

had none of the details to which the hon. member referred. In regard to the complaints that the Government were getting behind the Public Service Commissioner and the Act in the appointment of temporary employees, that was not the case. The number of temporary employees had been swelled in connection with the appointments to the Taxation Department; but he had thought it unfair to ask for permanent appointments until Parliament decided whether the Land and Income Tax was to be reimposed. Now there was no reason why many of the temporary employees in the department should not be dispensed with and permanent appointments made. There was no ulterior motive in these temporary appointments; they were only in the interests of the departments and the State.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Refunds*, £2,500—agreed to.

Vote—*Taxation*, £9,553:

Mr. BROWN: The appointment of Chief Land Tax Assessor was most scandalous. There were dozens of good applicants who had a general knowledge of land values in this State, but the one appointed was an officer who had something to do with the Mines Department and had no earthly knowledge of land values, and yet was to be sole arbiter of land values taxation in this State and would put taxpayers to the expense of appeals. One would like to see the item struck out.

Progress reported.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

Received from the Legislative Council—

Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.

Fremantle Disused Cemetery.

House adjourned at 11.19 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 13th January, 1909.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: 1, Timber Tramways, permits granted under the Land Acts. 2, Return showing resumption of pastoral leases under the Land Act.

QUESTION—TIMBER TRAMLINE, LAVERTON-LANCEFIELD.

Mr. TAYLOR (without notice) asked the Premier: Is there any objection to laying on the Table all papers in connection with the granting of a permit to the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Firewood Company to run a tramline from the Laverton railway station to Lancefield?

The PREMIER replied: I have no objection if the hon. member will move in the ordinary way.

QUESTION—RAILWAY COAL SUPPLIES, COLLIE.

Mr. A. A. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways,—1, What is the quantity of coal produced by each of the coal companies operating in the Collie district during the twelve months ended 31st December, 1908. 2, What is the amount of Government purchases from each company? 3, What is the amount of private trade supplied by each company? 4, What is the amount of bunkering trade supplied by each company? 5, What is the percentage of Government trade supplied by each company? 6, What is the percentage of private trade,

including bunkering supplied by each company (2, 3, 4, 5, 6) for the 12 months ending December 31st, 1908?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Cardiff Coal Mining Co., Ltd., 24,358.37 tons; Collie Co-operative Collieries, Ltd., 31,493.18 tons; Collie Propy. Coalfield of W.A., Ltd., 35,326 tons; Collie Propy. Coalfield (No. 1 pit), 36,427 tons; Scottish Collieries Co., 47,753 tons; total, 175,357.55 tons. 2, Cardiff (loco. coal), 19,802 tons 19cwt. 3qrs.; Collie Co-op. (loco. coal), 21,022 tons 19cwt.; Collie Propy. (loco. coal), 50,580 tons 4cwt. 2qrs.; Scottish (loco. coal), 19,642 tons 14cwt. 1qr. Total, 111,048 tons 17cwt. 2qrs. 3 to 6, inclusive. This information is not available, but an effort will be made to obtain same.

QUESTIONS (2)—STATE BATTERIES.

Re-arrangement of Charges.

Mr. TROY asked the Minister for Mines: 1, In reply to a question prior to the Christmas adjournment did the Minister not state that the promised re-arrangement of battery charges would operate from the 1st January, 1909? 2, Has that promise been given effect to? 3, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Yes. 2, No. 3, Because when the promise was made I was under the impression that the Mines Estimates would have been dealt with and I would have known the views of goldfields members generally in regard to the proposed new scale, which would have been explained when dealing with the Estimates, so deferred the instructions. I propose to instruct that the new scale shall come into force on Monday, February 1st.

(Engineer, Lennonville.)

Mr. TROY asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Is the Minister aware that the engineer, whom he stated had been sent to re-erect the Lennonville battery has not arrived at that locality? 2, When was the engineer despatched? 3, Will the Minister, recognising the urgent need of the prospectors, give instructions

to push on with the re-erection of this Battery?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, No. The engineer left Perth with the object of overhauling the Lennonville battery, but pending the settlement of insurances over the recent fire his services have been utilised to carry out certain works required at Boogardie battery, six miles distant. 2, The 15th December, 1908 3, Yes.

QUESTION—ELECTORAL, FREMANTLE OFFICE.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Attorney General: 1, What is the name of the electoral registrar for the West Province? 2, Where is his office located? 3, What is the postal address of the registrar where claims may be forwarded for enrolment as electors? 4, What is the name of the electoral registrar for the electoral districts of Fremantle, South Fremantle, North Fremantle, and East Fremantle? 5, Where is his office located? 6, What is the postal address of the registrar where claims may be forwarded for enrolment as electors? 7, Is the Minister aware the electoral office at Fremantle is only open one day in each week? 8, Where can citizens who wish to deposit claims for enrolment as electors do so on the days the office is closed, to allow them the privilege of the Electoral Act which provides that claims must be deposited 14 days before enrolment as electors? 9, Is the Minister aware that a youth at the Fremantle Court House, just turned 17 years of age, is appointed to give all information regarding electoral questions to those persons desiring information? 10, Can a person who is not qualified to be an elector, being under 21 years of age, witness the signature of a person claiming to be enrolled as an elector? 11, If not, what is the use of appointing a person under 21 years of age to control the electoral office? 12, Is the Minister aware the only claim forms supplied to the official at the court house are those in use previous to the passing of the present Electoral Act? 13, Is the Minister aware that though a notice is posted at

the Town Hall, Fremantle, that all information regarding electoral matters may be obtained from a Mr. Gomme, at the court house, Fremantle, no claim forms were available when applied for? 14, Will the Minister give some information as to the intention of the department regarding the Fremantle electoral office; the Minister having previously stated the office is not closed?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1, Ernest Wells. 2, Electoral Department, Barrack-street, Perth. 3, Electoral Department, Barrack-street, Perth. 4, L. A. King. 5, Electoral Department, Barrack-street, Perth, and Town Hall, Fremantle. 6, Electoral Department, Barrack-street, Perth, and Fremantle Town Hall. 7, Yes. 8, On any week day when the electoral office at the town hall is closed claims may be lodged by hand at the court house, Fremantle, or may be posted to that place, or to the Electoral Department, Perth. 9, I am aware that the duty of receiving electoral claims and of giving necessary information in response to inquiries is entrusted to Mr. Gomme, assistant clerk at the local court house, Fremantle. 10, No. 11, The clerk referred to is the person whose duties enable him to best attend to electoral claims. 12, No. No forms were supplied to the court house before the posting of the notice of the partial closing of the electoral office at the town hall, which was only effected yesterday. The necessary forms are now available at the court house. 13, The notice referred to was only posted by the electoral registrar yesterday morning, and all necessary forms have been supplied to the court house since then. 14, Owing to the fact that practically no business is transacted at the Fremantle office during the periods intervening between elections, and that the registrar's services can be made use of during such times at head office, it has been found necessary, in the interests of economy, to make the arrangements now carried into force, viz., to temporarily remove the registrar to head office and keep the Fremantle office open for the transaction of any business there may be on one week day only, viz., Wednesday. During

other days of the week information will be supplied, and forms and rolls made available at the court house, Fremantle. Whenever required by circumstances, adequate arrangements to cope with increased work will be made in time for the convenience of the electors of the West Province and the four Fremantle districts. Until the registrar is again removed from Perth to Fremantle, the local office in the town hall, Fremantle, will be looked upon as a branch office.

QUESTION—MEDICAL, PRINCIPAL OFFICER.

Mr. COLLIER asked the Premier: 1, Has the Public Service Commissioner recommended any person or persons for the position of Principal Medical Officer? 2, If so, what are their names and what appointments do they hold at present? 3, Have the Government approved of the recommendation of the Commissioner? 4, If the Government have not approved of the Commissioner's recommendation, what are the reasons for such disapproval? 5, Do the Government intend to appoint Dr. Hope? If not, who do they intend shall receive the appointment? 6, Is it the intention of the Government, before making an appointment, to lay all the papers in connection with the position on the Table of the House? If not, why not?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, As the appointment is now pending it would be inadvisable to supply the information required. 3, No. 4, If the Governor-in-Council has finally dealt with the matter, in the event of a recommendation not being accepted, the reasons for non-acceptance of the Commissioner's recommendation will be laid on the Table, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Act. 5, Appointments are made on the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner, under the provisions of the Public Service Act. 6, No. See reply to question No. 2.

QUESTION—FIREWOOD SUPPLIES EASTERN GOLDFIELDS.

Mr. HORAN asked the Premier: 1, Does he anticipate any immediate short-

age of firewood supplies to the Kalgoolie mines? 2. If not, why was the Coolgardie-Burbanks forest reserve reduced in area by Gazette notice on 18th December, 1908? 3. If the Government in August last satisfied themselves of the necessity to extend the Coolgardie-Burbanks reserve from the 25 to the 28-mile on the Widgemooltha Railway in order to provide ample supplies for Coolgardie and Burbanks mines, what special circumstances have since arisen to warrant a reversal of that decision?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2. Because that is the only area open to small cutters within a reasonable distance of Kalgoolie. 3. Because it was found afterwards that the country to the south of the 28-mile, for some distance, was practically devoid of timber adjacent to the railway.

QUESTION—RAILWAY SIDINGS, WIDGEMOOLTHA LINE.

Mr. HORAN asked the Minister for Railways: 1. Who were the applicants for permission to construct a siding between the 25 and 28-mile on the Coolgardie-Widgemooltha Railway? 2. What is the date of Mr. Connolly's latest application? 3. Has it been approved?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1. Thomas Connolly. 2. 12th December, 1908. 3. The application will be finally dealt with in the course of a few days.

QUESTION—TIMBER CUTTING, ILLEGAL.

Mr. HORAN asked the Attorney General: 1. Was an application made on behalf of John McCarty for the remission of part of fine imposed by Warden Finnerty, at Coolgardie, on 6th December, 1908, for cutting timber illegally? 2. If so, with what result? 3. Was the fine of £25 with £6 2s. 8d. costs inflicted upon Thos. Osborne at the same sitting of the court for a similar offence reduced by one-half? 4. If so, at whose instigation and for what reason?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1. No. 2. See No. 1. 3. The fine of £25,

together with costs £6 2s. 8d., was reduced to £18 12s. 8d. I am unaware if the case was heard at the same sitting of the court as that against John McCarty. 4. The Attorney General's, recommended by the Resident Magistrate owing to the case being one of a first offence and the defendant being a person of small means and not able to pay the fine imposed.

PAPERS—MINES PROSECUTION, MALCOLM.

On motion by Mr. Taylor ordered: That all papers in connection with the prosecution of Mr. Brimage by the Inspector of Mines at Malcolm be laid upon the Table.

BILL—ROADS CLOSURE.

Introduced by the Premier, and read a first time.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES. 1908-9.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day, Mr. Daghish in the Chair.

Treasury Department and Administrative Branches (Hon. Frank Wilson, Treasurer):

Vote—*Taration*, £9,553:

Item, Chief Land Tax Assessor, at £350 (six months).

Mr. BROWN moved—

That the item be struck out.

His object was to protest against the most wretched selection ever made by the Public Service Commissioner. Here was a gentleman selected to fill the position of Chief Land Tax Assessor who had been employed as a draftsman in the Mines Department for ten or twelve years, and who had absolutely no knowledge of land values. It was a most scandalous thing that the Government should have agreed to the appointment. The appointment would cost the taxpayers thousands of pounds in appeals against his decisions.

Mr. HUDSON: It was his intention to support the amendment, because it seemed to him that the department would

be landed into a great deal of expense. When it came to be considered that the revenue last year from land and income tax was only £18,000, and it cost £4,000 to collect it; a matter of 22 per cent., it seemed to him that there had been a good deal more expense incurred than was necessary. With regard to this particular item, although he was not particularly opposed to the individual, he knew as a matter of fact that some work had already been done by officers selected by whom he did not know, certainly not by the Public Service Commissioner, and he thought also, without the personal concurrence of the Treasurer. In one particular he knew of one man who went to a country town to make an assessment, and although he was an estimable gentleman, personally, he simply had no knowledge of his business, and it was a matter for ridicule in the town that such an individual should have been sent there. If this gentleman's appointment was to continue, we would be landed in innumerable appeals, and beside the tax put upon the people, they would have to go to considerable expense in fighting valuations, and the country would be put to the expense of defending the valuations of the officer who was incapable.

The TREASURER: It was rather astonishing to find an hon. member proposing to strike out the item, while the hon. member who had just spoken, without any reason, said he would support the amendment. The hon. member did not say the officer in question was incapable, but gave as his reason that the department was costing too much or was likely to cost too much. The department was incomplete without a land tax assessor. This appointment had been wanted for some months, and the Government had only refrained from making the permanent appointment until it was known that the House was going to reimpose the tax.

Mr. Butcher: Will you define his duties before you sit down?

The TREASURER: Certainly not, because he was incapable of doing that. He was afraid members would have to rely upon the Public Service Commis-

sioner, upon whose recommendation the appointment was made.

Mr. Bath: The officer has to value land, and therefore must have some knowledge of it.

The TREASURER: The officer had that knowledge. The Public Service Commissioner had gone into the matter fully; he had selected this gentleman who was previously employed in the Mines Department, as being a man capable of filling the position.

Mr. Brown: But the public treat it as a joke.

Members: What is his name?

The TREASURER: Mr. Barlee, who was Chief Draftsman in the Mines Department. This gentleman had held a responsible position, and surely members would not condemn him because the man in the street did not approve of the appointment. He had been a surveyor before filling the appointment in the Mines Department. The Public Service Commissioner who had appointed the officer, had probed the matter to the bottom. He had all the applications sent to him, and selected Mr. Barlee as the best man. If the man was capable according to testimonials put in, and had served well in other departments, and if the Public Service Commissioner recommended him for the position, that was good enough for the Government. Whether that was so or not, it was rather a bad way to protest against the appointment by moving to strike out the item. We wanted the Land Tax Assessor, and we wanted him badly. There was plenty of work to do, and someone must fill the post.

Mr. TROY: Mr. Barlee was an officer of the Mines Department, and what he knew about that officer was to his credit, but grave doubts were expressed regarding his ability to fill this position, and he too was inclined to think that the Public Service Commissioner's choice was not a good one, while he was amazed that the Government should have accepted the recommendation. The Treasurer told the Committee with an air of sincerity and earnestness that the Government followed the Public Service Commissioner's advice, and that they would not question his recommendation. What he would

like to know was, whether the Government would be prepared to lay the papers on the Table of the House regarding the appointment of this officer. He did not wish to say anything detrimental, because he knew of nothing that was detrimental to him, but he did feel that a wiser choice might have been made. The appointment was one in which the greatest possible care should have been exercised and the best possible man should have been selected. He felt that the officer was transferred to this department because it was essential that some place should be found for him.

The PREMIER: The suggestion that the papers should be laid on the Table of the House, was not a wise one in connection with personal matters. There were men who had made applications, and who having been unsuccessful, preferred that the public should know nothing about their applications. Very often, the placing of such papers on the Table of the House had a bad effect on a man who was engaged by a private employer. With regard to this particular appointment, the gentleman who was first of all selected was Mr. Hogarth, at present Inspecting Surveyor in the Land Titles Department, a man well qualified for the position, and who had a wide knowledge of land values throughout Western Australia; both in country lands, and in his capacity as Inspecting Surveyor of Titles he had had many opportunities of making himself thoroughly acquainted with the value of town lots. After he was appointed, for some reason or other he withdrew. There was an idea that there was not the same certainty about the new position that there was about the position he was occupying. Another surveyor, Mr. Sainsbury, was appointed, and he too withdrew, and after some few months, he (the Premier) suggested it should be possible to find some other gentleman who had the required experience. The Public Service Commissioner was satisfied from the knowledge he had of Mr. Barlee's qualifications, and from the fact that he had been in the field for a considerable time as an assistant surveyor, and being also a good draftsman, which was a very necessary quali-

fication for this particular position, that he would be quite competent to fill the position. The Commissioner of Taxation had impressed on the Government the necessity of making this appointment, and had declared himself perfectly satisfied that Mr. Barlee would make a capable officer. In consequence that recommendation had been approved by Executive Council.

Mr. BUTCHER: Hon. members would realise the necessity for the appointment of an assessor or assessors under the Act. For his part, however, he questioned the advisability of appointing any one individual to do the work. He did not see how one man could have the necessary knowledge for assessing all the lands in Western Australia. Such an officer would be called upon to express opinions as to the values of land, millions of acres of which he had never seen. He would be asked to assess the value of agricultural lands in respect to which he had had no experience, and he would be asked to value city and suburban land. It seemed to him (Mr. Butcher) there was probably no one man in Western Australia capable of filling the bill. Nothing short of a board of three good men wisely selected could possibly give satisfaction. He could claim a personal friendship with Mr. Barlee, whom he believed to be a thoroughly capable officer in the position he had been filling. As to whether that gentleman would be a success in his new capacity, he (Mr. Butcher) was extremely doubtful, although he sincerely hoped he would be. He would not assist the member for Perth in striking out the item.

Mr. BROWN: It would have been far better to have chosen for the post someone who had travelled the country over. So far as he knew, Mr. Barlee had not been out of Perth for the last 10 years. He hoped the Committee would strike out the item, in order that an opportunity might be afforded of securing for the post somebody more conversant with the values of land. Thousands of pounds would be entailed in appeals against the decisions of the officer appointed, who

knew little or nothing of the land values of the State.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was perhaps desirable to place before the Committee the real issue to be decided if a division were to be taken on the amendment. In the first place the necessity was not challenged of appointing a land assessor. What seemed to be challenged was the wisdom of the appointment of a particular individual. If that were the only consideration it appeared to him that the Committee were now acting as a court to revise appointments made by the Public Service Commissioner, and that too without evidence before them of the abilities of the several applicants, and as to whether or not the Public Service Commissioner had selected the best of those applicants. The question was not as to the working of the Public Service Act, but as to whether the Public Service Commissioner, having investigated the files, papers and documents bearing on the capabilities of the different applicants had recommended the best man available. He (the Attorney General) did not know whether any hon. member was justified in saying that the Commissioner had not recommended the best man available; yet that was precisely what the Committee would be doing if they agreed to strike out the item.

Mr. TAYLOR: It seemed that the appointment had been made by the Public Service Commissioner in accordance with the Public Service Act. If that were so, then in the absence of any evidence as to the incapacity of the successful applicant, he (Mr. Taylor) could not support the amendment moved by the member for Perth. The Committee had no knowledge of the qualifications of the various applicants as submitted for the consideration of the Public Service Commissioner. The appointment had been made by the Public Service Commissioner; or rather he had recommended to the Government the man whom he considered most capable of filling the position. It seemed that since the appointment had been made many more capable men had been looking for the position. However that was no reason why the Committee should strike out the item

with the object of once more opening up the question. He would support the item.

Amendment put and negatived.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Miscellaneous Services*, £98,365:

Item, Home of Peace, £800:

Mr. BROWN: People well able to pay for their maintenance in other institutions were at the present time paying 25s. a week as inmates of the Home of Peace. He knew of one who had been well able to pay three guineas in the St. John of God's Hospital, but who, finding it much cheaper in the Home of Peace, had removed to that institution. She was there to-day. She was the owner of land in Wellington-street on which was standing a number of cottages. In view of this, he moved as a protest against the continuance of this sort of thing—

That the item be reduced by £50.

The TREASURER: The case referred to by the member for Perth was one of which he (the Treasurer) had previously heard nothing. If it were as the member for Perth said, then he (the Treasurer) agreed with him that such a person ought not to be an inmate of the Home of Peace.

Hon. F. H. Piessé: Provided she can get into some other institution.

The TREASURER: The Home of Peace was not for persons who could afford to pay at other and perhaps more expensive institutions. It was a public institution managed by a committee, with public accounts, under public supervision, and the subsidy of the Government was paid only on a basis of pound for pound on the subscriptions of the general public. Therefore it appeared to him that if the complaint of the member for Perth were to be made to the committee the matter would be rectified.

Mr. Brown: Complaints have been made, but nothing has been done.

The TREASURER: At any rate the Government only contributed pound for pound on the voluntary contributions. He did not think the reduction of the item would serve any good purpose. If no good result was being obtained from

the item the Committee ought to wipe it out altogether. The Leader of the Opposition was a member of the committee, on which many prominent citizens of Perth had places. That being so, it was hard to realise that the committee would condone such a use of the institution as the member for Perth had pointed to. Now that the matter had been brought under notice he (the Treasurer) felt sure that some action would be taken.

Mr. BATH: Even if there had been any truth in the complaint of the member for Perth it would not be assisting the object of the institution—which was to provide a home for incurables—to reduce the Government subsidy. It would merely be making it all the more necessary for the committee to look for those who could pay the sum of 25s. per week.

Mr. Brown: Indigent persons are being kept out of the Home.

Mr. BATH: It was only natural that with a population of 260,000 there should be some for whom accommodation could not be found in the institution. The Federated Miners' Union on the gold-fields, the Fremantle Lumpers' Union, and other organisations had been so satisfied with the work accomplished by the Home of Peace that they had made a regular practice of furnishing donations to that institution. With this practical testimony to its value from semi-public bodies, he (Mr. Bath) thought it would be wrong to reduce the grant as desired by the member for Perth. Opportunity could be taken at the proper time to bring the matter under the notice of the Committee.

Hon. F. H. PIESSE: This institution was established 15 years ago by people anxious to provide a place to take in those considered incurable, more especially the indigent incurable; but if what was mentioned by the member for Perth had been done to the exclusion of those not able to pay, steps should be taken to prevent its recurrence. The institution had filled a great want and was much appreciated, and everything should be done to help it, and it was a question for the management committee to consider whether paying patients should be

admitted so long as it was not done to the exclusion of others. The member for Perth should withdraw the amendment having drawn attention to the matter and the Treasurer having expressed his intention to take action if necessary.

Mr. TAYLOR: What class of indigent incurable patients were admitted to the institution?

The Treasurer: All classes. I do not think exception is taken to any class.

Mr. TAYLOR: It was said that consumptive patients were not admitted.

Mr. Bath: They are not.

Mr. TAYLOR: There was not sufficient provision made in this State for patients suffering from consumption.

The Treasurer: We have a hospital at Coolgardie for them.

Mr. TAYLOR: Later there would be opportunity for passing some observations on that institution as to the way in which some patients not able to finance themselves were treated by the State. Western Australia had the reputation of possessing a climate suitable for the recovery of consumptive patients, so that people came here from all parts; therefore the question of treating consumptive patients was of great moment to the State. The amendment of the member for Perth should not be pressed because it would not reach the object aimed at. It seemed peculiar that any person possessing the means to pay elsewhere should be admitted to a home founded for those unable to provide for themselves. It was hardly fair that paying patients should go in because it was cheaper than any other institution while the class of patients for which the institution was built was kept out.

Mr. Butcher: Is that the case?

Mr. TAYLOR: The place was practically full, and if there were any in the institution in a position to pay for care in another institution they should not be allowed to remain in this home to the exclusion of those for whom the home was built; and while the Government contributed a certain portion of the upkeep, members were justified in putting forward their views on the question and in giving the Government a direction in the matter. There was no reason for

doubting the member for Perth. The hon. member's wife was on the committee of management of the institution.

Mr. BOLTON: This was a most excellent institution. He had recently had occasion to apply for the admission of a poor destitute woman pronounced incurable, and he had received the best of attention, everything being arranged for him surprisingly quickly. There had been a doubt in his mind as to whether the same consideration would be given to this woman as to a patient contributing towards the upkeep of the institution, but there was no distinction made; the woman was received into the institution in a few days after application was made and had nothing but praise for the home ever since. The item should not be decreased, but should rather be increased because the institution was doing wonderfully good work. Any suspicions he had that it was "a bit classy" had been entirely removed from his mind.

Mr. HUDSON: There were other excellent institutions, to wit the hospitals in the back country whose subsidies had been reduced to 15s. in the pound. Would the Treasurer explain why the distinction was made in this case?

Mr. JOHNSON: The general administration of the Home of Peace reflected great credit on the committee of management. It was a central institution for the incurable, and consequently one that could not be established in the various centres of the State. There was room for complaint as to the action of the Government in connection with the subsidy to out-back hospitals, but it would be unfair to attack this item on that account. There would be opportunity later on for protesting against the Government's parsimonious policy in connection with the out-back hospitals, but this vote should not be used as an opportunity for discussing that question. We should give the committee managing the Home of Peace all the assistance we could. The cost per patient reflected credit on the management; and when we realised the good the home was doing, the assistance given to the community, and the consolation given to those incurables,

members must give the committee every encouragement.

Mr. BROWN: No one had commented on the management of the institution. He could not be accused of doing that, his wife having been a member of the committee of management for some years past, but it was never intended that this home should receive patients with an income of £3 or £4 a week. A person in the position of the patient referred to was not a fit subject for charitable relief. It was to be hoped the Treasurer would give an assurance that the case would be inquired into.

The Treasurer: If the hon. member would give him the name of the patient privately he would make full inquiries into the matter.

Mr. BROWN: There were many applications from persons who were absolutely penniless now awaiting consideration, but it was impossible to admit them to the institution as there was no room. Surely such persons should have a priority over those who were financially strong enough to do without charitable relief. He desired to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Item, Fire Brigade Board and Fire Brigades—contribution and subsidy (maximum subsidy £250), £1,750.

Mr. TROY: On looking at the public accounts he had noticed that of the total subsidy of £1,750 the Boulder fire brigade received no less a sum than £981 9s., or nearly one-half. How could that brigade receive so much money, and why was such generosity shown to the Boulder brigade when there were some 30 other brigades in the State which combined only received about the same sum as the brigade in question?

Mr. HOLMAN: It was easy to see that the present system of distributing the grant was not fair. He was disgusted that the Government had not brought down a Bill compelling a fair allotment of the Government grant, and to make the insurance companies pay a quota towards the upkeep of the brigades. The present system was deplorable, for unless the members of the brigades begged for money they could

not get any grant. The reason why the Boulder brigade received so much was that the people had subscribed generously towards the funds and had assisted the brigade in their demonstration. Money was collected for the brigades by the holding of socials, dances, concerts and the giving of band performances, and the Government subsidy of pound for pound was provided. There was a proviso, however, that the subsidy should not be given on funds granted by the municipal councils. Evidently the reason why reference was made to the maximum subsidy being fixed at £250 was because one brigade had received so much last year. The Government should have brought in a Fire Brigades Bill in order to compel the local authorities and the insurance companies of the State each to pay a fair quota. In the alternative the amount available for distribution should be allotted, and each brigade should be given a fair share instead of one centre being granted the bulk of the grant. During the past 14 or 15 years the insurance companies had not contributed more than £5 towards the upkeep of the fire brigade system other than in connection with the Perth and Fremantle brigades. In the Eastern States the companies were compelled to pay their share.

The Attorney General: The Bill was brought down last session but was dropped in another place.

Mr. HOLMAN: What was the use of having the measure sent to another place and having it tossed out there? The measure introduced last session was not a satisfactory one, and it was only because provision was made therein for making the insurance companies pay their quota that it passed this House.

The Attorney General: That is a very severe criticism.

Mr. HOLMAN: It was easy to criticise it much more severely, but there was no necessity to do so now. The position with all Bills was that anything the Government brought down, whether it was for the benefit of the State or not, received the blind support of Ministerial supporters. Members came into the Chamber and voted without knowing what the question was, and as he had

said before, if a motion were introduced to hang some members, those on the Ministerial side would vote for it without knowing what they were doing.

The Attorney General: There would be a large majority if there were a motion to hang you.

Mr. HOLMAN: Without doubt a great deal would be done to him (Mr. Holman) if the Ministry had the power, but, fortunately, men of brains had some power in the House, and the Ministry had not their own way. The insurance companies should pay either two-fifths or one-third towards the upkeep of the brigades, and the whole system should be placed on a proper footing. Admittedly the Government had given fair consideration in the past by granting money to the brigades and assisting them with their demonstrations. In fact, they had been more than generous on some occasions, but it was not right that the Government and the municipal councils should pay everything towards the upkeep and the insurance companies nothing.

Mr. BOLTON: As had been pointed out, the Boulder brigade had received nearly £1,000 last year. It was provided that the Government should pay a subsidy of pound for pound for all money subscribed to brigades, but in this particular case it seemed evident that the Government had been "got at" as, instead of paying pound for pound on subscriptions only, they had paid a subsidy on the receipts from the fire brigades demonstration. With the exception of Perth no other than the Boulder brigade had received more than £103. Unfortunately the money had been paid to the Boulder brigade, but it would be remembered that some time ago a resolution was adopted calling on certain municipalities that had been overpaid to refund the money to the State, and it would surely be quite possible to get some of the money back from the Boulder brigade. If the Treasurer inquired into the matter he would certainly find that the subsidy was paid illegally, as it had been granted solely on the subscriptions collected for the brigade.

Mr. Holman: All the brigades received grants in the past on the demonstrations.

Mr. BOLTON: The country should not be bled in that manner.

Mr. HUDSON: The member for Murchison (*Mr. Holman*) had said the Government subscribed pound for pound on all money raised by the brigades throughout the State. He had a complaint to make on that score, for the fire brigade at Norseman, which had been in existence for some years and had done excellent work, had raised a considerable sum of money; but, notwithstanding repeated applications to the Treasury, had not received a subsidy of one penny. Recently, when the Minister for Mines visited Norseman, he made specific promises in regard to this matter, but they had not been fulfilled. He was not surprised at that, but the application of the Norseman brigade should certainly have received consideration from the Treasurer, especially when a grant of nearly £1,000 had been made to one goldfields brigade.

The TREASURER: An error was made when it was said that he had made a special grant to the Boulder brigade; there was no option to him but to make it. It was decided that a subsidy of pound for pound should be granted on the sum raised by brigades.

Mr. Bolton: By subscription?

The TREASURER: When the application for the grant came in he queried it and sent for the accountant, but he was assured that the collection boxes had been produced, that the amount had been certified to by the auditors, and that the bank slips showed the amount paid in had been subscribed; under that evidence the subsidy was granted. The rule was that pound for pound should be paid on all subscriptions collected. Each member had a collecting book.

Mr. Bolton: If you had a hundred pounds worth of trophies, would it be fair to give £100 subsidy?

The TREASURER: That was not done. He promised to make further inquiries, and if he found that any money had been wrongly paid, steps would be taken to deduct it. In order to put a limit on the amount, he had provided on the Estimates this year that it should not exceed £250.

Other fire brigades in the past had collected large amounts. Leonora, for instance in one year got something over £300. With regard to the complaint from Norseman, this place had had special grants totalling £475 for fire brigades.

Mr. Hudson: Not in recent years.

The TREASURER: No, because they did not collect anything. At any rate there was no evidence in the Treasury of any collections. They could claim pound for pound subsidy, and there was nothing to prevent them from doing that if they proved they had collected contributions.

Mr. Hudson: I know they have.

The TREASURER: A note would be made of the matter.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: With regard to the Fire Brigades Amending Bill, it was obvious that it could not be brought down this session. The measure was brought down in the session before last, and as it was framed, it was eminently suitable for Kalgoorlie, but it did not commend itself to members opposite. The measure subsequently was moulded differently, but it did not meet with the approval of the Kalgoorlie council, or the superintendent of the fire brigades at Kalgoorlie. This officer was satisfied that the career of the purely volunteer fire brigades was coming to an end in Australia, and he remarked from long experience, a small paid brigade was infinitely more effective than the volunteer brigade. The Bill would be brought down at an early date next session, and whatever the views of hon. members might be, he hoped that they would give the measure calm consideration, and endeavour to make it workable.

Mr. HOLMAN: The system which had proved successful in Victoria, had been in vogue there for over 20 years, and was the best fire brigade system in the world, and the most successful, and least expensive. It was a system in which over 100 brigades and over 1,000 firemen worked, and it was that which we desired to see introduced in Western Australia. He hoped the amending Fire Brigades Bill would be among the first introduced next session, and that its provisions would contain one which would compel the in-

insurance companies to pay something towards the upkeep of the brigades. At the present time, they reaped the whole of the benefit, and paid nothing for it. The reason why the Boulder amount seemed so large last year, was that the Boulder people subscribed very liberally to send their representatives to the Eastern States. They then conducted a demonstration, and the Government gave pound for pound on the donations received. It was found in Cue and other places where people subscribed most, they got the most, but he had advocated that that was unfair, and undesirable, and the sooner legislation was introduced to alter the system, the better it would be for everyone.

Item, Lawlers fire brigade—Initial Expenses, £35:

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: How was it that there was such a disparity between this and the other amounts, most of which were for £100?

The TREASURER: This was the sum applied for.

Item, W. J. Westhoven—services rendered in C.S. Accountant's office, £80:

Mr. TROY: Would the Treasurer inform the Committee why this amount was paid. The officer had left the service, and it was presumed that he had left of his own accord.

The TREASURER: This officer was originally in the Fisheries Department, and received £170 per annum. He was transferred some four years ago to the Accountant's branch of the Colonial Secretary's Department as bookkeeper at the same salary.

Mr. Taylor: He was taken over at the time of the reorganisation of the accountant's branch in 1905.

The TREASURER: That was about the time. He was taken over at the same salary, but there was a tacit understanding that when the position was classified by the Public Service Commissioner, he would receive the minimum salary whatever that was. The position was classified at a minimum of £270, but still the officer was kept on for a period of 21 months, drawing the salary of £175 per annum, notwithstanding that he applied over and over again for recognition of his services,

and the fulfilment of what he alleged to be the understanding arrived at at the time of the transfer. During the absence in England of five months of Mr. Campbell, the accountant, Mr. Westhoven filled Mr. Campbell's position, and did it very creditably indeed. Notwithstanding that the classification was £270 minimum, the Commissioner could only provide £200 for the position. Then this officer resigned, because he thought he had been treated badly, and he (the Treasurer) thought so too. The department lost a good man. That was one of the anomalies of the classification. An officer was classified to fill the position at a minimum of £270; and it did seem absurd that while it was not possible to give the position to this officer, a stranger should subsequently be brought in to fill the vacancy, and draw the minimum salary. Mr. Westhoven applied for a retiring allowance, and in view of the fact that he had filled the position of acting accountant for five months, the Government thought he should be recompensed, and granted him £80. The claim was for nearly double that amount, but £80 was agreed upon.

Item, Members of Parliament, free passes over the Midland Railway Line, £530:

Mr. HOLMAN: The accommodation supplied by the Midland Railway Company was not altogether satisfactory, and he would like to know why this sum of money was paid to the company year after year. Travelling over that line during the last few months, especially during the hot weather, one found that old dog boxes were used, and in some of the trains there was only one lavatory car. A large number of women and children also travelled on that line, and they should receive better consideration than was given by the company at the present time. The time had arrived when nothing else but lavatory cars should be used on the line. The question was a serious one, and even if it were found necessary to exchange more of the Government lavatory compartments for semi-obsolete compartments of the company, it would be better in the interests of the travelling public that this should be done.

Mr. TROY: Any person travelling on the Midland line would readily acknowledge that the conditions were scandalous. The Treasurer could see for himself that this was true if he would but go down and inspect the Midland Company's train before it started on its journey. It was a common thing to find in one compartment without a lavatory, men, women and children packed like sheep, with 600 miles of a journey before them. From time to time the Government had made some very great concessions to the Midland Railway Company; yet the company had not kept faith with the Government. The least the Government could now do was to endeavour to secure from the Midland Company a better traffic service. He (Mr. Troy) had several times written to the company on the subject. The reply he had got on one occasion was that the company were running the service to make a profit and not in the interests of the people. Surely the Government could manage to influence the Midland Company in the direction of providing better conditions.

Mr. HEITMANN: The amount set down seemed very large. It would be advisable if the Treasurer, instead of granting a lump sum would, for six months or 12 months, issue passes to members wishing to travel over the line.

The Treasurer: This has been the amount of the item for a good many years. It has not varied.

Mr. Bolton: But each year it has been questioned.

Mr. HEITMANN: The accommodation provided for the general public on the Midland line from Midland Junction to Geraldton; and on the Government line from Geraldton to Cue, was absolutely disgraceful and would not be tolerated in any other part of the world. Time after time the Government had been approached with a view to procuring a better service, but still the same old order was allowed to continue.

Mr. TAYLOR: It was not at all certain that the amount of the item was out of the way. Still he was convinced that the Government ought to try and enforce better conditions on the Midland Company's line. There was in existence

the original agreement between the Midland Company and the Government, which gave the Government power to compel the company to afford the travelling public the same facilities as were to be found on the Government railways. If that agreement were enforced it would meet the wishes of the travelling public. All who travelled over the railways of the State eulogised the Government system and condemned that of the Midland Company. Under the agreement referred to, the Government had ample power to enforce the provision by the company of a reasonable service. The complaints made by members who had to travel over that line to their constituencies should be accepted as ample proof that an improvement was required. The average man could of course put up with a little hardship when travelling, but women and children of tender years coming down out of a climate like that of the Murchison on a long tedious journey to Perth ought to be considered by the company. He hoped the Treasurer would go into the matter and see if it were not possible to enforce the original agreement.

Item, Ministerial and Parliamentary visits, State ceremonials, etc., £1,000:

Mr. JACOBY: This item had been set down at £500 last year, notwithstanding which £1,127 had been spent. For this year the item was estimated at £1,000. Some explanation should be forthcoming as to the reason why so much more had been spent than was voted last year. For his part he thought the amount could well be reduced. There was for instance the cost of opening and closing Parliament, which meant a considerable sum. He would submit that this could be reduced and that the amount spent on military display on such occasions would be far better expended as a subsidy to rifle clubs. He hoped the Treasurer would be able to give the Committee some information as to how the money had been spent and why it had been necessary to expend so much on Ministerial and Parliamentary visits. In order to secure an expression of opinion from the Committee as to whether it was advisable to go on with all this frill, he moved—

That the item be reduced by £500.

Mr. WALKER: On a previous occasion he had drawn attention to the fact that the expenditure under this item was being presented in a lump sum. The report of the Auditor General for the year before last had contained a detailed account of the incidental expenses of Ministerial and Parliamentary visits, etcetera. Members were then in a position to know how the money was being spent. Now, however, it was presented as a bare figure, although he noticed that it was an increasing one. It was extraordinary that last year, while only £500 was voted, £1,127 should have been spent. Possibly some of this would be found stowed away at Rottneſt or stored up for future contingencies. He desired to know how this money had been spent, and he hoped the Treasurer would produce a detailed account.

(Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.)

Mr. WALKER: The list of these incidental expenses was supplied in the Auditor General's report for 1907 and extended over several pages, and was the most interesting reading in the whole report. From these figures members learnt something of the actions of Ministers, but since the motor car had been purchased there were no items given as to this expenditure. Why should we cover up this big vote in one lump sum? Why was there no explanation of the enormous excess over last year's vote? It was only £500, yet nearly £2,000 was spent.

The Treasurer: No; £1,127.

Mr. WALKER: At any rate it was more than double the vote. Was the excess caused by those strange, almost midnight Ministerial visits to out-back electorates in anticipation of an election and in search of candidates? If we had this lump sum, a sort of secret-service vote, it was possible for the Government to do that sort of thing. Corrupt Ministries would do it, though there was no proof that the present Ministry would do it. It was an extraordinary jump from £500 to more than twice that sum, but there was no item showing how the money was spent. How was it that the Auditor General had become so accommodating as to cover up the item in one lump

sum? It was rumoured, and was a general belief that much of the money was spent on what might be called electioneering expenses just prior to the general elections.

The Premier: The expenditure took place prior to the 30th June last.

Mr. WALKER: It was about that time that all the papers were glorifying Ministers as a combination of tin gods.

Mr. Troy: Ministers got a spasm of energy and got round the country at that time.

The Premier: That was when we went to Meekatharra and to the Mount Magnet electorate.

Mr. WALKER: One straw showed the way the wind was blowing. The items in this expenditure might be insignificant, but they were an indication of the character and conduct of Ministers. Why was £1,000 wanted this year?

The Premier: It will cost £300 or £400 for special trains.

Mr. WALKER: For what purpose would they be needed now? Surely that money had not already been spent. Were the Ministry gallivanting now as they did prior to the elections? Was any election anticipated that Ministers should waste this money? It was not necessary to spend money on frivolous trips, though one would be sorry to see the State in the eyes of strangers appear penurious or mean in this direction. Much of the money spent last year must have been spent foolishly. We should not encourage that sort of thing. There was an item of £90 for a dinner at Mr. Glowrey's hotel put down as "encouragement to agriculture." That was not included in this vote but doubtless there was a lot of similar folly covered by it. The Treasurer should give some idea of the amount already spent and of the items on which it was spent, and some idea as to how he contemplated spending the vote during the six months of the financial year yet to run.

The TREASURER: The hon. member was a sufficiently old parliamentarian to know that expenditure of this sort must take place in any country, and that it did take place in other countries to a much larger extent than ascertained in

Western Australia. Ministers had to visit different parts of the country, and consequently had to spend money on travelling expenses, trains and other items. In the expenditure of this £1,127 there was no item that could possibly refer to the period of the last general elections. Expenditure for the period covered by the general elections would appear on next year's Estimates.

Mr. Jacoby: You overdrew last year's vote.

The TREASURER : The custom always had been to put down a sum of £500 on the Estimates as an approximate amount, but nearly every year it was considerably exceeded. For instance the 1904-5 Estimates showed that in the previous year £500 was voted while the expenditure was £1,460.

Mr. Taylor: But see who was in office at that time.

The TREASURER: Exactly, the hon. member was in office, but it was the previous year's expenditure. The hon. member could not be saddled with that. What we were most concerned with was the £1,000 provided for this year's expenditure. The sum was based on last year's expenditure. He did not know how much of it had been expended so far. Probably half of it had been spent. With regard to last year's expenditure on the item at least £230 or £240 was expended for special trains for Parliamentary trips, opening of railways, etcetera. The Dowerin line was opened during the year, and for that there was a Parliamentary trip and a special train. There was the opening of the Collie-Narrogin line, the cost of which was £70. There was the trip of the Minister for Mines to the North-West.

Mr. Walker: That came in the previous year.

The TREASURER: A great many of the accounts were paid in July. There was also expenditure in connection with the Governor General's visit to Western Australia; he was entertained on behalf of the State at a cost of something like £100. Then the steamship fares were paid for members of the Government to the Brisbane Conference, the cost being £40. There was a trip to Meekatharra

in the interests of that portion of the country, and with the object of examining the district between Nannine and Meekatharra to see if a railway were justified. On that occasion members accompanied the Premier, and there was a special train necessitating some considerable expense. There was also a parliamentary trip to Rottneest, with the object of seeing the improvements being carried out there. The cost was £35 for the hire of steamer, refreshments, etcetera. There were some of the items which made up the sum total of expenditure, and there were a hundred and one smaller sums in addition, all of which were justifiable in the interests of the State. Money had been spent in entertaining distinguished visitors who came to our shores, and surely members would not begrudge that disbursement?

Mr. JACOBY: What about the tomfoolery that took place when Parliament was opened and closed? What justification was there for that expenditure?

Mr. Taylor: That comes well from the hon. member for Swan.

The PREMIER: Surely that was a very unkind remark of the member for Mount Margaret. Those of us who had the opportunity of sitting under the presidency of the gentleman who had just referred to what he termed tomfoolery functions knew that he had not proposed to dispense with any of the frill attached to the opening of Parliament when he occupied the distinguished position of Speaker. This sudden desire for economy was not so apparent then as now. It was a question whether members would like to dispense with the guard of honour attached to the opening of Parliament. The Government were not very particular, although perhaps it was an encouragement to the men who, for the paltry sum of £6 a year, devoted their time to perfecting themselves so that they might, should occasion arise, be in a position to defend Western Australia. Surely for the sum of 4s. per man, and considering the added dignity which they lent to the opening of Parliament, members would not begrudge that small expenditure?

Mr. JOHNSON: Ministers defended the expenditure under the previous years vote, and he appreciated the fact that that was an exceptional year, for an election was pending and it was necessary for Ministers to go through the country. Surely, however, they did not anticipate another election, and one could not see where the exceptional expenditure would come in this year. There was no need to increase the item by £500.

The Premier: The election costs come in this year.

Mr. JOHNSON: Then he was to understand that the expenditure in excess of the vote of last year was not due to the general elections but for exceptional circumstances, and the extra £500 was needed this year in order to defray the extraordinary expenditure in connection with the elections.

The Premier: The hon. member understood nothing of the kind.

Mr. COLLIER: The Treasurer had not answered the question of the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) as to why details of the vote were missing from the report of the Auditor General. Early last year those items had been criticised in the country, and it was peculiar that now for the first time the items were omitted from the report. Would the Government give an assurance that they were not responsible for the omission?

The Premier: The Government do not sub-edit the Auditor General's report, for if they did it would be different from what it is.

Mr. COLLIER: There was no objection to the vote of £1,000 being granted for ceremonials and entertaining, but members should know how the money was expended.

The Premier: The items were only given in detail one year.

Mr. COLLIER: If the items were not given wrong impressions might get abroad as had been the case in connection with the visit of the Kalgoorlie band to the City. Some time ago the band were about to visit Ballarat to compete in the contests there, and a lengthy and eulogistic paragraph appeared in the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, saying that the Attorney General had entertained the band dur-

ing their visit to Perth, had taken them down the river in the police launch, and generally played the good fellow to them, and the general opinion on the fields then was that the Attorney General was responsible for that expenditure; but when the Auditor General's report came out it was found that the expenditure was debited to the State. There was no objection to the sum being paid by the State, but the public should know who was paying it so as to prevent an erroneous impression getting abroad in the Minister's own constituency that he was entertaining his constituents at his own cost. If a lump sum of £1,000 was voted this year it would be impossible for members to tell whether some of the money had not been expended in the recent elections by Ministers travelling around, not in the course of their duty but in the interests of their particular seats, or in order to bring out candidates against the Opposition. He would not say that such a thing had been done, but if information were not given in the report, such imputation against Ministers might exist, and it would be well in the interests of Ministers themselves that all details should be given, so that a wrong impression should not go abroad. In all likelihood, even with the increase voted this year, there would be an excess.

The TREASURER: What the reasons were which caused the Auditor General not to publish two or three columns of the details this year he did not know, but in his opinion it was very foolish for the details to have been published the previous year. Hon. members could get returns any time they liked.

Mr. Scaddan: Why did they not appear in the public accounts?

The TREASURER: The public accounts would then require to be as big as ledgers themselves.

Mr. TROY: The Treasurer would lead members to believe that the money had been spent in public services. He would give to the Committee some experience he had had in connection with Ministers who had been travelling, and in regard to the manner in which money had been spent. Just before the last elections

Ministers were attacked with a spasm of energy, and were found flying helter skelter in the State, hiring special trains in order to bring out candidates against members sitting in Opposition, and he had had the opportunity of seeing Ministers entertaining people in the Ministerial car with refreshments provided by the State; people who had no right to be there, and people who had been sounded in regard to their opposition to the sitting members. There was no doubt about it, the manner in which Ministers had been expending the people's money in order to secure the interests of their own supporters was somewhat unscrupulous.

The Treasurer: Had you not better quote instances?

Mr. TROY: When Ministers travelled around the country particularly in the constituencies of Opposition members, there was often a great deal of ground for complaint. Every penny which they expended in making themselves good fellows, was money which came out of a vote such as that which members were discussing.

The Treasurer: How do you know they were not travelling at their own expense?

Mr. TROY: One had only to look at reports to find they were not travelling at their own expense. They received 30s. a day allowance. He had known members on the Opposition side of the House who travelled with Ministers, and who sincerely regretted having done so.

The Treasurer: They why did they travel with them?

Mr. TROY: Because it was necessary as the Ministers were travelling in their constituencies. At the same time he could not help remarking that members on the Opposition side were glad to avail themselves of the courtesy of the majority of the Ministers, but there were Ministers who failed signally in that respect. Speaking for himself, he could not but say, that he had received the utmost courtesy at their hands. On this subject, the Auditor General on page 133 of his report had some comments to make. He said, "not only is this vote charged to one head, but the expenditure is charged under three different heads." He did not

wish to read further; members could read on and they would find there, striking indictments against the methods employed by Ministers. There was a motion to reduce the item by £500, and he would support it. He did not know of any more immoral proceeding than for Ministers to utilise the people's money to go round the country making themselves jolly good fellows, for the purpose of securing support. What he objected to was using the State's money for electioneering purposes; it was a very wrong proceeding, and it was extraordinary at the same time that a great portion of this expenditure should have been incurred just before the general elections. The Treasurer was good enough to read out the amount of the expenditure for this vote to pay the passages of those gentleman who attended the Premiers' Conference in Brisbane, yet here it was found that the whole amount, £208, was charged to miscellaneous services.

The Treasurer: I read out the steamship fares of four persons.

Mr. TROY: This vote, then, as he thought, could not have included the whole of the expenditure. However, the Committee could cut down the vote. Ministers would then be more scrupulous if they had less money to spend.

The Premier: We will travel less then.

Mr. TROY: Ministers should travel, but was there any necessity for the Colonial Secretary just before the elections, to proceed to North Coolgardie in the Ministerial car, and ordering a special train from Menzies to Leonora to take Mr. and Mrs. Gregory there?

The Minister for Works: My visit to Cue did not cost the State a halfpenny.

The Premier: Nor did the State pay for the freight on the motor car that was taken to Menzies.

Mr. TROY: The Ministerial car was placed at the disposal of Mr. Gregory and his wife, and it took them to Menzies; that in itself involved great expenditure. He could remember the outcry there was when members on the Opposition side were charged with living free in a cottage opposite Parliament House. There was not a word of truth in that, but it did not prevent members making the charge. All

he was doing, was to protest against members expending money to secure their own comfort and convenience and where there was no chance of the State receiving anything in return.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It had not been his intention to speak, but some paltry references had been made to expenditure of certain money in entertaining. Ministers must if they discharged their duties properly, travel about and become acquainted with the various parts of the State. Reference had been made to an item spent by himself with the assistance of the member for Ivanhoe in entertaining a body from the goldfields. In addition to the sum which was paid, Mr. Kitchener who supplied refreshments, the member for Ivanhoe and himself provided something to add to the quota. If goldfields people came down, surely it was not unreasonable that they should be shown some courtesy and it was a paltry thing to criticise it as if it had been something unusual. On another occasion the member for Ivanhoe and himself took some goldfields fire brigade men to Rottneet, and on that occasion something like £2 was incurred in entertaining them. Was that a sum to cavil at?

Mr. Walker : Here in the Auditor General's report is an item, "hire of drag and three horses, the hon. Mr. Keenan."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Those were the only two occasions on which he had entertained people. He had not been in the position to avail himself of any single opportunity to go on trips, although it was no credit to him to have to say so. It was the duty of members and Ministers to move about the country and the expenditure so incurred, was money well expended. There were numbers, including both members and Ministers, who if to-morrow they were asked to undertake one of these trips would not do so if it could reasonably be avoided. For there was always a certain amount of discomfort about these trips, and the set-off, if any, was by no means commensurate with this. Being in the position of one who seldom if ever made these trips, he could say without hesitation that it was almost a duty on members, and particularly on certain Ministers, to make these trips.

They should wherever possible visit every part of the country. It was only by this means that they would learn the requirements of the country.

Mr. Heitmann : They did not profit by the experience.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was not at all certain that all were as dull as the hon. member. Even he, if he travelled sufficiently, would find his perception brightening. There was nothing to gain by voting for the proposed reduction, because if at any time during the year it became necessary for Ministers and members to travel to any part of the State, they would certainly do so and the vote would be exceeded. What advantage then was there in voting for a reduction? It was futile. On the other hand could it be imagined that because the £1,000 was available that Ministers would wantonly spend the money unnecessarily? Of course not. That being so what possible good could be achieved by voting for the amendment? In respect to other items, when they were reduced the expenditure was prohibited; but so far as this item was concerned, if it could be shown to-morrow that it would be of benefit to the State that a visit should be made to any particular part of the State that visit certainly would be made even if there were not a penny of the item left.

Mr. JACOBY: The appeal of the Attorney General amounted to this: that because the Minister had helped a member to a pretty good time this should be taken as a justification for the item. The Committee had made reductions in salaries and had effected economies in several directions, and there was no justification for departing from the principle adopted by many members of the House, namely, to object to any increase such as this. If they were to agree to this increase of £500 asked for, they would not have the same opportunity of getting an explanation as to its expenditure as they would have if the item were kept down and subsequently exceeded. He trusted the Committee would adhere to the old amount. If necessary it could be exceeded and a subsequent explanation given. Seeing, however, that they had cut down incre-

ments to deserving servants of the State, he for one would object to this increase.

Mr. HOLMAN: Not only Ministers but members should visit as many parts of the State as they possibly could. It was well known that the salaries of hon. members would not permit them to pay expenses incidental to travelling about the State; and he maintained that when an hon. member, in the interests of the State paid a visit to some outlying part of the State, he should be entitled to some consideration. Whatever the amount that had been spent on the recent trip to Meekatharra, it was indeed fully justified. Members who had made that trip were able to see for themselves much that they would never have realised by listening to the speeches of hon. members more favourably circumstanced for knowing the true state of affairs in that district. He himself had visited many parts of the State at his own expense, and in different districts had seen for himself things which he would never properly have understood had he not visited those particular centres. Still he would protest strongly against Ministers visiting districts, not for the good of the country but for ulterior ends. For instance the Minister for Mines had visited Wiluna last June or July and had made a great many promises in respect to certain works, not one of which had been fulfilled. The Minister's mission up there had been to endeavour to induce a candidate to come out in opposition to him (Mr. Holman). That was what he protested against—expenditure of money for the purpose of enabling Ministers to visit different parts of the State in connection with political campaigns. On the other hand he was entirely in favour of any legitimate expenditure incurred by Ministers or members in visiting different parts of the State in order that they might realise the requirements of the various districts. The amount set down was not great, and it was to be remembered that not only did it cover the expenses of members visiting the different parts of the State but it covered also the expenses of entertaining distinguished visitors coming here from overseas. He was convinced that in a country like Western Australia Ministers

and members could not see too much of the State, so long as their object was to learn the requirements of the State and to determine how best assistance could be given to the opening up and development of the country.

[Mr. Taylor took the Chair.]

Mr. TROY: By way of reply to the contention of the Treasurer that Ministerial expenses were all shown under this item, he wished to quote the following from the Auditor General's report:—

"Item, Railway Fares and Travelling expenses generally of Distinguished Visitors, etc., £500.—According to the wording of this vote it is contended by the Auditor General that only railway fares and travelling expenses of distinguished visitors and other persons in the State, excluding Ministers and Government officials, should be charged. The Treasury, however, does not view the matter in this light, and expenses in connection with what may be termed 'State Ceremonials' are also included. For instance, a lunch given at Parliament House in honour of a distinguished visitor was charged.

Item, Ministerial and Parliamentary Visits, State Ceremonials, etc., £500: The charges to this vote include in some cases the expenses of Ministers and their secretaries while travelling, and apparently the expenses of the hon. Premier and his secretary are charged in all cases. On the other hand expenses of Ministers other than the hon. Premier are frequently met from the Incidental vote of the department controlled by them. It is noticed also that Ministerial expenses in connection with visits to the other States are charged to 'Incidental,' Item 56. Therefore travelling expenses are met from three sources.

Item, Incidental, £2,500.—Treasury Return No. 17 will give an idea of the expenditure from this vote. The Auditor General can have no knowledge as to what should be appropriated under the heading, because, as the name of the vote implies, the expenditure is incidental under miscellaneous." So not only were Ministers expending from this item under discussion, but from

the incidental items of their own departments. Thus it would be seen that members were not able to judge of the amount spent by Ministers, and had in consequence to accept the statements of Ministers that they paid their own expenses while electioneering. It seemed from the report of the Auditor General that travelling expenses of Ministers were drawn from three different sources. In other words the item under discussion by no means covered all that was expended by Ministers. What he desired to know was how much had been expended by Ministers and their secretaries while travelling during last year. All of this certainly should be charged to one item alone. He felt that he with others had been misled in the past in respect to this matter. He remembered the Minister for Mines saying in an electioneering speech that he had paid for the survey of the Mount Ida district out of his own pocket; yet later on the amount had been charged against Mr. Buzacott, it having been included in the costs of the court case. In a hundred ways it was to be found that Ministers had been spending money merely to get about the country just prior to a general election in order to rouse up their own supporters and, if possible, bring out a candidate against the Opposition member. It was impossible to say how much had been expended in this way from the other two sources. The member for Murchison had remarked that the Minister for Mines had gone to his electorate just prior to an election for the purpose of bringing out a candidate against the sitting member. In respect to this the State had had to pay for the use of a motor car and for the Minister's expenses round the country, and also for the expenses of two officials from the Mines Department. What advantage did the country derive from a trip of this character? The Minister for Mines had gone to his (Mr. Troy's) electorate and promised many things, including a reduction of battery charges. What had been the result? He (Mr. Troy) was tired of asking when the Minister was going to keep his word. None of the Minister's promises made on that occa-

sion had been fulfilled. Again, what result had the people of Katanning gained from the visit of the Minister for Mines and Railways? That Minister had gone to Katanning just prior to an election and had promised a reduction of railway freights; but again he had not kept his word. This was an electioneering matter. The State's money was used to assist Ministers to go round the country advertising themselves and making promises they never intended to fulfil, and helping candidates to oppose Opposition members. He protested against Ministers going through his electorate for electioneering purposes and charging their expenses against the incidental votes of their own departments, the country knowing nothing of how the money was spent. It was advisable for Ministers to go round the country, but not prior to elections in the manner indicated.

MR. DAGLISH: Since leaving office no Parliamentary trip had been attended by him, but it was absolutely essential that members should have opportunities of visiting different parts of the State, and greater facilities than were accorded in past years in this direction. Probably not five members of the Committee knew anything about more than half of the State. The great Northern part of the State was a *terra incognita* to almost every member. We were asked from time to time to deal with certain matters intended to work in the direction of developing the North, but we could have no knowledge, except hearsay knowledge, in regard to that part of the State; and as the facilities for travelling to the North were so costly, and the service so infrequent, and as members had few opportunities of sparing the time and cash requisite to pay a visit to the North, and as there was no doubt as to the large possibilities of the North, the Ministry should make some provision this year and in subsequent years to provide for passages and coach fares for members prepared to give up the time necessary to visiting the Northern areas so as to ascertain the possibilities of their future development. This could not be done unless some adequate provision was made on the Estimates.

Mr. Scaddan : What we object to is that the money is not used for that purpose.

Mr. DAGLISH : The vote could be useful as a means of educating members of Parliament so that they could discharge their duty to the State.

Mr. Collier : The hon. member must know that most of the money is spent by Ministers and not by members.

Mr. DAGLISH : It was the duty of every member of Parliament to know all about the State he could possibly acquire, but it was even more essentially the duty of Ministers to travel. If he were a representative of a district constituency, no matter on what side of the House he sat, he would want Ministers to occasionally visit his district so that they might know its requirements, and Opposition members were quite as anxious as members on the Government side to have Ministerial visits to their constituencies. Of course if a member had got his railway and had no other particular pressing need he was not anxious to have a Ministerial visit; but generally members on both sides of the House were anxious that Ministers should know the genuine requirements of their districts so that they might be met.

Mr. Heitmann : With promises; it is disgusting.

Mr. DAGLISH : Members were anxious to get these visits.

Mr. Heitmann : I am not.

Mr. DAGLISH : Probably the hon. member had all his district's requirements met. Members had not that degree of knowledge of the State, and particularly of the remote parts, they should have. He urged on the Treasurer to make provision out of this vote to enable members to pay visits to the North. He was prepared to support any judicious expenditure to enlarge the knowledge of members of Parliament and of Ministers themselves.

Mr. HEITMANN : It was his experience that it was generally before an election that Ministers visited places, and that they were instrumental in bringing out candidates opposed to members on the Opposition side of the House. Prior to the last election they had, unfortunately for the candidate, brought out an

opponent to him at Cue, and one of the conditions of this candidate was that he would stand if Ministers could find an opponent to the member for Murchison. Was it from this vote that Mr. Dyke got his expenses?

[*Mr. Daglish resumed the Chair.*]

Member : Who is Dyke?

Mr. HEITMANN : Mr. Dyke was a gentleman sent by the Ministry on a huge drunken picnic during the recent election campaign. It was to be trusted the time would never come when the Labour party would use such tactics as Ministers used during the elections.

The Treasurer : Is it charged to this vote?

Mr. HEITMANN was asking whether it was from this item that Ministers paid this gentleman's expenses.

The Treasurer : Whose expenses?

Mr. HEITMANN : The candidate Ministers sent to oppose the member for Murchison.

The Premier : We never saw the man.

Mr. HEITMANN : No, but Ministers communicated with him. The words came from the candidate himself that his expenses were paid, and he (Mr. Heitmann) was satisfied that the candidate did not pay them. The candidate was well acquainted with Ministers. It was an absolute disgrace for the Ministry to send a man on such a huge drunken picnic. From the time Mr. Dyke went on the Murchison until he left it he was never sober, and if his expenses were paid from this item members should reduce it.

Mr. Angwin : Perhaps he was a distinguished visitor on the Murchison.

Mr. BATH : The member who moved to reduce the item was asking us to take a leap in the dark, because we had no knowledge as to the amount of money necessary under this heading. What was objected to was the course of procedure adopted. The Auditor General informed us that, instead of this expenditure being made out of one specific item, it was made out of three different items according to the will of Ministers; and it would mean that if the expenditure under "Miscellaneous" appeared to be too large Ministers could charge it to the contingent-

cies or incidentals item of their own particular departments. Though not prepared to vote for the reduction proposed he would certainly vote for a reduction to call attention to the need for the expenditure being set down in one item, and for particulars of the expenditure being set forth each year, as was done for the financial year 1907. Then members would have a chance of examining the expenditure, to see whether it was warranted, and whether it was expenditure for the purpose for which the vote was set down, namely, to give Ministers an opportunity of visiting the various districts when invited to do so by residents, or of acquiring information in regard to works projected, in fact for necessary ministerial visits altogether apart from any consideration of party warfare. But in a Parliament such as this where party feeling was strong it was true that Ministers had used the allowance they were entitled to under the item to promote their own party interests and to the detriment of members of the Opposition. However, he would be satisfied if the expenditure was put under one heading so that we could assure ourselves that the Estimates before us included all that had been expended by Ministers in this direction, and if the practice embodied in the Auditor General's report for 1907 was continued in the future so that members could acquaint themselves with the items of expenditure and criticise anything they consider unwarranted.

Mr. TAYLOR: Some of the tactics adopted by Ministers just prior to the general elections must be condemned. At about that time great attention was paid to the districts North of Kalgoorlie, namely, Menzies, Mount Margaret, and Leonora. Not long previously the Colonial Secretary had been right through that district in connection with his candidature for the province. One would have thought that during that time he had become sufficiently acquainted with the district and its wants, but he found it necessary just before the general elections to go up two or three times. He had a special train taking him about with the object of looking for a likely candidate to oppose him (Mr. Taylor).

He was ultimately successful in finding a candidate, but the result was not very satisfactory from the Government point of view. Surely members did not pass the vote with the object of enabling Ministers to canvass for their constituencies against Opposition candidates. The Minister for Mines also went through the district at the cost of the State within a few months of the election. He was combining the business of the country with his own personal candidature for the Menzies seat. That was not a fair thing, and it was not placing the political views of both parties fairly before the country. An undue part was taken by the Ministry to help their own party to fight against the Opposition with the help of the people's money. It would be interesting to know exactly what it cost the State for the Colonial Secretary and the Minister for Mines to make those trips. There was an idea in the district that the Colonial Secretary was going to resign from the Upper House and run against him (Mr. Taylor) for the Mount Margaret seat, but he thought better of it and secured another candidate. It would also be interesting to know what it cost for the Government motor car to speed Ministers through those districts at the pace necessary to enable them to take advantage of their opponents.

The Premier : I will have pleasure in showing you receipted vouchers from the Railway Department for freight on the motor for every trip taken on a political occasion.

Mr. TAYLOR: Without doubt the Committee would be very pleased to look at those vouchers, and he was thankful to the Premier for the information. When the Premier went through that part of the country it was quite a different matter, for his visit was justifiable and was with the object of seeing the country. He would not support the amendment, for he did not believe in reducing that item. It was the duty both of Ministers and members to see the country from one end of it to the other. There was a great deal of the State he had not yet visited, and he could not do so at his own expense, for financial reasons. It was money well spent for both

Ministers and members to become thoroughly acquainted with the country for which they had to legislate. Abuses, however, had occurred, and quite sufficient had been said during the debate to show Ministers that members realised the extent of such abuses, and it was unnecessary for them to reduce the item in order to draw pointed attention to this fact. An item of this description was very necessary.

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

Ayes	8
Noes	33

Majority against .. 25

AYES.

Mr. Collier	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Heilmann	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Walker
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Troy

(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Hudson
Mr. Barnett	Mr. Male
Mr. Bath	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Carson	Mr. Monger
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Davies	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Draper	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Gill	Mr. Price
Mr. Goarley	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gordon	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Ware
Mr. Hayward	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Holman	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Hopkins	Mr. Layman
Mr. Horan	

(Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Item, Railway fares and travelling expenses generally of distinguished visitors, etc., £600:

Mr. HOLMAN: An explanation was needed on this item. He was not satisfied that the railway fares of some so-called distinguished visitors should be paid. For instance, Mr. Doolette was here for the sole purpose of speculating or of making something out of the State, and yet he was granted a free pass. Not only that, but Mrs. Doolette also received a free pass, and there were a great many other cases of a similar

nature. Returns should be placed on the Table showing who the distinguished visitors were. There was no doubt that much good resulted through issuing free passes to some people, but there were others to whom the courtesy should not be extended.

The Treasurer: The principal item under this heading was expenditure incurred in connection with the visit of the Governor General to the State. Special trains cost something like £385. He travelled to the Murchison.

Mr. Holman: Is Mr. Doolette's name down there?

The TREASURER: It was not on that list, it must have been the year before. The list also showed that special trains to Munding were provided for visiting footballers, the Canadian lacrosse players, and there was also a grant of £80 to the municipality of Perth for entertaining Lord and Lady Northcote.

Mr. Troy: Why could not the municipality pay an expense like that?

The TREASURER: It was the usual thing to make a grant in such circumstances, and there was a grant for entertaining Senator Best, but the list showed that the total was made up principally of the cost of special trains. Free passes were also issued to Dr. Barnardo's boys.

Mr. Troy: Tell us to whom the free passes on the railway were issued?

The PREMIER: A free pass was given to Mr. Morgan, who was sent out here by the Associated Board of Trade; he went over the whole of the State, and took evidence at different places. A pass was given to Mr. Hitchins. Accommodation was provided for Federal legislators, and this amount of £13 9s. 4d. has been held over for three years. A pass was issued to the Rev. Mr. Wright and the Rev. Mr. Meares; the latter was connected with Dr. Barnardo's boys, the Rev. Mr. Rice and Mrs. Nolan, Mr. Ramsay McDonald, and the New South Wales footballers. All these were given passes on the railway.

Mr. HORAN: There was no objection to passes being given, but to the return for 1907 some exception might be taken. Mr. Teesdale Smith received a pass

worth £75. Under the regulations he was perhaps entitled to one trader's pass. There was another pass granted to someone named Shotridge, £40, and he did not know whether the circumstances in that case justified the granting of it. Another pass was given to Mr. Karri Davis who was well able to pay.

Item. Entertaining American Fleet, £2,000:

Mr. ANGWIN: It was necessary that we should have some information with regard to the expenditure which had been incurred in this direction by the committee appointed in connection with the visit of the American Fleet. The Commonwealth Government he believed also provided £2,000 for the entertainment of the Fleet during their visit to Albany, but the statement laid on the Table of the House showed that the expenditure had run into £4,500. Where was the balance to come from?

The Premier: When the Estimates were framed, the accounts sent in totalled £4,000.

Mr. ANGWIN: It appeared to him that the committee did very little as far as entertaining the men and the Fleet was concerned.

The Treasurer: You should have been at Albany.

Mr. Troy: He was there.

Mr. ANGWIN: A good deal of money was spent on the entertainment of those people who went to Albany from the City.

The Premier: All the men were provided with free lunches every day.

Mr. ANGWIN: The Sailors' Rest received a small grant for entertaining sailors. Was that where they got their free lunches?

The Premier: No.

Mr. ANGWIN: There was no account in the return for entertaining sailors. There was a sum of £384 paid to Mr. Kitchener; that was the only account for catering. When the Committee took into consideration the amount given to the Sailors' Rest, some £24 to entertain 7,000 or 8,000 sailors, and then compared that amount with the grant of £85 12s. given

to the Albany club, it was only proper that members should have an opportunity of securing some information with regard to the actions of the committee who had the control of this money. Taking into consideration that the gentlemen who represented the Albany club, many of whom were wealthy, were not able to afford to entertain distinguished visitors at their club without dipping into State funds, he could not help saying that such a club was a disgrace to the State of Western Australia, and should immediately have its licence cancelled. Then there was a band at Albany, and on all the visiting ships there were bands also. He was not aware that there was any necessity for providing special music at Albany to entertain sailors from vessels all of which boasted bands, but the committee who had charge of the entertainment were not content with engaging the Albany band at a cost of £50, but they thought it advisable to engage the Perth band as well at a cost of £165.

The Premier: The Perth band played right throughout the week.

Mr. ANGWIN: The Albany band should have been quite sufficient to meet all requirements. It was also found that the mayor of Albany was very generous during the time of the visit of the Fleet. He gave a ball to the officers of the Fleet and the visitors, and on looking through the accounts it was found that this cost £197. There were many people holding the office of mayor who would give balls daily at that cost if the money was provided for them. There was also an account for railway fares amounting to £271. Why was there a necessity for that amount, and again, why was it necessary to have furniture sent down to Albany, furniture hired from a Perth firm at a cost of £201? We knew that the officers and men spent most of their time on their vessels; where then was the necessity for incurring this expenditure? The Government had sent the "Penguin" to Albany; and there were there innumerable launches belonging to the Fleet, continually plying between the vessels and the shore. Notwithstanding this it had been found necessary to hire one of the Adelaide Steamship Company's launches

at a cost of £82. Another £20 had been given to McIlwraith, McEacharn, and Company by way of hire of a launch. These launches had been required for the purpose of putting fruit on board the American vessels. One would have thought that seeing the Government had there a steamer of their own they would have utilised that vessel for the purpose of sending the fruit over, and so have saved £100. Then there was the cost of the Press dinner given at Albany. This, with certain accommodation, had run into £143; yet it was well known that there were but few pressmen with the Fleet.

Mr. Collier: "Dryblower" was down there.

Mr. ANGWIN: And £5 or £6 had been paid for copies of the song "We have a big brother in America." No doubt "Dryblower" had been down there, and been down there for business. There was one item the necessity for which he (*Mr. Angwin*) could not possibly see: that was the expenditure of £400 on advertising the fact that the Fleet was coming to Western Australia. Every child in the street had known that the Fleet was coming, and there had been no necessity whatever to expend this large amount of money in disseminating that information. One gentleman had secured £33 for wines. He appeared to be rather a favoured person; because since then he had been made a member of the Fremantle Harbour Trust. It was satisfactory to notice that very few officers of the State had encroached upon the funds granted to the Committee for entertaining the Fleet visitors. So far as he could see there were only two officers who had had anything to do with the work on behalf of the committee. They were *Mr. Parker*, the Secretary to the Executive Council, and *Mr. Ford*, the Parliamentary typist. Yet it was very strange that the under secretary in the Colonial Secretary's Department could not go to Albany to see the Fleet without charging his expenses to the Committee. It was indeed strange that that officer should have bobbed up on this occasion and charged his expenses to the committee. Speaking generally he (*Mr. Angwin*) wanted to say that those who had had

control of the finances in connection with the entertainment of the Fleet had not used any economy whatever. Indeed they had wilfully wasted the money placed at their disposal.

The TREASURER: It was indeed surprising to hear what the member had had to say in regard to this item. It would be remembered that the entertainment of the Fleet had been carried out by a joint committee consisting of Federal members of both Houses and of leading citizens of Western Australia. He ventured to think that if the member for East Fremantle had been on the committee the expenditure would have been just the same.

Mr. Collier: Who constituted the local committee?

The TREASURER: The President of the Legislative Council had been one, while the Leader of the Opposition was another.

Mr. Scaddan: The Leader of the Opposition did not go near the place.

The TREASURER: Probably because he had had something else to do. If that gentleman had thought it at all necessary to go down to look after the expenditure, he would have been there. The committee had had a large body of men to entertain and they had to be entertained worthily, and in a manner creditable to Western Australia. The expenditure was not at all excessive. The expressions of goodwill and thanks and gratitude had been overwhelming for the way in which the men of the Fleet had been entertained. It was a misrepresentation to say that these men had not left their vessels. Every day large numbers had been landed and freely entertained. It had not been a question of reduced prices; it had been a matter of entertainment free to any and all of the visitors. The Albany club had been thrown open to these guests during their stay in Albany. He (*the Treasurer*) had visited Albany at the time, and as far as he could see he was satisfied that the money could not have been better expended.

Mr. Troy: What are the results?

The TREASURER: The results would be enormous. Already highly gratifying letters were coming in; while articles were being published far and wide throughout

the United States, drawing attention to Western Australia. Official communications had been received expressing intense good-will towards the people of Western Australia and stating that in no part of the world which the Fleet had visited had its officers and men been better received than in Western Australia.

Mr. BATH: When first invited to take a seat on the committee, he had thought that perhaps the occasion was one that would not justify lavish expenditure. Still on further consideration the necessity of giving the heartiest welcome to the American representatives had impressed him. He had attached a great deal of importance to the occasion—far more importance perhaps than had certain other members. When he realised that the black races and the Asiatic races were increasing in a much greater ratio than the white races, and that the Americans upheld the prestige of the white races on the other side of the Pacific, he was imbued with the necessity for extending a worthy welcome to the representatives of that nation, and for doing all that was possible to seal the bond of friendship between the British and the American people. It was unfortunate that at the time the committee was appointed the electioneering campaign had already been embarked on, and naturally he found it necessary to devote his attention to electioneering matters. He could have resigned from the committee, but he recognised there would be criticism. There never yet was expenditure of this nature where there was not criticism from somebody as to the way in which the money was expended, however representative the committee might be. Therefore he felt it was not for him to resign, because it might be thought he wanted to relieve himself of any responsibility. The only committee meeting he attended dealt with the supply of fruit, and the questions of the desirability of illuminating Albany and of providing facilities for visitors to Albany inspecting the Fleet. Through contracting an attack of influenza during the election campaign he had been unable to attend other meetings or visit Albany, but the other members of the committee fulfilled their duties to the best of their belief of

what was right, and he took his share of the responsibility.

Mr. COLLIER: Few would not agree to the need for giving a true welcome to the American Fleet, but the objection was in regard to the manner in which the money was spent. We did not know the names of the committee.

Mr. BATH: The committee consisted of the three editors of the Perth daily newspapers, with Mr. Moson of the Adelaide Steamship Company, the Commissioner of Railways, the President of the Legislative Council, the Mayors of Albany, Perth, and Fremantle, and the State's Federal representatives here at the time. There may have been others.

Mr. COLLIER: The names were interesting in view of some of the items of expenditure. Perhaps it was owing to the fact that there were three editors on the committee that such a large amount was absolutely thrown away in advertising. The mayor of Albany received £197 for entertaining the officers of the Fleet at a ball. It was evident that the secretary of the committee, who was a public servant drawing £350 per annum, while attending to the duties of the committee could not perform the duties he had to carry out in Perth.

The Treasurer: They were accumulating.

Mr. COLLIER: Had the Government to pay extra to overtake those arrears of work?

The Treasurer: The officer worked overtime.

Mr. COLLIER: We all had opportunities of knowing how that officer worked overtime. One objected to any civil servant drawing this salary getting an honorarium of £31, while another officer, who probably did all the hard work in typing and getting out the returns, received only a paltry £5. Mr. Parker also drew a travelling allowance of 15s. a day between Perth and Albany. He (Mr. Collier) could manage his travelling on 15s. a week. Again, what was Mr. North doing at Albany? Not only was Mr. North allowed to get away from his duties for a week or so to enjoy a holiday at Albany entertaining the Fleet, but he was paid £6 1s. 3d. for travelling expenses though

receiving a salary of £600 per annum. The item £201 for hire of furniture seemed large, and one would imagine that almost all the flags in the State could be purchased for the £87 17s. 6d. paid for their hire. There was also an item of £46 for damage to the flags. They must have had a stormy week at Albany. Something like £500 was spent for fruit. Allowing 1s. a pound for the fruit supplied there must have been about four tons of fruit distributed among the Fleet. However, the principal items objected to were the travelling allowance to Mr. North and the honorarium given to Mr. Parker. Whoever was responsible for giving that present to Mr. Parker had not done his duty.

Mr. SCADDAN: We were wise in entertaining the Fleet to the best of our ability, and we had obtained a good advertisement for it, but one protested against the manner in which the money was spent, a great proportion of it being spent in entertaining not the Fleet but citizens of the State, many of them well able to entertain themselves. It was said the Albany club were exceptionally generous in the way they treated the officers of the Fleet, but we now ascertained that even this money was paid by the State. It was the same in regard to the mayor's ball; it was not generally understood by the public that they paid for these entertainments. The committee were apparently very extravagant. It should have been an Albany committee and not a committee situated in Perth. There must have been a considerable sum spent in communicating between Albany and Perth. Up to within a few hours of the arrival of the Fleet practically nothing was done in Albany. The people there could get no satisfaction from the Perth committee, application after application for money with which to decorate the town being made without any reply from Perth. As a matter of fact they were hampered, as the Perth committee did not pay attention to these matters. Eventually they had to take action themselves and run the risk of the committee declining to foot the bill. Had they not done this the whole affair would have been a farce. With regard to the amount of

£394 paid to the caterer, mention must be made of the way in which the waiters were treated. Surely when waiters were taken from Perth to Albany they should have received the same rate of wages for the long hours they worked as they would have done had they remained in Perth, and should have been paid the necessary travelling expenses. These men had to appeal to the courts of the State in order to get what was due and promised to them. He did not desire to make either Mr. Kitchenor or Mr. Parker responsible. The former handed over the engagement of the men to another person. When the case was heard the magistrate sympathised with the waiters, and said they were absolutely justified in appealing to the court to receive the amount promised to them. The committee need expect no thanks from the public for the way they worked. A number of the members of the committee did not even go to Albany. The whole matter was discussed in Albany by the local people with a certain amount of disgust.

Mr. TROY: There was a sum of £200 for which provision was not made on the Estimates.

The Treasurer: There were still some outstanding accounts, for the full amount was not known at the time the Estimates were framed.

Mr. TROY: It appeared that the total cost to the State of the mayor's ball was about £200. He yielded to none in his desire to honour the American visitors, but he must take exception to the manner in which some of the money was spent. For instance, advertisements was a very considerable item, and each of the papers did good business in connection with the visit. Then as to the Adelaide Steamship Company. There was not sufficient public spirit among the steamship companies to put a small boat at the disposal of the committee at Albany. Surely they might have done so considering the fact that they did enormous trade with Western Australia and benefited by the arrival of the Fleet. The Adelaide Steamship Company was paid £82 for the hire of a small boat for a few days. The Premier gave a dinner to the pressmen at a cost of £142, and one would have thought from the re-

ports in the Press that he paid that sum out of his own pocket: not that he should be expected for one moment to do so, but it looked as if he was actually the host on that occasion. The only persons on the committee who did not benefit in some way or other by the expenditure of money in connection with the visit of the Fleet were the Federal representatives and the Leader of the Opposition. In almost every other case—in the case of the Premier, the mayor of Albany, and the manager of the Adelaide Steamship Company, huge sums were received from the total sum, and these persons took credit for the expenditure. The *Sunday Times* was given £108 for producing 3,000 copies of their paper to be forwarded to America. Doubtless the object of sending the papers there was to show the high class of journalism in this State. It was a class of journalism which would publish almost any sort of story and stop at no innuendo or lie. We were told that 3,000 copies of the paper were posted by the State to America at a cost of £26. A sample of advertisements of this kind was shown by the article written by a Victorian, stating that in that State free homestead farms and 8,000 dollars would be given to intending settlers. The visitors had been treated in a royal manner, but several persons in the State had benefitted by the way the money was expended to an extraordinary degree. Then there was the amount received by an officer of another place. He was paid in all about £60, notwithstanding the fact that he was drawing his salary all the time. He charged for travelling expenses to Albany £3 15s. The journey there and back only took two days. On further examination of the accounts it was found, however, that other travelling expenses amounting to £10 were paid to that gentleman, so that altogether he received £13 15s. for travelling to Albany and back. What did that gentleman do for the money he received? He enjoyed himself at Albany, and that was all. The typist of the House did all the hard work.

Mr. S. F. Moore: He made two trips to Albany.

Mr. TROY: Would the member for Irwin spend £13 15s. in going to Albany

and back? No, he would not spend five-pence. Then there was the case of Mr. North. What on earth took him there? Who asked him to go there, and what business had he there? He should have been in his office in Perth. What was he paid for? Was he paid to go to Albany and enjoy himself with the officers of the American Fleet, and to be paid in addition to his salary £6 for travelling expenses? He desired to take strong exception to the manner in which high-salaried civil servants exploited the State for their own social advantage. These officers put on more style and exhibited more impudence than even the Treasurer, and it was high time a protest was made against the State spending money on their behalf. This was not the first time Mr. North had acted in this manner, and it would not be the last. We should remind that gentleman and others like him that their places were in their offices in the City, and that the State would not pay their travelling expenses to Albany and so enable them to enjoy themselves. While all agreed that there was good reason for spending money, there was no doubt that it should have been spent more wisely. As it was, the next Estimates would show that a further amount of some £200 would have to be paid.

Mr. HOLMAN: There was one phase of the question not touched upon and that was the discourteous manner in which some of our Senators were treated in connection with the festival. The Premier gave a dinner to the pressmen at Albany and this State and the Commonwealth paid for it, but although the Federal Senators were in Albany and were members of the committee, they were treated with great discourtesy by not being invited to the dinner. That was an example of very bad taste, and it was very boorish for any man to act like that. The question was mentioned by the Premier even at the time the dinner was going on and the reason given was that one of them did not have a dress suit. If that was so, and he had it on the words of one of the Senators, he could not help saying that it was a standing disgrace to treat a man in such a way, because he did not have a dress suit.

Mr. ANGWIN: His objection was that the money was not used for entertaining the Fleet, but was wasted. The Treasurer had pointed out what a splendid advertisement had been given to the country, but there was another advertisement given to the country at the same time. On the Monday night when crowds of people were being entertained there, between 30 and 40 men arrived at Albany to go on relief works, men who were poor and penniless and who had to tramp round Albany next morning to beg their breakfast. That kind of thing would be detrimental to Western Australia, and he could not help repeating that the money was wilfully wasted.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: There was one item that he would like the Treasurer to refer to, and that was the railway fares. There was an amount of £291 on the statement for railway fares. It was generally known that very few of the officers and pressmen utilised the railways of this State, and members were led to believe that most of the railway fares were for visitors to Albany. At that time there were some ugly remarks with regard to the number of people who went down to Albany "on the nod," particularly in the ministerial train. If we were going to pay the fares, or were going to give free trips to scores of people in the State, that would not be the way to advertise the State.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: With regard to the invitations to the Federal legislators to attend the Press dinner at Albany, he had spoken to the Premier, who said that as far as he was aware, invitations were issued to all the members of the State and the Federal Parliaments.

Mr. Bolton: Senator Lynch was deliberately ignored.

Mr. HOLMAN: Senator Pearce had informed him that Senator Lynch was ignored. No invitation was given to him, and he would mention that even on the occasion, Mr. Moran drew attention to the fact, because he thought there had been a mistake. Invitations may have been sent out, and not received, but when attention was drawn to the fact, and the remark was made which he had previously

mentioned, it was very bad taste to say the least of it that nothing further was done. With regard to the matter mentioned by the member for Forrest, it had been said that the Treasurer himself went through the barrier at the railway station accompanied by five ladies.

The Treasurer: I took the members of my family.

Mr. HOLMAN: If the Treasurer assured the House that it was the individual members of his family that he took, he (Mr. Holman) would be the last to say anything about it. A Minister when travelling through the country should be entitled to take his wife with him, but he strongly objected to any Treasurer taking not only the ladies of his own family, but other ladies as well.

Item, Subsidy to Municipalities on General Rates, £43,000:

Mr. ANGWIN: There was a large reduction in subsidies in municipalities. It might have been a good system to reduce the subsidies which were paid to municipalities, but in his opinion, it would have been far better if the Government declined to give further grants, and assisted municipalities to the extent of the amounts they realised in rates. He was sorry that the Treasurer had seen fit to reduce the municipal subsidies during the last five years by 60 per cent. That had had a tendency to put many municipalities in such a position that it was almost an impossibility for them to carry on. If it was necessary owing to the financial condition of the State to do this, and he maintained it was not, the Government should immediately have taken some steps to enable the municipalities throughout the State to raise more revenue. They were limited so far as striking the rates was concerned. The limit which was fixed some years ago was sufficient at that time, but now it was necessary that greater powers should be given to enable them to realise a larger revenue than they could obtain to-day. He would rather see increased subsidies paid on the amount of rates realised, and all direct grants wiped out.

Mr. WALKER: If the member for East Fremantle had occasion to complain of the diminution of the sum voted for

subsidies, what about the members representing out-back constituencies? In his own electorate (Kanowna) the reduction of the subsidy had caused it to suffer very considerably from lack of funds.

Mr. JOHNSON drew attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung, a quorum formed.

[*Mr. Taylor took the Chair.*]

Mr. WALKER: Considering the extravagant votes the Committee had passed for luxuries, votes which might well have been curtailed, to have to submit to curtailment in necessary expenditure for good government as he submitted was the case in connection with these subsidies for mining townships, was indeed a sad reflection upon the condition of the State. No worse advertisement could be given to the State than the neglect of the mining municipalities. That they were neglected the Minister for Works and the Minister for Mines knew well, and what made it more difficult for these people to bear up with their financial obligations under these circumstances was the fact that occasionally promises were made, and those promises were not always fulfilled. We must attend to the outlying portions of the State. It was these mining townships that had made the State what it was, and he was not sure that these small mining towns were not of greater importance to us than the larger townships, such as Kalgoorlie. He maintained that the mining industry was just as important to the State in its present stage of development as was agriculture itself. The advancement of these mining localities did not depend alone upon the Minister for Mines. The Minister for Works and the Treasurer each had to bear his share. These outback places should be made desirable in order that the people living in them might be content with their surroundings. It was an objectionable feature in Government that there was no give and take, no allowance for special circumstances, and no special inducements offered where required. What would have been known of Western Australia, beyond a few miles from the coast, had it not been for the mining pioneers?

Yet when the pioneers had finished their brave work, had conquered the desert and brought wealth to the State, the Government in everyone of its departments stopped expenditure and gave these out-back districts no further chance of advancing. It was not government; it was blind fatuity, it was following despairing fate. It was objectionable from every standpoint, and therefore he would protest against this reduction of subsidies to municipalities, and against the hard and fast rule which made no distinction between municipalities. Municipalities in mining constituencies should be nursed and nourished, and every inducement should be offered to make, if possible, the people residing in them feel contented with their environment. Yet to increase the hardships in every direction seemed to be the policy of the Government; against that policy he emphatically protested.

Item, Parks and Recreation Grounds, etc., Grants for Maintenance and Improvements, £4,500:

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Some information seemed necessary as to where this money was spent and to what purpose.

The TREASURER: Details of last year's expenditure under this heading would be found on page 54 of the Government accounts for that financial year. The largest item was for the upkeep of King's Park, £2,300. Other items were distributed according to the requirements of the different centres as represented to the Treasury. There was an amount of £300 spent at Kalgoorlie and another of £100 for the Kalgoorlie roads board. Kanowna had had £25, while £250 had been expended on Lake Monger.

Mr. Walker: Contrast that with Kanowna.

The TREASURER: In any such contrast the difference in population should be considered.

Mr. Walker: I want my fair proportion.

The TREASURER: The hon. member had got his proportion.

Mr. A. A. Wilson: How much for Collie?

The TREASURER: Collie did not appear on the list. Collie evidently was satisfied, for no application had been made for a grant. It was necessary to make application, when enquiries were made into the necessity for the grant asked for.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The explanation given by the Treasurer was not wholly satisfactory. Practically the whole of this grant was being swallowed up by a few parks and reserves. The Treasurer had mentioned half a dozen different districts in receipt of grants; yet surely applications had been made from other portions of the State which had not been treated very favourably.

The Treasurer: I do not know one of them.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: In the distribution of these grants, due consideration was not always paid to the various districts. He trusted that a more equitable distribution would come about in the future. As for Collie, if the only reason why it had no grant was its failure to make application, possibly the Treasury would be double-banked during this year. He hoped that in regard to these grants every part of the State would receive equal attention from the Treasurer in next year's Estimates.

Mr. TROY: In respect to remote portions of the State, the necessity should be borne in mind of providing some means of recreation for the residents. He had no desire to cut down the grants given to localities adjacent to the City; because he believed that money expended in the provision of recreation grounds for the people was wisely expended. Still, there were localities out-back where the people had few if any advantages. The outlook was barren, and in no sense conducive to enjoyment. He knew of people living in the mulga, on bare, barren plains, who painfully enough collected among themselves a few pounds to provide a park and plant trees. But it cost these people a considerable amount for water, and he thought that in order to encourage them to remain where they were it was advisable that some consideration should be given to them. The people living in remote portions of the State laboured under

many disadvantages, and special efforts should be made to encourage them to continue their work in the development of the country. If the Treasurer would assist in making these places worth living in, the people would remain there and continue that good work of development.

Mr. WALKER: It was not for a moment contended that there should be as much spent in Kanowna as in Perth or Kalgoorlie; but it was altogether out of proportion that there should be over £2,000 spent for recreation purposes in Perth proper, and only £25 spent in Kanowna. The contrast was too extreme. It was to be considered also that apart altogether from King's Park, which was costing between £2,000 and £3,000 per annum, Perth was well supplied with recreation reserves. There were the Queen's Gardens, the Zoological Gardens, the Government Gardens, and the Domain; and then contiguous to Perth, Subiaco and other suburbs were all receiving similar grants for their reserves. One municipality in the Kanowna electorate which had not a tithe of the population of Kanowna received the same sum. It was not too much; the point was that Kanowna was receiving too little. There was no judgment in allocating this money. Why should not Perth do its share of sackcloth and ashes? Why was all the saving at the expense of outlying districts? There would be no complaint if King's Park had to do a little economising while the depression existed. The people in the metropolis should take their fair share of the retrenchment, and more consideration should be given to the outlying municipalities, whose services to the State we could not too much appreciate.

Mr. TROY: Would new localities be added to the list of districts sharing in this grant?

The Treasurer: Certainly, if they can justify their claim.

Mr. TROY: Was the money allocated in proportion to population or in keeping with the amounts collected in the districts?

The TREASURER: First of all the grants made in the past were considered, then the efforts made locally to raise funds. He assisted a ground that as-

sisted itself by charging fees for cricket pitches and such like. Of course population was taken into consideration, and a new place was given preference to an older locality.

Mr. Walker: Are you punishing Kanowna for being old?

The **TREASURER:** The hon. member should know Kanowna was suffering from decay; the population was not sufficient; there was not that enthusiasm to keep a recreation ground going; but Kanowna got exactly the same treatment as any other goldfields centre. He had always endeavoured to give what the hon. member asked; in fact the hon. member had not asked for more than £25 and thought he was generously treated.

Mr. Walker: I asked for all I could get, but could get no more.

The **TREASURER:** It would be well if the responsibility for allocating this fund could be put on some proper basis, such as was done in regard to mechanics' institutes and fire brigades, the grants in the former case being allocated on the scale of financial membership, and in the latter case on the amount of collections made by the various brigades. One could not fix on any basis for this vote unless we made a hard and fast rule and paid on amounts locally subscribed, but if that were done not one ground in twenty would receive assistance.

Mr. JOHNSON: Last year the expenditure had been kept under the vote, as was usually done; and this year, although the vote was reduced by £500, there would be a percentage kept in hand, so that the amount to be distributed would be less than last year's expenditure by £500. King's Park received £2,300, and was to be given the same sum this year. Consequently other recreation grounds receiving the balance over the £2,300 for King's Park would have to be reduced. King's Park should suffer a proportionate reduction.

The **TREASURER:** Last year £4,300 was spent, of which sum £2,300 went to King's Park. This year he proposed to spend £4,500, but King's Park would receive no more than last year. The fact was the grant to that park had been reduced by him since in office £500 or £600.

When this reduction was first made the trustees struggled through for seven or eight months, but then, during his absence from the State, they obtained an additional £300. The park was a big one and took a lot of money to keep in proper order, and surely none would like to see it go to ruin.

Mr. M'DOWALL: Coolgardie seemed to have been omitted from the vote altogether, notwithstanding the fact that there was the finest garden there outside of Perth.

Item, Police Benefit Fund pound for pound subsidy, £2,230:

Mr. BOLTON: It would be remembered that the House decided by resolution, and a promise was given by the Ministry, that so far as practicable the police would get one day's leave a month. Since the introduction of that reform the subscription of the constables to this fund had been increased to the extent of exactly one day's pay a month. In other words, if the subscription of a constable paid towards the benefit fund were one day's pay a month previously to the reform, now, it was raised to two days' pay per month. That was never the intention of Parliament. Perhaps the Government had not understood the question and had allowed the Commissioner to make an increased levy on constables, corporals, and sergeants to the extent of one day's pay per month, in order to make up for the one day's leave a month granted to them. Owing to this fact the subsidy paid by the Government would also be increased.

Mr. COLLIER: Surely it would be better to discuss this question when the Police Department Estimates were before the Committee.

The **CHAIRMAN:** An opportunity would be afforded when that vote was under discussion.

Mr. JOHNSON: There was mention in the Estimates of an expenditure during last year of £72 in connection with the Illingworth inquiry.

The **CHAIRMAN:** There was no such item on this year's Estimates, for the sum mentioned only referred to last year's expenditure and was inserted for

purposes of comparison. The item could not be discussed now.

Mr. JOHNSON: The money was paid without the authority of Parliament.

The Treasurer: The item would be mentioned in the Excess Bill.

Item, Price of Meat Commission, £500:

Mr. ANGWIN: Would that sum pay the cost of the Commission?

The TREASURER: That was the estimate, and he hoped it would pay the cost.

Item, Gwalia Hotel—maintenance, including salary and wages of Manager, etc., £8,000:

Mr. ANGWIN: Some explanation was needed as to the management of the hotel. A little while ago the manager was severely criticised at an inquest held on the body of a man found near the hotel. The jury condemned the manager for the manner in which the hotel was conducted and, in fact, it was almost thought that a case of manslaughter had occurred just outside the premises. If this had happened to any ordinary publican for a surety his licence would have been taken away. Was inquiry made as to the verdict, and if so, was it found that the verdict was in accordance with the facts? If it were not in accordance with the facts then a statement should be made to that effect.

Mr. BATH: A public inquiry was held into the circumstances of the case, and it was found that the charges were absolutely unfounded. It was ascertained subsequently that the foreman of the jury was a hotelkeeper in Leonora. There had been a great deal of hostility between Gwalia and Leonora over the question of the hotel at the latter place, for it was said that it affected the interests of the Leonora people. With regard to this item he feared that the original idea for the establishment of the hotel, which was to set an example as to how a hotel should be conducted on lines which would do away with many of the evils consequent on the liquor traffic, had been departed from. It seemed that the idea was possibly to help the Treasurer to "square" the finances by making as much money out of the hotel as possible. Kudos had been taken by those running

the hotel for the profit earned. He was not anxious to see the hotel earn a big profit as long as we protected the interests of the State as far as the expenditure was concerned; that was all that was wanted.

The Treasurer: Do you want to reduce the price?

Mr. Angwin: Make the accommodation cheaper.

Mr. BATH: There had been a request made repeatedly for the establishment of something connected with the hotel which would be in the nature of a club room of an elevating tendency.

The Minister for Mines: I offered to do that for them, but they refused it.

Mr. BATH: At a deputation which waited on the Minister at Gwalia this request was made and the Minister promised to accede to it. Now he would certainly like to hear from the Minister why these people had refused the offer, because it had been a grievance of theirs. About six months ago these people wrote to him and asked him when the promise was going to be fulfilled. Other Ministers had also been waited on with the request that this room should be established.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: With regard to the library promised in connection with the State hotel, he promised a deputation which waited on him, that the Government would build a club room alongside the hotel; that in fact it would be a portion of the hotel and that it would be controlled by a committee, but it would be under the management of the manager of the hotel. They wrote to him afterwards—he was speaking from memory—and urged that in connection with the club room, that it was their desire to have it apart altogether from the hotel. He (the Minister) declined to do that.

Mr. Gourley: On the same block?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The block was not big enough, but he had made arrangements with the association for two blocks of ground to enable them to make extensions. The Government were prepared then to put up an additional room subject to this new building being under the control of the manager of

the hotel. The people at Gwalia desired that it should be under the control of themselves, and that was the reason why the work was not carried out.

Mr. SCADDAN: These people contended that as the revenue derived from the State hotel was really obtained from the pockets of the residents of Gwalia, a certain proportion should be returned in the direction of building this club room, and making it something of an institute. There were some people at Gwalia who would have an objection to spending all their time at the hotel premises. If this club room were separated by only a small lane from the hotel premises, and the entrance faced the railway line, then, even though it were controlled by the manager of the hotel to the extent the Minister desired, he did not think there would be any further difficulty about its construction. He was afraid there had been some misunderstanding because the people were very keen about it.

[Mr. Daglish resumed the Chair.]

Mr. JOHNSON: Unless this proposed institution was directly under the control of the manager of the hotel, he doubted very much whether the money available could be used for the purpose of erecting it. If anything else were done, he would certainly protest against the money being spent. Why should we provide the people of this locality with an institute out of special funds? We had established an hotel there, and fortunately for the State, it had turned out a success, and now the people said that simply because the State had a hotel and derived certain profits from it, they wanted the State to grant them special consideration, more than was granted to any other portion of the State. If the Gwalia people wanted a separate institute, they must get it erected on the pound for pound subsidy system as was done everywhere else. It would be wrong to use the hotel profits for that purpose. On the other hand, he agreed with members who urged the Minister to make this establishment as small a drinking concern as possible, and give every facility for education and amuse-

ment, but he wanted to see this done by attaching the extra accommodation to the building and placing it under the control of the manager of the hotel.

Mr. GOURLEY: With regard to the accommodation at the hotel at the present time that was only for a select few. The drinking section of the residents of Gwalia had only the hotel bar to resort to. As far as other accommodation was concerned, there were no facilities offered for the working people in that centre. As to the club room, which would be a library and reading room, as promised by the Minister, he hoped the Minister would give favourable consideration to the request of the residents, seeing the amount of revenue that came from that centre. It was the duty of the Minister to give the facilities that the people were asking for namely, the provision of this library and reading room. He hoped that the request would receive favourable consideration at the hands of the Minister.

Mr. TROY: Having had an opportunity recently of visiting this hotel he had endeavoured to make himself acquainted with the manner in which it was conducted. It seemed to him that the institution was socialistic in name only. The management appeared to be all that could be desired from a certain standpoint. The manager was courteous and obliging to those staying in the house. Still there was a great difference in his bearing towards the people living in the district. There seemed to be absolutely no sympathy whatever between the manager and those of the local residents who patronised the bar. All that was desired, it seemed, was that the man who went in to get his drink should have it, pay his money and go out and sit against the verandah post until he got thirsty again. It was essentially a mercenary, money-making institution. In his opinion there should be attached to the hotel something in the nature of a reading room, in which the miners could find the newspapers and periodicals of the day. Such an adjunct would be a distinct advantage. Again, they might reasonably provide a room in which the men could sit down of an evening and

play a quiet game of cards, draughts, or the like.

The Treasurer : Something of the sort will be done.

Mr. TROY : It was wanted. While he was up there it had been borne in upon him that the customers of the hotel were deserving of some further consideration than they were receiving.

Mr. ANGWIN : On putting a question a few minutes ago he had been answered, not by the Minister but by the Leader of the Opposition. He would like to hear the reply confirmed by the Minister for Mines.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES : Everybody knew that there were a number of sly-grog shops around the hotel. The man who had met his death had obtained his drink away from the hotel. They did not serve drunken men at the hotel. Members opposite had appointed the manager of that hotel, and they had indeed made a good selection. The manager never allowed drunken people to be served with liquor, and the fact that big profits had been made went to show that he had attended to his duties. An inquiry had been held into the circumstances of the fatality, and there was not the slightest doubt that the unfortunate victim had obtained his liquor from some of the sly-grog shops which everybody knew existed in that locality.

Mr. SCADDAN : That statement from the Minister or from somebody else he had been long waiting for. Truly everybody knew that these sly-grog shops existed—that was to say, everybody but the police. Almost every camp in that locality—known as “Little Italy”—was a sly-grog shop, and in view of the statement made by the Minister that men could not get drunk at the hotel but could go to the sly-grog shops and get rolling drunk, it seemed truly wonderful that the police could not catch the offenders. This matter had been exercising the minds of the people of Gwalia for a long time. While in Gwalia lately he (Mr. Scaddan) had been taken round and shown a number of these sly-grog shops, kept by Italians. Many of them had skittle alleys attached, where skittles were played all night long. This was

going on within a few hundred yards of the police station, and yet these people could not be caught. Serious reflections were made upon the police up there, and no wonder. Certainly it was time that something should be done. It was a situation requiring serious consideration.

Mr. ANGWIN : From the reply of the Minister it seemed that there had been a lack of attention to official duty somewhere or other. On the evidence before them the jury had condemned the administration of the hotel, and the coroner in very strong language had condemned what had taken place in that institution. This condemnation had been published throughout the length and breadth of the State, and it was probably known right across Australia that the only hotel owned by the Western Australian Government was a disgrace to the community. It showed that something was seriously wrong. Then the Minister had said he had no fault to find with the jury, but that the warden had on inquiry proved that the coroner and the jury and the evidence brought before them by the police had all been entirely wrong. Someone was decidedly to blame, and there must be some reason for sheltering him. It was said that the person in charge of the jury was an hotel keeper at Leonora. This gentleman was a justice of the peace. In the circumstances either the warden or the justice of the peace should be shifted. It was only right, if the manager of the hotel had been injured by the verdict, that the Ministry should clear him.

Item, Incidental, £2,500 :

Mr. SCADDAN : There was an expenditure under this item of £38, a refund of customs duties to the Governor. This at 10 per cent. probably represented about £500 worth of goods the Governor had imported. So we paid £4,000 a year to a Governor to import all he needed except probably eatables. This was not patriotic on the part of the Governor. Of course His Excellency had the right to do this, but were we justified in continuing to pay Governors to act merely as figure-heads if they did it? If we could find out exactly what other sums were paid to the Governor such as this it would probably mean that we were spending

£5,000 a year instead of £4,000 in this direction.

The TREASURER: It had always been the arrangement that our Governors should be able to import goods for their own consumption free of duty, but the Commonwealth insisted on collecting customs duties on goods imported by State Governors, just as they collected duties on goods imported by the States.

Mr. Scaddan: The Governor gets his money here, and should get his goods here.

The TREASURER: We must allow His Excellency to import the goods if he wished to do so. The agreement having been made with the Governor that he should have his goods brought in free of duty for his own consumption, we had no right to criticise his actions in this respect.

Item, North-West Pearling Fleet Disaster, £300:

Mr. COLLIER: The sum of £198 was spent last year, and £300 was provided on these Estimates. To whom was the money to go?

The TREASURER: The money was to relieve the sufferers from the disaster. The resident magistrate distributed it. The sum provided this year included last year's expenditure.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Treasurer was absent at a conference in the East when the disaster occurred, but instructions were immediately telegraphed to the resident magistrate at Broome to use his own discretion in relieving suffering. A large sum was spent in patrolling the coast to pick up bodies and render assistance.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.20 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 14th January, 1909.

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

QUESTION—IMMIGRATION, MR. LANE'S WORK.

Mr. TROY (for Mr. Bath) asked the Premier: 1, Is Mr. Lane, who is advertising for immigrants in England for Western Australia, acting on the instructions of the Government or the Agent General in London? 2, Does he receive any payment from the W.A. Government for his services? 3, Is the Premier aware that complaints have been made against Mr. Lane for misrepresentation and deluding immigrants? 4, Have these complaints been brought under the notice of the Government? 5, Is it a fact that the Government have repudiated responsibility for Mr. Lane's work in this regard?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The Government are not aware of any such instructions having been issued. 2, I understand this gentleman has received some fees from the Agent General in London for lecturing in January of last year. 3 and 4, No specific complaint has been brought before the Government. 5, Yes, except as set out in answer to question No. 2.

QUESTION—SEWERAGE FILTERS. BURSWOOD.

Mr. TROY (for Mr. Swan) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has the necessary machinery for spreading the sewerage over the filters at Burswood been purchased? 2, If so, is this machinery satisfactory? 3, If not satisfactory, who is responsible for its purchase?