

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 3rd February, 1909.

	PAGE
Bill: Health Act Amendment (No. 2), Message ...	1880
Excess 1907 and 1908, 1R. ...	1880
Questions: Meat Commission report ...	1880
Medical Officer, Greenough ...	1880
Tick Cattle Restrictions ...	1880
Paper presented ...	1880
Annual Estimates, Votes and Items discussed ...	1881

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

#### Message to Council.

The PREMIER moved that the following Message be forwarded to the Legislative Council:—

*In reference to Message No. 5 of the Legislative Council, the Legislative Assembly acquints the Legislative Council that certain doubts have arisen as to whether the Bill therein mentioned was one which could be properly introduced into the Legislative Council, the Legislative Assembly resolved, in order to avoid any controversy on the question, to discharge the Order for the second reading of the Bill and to introduce a new Bill in the Legislative Assembly on exactly similar terms, which Bill was forwarded in Message No. 14 to the Legislative Council.*

He said: This was in order to remove any doubts as to the rights of the Legislative Council to introduce the Bill. The measure had been discharged from our Notice Paper and a new Bill introduced without a Message having been returned to the Legislative Council informing them of the course taken.

Question passed.

### QUESTION—MEAT COMMISSION'S REPORT.

Mr. TROY (for Mr. Swan) asked the Premier: 1, Do the Government intend to give the House an opportunity of discussing the report of the Royal Commission on Meat Supply? 2, If not, do the Government intend to take action to protect the consumers against the combination which was proved to exist? 3, If so, how?

The PREMIER replied: 1, In view of the state of the business paper it is hardly likely that the opportunity will be available. 2 and 3, The recommendations of the Commission are now being considered by the Government.

### QUESTION—MEDICAL OFFICER, GREENOUGH.

Mr. NANSON asked the Premier: 1, Is a salary or subsidy paid by the Government for the purpose of securing periodical visits by a medical practitioner to Greenough? 2, If so—(a.) What is the amount of such salary or subsidy? (b.) To whom is such salary or subsidy paid? 3, At what intervals are visits paid? 4, Is any provision made for special visits in the event of an emergency? 5, Is there, in consideration of such salary or subsidy, a scale of fees prescribed to be paid for visits to individual settlers?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, (a.) £75 per annum. (b.) Dr. L. M. T. Hungerford, District Medical Officer, Geraldton. 3, On Wednesday in each week. 4, In such cases arrangements are being made to fix a scale of charges. 5, On visiting day the charges to patients at Greenough are the same as in Geraldton.

### QUESTION—TICK CATTLE RESTRICTIONS.

Mr. MONGER asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Government to give effect to the recommendation (unanimous) of the Royal Commission on Meat Supply in reference to removal of restrictions on cattle from tick areas?

The PREMIER replied: The recommendations of the Commission are now receiving consideration at the hands of the Government.

### PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Premier: Goldfields Water Supply Administration, by-laws.

### BILL—EXCESS, 1907 and 1908.

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

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1908-9.

*In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the previous day, *Mr. Dalglish* in the Chair.

Colonial Secretary's Department (Hon. J. D. Connolly, Minister): the Treasurer in charge of the votes.

*Vote—Medical and Public Health, £101,885:*

*Mr. BATH:* Under this vote one could call attention to the administration of the Factories Department. It was previously pointed out in the House that the change in the control and administration of the Factories and Early Closing Acts had not conduced to the effective administration of the measures. In one particular, that of stamping Chinese-made furniture, the Act was absolutely of no avail owing to the way in which it was administered. It was true that in the factories Asiatic-made goods were probably stamped, but when the articles got into the warehouses throughout the country the mark was conspicuous by its absence. It was no trouble whatever for the warehouses to sandpaper off the mark, and a buyer anxious to discriminate between Chinese-made goods and goods made by white labour, had no opportunity of knowing whether the article was made by Asiatic labour or not. It was only necessary to go through quarters where the Chinese mostly congregated and see the circumstances in which the furniture was manufactured to know there was no possible chance of European cabinet-makers competing, and that the surroundings in which the Asiatic goods were manufactured were a menace to public health.

*Mr. Butcher:* What has this to do with the Medical Vote?

*Mr. BATH:* This department, unfortunately, administered the Factories Act, and it was the only opportunity members had of calling attention to the maladministration and the scandalous way in which the Act was ignored. It was well known in connection with Chief Inspector Vincent's retirement that because the Principal Medical Officer was antagonistic to this legislation—Factories and Early Closing—because it did not square with his opinions, he decided and inti-

mated to Chief Inspector Vincent that he was going to put his private opinions above the law passed by Parliament; and that had been done. In the vicinity of big furniture establishments, in the early morning one could see the Chinese carts conveying the furniture to the warehouses. A club that recently built new premises called tenders for furniture and among the tenderers was a Chinese firm that quoted a price lower than other tenderers. The club decided to give consideration to what were reputed European firms and accepted the tender of one firm, but that firm then went to the Chinese firm and gave them the order, scooping the extra price from the committee of the club. It was necessary that we should insist on the stamp being branded on the goods in such a way that it could not be removed as easily as was now the case.

*Mr. Foulkes:* What can you do to stop Chinese manufacturers in Melbourne sending furniture over here?

*Mr. BATH:* The Chinese manufacturers in Melbourne would have little chance of competing with the Chinese manufacturers in Perth in view of the cost of sea carriage. Again, in connection with health administration, in various parts, of the State local health authorities called on certain owners of property to rebuild premises and make them sanitary or in conformity with the Health Act, and failing their orders being carried out, exercised the authority in some instances of having obnoxious premises pulled down, but in Perth, and Fremantle and in other places one found Chinese in occupation of premises that were absolutely opposed to the commonest dictates of public health. One could find hovels where horses were stabled in one portion of the Chinaman's hut, while melons were stored under the bunks to ripen. Cabbages, fruit, and other articles which were to be sold to the public were placed in the room in which the Chinamen slept. Again, the carts which were used to transport vegetables and fruit into town were employed in carrying manure back to the gardens.

*Mr. Gordon:* Does this apply only to Chinamen's carts?

Mr. BATH: It applied mainly to the Chinese, but whoever did that should be dealt with. It was a great hardship that whereas Europeans were called upon to conform to certain health conditions, within a mile of the same locality there existed Chinese hovels of the kind he had referred to. In some places where the local governing body was not a health board under the Act, the administration was centred in the Central Board of Health. It was very clear that the Central Board administered the department very badly, and should have no more power placed in their hands.

*The Treasurer:* Are you accusing the Central Board or the local board?

Mr. BATH: The Central Board. One of the cases to which he referred existed outside Northam. The roads board of the locality was not a health board, and consequently the administration came under the Central Board. In any case that body could exercise supervisory powers, and had the right to take over the duties of the local board if they were neglected.

*Mr. Angwin:* Do away with the Central Board altogether.

Mr. BATH: There must be a central authority if only to see that a uniform system operated throughout the State. One of the duties devolving upon the Central Board under the Factories and Early Closing Acts was that of bringing to book anyone who exceeded the regulation number of days worked per week. If white men in the centres of population were found to be working on Sundays in addition to week days, the Government, if unable to proceed against them under a modern measure, would rake up an Act of Charles I. or Charles II. to prosecute them for Sabbath desecration; but at a big estate not far from Northam, Chinamen were worked every day of the week, including Sunday, notwithstanding the fact that the gentleman owning the estate held a high Legislative position.

*Mr. Walker:* In which House?

Mr. BATH: In the Upper House. No prosecution had been instituted in that case. In the interests especially of the girls and women employed in shops, there was necessity for better administration

of the Factories and Early Closing Acts. Especially was there need for intervention with regard to the practice of bringing these employees back to work at night, after having been on duty all day, and compelling them to work without payment for overtime, other than the miserable pittance of one shilling for tea money. No member would deny there was need for consideration in the interests of these employees. The work they did was injurious to their health, and the time had arrived for the administration of this branch to be taken away from the Medical and Public Health Department, and for the system to be reverted to of a chief inspector of factories being responsible for seeing that the Acts were properly administered. With regard to the appointment of a Principal Medical Officer, applications were called for this position about the same time as applications were called for the position of Superintendent of State Batteries. Members had complained about the delay in making the latter appointment, but what could be said of the delay with regard to the former one? Surely it was necessary that we should have some one who was responsible in charge of this very important department; yet that appointment had been delayed, and even at the present time members had no knowledge as to the gentleman who was to be chosen for the position. We had, however, a very shrewd idea, owing to the fact that Dr. Hope had been appointed Acting-Principal Medical Officer, and that provided a pretty good indication that he would get the permanent position. If that gentleman who had only two or three years to go before reaching his retiring limit, were chosen, it would be a scandalous appointment. It was time the Minister took the Committee into his confidence as to whom would be appointed, what recommendations had been made, and what was detracting the Government in making such an appointment. The information should have been given to the House long ago, and at all events the appointment should be postponed before it is made permanent.

[*Mr. Foulkes took the Chair.*]

Mr. JOHNSON: It was his intention to move for the reduction of the vote in order that a distinct understanding might be arrived at with regard to the appointment of Principal Medical Officer—one of the most important appointments in the public service. One was unable to criticise the administration of these departments because no administration existed. The Factories and Early Closing Acts were practically dead. This was due to the fact that the gentleman who had been in charge of the supposed administration, was absolutely opposed to that class of legislation, and took it upon himself to say that because he was opposed to it he would not administer it. A one time secretary of the Department of Labour had distinctly stated that he thought that to administer the law as passed by this House in connection with Chinamen would be no less than persecution; consequently that official also absolutely declined to put the law in operation. Strong exception must be taken to the action of the Colonial Secretary in stopping the prosecution initiated in connection with Brennan Bros. In the early part of the session the file dealing with this matter was laid on the Table; that file showed that inspectors had experienced great difficulty with this firm, who had flouted the law time after time. They were warned and their premises were subjected to special inspection, and at last the under secretary took action against the firm for breach of the Factories Act, and the Crown Law Department selected several instances of breaches. Proceedings were started, and Brennan Bros. endeavoured to make out that the inspector had exceeded his duties when inspecting their premises. Although the attack was allowed to go to the country, there was no reply from the inspector; he was not called upon to reply to the dirty accusations made by Brennan Bros., clearly showing that the Minister was with the firm instead of in favour of adopting the honest course of protecting the officer who had been attacked. If there was anything he liked to see the Minister do it was to protect officers when attacked, especially

when officers were not in the position to reply.

Mr. Angwin: Would you protect an officer against a friend of yours?

Mr. JOHNSON: Most certainly. The Minister was not paid £1,000 a year to administer the law for the benefit of Brennan Brothers.

The Treasurer: Does the file show that he gave special attention to Brennan Brothers?

Mr. JOHNSON: The file did not contain very much, but it contained enough to make him think seriously that it was necessary to read between the lines, to find out what had been left out. Evidently efforts were made by someone, the file did not disclose who, but someone who was taking action in the matter to prevent a prosecution against the firm. The Colonial Secretary was away in Kalgoorlie at the time and a wire to this effect was sent from the office in Perth:—"Brennan's; Principal Medical Officer considers inadvisable withdraw this case, recommends adjournment until able discuss with you, do you approve?" There was absolutely nothing on the file to show that the Minister had this matter brought under his notice, yet on a wire so indefinite and brief as that the Minister was able to send a reply as follows:—"Re Brennan Brothers' prosecution under Factories Act. It is impossible for me to advise from this distance, you will have to act as you think best on Principal Medical Officer's recommendation." If there was no discussion or nothing more than that brought under the Minister's notice, how could he, on a vague wire, have all the matters at his fingers' ends and send such a telegram as that; he must have known something about it.

The Treasurer: That is the reply of a man who knows nothing.

Mr. JOHNSON: If the Minister knew nothing how did he know it was under the Factories Act? If it was discussed with him there should be some record of it. The position was that the Minister knew all about it before he went to Kalgoorlie and a wire was sent to Kalgoorlie, and he sent a reply fully knowing all the circumstances. Anyhow, life was

too short to delve into files at this stage of the session, and he would only say that he was satisfied that the Minister allowed his personal friendship to blind his administrative judgment in connection with this case. We all knew that Brennan Brothers were strong political supporters of the Minister. We knew that motor cars and buses were running around Perth to secure votes for Mr. Connolly when he was contesting the last election. He knew this from a friend of his, that the argument used by Mr. James Brennan when soliciting votes for the Minister was that the Minister had done him a good turn and he desired to return it by securing all the votes he could. He (Mr. Johnson) would not have taken so much notice of this, but when he knew that Brennan Brothers were over-crowding their work-rooms and were persecuting their employees, he raised his voice in protest when the employees of that firm were sacrificed and the Minister gave special consideration to the firm. One could not do more than enter a protest against this sort of administration. He distinctly objected to the Minister allowing his friendship to blind his judgment, and he should realise that suffering humanity was behind all this, and that the factories inspectors had failed to get Brennan Brothers to realise their responsibilities. Brennan Brothers having failed, the inspectors endeavoured to get the assistance of the law, and just at the time when Brennan Brothers were forced to realise their responsibilities, we found the Minister stepping in and nothing more was heard of this important case. He simply repeated his protest, and sincerely hoped that the Government would realise that we wanted the Factories and Early Closing Acts administered as strongly and as vigorously as possible.

Mr. DAGLISH: It was his desire to say a few words with regard to the administration of the Factories and Early Closing Acts, and he wanted to preface these remarks by a word or two in regard to these Acts. The foundation of all the complaints with regard to early closing and factory law administration was to

be found in the fact that both these Acts were bad in design and to a large extent bad in construction. The Factories Act was defective inasmuch as on that one important question, Asiatic labour, it did not make adequate provision for the protection of the European workers. There was an effort made at the time it was passed into law to see that every seller of Asiatic furniture was required to advertise that fact, not only on the furniture but also on the outside of his establishment. That provision should be embodied in our factories law, and a great advantage would follow from compelling every furniture dealer, who sold Asiatic made furniture, to advertise that fact on his premises. Regarding the early closing law, the Act we had on our statute book was one of the worst Acts that could be found. It was based on the desire of Parliament and the public to shorten the hours and improve the conditions of those persons employed in shops. It was intended to shorten the hours, and in order to shorten those hours it took the clumsy method of providing that the shops should be closed. As a matter of fact the shops were closed, previously to that law being introduced, at a much earlier hour than otherwise they would be, and the shop employees were now night after night required to work behind closed doors in more unfavourable atmosphere and conditions than if the shops were open and trade were going on. The Act was intended not to restrain or limit trade but solely to shorten the hours of employees. What the member for Guildford had said regarding the treatment of men and women during the past month in the large shops of Perth, that these people had been brought back on many nights to work overtime, taking stock, preparing for sales, replacing stock and doing a thousand and one things required of them between closing time and opening time was quite true, and yet the early closing law was powerless to deal with that matter. He contended at the same time that the Early Closing Act was inflicting, if properly administered, a grievous hardship on a large number of people in this community: it was inflicting a hardship on those unfortunates who had

from £50 to £150 with which they desired to purchase stock and open small shops in out-of-the-way streets. As soon as a man, perhaps a miner or a manual labourer, was disabled, some other line of occupation was thought of. The individual perhaps would not be able to continue the arduous work he had been discharging, and the only resort was a small shop wherein he could eke out enough to keep himself in bread and meat for the rest of his days. Or even the woman whose husband was perhaps killed, and who had drawn a little insurance money, or some compensation, might desire to seek some means of keeping herself and the members of her family in the necessaries of life by opening a small shop. Then she had to go into competition at once with Foy and Gibson, Boan Brothers, the Bon Marche, and other places, and had to do all her trading within the hours for trading open to these particular firms. What hope had an unfortunate man or woman, situated as they were, of competing successfully or earning even a crust by trading, if the hours were restricted to those of the big shops, which could at the same time buy at a big percentage less than the small and struggling traders could do? He contended that the early closing law, while it failed in the primary object of restricting the hours of work, did absolute mischief in not permitting such people as he had mentioned to earn a living. So a double injustice was done. The Government should take into consideration the practicability of requiring that shop-workers should be allowed to leave their work at a certain hour each night, and at the same time leave those shopkeepers who employed no labour an opportunity of trading after those hours if they pleased to do so. It was a mistake to make it an offence for a man who wanted to sell an article to sell that article to a man who wanted to buy it at any particular hour of the day. Apart from that there was this ineffectiveness of the Act to achieve its own purpose of limiting the hours of employees. He wanted to give another instance; the men who worked the longest hours were those who worked on the carts outside the shops. One

could see them even at the present time, but more especially in times of stress, immediately before the holidays, delivering goods even after midnight, and these men were absolutely unprotected. There was no limitation to the hours of their labour. These men should have the protection of the law. The same thing applied to the shop assistants. At night on passing the big drapery shops one could see the shadows of these assistants flitting across the windows from time to time. Anybody could make his own investigations amongst those earning their living by working in these shops. The toil of the shop-worker did not conclude with the closing of the establishment. It was by a fault of the Act that these employees were engaged for long after closing hour in fixing up stock and arranging the shelves and attending to a thousand other things to be done; and so too in the dressmakers' and the tailoring establishments connected with these shops. Girls were back working at all hours of the night getting very little, and in some cases nothing at all for their work. At the end of the busy season they were very often told to take a week or a fortnight's holiday without any payment whatever. The Committee ought to try to do something, to make some amendment in the law in regard to shop-workers, who were the weakest section of our community. Something ought to be done in regard to the employment of girls getting nothing a week for a fairly long term, and later 2s. 6d. a week with the "order of the sack" very soon afterwards. These workers had no organisation and no political voice; and no consideration whatever had been shown to them in respect to legislation. Yet they were in every sense well deserving of consideration. And the employees in the warehouses, too, might well be brought under this limitation of hours of employment. They too were a helpless unorganised section, and were required time after time and week after week to put in a large portion of their nights working just as hard as they had worked throughout the day. He had, he thought, said enough to justify his statement that even when administered in the most capable fashion the existing law

was defective. The ordinary man or woman running a fancy goods shop was required to close it at six o'clock; and if the door were left open after that hour even for ventilation purposes, without the goods being shuttered off, the person was liable to a penalty. But there might be, a door or two down the street, a chemist's shop; and in that shop the fancy goods which it was a crime to sell in the fancy goods shop after six o'clock, could be sold by the chemist at any hour of the day or night without any breach of the law being committed. This, again, went to show that the law was defective and even ridiculous. Tobacconists were prohibited from selling tobacco, cigars, and cigarettes after 10 o'clock; but for nearly two hours later the publican next door could go on selling tobacco, cigars, or cigarettes without committing any breach of the law.

*Mr. Underwood :* He pays a license.

*Mr. DAGLISH :* But the man who gained a living by selling tobacco, cigars, or cigarettes was limited as to the time in which he might sell these articles, whereas the publican who sold them merely as a side line could start selling two hours earlier in the morning and sell two hours later at night than the tobacconist was permitted to do. Certainly there were one or two defects in the Early Closing Act. But coming to the question of administration, he desired to express his regret that the Government had lost one of the best public servants in the State. A servant good because of his energy, good because of his work, good because of his industry, good because of his zeal and good because of the integrity that had characterised the performance of that work. Mr. Vincent might have had certain defects of manner; most of us had. Mr. Vincent undoubtedly was a man with a strong spine and a straight forward style of speech; and undoubtedly if he were to come into conflict with another as determined as himself there was likely to be trouble. But Mr. Vincent should never have been required to come into conflict with the strong-minded gentleman who was then Principal Medical Officer. There had been a clash, and the

lower officer had gone to the wall. By this Western Australia had lost one of the best officers we ever had, in spite of all his defects; and Victoria, who had had a previous experience of Mr. Vincent, had at once re-employed him in a somewhat similar position to that which he had held before joining our service—a position which he had been foolish indeed to sacrifice to come here. Ever since that time there had been reasonable justification for the complaints made in regard to the administration of the Factories and Early Closing Acts. He did not intend to follow the member for Guildford and the Leader of the Opposition in their remarks in regard to the administration of the Factories Act; but he did desire to complain very strongly of the administration of the Early Closing Act. He did not blame the Minister for this administration except in so far as the Minister had placed the administration of the Factories Act under the control of the Central Board of Health. As to the incompetence of that board to administer the Factories Act there could be no two opinions. The very composition of the board was against efficiency to administer the law. In regard to the difficulties in respect to the administration of the Early Closing Act he had asked some questions in the House recently. One was in regard to the capacity of the inspector to conduct prosecutions. He did not even know the name of the inspector to whom he had referred in that question; but he did know that some two weeks ago there had been prosecutions in Perth against certain shopkeepers for trivial breaches of the Early Closing Act. One of these breaches was nothing more than that at half-past six o'clock a man who was running a stationery shop in connection with a fancy goods shop had forgotten to curtain off the fancy goods department. For this the shopkeeper had been very properly summoned. But very improperly a solicitor was engaged to appear against him. This, too, notwithstanding the fact that there was no doubt of the man's guilt, and no possibility of any technical defence being entered. So far as he (Mr. Daglish) could see, the solicitor was present in court simply to heap up costs

against this unfortunate shopkeeper who had forgotten to pull down a curtain.

*The Attorney General:* What were the costs?

*Mr. DAGLISH:* The costs had been either 25s. or 27s. 6d., he had forgotten which. The gravity of the offence was shown by the imposition of the fine of 2s. or 3s. Surely it was unfair to penalise a man in costs in that fashion. As an illustration of the value of the solicitor's services on that occasion, it might be said that the offence had been committed on the 4th January, and was shown on the summons to have been committed on the 4th January; but the inspector when in the box had sworn that the offence was committed on the 5th January, and the prosecuting solicitor did not correct him. In fact, it was the defendant himself who, foolishly enough had corrected the evidence of the inspector; and for doing this he was required to pay 25s. costs. It would seem that if the defendant had known enough all that would have been necessary for him to do in the circumstances was to have pointed out the discrepancy in the dates, when the case must have been dismissed. That was surely an indication of the value of the solicitor's services to the inspector, though it might also be evidence of the fact that the inspector needed assistance of some sort.

*Mr. Ware:* You made a mistake last night.

*Mr. DAGLISH:* It should be possible to find a man who knew the Act, and was capable of prosecuting under the Act in order to avoid penalising shopkeepers by heavy costs on top of small fines. It was said in reply to a question that no person was proceeded against without being first warned, but that was contrary to the facts, because it was shown in evidence in one case that the shopkeeper had never been warned. There was a number of similar cases heard on the same day for offences committed in January, yet for nine weeks Charles Moore & Company and the Bon Marche had been breaking the law. Parliament recently decided that shops should not be opened on Friday night.

*Mr. Bath:* Parliament did not decide that.

*Mr. DAGLISH:* The Assembly amended the Act to allow shops to be opened on Friday night, but it was subsequently struck out.

*Mr. Bath:* Not by this Chamber.

*Mr. DAGLISH:* There was no desire to go into that question.

*Mr. Bath:* I thought you were an advocate of the Saturday half-holiday.

*Mr. DAGLISH:* That was the case. He was a thorough advocate that all shops should be compulsorily closed on Saturday afternoon at one o'clock, but in this matter his objection was to the fact that shopkeepers in his district were compelled to compete against a late night in Perth on Friday for certain shops and a late night in Perth on Saturday for certain shops. If we prosecuted a few suburban shopkeepers for selling goods a few minutes past six o'clock on any night of the week except Saturday, it was surely wrong to allow big shopkeepers in Perth to trade week after week on Friday nights, this being undoubtedly against the law. The issue of the last proclamation making Friday-opening illegal was a great mistake, but at the same time we must recognise that opening shops on Friday nights was illegal, and that it was wrong to impose this double competition on small shopkeepers. His desire was to urge first of all that the Government in order to secure more efficient administration of early closing and factories law should abolish the amalgamation effected between the Medical Department and the Early Closing and Factories Act administration; and in the second place, that the Government should give the Inspector of Factories the power, which was his duty, to prosecute immediately a breach of the Act was committed without any reference to a Minister or to any other officer; that the Government should remove the officer from all supervision, and should make it incumbent on him to prosecute immediately a breach of the Act was discovered, so that there could be no accusation of favouritism to anybody, and so that the inspector could be made responsible for any breaches of the law committed. If this were done we would have far better administration of the law.



The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was perfectly true that the Factories Act did not achieve the object it was intended to achieve and that an amendment of the Act would be necessary; but in attempting to amend the Act, we were not in the position we formerly occupied; because, before any attempt could be made by a State Government to impose on any person in Australia, white or black, conditions peculiar to his colour, representations would have to be made through the Commonwealth Government to the Foreign Office. For that reason it was most important that we should maintain some open channel between the State and the Foreign Office. It might well happen that one State might wish to pass legislation for its protection that might not appeal to the rest of Australia; and unless we could show the Foreign Office that there were conditions that should particularly apply to the State we might run the risk of having our desires and welfare subordinated to the general desire and welfare of the Commonwealth. In regard to the complaint of Chinese doing clearing on Sundays, he did not know whether there could be any prosecution. The old Sunday Observance Act could scarcely be applicable to the peculiar conditions that might arise where clearing work was being carried on. He did not propose to enter into any lengthy discussion of the matter of the appointment of the Principal Medical Officer, for one reason that he was not personally prepared to bring forward all the facts that no doubt would need to be thrashed out if we were going into the matter with that thoroughness to show that the appointment could not be challenged on any right grounds. The Public Service Commissioner recommended a gentleman who had been about eighteen months in the State. This gentleman no doubt had youth in his favour and considerable brains, but the question before the Government was whether there was not a better man available, a man with longer experience in the State, one in whom, owing to that experience, the subordinate officers would have greater confidence, and a man who, from the experience of his own life, would be able to give greater benefit to the State. That was

a question that could not be settled on the floor of the House, because every member would be at the outset somewhat of a partisan, would not be able to enter into the merits and demerits of the matter, and would only be inspired from some outside source.

*Mr. Bath:* Oh! who makes innuendoes?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Was one to credit the hon. member with relying on his imagination? Surely credit must be given to the hon. member that what he said was because of some knowledge derived from somewhere and not because of imagination. Then, if it be knowledge derived from somewhere it must be from some outside source.

*Mr. Johnson:* There have been numerous questions that the Government have answered in reference to this matter.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The only questions asked were whether the appointment had taken place and whether Dr. Hope had been recommended by the Public Service Commissioner. He was not dealing with any innuendo or in any way wishing to criticise the Leader of the Opposition in saying that the hon. member's remarks were founded on information received from some source; but he was pointing out that in fact it would be utterly impossible to discuss an appointment of this character with any possible result in an Assembly such as this primed only with the facts which to a certain small extent had been communicated to members. In the circumstances, how could members express an opinion worthy of consideration?

*Mr. Bath:* What about the fact known to all of us that he has only a few years to go before he reaches the retiring age?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The gentleman, being 57 years of age, had eight years to run before reaching the age when he could be called upon to retire; and then, if in the opinion of the Public Service Commissioner and the Executive Council it was of advantage to the State to continue this gentleman's services, they could be continued. One could conceive no argument more fallacious than that because a man had only eight years to run before the retiring age would be reached

we should not appoint him to an office of this character. Surely after years of service a man's services became more valuable, and surely this gentleman had now reached the summit of that value.

*Mr. Johnson:* The longer you keep officers the worse they get.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If the hon. member started on those premises, we were now employing men who should not be employed. Surely a public officer gained experience every day. In connection with the prosecution of Brennan Brothers, the member for Guildford put the complexion on the matter that the Minister and Mr. Brennan being close personal friends, and Mr. Brennan being a political supporter of the Minister's, the Minister had not discharged his duty in this case. But what were the facts on the file the hon. member had before him? A complaint under the Factories Act was laid against the firm and came before the magistrates in Perth. They heard the case, and dismissed the second charge, while they could not agree on the first and third charges. The Colonial Secretary was in Kalgoorlie at the time, and a telegram was sent to him saying the Principal Medical Officer considered it inadvisable to withdraw at that stage, and recommended an adjournment so that he could discuss the matter with the Minister. The Minister in reply said that it was impossible for him to advise on the matter from such a distance, and that action would have to be taken as they thought best on the Principal Medical Officer's recommendation. The member for Guildford (Mr. Johnson) said that because the telegram began "*re* Brennan Bros.," the Minister had a full knowledge of the facts, and should have advised on the matter from Kalgoorlie.

*Mr. Johnson:* I say that there should be more on the file than there appears to be.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Everyone knew of the prosecution against Brennan Bros., and therefore to read into the telegram the meaning that the Colonial Secretary had a full knowledge of the case seemed extraordinary. The motive mentioned in the hon. member's speech was worthy of him. He (the At-

torney General) repudiated entirely any insinuation of the Colonial Secretary in any way discriminating between Brennan Bros. and other persons in the City.

*Mr. Johnson:* Why did not the prosecution go on?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Surely that was obvious: the principal charge had failed in the court, and with regard to the other two charges the bench could not agree. The Principal Medical Officer having apparently satisfied himself that he could not succeed in the action, was not prepared to go further, yet the hon. member imputed political corruption to the Colonial Secretary.

*Mr. Angwin:* That is the opinion outside.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It might be the opinion of the people the member associated with. As to remarks made by the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) that member had proved in a lengthy speech that the Factories and Early Closing Acts were so badly drafted that they were practically worthless, and he desired to get Parliament to adopt some principle of legislation which would allow the shops to remain open, apparently indefinitely, so long as there was a proviso that the assistants should only work for fixed hours. If that were practicable he would support it, but it had never been found workable. The only way to secure that the shop assistants should not be kept at work longer than the statutory hours was to close the shops. The extraordinary feature in connection with the speech was that the hon. member, having proved that the Acts were incapable of effecting anything, then went on to criticise the administration of those Acts by the Central Board of Health. If the Acts were worthless of themselves then surely there could be no administration of them. The hon. member had overstated and over-argued his case. He proved too much in the first instance, and deprived himself of the chance of proving anything at all in the second instance. With regard to a certain prosecution, he complained of a solicitor having been employed. Where actions were taken against shopkeepers a number of these

cases were grouped together. Where the defendant pleaded guilty there was no appearance on the part of the solicitor against him, and he was merely fined by the bench; but where shopkeepers pleaded not guilty then it was necessary for a solicitor to be appointed to watch the interests of the Crown. In such cases one solicitor was appointed to act, no matter how many cases were to be tried. The solicitor did not ask for costs against each individual, but for one fee, and this amount was divided up among all the defendants. It was necessary to have a solicitor, for technical points always arose in discussions of this kind. The defendants would be represented by a solicitor, and if the inspector were left to his own resources, in many cases justice would not be done. There was no reason for complaint. With regard to the fees, he doubted whether the figures quoted by the hon. member were correct, and anyhow it must be remembered that the costs included not only the professional fees, but the cost of the summons, and the court fees.

*Mr. Gill:* What about people being summoned without being warned.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Minister had told him the department had never summoned a shopkeeper without previously warning him.

*Mr. Gill:* That is incorrect.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That was the information given him by the Minister. The member for Subiaco had attacked the solicitor. He started by patting his own back, and saying he did not know whether that gentleman were an elector or not of Subiaco. Surely the Committee had had enough of this habit of members patting themselves on the back and painting themselves in favourable colours before making an attack upon some one else. One of the members' allegations against this solicitor was that he had not corrected a witness who said in evidence that a certain date was the 5th January instead of the 4th January. If a solicitor were to suggest to a witness the evidence he should give any magistrate worth his salt, would order him out of court. It would not be tolerated for an instance that a solicitor

should suggest what evidence a witness should give. To criticise a solicitor for not doing that which would make him unworthy of his profession, was an extraordinary example of what some members would do. In regard to the Friday half-holiday, there was a great deal more of trade stress in this question than a desire to secure a half-holiday for the employees. There was keen competition among the shopkeepers and one found that those who were advocates of various schemes were so, not because of the desire to secure better conditions for the shop employees, but in furtherance of the trade prospects in the particular locality they represented. The hon. member had said the Subiaco shopkeepers were under a disadvantage because Moore's and the Bon Marche opened on Fridays, therefore those firms should be prosecuted. It was not for him to say that anyone who broke the Act should not be prosecuted but when the intent and spirit of the Act were observed, and the mere letter was broken, he would never be in a hurry to prosecute. He would not look for an opportunity to prosecute people so long as they were observing the spirit of the law. Although the necessity might be placed on the Executive Council to direct action against these people, it would have no sympathy from him: he would proceed because the law said he must, but he would not do it with a feeling of satisfaction. It was surprising to find members egging on the Executive Council to take a course of this kind when they were reluctant to do so.

*Mr. Angwin:* Has action been taken against people in other parts?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL knew of no distinction having been made between different parts of the State.

*Mr. Angwin:* People had been threatened with proceedings if they kept open.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Presumably then those people had received the same notice as had been sent to Moore's and the Bon Marche. The Executive Council had to carry out the law even if they disapproved of it. One would not have expected the member for Subiaco, such an ardent champion for

the Saturday half-holiday, to go to the Executive Council and try and get them to proceed against those who of their own free will had granted the Saturday half-holiday and opened on Friday evenings instead.

Item. Principal Medical Officer. £850:

Mr. JOHNSON moved—

*That the item be reduced by £50.*

The reason which induced him to move the amendment was that some information might be given to the Committee regarding the appointment of the new Principal Medical Officer. In his opinion the Government were trifling with this important matter. The Attorney General had insinuated that we went around looking for special information on this particular matter. If hon. members did that they were simply doing their duty to the State. When it was found that applications were called and the Public Service Commissioner made a recommendation and the Government would not confirm the appointment, one had to take some action to protect the people against the Government, who would not abide by the decision of the Public Service Commissioner. It was some six or seven months since applications were called for this position. Many were received and the Commissioner, in his wisdom, recommended a man for the position. The Government could not see their way to accept the recommendation and for some reason now they proposed to put into this office another gentleman who had passed the best portion of his life in the service of the State. The laxity of administration in this department was well known. One heard complaints about health administration, hospital administration, and the administration of the Factories and Early Closing Acts, and all was due to the fact that we had in control a gentleman who was not able to grapple with the various duties connected with the office owing to their magnitude. Now the Government did not want to profit by the experience of the failure of that officer, but they proposed to perpetuate what had gone on by putting in another gentleman who would be equally incapable of doing justice to this important office.

The position demanded a strong and vigorous man as an administrator. The Public Service Commissioner set himself out to find such a man and the Government now proposed to bring up Dr. Hope from Fremantle and put him in the position, a man who was 57½ years of age.

*Mr. Butcher:* Is that a fact?

Mr. JOHNSON: I am saying that, and it is for the Minister to deny the accuracy of what I have said. We have asked the Government to place the papers on the Table of the House and they have refused to do so, and one could bet his life that there was something to hide. When this sort of thing happened a member must forage out for himself.

*The Minister for Works:* Do you assert that papers are not laid on the table when asked for?

Mr. JOHNSON: The member for Perth had submitted a motion asking for these papers and it had never been treated as formal. If it had it would not have been carried, and hon. members would have had to speak on this subject without their book. When the Government refused to give information, he felt it was his duty to the State to endeavour by all means to get that information himself, in order to protect the State from the failure of the Government to do their duty. He understood that Dr. Cumpston was the gentleman recommended for the position by the Public Service Commissioner. Dr. Cumpston was at present an officer in the Health Department. He (Mr. Johnson) had been informed, and it was again for the Government to deny the accuracy of this, that the Public Service Commissioner consulted four or five professional men in this State and asked them to assist him in making a selection. The majority of those medical men endorsed the recommendation of the Commissioner that Dr. Cumpston should be appointed. In face of that position, the Government, when they differed from the recommendation of the Commissioner, should have placed the papers dealing with the matter before the House. The Act stated that that course had to be followed in such circumstances.

*The Treasurer:* You seem to know a good deal about the facts.

Mr. JOHNSON: What he knew he had heard from the man in the street, and Dr. Hope had not failed to talk about it in public. Moreover Dr. Hope had stated that if he got the position he would want £1,000 a year and not £850. That remark had been made in a public place. One had only to move around the streets of Perth to get information when the Government refused to give it. He hoped the Committee would investigate this matter in order to see that the State was protected, and to see that the department was placed in the hands of a capable and vigorous administrator. We wanted closer administration than had been given in the past, and we could not get that from a man who was 57½ years of age.

[*Mr. Taylor took the Chair.*]

Mr. ANGWIN: It was a pity that the Government had not seen fit to place the papers dealing with this matter on the Table of the House. There was a motion on the Notice Paper in the name of the member for Perth, and if he had been anxious at all to secure those papers, the session had been long enough, and he could have asked the Premier to treat the motion as formal and that would have been done. The position with regard to the matter was that the Public Service Commissioner had to take into consideration seniority as well as the qualifications of a candidate. The Commissioner would not tell him anything about the recommendation he had made, and if the Commissioner had made the recommendation which had been referred to by the member for Guildford then there was a leakage in the office of the Commissioner or in one of the Government departments.

*Mr. Bath:* The dogs in the street knew of it.

Mr. ANGWIN: How could anyone know unless there had been a leakage somewhere? An attack had been made on Dr. Hope, because it had been said that he did not possess the necessary qualifications for such a position. We must admit that he was a senior officer, and we should take into consideration that the Act distinctly laid down that the Public Service Commissioner had to con-

sider the question of seniority equally with qualifications. Dr. Hope was a senior officer, therefore the attack which had been made upon him by members must be with regard to qualifications.

*Mr. Butcher:* No one attacked his qualifications.

Mr. ANGWIN: The Public Service Commissioner was in the best position to judge as to a man's qualifications. He knew well that if Doctor Hope were to be appointed to the position he would carry out his duties fearlessly. There was no other medical man in Western Australia who had been the means of condemning as many buildings as had been condemned by Dr. Hope.

*Mr. Swan:* He has had more scope in Fremantle.

Mr. ANGWIN: If Dr. Hope were to be appointed to this position there would very soon be a great change in Perth. No man in Western Australia could be relied upon to give better attention to the duties of the office than would be given by Dr. Hope.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It would be well to nail to the counter the statement made by the member for Guildford, who had laid down the extraordinary doctrine that when any Government did not see fit to lay papers on the Table of the House that Government had something to be ashamed of. It might so come about that the hon. member would be again on the Ministerial side of the House, when, in the event of his being asked for papers and refusing to produce them, members would know that on his own showing he or his Government had something to be ashamed of. As to this question of the appointment of Principal Medical Officer, Section 44 of the Public Service Act provided that in every instance where a junior officer was recommended for a vacancy, the Public Service Commissioner should issue a certificate to the effect that there was no senior officer available and as capable of satisfactorily performing the duties. There could be no question as to who was the senior officer in the Public Health Department to-day; yet there had been no certificate from the Public Service Commissioner to the effect that Dr. Hope

was not capable of satisfactorily performing the duties, notwithstanding that the officer suggested for the post by the Public Service Commissioner was of only eight months' standing in the department. But supposing that the Public Service Commissioner were to issue a certificate to the effect that there was no senior officer available who was capable of fulfilling the duties, the Act still provided ways and means whereby the Government might override the opinions of the Public Service Commissioner—and very properly so too. He (the Minister) might be accused of having some personal predilection for Dr. Hope; but it was strange that the member for East Fremantle, who differed from Dr. Hope and from him in his political views, was able to give strong testimony as to the straightforwardness and the absolute fairness of the doctor in carrying out his public duties. It was well known that as a public servant Dr. Hope had been absolutely fearless in the performance of his duties at Fremantle. The mere fact that a man had arrived at the age of 57 should not be sufficient to debar him from a high position, more particularly when it was remembered that he was robust and well preserved and had served the public for very many years.

*Mr. Scaddan* : When does he retire?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Compulsory retirement was provided for at the age of, he thought, 65 years; but it was very hard to say that because Dr. Hope had reached the age of 57 he should not attain to the highest position in the department. One qualification held by Dr. Hope, and which would be of the utmost service in the Principal Medical Officer, was that of tactfulness. At Fremantle in respect to the demolition of many old buildings Dr. Hope had been most tactful with the happiest results. He (the Minister) could confidently inform the Committee that Dr. Hope was absolutely fearless and straightforward in the discharge of his duties.

*Mr. BATH*: It was unfortunate for the Minister for Works that he had only given a cursory glance at the provisions of the Public Service Act and so, while he had fancied that he had happened

upon something that would adequately support the position that he had taken up he, as a matter of fact, had produced something very much in the nature of a mare's nest. There were other provisions in the Public Service Act which had a greater bearing upon the question of the appointment than the section to which the Minister had referred. Section 9 gave the Commissioner wide powers in respect to the disposition of officers and the re-arrangement of methods for carrying out the departmental work in the direction of securing the economical or convenient working of the respective departments. Further than that, Section 38 provided that a vacancy might, on the recommendation of the Commissioner, be filled by an officer of the department in which such vacancy occurred, or by an officer of another department if it appeared to the Commissioner that such appointment would result in the work of the department being more efficiently performed; efficiency meaning special qualifications and an aptitude for the duties to be fulfilled. In Section 39 it was clearly laid down that in the matter of appointments to the administrative division seniority should be subordinated to considerations of special fitness. He submitted that in no appointment the Public Service Commissioner had been called upon to make was it more necessary that special fitness and aptitude should be considered than in the question of the appointment of Principal Medical Officer. Yet from the administration of a district like Fremantle Dr. Hope, it was proposed, should be called upon to control the whole of the health affairs of Western Australia. To control the administration relative to public health and the prevention of diseases, and the innumerable other duties required in the position, no pains should be spared to obtain the man best qualified, one who, from superior attainments and opportunities of securing special diplomas, was more fitted than others to occupy the position. There was no desire to reflect on Dr. Hope's capabilities, except that the experience of the State was that one reason why there was a big call for the payment of pensions, was that in many such appoint-

ments officers who had a short time to go before retiring had been elevated to positions, and the amounts of their pensions considerably increased.

*The Minister for Works:* It will not be the case here.

*Mr. BATH:* Decidedly it would. The Public Service Commissioner had not only to judge fitness and capabilities but he had also to prevent nepotism and political patronage in appointments, in many instances the more important duty to perform. The Public Service Commissioner had unerring guides to follow—diplomas, and the knowledge of positions applicants had filled elsewhere in appointments where they might have experience of the work they would be called upon to do here. Any Commissioner with sense could do that and at the same time avoid those evils he was appointed to prevent and the Act was passed to prevent, namely, influence and favouritism in making appointments to those important positions. Members asked the minimum when they asked to be placed in possession of all information in regard to this appointment, and they had good reason for thinking, if the information were withheld, that there was a desire to hold something back. The Government should welcome the opportunity of giving members all the information so that members could judge for themselves. Had they done so, probably some of the discussion this afternoon might have been avoided.

*The TREASURER:* It was impossible for the Government to place the papers before members, because no appointment had yet been made. The papers were incomplete and the whole matter was practically *sub judice*. It would not be wise to call for the papers.

*Mr. Swan:* The Government will decide quickly after we pass this vote.

*The TREASURER:* Was the hon. member throwing out a threat? There was certain procedure laid down under the Public Service Act and that procedure would be followed. The Government were not in sympathy with the recommendation made by the Public Service Commissioner, and that was as far as the thing had gone. The matter must come before the Executive Council, and the

Governor must, on the advice of his Ministers, decline to make the appointment. The matter would then be referred back to the Public Service Commissioner for a fresh recommendation. When that came on it must be accepted or rejected, and then it was time for the papers to be laid before Parliament.

*Mr. Johnson:* Did you delay this to decide it during recess?

*The TREASURER:* These matters were not done in five minutes. There were many consultations. On many occasions members claimed that Ministers must not always rely on the Public Service Commissioner, but must rely on their own judgment in making these appointments.

*Mr. Angwin:* For instance, the remarks about the land tax assessor.

*The TREASURER:* The Government disagreed with the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner on what they considered were very proper grounds. A young officer about eighteen months in the service, an able man of high diplomas, was selected by the Public Service Commissioner; but the Government recognised that old servants who had passed the prime of their lives in the service of the State should receive due recognition at the hands of the State, especially when an officer had done good service in the earlier stages of the State's history, and more especially when that officer had kept himself up-to-date in his profession and, notwithstanding his years, showed more energy and more administrative capacity than officers many years his junior. The Government were not to be blamed because the matter was delayed so that it might receive maturer consideration and so that injustice would not be done to an officer who had given his best years in the service of the State.

*Mr. Heitmann:* That should not be considered. Put the best man in the position.

*The TREASURER:* The sections of the Act quoted by the Leader of the Opposition, which had no bearing on the section quoted by the Minister for Works, said that we must consider ability before seniority, but in order that the Government could be assured of the excessive

ability of one officer over another, a certificate had to be issued by the Public Service Commissioner that there was no senior officer capable of satisfactorily filling the position. Now no one had said that Dr. Hope was incapable of satisfactorily carrying out the duties of the position.

*Mr. Collier*: It is to be presumed that the Public Service Commissioner would issue that certificate.

The TREASURER: It was not to be presumed. The Public Service Commissioner would probably not be prepared to issue that certificate. No one would say that Dr. Hope was incapable of administering the department, because his experience eminently fitted him for the position. He had kept himself up-to-date in the knowledge of the profession, and at his own expense had visited London and gained the diploma of public health. Not only this, but Dr. Hope had a special faculty for administration; he had tact, and in a position like this we had to look for a man of this description to put him in charge of a big department requiring very tactful management. The Government shirked no responsibility; there was no desire to keep back any papers when they were ready for production. Members should not listen to "yarns" in the streets, or to information which apparently leaked out, and then come to the House and make charges against the Government. Until the transaction was completed, until the Governor-in-Council had refused the recommendation, until there was a further recommendation, and until that was accepted or rejected, it was not proper that papers of this description— which were private and confidential— should be made public. Indeed it was not in the interests of the State.

*Mr. Holman*: What can be done after an appointment is made?

The TREASURER: Nothing.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	18
Noes	..	..	..	27
				—
Majority against	..			9
				—

## AYES.

Mr. Bath	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Bolton	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Brown	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Collier	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Gill	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gourley	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Heilmann	Mr. Ware
Mr. Holman	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Troy

(Teller).

## NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Layman
Mr. Barnett	Mr. Male
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Carson	Mr. Monger
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Davies	Mr. E. F. Moore
Mr. Draper	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Price
Mr. Hopkins	Mr. Walker
Mr. Horan	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Keenan	

(Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Item—Bacteriologist and Pathologist, £533 6s. 8d.:

Mr. BATH: Which officer was filling the position?

The TREASURER: Dr. Cumpston was the officer at the present time.

Mr. BATH: Which officer then was filling Dr. Cleland's position?

The TREASURER: The exact definition of the position was not in his possession.

*Mr. Collier*: Bacteriologist.

The TREASURER: Dr. Cleland had left, and with regard to some portion of his duties, those of lecturer to the Education Department, no arrangements had yet been made to replace him. Dr. Cumpston had been engaged in the place of Dr. Blackburne, who resigned from the service. Dr. Cumpston was a gentleman who held very high degrees and who had a very varied experience. In the case of any outbreak of infectious disease Dr. Cumpston was consulted.

Mr. BATH: It was with the loss of Dr. Cleland's services that he desired more particularly to deal. This was not the first instance where in Western Australia there had been need for skill and ability and where we had the unhappy faculty of getting rid of a good man, and retaining those who were antiquated in their



ideas. It was a most unfortunate thing and we should begin to realise this very important matter, if only from the point of view that we wanted to gain as much population as was possible by excess of births over deaths and in connection with which the question of health entered very largely. One could not blame Dr. Cleland because he had gone to New South Wales to take up what was perhaps one of the very best positions a medical officer could occupy, that was, to be engaged in original research. But he ventured to say that in Western Australia we had as many possibilities for scientific discovery, which would mean untold wealth to the State, as there were in New South Wales, and we wanted men who were skilled in this direction. We could afford to pay more for them. It was found in South Africa and in South America, and in fact all over the world, that these countries were securing great wealth from the fact that they had employed the best talent, with the result that new discoveries had been made. He had only to cite the discoveries of the new varieties of rubber tree on the West Coast of Africa, which had added great wealth and increased trade there to a great extent. Here we had a wonderful variety of botanical life of which so little was known, and it was possible by research that we might be able to increase our wealth as well.

*Mr. Jacoby:* The Agricultural Department should do that.

*Mr. BATE:* We could not afford to lose a good man. The Minister had also referred to the work this officer had done in connection with the Education Department. The position was that the amount of work this officer could cover was limited. We wanted this work extended, because the report of Dr. Blackburne showed that there were many physical defects in the children attending the schools. If this knowledge were made known to the parents, they could attend to the matter with considerable benefit to the children when they grew up. In Great Britain the work was taken in hand, in the first place not by the Government but by medical men themselves, who did it as a labour of love. All over Western Australia it would be possible to find medical

men who would be willing to act in a similar way, and he made the suggestion to the Treasurer with a view of its being acted upon in the future. If medical men were willing to carry on this work the Government should avail themselves of their services.

*The TREASURER:* With regard to the suggestion made by the member for Brown Hill he would be only too happy to adopt it if it were at all possible. He would see what could be done in that respect. He agreed as to the necessity for keeping capable men in Western Australia. The Government had recognised the exceptional ability of Dr. Cleland and he had only to point out the fact that this officer started in 1906 at a salary of £400, then it was increased to £500, and when Dr. Cumpston was engaged under a special agreement at a salary of a minimum of £500, rising to £600 by yearly increments of £33 6s. 8d., the Government immediately placed Dr. Cleland on the same footing.

*Mr. Heitmann:* That is not a salary for a scientific man. Why, at Black Range he could earn £600.

*The TREASURER:* At any rate he wished to point out that every effort was made to pay Dr. Cleland a salary which was commensurate with the position he occupied. A much better post was offered to him, and therefore he congratulated the doctor upon the fact that he had moved a step upward, and had obtained one of the prizes of the profession. As far as the Government were concerned everything within reasonable bounds would be done to keep men of ability in Western Australia.

Item, Medical Officer for Schools, etc., £518:

*Mr. HOLMAN:* The matter referred to by the Leader of the Opposition should receive more than passing consideration. There was a number of medical officers paid by the State, and others partially paid by the State, and it should be easy to arrange for these medical officers to undertake duties in connection with the examination of pupils in schools. It was necessary that school children should have their eyes tested, and their teeth examined. If these mat-

ters were attended to early in life, remedies might be effected. A course of lectures might be given to the teachers who could thus instruct the children in matters affecting their health. We should be following a good system which was in existence in the old country. Honorary medical officers could be attached to the schools.

Mr. HEITMANN: What was being done as to the medical examination of State school children, and was it the intention of the Government to extend the system? The Government were prepared to make casual examinations of all State school children but not a thorough examination. One of the diseases which was becoming prevalent yearly was lung trouble in various forms. From the experience of older countries this was one of the diseases that we could not place too much importance upon. Therefore, the Government should see that State school children were medically examined. If we could not remedy the trouble as to the birth rate, we should make it a first point to take more care with the children we had. Expense should not stand in the way of an extension of the system in this direction. From the report of Dr. Blackburne one learnt that casual visits were made to State schools, but the system should be extended throughout the State. We might have medical men delivering lectures throughout the State, not to the children, but to the parents, for it was found that ignorance was displayed by parents as to sanitation and hygiene. Was it the intention of the Government to extend the present system, or did they intend to jog along as they had been doing during the past few years?

The TREASURER: Periodical inspection of State school children was first undertaken two years ago by Dr. Blackburne, some 3,000 or 4,000 children being examined for throat, eye, and ear diseases. This work had since been taken up by Dr. Cumpston. The intention was to extend the system as far as possible. He had noted the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition. Up to the present the various district medical officers or private practitioners had not taken part

in this work, but if agreeable, no doubt the Government would be happy to have their services.

Mr. HEITMANN: The Government medical officers should be asked to do this work as they were paid.

The TREASURER: The matter would be brought under the notice of the department, and if possible, the system would be extended.

Item, Medical Officer for Plague. £68:

Mr. ANGWIN: What was the intention of the Government in regard to this officer, for at present there was no plague, nor had there been for some time? The duties of this officer could be carried out by the district medical officer, and there would be a saving to the State.

The TREASURER: This medical officer (Dr. Anderson) had special knowledge of bubonic plague, and it was thought advisable to pay him a retaining fee of £52 per annum to have his services in this connection. The officer had done excellent service in Western Australia in regard to bubonic plague, and it was little enough to pay him for the work he had done. There had also been an examination of rats which was a very extensive work, especially at Fremantle.

Mr. ANGWIN: Could not the duties of this officer be tacked on to those of the district medical officer?

The Treasurer: This officer had special qualifications.

Mr. ANGWIN: Where did he get them from?

The Premier: The officer had experience in India.

Mr. ANGWIN: The officer was paid a special fee when attending to plague patients, and a very good fee. There was no necessity for this retainer. The doctor would not run away while there was plenty of work for him to do.

The Treasurer: Consider the large number of rats examined.

Mr. ANGWIN: Would the Minister supply a return showing the number of rats examined during the last two years? This was an item which we could well do without. The district medical officer at Fremantle could carry out this

work. This was money wasted. Would the Government go into the matter later on?

*The Treasurer :* Very well.

Item, Compulsory Vaccination Officer, £180:

Mr. BOLTON: It was originally intended by him to move that the item be struck out, but since he had had a conversation with the Treasurer and the Premier, he thought it might be wise to move that the item be reduced by £60, being the salary for the remaining four months of the financial year. The past seven months salary had been paid to this officer, and he had now started on the eighth month of the year. It was not intended to deal with the question of compulsory vaccination now. On the first day of the session he (Mr. Bolton) had given notice to move for leave to bring in a Bill to do away with compulsory vaccination, and on the following day, the motion was carried and the Bill brought in. Since then no opportunity had been given to discuss the measure. He did not altogether blame the Government for this, but it would be impossible for the measure to be discussed in another place this session. He was pretty sure of a good majority in this House in favour of the measure, and it would be carried in another place, still, the Bill would have to be dropped for this session. It was not intended to depose this officer, for he (Mr. Bolton) was informed by the Minister in charge of the department that something else could be found for this officer to do for the remainder of the financial year. There was only one compulsory vaccination officer appointed for the State, and it was well known that he could not visit the whole of the districts within the metropolitan area. Therefore, the proceedings were farcical. If the item were reduced by £60, the compulsory vaccination officer would not exist until we had had an opportunity of discussing the Vaccination Act Amendment Bill. If the Bill became law, as he believed and hoped it would, the office of compulsory vaccination officer would be abolished, and provision would have been made for the abolition of this offi-

cer four months before the passage of the measure. He had the assurance of the Premier and the Minister in charge of this department, that no action would be taken against parents or guardians of children who did not have their children vaccinated if provision was not made for the salary of this vaccination officer. He had no desire to reduce the item simply with the object of defeating the Government, but it was to get a clear opinion from the House on the question of compulsory vaccination. If the amendment were carried it would mean that there would be no compulsory officer for the rest of the financial year or until a new Bill was dealt with by the Legislature. There would then be no further prosecutions under the Act, so he had been told.

*Mr. Brown:* That is scandalous.

Mr. BOLTON: The hon. member who had interjected would have plenty of opportunity to show his opposition to the attempt to do away with compulsory vaccination when the Bill was before the House. He did not seek to capture a single vote on this amendment on the score of economy but it was simply to allow members to show their disapproval of compulsory vaccination.

*Mr. Brown:* It was scandalous for the Government to promise that they would not carry out the provisions of the Act if the amendment were agreed to.

Mr. BOLTON had not said that. What he had said was that if the vote were reduced the compulsory officer would be out of employment from the end of this month and compulsory vaccination would cease then; but there was no doubt the same result would have been achieved had the Bill he had given notice of been dealt with by the Legislature this session. He moved an amendment—

*That the item be reduced by £60.*

The TREASURER: The excision of the item from the Estimates could not determine an Act of Parliament which compelled people to have their children vaccinated. Only the repeal of the Act could end its operation. It was a most improper procedure altogether to endeavour to override an Act which had been

in existence here for many years by cutting down the item for the officer controlling it. The Premier had informed him that there was no understanding between him and the hon. member that there would be no further prosecutions if the amendment were carried, but that his reply to the hon. member was that the bringing forward of the amendment would enable him to ventilate his case. There was no understanding that if the item were cut down further proceedings under the Act would cease.

*Mr. Bolton :* I received that assurance from the Colonial Secretary.

The *TREASURER*: There must have been some misunderstanding. The fact of having or not having an officer could not stop the action of an Act. There were registrars of births throughout the State and certificates of vaccination had to be lodged with them, and the registrars had power to take action. Admittedly in the majority of cases they took action through the officer now under discussion. The compulsory officer consulted all the returns sent in to him, and when he found out cases of children who were not vaccinated he took proceedings.

*Mr. Bolton :* No action has been taken outside the City.

The *TREASURER*: Well then what was the hon. member grumbling about?

*Mr. Underwood :* Because action is taken in one case and not in another.

The *TREASURER*: By all means let the question be discussed but no effort should be made to supersede the Act by means of cutting down an item on the Estimates. The member should not take action which would interfere with the Government Estimates in order to bring about the non-enforcement of a certain Act of Parliament. If he did this he would probably alienate the sympathy of those who were against compulsory vaccination. It was quite an improper course for him to take.

*Mr. BOLTON :* Would it be possible for him, by permission of the Committee, to withdraw the amendment and move to reduce the item by one pound?

The *CHAIRMAN*: No.

*Mr. BOLTON :* If he obtained leave to withdraw the amendment could he not

move to reduce the item by a nominal sum?

The *CHAIRMAN*: No. The only way the hon. member could take action was to move to reduce the total vote by a nominal amount; he could not reduce the item by a nominal amount.

*Mr. BOLTON :* In such circumstances he would not ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

*Mr. ANGWIN :* An expression of opinion should be taken by members on the question of compulsory vaccination. A very large majority of the residents of the State were against this principle and there was not the slightest doubt that the system now in vogue was a farce. It was impossible for the compulsory officer to carry out the duties assigned to him. It had been proved pretty conclusively that vaccination had been the cause of the death of a number of children.

*Mr. OSBORN :* This was not the proper way to seek for an opinion from members on the question of compulsory vaccination. It was a matter which required very serious consideration and he certainly did not intend to commit himself on the question without first having an opportunity of reading up on the subject, of hearing what members had to say upon it, and of seeing the provisions of the Bill intended to be introduced regarding it. The Bill was not before the Committee and it was altogether a wrong procedure to follow for the hon. member to endeavour to cut down the item on the Estimates so as to get an expression of opinion on the principle. He intended to vote against the amendment as this was not the right time to deal with the question. The hon. member should withdraw his amendment and bring forward his Bill at the first possible opportunity. He should not attempt to get a snatch vote at this juncture by the reduction of an item on the Estimates.

*Mr. UNDERWOOD :* The amendment would have his support for quite another reason than those already mentioned, namely, that this officer did not enforce the Act throughout the whole of the State. Now, as there was but the one officer it

would seem that the Act was not being enforced outside Perth and Fremantle, where the officer was stationed. That being so, it was useless to attempt to enforce the Act in that one locality. He had reason to believe that the police enforced it in other centres; but if that were so, the police were equally capable of enforcing it in the metropolitan area. As to the question at issue, namely, that of vaccination, he himself was in favour of it; at the same time the House had decided against it by a two to one majority and in view of that the Government ought to take up the question and see it through. However, as the Act was not being carried out as it should be, the salary paid to the officer under consideration was being wasted. Consequently he (Mr. Underwood) would vote for the amendment.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	20
Noes	..	..	..	24

Majority against .. 4

#### AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Barnett	Mr. Holman
Mr. Bath	Mr. Horan
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Jacoby
Mr. Butcher	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Collier	Mr. Swan
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Davies	Mr. Walker
Mr. Gill	Mr. Ware
Mr. Goarley	Mr. Heltmann

(Teller).

#### NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Monger
Mr. Carson	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Draper	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Hopkins	Mr. Price
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Troy
Mr. Male	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. McDowall	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Gordon

(Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Item, District Medical Officers,  
£10,487 :

Mr. BROWN: It would be interesting to know the total amount paid to the district medical officer at Fremantle.

The TREASURER: The member could find the information in the footnote. The amount was, he thought, £920.

Mr. BROWN: According to the footnote there was in addition to that, £50 for drug allowance, making £970, and quarters, water, and sanitation free. So it seemed that with these other items Dr. Hope at Fremantle was drawing about £1,200. It was passing strange that the Government should seek to reduce him to £850 by appointing him Principal Medical Officer. How came it that this gentleman was prepared to throw up some £400 or £500 a year for the sake of being made Principal Medical Officer? It would be interesting to know the reasons for the desire on the part of the Government to appoint him to that position.

Mr. NANSON: It was to be hoped the Treasurer would reply to the hon. member. For his part he would like to call attention to the item "Geraldton-Greenough," which was included in the item District Medical Officers. He had asked questions in the House to-day in regard to this officer, and had learned that his salary was £275. This question of medical officers in agricultural districts was one that must appeal to all members representing such districts, and one, moreover, to which the Government should devote some attention. At Greenough at the present time there was in evidence a considerable number of cases of diphtheria. It seemed that the officer at Geraldton had reported only four cases, but there must have been more. The district was so scattered that if a medical officer visited the centre he might be miles away from where his services were required. Again, the need for the doctor's services might not be apparent on the day of the visit. A valuable life was lost through diphtheria, a youth, apparently quite well on the day of the doctor's visit to the district, having died two days later. It was difficult to diagnose diphtheria, while it was an expensive matter to send for a doctor

over the long distance between the district and Geraldton until it was really assured that there was need for the doctor's services. Possibly it might be found practicable to provide a liberal subsidy for a resident medical officer provided the residents of the district were prepared to furnish among themselves a certain sum on the pound for pound basis. At any rate the Government should, during the present outbreak of diphtheria, send an officer to the district, if it was only as a temporary measure.

Mr. JACOBY: The districts surrounding Guildford, for which there was a subsidy, were not provided with medical attendance. When the matter of these appointments was being considered, some scale of charges might be agreed upon by which the resident medical officer's services might be obtained in the districts surrounding Guildford. At present the doctor's fee for attending patients a short distance out from Guildford among the hills was usually five guineas.

The TREASURER: The resident medical officer at Guildford received £124 practically to attend the Government cases at the local hospital; but some arrangement might be made for a scale of fees for the outlying districts of Guildford. This matter would be brought under the notice of the Colonial Secretary. The alteration in regard to the resident medical officer at Greenough had not been made without due consideration. It was impossible to have medical officers in every centre where the population was small. He (the Treasurer) had had a more bitter experience than the hon. member. At Nannup diphtheria carried off five or six children. As soon as he received a wire from the district he communicated with the Colonial Secretary; but the department had already sent out the medical officer from Busselton. He felt sure that if the hon. member had made representations to the department the result would be similar.

Mr. Nanson: In all probability. I make no charge against the Minister.

The TREASURER: The desire of the Government was to give as free and

extensive medical attention to people in the State as could be got in accordance with the revenue at our disposal, but the line must be drawn somewhere. Where a district was not more than 13 or 14 miles from a medical officer it was not inflicting a hardship on the settlers to have no doctor in the district, but something on the lines of the subsidy suggested by the hon. member might be done. Some of our hospitals had been put under local committees on that basis with good results. The suggestion would be brought under the Colonial Secretary's notice to see if some scheme in that direction could not be devised. Those who helped themselves should certainly be assisted.

Mr. BUTCHER: If the suggestion made by the member for Swan were carried out it would mean granting a monopoly to the resident medical officer at Guildford, and it would drive out the independent men, or compel them to accept the scale of fees laid down by the department. That aspect should receive consideration.

Item, Secretaries and Dispensers (4) £656:

Mr. BOLTON: It would appear that the dispenser at Kalgoorlie could look after the work of both Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, especially in view of the fact that Coolgardie was disappearing.

Item, Radiographer (Kalgoorlie Hospital), £50:

Mr. BATH: The fees charged for the Rontgen rays apparatus at Kalgoorlie were stiff, and in view of the fact that most people could not pay them, an invention of this kind which saved so much trouble and so much of the probing otherwise necessary should be made available as cheaply as possible.

The TREASURER: As far as the fees charged for administering the Rontgen rays were concerned, he could not say what they were, but he agreed with the hon. member that the treatment should be provided at as cheap a rate as possible. He would bring the matter under notice.

Item, Perth Public Hospital, Maintenance, £16,000:

Mr. HEITMANN: There was no desire on his part to reduce this item. He believed the Perth hospital was a fine

institution, but there were times when we heard from the newspapers various complaints about the management, sometimes about the treatment of the patients and at other times about the staff. From time to time he had heard of complaints about the treatment meted out to the nurses. He would suggest the members of the board should wake up and see if it was possible to give the nurses shorter hours of labour. It would be interesting to get a return showing the number of nurses who had fallen sick in the first 12 months of their service in the institution. There was a time when we heard complaints that the Legislative Assembly was not represented on the board of management, and afterwards the member for Mount Margaret and the member for Perth were appointed on the board. When the member for Mount Margaret was appointed we expected to hear of many reforms being effected and that his appointment would be like a lion going among the lambs. It looked as if the lambs had eaten him up, for he was now the mildest lion that could be found. Greater consideration should be given to the nurses, and he hoped that the Colonial Secretary would make every effort to bring about such a reform.

MR. BROWN : As one of the members of the hospital board and also one of the members of the visiting committee he desired to say without fear of contradiction that the management of the Perth hospital to-day was as perfect as it possibly could be. And it was evident the Government had attempted to ameliorate the conditions of the nurses by expending as members would see on the Loan Estimates, £12,000 to provide them with proper accommodation. When those nurses' quarters were completed the nurses would have little if any cause for complaint. He would admit in some cases that the hours were long, but members forgot that every nurse each week had one clear day off, and the patients themselves complained even on that day of the interference of possibly a strange nurse. When Mr. Taylor was Colonial Secretary he went into the question of hours and found it

impossible to introduce the eight hours system. Even if it were possible to introduce the eight hours system it would cost an extra £3,000 or £4,000. The hon. member for Cue had complained about the treatment of the nurses. Everything had been done to make the nurses as comfortable as possible. It was admitted that the quarters were bad and the board had done their best by renting at considerable expense some villas in Hay-street for the benefit of the sisters. Mr. Rendall and he (Mr. Brown) had been on the visiting staff for the last two years, and he would say that the nurses had been asked whether they had any complaints to make, and not a single one had been forthcoming. Mr. Rendall and he had gone through the hospital unattended and had invited complaints, but in not a single instance had one been made. The only one they did receive was from a patient who complained that he was not receiving sufficient food. The matter was represented to the Principal Medical Officer, who replied that the patient had been operated on for some abdominal complaint, and naturally they were starving him until he had recovered from the effects of this operation. Mr. Speaker was the chairman of the board and he had done his best not only for the patients but for the nurses. The probationers in the hospital must expect for three years to work harder than they would do after having passed their examinations. There was no profession in Western Australia where women could after a term of three years come out and demand three or four guineas a week as professional nurses.

MR. HEITMANN : No complaint was made about the cost of the hospital, although one might justifiably raise objection about the increase in the vote. He believed however that the money was well spent. Listening to the hon. member for Perth one would think that nurses after having served their three years would have no difficulty in securing employment at a high salary. From two to five however might get the salary mentioned by the hon. member, and then possibly they would secure work for only four or five months in the year. Looking

at the salary list one found that the matron who was the highest paid member of the staff received £150 and the nurses were paid from £18 to £80 per annum. It was ridiculous for the hon. member to say that to employ the nurses for eight hours a day would mean an extra cost of between £3,000 and £4,000. The whole of the salaries at the present time did not come to anything like that. If the board of management were not prepared to do something in this respect he hoped the Committee would do something.

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

Mr. HEITMANN: It was his desire to draw the attention of the Government to the method of treatment of phthisical cases in the Perth public hospital. It was only too well known to the average citizen that in Western Australia we had very many cases of lung trouble. Very often these cases were among people who could not afford to pay private hospital fees, and who consequently, were forced to go into the public hospital in Perth. In the first instance these patients were placed among other patients in the hospital. He particularly wished to impress this upon the Minister. It was, he understood, because they had not sufficient accommodation in the No. 10 ward, which was set apart for these cases. He had frequently visited the hospital. At one time he had two friends in there for over two years. Later on they were moved to Coolgardie. One of these, when first placed in the Perth public hospital was considered to be at death's door; but after lingering for 18 months in that hospital he had been removed to Coolgardie, where he rapidly recovered. He (Mr. Heitmann) hoped the Government would recognise that it was their duty not only towards the unfortunate people stricken down with this disease, but towards the public generally, to enlarge the sanatorium at Coolgardie and to make it easier for patients in the Perth public hospital to be removed to that sanatorium.

Mr. TAYLOR: The member who had just resumed his seat had pointed out to the Government the necessity for doing something further than what had already

been done in the way of providing some suitable place for those suffering from lung trouble. Mr. Heitmann had referred in warm terms of praise to the sanatorium at Coolgardie. This was the more pleasing to him (Mr. Taylor) because when Colonial Secretary he had taken a hand in the establishment of that institution. He was sorry that the institution had not been maintained along the lines which he had intended. He had established that institution after having taken into consideration the climatic advantages of Coolgardie and its suitability for the treatment of consumptive patients during at least eight months of the year. He had been advised that there was no better place in the whole of the Commonwealth for this purpose. Because of that he had instituted the sanatorium with the object, not of making it a home for patients with no chance of recovery, but for those who, being in the early stages of the disease, could under proper treatment be wholly cured. It had been proved beyond doubt that the disease, if taken early, could be cured in 85 per cent. of the cases. He had instituted that sanatorium at Coolgardie with the object of demonstrating that, given the highest remedial skill, consumption was a curable disease. Unfortunately the institution had not since been used to that end. The position to-day was such that no matter how the Government might be feeling the stringency of finance it would have to consider the setting apart of a large sum of money for the purpose of building a consumptive sanatorium. More than that, legislation would have to be provided against the landing on our shores of consumptives from foreign countries. He had gone deeply into this question and he could say that throughout the Commonwealth and New Zealand it was a generally accepted opinion that Western Australia was, par excellence, the place for persons affected with lung trouble. It was because of this that we had so many such cases in our State. According to the local medical fraternity it would be necessary to build a second sanatorium in the Darling Ranges for occupation in the summer months. He had been a member of the Perth public hospital board for a



term. That board was faced with a difficulty almost insurmountable, namely, that there was a very large number of people suffering from consumption who desired treatment in the hospital, where, in point of fact, there was accommodation for only 16 consumptive patients. Hon. members would recognise that that hospital was no place for people suffering from consumption in advanced stages ; for within the narrow confines of that hospital they were unavoidably placed in close proximity to other patients in ill-health. It was very unsatisfactory to the board of management that these consumptive patients were there at all ; but what could the board do ? The board had pointed out to the Government the need for further arrangements and the suggestion was made that the Government should build a sanatorium at Subiaco where the infectious cases were now treated. At all events it was to be hoped that the Government would give this matter the consideration it deserved, because it was a subject that could not be treated too lightly, when we had in our midst people suffering from this disease which simply ate away the human frame, killing by inches. He understood it had been pointed out that the hospital was almost a sweating concern in regard to the nurses. Two members of the board of management were appointed each month as a visiting committee, and they went through the hospital at any time they choose, unaccompanied by any officer : and if there were any complaints, and if the nurses did not avail themselves of this opportunity of making them known, the board could not be blamed.

*Mr. Heitmann :* Your own common sense ought to tell you that eleven hours a day is too long.

*Mr. TAYLOR :* The nurses worked for nine hours, but, in the circumstances, the institution could not be run otherwise.

*Mr. Heitmann :* It can.

*Mr. TAYLOR :* If the hon. member could influence the Government to put on three staffs where two were employed it might be done. There might be some truth in the complaints in regard to probationers, but they were just like apprentices. The nurses and sisters made no

complaints. When he (Mr. Taylor) was Colonial Secretary, and when Dr. Ellis had moved that the nurses should work eight hours a day, he had visited the Perth and Fremantle hospitals, and found that the nurses were perfectly satisfied.

*Mr. Heitmann :* Because they were threatened that it would be worse for them if they complained.

*Mr. TAYLOR :* Any member knew that he would not submit to anything like that if it came to his knowledge that employees were coerced not to speak the truth ; but these nurses not only spoke to him and told him that they were satisfied, they wrote and told him that they were satisfied. Of course the hon. member might know more about these nurses, but the board had done all it could to make the condition of the nurses as good as possible. Certainly there had been no proper quarters for them, but the board had made excellent temporary arrangements, and the new quarters would be built about the middle of this year.

*Mr. Heitmann :* The cost of the hospital has increased from £12,000 to £16,000.

*Mr. TAYLOR :* After the completion of the nurses' quarters the board would be able to do better work. There would be greater facilities for administration. The cost of the hospital had naturally increased. The number of in-patients in 1896-7 was 1,114 ; last year the number was 3,330, so the cost must naturally have increased. But the cost of treating in-patients had fallen in the same period from £2 11s. 4d. to £1 10s. 4d. per head, which compared favourably with the Eastern States. In Adelaide with an average of 222 in-patients the cost per head per day was 3s. 6d. ; in Melbourne with an average of 305 in-patients the figures were 3s. 9d. ; in Sydney with an average of 295 in-patients the cost was also 3s. 9d. per head per day, and in Brisbane with an average of 218 in-patients the cost was 3s. 8½d. per head per day. In Perth the cost per head per day was 4s. 4d. for 1908. Again, what cost us £3,002, cost £759 less in Melbourne, so we could not expect to treat the patients

in our hospitals as cheaply as they did in Melbourne. What did the hon. member expect?

*Mr. Heitmann:* I expect fair treatment for the nurses, and you are not trying to get it for them.

*Mr. TAYLOR:* If the hon. member could bring any nurse in the hospital who had not been fairly treated he (Mr. Taylor) would see that she got justice. If the hon. member found any employee of the hospital who did not receive justice he (Mr. Taylor) was satisfied his colleagues on the board would investigate the case, as they investigated every case that came under their notice. There was recently a strong article in the *Morning Herald* about the maltreatment of a patient. This being brought under the notice of the board by him, it was thoroughly inquired into, and the father of the patient admitted there were no grounds for the charge and said he was perfectly satisfied his daughter received more attention than any other patient, on the ground that a doctor, a friend of his, had rung up Dr. Tymms, pointing out that it was a special case and that he would like to see something special done for the patient. Notwithstanding this, the paper said that the patient was practically killed by the hospital. If any member knew of any persons not getting fair treatment at the hospital why did he not tell him (Mr. Taylor) as a member of the board?

*Mr. Heitmann:* I am telling you now.

*Mr. TAYLOR:* The hon. member took the opportunity on the floor of the House. If the hon. member knew of these cases and did not tell him (Mr. Taylor), then the hon. member was only playing to the gallery. No member should take advantage of a meeting of Parliament as long as there was a Minister or a board managing an institution, unless the member wanted to use the incident for party purposes. The hon. member should first seek redress at the fountain head; he should go to the Minister in charge of the board in control, and if the grievance was not removed then he could bring it before Parliament; but an hon. member who did not take this course and first brought his grievance

before Parliament was not so deeply or sincerely interested as he would try to make the Committee believe.

*Mr. Johnson:* Do you always practise that yourself?

*Mr. TAYLOR* defied any member to say that he had stored up any grievance. He had always striven to seek redress from the Minister before bringing the matter before Parliament. There were three members of Parliament on the board of management of the Perth hospital, and they were nearly always accessible to members, and any complaints members had in regard to the hospital would be gone into. But whatever we might do in party politics, it was not a fair deal to use an institution such as this for party purposes. The Government were not doing enough for the institution, though they were doing all they could with the finances as they were at present, and there was room for great work. Patients came to the institution from all parts of the State.

*Mr. Brown:* There are not 50 there from Perth.

*Mr. Collier:* Perth does not provide the money.

*Mr. TAYLOR:* That was why the Government should not be so niggardly. People from all parts of the State had a perfect right to go to the Perth Hospital. Due greatly to Dr. Tymms, that institution had never been so well conducted as during the past twelve months. The doctor was a very good administrator, he knew his business thoroughly and kept everything up to date. It was to be hoped the Treasurer would use his influence with the Colonial Secretary to find some money for the board so that they would be able to remove the slight anomalies now complained of. Above all, the Treasurer might take into consideration his remarks with regard to the consumptive patients. The hospital was no place for these people, as there was no means of segregating them. The board should be given money for the erection of some place at Subiaco for an infectious hospital.

*Mr. COLLIER:* Regarding the management of the Perth hospital, it was easy to understand why the member for

Cue (Mr. Heitmann) did not go cap in hand to the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) when he had grievances. No doubt he had had experiences when Mr. Taylor was administering the department. From Mr. Taylor's own showing there was a grievance with regard to the hours the nurses were compelled to work, and he was sorry to hear that the member thought it was right that the hospital nurses should be compelled to work ten or eleven hours a day. Mr. Taylor had said that, while he was Colonial Secretary, a complaint was received as to the hours of work. He had made inquiries, and found that the nurses were perfectly satisfied with the hours of work.

Mr. Brown : The nurses have holidays of three weeks a year.

Mr. COLLIER : And many of the civil servants had longer holidays than that. It was an extraordinary thing to hear a Labour member say that slaves working long hours were perfectly satisfied.

Mr. Scaddan : They have not the courage to say anything otherwise.

Mr. COLLIER : Would Mr. Taylor say that things were all right because the nurses were satisfied ? That was not the question. It was a matter of whether the hours of work were reasonable. It might be a fact that the nurses had not complained, and it often happened that those suffering from the gravest grievances were the last to complain. It was unreasonable to ask the nurses to work ten, eleven, or twelve hours a day, whether they were satisfied to do it or not. We had been told that it was impossible that they should be worked for only eight hours a day, but that was ridiculous.

Mr. Taylor : There was a return published some years ago that showed that the expenses would be immense if the alteration in the hours was made.

Mr. COLLIER : How could it be immense ? It might by a small advance. In every fight made to reduce the hours of wage slaves the argument was used that it was impossible as the cost would be immense. If the member were putting that forward as an excuse, why was he not

championing the old twelve hours a day of labour.

Mr. Taylor : I did not put that forward as an excuse.

Mr. COLLIER : With a reduction of the hours of work, the cost of commodities and industrial life had decreased. Anyhow, the increased cost was justified. There was great necessity for increased accommodation at the Coolgardie sanatorium, for at present the space there was wholly inadequate. There were only forty beds, and there were dozens of people waiting admission. He received letters every week from men who had been unable through illness to follow their occupation and were asking whether they could be assisted into the institution. On going to the department he had been dealt with very fairly for whenever there was an opening his application was granted, but still there were vast numbers waiting admission. A hospital for incurables should be established in the State so that when cases in the Coolgardie sanatorium were hopeless they could be transferred there. Unless something were done within the next year or two, many people would either have recourse to other public hospitals—which was most undesirable—or they would die outside the hospital.

Mr. McDOWALL : There was a real necessity for increasing the accommodation at the Coolgardie sanatorium, which had been in a very bad condition up to recently, but now contracts had been let with a result that considerable improvements had been effected. The attendants were worked too long hours. It was all very well to say that nine and three quarters or ten hours were not too many, but it must be remembered that sometimes those hours were spread over fifteen hours, so that to all intents and purposes the nurses were on duty for that period. Mention had already been made of the additional cost that would be incurred if the hours of the nurses were reduced. That should not come into a question of this kind for people able to work in a community like Western Australia were perfectly satisfied to bear a little extra cost in the interest of suffering humanity. Splendid work had been done at the

sanatorium, it was conducted excellently, and there was no doubt about the popularity of the staff. The only trouble in the past had been that the accommodation was inferior. There were forty patients there and there was only one bath room, and in wards where sick patients were dying, and at times were actually dead, others were having their meals. That was a very bad state of affairs, but recently contracts had been let and this position was being remedied. It was to be hoped that when increased accommodation was being given there would be no cheese-paring policy adopted.

Item, Fremantle Public Hospital, £5,550 ;

Mr. SCADDAN : The member for Perth, who had not been able to wait for this item, had asked him to bring a matter under notice, and that was that the secretary of the friendly societies had informed him that the medical officer at the Fremantle hospital charged the patients receiving fees from a lodge amounting to £1 a week, a sum of 10s. 6d. before he would supply them with a medical certificate on leaving the hospital, stating that they were able to follow their usual employment. That was a hardship on lodge patients and he would like to have an explanation from the Treasurer.

*The Treasurer :* I am not aware that this charge is imposed, but I will cause inquiries to be made.

Mr. ANGWIN : The statement of the hon. member was correct ; he had interviewed some of the members of the board with regard to it, and there appeared to be a disinclination, more especially on the part of the members, that these friendly societies should have any assistance at all so far as the hospital was concerned. In Fremantle the friendly societies banded together and employed a medical officer, to whom they paid an annual salary. These societies were not always held in the best opinion by other medical gentlemen. It would be unnecessary for him to say that the medical officer of the friendly societies was not a member of the staff of the Fremantle hospital, and therefore he had no right to visit patients in the hospital, though it was said he could call there and

see patients to give them a certificate. It appeared to him, for a considerable time efforts had been made by the members of the hospital board of Fremantle to put every difficulty in the way of admitting those entitled to hospital treatment : there seemed to be a feeling that they were doing some medical men out of their fees. The Lumpers' Union at Fremantle had been in the habit of contributing £50 annually towards the maintenance of the Fremantle hospital, and the secretary of the union was allowed the right to give an order for out-patients, but of late the board had denied that privilege and consequently the annual subscription from the Lumpers' Union had been withdrawn. There was a new board appointed now and it was hoped that they would act better. He hoped that the charge to which the hon. member for Ivanhoe had referred would be immediately wiped out.

Item, Assisting hospitals, 15s. in the pound subsidy, etc., £7,000 :

Mr. WALKER : The subject had already been alluded to by him in other speeches. He wanted now to draw attention to the fact that unless further provision was made, some of the hospitals outback would have to be closed. He was not at all an alarmist in this respect, but he had information which showed the danger in which these country hospitals were placed. In his own constituency there was one at Broad Arrow, one at Bulong, and another at Kanowna, and fortunately the allowance stipulated for them had been increased and hopes had been raised in the hearts of those residents for the good work done there. But even now it was questionable whether the sum granted would be sufficient to meet emergencies. There seemed to be a disposition on the part of those responsible, to close up these hospitals and to as much as possible compel patients out-back to go into Kalgoorlie and other centres. These hospitals were not only useful for the cure of the sick, but in nearly all mining townships they were social institutions of extreme value, apart altogether from the good they did in the care of the sick. To close them up in some cases would be like closing the

township itself and sending the miners still further back into the wild interior. That view of the question should not be overlooked. If we one by one removed all the civilised associations of these little towns, we would drive our mining population away. By keeping these towns going we were preparing for mining revivals, and instead of a roving population we got a settled population, and it was the settled population which was the very life of the commerce of Perth and Fremantle. Comparing the cost of the maintenance of the Perth and Fremantle hospitals with the cost of these institutions on the goldfields, one could not but feel disgusted at the distribution of our charity. He did not begrudge one penny that Perth was getting. It deserved all that it got for its hospital, but if there was to be economy, Perth should take its share of it. It had been owing to the energy of those who had been associating themselves with these hospitals that they had been kept going. To begrudge the miners through their hospitals seemed to him to be the height of meanness. Economy was necessary, but not in the direction of the hospitals. The sick and the maimed should at least have some generosity shown to them; not mere pittance, but the generosity which disclosed the heart behind the kindness. He had taken this course to-night because he felt convinced that more provision would have to be made for the hospitals; and, further, because he wished to give a word of warning against that policy which was seeking to close these smaller institutions in the interests of the bigger institutions. That was the reason why he had given a note of warning—the conviction that the Government would have to change its policy in this regard.

The TREASURER: It was indeed an unfortunate circumstance that three of these hospitals which had been interfered with to some extent were situated in the hon. member's electorate. Possibly the member had had a much larger percentage than he was entitled to.

Mr. Walker: It is a big electorate.

The TREASURER: It was unfortunate that three of these hospitals, which had been put on the new basis,

were in that one electorate. It had to be admitted that the arguments advanced by the hon. member were deserving of serious consideration. There was no intention whatever, so far as the Government was concerned, that the hospitals should be closed down wherever it was deemed necessary that they should remain open. The hon. member would not wish to see a hospital kept open where there were only two or three patients, and where that hospital was within convenient distance of another hospital. The Government recognised that these institutions had associations which made them to some extent a nucleus for the social entertainments arranged for the benefit of the hospitals. So long as a reasonable scheme could be adopted for the maintenance of these institutions, and so long as these people in the outback centres were doing what the hon. member had explained they were doing in Kanowna, namely, taking a lively interest in the establishments and assisting to raise funds for their maintenance, so long might the hon. member rest assured that these hospitals would have every sympathetic attention and consideration at the hands of the Minister in charge of the department. It was hardly necessary to remind the hon. member that he had already received some consideration in that respect, notwithstanding his pronounced opinion that the amount would prove too small. That amount had been increased as the result of representations made, and it was to be hoped that the people in these centres would rise to the occasion and endeavour to assist the Government in retaining the institutions. He (the Treasurer) had the same thing in his own district. The hospital at Busselton had been placed in the hands of a local committee, who had now to provide funds for carrying it on. The member for Kanowna probably realised that the hospitals he referred to had decreased enormously in the number of patients treated.

Mr. Walker: It might jump up at any time.

The TREASURER: That was so; still the present position had to be faced. There was no desire on the part of the

Government to be parsimonious in any way. It was only desired to do a fair thing, and to get the people to take a greater interest in the hospitals. He wished, indeed, that the people of Perth and Fremantle could be induced to take a greater interest in their respective hospitals. If the example set by the people in the out-back districts were to be followed in Perth and Fremantle it would indeed be very much better for the institutions concerned.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It was by no means difficult to realise that the Government could have been far more generous than they had been in the treatment of the hospitals. He himself had had some experience on the committees of goldfields hospitals, and he knew the difficulty experienced in financing these institutions. It was not alone the goldfields hospitals that had suffered in efficiency through the course taken by the Government, but also the coastal institutions as well. Speaking of his own electorate, there were there thousands of workers who had been doing a good deal in assisting themselves in this matter of hospitals, and who had received very little assistance whatever from the Government. He had no desire to post himself on the door of a Minister's office asking for grants and subsidies. He was wholly opposed to that sort of thing. But, taking into consideration the large number of men making a big sacrifice to provide hospital facilities in their respective districts in the South-West, surely this grant might have been maintained for those districts. The Busselton hospital had been referred to. He would like to point out that in the Yarloop district, where a thousand workers were engaged, these men were paying 3s. 6d. each per month and striving to establish hospital facilities and to get an institution that would be a credit to them. Yet the Government had refused to give them any assistance whatever. Another instance was provided in the Mornington district. He had brought this instance under the notice of the Minister, and he was pleased to say that the Minister had risen to the occasion, and had agreed to afford some assistance. In this particular district there had recently been an outbreak of

diphtheria, and but for the energy and resourcefulness of the local people the results would have been serious indeed. The men had arranged to erect a building at a cost of £450, and this sum was to be made available. He was pleased indeed that the Minister had given the concession in this particular district: but he would point out that in the same electorate there were thousands of men who could not get medical assistance of any sort. Yet it was to be remembered that the industry was just as dangerous as mining. It sometimes happened that, 30 and 35 miles out through the forest, men lost their limbs in the pursuit of their avocation. So it would be realised that this was indeed a matter that should receive the consideration of the Government. He trusted that in the next Estimates the vote would be reinstated. If the Government wished to apply the pruning knife they should apply it in some other direction.

Mr. TROY: While he had no desire to criticise the administration of the Colonial Secretary, he would point out to the Government the absolute necessity of giving that Minister more money for the purpose of subsidising hospitals. Until within the last year or two it had been the practice in this State to subsidise hospitals pound for pound: but recently the Government had reduced this vote. He thought it was one of the votes that might well have been left untouched. In this matter of tampering with this particular vote the Government had, indeed, pursued a very unwise policy. In some electorates the population was sufficiently strong to maintain the local hospital by local subscriptions added to the 15s. in the pound received from the Government, but in sparsely populated districts the existing conditions pressed most unfairly on the hospitals. Although the State was hard pushed for money, members could not be blind to the fact that the Government squandered a large amount annually, but he hoped a larger sum would be provided for district hospitals. The Minister did his best to provide a hospital for the promising locality of Black Range, and the local people went to considerable trouble to provide funds, more

particularly for enlarging the institution and furnishing it, recognising that they could not expect the same assistance as was given in the past by the Government, but at the same time they thought the Government should continue to pay the subsidy. The maintenance of hospitals in outlying districts was a heavy drain, and the Government should subsidise the institutions at least pound for pound. It was to be hoped that there would be an improvement on the item when the next Estimates came down.

Item, Vaccination fees, etcetera, £175:

Mr. BOLTON: Last year we voted £300 to pay medical practitioners for vaccinating children whose parents could not afford to pay the usual fee, but only £20 was spent. This was an argument against compulsory vaccination; and the Government had recognised the feeling there was about the matter by reducing the vote this year to £175. He knew he would not gain the object he sought in this direction by moving to reduce this vote still further, but he would be content if the Government would order the inspector to travel outside Perth. Busselton and Bunbury had not been visited by this officer for years; in fact, the law was only administered in one small centre. If compulsory vaccination was to continue until next session, when there would be an opportunity for passing the Bill he had introduced, then the officer should go to the outlying districts and give the people outside the metropolis a taste of compulsory vaccination.

The TREASURER: The remarks of the hon. member would be brought under the notice of the Colonial Secretary. The officer would certainly be despatched to Busselton to see that the Act was carried out there.

Mr. BOLTON: The Treasurer could get the assurance from the Colonial Secretary at once, as the Minister was in the Chamber, though his presence was not officially recognised. But the officer should be sent to Bunbury and then the Premier would get such a bad time from children's parents that there would be a better chance of the amending Bill being passed.

The TREASURER: The Colonial Secretary had given an assurance that this officer would be sent outside the metropolitan area.

Mr. ANGWIN: Instead of asking that this officer should be sent to the outlying districts, the hon. member should be pleased that the children outside Perth remained safe, and were not troubled by visits from the inspector.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Observatory*, £2,180:

Mr. BATH: This vote usually passed without much questioning, but now the Commonwealth had taken over the meteorological branch of this department's work and the general taxpayers had the additional burden of two departments, it might be questioned. He did not cavil at educational votes, but in Western Australia we wanted to devote a good deal to things mundane rather than to worry much about the stars, and though it was pointed out that the Government Astronomer was carrying on a most important work in conjunction with astronomers throughout the world in mapping the firmament, Western Australia was paying more than a fair share of the burden in proportion to its population. He had no intention of moving to wipe out the vote, seeing that seven months of the financial year had already passed; but he desired to see the department taken over by the Commonwealth. Of course this would not relieve the people of this State of the burden of the upkeep of the institution, but when the meteorological and astronomical works were embraced in one department the cost of administration would be less, and we would only contribute towards that cost on a per capita basis. At any rate, the State should only be called upon to pay its proportion of this work of mapping the heavens. He would like to know what the Government intended to do: whether they would seek to have the department transferred to the Commonwealth, or, failing that, whether we would be relieved of some portion of the expense we were now incurring in regard to the mapping of the heavens.

The PREMIER: In regard to the remarks of the hon. member concerning this institution, he concurred that a small

community like ours should not bear such a large proportion of a work which was of world-wide value, and he would be pleased if the Commonwealth would make arrangements to take over the two branches—meteorology and astronomy. The Bill introduced by Mr. Green only made arrangements to take over the meteorological portion of the work. In regard to the mapping of the heavens, an obligation was entered into nine years ago that certain portions of the skies should be charted by certain observatories, and for eight years our Observatory had been carrying on the work. It would be a great pity if the institution were closed down, because it would mean that the work carried on for so long would practically be rendered valueless. He had already intimated in a reply given in another House what the Government were prepared to do in this direction, and in recess as soon as possible the Government intended to get into touch with the Federal authorities with the view to seeing whether it was possible for them to acquiesce in the suggestion.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Police, £12,403:

Mr. TROY: The Police Department was probably the worst administered in the State. The Commissioner's appointment had never given satisfaction, nor did the administration of the Commissioner give satisfaction to the force or to the State. Complaints had been received regarding favouritism. The Police Benefit Fund was being squandered, and although the Premier gave an assurance last year that he would see the members of the force received justice, that had not yet been granted them. Some sort of election took place last year for representatives of this board, and the police now held that in so far as they were concerned there were not those precautions taken with regard to the voting nor were there those safeguards which would enable them to vote as they desired. Because of the manner of the voting, many members of the force were unable to exercise their judgment for fear they would come under the ban of the gentleman at the head of the department.

[Mr. Foulkes took the Chair.]

The PREMIER: The statement that the appointment of the Commissioner, which was made many years ago, had not given satisfaction either to the public or to the police was incorrect. As a matter of fact, the public generally were well satisfied that the gentleman controlling the force was the right man in the right place, and the fact that at a recent ballot in connection with the Police Benefit Fund the Commissioner secured so large a majority was evidence that, so far as the men were concerned, they were absolutely satisfied to have him representing them on the board. The result of that election was as follows:—The Commissioner of Police 203 votes, Sergeant Moore 74 votes, Sergeant Thomas 50 votes, P.C. Campbell 24 votes, Sergeant Parkinson 18 votes, Sergeant O'Halloran 14 votes, Sergeant John Smith 11 votes, Corporal Cunningham 5 votes, Sub-inspector Lappin 4 votes, two other officers received three votes, four received 2 votes, and eleven received 1 vote. Total votes recorded 439.

Mr. Holman: What about the first election?

The PREMIER: The circulars for that election were not understood, with the result that no distinct decision was arrived at. That was practically an open vote, and would never have given satisfaction. Several of the principal districts asked at that time if the Commissioner were eligible for election. The Commissioner was not anxious to be on that board, but the second ballot was taken, and he was chosen at that election. Three scrutineers were elected to count the votes, namely, Corporal Buttle and constables Green and Tillotson. As to the question of police administration it was to be regretted the Government were unable to pay a larger salary to the police. Cases had been brought under his notice where it would have been well could the Government have increased the amount. At the present time, however, there was a scheme introduced which would allow for an increase to those men who had served a certain time. Promotion from the position of constable to that of a non-



commissioned officer must be slower in the future than in the past, and as a number of good-conduct men made good constables but were not suitable for officers, the Commissioner had put forward a scheme for their reward. In recognition of their long and good service, constables of the uniformed police who had been granted the good-conduct badge or a stripe would have their pay increased by 6d. per day after serving for ten years with good conduct. This would entail an additional expense of something like £1,500. The scheme had been approved of by Cabinet and would come into operation at the beginning of the next financial year. Recently the Government Actuary held an enquiry into the Police Benefit Fund. The original scheme provided that all members should contribute one per cent. of their salaries to this fund, while the Government made an annual grant of £1,000 irrespective of the contributions. The following were extracts from the Government Actuary's report:—

"My investigation of this fund in 1903 showed that it was in a very unsatisfactory condition. The deficiency must increase with every year while the members continue to pay inadequate rates. I therefore strongly point out that the fund as a Government concern cannot carry on under the present small rate of contributions from members, and the high scale of gratuities and allowances now in force. The majority of the members are paying but a fraction over one per cent. of their salaries to the Fund. In New South Wales it is 3 per cent. of the wages; in Queensland 4 per cent.; Tasmania 5 per cent.; and in New Zealand from 5 per cent. upwards. Even with such higher contributions the funds are in several cases hopelessly insolvent. In New South Wales the whole of the capital was exhausted in 1898 after the fund had been in force 47 years, and the Treasury have since had to find sums of £16,000 and £15,000 a year to pay current claims. Opportunity should be availed of now to place the fund on a stable foundation. I recommend that the pay a sum equal to 3 per cent. of

their salaries instead of about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. as at present."

The recommendation had been made by the actuary that there should be an increase of three per cent., the Government to provide a subsidy of pound for pound on the amount contributed. It was thought that this contribution would put the fund on a sound basis. The fund was established for the benefit of the rank and file, and officers were not allowed to contribute.

*Mr. Troy:* Do the commissioned officers subscribe to the fund?

The PREMIER: No.

*Mr. Troy:* Then why should they participate?

The PREMIER: They do not participate. From this on, the fund would be solvent, and seeing that the men had now elected their own representative to the Board, it was to be hoped there would be no further complaints as to the administration of the funds.

*Mr. HOLMAN:* The Premier's explanation was anything but satisfactory, for the police had been treated most unfairly during the past year or two. A promise was made that the men would be given the opportunity to elect their own representative to the board in lieu of the Commissioner, and now the Premier was trying to justify what, to say the least of it, was a most unfair and unmanly action. At the ballot the police were placed in a most unfair position for they did not know what might happen if they recorded their votes against the Commissioner. Representatives for the board should have been called for in the ordinary way, and then a secret ballot should have been held. Some time ago, replying to a question, the Premier said the Commissioner was not a candidate for the position. How was it possible to elect a man if he were not a candidate? The whole thing was absurd. It was really immaterial who was nominated as the men's representative, for actually it was decided beforehand that the Commissioner should retain his seat on the board. The police should be allowed to nominate their candidate, and return him by secret ballot. Surely they could have been trusted to record their votes, but when a man was

asked to sign his name, and send in a ballot paper which showed that he was voting against his superior officer there was a travesty of justice. That was not the only cause for dissatisfaction. The police on the goldfields and elsewhere did not receive the remuneration they should for the work they did. In fact, they received a starvation wage. In the goldfields centres they had to work for a miserable wage of about two shillings a day less than was paid to the ordinary municipal labourer. The police force was a creditable body of men who should be treated better than they were. The Police Benefit Fund should be administered by the men who paid the contributions. At present the administration of the board was very bad. A constable might serve for a certain term and yet because he had been in the force for only one or two months less than the required period to enable him to receive the grant from the Fund, his application was refused, and he did not get a penny. Of course there were men in the force who were not a credit to it, but the majority of the men formed as fine a body of officials as could be got together, and they deserved every encouragement. The police should be allowed a little more freedom to express their opinions, and to select from among themselves those whom they considered best to look after their interests in this fund which had been the subject of so much talk. It was a well-known fact that satisfaction had not been given in connection with this fund. Officers high up in rank had been treated generously, while others from the rank and file had been treated in anything but a generous way, and some extreme cases of hardship had been brought under notice. A question we had to deal with on many occasions was that the best men were overlooked, and many of the crawlers who were in the position to make use of the advantage they were able to secure, had been able to obtain advancement.

*Mr. Butcher*: I do not think there are any crawlers in the police force.

*Mr. HOLMAN*: There were some. A case had been brought under his notice. It was his intention next session to endeavour to get a Royal Commission ap-

pointed to go into the question. The time had arrived when the question should be dealt with in a proper manner and when this Commission was held, and he hoped it would be some time next year—

*Mr. Monger*: Cannot we get it during the recess?

*Mr. HOLMAN*: As far as he was concerned he would prefer to have a select committee to go into the matter thoroughly. He did not mention a Royal Commission in the hope of getting anything out of it because if a Royal Commission were appointed, and he sat on it, in all probability he would refuse to take any fees. The question was one that should be seriously considered. It was said that there was no discontent in the police force, but he had personal knowledge of its existence, having travelled through the out-back goldfields, through the country towns and from one end of the State to the other and having found these feelings of discontent to exist among the rank and file.

*Mr. Monger*: They are a very different crowd from those I have come into contact with.

*Mr. HOLMAN*: In all probability the member for York got away from those who were not afraid to do their duty. Without exaggerating one iota the question was a serious one, and we should give the police every assistance and pay them a fair rate of wages for the work they were called upon to do. On the goldfields it was impossible for a policeman to live decently on the salary that he drew. We could in some cases do with fewer police, and he would rather see a small but a better paid body. He regretted the attitude that the Premier had taken in connection with the election of a representative on the board, because it was not fair. If the Commissioner was responsible for the taking of the ballot in the way that it was taken, there was no condemnation which was strong enough for him. The ballot had not given satisfaction, nor was it fair play to a large body of men who were called upon to perform important duties. He could not understand in the first place when the Commissioner was not selected, why that ballot was not allowed to stand. He

would like the Premier to give the reason why the first ballot was not adhered to, why that ballot although it was taken in a proper form was declared null and void, and another ballot ordered and special instructions given out that the Commissioner was not to be a candidate? Yet, we found him in such a position. It showed there must have been a great deal of manipulation for that state of affairs to exist. With regard to the members of the police force, there were some who were too officious and cases had been brought under notice where men who had taken a little drink too much had been subjected to treatment as though they had been the worst criminals. It was the duty of the policemen if they saw a man drinking, a man who was a decent, honest citizen, to show him his way home, where he could recover from the effects of the liquor, and it would be a greater credit to the police if they ran the publican in. Cases had been brought under his notice where men of this class had been removed to the police station and their finger prints taken. Other cases of officiousness had been brought under notice, and that seemed to be only with the desire on the part of the constable to push his way ahead. The duty of the police was not to encourage crime for the sake of getting cases. Their duty was to prevent crime, and to try and induce citizens to lead better lives. Unfortunately, we had cases brought under our notice where the police in order to get a case had practically led the people to commit crime. One instance which would never be forgotten was that where Mr. Gerald Browne shot at and killed a man on the goldfields. That was a case in which the police assisted him to carry out that crime and to take the life of a poor man who might have been prevented from committing that crime. The police should have arrested that man for conspiring to commit a crime instead of allowing him to go on to the mine to actually commit it, and permit Mr. Browne to take fire-arms there with the intention of using them. That was a standing disgrace, and would ever remain a blot on the administration of justice in this State. As far as he was personally

concerned, he would rather see the whole of the expenditure, large as it was, devoted to preventing crime, than he would see one unfortunate brought up for the purpose of enabling a policeman to get a case. His belief was that the very best record a policeman could get was by not having any cases at all. That would be a record which any policeman should be proud of. Unfortunately we had a class of men some of whom thought that they were not doing their duty if they did not have a great number of cases. He was one of those who would like to see the work of the whole police force devoted towards the prevention of crime instead of encouraging it. He believed too that the men who had the right to be represented on the board should have the right to select their representative just as in any outside institution. He was not speaking in any antagonistic way of the police force, but he could not help remarking that while we had this body of men, we should teach them that our desire was that they should prevent crime, and not make it; to show them that their position was one of trust with grave responsibilities, and he felt satisfied there would then be no cause for complaint against a majority of the police in Western Australia.

The PREMIER: It was his desire to refute the statement that he had not kept his promise. He had promised that some alteration would be made as far as representation on the Police Benefit Fund was concerned, provided that the members were desirous of such a change. The first ballot had been taken and circulars were sent out in accordance with instructions received. The circular sent out was as follows:—

"It has been decided that the contributors to the Benefit Fund shall have an opportunity of electing a representative on the board in lieu of the Commissioner of Police. The replies received in response to the former circular (2130/06. 4th January, 1908) were either incomplete or not direct answers to the questions put, consequently a special ballot paper is now being issued for each member of the fund in order that they may ex-

ercise their vote in favour of the member of the force they desire to see elected as their representative on the board. All members of the force, exclusive of the superintendent, inspectors, sub-inspectors, and probation constables, are eligible for election, but obviously the advisability of selecting some one in the metropolitan area is commended to the notice of voters. The ballot papers are enclosed in special envelopes duly numbered, and must be issued in accordance with the list supplied herewith. They are forwarded to you in separate packets for immediate distribution and should be completed and posted direct to this office by members of the force concerned without delay. The necessary official postage stamps will be supplied by officers-in-charge of stations for the purpose. Should a member of the force have left the district or from any cause be incapable of voting, please have me promptly advised. (Signed) Fred Hare, Commissioner of Police."

The whole question had been as to whether they were desirous of a change in the representation. The analysis of the first ballot showed 98 to be in favour of a change, 144 in favour of a change so as to provide for two additional members of the board appointed from contributors, 188 against a change, and 5 declining to furnish a reply. In replying to the Leader of the Opposition in August of that year he (the Premier) had said that it was desirous to alter the constitution of the Board so that the members of the force might have direct representation. In accordance with that he had given instructions for the alteration to be made. The first ballot was taken with the result already announced and of this he was duly notified in an official minute from the Colonial Secretary stating that a majority of 142 were against the change. In reply to this minute he had written—

"It seems to me that your figures are apparently made up from answers to some other questions not shown in the papers before me, but which has been submitted to the men: in any

case your analysis seen to me to indicate that 98 plus 144 (242) are in favour of a change and 188 are against it, being a majority of 54 in favour of an alteration. The points raised in your minute have already been considered by me and I see no reason to amend the promise which I made. I shall be glad therefore if you will take the necessary steps to give effect to that promise."

The Colonial Secretary had stated that no other questions were put to the police and he thereupon directed that effect should be given to the promise made by him (the Premier). From the analysis made of the voting at the first ballot he (the Premier) gained the impression that the questions submitted were not sufficiently distinct. He had been under the impression that the men were in favour of an alteration. The Commissioner then issued a new ballot paper which clearly showed that the new ballot was for the election of a member of the force to represent the contributors to the fund in lieu of the Commissioner of Police. The directions on each ballot paper provided for the signing of each paper and for its return to the office of the Commissioner of Police as speedily as possible. Some time was taken up with this second ballot. Subsequently a report was received in connection with the representatives on the Police Benefit Fund board to the effect that at a meeting of the subscribers of the Police Benefit Fund Police Constable Greene, Police Constable Tillotson, and Corporal Buttle had been elected to act as scrutineers of the ballot papers. That report had gone on to state—

"The scrutineers have recognised the fact that some of the subscribers voting have included others than subscribers to the fund but in order to make clear their wishes all grades of the department who have had votes cast in their favour are included in the list. The 11 informal votes are those of the members who have not made clear their intention as to who they desire to be returned, also those who have declined to exercise their privilege."

That was a report of the committee appointed by subscribers to the fund—of men elected at a meeting duly held; and apparently no exception had been offered to the action taken. The Commissioner had clearly intimated that he was not desirous of being on the board.

*Mr. Underwood:* Well, why did he push himself on to it?

*The PREMIER:* The Commissioner had intimated that he was not desirous of being on the board, but the men apparently had thought that he would make the most fitting representative of them.

*Mr. Underwood:* It is the most indecent thing I ever heard of.

*Mr. Bath:* It was done in such a roundabout way; it could have been done by a simple ballot.

*Mr. McDowall:* The Commissioner should not have been elected at all. Fancy electing a person who was not a candidate!

*Mr. COLLIER:* The explanation of the Premier did not make things much better; in fact it had gone to show that the second ballot was conducted on similar lines to the first, with the difference that, if possible, it was worse. Would the Premier himself attempt to conduct an election on the lines which had characterised that ballot, where every elector in the constituency was a candidate? The position was that at the second ballot every member of the police force had been a candidate. A constable at, say, Kalgoorlie, may have desired to vote for Constable Jones, at Fremantle; but he did not know whether or not Jones was a candidate. Nor did Jones know whether Smith, at Kalgoorlie, for whom he wished to vote, was a candidate. The whole thing had been an absolute absurdity, and he was sorry that the Premier had not carried out his promise in regard to this matter. There had been a distinct understanding at the time the Premier made his remarks, that the Commissioner would retire from the board, and that the fact that he was not eligible to be a member of the board would be made clear to the

voters. The Premier in dealing with the question had said—

“It is only fair and reasonable that the men should have an opportunity of being represented on the board; and in that respect I agree with the mover’s contention that it would be advisable to alter the constitution of the board administering the Police Benefit Fund. This would mean that the members of the police force would nominate a member of the force as their representative. The representation on the board would then consist of the Under Secretary of the Colonial Secretary’s Department, the Under Treasurer, and one other to be nominated by the members of the police force. The Commissioner of Police would withdraw.”

But no intimation had been given to the voters that the Commissioner of Police had withdrawn.

*The Premier:* It was done on the ballot paper.

*Mr. COLLIER:* The Premier had said it was open to any constable to vote for whom he liked, and that a committee of three were appointed to act as scrutineers. But these constables, when recording their votes, had not been aware that a committee would act as scrutineers. They had to sign the ballot papers and address them to the Commissioner in Perth, and so far as they knew the Commissioner was the returning officer. What then was the use of appointing a committee of three when the police knew nothing of it? The ballot papers were addressed to the Commissioner, and those who voted did not know but that the Commissioner was going to open those papers. Was that a fair means of taking the ballot? It was a miserable subterfuge to get the Commissioner on the board.

*The Premier:* The Government do not want the Commissioner on the board, nor does the Commissioner want to be on the board.

*Mr. COLLIER:* Well, why had the Commissioner not retired, and why had not the Government told the police that the Commissioner had finally retired and was not eligible to sit on the board?

*The Premier:* Did not the ballot papers say, “in lieu of the Commissioner?”

[Mr. Daglish resumed the Chair.]

Mr. COLLIER: Yet the Commissioner apparently had been eligible, for he was appointed. The whole thing was a miserable farce, more particularly in respect to making the voters sign the ballot papers and address them to the Commissioner himself. Yet, after all, the Commissioner had not obtained a majority. He was sitting on that Board representing the men by a minority vote. It was too late now, but he (Mr. Collier) was going to assist the member for Murchison in making an effort next session to have the whole matter inquired into and altered. It appeared to him that the discussion on the Estimates was useless; because Ministers promised redress, and yet in the following year it was found that the same old order still existed. Here was a condition of affairs under which 400 or 500 men were contributing to this fund without having any voice whatever in the distribution of it. The Under Secretary to the Colonial Secretary, the Under Treasurer, and the Commissioner of Police could do what they liked with the fund. A perusal of the rules would show how necessary it was that these men should have representation on the board. One rule said that the character and the pecuniary position of the widow of a deceased member of the force would invariably be taken into consideration when recommending gratuities. Why should these be considered? If a constable served his 14 years according to the regulations with good conduct and good service his widow was entitled to a certain gratuity, and it should not be within the province of the board to make this inquiry. Another rule provided that it was competent for the board to recommend the payment of gratuities in cases not provided for. So it was free for the board to say to whom they should give the money, without any consideration for those contributing to the fund. The rules could also be cancelled, altered, or amended from time to time as the Governor-in-Council might direct, and not according to the desires of those who contributed to the fund. These men were taxed, but they had no say in the distribution of the fund. Last year the Gov-

ernment increased the amount to be paid. It was now 7s. 5d. per month each second-class constable paid. The goldfields constable drew the munificent wage of 9s. 7d. per day, and was compelled to pay 7s. 5d. per month. The Premier told us that it was necessary to increase the contribution in order to put the fund in a solvent position, but on the 30th June, 1907, the fund was in credit £10,707, while on the 30th June, 1908, it was in credit £12,491. In face of this increase the Premier told us that it was necessary to continue these high contributions.

*The Premier:* I read the Government Actuary's report.

Mr. COLLIER: That did not seem to be borne out by the actual results. Last year £3,000 was paid by way of retiring allowances. If the fund were not increased for the next four years it would still be solvent at the end of that period. The Premier announced the intention to pay second-class constables an increase of 6d. a day after 10 years' service and good conduct all the time. What did it amount to? The goldfields constable now getting 9s. 7d. a day would get 10s. 1d. per day, which would still be the lowest wages paid to any ordinary labourer on the goldfields. We could not expect that there would be satisfaction when men working in the same station, or perhaps on the same beat, doing the same class of work, received different salaries, one getting 6d. a day more than another. The only equitable way to increase salaries was upon merit and efficiency after examination every year. That was done in Victoria, where the men, after examination, were entitled to rises of 6d. a day from time to time. Then there would be no cavilling at an increase if given, but under the Government's proposal the difficulty would be increased where men of equal ability in the one station were paid on different scales.

*The Premier:* Do you not believe in giving something extra for long service and good conduct?

Mr. COLLIER: The best way was to increase the salary according to merit and not according to time. He did not believe in giving extra to one man when

another man might be doing the same amount of work and might be equally capable with the other. It was an easy matter for a constable to carry out his duties in an indifferent fashion for 10 years and so get an increase, while a constable active and alert, but with only eight years' service, would receive 6d. a day less. The whole matter required consideration. It was thought that after the Premier's promise the matter would have been inquired into during the past six months. Last December, probably in accordance with the policy of economy the Government introduced, there was a limitation in the travelling allowances and allowances for meals for members of the police force. The effect was that if a constable was on duty at a race meeting within six miles of his station, and if he did not put in eight hours' duty at the gathering, he would have to go without his lunch.

*The Premier :* It would be a miserable club that would not give him some luncheon.

*Mr. COLLIER :* Instead of increasing the privileges of the force we were nibbling them away, and many members of the force were only waiting until the time expired when they could get their gratuities to retire from the force. There was no opportunity for a constable to get promotion. Last year only 13 were promoted from the second-class to the first-class, and there were about 230 or 240 second-class constables, so that at this rate of promotion a constable joining the force to-day would have to wait 14 years to get from the second-class to the first-class. There were one or two matters in the report of the Commissioner. One did not know that it was within the province of the Commissioner to suggest laws or point out in what direction we should legislate. Last year the Commissioner was away on leave for three months and visited New Zealand, and in his report gave his impression of the licensing law in New Zealand, saying—

"Another matter which engaged my attention was the comparatively recent alteration of the licensing laws of New South Wales and New Zealand. I miss-

ed no opportunity of comparing the results of the working of the different Acts in the States I visited, and personal observation only strengthened the opinion I previously held that good results invariably follow the enforcement of the principle of local option. Total prohibition, however, is not always a success. In my opinion its adoption is liable to do the temperance cause harm, inasmuch as extreme measures defeat their own object by causing a re-action which leaves the last state of affairs worse than the first. While visiting a prohibition district in New Zealand, I found sly-grog selling rampant, thus repeating the experience of those States in the American Union which have given the system a trial. All evidence points to the conclusion that under present social conditions in Australia, it is not likely to be a success. It appears to me too much like trying to make a man virtuous by an Act of Parliament comprised solely of mandatory clauses, and as far as I could ascertain this is the opinion of the majority of thinking people in the Dominion, where, by the way, this year there were nearly 1,000 more cases of drunkenness than in 1907. Local option on the other hand has been a success pretty well everywhere it has been tried."

The Commissioner said that local option had been a success pretty well wherever tried, and pointed out where prohibition was a failure. He (the Commissioner) probably forgot that prohibition or no-licence was only brought about through the exercise of local option, which he claimed had been a complete success. Was that the kind of reasoning we had before us in framing the comprehensive measure we were to have next session? It was not in the province of the Commissioner to suggest laws to us. Right through the report he showed us where we could amend Acts of Parliament and what should be done. If the Commissioner gave more of his time to the consideration of grievances within the force he would be doing a better service. The Commissioner also made reference to "drones and agitators." No doubt he

learned that term from the Minister for Mines. In the report he said—

“Criminals have been kept under constant supervision by the members of the Criminal Investigation Branch, and the provisions of the vagrancy laws have on occasion been judiciously applied, with the happy results stated. This, I take it, is a complete answer to the few carping critics who use a certain section of the Press for the purpose of maligning the administration, and who knowingly obtain misleading information from agitators, drones, and defaulters, a small percentage of whom are to be found in all walks of life. Efficiency is a certain guarantee of contentment, for were its members discontented, the Force itself would most assuredly be inefficient. I do not think, however, these good results are likely to continue unless we are aided by some of the measures recently passed into law in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, notably the Influx of Criminals Act.”

The Commissioner added that the efficiency of the force would not be improved unless Parliament passed other legislation. How could efficiency be had because legislation did not exist here which had been passed in the Eastern States. If there were no Acts at all dealing with criminals it would be possible for the police force to be efficient. It was to be hoped that in the coming year more consideration would be given to matters at home rather than that there should be so much criticising of legislation of some of the other States. It was most unsatisfactory that the Premier had failed to carry out the definite promise he gave last year, that there should be a ballot in connection with the Police Benefit Fund board election.

*The Premier:* I gave instructions that the ballot should be taken.

Mr. COLLIER: If those instructions were not carried out the Premier should call someone to book for it. Could the officers of the service flout his instructions? The ballot was a ridiculous absurdity and had been adhered to as a subterfuge to retain the Commissioner on the board.

Mr. BATH: There could be no doubt in the minds of members that the police had a genuine grievance. They were compelled to contribute to a fund without having a voice in the administration. It had been thought that the difficulty would be overcome by the police force being given an opportunity to elect their own representative to the board. He absolved the Premier from a great deal of the blame in regard to the way in which the promise he made to the House had been carried out. Although that promise was made in 1906, over 12 months elapsed before anything definite was done. Then the Premier said he would give instructions for the carrying out of his promise. Those instructions were doubtless given to the officers administering the department who, while reluctantly acquiescing in the minute to carry out that promise, deliberately determined to set at naught the opinion of the House and the expressed desire of the Premier. This was shown by the way in which the ballot was formulated. It was an easy enough matter for anyone to ascertain how a ballot should be conducted properly, for it was a very simple matter. Nominations should have been called for and then the members of the force should have been given an assurance that none would know how they cast their votes. Evidently, instead of that, the greatest ingenuity was exercised to make the ballot as elaborate as possible and to leave no loophole available by which any constable could exercise his vote without the manner in which the vote was cast being known to the returning officer. The fact that the members of the force had to sign their names was sufficient to destroy the confidence of anyone in the integrity of the ballot. The police, knowing probably the military spirit with which the force was commanded and that there would be persecution later on of those who exercised free-will in the ballot, had, in all probability for the purpose of protecting themselves from these unpleasant consequences, cast their votes for a gentleman who was not a candidate. Although the assurance was given by the Premier that the Commis-



sioner would retire from the board, and that the members of the force would be given a chance to nominate their representative, they knew it was no use in the circumstances to vote against the Commissioner. With regard to the administration of the fund, the fact that the money allocated was called a gratuity conveyed to members and to the public the conception which those administering the fund had in their minds. It was no gratuity, for the fund was something to which the members of the force contributed just in the same manner as a person insured his life and contributed a premium. The term gratuity was altogether a misnomer. The police who contributed to that fund should at least be given the right to have one representative on the board. Notwithstanding the fact that the attention of the Treasurer was called in 1906 to the grievances which existed, and concerning which there was a promise that an inquiry should be held, those grievances still existed. While some of the best men in the force had resigned there were others of just as good calibre who were very discontented. So far as the work of the force was concerned, there would be no satisfaction unless there was a change. The police force was worthy of commendation, and it was all the more necessary therefore that we should do everything possible to make the force attractive. It was to be regretted that the only effort the permanent heads of the department made was in the direction of seeing how far they could set at nought the just grievances of the members of the force and how far they could try the men and cause the discontent to be greater than it had been in the past. In connection with all elections to the Police Benefit Fund board in the future a secret ballot should be taken.

Mr. McDOWALL: The Commissioner in his report said, "Efficiency is a certain guarantee of contentment for were its members discontented the force itself would most assuredly be inefficient." At the present time the police force was anything but contented. He did not know why it should not be contented, but he did know from various conversa-

tions he had had with members of the force that it was far from being contented. More especially was the force discontented in connection with the Police Benefit Fund. The police claimed that they should have some voice in its management as they contributed to the fund, and it was unfair that we should penalise them if they committed some slight error after having been in the force many years. Why should there be discontent? The very explanation given this evening of this ballot showed conclusively why there should be discontent. He did not know anything about the Commissioner in connection with it. Probably if a secret ballot had been taken, the Commissioner might have been elected by an overwhelming majority. But a ballot was not taken in a proper manner, and we had no opportunity of judging whether he would have been chosen. The Premier explained that certain ballot papers were sent out, and that the ballot was to be taken for a representative in lieu of the Commissioner of Police. Would members just mark the absurdity of the result? It was supremely ridiculous for when the ballot papers came in the Commissioner of Police was found to have received 203 votes, although the police who were supposed to be an intelligent body, had been distinctly and emphatically told that the Commissioner of Police was not a candidate. Was there not some reason for that? Firstly the police were told that they must sign a ballot paper, secondly, they were not told that independent scrutineers were to be appointed to count the ballot papers, and thirdly, they were not told whether the ballot papers would be held or whether they would be immediately destroyed after having been counted; consequently the police as men of intelligence, voted for their superior officer who was not a candidate. Was that not an absurdity? In face of this what did we find? The member for Canning interjected something when the member for Boulder was speaking, to the effect that the member for Boulder knew all about the conduct of ballots since the Labour party had been conducting selection ballots. He

(Mr. McDowall) ventured to assert that if the Labour party had conducted the selection ballot on the same lines as the police ballot the Press of the State would have unanimously condemned the method and called it log rolling, corruption, and everything of that description. The friendly societies and lodges and institutions conducted their ballots on a superior principle to that adopted by the police; nominations were called for, and people had an opportunity of making a selection. In the police force we had no concentration of mind or effort, but Tom said to Dick, "Are you going to vote for Brown, Jones, or Smith?"

*Mr. Bath:* It ought to be in a comic opera.

*Mr. McDOWALL:* It really ought. He really could not realise that the Government, being the supreme power in the State, could admit of the conduct of a ballot in this way. It seemed so utterly ridiculous; in fact he could not describe it. There were no words in the English language which could describe the mode in which that ballot was conducted. It had not been his intention to even touch upon this matter, but he could scarcely refrain from doing so upon hearing the absurd manner in which the benefit fund had been conducted, because he knew that during his last election, it was a point that the police felt very strongly upon. He hoped now that something would be done in order to give the police in future the opportunity of voting properly. He had no grievance against the Commissioner of Police or against anyone. He was too young a member of the House to have grievances, but he wished to state that there was every probability that the Commissioner of Police might be elected to the position by an absolute majority under a secret vote, and he claimed that at least the police should have the right of exercising a secret vote in the election of a representative. It seemed, however, that it was no earthly use talking upon these Estimates to rectify anything. However, he hoped that a select committee or a Royal Commission would be appointed as soon as possible to inquire into this matter.

The police were not satisfied with their pay, but he thought he had said enough to show that the police as a whole were a worthy body of men and deserved some consideration.

*Mr. Monger:* Undoubtedly.

*Mr. McDOWALL:* If that was the hon. member's opinion, then he should vote for some measure which would improve the condition of affairs.

*Mr. BUTCHER:* Though he had not a quarrel with the Commissioner of Police, he had a grievance against the department, and it was his intention to air it. The Commissioner of Police in his great desire to administer his department on the most economical lines, and to keep well within his vote and was attempting to do so in some instances at a sacrifice of property and life. There was one particular case in his mind, and this grievance had been going on for years. He had placed the matter before the Commissioner without obtaining redress, and now he was going to give it for the benefit of the Government in the hope that some redress would result. There was a small settlement three or four miles from Carnarvon which contained a population of from 150 to 200 people; a large proportion of them being Asiatics. Members would agree that it was not always the safest population for white men to live with. In order to secure police protection for that small centre, he had waited upon the Commissioner on more than one occasion, and had used every measure to force the department to give these people the necessary protection, even using his position as a member of Parliament to try and obtain a licence so as to compel the police to afford protection there; but on every occasion the Commissioner had beaten him. He told the Commissioner many years ago what would happen, and he was in the position now to say "I told you so." A few months ago when an application was made there for a licence, it was opposed by the police on the score of economy, and at the sacrifice of life and property. Now crime was rampant in that particular place, and all the crimes in the calendar—they were fairly numerous—had been com-

mitted there. He was not going to enumerate those crimes, but the Commissioner and the Government were aware of them. In the course of examination on oath a constable when giving evidence in connection with the application for a licence, said he was aware that sly grog selling was carried on. He (Mr. Butcher) knew that there were no fewer than four of these shops there. There was a Japanese shop, which was used probably for other purposes; there was a Chinese shop, also used for other purposes, and there were two establishments conducted by whites where sly grog was sold, and all the crimes committed within a recent date were due entirely to the fact that there was no police protection there. Men bought large quantities of grog in the town, and they went out, neglected their teams, and the property they were charged to attend to, and they remained in a helpless state of drunkenness; yet, with all his endeavours to get police sent there, he had failed. He knew of cases where workers were obliged to leave firearms with their wives to enable them to protect themselves when the husbands had to go out to work. Was that a proper state of affairs to exist in a country like Western Australia, and in a place which was only three or four miles from a township where there were three or four police, and where there was not sufficient work for them to occupy their time? These men could not always be expected to be on the alert waiting for instructions from head quarters, or waiting for crimes to be committed. He hoped the Government would look into the matter and see whether it was possible to over-rule the Commissioner in this respect.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The election of the Commissioner in connection with the Police Benefit Fund had been referred to by several speakers, but he desired to pass a few remarks on the wages of the second-class constables. In various parts of the State, police constables and men who had been in the service for seven or eight years were receiving 7s. 6d. a day. This was a deplorable state of affairs, and while that rate of wages

was paid, we could not expect the best services or the greatest amount of enthusiasm or efficiency in the police force. A few nights ago he had mentioned that in South Australia seven shillings had been fixed as a poverty line in an award given by Mr. Justice Gordon, while here in Western Australia men were receiving the inadequate sum of seven shillings and sixpence. A great deal had been said with regard to the absurd ballot in connection with the Police Benefit Fund. He did not intend to deal with that question. He thought that a real grievance the police had was the very low rate of wages paid. In all probability that in itself was the cause of a great deal of discontent. He thought also that if some better inducement were held out to the police officers we would not have such a statement as that made recently by the Minister for Mines when he declared that shanties were flourishing in Gwalia close to the State Hotel. It was not desirable to bring up a class of informers in this State; it should be the duty of the police to eradicate this evil and not leave it to informers. But the police had no inducement whatever to carry out a duty of this kind. Another grievance the police had was the inadequacy of the sum allowed for the maintenance for prisoners. If a report were called for it would be learned that in a great majority of cases they were receiving an insufficient amount for this purpose. He believed the rate was less than one shilling a day. Certainly it was penalising the keepers of police gaols to expect them to sacrifice some part of their salary for the maintenance of prisoners. In his opinion, a Royal Commission, or at least a select committee should be appointed to inquire into the grievances existing in the police force. If such an inquiry were instituted the evidence would be found to be somewhat startling and to fully justify the criticisms of this evening. If the police were allowed to organise themselves their grievances would be redressed a great deal more quickly than was possible under the existing system. Why should they not be allowed to bring their grievances before a proper tribunal? There was a good deal of discontent in the force

and up to the present the Government had made no honest effort to redress the many grievances giving rise to this discontent.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The explanation given by the Premier in respect to the police ballot disclosed a most discreditable state of affairs. It was absolutely indecent that the Commissioner of Police should have forced himself on to the men under him after they had given direct indication that they did not want him. It was useless for the Premier to say that that was not the position. It was easy to imagine the real circumstances. After the announcement that there would be an election to elect someone in lieu of the Commissioner of Police decency should have prevented the Commissioner from allowing himself to be elected. After the notice of the election had gone forth those who had votes were under the impression that the Commissioner was going to examine their votes, and that they had to sign their ballot papers in order that the Commissioner of Police might see how the individual officers had voted. It was little wonder that, under these circumstances, the Commissioner had been elected. The fact that so many had voted against him spoke highly for the integrity of the force. He (Mr. Underwood) did not wish to go any further into the question. The Premier had said that he gave instructions. It seemed that the Premier's instructions were not very effective: indeed he would advise the Premier to add a little dynamite to his instructions in the future. If that dynamite served to shift the Commissioner of Police, it would be to the advantage of the State. However, the question with which he (Mr. Underwood) was most concerned was that of the treatment of the police in the north of the State. One serious disability the members of the force stationed up there were under was in regard to the month's leave of absence allowed to all members of the force annually. As a matter of fact it would take a man stationed at Hall's Creek, or Nullagine, or Twenty-Mile Sandy, practically a month to get out of the district to enjoy his leave. It seemed ridiculous to give a man one month's

leave of absence from the date of his leaving some out-back station. This annual leave should be made cumulative, and when a man had served three years in the North and was retiring from the district, he should have three months' leave on coming down to the coast. That was only just, and it was a concession to which these men were entitled. Another matter of complaint was in regard to the tropical allowance made to the police. It was, he believed, £30 a year whereas other Government officials in that part of the State were allowed 30 per cent. on their salaries. He held the police were entitled to consideration equally with other servants of the State. The department had recently conceded first-class fares to members of the force travelling along the coast, so that it was not necessary to speak on that matter. But another question was one he had previously referred to—that on the whole the bush police were a body of men the State could be proud of. They were undoubtedly a most useful body of men, but we often had men sent out unsuited to the work, and it led one to the conclusion that it was necessary to have men specially selected for this particular service, the essential requirements being that they should be thorough bushmen, and should have some knowledge of natives. It took a man almost three years to learn his duties in the bush, but we found that usually at the end of that time the constable was removed and a new chum was sent to the work. This was unsatisfactory not only to the people in the district but also to the members of the force, as it handicapped them and prevented them giving that beneficial service that they would otherwise be able to give. They were all required to be horsemen, and if a man of 14 stone to 15 stone was sent there it was difficult to horse him. The Premier would appreciate that seeing that he was a "Rear-Adjutant" of the Australian Light Horse. The system of reports about complaints was bad. Generally the complaint was sent to the officer complained of, and the officer was asked if it was his fault, and the reply sent to the person complaining was that after careful in-

vestigation the Commissioner had come to the conclusion there was no ground for the charge made. But these "careful investigations" were mostly through the post office, asking the constable concerned whether there were any grounds for the charges, and naturally the constable said, "No." While we had this system of making "careful investigations" there would be no relief for the public who wished to complain against over-officious officers, or those neglecting their duties. A correspondent had complained that the natives at Nullagine had not been controlled as they should be, that the constable at Nullagine was making considerable profit by feeding the natives and that he was, without a licence, buying gold from the natives. After making full inquiries from reputable persons of Nullagine as to the bona fides of this correspondent, the complaint had been forwarded by him (Mr. Underwood) to the Commissioner of Police, and a report was made upon the matter. Inspector Osborne reported that the aborigines at Nullagine, when he visited the camp, were situated two miles from the town on the left bank of the Nullagine River. This inspector was supposed to be a bushman yet talked of the left bank of the river. Was he going or coming? A man who wrote about the left bank of a river would get lost in a horse paddock. When this inspector visited the camp the natives were in a nice spot, but when the complaint was made they were camped in the town. It was known a complaint had been made and the natives were shifted. The inspector reported that traffic with the whites was limited and that no reasonable person could take exception to the position of the camp, also that the camp was regularly visited by the police. No doubt that was the case, but it was the police who brought the camp into Nullagine. Then we had an extraordinary paragraph in the report saying that with respect to the quantity of rations supplied strict inquiry was made and it was found that the rations were procured from the local merchant who supplied only one class, that being the best procurable. This officer was asked to inquire into the quantity and reported that the quality was good.

The report concluded that the writer who had contributed to the *Sunday Times* newspaper must have been, what he considered, duly cared for by the police and warden of the district on more than one occasion, and that he was the class of person who did not usually confine himself to solid facts. This paragraph he (Mr. Underwood) could only take as a deliberate insult to himself and to his correspondent. If the inspector had anything to say about his (Mr. Underwood's) character or against the character of the man who wrote the letter let him say it, but it was the same old system that the Commissioner of Police had adopted in regard to the Dr. Roth inquiry; anybody who gave evidence against the police was sneered at and condemned as a criminal whose testimony should not be allowed to exist. A policeman should never be allowed to reply in language such as that to a complaint made against the department. Before putting the letter in he had made full inquiries, and was told the complaint was substantially correct, his informant being Mr. Fawcett, a member of the firm of J. M. Walker & Company, of Nullagine, whom this inspector lauded in his report. With regard to the military system existing in the force, this was not to the best advantage of the police of the State. What the policeman wanted above all things was discretion, but at the present time he was run by a code of rules as if he were a machine. That had the result of preventing the initiative which he should possess, and stopped him entirely from using any discretion. The first remedy to be taken in connection with the force was to remove the present Commissioner and appoint a man in his place who would be able to control the department.

The PREMIER: The particular subject dealt with by members had been the appointment of a representative on the Police Benefit Fund board.

Mr. Scaddan: The wages question is more important.

The PREMIER: That was also raised, but most members dwelt largely on the fact that the ballot for the election was not conducted in accordance with the promise made. Undoubtedly a mistake was

made through the men being forced to sign their names. The instructions in the matter were very specific. The Colonial Secretary, in instructing the officers, stated that it was his desire that the promise made by the Premier should be carried out. A circular was sent out to the officers commanding the various districts. Details of the circular had already been given the Committee. No nominations were called for.

*Mr. Scaddan:* You promised there should be.

The PREMIER: What he had said was that he was anxious a man should be appointed in lieu of the Commissioner.

*Mr. Scaddan:* You distinctly stated the men would be allowed to nominate someone.

The PREMIER: Apparently they nominated the Commissioner. The Government were not desirous that the Commissioner should be the representative, neither was the Commissioner anxious to serve on the board. He was prepared to take another ballot, and if one of the Opposition members acquainted with the process of taking ballots liked to make suggestions as to the manner in which the election should be conducted, he would be prepared to take advantage of his experience. He had never gone back on a promise, and he resented the statement made by the member for Boulder (Mr. Collier). He had made a promise in regard to the matter, but did the hon. member expect that he was to follow up personally every minute sent out. He had sent a minute asking that effect should be given to the promise he had made in Parliament. Doubtless the officials thought they were giving effect to that promise by the action they took. If the member for Boulder cared to undertake the work of managing the ballot he would accept his services.

*Mr. Holman:* Appoint him returning officer.

The PREMIER: The police would not like it. With regard to the question of wages, he understood that the wages here were considerably in excess of those in the Eastern States: they should be, to some extent. The wages in Western Australia

for sergeants were 11s., in South Australia from 10s. 6d. to 14s., Victoria from 8s. 6d. to 10s. 6d., in New South Wales from 9s. 3d. to 10s. 6d., and Tasmania from 8s. to 9s. Corporals in Western Australia received 9s. 6d., constables 8s. 6d. first-class, 7s. 6d. second-class, and 6s. 6d. probationers; whereas in South Australia the figures for ordinary constables were 7s. to 8s. 6d. and others 7s. 6d. and upwards; in Victoria, 6s. 6d. to 9s.; in New South Wales 6s. to 8s.; in Queensland from £108 to £134 a year; and in Tasmania from 6s. to 7s. In Western Australia there was a £25 lodge allowance, and £20 for uniform. In South Australia the allowance was £20.

*Mr. Collier:* The wages may be the same, but in Victoria they get a rise in shorter periods than in this State.

The PREMIER: The hon. member could understand that at the present time he had not the opportunity of going into the whole of the details, but it must be admitted that the suggestion which had been made regarding good conduct men, was certainly going a step in the direction of recognising the services of those men who had been members of the force for a considerable time; although he was of opinion that men should be paid irrespective of length of service. That would entail an expenditure of something like £1,500 or £1,600 a year. The member for Pilbara referred to the necessity existing in cases where constables were stationed in far-back localities for making some arrangements for cumulative leave. This suggestion was a sensible one, because we recognised that it was not of much value to a man in the back blocks to obtain a fortnight's holiday. Provision would be made if it had not already been made for leave to accumulate. With regard to the other question raised that there was too much militarism in the police force, one could not very well object to that. Surely it was an advantage to have well trained and well set up men with a certain amount of discipline, otherwise one could not carry on very well. The men employed here at the present time were certainly a creditable body of men, and they had been

most favourably commented on, on more than one occasion. Quite recently in connection with the functions at Albany, the Admiral of the American Fleet stated that the mounted troops were the smartest he had seen during his recent visit. That reflected creditably on those concerned.

*Mr. O'Loghlen*: The department should recognise they are good men.

The PREMIER: It was to be supposed that the department did. He was replying to the argument that it was not necessary that we should adopt the same methods as in a military organisation. He could not say anything further in connection with this matter. If there were any points he had missed, and hon. members liked to bring them under his notice at any time, he would be glad to place the files at their disposal.

*Mr. HUDSON*: In his opinion the police force in Western Australia was rather under a dictatorial management which at present was in the direction of militarism. The police force in Perth and even in the country were placed in the position that they had to obey certain regulations which should not operate. The police force should be in the direction of a civilian force for the prevention of crime, but it seemed that the present administrator of the department held the opinion that he should make himself a sort of governor-general of the police force. This was not as it should be.

Item, Caretakers of morgues, Boulder and Bunbury, £36:

*Mr. SCADDAN*: In connection with this matter he had asked the Premier questions which had appeared in *Hansard*. He only referred to it because the Boulder morgue happened to be in his electorate. According to the Premier, Constable Fortescue had been appointed previously to the present caretaker, Constable Gallagher, and on that occasion Constable Gallagher had been recommended by the district officer. On inquiry it was discovered that there were senior officers and apparently on this ground Constable Gallagher was overlooked, and Constable Fortescue was appointed. After Constable Fortescue was removed from the

district, Constable Gallagher was recommended again. On this occasion there were two other applicants for the position, Constables Spalding and Hunt. Spalding had twelve years service and Hunt nine years. Gallagher who was appointed had eight years service. In this case, the matter of seniority was overlooked and the claims of Constable Gallagher were accepted by the Commissioner without consideration of the fact that the other officers who had made application were seniors. It was not a matter of promotion, but it meant a great deal to the man in charge of the station. For being in charge of the station he was supplied with quarters, and consequently got no allowance under this head; whereas the salaries of other constables junior to him, with allowance for quarters—for which as a matter of fact they had to pay practically no rent, because they were camping—were practically equal to the salary of the man in charge of the station. Of course no discipline could be maintained while that state of affairs continued. If this officer had secured the position of caretaker of the morgue it would have meant some £30 a year, and so would have put him on a better footing. In the circumstances Constable Spalding was called upon to take dead bodies to the morgue, and to institute all inquiries in connection with fatal accidents whilst all that Constable Gallagher had to do was to see that the morgue was occasionally swept out. Surely in the circumstances one or other of the two officers who had so much longer service to their credit should have been appointed to the position instead of Constable Gallagher. Again, it certainly seemed that the morgue ought to be handed over to the officer in charge of Finiston Station. He (*Mr. Scaddan*) desired to bring this matter forward to see if justice could not be done. Certainly senior officers had been overlooked and juniors appointed. Apparently Constable Gallagher had had a pretty soft billet in Boulder, where he had been continuously on day work. There seemed to be something in the nature of favouritism in the making of this appointment.

The PREMIER: The complaint apparently was that a junior officer

had been appointed in preference to a senior. The hon. member desired that inquiries should be made. On this point, and on the further point of the advisability of transferring the morgue to the Fimiston station, he (the Premier) would bring the matter under the notice of the Colonial Secretary with a view to having the necessary inquiries made.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—*Government Gardens and Government House Domain*, £2,650; *Registry*, £6,663—agreed to.

Vote—*Rottnest*, £455 :

Mr. TROY : Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, the Committee would like to hear something about the work which had been done on Rottnest Island. There were a number of Government cottages on the island and hon. members would like to know whether they were leased out ; how they were being tenanted ; what rent was being paid, and what had been received by the Government towards interest and sinking fund on the cost of the furniture in these cottages.

The TREASURER : So far as he was aware not one of the Government cottages was leased out, consequently nothing had been received in the way of rental nor by way of the return on the small cost of furniture in these cottages. Ministers occasionally used the cottages. He himself had spent a fortnight in one of those cottages 12 months ago.

Mr. Angwin : Who in addition to Ministers use them ?

The TREASURER : None but Ministers used the cottages. He understood that the member for Swan had spent a short vacation there, in an unfurnished cottage. A great many people went there and camped. As to the improvements that were being carried out by prisoners on the island, when these works were completed, at the end of perhaps a couple of years, those prisoners would be withdrawn.

Mr. TROY : There was no objection to Ministers using these residences at Rottnest ; but he desired to remind Ministers that they had once accused the members now on the Opposition side of the House

of occupying a Government cottage without paying rent, and had used that statement for electioneering purposes. Perhaps the Attorney General would deny this accusation. If he felt inclined to do so he could refresh his memory by reference to the columns of the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, in which he had accused members now on the Opposition side of the House of having used that cottage rent free. It was a malicious lie.

The CHAIRMAN : The hon. member must not apply that remark to any statement of the Attorney General.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL : On a point of order. The statement of the hon. member was a gross misstatement.

The CHAIRMAN : The hon. member must not apply that term.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL : It is a gross inaccuracy. The fact that he commented on was that some accounts were outstanding for board and lodging in the cottage bought by the Government.

Mr. TROY : The accusation was paltry considering that some of the hon. member's colleagues occupied cottages at Rottnest and paid nothing. They should be heartily ashamed of it.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 11:25 p.m.*