

whenever opportunities offered. This was actually done. It was in the best interests of the department that it should be so, because it afforded a healthy change, and the efficiency of the department depended very largely on the health of its officers. As regards what had been said about officers working day and night and being disallowed overtime, he had no actual knowledge of the particular cases, but if the member for Dundas would furnish him with the particulars he would have inquiry made.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.16 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 6th January, 1911.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 10.30 a.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION — TIMBER TROUBLE, LAKESIDE.

Mr. SCADDAN asked the Minister for Railways: Has his attention been drawn to the following paragraph in this morning's *West Australian* in reference to the trouble in the goldfields firewood industry—

Orders have come from the headquarters of the Government railways to bring the ten locomotives and the trucks hitherto used in conveying firewood to the mines down to the agricultural districts, where this additional rolling stock will be put into service to bring produce to the seaboard.

Is that statement correct, and what had induced the department to take that ac-

tion at such an early stage in the trouble on the goldfields? Does not the Minister consider that that action is likely to embitter the parties rather than bring them together?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: I have not the slightest knowledge of whether or not the statement in the newspaper is correct, but I have rung up the Railway Department and have asked them to look into the matter and advise me by telephone. As soon as I get a reply I will convey it to the hon. member.

BILL—YORK MECHANICS' INSTITUTE TRANSFER (PRIVATE).

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for resumption of adjourned debate.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Taylor in the Chair; Mr. Monger in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2, 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Municipality to discharge liabilities of Institute:

Mr. ANGWIN: It was only fair that members should have some information in regard to the duties and liabilities that were being placed upon the municipality.

Mr. Monger: Forty pounds.

Mr. ANGWIN: That was a very small amount, but were the ratepayers of the district in favour of taking over that institute?

Mr. Monger: Yes, by a majority of five to one.

Mr. ANGWIN: Had the ratepayers been consulted, or was it merely that the majority of councillors had agreed to take the institute over?

Mr. MONGER: A referendum was taken and the transfer was carried by a majority of five to one.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—agreed to.

Schedule, Title, Preamble—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL — BRIDGETOWN-WILGARRUP RAILWAY EXTENSION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from previous day.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest): My remarks on the second reading of this Bill will be very brief indeed. When I secured the adjournment of the debate last evening it was with the object of gaining a little more information, but in the short time which has elapsed since the introduction of the measure, it has of course been impossible to get any detailed information. However, it is only a small proposition for a three miles extension of the line, and consequently I do not intend to take up much time either in criticising the proposal or in dealing with it in any way. I want to point out that the argument advanced by the Minister for Works for the extension of this line did not apply to other lines under consideration, and, in fact, in course of construction, namely, that we should build this additional three miles of railway while the plant and gear are on the spot carrying out the already authorised line from Bridgetown to Wilgarrup. When we advanced that argument before in regard to the extension of the Pinjarrah-Marrinup line and the Mount Magnet-Black Range line, it did not hold water with the Government.

The Premier: But we have extended the Pinjarrah-Marrinup railway.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Yes, but when we waited on the late Premier and asked for this extension while the plant and men were on the spot, our request went unheeded; and, again, when we asked during the extension of the Mount Magnet-Black Range Railway that the Nannine-Meekatharra line should be built while the departmental plant was in the district our representations were not given effect to, and the work was subsequently given to a contractor to carry out at a much larger figure.

The Minister for Works: You are very pleased in this case.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: As I have already said, I cannot offer any objection to the proposal, but I would like the Minister to be a little more consistent. It has been pointed out by the Minister that it is

looked upon as a sound commercial proposition to build this line in order to allow Bunning Bros. to exploit the area of timber country they have there.

The Minister for Works: That is not the way I put it.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The way the Minister put it was that the Department required 6,000 loads of karri, for which the contract price was 75s. per load, but that the department could get a reduction of 10s. per load if this additional three miles of railway were constructed. A few months ago the farmers resident beyond the present terminus of the railway waited on the Works Department and asked for a further extension of this particular line by ten or twelve miles. The Minister will be prepared to admit that he is not building this extension for the farmers in the locality, but solely in the interests of Bunning Bros., who have acquired a large area of country to operate on there. I notice that Bunning Bros have secured 19,000 acres of karri country within three miles of the present terminus, and they obtained that concession three or four months ago. All I want to ask the Minister is whether there were any other applicants for this territory, and, further, was it advertised in the *Government Gazette* as being open? I believe that there are some 40,000 or 50,000 acres of timber country reserved there for Government purposes, and it certainly seems strange that an area of 19,000 acres should be allotted to Bunning Bros. I believe that if it had been thrown open for public competition there would have been more applicants. There is an immense quantity of karri throughout that country, and I trust that later on if this extension is made, and the Government require further large orders, they will set about supplying themselves. I believe it has been demonstrated during the last three or four months that the State can produce its own timber, jarrah at any rate, cheaper than by private companies; and I believe that if the Government requirements in karri should run to any great extent they should also cut the karri themselves. It remains to be seen whether the karri is going to be a good timber, as

we hope it will be some day, though we recognise now that for overhead work, such as the construction of bridges and so forth, it is one of the best timbers. Unfortunately, for sleepers or timbers that have to go on the ground it is useless. Whether the powellising process can be applied to karri with good results remains to be seen; but if it can the sooner the Government extend their operations into the karri country the better it will be for the departments and for the State as a whole. The cost of this small section of three miles appears to me to be too high: it works out at £2,100 per mile, and it is not to be built in the winter. I recognise that the cost of construction during the winter is very much greater than the cost of construction during the summer, because it is almost impossible to get on the ground; but seeing no difficulties in regard to weather conditions, at any rate, exist now, and seeing that the sleepers are growing practically all along the route of this proposed extension, I fail to see why the cost should be so high as was given by the Minister. I trust the Minister will in a few words give me the information, if he can, with regard to the granting of this area to Bunning Brothers, and also some explanation as to what appears to me to be the high cost of this proposed extension. In conclusion, I only desire to say that it once more demonstrates, no matter what the Premier may say about the nomads developing the timber industry, and about these people who are supposed to be in one locality for a time and then in another part, he has received a flat contradiction inasmuch as the Minister for Works is prepared to bring down a Bill for the purpose of providing a railway for these timber workers.

Mr. Holman: For one company.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Yes, for one company to produce this timber.

The Minister for Works: The line is to serve the Railway Department.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Minister is not going to contend that Bunning Brothers, who secured this concession, are not going to receive the greatest benefit; he must admit that by building

this three miles of railway they will be in a position to produce their timber at a much lower rate than would be otherwise possible.

The Minister for Works: They were the only tenderers.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: If the Minister did not have in view a further extension of this proposition I venture to say the extension of this railway would not have been proposed. By constructing it now he can get a reduction of 10s. a load on 6,000 loads of karri. No matter how we may despise the nomads, and those people who are in a large measure contributing to the prosperity of the South-West, no matter how uncharitable the Premier may be in some of his remarks, the fact remains that, were it not for the development of the timber industry and the employment of these timber workers in the South-West, we would not have the prosperity there is in that district to-day. I have no intention of opposing the second reading because I recognise this is only a small measure for a small section of railway.

The PREMIER (Hon. Frank Wilson): It is a marvellous thing to me that no business proposition can be entered into by the Government for the benefit of the State with any private firm but mistrust is disclosed at once by members opposite and something ulterior is insinuated as the motive for making the arrangement. We are here to look after the interests of the State.

Mr. Hudson: You are supposed to.

The PREMIER: We do, which is more. This transaction is a perfectly simple one; in fact it originated before I left the Works Department. We were constructing a railway as far as Wilgarrup south of Bridgetown. These people had secured karri country some three miles further south. They secured that country in the ordinary course; they made application for it; it was free and open to anyone, as there are hundreds of square miles still open for people to take up on certain terms.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Did they know the railway would be extended?

The PREMIER: No; but if the hon. member will have a little patience he will hear exactly all about it. This country was open to anyone. The hon. member could have applied for it and taken it up if he liked. He did not do so. These people got the timber country and prepared to put up their saw mill and commence operations. They tendered for 6,000 loads of karri, wagon scantlings, not sleepers.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I know; we would not have karri sleepers.

The PREMIER: I would if they were powellised; if that process could successfully be applied to them.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That has to be seen yet.

The PREMIER: They were for wagon purposes, for which karri is eminently suited, and for which purpose we supply hundreds of loads to the old country for the railways of Great Britain. We have used it here for the same purpose for many years, for 20 years to my knowledge. It has answered the purpose very well. Though it is not so good as tuart, it still is a very good serviceable timber, and we want it badly. We cannot get the tuart in sufficient quantities. We get all the tuart we can, and the Railway Department miss no opportunity of getting it when they have a chance to get it, and they are busy at the Midland workshops cutting up tuart in large quantities, but still they require further timber for wagons. We must have wagons, and the department wanted 6,000 loads of karri wagon scantlings immediately. They called for tenders and got a tender at 75s. a load on trucks at Wilgarrup. The contractors said, "Will you allow us to construct three miles of railway on your surveyed route from the terminus at Wilgarrup on your specifications, and on the understanding that you can take over the line any time you like at cost price in order that we may get our timber in?" I said, "No; we will not allow any private individual to interfere with our railway system. This is an extension of our main system from Bridgetown, and if a line is to be built at all it must be part of the Gov-

ernment system." Then negotiations proceeded as to what reduction in price should be made. First of all they wanted the reduction to be 5s. on their price; they thought £1,500 a fair concession to give for the construction of three miles of railway. I bargained with them and said it did not appear to me to be sufficient, as it was an expensive line to build owing to the rough nature of the country. Then they asked me what my idea was and I said that if they would contribute 10s. a load, or £3,000, which would be about half the cost of the work, I would recommend Cabinet to accept it. They agreed to do so, and I considered we made a good bargain for the State, because we saved £3,000 on the cost of timber very badly needed by the Railway Department and at half the cost we would construct three miles of a railway which must ultimately be extended south.

Mr. Holman: Would it not have been better to have taken up the area and worked it yourself?

The PREMIER: No; we have areas down there, and I would be sorry indeed to take up an area to cut timber of this sort exclusively. I have had a good deal of experience, and if the hon. member had had any experience of the industry he would know that one would not cut one sample of timber only, for instance, wagon scantlings only, or there would be a big residue on one's hands. If one cuts for sleepers alone he must destroy all sorts of timber, or else have a big residue of scantlings for which he would require a market. That is always the difficulty in the timber trade in Western Australia.

Mr. Underwood: We want other timber.

The PREMIER: The hon. member must admit I have had some experience. That has always been the difficulty. I have seen thousands of loads of scantlings sold at £1 a load. When orders are cut to specification to certain lengths the residue has to be disposed of. It would not pay the Railway Department for an order of this description to establish a mill. Of course it might ulti-

mately, but as long as we can get what we require at a price, such as has been arranged for in this instance, I do not think it would pay the State to put up a mill. If we find that these people are going to increase their prices largely, the same as was done for jarrah sleepers recently, we would have no hesitation in erecting our own mills. We have done that in a small way in connection with sleepers for the railways. I have not yet sufficient data or information to warrant me in accepting absolutely without reservation the statement of the hon. member that we are cutting very much cheaper.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I have not the data either, but I have been so assured.

The PREMIER: When I have had 12 months' run, 12 months' return, taking into consideration all the stock in hand or disposed of at a cheap rate, and when I have the balance sheet, I will be able to express an opinion. I admit at once there is no reason why a State mill should not be run as cheaply as a private mill.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Provided it is erected all right.

The PREMIER: Yes, provided it is erected properly. The present mill is a make-shift one; I have not seen it; it is a temporary expedient to provide for the department without going thoroughly into the business. There is no reason why the State should not under proper supervision save the profit which the sawmiller gets; but it is not the policy of the Government to rush in and interfere with private enterprise unduly. I have always stated on the floor of the House and elsewhere that whenever I thought private enterprise was unduly harassing the Government and charging too much for its products I would not hesitate in using the State's funds to supply the State's requirements. We have adopted that principle, and that principle is the principle that holds good to-day. Now, with regard to the railway it is, of course, an expensive line to construct; it is rough mountainous country, as the hon. member knows. The line from Bridgetown to Wilgarrup is an expensive

line to start with, and the three extra miles is of an expensive nature.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Carrying it through in the winter made it far more expensive.

The PREMIER: Probably; but it is difficult to stop works of this description even in the winter months; and in this country there are not very many weeks or months, even in the winter season, when we cannot carry on work at a reasonably expeditious rate. I think the hon. member need have no fear that this is playing into the hands of any company. The extension is built because the Railway Department require the timber, and because we have made a good bargain and are getting timber supplied to build trucks; that is the only and sole reason. If the Government did not want to build the line and deemed it not in their interest to do so, the company would build it; but they wanted to build it over the surveyed route. They were in such a position that they could not build it other than over the surveyed route, and that would be against the policy of the State, which is not to permit any private company to extend a railway of this description. I refused a request of the same nature from the hewers at Marrinup when they came to me. They could not get their sleepers out, and they offered exactly similar terms. They said, "Allow us to construct two miles in addition to what you have already constructed and we will undertake to hand it over at any time at cost price, and we will build it to your specification." I said, "No;" because it was contrary to the policy of the Government and Parliament. I agreed in that instance to build the extra two miles, and I did it at once so that they could get their sleepers out, and that was mainly for export. Of course I granted the concession on the understanding that they could complete their contract with the Railway Department, for which they had to supply sleepers. In this instance, however, it is timber we ourselves want badly, and I think hon. members will admit we were fully justified in endeavouring to make a fairly good bargain for the State.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES 1910-11.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Taylor in the Chair.

Department of the Attorney General and Minister for Education (Hon. J. L. Nanson, Minister.)

Vote—*Crown Law Department*, £8,067:

Item, Under Secretary, £600:

Mr. HUDSON: The Under Secretary for Law was to receive an increase in his salary of £50, and he desired to enter a protest against that advance for the reason that the office had been magnified out of proportion. The work to be accomplished by that officer did not justify the payment of so high a salary as £600. The Attorney General's Department was divided into a number of branches, the Electoral, Lands, Titles, Magistracy, and Supreme Court, all of which had their own heads. There was a Master of the Supreme Court, a Commissioner of Titles, a Registrar of Titles, and then an Under Secretary for Law. This last position was absolutely unnecessary, because the work to be performed was of a purely clerical nature. There was no necessity for management on that officer's part, and at the present rate of payment the amount was extravagant, especially as a number of other officers who had to exercise judicial powers and had to be conversant with the law, and whose duties were onerous, were not receiving the same consideration. He moved—

That the amount be reduced by £50.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: An excellent case could be made out for increasing the salary of this officer. It was nine years since he became Under Secretary for Law.

Mr. Holman: What salary was he getting then?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Under Secretary for Law had not re-

ceived an increase in his salary for seven years.

Mr. Troy: He does not deserve any either.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Not having the figures before him he could not say at what salary the officer commenced his duties, but if the salary were contrasted with that of the salaries of officers holding similar positions in the Eastern States, it would be seen that that of our own officer suffered by comparison. A comparison with the salaries paid to the under secretaries of the other departments in this State also showed that the proposed increase was fully warranted. The Under Treasurer—though it was admitted that this was a much more important appointment—received £750. The Under Secretary for Lands received £650, the Secretary for Mines received £650, and the Under Secretary for Law received £550. The Inspector General of the Education Department received £750.

Mr. Hudson: There is no comparison between them.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Under Secretary for Agriculture who was appointed last year received £500 a year. With regard to the salaries paid to the under secretaries for law in the Eastern States it was found that the under secretary of the Federal Crown Law Department received £900 a year.

Mr. Walker: But he is a professional man.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The occupant of the position in Western Australia as far as experience was concerned might be regarded as being equivalent to a professional man. He had been in office for something like nine years as under secretary, and during that time he had necessarily acquired a large experience, and it had been necessary for him to keep himself fully abreast of all the Statutes, more especially concerning the work of the department. It was possible that under-secretaries elsewhere were professional men, but as far as the knowledge of statute law was concerned the present occupant of the office in this State had quite as good a know-

ledge as any professional man in Western Australia. In Queensland the under secretary received a salary of £700; in South Australia, where the appointment was recently made, the commencing salary was £550. In Victoria it was £800, and in Western Australia £550.

Mr. HUDSON: Do you say that the Under Secretary for Law in Victoria receives £800?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes.

Mr. HUDSON: The Crown Solicitor gets £800. I challenge your statement.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The figures which were supplied to him he was perfectly certain were correct. In most of the Crown Law Departments of the Eastern States the under secretaries were assisted by chief clerks. There had been no endeavour on the part of the under secretary of the Crown Law Department of Western Australia to in any way magnify his office as had been stated by the member for Dundas; on the contrary, it was doubtful whether there was a single officer in the public service who had been more insistent and determined to keep down the number of the officers in his department. Perhaps the best testimony with regard to this officer was that of previous Attorneys General who had been in office while the officer had filled the position of under secretary. The officer was first appointed by the late Mr. George Leake, and when Mr. Leake left office he left on record his opinion of the under secretary, and spoke of the work he had done in the highest possible terms. There was similar testimony from Sir Walter James, and Mr. Keenan.

Mr. Collier: Is Bobby Hastie's testimony there?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes. If we were to retain officers in responsible positions it was necessary to see that they were adequately paid. This officer had had no increase for the last seven years, although during that time the work of the department had developed to a considerable extent.

Mr. Holman: He was only an accountant at £300 a year nine years ago.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This was what Mr. Keenan, the late Attorney General, had written to this particular officer—

On the occasion of my resignation of the office of Attorney General and Ministerial head of the Crown Law Department, I desire to record in some manner my appreciation of the excellent services rendered by you as Under Secretary for Law during the term of my tenure. As no better way lies open to me than the simple form of a letter to yourself, I am writing this to thank you for the very loyal and valuable support you gave me as your Ministerial chief and the invaluable services you rendered to the State by a close attention to all the details of administration. If during the three years I held office any advance was made (as I hope we may claim to have made) in the more economical and at the same time more efficient discharge of those duties which fall to the Crown Law Department, I am free to admit that the same is due not to anything I did do or could do but to the untiring energy and ability of the permanent officers of the department and in particular to personal effort and example on your part.

There was testimony in similar strain by the late Mr. George Leake, by Mr. S. Burt, and by Sir Walter James.

Mr. HUDSON: The department was totally different from all others. It had not been suggested that this under secretary had any administrative control over the various sub-departments. For instance, he had nothing to do with the Commissioner of Titles, nor with the Solicitor General, whose title by the way was a misnomer, because the Solicitor General should be, and in all other places was, a political officer. It had been merely to please the vanity of an individual that the office was entitled that of Solicitor General. The Solicitor General had been relieved of the duties of Parliamentary Draftsman, and surely it would be within the compass of his office to manage the Crown Law Department. The Master of the Supreme Court managed most of the

officers connected with the administration of the law in the central office, and surely the Master of the Supreme Court did not come under the direction of this under secretary. In fact it might be asked who did the Under Secretary for Law control? The expenditure under the Crown Law offices was estimated at £8,067, and the revenue at £1,400. From this it could be seen how relatively unimportant was the work; yet the under secretary was to receive an increase of £50. As a matter of fact the supposed under secretary was merely a correspondence clerk, and it was unnecessary that he should have any abilities beyond those required in a correspondence clerk. There was no justification whatever for the proposed increase.

Mr. HOLMAN: The explanation given by the Attorney General served to show how little the Minister knew of the work of his own department. After all, nothing else could be expected of one who had been afraid to prosecute his studies in his own country, and had deemed it expedient to go abroad for the purpose of passing his examinations. The under secretary under discussion had caused one of the greatest debates that had ever taken place in the Assembly. This was seven years ago, when the Estimates were under discussion. At that time it was proposed to increase the salary of this under secretary by £100, but an amendment to reduce it by £100 had been carried by 17 votes to 14. Yet, in the face of that, the proposed increase was actually given, showing that undue influence had been at work in connection with this officer. Nine years ago this under secretary had received £300 a year as accountant. On his entering the Attorney General's Department his salary was increased to £450, and such influence was he able to exercise that in the following year it had been gravely proposed to increase it by £100. As already stated, Parliament had declined to make this increase, notwithstanding which it had been given. And to-day we had the Attorney General attempting to compare the work of this under secretary with that accomplished by other under secretaries. It would have been more fitting had the Attorney Gen-

eral compared this officer's duties with those of the secretary to the Central Board of Health. The work done by the Under Secretary for Law was not commensurate with the salary he was receiving to-day. The Attorney General had told us there was no man in this country who knew more about law than did this under secretary.

The Attorney General: I did not say that.

Mr. HOLMAN: Nobody could have interpreted the Attorney General's remarks as meaning anything else. Perhaps with his own limited knowledge of law the Attorney General would regard this under secretary as a Solon. Why had not the Attorney General compared this officer's work with that of the clerk in the Police Department? All that this under secretary had to do was to act as corresponding clerk to the Minister. Probably in that capacity he was a very good officer, but certainly his duties were not worth £600. Perhaps the Attorney General would be able to explain how it was this officer had received an increase which Parliament had refused to grant him?

The Attorney General: I was not in office then.

Mr. HOLMAN: A reference to *Hansard* of seven years ago would disclose what the Minister for Works had said in opposing the proposed increase.

Mr. Johnson: He was not Minister then; he was plain Mr. Daglish.

Mr. HOLMAN: However, this was what Mr. Daglish had said on the 10th November, 1903, when discussing the Annual Estimates of the Crown Law Office, and the proposed increase of £100 to the under secretary—

Such a rule should not be made, because he did not think every man receiving £200 a year was necessarily paid in accordance with his merits and the importance of his work. There were no such advances as £100 made in the cases of officers receiving miserable salaries such as those in the Audit Office where men were doing responsible work for £150 a year, in regard to which the expert who specially reported on that department had recom-

mended salaries nearly double the amount that were paid.

That member had made a very long speech, which he concluded by saying, "he must oppose any such large increase as that recommended by the Attorney General in that department." Surely if the Minister was of that opinion in those days he should not alter that opinion now. Mr. Hastie had opposed it and Mr. Taylor had spoken for nearly an hour in bitter opposition to the increase. The member for Gascoyne had supported them in attempting to reduce the salary and Mr. Jacoby had acted as teller, whilst Mr. Quinlan had protested strongly against such a large increase. In fact, the debate on this increase had occupied nearly two days, despite which the increase had been agreed to. Evidently there was some undercurrent at work when that occurred. Perhaps the Attorney General would compare the duties of Mr. Hampton with those of the secretary to the Public Health Department, where the Principal Medical Officer received a high salary and had a clerk or secretary to assist him.

Mr. Hudson: Mr. Hampton does no legal work at all.

Mr. HOLMAN: Then why pay an ordinary clerk a salary of £600 per annum? It was setting a very bad example, but there might be justification for the salary if the Attorney General's department was worked under one permanent head and the under secretary controlled the whole of the sub-departments.

The Attorney General: That is precisely the position.

Mr. HOLMAN: Surely the Electoral Department, for instance, did not come under that officer's control.

The Attorney General: Yes, it does.

Mr. HOLMAN: If the salary of £600 was paid to the Chief Electoral Officer instead of to Mr. Hampton, the Government would be acting more reasonably and would be keeping an officer whom it would be difficult to replace, but if Mr. Hampton were to leave the department, his place could be filled at any time.

The Attorney General: He has the same control as the Under Secretary for Works has over the sub-departments.

Mr. HOLMAN: It was absurd to say that the under secretary controlled the Crown Solicitor and the Solicitor General in the same way as other under secretaries had control over clerks.

Mr. Hudson: We are only paying the Under Secretary for Works a salary of £550.

Mr. Johnson: Do not make a comparison of that sort for goodness' sake.

Mr. HOLMAN: There was no desire to suggest that the work of this officer was anything but the very best, but the salary proposed to be given to him was too great, especially as he had only started in the service nine years ago as accountant at £300. Some extraordinary influence seemed to have been exercised in the interests of that officer for many years past.

Mr. FOULKES: It was pleasing to hear the Attorney General say that if the State wanted to keep its good officers it must pay them well, and it was to be regretted that the Minister for Railways was not present to hear that statement, because only recently the House had considered the case of a railway officer who had been lost to the State because the Government had not been prepared to pay him what he was entitled to. There was no doubt that Mr. Hampton had acquired a good deal of personal influence, but it had been honestly earned, and he had been regarded as a first-class officer who had done his work well all the time he had been in the department. Mr. Holman had referred to the fact that various members in 1903 had supported the reduction of that officer's salary. The reduction had been moved by Mr. Piggott, the then leader of the Opposition, not because the officer was not entitled to the increase, but in order to force from the Government a clear statement of their intentions in regard to the classification of the service. The idea of many members at that time was that no increases should be voted until the Government had announced their intention in that regard, and the reduction of this salary had been

moved solely for the purpose of forcing a statement from the Government. The debate and the vote had taken place wholly on those lines. In comparison with the salary paid to many civil servants, that provided for Mr. Hampton was certainly liberal, but he was a gentleman who was fitted to receive more onerous work than he was at present doing: he was a first-class business man, he had helped to keep many Attorneys General in the right track, and he would be a very good man for the Minister for Lands to have in his department. The Government could not make a mistake in appointing Mr. Hampton to a more responsible position.

Mr. HUDSON: The object of the amendment was not to make a personal attack on the officer; it was moved because the duties of the office did not justify a salary of £600.

Mr. JOHNSON: There was no justification for moving the amendment. There was a standard fixed for under secretaries. If this officer was an under secretary and was doing his duty he should be paid the standard fixed for under secretaries. Mr. Hampton was one of the bright spots in the public service, always ready with an answer to any inquiry, and always to be found in his office or close at hand. His abilities could be used to greater advantage to the State, but because his capacity was not too fully utilised it did not follow he should be denied the standard rate for under secretaries.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The opinions expressed by the members for Claremont and Guildford would probably carry more weight than the opinion of a Minister, but the opinions of those hon. members were the opinions of most members. When Mr. Hampton's salary was reduced by Parliament some years ago, during the same session the Estimates were recommitteed and the salary reinstated at its original figure.

Mr. HOLMAN: The item was previously reduced as an expression of opinion against granting too large an increase in one year, and the reinstating of the item took place in a thin House.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. HOLMAN: Why were certain papers in the Crown Law Office supplied

to the *Sunday Times* before being supplied to the House? Certain papers were moved for in the House, but before they were laid on the Table information that could only come from the Attorney General's Department was supplied to the *Sunday Times*, with extracts that could only have come from the departmental files. The article was headed, "Justice rights." In the circumstances it was justice prostituted, and it was surprising that in an important department which should be sacred so far as these matters were concerned such things should occur.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: When a motion was carried for laying any papers on the Table of the House the papers were immediately supplied to Parliament. If the hon. member would say when the motion was carried he would ascertain when the papers were supplied. As regarded the general question of giving information to the Press, the rule of the Crown Law Department was that leave of the Minister was obtained as to whether the Press were to be given any information they asked for; and if from his knowledge of a file he thought there was no objection, he would allow the representative of the Press to see any file. The Press had to be regarded as acting in a quasi representative capacity, as representing the public, and if information could legitimately be made public he would not refuse to give reasonable information to the representatives of the Press.

Mr. HOLMAN: It showed that Ministers were controlled by a section of the Press; it was prostitution of justice when this information was supplied. The Minister might have given correct information and absolute facts, and not tried to bolster up his case at the expense of any individual, as was done in this instance. The *Sunday Times* did not hesitate to publish a deliberate misstatement. Any Minister that would supply information to a paper like that to further certain ends was not worthy of the name of man. The papers were moved for on the 19th October, and on the 23rd October this statement appeared in the Press containing absolute lies. Yet although this information could be given to the *Sunday*

Times, the papers were not placed on the Table until the 15th November.

Mr. TROY: What were the papers?

Mr. HOLMAN: The papers of the Barry *versus* the Crown case. They were even not laid on the Table until he had asked the reason for the delay. Other matters could be brought forward of a similar nature. Files in the department and the Press were utilised by the Government, discredited among a great number of people in the State, to discredit other parties. It was a piece of work that was not clean. This matter had been brought forward on two or three previous occasions without any satisfaction having been obtained. It was only in keeping with the Berteaux case, when absolute fraud was proved and when the Attorney General declined to take action. The sooner there was an alteration in the working of that department the better it would be for the State and for everyone concerned. It was known what had happened in the Barry *versus* the Crown case, when the advice was given by the Crown Law Department and probably by the under secretary, whose limited knowledge of law led him into the error. Where the workers were affected the whole of the influence of the Crown Law Department was used. This was shown in the case of the tramway men. There were many cases of a similar nature, and yet the Attorney General tried to get increases in salaries for his officers. Why did not the Attorney General take the action that he took against the tramway men against the Bullfinch people at the present time? The Attorney General would not do that because some of his colleagues were interested in the Bullfinch.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was going somewhat beyond the vote.

Mr. HOLMAN: What he wanted to know was whether it was the duty of this officer to advise the Minister in these respects, and whether that officer was above the Solicitor General. Why did not the Government take action against the Bullfinch proprietors for reducing the wages of the men and causing a lockout?

Mr. TROY: Because the Government are shareholders in it.

Mr. HOLMAN: That might account for it. The Attorney General should explain whether this officer had any control over such matters.

The Attorney General: It is not part of the under secretary's duty to give legal advice.

Mr. HOLMAN: That was something in his favour, because the Committee had been told by the Attorney General that the under secretary was one of the best officers in the department as far as giving legal advice was concerned. In the past the administration of this department had not been satisfactory. He would say it was not clean, and the sooner the fact was recognised the better.

Mr. TROY: It was not a new experience to find a newspaper like the *Sunday Times* being taken into the confidence of the Government, and to find that it was always utilised for the purpose of bolstering up the Government. It might be that a newspaper of that class came in handy for a Government whose policy was one of misrepresentation, and undoubtedly members could not expect any other policy to be pursued in the future than that which had been adopted by the Government with regard to the files mentioned by the member for Murchison. The *Sunday Times* reporters were allowed access to all the Government offices, and had been given by Ministers themselves statistics for publication. Had he (Mr. Troy) not actually seen that delicately minded and gentlemanly person, Leslie Norman, coming out of the Premier's office with a bundle of notes in his hand about the financial agreement? The *Sunday Times*, too, was hired by the Government to indulge in scandalous misrepresentation of their opponents at the time of the Federal election. When members dared to attack a newspaper of this description in the House they might expect a good deal of abuse, and he might say slanderous and most scurrilous abuse. He, however, had always had the courage to speak his mind with regard to a journal which was the most vicious of its kind, and he had ever refused to give sanction to that journal or be associated with it in any way, or be associated with any person connected with

it. It was a scandalous thing in the history of the State that we had arrived at a time when Ministers, who should be above such a state of things, taking such a newspaper into their confidence and giving its representatives access to files and to correspondence which had been refused to members of Parliament. The Government in doing that were doing something which was degrading, and the House should express the opinion that the action was not the action of decent men. The Attorney General in justification said that this newspaper was acting in a *quasi* public manner. Newspapers were self-constituted exponents of public opinion. He (Mr. Troy) would start a newspaper next day if he had the money with which to do so, and he could make it the mouthpiece of public opinion.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could not discuss newspapers under the item. The member for Murchison had been allowed to make some remarks with reference to a resolution carried in the House, but the member for Mt. Magnet could not go on discussing newspapers generally.

Mr. TROY: The desire he had was merely to refute the statement of the Attorney General that newspapers were entitled to the information which he had given them, and he desired to say that the newspaper which had been discussed could not be classed with the ordinary daily newspapers of the State. This particular newspaper, to the representative of which the file had been given, was recognised to be the most vicious and most unscrupulous in its misrepresentation, and a Minister or a Government should not consider a newspaper of such a character. If this newspaper carried on decently, honestly, and squarely, well and good, but their general policy was not to do that. A member of the Chamber was the elect of the people, and he should be entitled to receive information and not a newspaper. A newspaper was no more entitled to information from the Government than any person in the country. One would expect that the Attorney General would be ashamed to be associated with the *Sunday Times*. He repeated,

that the character of the newspaper would not prevent him from courageously expressing his opinion regarding a transaction in which the Chamber was concerned.

Mr. HOLMAN: There was an officer in the Crown Law Department who was acting in the capacity of Assistant Crown Solicitor, but the item did not appear on the Estimates. He referred to Mr. Parker. Would the Attorney General explain?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Crown Solicitor had an assistant who was provided for under the item "Managing Clerks."

Mr. HUDSON: Surely the Attorney General was making a mistake. If his explanation was right, would he tell the Committee where Mr. Rowe was provided for?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Mr. Rowe was provided for under item 7.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Electorals*, £6,444:

Mr. HOLMAN: Why was not some better method adopted in respect to the placing of names on the roll in the more isolated districts? Under the present system if a miner of Meekatharra removed to Yaloginda, eight miles away, his name was struck off the roll because he had left his last postal address and had failed to send in a notice to the registrar. For many years past no effort had been made to place names upon the rolls in the Nannine district, notwithstanding that the population of the district had very largely increased. Thus, in Nannine, which included Meekatharra, the number of workers in 1908 had been 480, while in 1909 it was 890. Despite this, there had been no increase in the number of names on the roll; rather had they decreased. Whenever a man removed from one centre to another in the same electorate, or even from one street to another in the same town, his name was struck off the roll unless he had given notice of the alteration in address. Men who went out for a month's prospecting found on return that they had been struck off the roll. Something

should be done to prevent the perpetuation of this injustice.

(*Mr. Foulkes took the Chair.*)

Mr. HUDSON: The same thing applied to all the back country places. Immediately a man left a particular locality his name was struck off the roll, even though he was still in the same electorate. Some effort should be made to ascertain the whereabouts of a man before striking his name off the roll.

Mr. BATH: On the preceding evening the Attorney General had unfairly tried to shelve on to the officers of the department the blame of the partial application of the recent electoral canvass. If, being desirous of procuring reliable information as to the number of electors in the whole State, the Minister had ordered a complete electoral canvass members would have had every confidence in the impartial carrying out of that canvass by the officers of the department. But particular districts had been specially selected for the operation of this canvass. Thus Coolgardie, where there had been a period of depression, was subjected to the canvass; and perhaps the result of the inquiry served to bear out the statement subsequently made by the Minister, that the goldfields districts selected showed a reduction of the voters. If there had been a general canvass the Minister would have found that in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder group of electorates a big increase had taken place. So, too, in the Mount Magnet electorate and all through the Murchison and Yilgarn districts. It was not fair that the Minister should try to shelve on to the officers of the Electoral Department the criticism levelled at him on the score of this partial application of the canvass, and to infer that the criticism had been directed at those officers rather than at the Ministers who had utilised the services of those officers in securing information of a partial character. Generally speaking hon. members would be better pleased if the Attorney General would show a greater regard for accuracy. Only last evening the Attorney General had deliberately repeated the

statement that in respect to the Commonwealth Parliament the quota was distributed on the basis of population, and not of electoral population. For the information of the Attorney General and of the member for Swan, he would read the following sections from the Commonwealth Electoral Act:—

15. For the purposes of this Act a quota shall be ascertained in each State as follows:—The whole number of electors in each State as nearly as can be ascertained shall be divided by the number of members of the House of Representatives to be chosen therein. Until rolls are compiled all persons qualified to have their names placed on a roll shall be deemed to be electors for the purposes of this part of this Act.

16. In making a distribution of States into divisions the Commissioner shall give due consideration to (a) Community or diversity of interest, (b) Means of communication, (c) Physical features, (d) Existing boundaries of divisions; and subject thereto the quota of electors shall be the basis for the distribution, and the Commissioner may adopt a margin of allowance to be used whenever necessary, but in no case shall such quota be departed from to a greater extent than one-fifth more or one-fifth less.

Mr. Jacoby: The number of electors is divided by the number of members?

Mr. BATH: That was for a State, but the hon. member had been talking about the distribution of the electors. Members should expect from Ministers in the House that when they gave information it should be accurate because they had access to all sources of reference.

Mr. TROU: There was no provision on these Estimates for the holding of the next general election, and perhaps the Attorney General could tell the Committee what time the general election would be held. If no provision had been made for an election on the Estimates, members could only speculate on the possibility that there would be no general

election during this financial year. He desired to say a few words in regard to the compilation of the rolls. It had been the custom until this year to compile the rolls every three months, but during this year no census had been taken, and the rolls had not been brought up to date as had been formerly the case. In fact, for some reason or other the department had struck thousands of people off the existing rolls, and since last March had made no effort to put others on, with the result that the rolls were not now a true reflex of the electoral strength of the State. He knew that if the roll in his old electorate were brought up to date, it would be found that even without the area proposed to be taken from it by the Redistribution of Seats Bill, there were three thousand electors in the district, but, because 700 names had been struck off and none had been added, one would imagine that the district contained only about 2,500. When the Electoral Department had been reorganised and placed under one who was supposed to be a competent officer, members expected that at least the rolls would be kept up to date and an effort would be made from time to time to show what was the electoral strength of the various electorates. From the newspapers he had learnt that a canvass had taken place in several electorates; he knew that in the Greenough and Geraldton electorates adjoining his own a canvass had taken place during the year, but no canvass had been made of his electorate. In electorates which had a larger electoral population than the figures quoted by the Attorney General, no canvass had been made, but if that had been done the electoral population would have been shown to have been considerably greater. Surely an effort might be made to keep the rolls up to date. In regard to the Chief Electoral Officer, there had been a general opinion amongst the public, an opinion which he was glad to say was now becoming dissipated, that that gentleman was responsible for the Redistribution of Seats Bill introduced into the House.

The Attorney General: The Government are responsible.

Mr. TROY: It was satisfactory to hear that the Government took all the responsibility, because if the Chief Electoral Officer had been responsible for this abortion, he would have moved that his entire salary should be struck out, and would have said that he was entirely unfit for the office he held.

Mr. Johnson: What would you do when the Attorney General was responsible?

Mr. TROY: It would be his endeavour to strike out the Attorney General at the earliest opportunity. He had met hundreds of Government supporters who said that the Bill was not a Government measure, but was originated by the Chief Electoral Officer. He was glad to know that the Government accepted the responsibility and that their supporters, many of whom were fair-minded and decent men, would know on whose shoulders to lay the blame.

Mr. WALKER: Whilst electoral matters were under discussion it was his desire to say a word in regard to the manner in which the outlying goldfields were treated when a canvass at any time was being made for the rolls. He could speak more positively in regard to his own district, but what took place there was taking place elsewhere. It must be known to the Government as to all others acquainted with mining districts that the chief proportion of the population consisted of prospectors. The prospector was not localised, and could not, like an employee or a firm or company, stop in one place. If he desired to get the best of his knowledge and do the best for his country he must travel. A man might be to-day near Kanowna and the next week as far north as Mulwarrie, to-day he was on the roll, but next week when an officer came round to inquire whether the man was in his own place and entitled to be on the roll, he was of course absent, and the farce of sending letters to him where mails were irregular and sometimes impossible must be obvious even to the Electoral Department. Consequently, he never learned that he was being struck off the roll. Some consideration should be given to those men in connection with the compilation of the rolls. It struck him as perfectly evident that the object of the

recent canvass, particularly in his own electorate, was to demonstrate that a fewer number of voters were in that portion of the State. Of course these men drifted from one electorate into another; wherever there was a rumour that there was a colour of gold, those men would go on trek. He guaranteed to say that if a canvass were made of the whole of the goldfields contiguous to each other, it would not have shown the decrease in voters that was now made to appear for the purpose of a Bill before the Chamber. All of his voters in Kanowna had not been counted.

The Attorney General: What was the number of voters in your electorate according to the last election?

Mr. WALKER: The number was certainly more than was now shown on the electoral list. He would point out also that the full voting power was not shown at that election because his opponent was not regarded as a serious opposition; his nomination was merely regarded as a dodge on the part of the Minister for Mines and the then Attorney General to keep him (Mr. Walker) out of Menzies during the election campaign, and his return was by all old voters looked upon as a certainty. Therefore there had not been a full poll of the possible voters. He was convinced on information from reliable sources that the full voting power of Kanowna was not shown by the recent figures. Those men so far removed, less liable to complain than any others in the State, were treated, because of their distance from central power, with not only discourtesy but injustice. Some system should be devised whereby prospectors, travelling round and not long enough in one district to obtain a residential right, could be treated just the same as sailors were in New South Wales, namely, granted electoral rights.

The Attorney General: It would be necessary to have some safeguard not to give them the right to vote in any electorate.

Mr. WALKER: Undoubtedly, but there was no attempt made to meet the difficulty. Hundreds of men were disfranchised through the prosecution of

their employment necessitating their constant roving. In the Kanowna electorate a few years ago there were 10,000 men. Where had they gone? They had planted new goldfields all over the State; they had dispersed; but the State had not lost them; they were still voters and citizens and still representative of the gold mining industry.

The Attorney General: Some of them may go into agricultural districts.

Mr. WALKER: There were thousands of acres applied for in what would be the electorate of Kanowna, if the new Bill passed, and there would be hundreds of settlers between Norseman and Esperance, yet the quota was maintained on the goldfields basis. Some steps should be taken to put these prospectors upon the roll, and there should be no eagerness to strike off names. For some reason or other there was an unintentional purpose of diminishing the voting power and electoral standard of the goldfields, more especially the outlying ones.

Mr. ANGWIN: The electoral office should be reopened at Fremantle. Two persons wishing to get on the roll had asked him during the morning where they could enrol. Not one person in a hundred in Fremantle knew where or when they could see the electoral officer. The department appeared to be anxious to save a sixpence where they could even if it was detrimental to the work of the department. They saved a small rental at Fremantle, but the Fremantle rolls were never in a worse condition. There were hundreds in the district whose names were not on the rolls.

The Attorney General: Anyone who is anxious to find the office could find it.

Mr. ANGWIN: The office should not be in a back street, but in a position where it could be found easily by any person wishing to enrol. Another difficulty was that the electoral officer was only at Fremantle one day a week. Certainly a clerk of the local court registered names, but as a rule many people did not care to knock about police courts to register as electors. A town of the importance of Fremantle should have a special electoral office, and

there was no occasion to shift the electoral officer to Perth. The work that officer did could just as well be performed at Fremantle. Even the Perth office was in the wrong place, and the sooner it was shifted the better. There should be a permanent officer at Fremantle to provide people with proper facilities for registering their names and making inquiries. As there was a possibility of a general election taking place at an early date, was it the intention of the Minister to have a canvass of the districts prior to the general election with a view to having the rolls brought up to date as was done in 1908? If so, the money provided on these Estimates would not be sufficient. In order to perfect the Legislative Council rolls it was necessary to have district officers, otherwise it would be impossible to keep the Council rolls up to date. The West Province rolls were prepared in Perth for the last Council elections, and there were never worse rolls for that province than were prepared for that election. An officer in Perth could not secure from the Titles Office the information that would enable a proper list of owners to be prepared.

Mr. Taylor resumed the Chair.

Mr. ANGWIN: It was necessary that the officer preparing the Council rolls should be stationed in a particular province to learn the conditions, and to know the people, and to ascertain direct from the local authorities what property changed hands.

Mr. HARPER: The goldfields were not the only localities affected.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

Mr. HARPER: The member for Kanowna had some grievance with regard to getting the names of people on the roll. It was his desire also to point out, without reflecting on the Electoral Department, that there were many people in other parts of Western Australia who had a similar grievance. In some of the districts of the Beverley electorate there was not a single name on the electoral roll. Everyone knew what a vast country this was, and how difficult it was to

enrol people; this, however, was due largely to their own indifference. As far as he was concerned he would like to see the rolls as complete as possible. There was a moving population in Western Australia, and the member for Kanowna had spoken of the large number of prospectors who were not enrolled. He (Mr. Harper) was rather doubtful about the prospectors being very numerous at the present time, because they had not received much inducement to go out prospecting. However, it was known that in the outback goldfields districts there were fewer people on the rolls than in the more established places. It was to be hoped that every effort would be made to remedy this grievance. Farmers and others in agricultural districts were, as a rule, very indifferent about enrolment, but he would refer to this more particularly at a later stage when speaking on the Redistribution of Seats Bill. An electoral canvass should be made as quickly as possible, so that every name should be placed on the roll.

Mr. FOULKES: Could an arrangement be made whereby printed electoral information could be distributed? This would be of great value in connection with the Redistribution of Seats Bill. The Minister should not only supply a printed sheet containing these particulars, but also maps for distribution to the various local authorities throughout the State. In the House, members were well provided with information, but, unfortunately, the electors of the State had no information and had no opportunity of getting it. It was impossible for them to get information by reading the reports of the speeches published in the Press.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: With regard to the request made by the member for Claremont, he would be only too pleased to supply a tabulated statement to any local body or individual who required this information. The department were only too anxious to give the fullest possible information. The difficulty the department had to contend with, however, was the general apathy with regard to

these matters. If a large number of these forms were printed and distributed broadcast to every local body the probability was that a large percentage of these returns would immediately find their way into the waste-paper basket.

Mr. Foulkes: Will you let me have a thousand of them?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes. If any of the authorities made application for this information it would be promptly forwarded. With regard to the maps, as he had pointed out to the leader of the Opposition some time ago, the Government were willing to make the maps available when they were required. It was not proposed, however, to distribute broadcast to every local body in the State a complete set of maps, but where application was made they would be sent.

Mr. Scaddan: You promised that you would supply them with copies; now you want them to make an application.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was a very small matter for a local body to send in an application; it was certainly not too much to ask them to do so if they were at all interested in the matter.

Mr. Scaddan: You promised distinctly you would send them.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Anyone conversant with the administration of public departments was aware that there was a great amount of waste incurred in connection with the vast quantities of printed matter which were distributed and which were never looked at. In the department which he was administering he wished, as far as possible, to avoid the multiplication of printed matter or to go to the expense of distributing maps which might not be required. The department were entitled to ask that the small amount of trouble involved in making a request should be incurred. It was not possible to give maps to the entire body of electors.

Mr. Scaddan: Where are the maps you promised to supply to hon. members?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If hon. members applied for maps they could have them. The Chief Electoral Officer was at the disposal of every hon. member and would supply not only maps but information with regard to the boundaries.

Mr. Collier: Your promise was that every member would be supplied with maps.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Every member would be supplied, but there was no use supplying members who did not want the maps.

Mr. Scaddan: Surely every member wants a map.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was not known that every member did require a map.

Mr. Scaddan: Every member, with the exception of the member for Wellington, who is not concerned.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The member for Wellington was as much concerned as any other member.

Mr. Foulkes: All the local authorities between Midland Junction and Fremantle want them.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: These people would be supplied, and every hon. member who made a request would also be supplied.

Mr. Scaddan: I made a request here publicly, and you gave a distinct promise that the maps would be supplied.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: With regard to the general question touched upon by several hon. members, more particularly those members representing scattered districts, as to enrolment, it was never intended when the Electoral Bill of 1907 was passed that the Electoral Department should always have the rolls absolutely up to date and perfect at any time of the year. Hon. members would recognise that a large sum of money would be required to maintain the rolls in such a perfect condition. Probably there was no country in the world where rolls were maintained in a continual state of perfection. We had gone further than most countries in taking a large portion of the work off the

shoulders of the electors. Theoretically the right to vote was the most prized privilege of citizenship; but in practice it was a matter of the utmost difficulty, in the first place to persuade people to enrol themselves, and afterwards to persuade them to vote. If we were going to have rolls in such a condition that they could be perfected at a moment's notice, we would have to consider the advisability of instituting a system of compulsory registration. Even then it would be a somewhat difficult matter to secure the enforcement of such registration unless as a penalty we provided for the loss of the franchise. So far as constituencies were concerned, the Electoral Department made an effort to see that the rolls were brought as near as possible to perfection immediately before an election, and perhaps there was no reason why they should not be perfected at other times if it were discovered that they were far from being in good order. Before the next general election the Commonwealth census of the population of Australia would be taken, and arrangements were already in training with the Commonwealth authorities to conduct at the same time an electoral census throughout all the constituencies of Western Australia; and, seeing that the arrangements for the census of the general population in this State had been entrusted by the Federal Government to the Chief Electoral Officer of Western Australia, we could rest content in the conviction that it was in thoroughly capable hands.

Mr. Bolton: You are not anxious to get the Redistribution of Seats Bill through before the census is taken, are you?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was desired to get the Bill through before the next general election in order that when the new Parliament assembled it would be felt that the members were, so to speak, a microcosm of the people of the State.

Mr. SCADDAN: On the 13th December last he had asked the Premier the following question:—

When does the Premier propose to have the maps prepared, showing the boundaries of the new electorates as outlined in the Redistribution of Seats

Bill, for distribution to members and local authorities?

To this the Premier replied—

From what I can gather from the Attorney General the maps are being prepared as rapidly as possible, and he will be able to supply members with one copy each this week. With regard to the local authorities the Attorney General is unable to say when the maps will be ready.

This had been a definite promise that members would be supplied with one copy each, and that the local authorities would be supplied when the maps were ready.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Land Titles*, £9,542:

Mr. HUDSON: The attention of the Attorney General should be drawn to the accommodation provided in the Titles Office. It was a standing disgrace. The conditions had been bad enough before the passing of the amendment of the Transfer of Lands Act last year, when additional business was thrown into the department by the bringing of conditional purchase leases under the Transfer of Lands Act. Now, the conditions were a menace to the health of the men employed in the department; and, although the Government had been repeatedly notified of this state of affairs, nothing had been done. In the report of the department the registrar had referred to the necessity for providing as soon as possible increased accommodation. The Attorney General ought to visit the premises himself and see the conditions under which the men are working. The result of such a visit would assuredly manifest itself in the making of some improvements. Again, there had been, during the last year or two, a number of temporary hands employed in the department. If there was any department calling for a permanent staff, it was that of the Lands Titles, where it was necessary to maintain secrecy in regard to the business done, and provide ample security against mistakes. It was not fair to the heads of the department that they should have to teach a temporary officer his work only to see him presently supplanted by a newcomer.

Mr. WALKER: It was incredible that the Solicitor General, who had so many duties to perform in the Crown Law Office, could also give the necessary attention to the duties falling within the compass of the Commissioner of Titles. The Solicitor General had too much detailed work placed upon him. It was a farce to expect the Solicitor General to carry out the duties pertaining to the officer of Commissioner of Titles. True, the Solicitor General paid occasional visits to the department, but inevitably he had to rely on the accuracy and efficiency of the officers carrying out the routine work. In the past the State had had to pay considerable sums of money for errors made in the Lands Titles Office.

The Attorney General: Not since the present arrangement was arrived at.

(Mr. Foulkes took the Chair.)

Mr. WALKER: Just the same, the experience of the past should be accepted as a warning that it was necessary to maintain continual caution. He had no word to say against the present holder of the position, except perhaps that that officer was too willing to oblige everybody. However, the Solicitor General had quite sufficient work in attending to his duties at the Supreme Court offices without having this responsibility of the Lands Titles Office thrown upon him. Undoubtedly there should be a Commissioner of Titles in charge. If we had such an officer the subordinates of the department would probably receive better treatment than they were getting to-day. The chief clerk had been carrying out his duties for many years without any recognition at all of his services. Another officer, a clerk receiving £170, had been 17 years in the service; had in fact started at £170 seventeen years ago, and had since been raised to £200, only to be again reduced to the original sum under the Public Service Commissioner's classification. This sort of thing might be economy, but it was not wise economy. The State had no right to treat its faithful servants in that cruel fashion simply because they were receiving small

salaries to begin with; no private firm would think of doing that. Anyone who had had extensive relations with men knew that there was no greater incentive to good service than recognition, and the fact that many good servants were at the present time ignored was the cause of a lack of interest and occasional spirit of mutiny throughout the service. The object of treating men well was to get faithful service out of them and if there was anything which would tend to prevent the State getting faithful service it was the fact that after 17 years' service a man was reduced £25 in salary. He hoped that the Attorney General would have that case looked into. Mention had been made of the employment of temporary hands, and he believed that it was true that these temporary hands were farm immigrants. He agreed with the member for Dundas that if there was one department more than another that required care and scrupulous attention to the work it was this department. Mistakes were so easily made and such mistakes were very dangerous, not only to those whose lands were involved, but to the State itself in the possible litigation that might ensue. Then there was the fact that the regular hands had to be taken off their usual work in order to instruct the temporary employees. It took six months to equip the temporary hands for the work and as soon as a man was got ready to do his work without being constantly watched, he was removed into some other department or out of the service altogether. And this was being done at a time when extra work was being placed on this branch of the service, because, since the alteration of the Transfer of Land Act, making it possible to bring within the scope of the Act all leases, the work had been more than duplicated. As these leases became securities and the banks were dealing with them, accuracy was more than ever essential, yet it was found that immigrants just brought from England had been placed there as temporary hands. He did not wonder that the State was from time to time losing its most valuable servants. They were leaving the

service of Western Australia because they thought this State the worst master to serve. He hoped the Attorney General would give that matter his earnest attention. In regard to one other matter, he desired to endorse the remarks of the member for Dundas. Over four years ago he had drawn attention to the lack of accommodation for the lodging of parchments, documents, and deeds, and a promise had then been made that the matter would be attended to. If the Attorney General would take a trip into those vaults he would see that there was no exaggeration in what had been said and that the accommodation was absolutely insufficient.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: In regard to the accommodation in the Lands Department he was to a large extent in accord with the remarks of the two preceding speakers. He had frequently visited that office and no one could deny that the accommodation was not only limited, but was capable of being very much improved. In anticipation of the extra work consequent upon the passing of the Transfer of Land Act last session, structural alterations had been made in the premises occupied by the department, and with the utmost difficulty some additional rooms had been obtained in the Lands Department. At the present time, unfortunately from a departmental view, although fortunately from the point of view of the prosperity of the State at large, there was a great lack of accommodation in Government offices, particularly in that wing. However, arrangements had now been made to remove the Education Department, lock, stock, and barrel, into new premises so as to allow of the necessary expansion of the Lands Department, and he hoped that when that amount of relief was afforded it would be possible to also temporarily improve the accommodation in the Titles Department. Of course temporary measures were not always required, and the matter was one which must engage the attention of the Government as part of a comprehensive scheme for housing the public servants. Ultimately, and he hoped very soon, the State would obtain that portion of the public buildings used at present

as the general post office, and then arrangements could be made to provide offices suitable for the growing needs of an expanding State like this. He appreciated fully the inconvenience under which the work was being conducted and every effort was being made by him to effect temporarily an improvement, and, as quickly as possible, permanent accommodation would be provided. In regard to the employment of temporary hands, he was at one with those members who urged that temporary hands should not be employed in doing permanent work, but so far as the Lands Titles were concerned—and that was the branch of the Crown Law Department in which temporary hands were most engaged—the rush of work had only come along within the last few months and most of the temporary hands had only recently been engaged. It was, of course, very essential that we should obtain skilled clerical men for that kind of work because it was vastly important work and mistakes might incur serious liability; but the department had experienced some difficulty—a difficulty which, he understood, was shared by the banks and the commercial houses—in obtaining suitable clerical assistance at the present time. He had no knowledge of any farm immigrants having been taken on in the Titles Department. Only yesterday, when discussing with Mr. Burt the matter of obtaining necessary assistance, that officer had informed him that it was a matter of extreme difficulty to obtain suitable clerks with a knowledge of that class of work.

Mr. Troy: Are the immigrants the most suitable?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Assuming that immigrants were employed he supposed that an inquiry would have been made into their qualifications before they were engaged. A head of a department who engaged unqualified men only increased his own responsibility and the work of himself and his staff. He was not aware that immigrants were employed, but he would make inquiries into the matter. As regards the salary of Mr. Harvey, the gentleman referred to by the member for Kanowna, the re-

duction had taken place some time before he (Mr. Nanson) had taken office, but he would point out in regard to all these matters that Parliament in its wisdom had passed a Public Service Act which, whether members believed in it or not, Ministers had to be guided by. To a very large extent the control of the department was taken out of the hands of Ministers and permanent heads, particularly in so far as the salaries of permanent officers were concerned, and placed in the hands of the Commissioner.

Mr. Bath: Ministers do not feel themselves called upon to pay attention to that.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Undoubtedly the Ministers felt called upon to pay very serious attention to any recommendations that the Commissioner might make. Parliament in its wisdom had removed from Ministers and the heads of departments some amount of the control that they used to have. He did not mention that with any idea of reflecting on the Commissioner; his own idea was that that gentleman performed his duties exceedingly well, and considering the difficult nature of those duties, it was much to his credit that he was able to give such a large amount of satisfaction. But where a department had to approach a Commissioner, who had the whole of the staffing of the public service under his control, some time must elapse before he could make requisite inquiries. He could not be switched off the work he was doing in one department in order to attend to something in another department. He might be engaged in connection with organisation in the Lands Department and be called upon by the Lands Titles Office to make an appointment in that branch, and as soon as he was free from the work on which he was engaged he attended to the other. At the present time the Commissioner was engaged in investigating the state of affairs in the Titles Department, and he hoped that some proportion of the temporary hands at present employed would be ultimately placed by the Commissioner on the permanent staff. Without a doubt a large portion of the new busi-

ness coming to the department was of a permanent character, and we could safely increase the permanent staff, and the Public Service Commissioner would, no doubt, after completing his investigation, make a recommendation to the Government to that effect. There was no desire on his (the Minister's) part to escape any responsibility that rightly belonged to him in the administration of the department, but he would have been glad had the Public Service Act not been passed, as he always believed to the fullest extent in Ministerial responsibility. When the Act was passed many people thought it would bring peace, instead of which in some quarters, if we could believe all, there were drawn swords instead of peace. The work might not have proceeded as rapidly in the department as could be wished, but that was because the employees recently taken on, did not possess experience. When this was gained by them the present congestion would be quickly overcome. Those in control of the department were fully determined to keep pace with public convenience. It was some years ago that the Solicitor General was appointed Commissioner of Titles, and there was no one in the public service with a greater capacity than Mr. Sayer. His work in regard to Lands Titles Office was mainly of an advisory character, because the routine and administrative work were more properly placed in the hands of the Registrar of Titles. By the appointment of the Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman a great deal of the work Mr. Sayer formerly did was taken away from him; and this would leave him more time available for his duties as Solicitor General and Commissioner of Titles; but should there be a great expansion of business in the Lands Titles Office, necessitating a reversion to the older and more costly system of having a special Commissioner of Titles, no doubt it would receive attention from the Public Service Commissioner, who, in turn, would make a recommendation to the Government. For the moment, however, he did not think the time had arrived for that. It did not do to have

undue parsimony in a department, but, on the other hand, we should not go to the opposite extreme. He would be sorry if, during his tenure of office, he would undo the undoubtedly good work done by his predecessor in regard to economy of administration without diminishing the efficiency of the department.

Item. Temporary clerical assistance, £1,300.

Mr. PRICE: Last year £300 was voted for this purpose, but the department spent £747, and this year we were asked to spend £1,300. If there was any department where the officers should be permanent it was the Lands Titles Office. Would the Minister explain this item?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The large increase was due to the enormous expansion of work. The work was comparatively little during the early part of the last financial year; but then the Transfer of Land Act was passed, and the registration of leases provided for in that Act led to a large increase of work. Also during the last six months there was a big revival in real estate business in the State. Though last year was a comparatively slack one, there were indications of a large increase. There were 5,065 transfers registered as against 4,960 in the previous year. It was estimated the revenue from the office would be £16,000 this year, and that would probably be exceeded. The estimate last year was £11,800, but the actual revenue of the department was £12,492, being an increase of £400 over that of the previous year. The expenditure last year was £8,600 as against £8,271 for the previous year, and the profit on the year's transactions was £4,200. The first necessity in the department was to suit the public convenience, and with the rush of work that had taken place it was absolutely essential to put on additional clerks. It was an excellent indication of the general activity in business in Western Australia.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Stipendiary Magistracy*, £27,947:

Mr. JOHNSON: This was an opportunity for drawing attention to some of the erratic decisions given by the chief

magistrate in our capital City, and also to the biased decisions given by him. The Attorney General should instruct Mr. Roe to give his judgments irrespective of personal feelings and to see that justice was meted out to all concerned. There was no need to refer to the tramway case, in which Mr. Roe undoubtedly showed vindictiveness in the penalties inflicted; but it was worth mentioning in passing that Mr. Roe, when the case was first presented, raised the point that he could not hear it because it had been previously decided by a judge of the Supreme Court, though afterwards, despite having said he would not be in any way bound by the decision given by the Supreme Court judge, he justified his judgment by reading slab after slab from the decision of the Supreme Court judge, and based his decision on what the Supreme Court judge had said on an *ex parte* application. There was the case in which Mr. Cunningham interfered with one of the tramway workers. This tramway worker was one of the blacklegs and carried a revolver; he was one of the cheekiest upstarts on the trams, a man who went to the extent of making faces at him (Mr. Johnson) in the street, and who tantalised men in the street and was one of the dirtiest mongrels to be met with. This man tantalised Mr. Cunningham, and Mr. Roe fined Mr. Cunningham and said distinctly that he was going to protect the men on the cars irrespective of the justice of the thing. Irrespective of whether Mr. Cunningham had justification or not, Mr. Roe took upon himself to say he was going to protect these tram men and use his position as chief magistrate to protect the tramway company, or to imagine he was going to do so. The position we were in to-day was that the men on the cars were carrying firearms and were permitted and encouraged to do so by the remarks of Mr. Roe. Those men were presuming on their position to-day. Only on the previous day another union man was fined for attacking or threatening to an extent, one of the blacklegs who had been repeatedly tantalising him for weeks past. The union man replied to him in the main street and told him what he thought of him. Sim-

mons took the case before Mr. Roe, encouraged to do so, and glorying in the fact that when he got before Mr. Roe the man whom he had tantalised would suffer.

Mr. Price: Is Mr. Roe under an obligation to the tramway company?

Mr. JOHNSON: Mr. Roe travelled on a free pass. But apart from that he had no right whatever to say from the bench that he was going to victimise a body of men or protect another body of men, irrespective of the relative justice of the case. Cunningham no doubt was tantalised by Baker; Cunningham hit, and was taken to the police court and was fined £10. A day or two after there was another case of assault in a main street in Perth. A coloured man attacked a Britisher, hit him behind the ear, knocked him down in the gutter and then kicked him. The police magistrate stated it was one of the worst cases heard of, and he imposed a fine of £3, yet Cunningham, for interfering with a mongrel who tantalised him and meeting him face to face, a fine of £10 was imposed. Several instances of the inconsistencies of the judgments given by Mr. Roe could be mentioned. This magistrate was not meting out justice and was not doing his duty as the chief police magistrate of the City. A nice example, too, he was setting the other magistrates. It was time that the Government stepped in and saw that the people were protected against a gentleman of this description.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: While he was not bound to impugn the good faith of the member for Guildford, he was certainly not prepared to accept the ex parte statements made by that member with regard to the conduct of cases by the police magistrate of Perth. The hon. member was, of course, entitled to hold what opinions he liked, with regard to the police or other magistrates, but it was to be regretted that the sound Parliamentary rule that protected judges from being criticised in Parliament except on a direct motion did not extend also to magistrates. Mr. Roe had been a magistrate for many years, and when the member for Guildford brought wild and whirling accusations of the kind that he had done against the police magistrate,

these accusations would recoil, in the estimation of the great bulk of the general public, upon he who brought them. They really did not require any serious defence in the Chamber. If these matters were divorced from purely party and political considerations, not a single member in the Chamber would in his calmer moments say that the police magistrate of Perth was not an absolutely upright gentleman. If a case was taken before the magistrate and it was shown that there had been an endeavour upon the part of some person to terrorise other persons, and that charge was sheeted home, undoubtedly the magistrate would be failing in his duty if he did not seriously punish the offender. There was no desire to have in this community any system of terrorism, because a man did not wish to join a union. We wanted liberty of action with regard to such matters. He (the Attorney General) took the strongest exception to the intemperate manner in which the member for Guildford and one or two other members on the Opposition side of the House spoke of persons who refused to become associated with trades unionism. This was a free country, and a man had a perfect right to say whether he would become connected with a union or not. He did not believe for a moment that Mr. Roe had on any occasion made a distinction between persons. If it could be proved that a unionist had been assaulted by a non-unionist of course there should be punishment, or if it were the other way about the punishment would be just as severe. Whether the complainant were a unionist or not had nothing to do with the matter; the courts of law were not concerned. The magistrate had to ascertain what was the evidence, whether an assault had been committed and what were the surrounding circumstances, and then apportion a proper degree of punishment. Mr. Roe had great experience in police court work, and the State was fortunate in having a gentleman of his ability to perform the important work of presiding over the principal police court of the State.

(Mr. Taylor resumed the Chair.)

Mr. TROY: The Attorney General had remarked that it was a pity the same rule which prevented judges from being criticised in Parliament did not apply to magistrates as well. It was to be regretted the rule applied to judges, because they had been guilty of statements which had been totally at variance with the facts, and they should have been censured not by Parliament but by the people. Some of the justices who had been appointed by the Government were not fit to try a blackfellow. Why should such a rule apply to men like Mr. Glick?

The Premier: A very honourable gentleman.

Mr. TROY: The Government dared not put the papers on the Table of the House showing why Mr. Glick was appointed.

Mr. Collier: Why did the Government wipe him out and then reinstate him?

Mr. TROY: Probably the member for York, who was under an obligation to that justice of the peace could explain. These were the men who were appointed to the positions of justices, were struck off later on, and because the Ministry were approached by those who were under an obligation to these people, they were then re-appointed. These were the men who were entrusted with the liberties of the people in the country.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was not in order in discussing honorary justices.

Mr. TROY: With regard to Mr. Roe and his humanity, that gentleman had sentenced people, first offenders, to six months imprisonment and put them in a criminal environment, which would do them an injury for the remainder of their lives. During the course of the recent tramway trouble in Perth this magistrate was prejudiced with regard to men who were out against the tramway company. The member for Guildford, who was fined by this gentleman, was only the paid secretary of the institution; he merely carried out their will

just as the Premier carried out the will of the employers when he appeared before the arbitration court and urged that the men should not get more than 6s. per day.

The Premier: Oh, ring off.

Mr. TROY: The Premier excused that conduct on the ground that he was a paid agent.

The Premier: What has that to do with this vote.

Mr. TROY: The member for Guildford merely carried out the instructions of his union and yet the magistrate treated him as the very worst offender, and imposed a penalty entirely out of all reason. Throughout that trouble Mr. Roe went out of his way to encourage the blacklegs in doing unmanly things, and said they were not blacklegs. But he (Mr. Troy) declared that they were blacklegs, and the lowest class of men who had ever encumbered the earth. If a motion were carried to reduce Mr. Roe's salary and someone else took the position at the reduced salary, Mr. Roe would certainly look upon that man as a blackleg. Mr. Roe was biased because he was under an obligation to the tramway company, from whom he accepted a free pass to ride from the police court to the Weld Club. No magistrate holding the balance between the people should be under an obligation to anybody. Certainly Mr. Roe was not setting a good example in accepting a free pass from the tramway company, and subsequently adjudicating on cases in which that company was concerned. During the whole of the recent trouble between the tramway company and their employees, Mr. Roe's decisions, so far as they affected the men alleged to be on strike, were entirely out of all reason, and were vicious and arbitrary. It was impossible to avoid thinking that Mr. Roe's manifest sympathy with the tramway company was due to the fact that he was under an obligation to that body. If this sort of thing were allowed to continue we should have all our public servants in the pay of private corporations. To accept a free pass was to accept payment in kind instead of in money, and what was there to prevent another public

servant from accepting a sum of money from an outside corporation? He knew of magistrates, wardens on the goldfields, who during the whole of their official life had stoutly refused to accept even a specimen from a prospector. That was the policy all men in a judicial capacity should follow; but the police magistrate of Perth was prepared to accept bribes in the shape of concessions from private corporations. It was a most vicious system, and could not be too strongly condemned. Again, Mr. Roe had gone out of his way to make insulting reflections upon the jury system, for he had said, "I know that juries do return most shocking and scandalous verdicts." Surely it was not Mr. Roe's business to say this. Mr. Roe was one of those persons members were told they should not criticise. This was the only place in which we could criticise them, and if they were prepared to attack institutions dear to the hearts of the people, he, for one, was at liberty to attack them in return. His duty as a representative of the people was to insist on the purity of our judicial life, and he was going to insist upon it. He had in mind one or two cases in which these same magistrates had imposed harsh and cruel sentences for minor offences, while they had allowed to go almost scot free brutes making vicious attacks on little girls. The very man who considered it an atrocious crime to hoot a blackleg considered it a minor offence for a ruffian to attack the virtue of young children—and these were the men we were told we should be proud of. For his part he was inclined to think these magistrates still adhered to the opinions they had gained when the State was a penal settlement. Invariably they had a lenient eye for attacks on the virtue of children, but when a man resented an attack upon himself and his livelihood he was put down as a villain of the deepest dye, and was compelled to pay the highest penalty the law allowed.

Mr. FOULKES: It was a pity the hon. member had thought it necessary to discuss the decisions given by the police magistrate of Perth. It was recognised that Mr. Roe's decisions had not fallen in with the

wishes of some hon. members on the Opposition side. Mr. Roe's chief responsibility was to do justice between man and man, and he (Mr. Foulkes) was convinced that Mr. Roe tried to act up to that responsibility. If we required magistrates to hold specific opinions in regard to certain companies and bodies of men, it would be necessary to adopt the American system of election of magistrates, and alter our Constitution accordingly. It was a wrong thing to take exception to a decision given by any magistrate who had the experience acquired by Mr. Roe, and who admittedly gave his decisions in good faith. There had been times when he (Mr. Foulkes) did not see eye to eye with the police magistrates of Perth and of Fremantle in regard to offences under the liquor laws, but he had never attacked those magistrates because of that divergence of view. Recently he had called attention to certain decisions given by various magistrates where charges had been brought against persons for assaulting children. In doing so he had not attacked the integrity of those magistrates in the manner in which Mr. Roe's integrity had been attacked this afternoon. Even if Mr. Roe had accepted a free pass from the tramway company it was absurd to suppose that that fact had in any way impaired his sense of duty. On the 13th of December, 1907, a debate had taken place in the House in regard to the Nedlands Park tramway. The member for Mount Margaret had moved an amendment which was to provide that every member of the West Australian Parliament should be entitled to travel free of charge on all cars, special or non-special, on any journey over any part of the whole of the tramway constructed under the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. Bath: Now look at the division list.

Mr. FOULKES: There had been no division. After the member for Mount Margaret had moved that amendment the Premier had interjected, "what about the wives of members of Parliament?" and Mr. Taylor had replied that the wives of members of Parliament could not travel free on Government railways, and that when anything went wrong with such a

concession and the public or employees felt aggrieved, members of Parliament were immediately asked to visit the scene, and should therefore be allowed to travel free. Then Mr. Seaddan had supported the motion, but had thought that owing to the state of the mover's health the words "every member" should be struck out and "the member for Mount Margaret" inserted. The motion had been passed and the clause added.

Mr. Collier: To be fair to the member for Mount Margaret you ought to state that the debate on that Bill was a stonewalling debate.

Mr. FOULKES: Doubtless when Mr. Roe accepted the pass he had in mind the fact that the heads of departments were in the habit of receiving free passes from the tramway company. He was sure, however, that the acceptance of the pass would in no way affect that gentleman's decision. ?

Item, Clerks of Court, £8,747.

Mr. HUDSON: In making reference on the previous evening to the allowances to officers engaged at Southern Cross he had stated that no overtime was paid, but having been informed that that was not entirely correct, he hastened to withdraw the statement. The point he desired to make was that although they had been paid the regulation allowances they had not been paid that liberal allowance which their work warranted. He urged upon the Attorney General the necessity for making some special allowance for the arduous work they performed under difficult and very trying conditions. In regard to the item he would like the Attorney General to inform the Committee when it was intended that the clerks of court on the goldfields should have their appeals against the classifications heard. It seemed to be a hardship on the goldfields officers that they should have been classified as they had been, and, in instances which he knew of personally, without any inspection by the Commissioner of their work or the conditions under which they had to perform their duties. In some cases appeals had been lodged but had never been heard, and it was time

that something was done in the direction of allowing these people to have their cases dealt with. Only the minimum salary was being paid in some cases, but he knew of instances where the maximum ought to be paid, not because the duties as clerks of court alone demanded it, but because the officers had so many other duties to perform as mining registrars, registrars of births and deaths, electoral registrars, etcetera.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There was no desire on the part of the department to block the appeals at all, and he would ask the Public Service Commissioner whether it would be possible to expedite the hearing of appeals.

Item, Law Books, £250.

Mr. PRICE: Last year £150 had been voted for law books and only £68 had been expended, whilst this year the Committee were asked to vote £250. Surely the increase of business did not warrant that increase in the purchase of books, which, he understood, were used mostly by impecunious members of the legal profession. The amount seemed large in view of the fact that only £68 was expended last year.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: During the last couple of years, owing to the condition of the public finances, there had been an endeavour to keep expenditure down in every possible way, and even small items had been affected; consequently, a less amount had been expended on law books than the Government would wish to expend in better times. Now the vote was being brought back to its former proportions, and he had no doubt that the full amount would be expended.

Mr. HUDSON: These books were not used by impecunious members of the legal profession. They were books purchased for clerks of courts and magistrates, and the amount was not excessive. It was desirable that provision should be made for magistrates in country districts to have books which contained decisions for their guidance.

Mr. PRICE: There was no real objection to the amount, but it had seemed desirable that the increase should be explained.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Supreme Court*, £14,590:

Mr. HUDSON: There were again extraordinary increases to men who were drawing large salaries, and he wanted to enter his protest. The two most important increases in salaries were £100 to an officer already drawing £700, and another £100 to a man who was drawing £450, but the men who were doing the bulk of the work in the Supreme Court were not getting the consideration that was due to them. One man who drew £300 a year after 16 or 17 years' service was getting a paltry increase of £5 whilst the man who drew £700 had his salary raised by £100. He was not discussing the merits of the different men, but he wished to show the disparity in the treatment meted out to different officers.

Mr. Butcher: What are the names of the officers?

Mr. HUDSON: One was the Master of the Supreme Court, Mr. Moseley, who was receiving an increase of £100 and the other was the Official Receiver who was to have a similar advance. One of the principal subordinate officers was getting merely an increase of £10, the next in charge an increase of £5, and still another an increase of £4. These advances were altogether out of proportion to the increases given to the heads of the department, and he would like to have an explanation from the Attorney General.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Master of the Supreme Court had been in the service for over 29½ years. Some years ago he had been classified at a salary of £800 and within a very short time he would be due for retirement. It was to be assumed that when an officer was classified at a fixed salary it was intended that before he retired he should reach his maximum. It was not intended that immediately the classification was made he should attain to that maximum, but if he was to receive it at all it should be before he reached the age of compulsory retirement.

Mr. HUDSON: I am not objecting to the man or to the amount. I am saying that other officers are being ill-treated while he is being specially favoured.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The salaries paid to the Master of the Su-

preme Court and to the other officers under him were fixed under the Public Service Act. Some short time ago the work of classifying and fixing the salaries to be paid to members of the public service had been undertaken. Within the last 12 months the Government had arranged that every officer in the public service should receive at least the minimum salary attached to the class to which he belonged; but this year, owing to the greater financial prosperity in the State, in almost every case the Government were able to give to every officer an increase representing a step of one grade in the class to which he belonged. The Master of the Supreme Court for a long time past had been receiving a salary below that fixed for the office by the Public Service Commissioner. In fact, a Public Service Commission, which sat years ago, recommended that he should receive £800 or more a year; and judge after judge and Attorney General after Attorney General had called attention to the case of this officer. If juniors were not receiving salaries adequate to their positions, at least they were receiving the salaries fixed for their positions by the Public Service Commissioner, and if they were dissatisfied they could have appealed. When any increases were brought about the system was for the permanent head of the department to go into the matter with the Ministerial head. A list was prepared showing the suggested increases for each individual officer. These increases were sent on to the Public Service Commissioner, and then the matter was gone into between the Public Service Commissioner and the departmental heads, and finally the Public Service Commissioner made a recommendation, which was either accepted or rejected by the Government. No one claimed infallibility, yet one could claim very careful attention was given to the subject, and the Public Service Commissioner was probably in a better position to judge the relative claims of civil servants than hon. members. The Master of the Supreme Court was on the eve of retirement after a long and honourable career, and surely it was right that during the last few years he should receive

the salary at which his office was classified.

Vote put and passed.

(*Mr. Brown took the Chair.*)

Department of Education (Hon. J. L. Nanson, Minister).

Vote—*Education*, £200,923:

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. L. Nanson): In introducing the Estimates of the Education Department I may point out that they show an increase as compared with the Estimates for the financial year 1909-10 of £13,879, and they exceed the actual expenditure of the last financial year by £17,000. The principal increases are—item 9, the item from which teachers' salaries are paid, where the increase is £7,000 odd, and item 22, the item for the salaries for technical and continuation schools, where there is an increase of nearly £4,000, and the item for incidentals shows an increase of nearly £900. There are also new items, 18 and 36, of £1,300 and £500 respectively for the Modern School. The main item, that for salaries of teachers, shows a considerable increase, accounted for partly by the continued enrolment in the numbers in our schools, indicating a gradual increase in attendance, and partly by the necessity for making provision for the increments secured to teachers by regulation. The increase in the technical schools' vote is largely due to the provision the department are making for securing in our schools throughout the educational system what is called the system of continuation classes. In these classes, which we are starting at the larger schools, provision is being made to give education to scholars between the ages of 14 and 18 years. Primary education, the education that is by law made compulsory, comes to an end when the child reaches the age of 14. I think most hon. members will agree with me that it seems almost a waste of the effort made in educating children up to the age of 14, and of the money spent upon it, if, when the children reach that age, all further effort should cease and their education in the schools and classes come to an end. In all modern countries

the importance of bridging over the period between early youth, between the age of 14 and the age of budding manhood, has been recognised, and we are only following in the footsteps of countries progressive in matters of education in inaugurating this system of continuation classes. My only regret is that we are not able during the current financial year to extend the system further than we are doing, but at any rate we are making a substantial start, and when these classes have got into working order and the good work they are capable of doing is realised, it will be no doubt a matter for the consideration of Parliament whether we should not extend the age at which compulsory education should cease. That, however, is a matter for future consideration. One important development in the educational work of the department during this year is the opening of the Perth Modern School. The inauguration of that school is due to my predecessor in office, the present Premier, and I can, therefore, claim no part in nor any credit for the idea, nor for the bringing of the idea into practical form; but I may say that, although at the time the proposal was put forward it met with a considerable amount of opposition, here, again, as in regard to continuation classes, we are only following the footsteps of countries progressive in educational matters. This new Modern School, which will open its doors for pupils next month, will provide for a very great want in the community. It will specially devote itself to the teaching of science and modern subjects, and every effort will be made to ascertain what walk of life the pupils intend to enter upon, whether commercial, agricultural, mining, or any other calling. So far as it is possible in a school of that kind, any bias given to the pupils' education will be influenced by the calling which it is proposed they shall ultimately adopt; and the requirements of future agriculturists, as well as of those who intend to follow mining pursuits, will be carefully considered. As regards technical education, it is a gratifying circumstance that the development of that class of education in

this State, has immediately appealed to the community, and that the classes have been utilised to a considerable extent. So far as I have been able to judge during the short time I have been in charge of the Education Department, there is a very gratifying demand in every part of the State for the advantages these technical classes offer, and the department have no reason to complain that when they have opened classes they are not fully taken advantage of. If there is ground for complaint, it is rather that we have not supplied as many classes as one would wish to do; but, of course, whatever one's educational ambitions may be, we are to a great extent to be governed by financial considerations; and although the Treasury have been liberal with us this year in allowing a very considerable augmentation in our vote as compared with last year, amounting to over £17,000, still, if the money were available, as I hope it will be available to a very great extent next year, no doubt we could spend it to the very best advantage of the community. As showing the acceptance of this form of education in technical schools, the fees from pupils have risen from £3,053 to £4,520. When we remember that the Perth Technical School, the first of these schools, begun only some 10 years ago with 50 students, and at the end of 1909 there were 1,100 students, and at the end of 1910 the attendance had increased to 1,500, I think hon. members will realise that the work we are doing in this direction is fulfilling a very healthy and very commendable public demand. With regard to the staff of the Modern School, as far as possible every effort has been made to fill the appointments from officers already in the service of the department. The first appointment to the position of headmaster was that of a gentleman possessing very high credentials from South Australia, and I personally regret very much that, after being appointed, he asked to be relieved of the position because he had been offered a better position in South Australia. We would, I feel convinced, have obtained for the position one of the very best men in the whole of Australasia if we had

obtained the services of that particular gentleman; but failing him, I am indeed pleased to feel that the candidates who came next in order after him were in both cases teachers in the employ of the department. The officer who came next to Mr. Jolly in the opinion of the Inspector General of Schools and myself was Mr. Clubb, who at one time was headmaster of the James-street school and conducted it, I understand, in an extremely able manner, and who afterwards became an inspector of the Education Department. Unfortunately after he was appointed he suffered from a nervous breakdown and had to resign. The gentleman next in order was Mr. Brown who had for some years been master of the Normal school, and he possessed very high qualifications. He was appointed headmaster of the Modern school, and it is gratifying to know that we have in the State officers like this gentleman, who during the time he has been engaged in teaching has also not disdained to improve his own knowledge, because he has attended classes at the technical school and this year obtained a first-class pass and honours in mathematics and obtained the B.Sc. degree, which is, of course, exceedingly gratifying to him. We propose during the year, in furtherance of our project to establish these continuation schools, to erect science rooms at the schools in the larger centres of population. I may mention also that there is to be held in London in April of next year an Imperial conference on education, and it has been decided by the Government after careful consideration to send the Inspector General of Schools to London for the purpose of attending this conference, and the opportunity will also be taken of the occasion by the Inspector General to bring himself up to date with educational methods in the United Kingdom and the continent of Europe, and if time will permit—although I am very doubtful on that point—in Canada and in the United States. The conference to be held in London in April is of a very important nature, and it is, in a sense, a continuation of a conference held in London in

1907. The subjects that will be discussed include a general interchange of information, exchange of publications, special exchange of intelligence and advice, the scheme of exchange of teachers between English and French schools, the exchange of officials, exhibitions and general educational problems. It is a good many years, some nine years now, since the Inspector General has had an opportunity of bringing himself into close touch with educational methods elsewhere, and I think hon. members will agree with me it is necessary, if the State educational system is to continue to uphold that deservedly high reputation which it has gained during the last 10 years or so, that the expert permanent head of the department should be given reasonable opportunity of keeping in touch with modern requirements. In adopting the course of sending the Inspector General away for a few months we are following the procedure which has been adopted by Victoria, who sent their Director of Education away, and by New South Wales who also sent their permanent head of the department, and in both of those cases the result has been such as to more than compensate those States. In showing that our action is not solitary I may mention that New South Wales is participating in this conference, and probably arrangements will be made for the Inspector General of Schools to travel and combine his investigations with those of the officer from New South Wales, and value will be added by the notes which the officers will be able to compare. I have no doubt, although I cannot say from actual knowledge at the present time, that most, if not all, of the Australian States will be represented at this particular conference of expert educational representatives drawn from all parts of the Empire. I do not know that I need detain hon. members at any greater length. No doubt there are subjects upon which they will require information, and I shall have the opportunity later on, after they have expressed their views, of replying.

Mr. BATH: The Minister in introducing this part of the Estimates refer-

red to the fact that there was a substantial increase in the vote provided in comparison with that of the previous year, and hon. members on this occasion, as in the past, were not likely to begrudge that increased expenditure for the education of the children of the State, recognising if facilities were to be provided for those areas in the back country, mining, agricultural, and timber districts, which were being opened up, we should be prepared for an increased vote as each year passed. At the same time while there were a few who were likely to begrudge the expenditure it was as well for hon. members to examine the method of that expenditure in order to secure the best results for the money invested. There were several directions in which economy could be effected without in any way impairing the efficiency of the system, and at the same time providing money for much needed extension, particularly in those districts which were not yet provided with school facilities and also in the direction of providing more adequate remuneration for those who were in charge of our country schools. Western Australia had every reason to be proud of its education system, and the progress which was still going on, but one would be lacking in duty if, holding opinions as to the reforms which could be effected, he did not utter them. In the first place, there was undoubtedly overlapping in the scholastic institutions, and there was not that connecting link which had become an accepted principle in all those countries where education was on a high plane, and although one of the institutions which we had and which, in a large measure, had overlapped others, was being dispensed with, in view of the establishment of the modern school, there was room for reform. We found that the normal school and the training college at Claremont had practically carried students over the same ground, instead of the normal school being an institution which would carry those taking up the teaching profession to a certain stage and passing them on to the train-

ing college. The principal of the training college and his staff had been called upon to do a great deal of unnecessary work in the way of training, independently altogether of that professional training of school teachers which should be the chief work of the training college. He understood that this training of pupil teachers from primary schools was to be carried on in the secondary schools or modern schools, as they were called, and from there those who were taking up the teaching profession would be carried on to the training college. In another respect there was room for considerable reform, and that was in the provision of what might be termed the *quasi* secondary training in the James Street school. We had established modern schools for secondary education, and at the same time we had a school like that at James Street, which was undoubtedly crowded with scholars from schools of the metropolitan and the suburban areas. If we were to provide for the scholars to be drafted back to those centres it would be possible to utilise the James Street school as a purely secondary school, and the use of James Street as a secondary school purely and simply would mean that it would be possible to utilise that building erected for the modern school as a building in which the university could be carried on until we were prepared to expend the necessary money in erecting adequate buildings for that university. This was a matter upon which he felt strongly, and he regretted there had been no mention in the Minister's speech as to the intentions of the Government with regard to the establishment of a university. True, we had a Bill before us providing for the erection of a university, but that only provided in the various clauses that certain steps might be taken, but what was necessary and what we should have had from the Minister was a declaration not only as to the intention of the Government to establish a university, but also as to the lines upon which it was to be established, and whether the recommendations of the Royal Commission with regard to free training, and what was a necessary corol-

lary, free training in the technical and secondary schools was to be the policy of the Government. Members should know that, because it would have a bearing on the subject when the University Bill was being discussed. In another direction we could effect economy; we should provide for greater continuity in the system of training and at the same time economise in the expenditure. At the present time in nearly all the metropolitan and suburban schools there were separate establishments for the seniors and juniors entirely independent of each other, with head teachers over each. While we should pay some attention and give adequate scope to the teachers in our Education Department to exercise their individuality in the training of children there should be the one policy running right through, the policy which set out what each particular branch of the Education Department was called to perform, and when that work was allotted, to leave it to the principal and his staff to carry out that work in the best possible manner. As a matter of fact the heads of these institutions were sometimes in antagonism, and the work of the junior school did not lead naturally into that of the senior division; nor was it ever likely to do so until we had the head teachers of these schools in charge of the whole establishment, senior and junior. That would mean the effecting of economy, and would set free a sum of money which could be utilised first in the provision of better salaries for the teachers in the out-back schools, and in the second place for the extension of the system. Another matter to be referred to was the policy of the Government in regard to the making of a temporary appointment, and later on calling for applications for the permanent appointment, thus in a measure giving the person occupying the temporary appointment a lien on the position. For these positions all eligible should have a fair chance, and no one should be given an advantage by being placed in the temporary appointment before applications were called for the permanent position. The results of the existing system could

easily be avoided by the exercise of a little foresight on the part of officers of the department. The same remarks applied to an appointment to the position of a junior inspector, which was afterwards converted into that of an advisory teacher owing to some difficulty between the Public Service Commissioner and the Education Department.

The Minister for Education: I do not think there has been any conflict between the Public Service Commissioner and the Education Department.

Mr. BATH: As a matter of fact there had been, and the person who secured the appointment held the lowest grade certificate, while unsuccessful applicants were in possession of the highest grade certificates. Yet presumably the department had granted those certificates as a measure of the scholastic and professional capabilities of those in its employ, notwithstanding which the applicant holding the lowest grade certificate had been appointed to the position. It was most discouraging to those who had worked hard in order to secure the higher grade certificates to see an applicant holding the lowest grade certificate appointed over their heads to a more lucrative position. In regard to the position of those called upon to take up posts in the smaller country schools in out-back districts, he recognised there were great difficulties to contend with, difficulties in the way of providing school accommodation, and in the way of securing suitable persons with the necessary qualifications to take up the work in those remote districts. Still an effort should be made to do something better than that sufficed in the past. If we were to secure a body of contented people to carry on the developmental work of the State, we must try to give them all reasonable facilities for the education of their children. The lack of proper educational facilities in some of the out-back districts was the greatest stumbling block in the way of those whose lot had been cast in those districts. No member of the House would begrudge a special vote for the provision of better educational facilities in these out-back districts, whether mining or agricultural, nor would the people of Western Aus-

tralia as a whole offer any objection to the increased expenditure. Therefore no plea of expense should prevent the Government from dealing with this question more effectively than had been done in the past. In regard to the establishment of the modern school, it seemed incomprehensible why the department should have selected a name of so little significance. Any up-to-date primary or cookery school was a modern school; the term carried no significance at all.

The Minister for Education: It is a well established term in educational circles.

Mr. BATH: The Minister could not point to any institution in any country in the world where educational development had made any strides and where a secondary school was given such a title. Surely a more appropriate name could have been found, one which would have carried significance to the whole of the educational world. The fact remained that it was a secondary school, and hon. members would agree that it represented a step in the right direction. However, we should not stop there. There was no reason why, for instance, pupils on the goldfields should be compelled to come to Perth to attend the school, a journey involving expense and separation from their parents. A similar institution should be established on the goldfields, and he would like to see lesser institutions of a similar kind but of somewhat different trend established in the agricultural centres where they would do much in inculcating the principles of scientific agriculture. He was glad to hear from the Minister that so much success had attended the establishment of technical schools. He believed that if the system was still further extended we would find the people ready to support it. It was necessary that the parents of children should be afforded some information as to what our Education Department was doing. In this regard there was room for much propaganda work by the department with a view to awakening public interest in the carrying on of our educational work.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It was to be regretted that so few members were present in the Chamber to hear a discussion of

such importance. The member for Brown Hill took a very keen interest in this particular department, and perhaps if that hon. member's views were given effect to, the department would rapidly show a considerable advance on its present condition. He (Mr. O'Loughlen) felt it his duty to plead for more educational facilities for country districts. Many new districts were being opened up which had not the slightest recognition in this respect, and although there were difficulties in the way he believed more progress should be made. One feature that caused dissatisfaction and annoyance to country teachers was that sufficient encouragement was not given to the demonstrating to the children the necessity for securing practical education on agricultural matters. He understood that several country schools were supplied with the necessary tools for garden purposes; but in many instances the schools were located on such barren soil that it was almost impossible to give to the children any practical demonstrations of the cultivation of plant life.

The Minister for Education: We have increased the quantity of tools supplied.

MR. O'LOUGHLEN: That might be so, but the feature that gave a good deal of dissatisfaction was that the quality of the tools was far from being good. He had heard complaints from various centres, and he believed that the inferior quality of the tools was causing annoyance to the teachers who had to use them, and consequently they were unable to show good results. Again, they had received no thanks from the Agricultural Department for any work they had done in this direction, but now, when the schools were able to show some advance in that direction, the Agricultural Department was prepared to take all the credit for that advance. He believed that it was a good policy to impart to the rising generation some knowledge of the principles to be applied in what would in time be the most important industry in this State, that of agriculture. When they were growing up, when their minds were plastic and more receptive to the essentials of sound training, that was the time to educate them in that direction. Such training had

been given in several schools, but no recognition had been given to it by the Agricultural Department until quite recently. He hoped that in future the Agricultural Department would show more interest in this work by selecting better localities wherever possible, and providing the teachers and scholars with a better class of tools. Another matter to which he desired to draw attention was the placing of the contract yearly for the doing up of the tools used by the Education Department. That was a fairly big work, when the saws used for fretwork in the big schools throughout the State were taken into consideration. These big schools used a considerable number of tools, and the practice in the past had been to have these tools put in order by a firm in Perth who had always carried out that work satisfactorily and well. The price had never been disputed, but when some time ago an offer was received by the department to do up the tools at a less rate, the department accepted that offer without giving the former contractor an opportunity of tendering. That firm had always given satisfaction in the past and had a reputation in the State which had been damaged by the fact of the whole of the work of the Education Department being taken out of their hands. He hoped that in future tenders would be called for that work, and whoever would do it most economically and give satisfaction as well, should get the contract. The Minister should also take note of the disabilities under which teachers laboured in Western Australia—and the disabilities were not confined to Western Australia. Under the present conditions it was absolutely impossible for a teacher in any part of the State to aspire to a public position outside the department. The State should not keep back any man, no matter where he might be engaged, but the position to-day was that if the people in any locality saw a brilliant man and asked him to contest a public position, he could not do it without losing all the privileges he had accumulated after service in the department for ten or fifteen years. No harm would be done by doing those men the common justice of preserving to them

the privileges which they had earned. The member for Brown Hill had stated that greater consideration should be given to the people in the country districts. Throughout the agricultural and timber districts there had been a great necessity during recent times for the establishment of additional schools. He had obtained four new schools during the last 18 months and at the present time he required four more, one of which had been hanging fire for over 12 months. He believed that it was not the fault of the Minister for Education on this occasion, but that the matter had gone forward to the Works Department.

The Minister for Education: What school is that?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Marrinup. For over 12 months the people had been asking for a school there and in the meantime the children were practically running wild. The same conditions applied in many other districts. The district which he represented was in urgent need of these four schools and the Minister had promised him some seven weeks ago that the schools would be opened after the holidays, but letters received from the various centres informed him that not the slightest attempt had been made to prepare these structures for the opening of the schools, notwithstanding that this could be done cheaply in the timber districts because of the abundance of building material. He hoped that these schools would be shortly established by the Works Department and teachers sent to conduct them. The schools he referred to were tent schools, but so far they had not turned out well. The greatest drawback to the success of the schools in country districts, which meant so much to the future of the men and women in this State, was the lack of inducement given to the teachers. He had in mind teachers in his own district who, though unclassified, were teaching from 30 to 35 scholars, and they were receiving a salary of £100 a year. In some cases they were married men, and to his mind it was impossible for them to have their mind free of other worries and make a success of their teaching. On such a remuneration as that it was

not to be expected that the department could get good teachers and good results.

The Minister for Education: When they qualify they will get increases.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: That was so, but he would like the Minister to take into consideration the difficulty which these men had in qualifying. Some of them were engaged at what were known as bush landings; from time to time the landings were shifted and the parents and the schools and the children were shifted with them. This happened every few months and there were many difficulties when the children were shifted and the school was not, and the teacher had to walk several miles to give his instruction, with the result that it was almost impossible for him to carry on his duties. In many cases the department had found it impossible to carry on these schools, and in one or two instances teachers had had to conduct their classes in boarding houses where it was impossible to even hear themselves speak at times. These men had applied themselves to their studies and had brushed up their intellects as well as they could, but he understood that some of them, whilst passing in certain subjects had failed in others, at the departmental examinations held in Perth recently. Surely some consideration should be given to these men on account of their uncongenial surroundings and the difficulties they had to contend against in improving themselves, and even if they were not qualified, the minimum salary which they received should be at least a living wage. When the State was asking men to go into the bush and teach under very great disabilities, it should not pay them less than £2 a week. He thought he could appeal with confidence to the Minister on that subject. The present rate of pay was scandalous and he did not anticipate any good results from such a system.

Mr. Hudson: New South Wales has increased the minimum.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: In New South Wales the minimum had been increased he understood to £110, but even £110 in New South Wales was equal to probably £150 in this State. Certainly some consideration should be given by the Edu-

cation Department to this matter, and regard should be had to the difficulties under which these teachers laboured in trying to carry on their teaching at that salary, walking some miles to night classes in order to earn a little extra money, and also trying to find time to qualify themselves for higher grade positions. He trusted that the Minister would remind the Works Department that these four schools for which he had asked in his own district were absolutely essential. There was nothing so much wrapped up with the future welfare of the country as the provision of educational facilities. He supposed that the object of all members was to see that if possible their children and relatives and the children of the State at large received a better education than it had been possible for them to obtain in their youth. That being the case, he hoped that the Works Department would proceed with the erection of these schools and that good teachers would be provided and properly remunerated, so that they might put heart and enthusiasm into their efforts and so turn out a good product for the State.

Mr. JACOBY: With the request made by the member for Forrest that some greater consideration should be given to the need of educational facilities at the timber mills, he was very much in sympathy. He had had an opportunity of seeing how difficult it was for people engaged in that industry to get that education for their children which they had a right to expect from the State. It had to be recognised that the State had to make special provision in connection with this industry, but he had known of instances where the department had insisted on the people concerned finding a large portion of the money necessary to erect a school. These men were engaged in producing the wealth of the country and one could easily recognise that they would feel exasperated when they saw abundant facilities, even more than were necessary, provided for the people in the city and more settled districts, whilst those working in the scattered districts under very disadvantageous conditions had to put

their hands in their pockets to pay for the education of their children. The department should devise some special means of providing educational conveniences in these timber districts, and there was a moral obligation on the State to afford education to the children in these districts just as much as in other districts, even though the expense should be greater.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The expense is not greater.

Mr. JACOBY: The Minister had all along been an advocate of the recognition of the claims of people who lived in the back portions of the State, and now he had become head of the department, it was to be hoped that he was not going to allow other considerations to interfere with his convictions in that respect. The provision of education facilities and surety of medical comforts were the two principal things required by the people in the back country. They were the wealth producers of the State and they deserved consideration even before the people in the more settled districts. He also agreed that every endeavour should be made by the department to make the position of the teacher attractive from a financial point of view and to keep good men in the service. The work of teaching was most arduous and only comparatively few people were qualified for it. There had been grievances in this department in the past, and he hoped that the Minister would recognise that if he was to have a high standard of efficiency in the department, it would be necessary for him to find proper remuneration for those employed in it. One other important matter was the question of the school hours in infant schools. Some alteration should be made in the hours of attendance during February and March, practically the most trying months of the summer. A move in this direction would be a considerable boon to the children. A gentleman in a position to express an authoritative opinion about this said that if the children attended from 8.30 a.m. to 1 p.m., with a short interval for recess, there would only be half an hour lost on the regular hours, and very little actual work would

be lost, because during the last hour in the afternoon the little ones became so listless and sleepy. This gentleman said that many of the children who went home for lunch during these months did not return in the afternoon, that if the hours were fixed as proposed a hot walk home at noon would be saved where children went home for lunch, and that it would be better for most of these children if they were employed during the hour and a half allowed for lunch and allowed to be free for the afternoon. This was a matter the Minister might take into consideration. We could all join heartily in congratulating the department on the excellent standard maintained in educating our children. Despite many difficulties we could feel proud of the fact that our standard of education was second to none in the world. That standard would assuredly be well maintained, and we could all be pleased at the efforts put forth by the officers of the department.

(Mr. Taylor resumed the Chair.)

Mr. PRICE: While endorsing the remarks of the member for Swan in regard to the good work done by the department, latterly there was creeping into the administration of the department a most pernicious practice that must inevitably lead to very serious trouble. Considerable dissatisfaction arose in connection with recent appointments, and the Minister's replies to questions asked in the House upon this subject conveyed their own condemnation of the conduct of the department. Some time ago applications were called for the appointment of an acting inspector, and an officer of the department of the lowest grade almost in the department was appointed. In other words, one who had no qualifications by examination, such as were possessed by the bulk of the other applicants for the position, received the appointment and was placed in a position of control over teachers who had spent many years in studying and in passing the examinations necessary to qualify them for the positions they occupied. When the department realised that they had appointed a class C teacher

over the heads of teachers holding class A certificates, and when they found that two of the other men resented this undue influence being used in the interest of one individual, they created two special positions for these two specially dissatisfied individuals, Messrs. Hamilton and Milligan, and appointed them as organising teachers, giving them the salary of £270, which was the salary fixed for the position of acting inspector. There was no reason for complaint against the salary, but these officers were previously carrying out the same duties, and were not granted any increase of salary until Mr. Murdoch was appointed over their heads as acting inspector.

The Minister for Education: It was intended to grant it.

Mr. PRICE: But would it have been granted had they not resented the appointment of Mr. Murdoch as acting inspector?

The Minister for Education: Yes.

Mr. PRICE: If they were carrying out the duties previously why were they not allowed the extra salary? Why should the department wait until these officers resented the department breaking the regulation by appointing Mr. Murdoch? On the 20th December last the Minister distinctly stated that there was no alteration in the duties performed by Messrs. Hamilton and Milligan.

The Minister for Education: Not in nature; but like many people, unfortunately, they had to wait for an increase of salary.

Mr. PRICE: It was a most remarkable coincidence that the granting of their increase of salary was simultaneous with their dissatisfaction at the appointment of Mr. Murdoch to the position of acting inspector.

The Minister for Education: A happy coincidence.

Mr. PRICE: Happy for the teachers, but most unhappy for the administration of the department, showing that the officers of the department could not get justice until they showed fight. We had it on the admission of the Minister that they got their extra salary immediately they showed they were dissatisfied. Steps

should be taken to secure from the Agricultural Department seeds for the small experimental plots in connection with the tuition of children in agricultural pursuits. Many of these plots were conducted at the country schools at the expense of the parents of the children. There was no objection to the parents who were able to pay supporting the carrying out of these experimental plots, but it bore very hardly upon the poorer section of the community.

Mr. George: I suppose it is not 6d. per head.

Mr. PRICE: It would be a simple matter to apply to the Agricultural Department to aid in the direction indicated. A serious matter for complaint was in connection with sending female teachers into the country districts. A female teacher was sent to Narrikup on the Great Southern Railway. The school house was two miles away in the bush. The teacher arrived at the station at 10 o'clock at night. She had never previously been in the country, but she was told before she left Perth that she would be met at the station by someone who would provide accommodation for the night. There was no railway officer in charge of the station, and when the teacher got off the train she found herself alone in the bush, the nearest house being a fettler's house. She applied at the fettler's house, but could not be provided with accommodation, so she had to spend the night in an open goods shed on the station. Subsequently, as a favour, she was accommodated by a settler about a mile from the school. Applications were repeatedly made to have a room provided at the school, but nothing was done in this direction. When female teachers were sent out to the country the department should consider it a portion of their duty to see that conveniences were made available so that the teachers would not be left to spend, as in this instance, the night in an open shed on the railway line, with no other accommodation available. No one could attempt to justify such treatment as that to our female teachers. In this case, perhaps, there was some oversight on the

part of those responsible for sending the teacher out. It was to be hoped that the matters which had been brought forward would receive the consideration of the Minister in charge of the department and that things would run more smoothly there, and that the officers in the department would feel assured that having passed their examinations and qualified for higher positions in the service they would have a fair opportunity of obtaining them, and not find others who were not qualified placed over their heads and receiving salaries which they had qualified themselves to receive.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:

With regard to the last matter referred to by the member for Albany concerning the experience of the female teacher, inquiries would be made. He felt sure that there was no fault as far as the department was concerned. The utmost care was taken to see that arrangements were made for the accommodation of ladies who accepted positions in the department. The department would not send a lady into the country districts unless they could be first assured that there was suitable accommodation there. In this particular case possibly some arrangement was made to have the lady met at the station, and through some unforeseen occurrence there was no one there to meet her. A great deal had been said by the member for Albany, and it had been referred to by other hon. members, about the appointment of an assistant inspector or advisory teacher. It might be true that the particular gentleman selected had not, as far as examination tests, the same qualifications as some of the other candidates. Hon. members might recognise that the department would not have taken the unusual course of appointing an officer to this particular position over the heads of other officers who had superior examinations qualifications unless there were some other qualifications possessed by the successful candidate, which were regarded by the responsible officers as giving him a claim in the interests of the

department which should be considered as superior. The gentleman chosen for this appointment had been for some considerable time in charge of a small school at Gosnells which, while it was fulfilling the primary purpose of a school, was also used as a sort of training place for unclassified teachers who were about to proceed to take charge of country schools. This small school was conducted as a sort of model country school, and persons without a good deal of experience as teachers were sent there for several weeks, or perhaps months, to receive some instruction with regard to taking classes in small country centres. Mr. Murdoch was placed in charge of that school, and he did excellent work there. It was ascertained, as far as it was possible to ascertain, that Mr. Murdoch had an intimate practical acquaintance with the requirements of country schools, and he had a particular facility for imparting instruction. The responsible officers of the department estimated that the qualifications as far as examination was concerned, perhaps, were not as high as the qualifications of some of the other candidates, but on taking his practical qualifications as well, he was found to be the most suited for the position. He obtained the best report in single-handed work, and his work would lie more particularly in small country schools, and it was desired to have as an advisory teacher a gentleman who was intimately acquainted with the work of the schools. There was no doubt that the appointment would prove an exceedingly successful one, and he (the Minister) was prepared to take whatever share of responsibility which was due over the appointment. With regard to the other gentlemen referred to, they were indeed excellent officers, and the member for Albany should disabuse his mind of the impression that they received increases in salary simply because they were dissatisfied. The coincidence perhaps was peculiar, but it was not on the ground of their dissatisfaction that they received their increases, but because of the excellent work they were doing. Several members had made a reference to the

salaries paid to teachers, more particularly in small up-country schools. The difficult conditions under which not a few of these teachers lived made it a matter of difficulty for the to become classified as teachers, and it was necessary for the department to approach any request that might be made on behalf of these teachers with a sympathetic ear, and as long as he (the Minister) had the honour of being the head of this department he would never be wanting in giving sympathetic consideration to any reasonable request that might be made with regard to these teachers, recognising as he did the important work they had to perform. The whole question of the salaries of teachers was at the present time engaging the attention of the department, and it was hoped very shortly, at any rate within the next six months, and in time for the next financial year, to have the matter arranged so that some improvement would be made in the financial year beginning on the 1st July next. He (the Minister) would shortly submit a recommendation to Cabinet on the subject, and he did not wish to say much more at that juncture than that the matter was being carefully gone into, and he felt fully confident that the department would be able to meet the teachers in some respect. At the recent conference of the teachers' union three resolutions were passed with regard to the appointment of unclassified teachers. The first one was that no unclassified teacher should receive a lower salary than, males £110, and females £80. With regard to the resolution he was entirely in sympathy with it, but while consideration was given to the unclassified teachers, the department had to guard against making the position of the unclassified teachers one in which there was little inducement for them to rise to higher positions in the service. The regulations in regard to examinations in the department could not by any stretch of imagination be termed severe. If a teacher on going up for an examination succeeded in passing in, say, four subjects out of six, he or she would not be required to take the whole number of sub-

jects over again, but would be permitted to pass at a subsequent occasion the two subjects in which he or she had failed. This system had been adopted in recognition of the difficult conditions under which teachers carried out their studies in remote districts. It would be seen that a teacher of ordinary ability could, with patience, ultimately pass the examination by a process of exhaustion, and so be in a position to claim his or her classification. There were, of course, objections to this method of examination, but on the other hand the department had been constrained to look at the difficulties with which teachers were faced. It was not altogether a satisfactory argument to make comparisons between the salaries paid in this State and in the other States, but, taking as a whole the salaries paid in the Education Department in Western Australia, particularly in the classified grades, it could not be said that as compared with the other States we did not deal liberally with our teachers. For an ambitious man or woman the opportunities of obtaining a good position were by no means to be despised. The highest salary available for a classified male teacher was £450 with house provided, and that was a higher salary than was paid in any other State in the Commonwealth except Queensland. But the main grievance was not, of course, in regard to classified teachers, but in regard to unclassified teachers and the assistants. Some years ago, when Western Australia had been rapidly moving ahead, there were greater chances of promotion than existed to-day. Within the last few years, of course, we had had a considerable number of new schools, but practically the whole of these new schools were small country schools in respect of which a high salary could neither be expected nor paid. It was therefore becoming a matter for consideration as to whether we should not improve the conditions of the teachers, with regard not only to the minimum but to the maximum, if they remained unclassified. Of course in such event we should insist on the teachers allowed to reach the maximum obtaining good reports from inspectors. He was persuaded

that it was possible to attach an exaggerated amount of importance to classification; but where we had a successful teacher teaching in a small school and not classified we should pay some consideration to the experience of that teacher and also to the reports obtained from the inspectors. In regard to the general question of providing new schools, and the delays which had taken place, the difficulty was one for which the present prosperity of the country was partly responsible. Indeed, a serious question in the department was the very high cost of erecting small country schools, and the difficulty of getting the work done at all. So much was this so that it was becoming a matter of consideration by the Works Department whether in some cases it would not be advisable to erect the schools departmentally. The only other subject to which he need refer was that remarked upon by the member for Brown Hill, namely, the university. He (the Minister) had purposely avoided referring to the university in his introductory remarks, partly because the subject would be fully gone into by the Minister whose duty it would be to introduce the University Bill, and partly because although it was a subject in which the Education Department was very much interested, still the department would have no sort of control over the university. So far as concerned the internal government of that institution when established it would be a matter, not for the Education Department but for the governing body; and it would be for the House to see that the governing body was so constituted as to provide the very best modern education. However, he had not refrained from referring to the university from any lack of sympathy with it. Apart altogether from its general utility to the State as a whole it would be of very great utility to the Education Department in the facilities it would afford for the higher education of teachers. In conclusion, he would thank hon. members for the generous way in which they had regarded these Estimates. In respect to the Education Department it was a satisfactory feature that although there might be differences

of opinion in regard to smaller questions of departmental administration, yet on both sides there was a common desire for keeping our educational system fully in accord with modern requirements. He felt sure that any Minister, to whatever party he might belong, if he came before the Committee with a demand for increased educational facilities, that demand would meet with a generous response.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

AN EXPLANATION.

Mr. Underwood and District Medical Officers.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. H. Daglish): It was desired to offer an explanation in regard to some remarks made during the discussion on the Estimates of the Medical Department, when reference was made by the member for Pilbara to the treatment of Inspector Sellinger at Broome by the Resident Medical Officer. He (the Minister for Works) had now a report furnished by Inspector Sellinger, which he proposed to read without comment. The report was as follows:—

During the discussion of the medical vote, item "District medical officers," Mr. Underwood stated that:—"Inspector Sellinger of the police force had been taken to the Broome hospital and a message sent to the doctor asking him to attend. The doctor was playing tennis at the time and three subsequent messages were sent to him at the tennis court, notwithstanding which he failed to respond. Eventually Inspector Sellinger left the hospital, and proceeded to the residence of the Bishop in the North-West, where he was satisfactorily attended to by the Japanese doctor. . . . As a matter of fact, Inspector Sellinger, being in the police, was one of the few Government officers whom the resident medical officer was supposed to treat free of cost, and on that account the doctor preferred to play tennis, and take the risk of the State losing a reasonably good inspector of police."

The Hon. Minister for Works stated that the matter would be thoroughly inquired into.

I beg to inform you on arrival at the hospital I was immediately attended by the resident medical officer (Dr. Paton) and was treated with such consideration that I must always remember with gratitude the kindness extended to me by that doctor. I did not leave the hospital to proceed to the residence of the Bishop of the North-West, nor had I seen that dignitary for five months prior to the period in question, nor was I in any way attended to by the Japanese doctor. (Signed) W. C. Sellinger, Inspector of Police, 6-1-1911.

The member for Pilbara would of course be anxious that this statement should be made, because neither the member for Pilbara nor any other member desired to cast an undeserved reflection on any Government officer.

House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 10th January, 1911.

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

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Works: Additional by-laws made by the Greenmount Roads Board.