

## Legislative Assembly,

Monday, 1st October, 1894.

Precautions against accidents at Railway Crossings—Street in Busselton Closing Bill: first reading—Police Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages Bill: third reading—Friendly Societies Bill: third reading—Marriage Bill: third reading—Estimates, 1894-5: Adjourned debate on the Budget Speech—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7:30 p.m.

### PRAYERS.

#### PRECAUTIONS AGAINST ACCIDENTS AT RAILWAY CROSSINGS.

MR. WOOD, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways:—

1. Whether, taking into consideration the large amount of railway traffic at the William Street crossing, it was the intention of the Government to light the crossing at night, either by gas or electric light?

2. Whether the attention of the Government had been drawn to the extreme danger of accident to life and property at the Melbourne Road railway crossing, and whether any steps would be taken to lessen the danger?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied as follows:—

1. The lighting of streets at railway crossings, as well as elsewhere, is the business of the municipality, and is, I believe, so regarded throughout the colonies.

2. It is being arranged to place crossing keepers at the Melbourne Road railway crossing, now that the new engine yard is in use.

#### STREET IN BUSSELTON CLOSING BILL.

Introduced by Mr. BURT, and read a first time.

#### POLICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by Mr. MONGER, and read a first time.

#### REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES BILL.

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

#### FRIENDLY SOCIETIES BILL.

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

#### MARRIAGE BILL.

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

#### ESTIMATES, 1894-5.

##### ADJOURNED DEBATE ON THE BUDGET.

MR. RANDELL: Mr. Traylen — In rising to offer a few remarks upon the financial statement which was so very ably laid before the House the other evening by the Hon. the Premier, I may say that I do not intend to go over the whole ground embraced in that speech. It was a very lucid statement, and it has been in the hands of members for some few days, and it is one that may be very easily followed by those who are prepared to do so. Speaking generally, I think we may congratulate the colony upon the point at which its revenue has arrived, if not its expenditure. When one reads the large figures which have been placed before us by the hon. the Treasurer, and remembers the figures of past years, one cannot but be struck with the enormous difference, and the enormous increase in the revenue of the colony. I think, if my memory serves me rightly, when I first came to the colony the whole revenue did not amount to more than £7,000 or £8,000. I know the Government at that time found some difficulty even in paying the salaries of the public officers; sometimes, I believe, they had to go two months before they could be paid, there being no money in the chest. A great change has taken place since those days, truly! Of course, I do not say that this change has come about suddenly, or all at once, nor has the growth in the revenue been an uninterrupted one. We have had bright times in the history of the colony before now, and those bright days have been succeeded, I am sorry to say, sometimes by periods of depression. That seems to be the case all over the world — seasons of depression following upon seasons of prosperity. At the present moment we are certainly enjoying a measure of unprecedented prosperity. As the Treasurer has pointed out, our revenue is increasing by leaps and bounds, whilst that of our neigh-

hours has been decreasing, and our affairs generally have been progressing in a way which must be regarded as a subject for general congratulation. The circumstances which have brought this about are, of course, as well known to members as to myself; at the same time it is very satisfactory to find the Treasurer in a position to give such a glowing account of the condition and prospects of the colony as he was able to give the other night. The Estimates now before us deal with very large items of expenditure, but at this stage I am not inclined to enter into anything like a detailed criticism of these figures, because we shall have an opportunity of dealing with them in detail when they come before us under their separate headings. Although, perhaps, in looking over them we may think there are some anomalies, and, perhaps, some surprising increases of salaries in some cases, while the salaries of other officers remain stationary, still, we may naturally suppose that the Executive and the heads of Departments have carefully considered the claims of all officers; and no doubt we shall, later on, ask for and receive some information with reference to these proposed increases, and I hope the information will be sufficiently satisfactory to justify the House in granting these increases. I think it would be very unfair, without this information before us, to cavil at the proposed increments, and that we should wait until we have some explanation as the items come up for discussion. The Treasurer in dealing with the position of the colony started first of all with the population of the country, and, from the figures he has given us, I think we must all agree that the increase in this respect has been a most satisfactory increase. Especially is it satisfactory when we remember the large amount we have borrowed, and are about to borrow, to find that our population is increasing, and so assisting us the better to bear the burden of this indebtedness. I find from the figures that our present population is put down at 78,000, and that the indebtedness per head of that population is only £42, or less per head than that of the other colonies, saving one, I think, —Victoria, which, we were told, is about the same, or a little lower, than our own —£40 or £41 per head of the population.

This increase of population, as I have said, is a satisfactory feature in the progress of the country; and the present aspect of things seems to point out to a still larger and still more rapid increase of population, and, to that extent at any rate, supports the statement which the Treasurer made, that we are justified in entering the money market to further increase our indebtedness, and that when we raise this other loan, the expenditure of which is to extend over a period of years, we shall not have increased our indebtedness per head very much. The Premier told us that his great anxiety had been to make the colony a place where those who came to it would have a fair chance of obtaining a comfortable livelihood rather than a sudden fortune, and that he believed that in the colony at the present time those who come here have opportunities and prospects equal, if not superior, to those offered by most countries in the world, of procuring a competence, if not an independence. No doubt that, as regards many of our population, this may to a large extent be true, and that the outlook in many respects is a cheering one, and that many of them may be able to secure for themselves a competence—let us hope so at any rate. At the same time we must not shut our eyes to the fact that a large number of people are coming here seeking employment, as artisans, mechanics, and in other avenues of employment, and that at the present moment they find some difficulty in finding employment. Let us hope that the result of the development of our goldfields, which has to a large extent brought about this increase of population, will continue to afford more and more employment, as more machinery is placed on the fields, and greater railway facilities are provided, and more systematic efforts are made to open up the mineral wealth of the country. I think it is desirable above all things that we should have a contented and well-to-do population; and I think it has been a peculiar feature of this colony in the past that, although we have not had many very wealthy men, or men who have made large fortunes in the colony as fortunes are regarded in other countries, still the fact remains that the people of the colony generally have been able to make a comfortable living, without, per-

haps, any extraordinary effort, and that the general condition of the community has been one of well-to-do-ness (if I may coin such an expression). Although, perhaps, we have not had many affluent men, who could count their possessions by hundreds of thousands, yet the majority of our people may be said to have been in easy or comfortable circumstances, and up to the present at any rate have been able to obtain a good livelihood for themselves. For one thing, competition was not so keen, and the struggle for existence not so fierce as in other places, with larger centres of population. But things are changing, and this condition of affairs is fast becoming a thing of the past, through various circumstances which I need not refer to, as they are as well known to members as they are to myself. The Treasurer informed us that the expenditure of loan money in the colony, during last year, by the Government and the Midland Railway Company, amounted to no less than about £550,000, or something over half a million of money. That seems a very large sum of money to be distributed amongst a small population, and, as the Premier seemed to think, it certainly ought to make itself felt in the way of providing employment and contributing to the well-being of the community generally. Of course this large expenditure is discounted largely by the fact that a large portion of this sum has been sent out of the colony for food supplies. The hon. gentleman drew special attention to this fact, and pointed out that it afforded much food for reflection when we found the amount of our imports increasing so largely, while our exports were rather decreasing than otherwise, or certainly were very small in proportion to our imports. But, I take it, that is a condition of things that generally happens when we enter into the loan market and borrow large sums of money for public works. The Treasurer pointed out that since 1890, when we entered upon our present loan policy, our exports generally have decreased, and are still decreasing, and that the present year seems to indicate a very large falling off in all our principal exports, except gold. That is only the natural result of a large number of public works being carried on in our midst. People are attracted away from agricultural operations, from the

more sober, and steady, and less profitable pursuits of farming and gardening, in order to find employment on public works. Therefore we may say that the result deplored by the Premier is in reality the natural outcome of our loan policy, or, perhaps, I should say, of our public works policy, and we may reasonably expect the same state of things to continue so long as we are spending large sums of money in the construction of railways and other public works. Our hope lies in these public works, by affording increased facilities of transport for our country settlers, tending to increase cultivation, and to increase our productiveness, so that they may be in a position to supply the market now opened at their very door, instead of the colony importing so largely. I do not know that it matters very much how the general imports of the country are paid for, so long as they are paid for out of the products of the country, whether it be in the shape of gold or of agricultural produce, or wool, or timber, or pearl shell, or the product of any other of the natural industries of the colony. Of course it is highly desirable, on the other hand, while we are largely engaged in raising gold from our mines, that we should be able to supply the wants of our own market in the shape of food stuffs and other products of the soil. If we can do that, I think we shall have arrived at a very satisfactory condition of things, irrespective of our exports. So long as we have a market at our own door for these commodities, I do not think we need trouble ourselves much. But when we find so large a portion of the gold raised in the colony, and of the loan moneys expended in the colony, sent out of the country to procure the means of supplying our population with what may be briefly called the necessities of life, then sooner or later we shall find ourselves struggling with a very unsatisfactory state of affairs. I am, however, hopeful that very shortly, by the extension of agricultural operations, and our horticultural operations as well, we shall be in a position to supply our own markets and more largely satisfy the requirements of our home consumption. The Treasurer also referred, as another indication of the prosperity of the colony, to the increasing amount of deposits in the local banking

institutions, and also to the increase in the transactions of the Savings Bank. The increase in the number of depositors in the Savings Bank, according to the figures furnished by the Premier, is certainly most astonishing. I find the number of depositors last year had increased to 17,297, or nearly one-fifth of the whole population of the colony.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): There is a little error there; it ought to be "deposits."

MR. RANDELL: That alters the case very much, and, if it is an error, I need not dwell upon it. The Premier told us it puzzles him to know where all this money comes from which we find deposited in our banks. I think it indicates that a large number of those who are coming into the colony bring with them larger or smaller sums of money, and are contributing to that extent to the well-being of the colony. I think that gives us an indication that this increase of money in the banks is not altogether traceable to the expenditure of loan moneys. In any case it is satisfactory to find such evidence of thrift amongst our population, and it helps to brighten the clouds that darken the horizon when we regard the large amount of money that at present is going out of the colony to provide the requirements of our own markets. The imports of the colony certainly appear to have increased largely. I have not been able to go into the matter very carefully myself, and possibly there may be some explanation forthcoming, which may, perhaps, show us that in some respects the increase has been abnormal. It certainly seems a very large sum, when we find that the imports for the first six months of the current year amounted to over a million sterling; and if by any means we can prevent the present large importations of articles which we ought to produce in the colony, it will be a good thing for the colony. The Treasurer, in the course of his remarks, referred to the amount of money that is sent out of the colony not only to pay for our imports, and to pay the interest on our loans, but also to support absentees. That is a word that has often been mentioned in this House, and it would be interesting to know—if it were possible to obtain the information—how much money does go out of the colony in the way of dividends,

rents of land, and otherwise, to absentees from whom the colony receives nothing in return in the way of expenditure. I do not know whether it would be possible to obtain such information; if we could, I think it would be very interesting and very instructive, and possibly would help to shape the future policy of the Government in a certain direction. If it is a large amount, as the Premier seems to suggest, it must be a very serious drain upon the resources of the colony. The Premier, also, in dealing with our imports, dwelt upon the absolute necessity of developing the internal resources of the colony. I think a reference to the schedule of the Loan Bill will show that we are endeavouring as far as possible to do this. It appears to me that by extending our railways into our producing districts, and providing a cheap and easy means of carriage for those who are upon the land, we are doing very much—more, I think, than we could do in any other way—to encourage settlement and to develop our internal resources. Let us only hope that the farming population will respond to these efforts to develop our resources—as I believe they will—in the future more than they have in the past. I think there are indications already which encourage us to cherish that hope. It is absolutely necessary that our internal resources *should* be developed, otherwise I am afraid it will bring about a very serious state of affairs by-and-by. I notice that the Estimates before us, leaving out the salaries and so forth for the officers who have to carry on the business of the country—a business which is rapidly increasing, and which no doubt necessitates a continuous increase in the staffs of the various departments—I notice that the Estimates, besides making provision for salaries and so forth, also provide a considerable amount out of current revenue for what we may call reproductive works. I find a large amount allotted, under the head of "Works and Buildings," to the various districts of the colony for necessary undertakings, and it seems to me, on glancing at the list of works, that they have been distributed very carefully and considerably all over the colony, with the view of providing improved accommodation and improved conveniences, and assisting people to develop their local

resources. I find that no less a sum than £119,000 is provided on these Estimates for various works and buildings out of current revenue—a very large expenditure indeed—besides a very considerable amount for roads and bridges. I am very pleased to see that the Government are able to increase this vote for roads and bridges. I think, every session almost, the necessity for increasing this vote has been brought under the notice of the Government, both under the old Constitution and the new. I was very glad to hear the Premier offering the suggestion that the principle of subsidising municipalities should also be extended to the roads boards, with the view of encouraging local efforts and local taxation to some extent amongst these bodies. Although I do not think that any large amount of taxation would be raised by this means, yet I think the adoption of the principle referred to would encourage and stimulate country districts in this direction. On the other hand it would encourage the Legislature and the Government to further assist these local bodies when they saw them exhibiting a stronger spirit of self-help. The Premier hinted that he did not care very much what the proportion of the Government subsidy to these boards should be—whether £1 or £2 or £3 or £4 for every £1 raised by local taxation—according to the necessities of the case, I suppose. At any rate I think it ought to stimulate the country districts to take up this matter very seriously and earnestly, and I hope they will endeavour to adopt this principle of local taxation before it is forced upon them by enactment. We know that the machinery already exists, enabling these roads boards to tax themselves, and I think it is very desirable they should set about the question and put their house in order, before further pressure is brought to bear upon them in this direction. With regard to the proposed subsidy of £1 per £1 for municipalities, I think there has been a very general desire throughout the colony in favour of this assistance being given to the municipalities. I hope, however, that the Government will provide that this subsidy shall be expended, as is done with loan moneys, for special purposes, such as the forming of new roads or footways. I am afraid that, unless some provision of

that kind is made, we shall find that with municipalities as with private individuals money easily obtained will be freely spent, and that we shall have another exemplification of the truth of the old adage "Lightly come, lightly go." Therefore I think there ought to be some check placed upon the expenditure of this Government subsidy, and some provision made whereby we may ensure the best possible expenditure by the municipalities of this large increase to their income. I think I was the first to suggest that some assistance of this kind should be given to the municipalities by the Government, believing as I do that these local bodies generally have a great deal more work to do than they can reasonably be expected to do with what they can raise from local rates. Perth, for instance, with its large extent of ground to be traversed by roads and footpaths, and the other requirements of a scattered population, requires a large expenditure of money in these directions. It has been absolutely impossible in the past to carry out these works without imposing undue burdens upon the population. I think municipalities generally are not afraid to borrow—I believe some of them have already borrowed as far as they ought to go, and, therefore, the assistance which it is proposed to give them by the Government will be a very acceptable addition to their income. The estimated revenue for the year, I find, is £873,650 from all sources, which certainly is a very large amount. But out of that sum I am sorry to see that £414,000, or nearly one-half the whole revenue of the colony, is expected to be derived from Customs duties. That is a very large proportion to provide through the Customs, and I think it would be interesting to know how the Colonial Treasurer would provide for a falling off in this source of revenue, which must follow a large increase in local production. If we were in a position, ourselves, to supply all the wants of the colony with those products which may be summed up as the necessaries of life, the result must inevitably be a loss of a large amount of revenue now received through the Customs, and it would be interesting to know how the Treasurer would propose to make up the deficit. Would he endeavour to introduce some special legislation to meet the

altered state of affairs, and in what direction would that legislation be directed? I think, myself, it is an unsatisfactory state of affairs for a country to be dependent for its revenue, to such a large extent, upon Customs duties upon articles which ought to be produced within our own boundaries. On the other hand, if we were deprived of this revenue, or if it were largely curtailed, it would interfere very much with the balance that exists between the revenue and expenditure. Notwithstanding this, I presume we are all glad to see that an increase of local production does take place, and, perhaps, we may leave it to the future to determine what means shall be resorted to in order to make up for the falling off in Customs duties, consequent upon the reduction in the quantities of imported products. I notice amongst the proposed items of expenditure that there are some items which may be said to have special reference to Perth, one being the proposed establishment of a Mint. I do not intend at the present moment to express any opinion upon this question further than generally to say that if we could carry on this establishment with only a small loss, I think it might be seriously considered whether it would not be desirable to establish a Mint here. But if it is to be carried on at any great loss, I do not see that it is necessary at the present moment for us to seriously consider the question. With regard to the proposed Observatory and the apportionment of a sum of money to the improvement of that magnificent reserve on the top of Mount Eliza, I am quite in accord with both of these proposals. I think the time has come when we ought to try and keep ourselves somewhat abreast with the other colonies in the matter of an Observatory. I also think that a small expenditure in improving the reserve on the top of Mt. Eliza will serve a useful purpose, as a first step towards converting it into a delightful and healthful place of resort. I supported the proposal on a former occasion, and I shall give it my support on this occasion. The outlook from there is certainly a magnificent one. Persons coming here from the other colonies, and visiting the spot, have been very favourably impressed with its charming situation, and the possibilities it offers as a delightful place of public resort and

healthful recreation. I do not know that I have any further remarks to offer. It was not my intention to criticise the Estimates adversely, because, generally speaking, I am in accord with the various provisions made, though I think there may be some things which require very careful consideration, and also some explanation; but, on the whole, I think the Financial Statement placed before us by the Treasurer was a very satisfactory statement; and I will not at this juncture at any rate give expression to anything that would throw doubt upon the realisation of the glowing prospects sketched out by the Treasurer in his speech the other evening. In our goldfields at any rate we have apparently a field for an almost unlimited and profitable employment of both capital and labour. As I stated before, as more machinery is placed on these fields, and the work of development is carried on more systematically and extensively, they give every prospect of not only affording a profitable field for employment, but also a profitable market for the industries of the colony. I can only, in conclusion, express the hope that the present apparently bright outlook, and the Premier's bright hopes of the future, may be fully sustained, although, perhaps, we have not the promise of too good a season—and I may say that I look upon a good season as very much more to the interest of the general community than almost anything else, for, with good seasons, increased cultivation, and increased production, I do not think we need fear the future that lies before us.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Mr. Traylen, —When a Treasurer is able to place before the country such a satisfactory statement of accounts as is contained in these Estimates, as elaborated in the Budget Speech of the Premier, there is not much scope for adverse criticism; and I suppose it is not necessary for members, on this side of the House at any rate, to go into any other kind of criticism. I may, however, indulge in a few remarks on the general aspect of the Budget. First of all, I must express my regret, and I may say my astonishment, at seeing so few members in their places when this Budget was delivered. I took the trouble to count the number present, and I found that only seventeen members—or just one-half the

number of sitting members—were in this House at the time when the Premier was presenting his Budget. I have been accustomed to see, in other places, and to read of it in other places, that every member who could possibly be in his place made a point of being present at the time the Budget speech was delivered. I think it is owing to the country, and that it is due to the Premier himself, that members should, as far as possible, be present on an important occasion like that. Of course there may be many reasons why members were not here—that is not for me to say; but I do desire to express regret that the circumstance occurred. The Budget is made up, as is usual in these Australian colonies, on what we may call a “cash book” basis—simply an account of the amounts received and of the amounts expended or proposed to be expended. That does not at all times give quite as clear a result as a statement based on what I may call a “ledger” basis. There are other aspects of the general finances which it may be desirable to place before the House and to place before the country, and which it may be necessary for us to look at from another standpoint than a mere cash book basis. For instance, the country is engaged in certain trading concerns, and the House wants to know how those concerns are getting along, whether they are a source of profit or a source of loss, whether they are likely to pay interest on the money that has been borrowed and invested in them, or whether they are likely to continue a burden upon the revenue. I have taken the trouble, as far as I have been able in a hasty review of this mass of figures, to collect a few points together which may, perhaps, be of interest; and that is my object in rising to-night—just to present a few points in connection with these figures from another standpoint than a “cash book” standpoint. I will first of all take the cost of government. I do so because I look upon it as an exceedingly important matter, and one that should receive our most earnest consideration, that we should have to spend what it really costs us to govern this country. I find that the figures—taken roughly, not accurately as to fractions—come out thus: I find that the item now under consideration, the Governor's establishment and its surround-

ings, the Judges and the surroundings of the courts, and Ministers and their own special offices—I find that we have an expenditure in this direction of £13,196. To this we have to add the expenses of Parliament (that is of the two chambers of the Legislature), and here the figures, so far as I can gather them, amount to £4,550. The next item—and it is here that a great proportion of what really constitutes the Government is to be found—is the Colonial Secretary's Department, which has charge of the police and other forces of that character; and this department, I find, takes up £181,378. Then we have the Attorney General's Department, with an expenditure of £26,321, including the magistracy; and, lastly, the Treasurer's Department, which, so far as it relates to the government of the country, involves an expenditure of £62,206. These items in the aggregate amount to £287,651. In addition to these, we have a few smaller items, which have a relation to the government of the country, though, perhaps, they can scarcely be treated as part of the cost of government in the same way as the other items. These are what come under the head of pensions or annuities (exclusive of the ordinary Estimates), £2,233; the Aborigines Grant, £7,732; the Ecclesiastical Grant, £3,543; and the Special Grant for the High School, £500. These items altogether make up another £14,000, and, added to the £287,651 already mentioned, give us £301,651 as the cost of government. This amount comes to more than £4 per head of the population of the country. I am quite prepared to admit that in a large and scattered territory like this, with the attendant difficulties that surround its management, and the vast territory we have to administer—I am quite prepared to admit that the cost of government cannot be reduced to or fairly gauged by the average cost of government in countries more compact in their areas, and where the population is less scattered. But I cannot help thinking that a sum of a little over £4 per head of the whole population is too much for the government of this country to cost—that is, for the direct government of it; and I cannot help thinking there ought to be some reductions in some of the departments. I notice on these Estimates that there has been a

considerable increase in various departments in the way of salaries. I do not know by what law, or system, or process of selection, these increases have been arrived at, but I know that a good many members of the Civil Service complain—even those who have increases of salaries complain. I suppose it always will be so; it always has been so. So far as I have been able to gather, there has always been a difficulty in completely satisfying civil servants that they are fully and adequately paid. [THE PREMIER: That is right.] There are features in connection with the Civil Service in this colony that are worthy of the serious attention of the Government. Members must have observed, or they must be aware, that a great deal of their troubles and difficulties in the other colonies have arisen out of the fact that a mass of civil servants have been employed in the public service in excess of the actual requirement of the service. There was a time in the history of Victoria when 33 per cent. of the working population of the colony were to be found in the Civil Service—a state of things which necessarily brought about serious difficulties in connection with the finances of the country. Therefore, I hope the Government will not unduly increase the Civil Service of this colony. I do not complain about salaries, because as yet, so far as I am able to judge by going through these Estimates, and regard being paid to the work that has been done, and with some little knowledge of the capabilities of the gentlemen employed in the various departments of the service, I do not think—and I desire to express this view publicly—that at present the Civil Service in this colony is overpaid. I do not think it is overpaid in any department; and I do not think that the Government are likely to err in this direction. But I do think there is a danger of their erring in the direction of unduly increasing the number of the civil servants. I hope the Government will resist the endeavours of members who, like myself, have again and again to appeal to them in the interests of gentlemen who constantly wait upon us to interfere in their behalf in their desire to gain admission into the public service. Since I have had the honour of being a member of this House, really about one-half of my time has

been occupied in interviewing gentlemen who wanted positions in the Civil Service. In fact I have very little time to attend to my own business, so much has my time been occupied in interviews with so many gentlemen coming here from the other colonies who desire to enter the public service. Of course, I am very glad to see them coming here, and I wish them every success; and if I could get them situations in the Government service, where their services were really needed, and I thought they were qualified for the position, I would willingly do the best I could for them. I say I hope the Government will strenuously resist the tendency to increase the number of our civil servants. Special works are on at the present time, requiring special efforts, but it would be very much better if the Government endeavoured to work with the servants they have, even if it necessitated a little overtime occasionally, than to permanently increase the staff. It is a difficult thing, when once a Civil Service has been increased, to reduce it; and, if adverse days should come, no greater calamity can be cast upon a country than to be forced by circumstances to retrench its Civil Service. Therefore, I hope this House and the Government of the day will endeavour to resist this tendency to unduly increase the number of public servants. Then I do think, sir, it would not hurt our civil servants to do a little more work. I do think that when gentlemen take up these positions in the public service, and get fairly well paid, they ought to give a fair return, in the work done, for the money they receive. I believe, from some observations I have heard, that a good many of our civil servants are doing more than their share of work, and that a good many of our civil servants are not doing the work that they ought to do, and which they are paid to do. I hope the Government will take into account the claims of those who are really doing their full share, and more than their fair share of work, and that they will stir up or get rid of those who are not doing their work. I hope they will treat the civil servants as a commercial house would treat its own servants—reward the worthy, and dispense as soon as possible with the unworthy. Let it be understood that the public service is not a refuge for mere



hangers-on; let it be understood that it is not a mere sinecure, but that those who enter it are expected to serve the State as honestly and constantly as they would any private employer. This is a defect which is to be found everywhere in the Civil Service. I think I may safely say that the defect is not greater here than elsewhere; I believe it is less. I believe that the State is more faithfully served in Western Australia than it is in other colonies. I think it is due to our civil servants that I should say so. I think it is due to those who are honestly endeavouring to do their duty that I should say that in my opinion the majority, the far greater majority, of the civil servants in this colony are honestly and faithfully serving the State. I am sorry to say it has not been the case elsewhere, to my own knowledge; and I hope such a state of things will never happen here, and that we shall not have the Public Service filled up with men who have nothing to recommend them but that they are friends of Ministers or friends of members of Parliament. I hope the State will take a definite stand, and say, "We are willing to pay men whose services we require, we are willing to pay them honourably and fairly, but we expect them to give an honest day's work for an honest day's wage, and we do not want to have the Public Service kept up at an extravagant cost to the country." I am afraid it would be difficult to get away from the impression that when the cost of Government amounts to over £4 per head of the population, we are (to say the least of it) arriving perilously near that mark; and that the tendency should be downwards and not upwards. I do not know that the increases proposed in these Estimates, so far as I am able to judge, need be complained of. I desire only to speak of the general aspect of the question, and to ask the Government to resist this tendency to unduly increase the number of its civil servants. I will say no more on this subject. Coming to what I call our trade concerns, I first come to the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone Department. I find that throughout the whole of these Estimates the Government have been careful to charge these services to each department in proportion to the extent the department actually uses them. That is all right; but it is using the postal

and the telegraph and the telephone service in the interests of the State, and, these amounts being debited to each department of the service reduces the actual loss shown in connection with the Postal and Telegraph Department. If we take these Estimates as our basis, we find there is a loss upon this department of £17,000 a year. Then I come to the Railway Department. The Commissioner of Railways shows a prospective revenue of £220,000 for the coming year. I believe this amount will be realised; I believe it will even be exceeded. The estimated expenditure of the department is put down at £166,647; but I notice that this does not include the Engineer-in-Chief and other officers whose salaries are charged to the Public Works Department; and I think a certain proportion of the expenditure charged to that department properly belongs to the Railway Department.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn): It is so charged!

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It is not so charged. You have the Engineer-in-Chief, at any rate, and other officers, charged under the Works Department. I have eliminated a little over £13,000 from that department, being charges which, in my judgment at any rate, whatever it may be worth, ought to be properly charged to the Railway Department. That will increase the cost of that department to £180,000, so that the expected profit will be £40,000. That is the amount we may expect to receive from this particular trading concern towards the payment of interest on borrowed money. Then I come to another department which we ought to take notice of, and that is the Lands Department. In this department we may also include the Mines Department, because I notice that the Lands Department takes credit for all the leases and the rents obtained from mineral lands, and I am not going to separate them at present. Here we have an estimated revenue of £133,000, and a contemplated expenditure of £43,000; so that we may expect to make a profit of £90,000 out of our lands during the ensuing year. This, as I have said, includes a considerable sum that is to be contributed from goldfields revenue; but I want to make this remark with reference to our land

revenue. I think the time has almost come—I think it has actually come—when the proceeds of our lands should be earmarked and specially set apart as against our loans. In dealing with our lands we are dealing with our public estate, we are dealing with our patrimony, and we are parting with our patrimony.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Not as regards rents.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Not to the extent of rents. While the rents are running there is, of course, a continuous source of revenue. But it is not so with the sale and alienation of our land. The proceeds of these sales cannot be regarded as a continuous or permanent source of revenue, and what I wish to emphasise is that the time has arrived when we should make some special provision for meeting our loan engagements, especially when we have taken the serious step of spending so much of our loan money on unproductive works; and I do not think we could do better than to earmark the proceeds of our land sales, and set it apart for this purpose.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We have a sinking fund.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I am aware of that; and a very good thing, too, as I have pointed out on more than one occasion in this House. Taking the profits we expect to get from our railways, which I put down at £40,000, and the profits we hope to get from our lands, including the goldfields land, which I put down at £90,000, we arrive at a sum which is nearly equivalent to the figures representing the interest on our present loan, and I think that must be accepted as a satisfactory state of things. I am not in this calculation speaking of what will become the charge for interest when the £1,500,000 included in the Loan Bill of this session is borrowed. I have good hope that the premium on that loan will go a good way to pay the first year's interest upon it. But it is satisfactory to find that we hope to receive from our Railway Department and our Lands Department a profit amounting very nearly to the sum required to pay the interest upon our present loans. Then we come to the Customs, which is the source of the direct taxation of the people. Here we expect to receive a revenue of £424,000, according to these

Estimates. I am not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but if this amount does not come out by the end of the year at £550,000, instead of £420,000, I shall be very much surprised. I believe that the Treasurer has under-estimated his income from this source. But taking these figures as they stand, they are sufficient to justify the argument I made use of the other night in urging the Treasurer to provide, for this year at any rate, for certain unproductive works out of current revenue, instead of out of loan money. However, that is passed. There are a number of items on these Estimates which I will not refer to at present, as they will all come before us as we are dealing with the appropriations in detail. I will simply say, in summing up, that it cannot be doubted by anyone but that this colony has entered upon a cycle of prosperity, and I think we may reasonably expect that this prosperity will last and increase for some years to come.

MR. RICHARDSON: Can you give us a tip how long it will last?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It does not do to prophesy unless you know. But when this cycle of prosperity runs its course, there will be a change, and we shall have to face something which will not be prosperity; and what we have to do during the next few years is to make the best of our situation, but to watch that we do not land ourselves in difficulties either by over-borrowing, or by unduly increasing our Public Service, and adding to the permanent cost of Government, and so place upon the people of the colony a burden which, if we meet with adverse days—I hope we may not, but we may—will be more than they can bear, and which it will be difficult to reduce. That is one reason why I think members have a right to look on this question from the standpoint I am trying to look at it. I do not sympathise one bit with the Premier in the point which seems to have cost him so much anxiety and to disturb his peace of mind, namely, the disparity between our imports and exports, which appeared to me the one thing that troubled him, and which was to him the “fly in the ointment,” and the only one. I am afraid he will find the same cause to trouble him in the days that are coming. I am afraid it is one of the penalties attached to his “bold” policy of borrowing, and that just as long

as we keep on borrowing, and spending upon public works so long will this disparity exist between our imports and exports. We may not like it, and it is a condition of things that is very serious to contemplate. But just so long as you go on building railways and constructing other public works, attracting labour from other fields of industry—so long as you keep on borrowing money for this kind of thing, you must expect to see your exports decreasing, although your imports may increase. It is not the fault of the country; it is the fault of the policy entered upon by the Government. We may as well look this question fairly in the face, and admit what we would admit at once in our own private concerns, and that is—that while it may be a great advantage to us for the time being, this borrowing of money, and enable us to tide over our difficulties, the day of reckoning must come, all the same, sooner or later. The days of evil will be upon us, unless we are very careful. It is not a proposition that we can safely lay down that permanent prosperity can come to us out of borrowed moneys. We want to see our country as soon as possible in the position which every wise and prudent man desires to see his own business in, when he carries it on with his own capital. Borrowed money is, of course, at times exceedingly useful, even to the man in private business—indeed it may be absolutely necessary; and what is true of the individual is true of the State. At present we must borrow, I suppose; but we are going down an inclined plane, and we have entered upon a policy which, unless we have strength enough to resist it, will mean not merely the borrowing of a million and a half this year, but will mean a continual and progressive policy of borrowing, which is bound to land us in serious difficulties, sooner or later. This is a temptation we ought and must endeavour to resist, as much as possible; and I ask this House again, if possible—and I think it is possible—to insist at any rate, now that we have gone so far astray in our borrowing policy as to borrow money for unproductive works—I ask this House to insist that no further loans shall be undertaken unless the money is to be expended on reproductive works. The difference is a vital one between the

expenditure of borrowed money on reproductive works, and upon works that are distinctly unproductive. In the case of a reproductive work, as soon as it is constructed and gets fairly under way, the burden of the interest and sinking fund in connection with it ceases to be a burden upon the State. It may even be a source of profit to the State. But, in the case of an unproductive work, constructed out of borrowed money, it remains a burden upon the State for all time; and for every £500,000 you borrow for unproductive works, the State has to pay £1,075,000. I will not labour this question any further; I have spoken on it before. On these Estimates the Government propose to spend, out of revenue, a sum of £106,000 upon various works and buildings; and if we look down the list of these works one wonders whether there is a necessity for all these agricultural halls, and mechanics' institutes, and working men's institutes, and literary institutes. I notice there is a miners' institute even for my own district, Cue. I have been charged by the Premier with caring for no district but my own; I do not know that he had any ground for such a charge, but what I particularly wish to see in connection with these agricultural halls and other buildings is the same principle of self-help extended to them as has been introduced in connection with municipal subsidies, namely, that the contribution from the State should be on the basis of £1 for every £1 raised locally. There is a great deal more in this principle than appears on the surface; because, when local bodies are prepared to put their hands into their pockets, or to raise a certain amount of money locally, they will themselves see that the money is not raised or spent upon works that are not required; and the Government may, with confidence, help those who in this way help themselves. It appears to me that this principle might be extended in the direction of the undertakings enumerated in this long list of halls and institutes. I think the Government ought to insist that if a district requires an agricultural hall or a mechanics' institute that will cost £500, a moiety of that amount should be raised in the district, while the other moiety might fairly come from the State. You would then be pretty sure

that no agricultural halls or mechanics' institutes would be built that were not really required. But, so long as people find they can get all they want by milking the Government cow, every district in the colony will go for its agricultural hall, and in many places where they are not required. Under this head of public works and buildings I want also to utter another word of warning, and that is this: it is becoming a very serious item, the cost of the upkeep of these public buildings, scattered as they are all over the country. The first cost is not the only cost in connection with them. There is also a tendency to spend too much upon our public buildings—I mean in mere ornamentation; they are too often of too costly a character for the purposes they are required. Take these mechanics' institutes, for instance. I think if my friends at Cue had been asked to raise the money to assist in the building of a mechanics' institute for that township they would have readily done so. [THE PREMIER: They have done so.] I am very pleased to find that it is proposed to erect such a valuable building for an institute at Cue, and, no doubt the Coolgardie people will also be pleased to find that they are to have a mechanics' institute; but I cannot help thinking that these two buildings might be done for the price of one. Considering that all these public buildings will require a considerable amount for their upkeep, I think the Government would display more prudence if they watched these small items more carefully. It is the multiplicity of these small works, scattered here and there, all over the country, that tots up into these big figures. They are not very large amounts in themselves, but, when you come to add them all together, we find that they come to £106,000. I do not think there is any serious extravagance in connection with this particular list, and I do not want to carp at it; but these are the kind of things we shall have to watch. We know very well that mistakes have been made in the past, and it is the duty of this House to see that the Government make no mistakes in the future, and that the tendency in regard to these public works will be in the direction of restriction rather than of expansion. I also hope that, as regards

our Civil Service, the policy will be to pay good men a good salary for doing good work, and to reduce their number, rather than to increase it. I further hope that our policy in the future as regards borrowed moneys will be that of borrowing for reproductive works, and productive works alone. I am glad indeed that we are in a position to show the world a Budget as cheering as this Budget is. I think it is one which any colony and which any Treasurer might be proud of. Yet I think that without taking too exaggerated a view, or being at all optimistic, the Treasurer might have brought in a Budget of £100,000 more than he has. If he has erred in this direction, however, he has erred on the safe side, and I am sure this House and the country will commend him for his caution; and, if he comes out at the end of the year with £100,000 more than he expects, I have no doubt there will be ways and means found to dispose of that large sum of money. I have every pleasure, Mr. Traylen, in supporting the item now before the House.

MR. RICHARDSON: So far as I can gather, there does not seem to be any strong desire or disposition to discuss the Budget speech. The hon. member for Nannine has expressed his regret that no more interest was taken by members in being present to listen to the speech, but I think we have even a smaller House this evening than we had when the Premier delivered his speech. With reference to the proposed increases in salaries, there does seem to be about these increases a little bit of the slapdash style of doing business. Some increases have been made where, perhaps, we did not expect them, and other increases which we expected to see are wanting. In some cases, too, the proposed increases are somewhat large, while in other cases they seem to be equally small. But I think it will be time enough to discuss this matter when we come to the items themselves. I just wish now to make a few remarks only with reference to one question which seemed to cause the Premier a considerable amount of anxiety, and that was the discrepancy between our imports and our exports. The Premier dealt upon this as if it were something to be very much scared at, and very much to be deplored. It seemed to

him to be the one dark cloud upon the financial horizon — the only black spot in the financial firmament. But I think a sufficient reason for it has already been mentioned by two members who have spoken this evening, and especially by the hon. member for Nannine, who pointed out that we could not expect the country to be going on producing at the normal rate while we were engaged in carrying on public works — works on which higher wages could be earned than in the prosecution of the ordinary pursuits of the country, and more especially agricultural pursuits. We have no reason to expect—or, if we do expect, we are bound to be disappointed—that farming operations and drudgery work of that kind will be largely carried on while men can earn much higher pay than farmers can afford to pay them. It will only be when there is some cessation of this large public works expenditure that we can expect to see these ordinary occupations resuming their natural sway. I think, considering the number of our population and the superior attractions that are offered in other directions, we have every reason to congratulate ourselves upon the advance that agriculture is making amongst us. We could not possibly expect it to do more, it appears to me. Furthermore, there are other explanations to account for the large discrepancy between our imports and our exports, for the increase in the former and the decrease in the latter. In the first place, we have been receiving an abnormal increase to our population, and we know that a large proportion of these new-comers bring with them some little means of their own: it may be £100, or £200, or £300. Of course they don't come here with so many sovereigns in their pockets; their capital is probably represented by a Bank draft, and that draft is sent away and exchanged for something that we require in the shape of imports; so that virtually this money which is brought into the colony comes to us in the form of imported goods. I am therefore at a loss to understand the lamentations of some hon. members; nor can I appreciate their methods of reasoning, when they contend that if our exports could only overtake our imports it would be a proof of the prosperity of the colony, when, in reality,

it only shows that we are not getting so much value as we are sending away; for, as I understand it, our imports are but the index of our purchasing powers. According to the arguments of some members, if we had borrowed many millions and had to remit say half a million annually out of the colony, and which would necessarily be sent away in the shape of exports, without any corresponding imports in return—if we did this, we would be told that we were prosperous (according to that method of reasoning). Or, if a large number of people living out of the colony were drawing their income from us—which would, no doubt, also be remitted in the form of exports—that likewise would be cited as a subject for congratulation. On the other hand, if, for instance, we discovered fifty or a hundred rich mines on our gold-fields, and floated them successfully in London, and these companies sent out machinery and plant, valued at from £5,000 to £10,000, for each mine, thus showing an import return of £100,000 and upwards without any compensating items of export—this also, according to this peculiar doctrine of political economy, would be interpreted as a bad sign of our financial condition. The Premier, in his speech, alluded to our public indebtedness, and no doubt that is a subject that ought to be very seriously considered. He gave us the figures on the 30th June last at £3,128,000, which represented about £40 per head of the population. Since then we have sanctioned the raising of another loan of £1,500,000, which will increase our indebtedness to £4,628,000; but the Premier told us that by the time this loan is expended we shall probably have a population of 100,000 in the colony—and I do not think that is an unreasonable supposition—and that our indebtedness per head then will not be more than £46 or £47 per head, the interest on which at 5 per cent. would be equivalent to £2 6s. or £2 7s. per annum per head of the population, or about £9 per head of the adult male population. Looking at it in that light, it is calculated to strike us as being somewhat serious, and no doubt it would be serious, if there was nothing to set off against it, that every adult male in the colony should be expected to find £9 annually towards paying the interest on our national debt.

But when we remember that nearly one-half of our annual income is derived from Customs duties, and that each of us is supposed, on an average, to consume dutiable goods to the extent of £4 10s. per annum, and that a great deal of taxation is paid upon what may be called luxuries which people might fairly do without, it will be seen that a very considerable reduction may be allowed in the amount of interest per head upon our public debt. I do not mean to say that it will not be quite heavy enough even then. But I do not think it comes very hard upon people to provide a fair amount of taxation to meet their national liabilities, so long as they are provided with profitable employment. I think that is where the shoe pinches. When we find in colonies having a big national debt like Queensland or New Zealand—one being £62 and the other £74 per head of the population—when we find people finding regular and profitable employment, they are able to bear this burden with considerably more equanimity than those who live in colonies where the national debt is less, but where employment is not so profitable, or is more spasmodic. Therefore, I think the great object we ought to keep in view is to endeavour so to frame our policy as to find channels and industries where the labour of our people may be turned to profitable account. If we do that, I do not think we shall hear any great complaint about taxation. It is when the industries of a country get into that depressed state that they afford no profitable employment for men's labour that the burden of taxation is felt, and the shoe begins to pinch, rather than when things are booming and when employment is plentiful and profitable. Another matter I should like to refer to is the question of State aid to municipalities. Considerable satisfaction has been expressed at the announcement that the Government propose to increase the present subsidy from 10s. to £1. I suppose that is all right, in a way. But there is another side of the picture, and it is this: the greater part, possibly nine-tenths, of the expenditure on municipalities is incurred in connection with the improvement of streets, the lighting of the town, its sanitary arrangements, and in connection generally with the comfort and conveni-

ences which chiefly concern the residents themselves, and the residents only. I do not see that it is of vital interest to people who live in the country, four or five hundred or a thousand miles away, whether people in the city provide themselves with these comforts and luxuries or not. The point I want to get at is this: the whole community is taxed to provide this municipal subsidy for the improvement of our towns. That being so, I think people who live in the country, and who benefit little or nothing by this municipal expenditure, contribute a very fair share of taxation without proposing to tax them for their own roads as well. I think there is no room for complaint against country people that they do not contribute their fair share towards the revenue, when they are all taxed—and perhaps taxed more heavily on the whole than town residents—in order to furnish the municipalities of the colony with half their income, to be expended in the improvement and adornment of their towns, and to provide the people in these towns with the comforts and luxuries of an advanced civilisation. It may be said that country people also visit the towns. No doubt some of them do, but how much do they benefit during their brief sojourn in town by the expenditure of this subsidy? They may enjoy the transient luxury of a decent pavement to walk upon, or of a street lit up with gas; but their enjoyment begins and ends there. I think the country does its fair share in this direction without putting any further strain upon it. There is another point in connection with our exports which I omitted to refer to, but to which the Premier made allusion in his speech. He regretted very much the falling off in the value of our exports. The cause of this depreciation in the value of our exports is not far to seek. As has been already pointed out, we had been in the habit in previous years of considerably over-valuing our exports in passing them through the Customs; and, in addition to that, the price of our staple commodity, wool, has fallen tremendously of late years, as indeed has the price of most of our principal products. The main point to consider in this connection is not so much whether the value of our export is maintained, but whether the production is increasing; and, as regards wool, it is

gratifying to find that, in spite of the period of terrific drought which the country has gone through, the actual output of wool is increasing. Of course the price of wool is beyond our control, but there is no doubt that the low price has correspondingly reduced the value of our exports. But there is a broader question at the bottom of this export question. If the community is largely engaged in getting gold, and in exporting it, it must be apparent that while they are doing that they cannot be also engaged in other operations. Every community will be engaged in that which they find pays them best. We need not trouble ourselves about that. If 5,000 people find it pays them better to search for gold and to export gold than anything else, there is no real reason to regret that they are not engaged in farming or in some other pursuit which would not pay them as well. As soon as they find something that pays them better than exporting gold, they will go about it pretty quickly. We may trust them for that. This is one of those things, perhaps, in respect of which a *laissez faire* doctrine is about the soundest one. I do not propose to offer any further remarks on the Budget, except to add my congratulations to those already offered to the head of the Government, who, so far as his financial statement is concerned, occupies a unique position, not only so far as Australia is concerned, but, perhaps, I may say almost any country in the world. With such a splendid tale to tell, I think he has been very modest indeed. Even one of the Opposition members has twitted him with being too modest in his calculations. No doubt he stands the cynosure of all eyes amongst Australian Premiers in being able to bring forward so satisfactory a Budget. Other Treasurers are struggling with deficits, and at their wits' end to bring their revenues within thousands and thousands of pounds of their expenditure, whilst here quite the reverse is the case. Instead of making the picture brighter than it really is, our Treasurer has to tone it down, and is almost at his wits' end what to do with an ever-increasing revenue. At the same time, I should like to join with one or two other members in a word of warning. As the hon. member for Perth said, "Lightly come,

lightly go." There is a danger even when the revenue is booming—the danger that the expenditure may boom too; and I would have been very pleased to have observed some of the works which even figure in our Loan Bill constructed, if possible, out of revenue. I think when we have a revenue that is increasing as ours is, by leaps and bounds, we might well devote a portion of it towards the construction of as many productive works as possible. I wish to add my earnest warning to all concerned, not to relax their watchfulness, and not to be led away with the idea that because the revenue is booming now it is going to boom for ever, and that we may indulge in increasing our departmental expenditure to our heart's content. It is easy enough to add two or three hundred to the strength of your Civil Service staff, but it is not so easy to get rid of them afterwards, when there is no work for them to do. It is a sorrowful thing to have to retrench and dismiss your public servants right and left, as some of our neighbours are compelled to. No Ministry can ever do it and retain its popularity. If they have to put on the screw, and cut down salaries, and discharge people, and retrench in all directions, it is an utter impossibility for any Government, however strong, to withstand the revulsion of feeling that is bound to take place. It simply means a continual shifting of Ministries, one in and one out, and general dissatisfaction. I think the wiser course is to take warning in time, and not to increase your staff beyond due proportion, but, on the other hand, let them be well paid so long as they do their work well. It is infinitely better to have a few good officers well paid, and doing their work honestly and faithfully, than to have an indifferent lot of hangers-on, living from hand to mouth, and neglecting the public interests.

MR. MORAN: Although there appears to be a lack of interest in this debate, I think it is the most important occasion offered to the House for dealing with the financial policy of the Government—more important than even the discussion upon the Loan Bill; and I think I would not be doing my duty if I allowed the occasion to pass without a few words, pointing in a direction that scarcely any member has pointed to, and that is the cause of the tremendous increase in

the revenue during the last year or two. I want members to look where that increase of revenue has mainly come from, and what has been the supporting cause of it. I noticed that a good many members passed over this matter very lightly, but I think it is only in the soundest interests of the colony that we should examine and bear in mind what has been the real cause of the tremendous leap forward which the revenue has made with such a sudden bound, showing an increase of nearly a hundred per cent. in so short a space of time. In doing this we shall simply be doing an act of justice to the great staple industry of the colony, the goldmining industry, and not building false hopes in regard to other industries. It is not my desire to depreciate the other industries of the colony; it is my wish that every industry in the country may in due time take as big a bound forward as the gold industry. At the same time I believe in this, that if you have a really good servant who serves you well, or any good animal that serves you well, it is your duty to serve him well, and also liberally in return; and I think it is the duty of the Government of this colony to serve this great goldmining industry a little more liberally in the future than in the past, seeing that this industry has been the sole cause of the colony so suddenly leaping into notoriety, when three or four years ago it was almost unknown amongst Australian colonies. That is simply a matter of fact: this colony four years ago was almost unknown amongst the Australian group of colonies, and where it was known it was not thought much of, whereas at the present time no colony in the world is more spoken of, no colony in Australia occupies such an enviable position, and there is no Australian Premier at the present moment who has such a rosy time as the Premier of Western Australia. Looking at the revenue as estimated for the year, we find that nearly one-half of it is expected to be derived from Customs dues; and I wish to point out that, if these dues were analysed, it would be seen that a hundred per cent. of this revenue is due, directly or indirectly, to the goldmining industry, made up of articles consumed on our goldfields by the thousands who have been attracted to our shores in the hope

of sharing in our golden harvest. Every item which passes through the Customs, and which passes over our railways for use on our goldfields, pays what I call a very heavy impost, an altogether too heavy an impost. For every article that is used for food, for every article of wearing apparel, and for every bit of machinery, and for every article required in the development of our mines, the people on our goldfields have to pay a very heavy Customs duty.

MR. A. FORREST: Not more than anybody else.

MR. MORAN: But the remarkable fact is that whilst the revenue from the Customs was comparatively small before, it is now the most important revenue we have, and I say this is entirely due to the development of the goldmining industry. Then there is the land revenue, from which it is expected we shall receive £98,000 during the coming year. How much of that item, again, is derived from the sale of land in goldfields towns? I am not in a position to say myself, but we all know that the land in these goldfields towns has yielded a large revenue, and brought thousands and thousands of pounds into the public chest. Land which four years ago, before this industry sprung up, was simply a howling wilderness, has already attained a value undreamt of. In licenses, too, a very big percentage of the revenue derived under that head comes from the various goldfields licenses. I would not be surprised if a hundred per cent. of that item is traceable, directly or indirectly, to our goldfields. Then we come to another important item of revenue—that received from postages, money orders, and telegrams. I should like to know what proportion of this revenue, again, is derived from the opening up of our goldfields, and the increase of population and the development of trade brought about by this great industry. I think a very large proportion of this revenue also may be fairly put down to that same industry, and that the Government has good cause to be thankful to its goldfields for making its revenue take such a big leap forward as it has done.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): What about the expenditure?

MR. MORAN: I am dealing with the revenue now; and no one will gainsay



the fact that a large amount of revenue in the way of postages and telegrams is derived from our goldfields. I should like members to bear this in mind: it costs the country just as much to build a telegraph line to a place where there are only half a dozen people to use it, as it does to build it to a place where there are thousands who use it. I believe that every public department connected with our goldfields pays well, and particularly the postal and telegraph services. They are not only paying interest and working expenses, but in a few years will repay the whole of the expenditure. I am only pointing this out in order to impress upon the Government, and to impress upon the House, what is due to this important goldmining industry. Next I come to a very interesting item — the railway receipts. Members are aware that double rates are charged on our Yilgarn railway. Not only must people on the fields pay through their nose, in the way of Customs duties, for all they use, they must all pay double railway rates. I think, as I have already pointed out in this House, the Government have adopted a very short-sighted policy in connection with these railway rates. Their only excuse is that there is no back traffic. Well, sir, back traffic or no back traffic, I venture to make this statement: there is as much traffic on the Yilgarn railway one way as any other railway in this colony has both ways, and more to spare. I have no hesitation in saying there are more tons of stuff carried on that goldfields line, one way, than are carried on any other line in the country reckoning the traffic both ways. Then where does the justice of charging double rates come in? There is nothing in the world to justify it, and I say again not only is it a short-sighted policy, but a policy that is grossly unjust to those who are struggling to develop these goldfields, and who have raised Western Australia to the high pinnacle on which she stands at the present moment. There is this point also to be considered: every ton of stuff that goes over this Yilgarn railway has, in the first place, to go over our Eastern line, yet we find that line getting credit for the increased traffic over our goldfields line. I think the return which I have moved for will throw some light on this point. I think it is only fair that

the Yilgarn line should receive credit for all that is fairly due to it, and that this credit should not go to other lines. I say that particularly, because we have the promise of the Commissioner of Railways that if it can be shown at the end of the year that the Yilgarn railway is paying he will be prepared to reduce the freights on that line, and assimilate them with the rates charged on the other railways of the colony. Next session, when I come back to this House, I will again jog the memory of the Commissioner about this promise, and I hope he will be prepared to carry it out. Then we come to another source of revenue, the stamp revenue. I should like to know how much of that is derived from transactions of one kind and another connected with our goldfields. In fact there is scarcely an item of revenue upon these estimates that has not been increased to a large extent owing to the development of the goldmining industry; and that is a fact which this House and the Government should not lose sight of. I have thought it my duty, representing as I do the largest goldfield in the colony, and representing, I maintain, half the capital or ready money in the colony, while at the same time I have the undoubted honour of representing the picked intellect of the best men in Australia, men who are largely imbued with that modern spirit of progress and enterprise which has done so much for this colony during the last three or four years—more than was ever done in its previous history—representing as I do the most important and the most enterprising goldfields constituency in the colony, I have thought it my duty to submit these facts for the consideration of the House in connection with these Estimates. The hon. member for Nannine says we should not spend loan moneys upon works that are not reproductive, and no doubt there is a good deal of sense in what he says. I ask the House what more reproductive work could the Government enter upon than a comprehensive scheme of water-works for our goldfields? I believe it would pay even more handsomely than our railways or our telegraph lines. It is all very well for some members to laugh at these assertions; those who do so are simply ignorant of the actual condition of affairs. I say unhesitatingly that no more reproductive work could be under-

taken by this colony at the present moment than a comprehensive water scheme for these Eastern goldfields. Even if the water were sold at half the price now charged for it, it would refund the interest and working expenses, certainly in a greater proportion than any other public work that I know of. Therefore it is not right nor statesmanlike to say that it is not the first duty of any Government to embark in an undertaking that is so full of promise, not only as a reproductive work but also as a work of absolute necessity. I do hope the Premier will tell us that the Government are considering this all-important work, and are looking upon it with a favourable eye. I suppose this will be the last occasion I shall have an opportunity of speaking on this question, and I do urge it as strongly as I can possibly urge it upon the consideration of the Government. Whether I succeed in my efforts or not, I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that in this matter, at any rate, I have not been wanting in my duty to the constituency I have the great honour to represent in this House. If the Government on their part, after the repeated warnings and the repeated appeals made to them on this all-absorbing question, neglect to do their duty, I can only say I am afraid the day will come when they will be sorry for it. I have endeavoured to support the Government, so far as I honestly and conscientiously could support them, but the interests of my constituents have a stronger claim upon me than any Government has; and, once more, let me urge upon them to give this question of water supply their most earnest attention.

MR. A. FORREST: I do not know that I would have addressed the House on this occasion had it not been for the speech we have just listened to. I must, in the first place, congratulate the Government on the financial condition of the colony; I congratulate them also upon their intention to increase, in a small way, the salaries of some of their civil servants. We all know that during the last two or three years nothing has been done to increase the salaries of this deserving class. I take it that the question at present before the committee is the first item on the Estimates,—the Governor's establishment, which has elicited from the hon. member for Yilgarn a lecture upon

our goldfields. We are all agreed that our goldfields have brought the colony into a certain amount of prominence; but the hon. member forgets they have also brought us into prominence in the loan market, and that the greater portion of this new loan of a million and a half is for the development and assistance of our goldfields. We may receive some extra revenue from these goldfields, but it certainly cannot be said to be equal to the expenditure which they have caused and are causing the colony. I cannot, myself, see why we should be so thankful as the hon. member thinks we ought to be to those who are taking our gold out of the country to benefit themselves. These men have come here, not to benefit the colony, but to benefit themselves, and they don't care "tuppence" for the colony. I may mention a case that came under my own notice only the other day. I employed 15 men on a mine in which I am interested, and we paid them £4 a week. They came up one morning and said there was a rush three or four miles away, and they wanted to be paid off. They said "We know you won't expect us to stay, because we have only come here to make money, and take it away again." So I let them go. That is a sample of the majority of these men whom the hon. member for Yilgarn talks about, as if they had conferred an honour upon the country by coming here to take away our gold from us. These men don't intend to stop here, and did not come here with any other object, as they say, than to make money and then clear out, and go back to their wives and families; very naturally, too. The hon. member for Yilgarn seems to think the colony depends entirely upon these goldfields for its revenue and everything else. I might remind him that these goldfields have only been in existence a few years, and this colony had a large surplus revenue long before that; and, so far as Perth and Fremantle are concerned, and this part of the colony, I do not know that the people generally have benefited anything from these goldfields. I do not believe they are a bit better off now than they were four or five years ago. Anybody would think, from what the hon. member said, that this colony would have no revenue at all if it wasn't for his constituents—neither Customs revenue,

land revenue, railway revenue, stamp revenue, nor anything else. We know that is all nonsense. The hon. member never said a word about what these goldfields are costing the colony. I have a high opinion of the fields myself, but "all is not gold that glitters," even on the goldfields. I think many men in this colony know that, to their cost. A man is pretty lucky if he gets back his money; the majority simply lose it and never see it again. I believe, myself, if the Government could tell us the exact amount of expenditure they have incurred in connection with these fields, it would be found that the revenue received by the Government out of the fields was nothing compared to what these fields have cost the colony. A man gets his miner's right for £1, and he may win thousands of pounds out of the soil. Although our revenue has increased, so has our expenditure; and, no matter how our revenue increases, we do not seem to be much better off than we were some years ago. We simply manage to make both ends meet, and have a little over. That was the case when our revenue was much less than it is now, and it is the case still. The hon. member for Yilgarn seems to think that Coolgardie is the only place in the colony that deserves any consideration. I believe there are many people in the town of Coolgardie who expect the Government to feed them with a spoon, and to pour water down their throats. They do nothing but grumble. With the exception of one mine, nothing at all has been done by private enterprise to procure water. They complain about the Government not giving them water rights, although they can have water rights any day if they like. Only the other day the Government offered to hand them over all their tanks and other water works, and to lend them £1,000 or £2,000 to carry on these works. What could be fairer or more liberal? But they wouldn't have it. They preferred the Government to retain the works, as the Government would treat them much better than the municipality would. That is what the people of the town said. I am not at all surprised that the member for the district should be such a strong supporter of the Government, seeing how much they have done for his constituency. But I would remind him that he is not

the only member for Yilgarn; there are plenty of members in this House who are a great deal more interested in Yilgarn than he is. For any member, and especially a young member, to get up in this House, and to address an intelligent body of men for half an hour in the way the hon. member has done, and to try to make us believe about all the good which the miners are doing this colony, when we know very well they don't care a straw for the colony, and only want to make money for themselves—I think it is ridiculous.

The vote—"His Excellency the Governor, £1,446"—was then put and passed.

*Legislative Council*, £1,475:

Put and passed.

*Legislative Assembly*, £3,075:

Put and passed.

*Office of Colonial Secretary*, £2,089:

Put and passed.

*Audit Department*, £2,625:

MR. SOLOMON asked for some explanation as to the proposed increases in the item.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the reason for these small increases was that the salaries of these officers were considered to be too low, looking at the very responsible duties they had to perform. In the first place, the Auditor General himself held a very important office, and carried out his duties, he believed, conscientiously and well; and it was considered by the Government that this officer ought to be placed in the same position, as to his salary, as the heads of other departments, such as the Collector of Customs, the Postmaster General, the Superintendent of Police, and the Under Treasurer. His office and his duties were in no way less important than those of these other officers, and it was felt that his salary ought not to be lower than theirs. With reference to the chief clerk, he was to receive an increase of £25 a year. He thought an officer holding the position of chief clerk in the Audit Department certainly deserved the salary proposed to be given to this officer. With regard to the other clerks, these also held very responsible positions; they were not only employed in the office, but were also entrusted with the duty of inspecting the accounts of the sub-treasurers at outside stations, and the Government thought that £250

a year was little enough to pay officers holding such a responsible position. He thought that, taken altogether, the officers of this department, even with these increases, could not be considered to be very highly paid, bearing in mind the very responsible duties cast upon them, and how much the public were indebted to them for the conscientious manner in which they discharged those duties. The salaries were not at all high; in fact, he thought they were very moderate indeed.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said his objection was not to the salaries, but to the fact that officers who had only been a short time in the Service should be receiving such salaries, when there were other civil servants who had been fifteen or twenty years in the Service were not receiving as much salary as some of these officers who had only been in the Service three or four years. He thought the salaries of these comparatively new officers had been unduly raised. He did not mean to say that they received too high a salary for the positions; what he complained of was that there were others in the Service long before them, and quite capable of performing the duties, who might have been promoted to these positions, instead of men who had only been in the Service two or three years. [THE PREMIER: Who are they?] He had no wish to mention names. The hon. gentleman knew very well who they were; or, if he didn't, he could soon find out. The Government were too apt to forget the claims of officers who were in the remote parts of the colony, while the claims of those nearer home were seldom overlooked.

MR. SIMPSON said, with regard to this item of the Audit Department, he thought it was time the House had an opportunity of going into the whole question of the system of audit obtaining in the public service of this colony. He had the honour of being a member of a committee appointed last session to deal with a phase of this question, and he thought it was a great pity that the Government did not give the House an opportunity of fully considering the very weighty evidence submitted by that committee when they presented their report. When that report was laid on the table it was suggested that the whole of the

evidence accompanying it should be printed and taken into consideration; but that evidence was in a sort of way smuggled through the House before the House was prorogued. There were some very important suggestions made in that evidence with regard to the system of audit, some of them made by the Premier himself, and others by some of the highest officers in the land, and were well deserving of the serious attention of that House. He might say that, personally, having heard the evidence given before that committee, and the evidence before another committee, he was utterly dissatisfied with the present system of audit. He had no hesitation in saying, from the evidence, that the present system of audit and of examining stores was utterly futile and ineffective, and afforded very little aid to Parliament in controlling the expenditure of public money. He did not mean to insinuate that there was any danger of malversation of funds or stores while the present Government continued in office; but, given a venial Government, and a favourable opportunity, and he had no hesitation in saying that the present system of audit and of stock-taking would be found futile and ineffective; and he thought it would be well if it were altered. So far as the Audit Department was concerned, he was satisfied that the officer presiding over it, and others employed in it, were very able, energetic, and conscientious officers, of the highest possible character. But he did think it would be well if a distinct opportunity were given to the House to consider the evidence taken before the select committee last year, and particularly the statement of the Engineer-in-Chief with regard to the system of accounts in operation.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) did not know what more distinct opportunity could be given to the House for considering this question than when the report of the select committee referred to was laid on the table of the House. That report and the whole of the evidence was still in possession of the House, and the hon. member could move in the matter any day he liked. He could have moved in it last session if he had thought it necessary. As for his charge against the Audit Department, or rather against the audit system, as to its being ineffectual,

and of no assistance to Parliament, he could not agree with the hon. member. He did not believe that in any part of Australia had they a better Audit Act than we had in this country, nor any part of the world where the public accounts were presented to Parliament in a more clear, precise, and satisfactory way. He did not mean to say that every thing was done that ought to be done, perhaps, in regard to the auditing of stores; but he knew that a great deal of trouble and a great deal of care was taken. As for the select committee's report having been smuggled, he did not know who smuggled it, unless it was the hon. member himself. The Government didn't. It was laid on the table two or three days before the close of the session, and the evidence was sent to the printer, but the printer was not able to have it set up—it was very voluminous—before the House was prorogued. That was the whole case. As to the system of auditing the accounts being a loose one, he must refuse to accept the dictum of the hon. member on that point. The hon. member might be a very able man in some matters, and a great authority upon questions of finance, and possess a great knowledge of accounts, but there were officers in the Treasury and the Audit Departments who probably had quite as much knowledge as the hon. member had of these matters, and possibly a great deal more. He had no patience with the hon. member getting up in his usual Sir Oracle style, and indulging in such rubbishy remarks—[MR. SIMPSON: Keep your temper; keep your temper]—he had no patience with the hon. member. It was utterly absurd for him to say that the Government should give him or anybody else a distinct opportunity of dealing with this matter, when all the documents were before the House, and had been before the House since last session. What more did he want? The hon. member could move in the matter when he liked. So far as the Treasury and Audit Departments were concerned, they carried out their respective duties conscientiously and well, and with considerable knowledge and experience of such duties, and he did not think that in any colony were the public accounts presented to Parliament with more preciseness, or in a form conveying greater information, or that there was any Gov-

ernment that was more ready than this Government to furnish the House with every information in its power relating to the public accounts.

MR. LOTON said it appeared to him that the point raised by the hon. member for the Gascoyne was this: that, when vacancies occurred in the Public Service, those already in the Service should be promoted, instead of employing fresh hands to fill positions to which good salaries were attached. [MR. R. F. SKOLL: That's it.] He was afraid that point was not always kept in view. But with regard to this particular department, the Audit Department, it was one that required special qualifications in its officers. Every officer had not the ability and training required for the performance of the duties cast upon the Audit Department; and that was the reason, possibly, why those outside the Service had been appointed. But, so long as officers already in the Service possessed the necessary qualifications and ability, he thought it was the duty of the Government to promote them, when a vacancy occurred, rather than appoint outsiders.

MR. A. FORREST said if a man was a good officer, no matter what part of the colony he was in, he was bound to come to the front. If a man had ability, whether he had influence or not, he generally worked himself up to the top of the ladder.

MR. JAMES said if those who had ability came to the top, those who had no ability ought to fall to the bottom. That was a principle that should apply to all parts of the Service, and to Ministers as well as others. It was all very well to say that merit was always rewarded; they knew very well it was not so. They had only to look at this department to find an illustration of that. One clerk, Mr. Kennedy, who, last year was only £60 below Mr. Shenton (another clerk) was now £100 below him, although the former joined the Service in 1886, and the other only entered this department in 1893.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said a man might have had other experience in the particular class of work required, before he entered the Service, and this experience in special cases would justify his appointment or promotion.

MR. LEAKE said, in other departments, increases generally were granted on a sliding scale, but in this department they seemed to put all the clerks on the same level, no matter what length of service they had to show. For instance, why should Mr. Shenton, who entered the Service in January, 1893—[THE PREMIER: That must be a mistake.] It was so in the Blue Book; why should a gentleman who only entered the Service last year be placed on the same footing, as to his salary, and receive the same increase, as officers who had been many years longer in the Service, such as Mr. Hussey or Mr. Whitfield?

MR. SOLOMON pointed out that in the Audit Department there were £100 increases, while in the Customs and Postal Departments they did not amount to more than £10 to £20 increase. There seemed to be a want of system in the increases.

MR. ILLINGWORTH could not see why the chief clerk should only get a £25 increase when one of the clerks received a £90 increase.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) pointed out that the four clerks and examiners carried out the duties of inspectors of accounts, visiting various parts of the colony. As to the chief clerk, he already had a pretty good salary, and it was not considered necessary to give him so large an increase. These men were all experienced accountants. One had been employed in a Bank before he entered the Service; another had been in a merchant's office; another had been a merchant himself; and one came from England with excellent testimonials.

MR. R. F. SHOLL was surprised, in view of the fact that the Civil Service Commission was sitting, that any increases were proposed. The Commission might enlighten the Government on the subject of those entitled to promotion. [THE PREMIER: Must we wait for a year for their report?] The Government might revoke the Commission if they could not get a report from them. The Government ought to prod this Commission up.

MR. CONNOR considered the increases proposed in this department were disproportionately large. In the other colonies "retrenchment was in the air,"

but here we were adding to our expenditure right and left. He moved that the item "Auditor General" be reduced by £50.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) did not know whether the hon. member was in earnest or not. The office of Auditor General was certainly one of the most important offices under the Government, and he was directly responsible to Parliament. The Government felt they would only be doing justice by placing this officer in the same position, as regards his salary, as other heads of departments. It was a very responsible post, and the present holder of the office had been about 30 years in the Service, having worked himself up from a very small appointment to his present position. He thought if there was a man in the Service who deserved an increase of salary it was an officer of that sort, who had worked himself up from the bottom of the ladder to the top, and who conscientiously did his duty without fear or favour. The Auditor General also had a most unpleasant position; he had to come into contact with everyone, from the representative of the Queen down to the smallest department in the Service. He had to criticise and scrutinise the accounts of every department, and, so far as he (the Premier) was able to judge, this officer had done his work fearlessly and conscientiously. Apart from that, the importance of the office was such as to entitle the holder of it to be placed in the same position as the holders of similar positions in other departments of the Service as regards his salary.

MR. RANDELL thought the hon. member for East Kimberley had been very unfortunate in the item he had selected for proposing a reduction when he selected the Auditor General. This officer, he believed, was the only officer, outside the Ministry, who was directly responsible to Parliament, and his duties were of the most onerous, and he might say, invidious character. That he was honest and faithful in the discharge of his duties no one who had any knowledge of the department would deny for a moment. He had thought for a long time that the head of this department ought to be placed on a par with the Under Secretaries as regards his salary, especially as he was to all intents an

officer of the Parliament itself. He therefore hoped the hon. member would withdraw his amendment.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said an undue preference had been shown to the Auditor General, who could not well recommend increases of salaries for his assistants without increasing his own salary.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Auditor General did not recommend the increase of his own salary. The Government did that.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it came to the same thing. He did not wish to cut down salaries at all, but only that justice should be done to all officers, according to length of service and merit, and not that a few late-comers should be placed in positions which others longer in the Service were capable of filling.

MR. ILLINGWORTH opposed the amendment, because if there was one department which hon. members should support and see that it was made independent it was the Audit Department. The only difficulty he saw was the irregularity of the increases, and the Premier's explanation was not sufficient to account for the chief clerk being increased only £25, while three clerks under him were increased £50 each.

MR. RICHARDSON suggested that the Government might make the increase to the chief clerk the same amount as the increase to the other three clerks, because the increase could not be made on the motion of an hon. member.

MR. RANDELL said there should be an understanding as to what was the maximum amount for the different positions, and it should be left to the Government to say when a servant should rise to the maximum.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Civil Service was not in a satisfactory condition, and a Civil Service Act was required for placing the whole Service on a better footing. He often wondered why the salaries had not reached an enormous amount, considering the exertions made by all the officers to get their salaries increased, year by year. The moderate amount of the salaries surprised him, under the circumstances. He hoped that a Bill might be brought in, perhaps next session, for dealing with the Service, so as to fix a maximum amount for the offices; and, unless that was done, the

salaries would be always increasing. Taking the Estimates all through, they had not increased an undue amount; but the wonder was that they had not, because efforts were made every year to get increases of salary. He would like very much to have the Civil Service placed on a better footing. There was an attempt made every year, by every one of the officers, to get an increase of salary. The heads of the departments knew it was of no use putting large increases on the Estimates, because they would not be approved by the Government; and, taking the heads of the departments as a whole, they had been very moderate in their recommendations. Certainly more increases had been recommended this year than in any year since the present Government had been in office. The increases in the present Estimates were generally those that had been recommended by the heads of the departments. He did not think there was a single instance, unless in the immediate office of a Minister, in which the Government had taken any action to recommend increases. The only action they had taken was to cut down. Unless the head of the department recommended an increase, the Ministers very seldom increased a salary. In the present Estimates, the Government had generally been able to accept the recommendations made by the heads of the departments. It was a mistake to suppose that Ministers had been instrumental in making these increases. It was only because the Government felt they ought to comply with the requests, and very often the strong requests, from the heads of the departments.

MR. KEEP said that occasionally clerks and examiners visited Fremantle, and, perhaps, some other towns near Perth, and he believed that on one occasion, about the time of the Geraldton races, one gentleman was told off to go and inspect the accounts at Geraldton. His own impression was that the Audit officers never went further North than Geraldton.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said they had been all over the colony, except the North.

MR. KEEP said the North was a large part of the colony, and there were many officers whose accounts should be inspected.

MR. CONNOR said he had not the honour of knowing the Auditor General personally, but believed he was an excellent man and a capable officer; but, in reference to these increases, the expenditure in the public service appeared to him to be generally too lavish, for although the colony might be in a position to increase salaries, this was going on a false principle, and the colony might have to suffer for it in the long run.

MR. A. FORREST said the discussion on the amendment had been a waste of time. The Auditor General was one of the oldest officers, and no reasons had been given for the proposed reduction.

MR. WOOD said that if there was one officer in the Service whom hon. members should support, it was the Auditor General, and he ought to be put on a level in salary with the other heads of departments. If the amendment were not withdrawn, he believed the mover would stand alone.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. SIMPSON, referring to Item 2, said the chief clerk was not remunerated in proportion to the value of his services. He knew, from the recent inquiry of the Civil Service Commission, that the chief clerk was one of the most valuable officers.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) again explained that this increase of £25 was the amount recommended by the Colonial Secretary.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that if the hon. member for Geraldton spoke as one of the Civil Service Commission, this only showed the wisdom of deferring these increases until that Commission had reported.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) deprecated the action of some hon. members in recommending increases for particular officers whom they happened to know, and not others whom they did not know personally, and to whom they might be doing an unintentional injustice. If the Audit chief clerk's salary was not increased so much as the salaries of others, possibly he had been already put above the heads of others in a similar position. It was better to leave this to the knowledge of the Government.

MR. JAMES asked how many telephones were used in the Audit Department.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said only one. As to the charge for telephones connected with the private residence of a head of a department, the charge was £6 a year, and for the same convenience to business people the charge was £10 a year.

Vote put and passed.

Medical, £22,117 15s.:

MR. RANDELL said the total showed an increase of not quite £5,000. He supposed that some items were new in consequence of the goldfield developments.

MR. MORAN, referring to Item 28 (Coolgardie medical officer, &c.), asked whether all the goldfields around Coolgardie were to be served by only one medical officer, whereas in every small agricultural town of two or three hundred people a medical officer was maintained by the Government.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said there were plenty of private practitioners on the goldfields. He knew there were four or five at Cue.

MR. MORAN said the Progress Committee at Hannan's had applied for a Government medical officer, and requested that a medical dispensary should be fitted up there for cases of accident. Hannan's township was now as big as four or five of such agricultural towns as he had mentioned. He was constantly receiving communications from mining townships in his district, asking him to place this matter before the Government. Let the Government subsidise some of the practitioners. He asked also if the Government would consent to fit up a small portion of a public building at Hannan's for a dispensary.

MR. A. FORREST said the vote for medical officers, like the Ecclesiastical Grant, would have to disappear in course of time. He did not think the Government in any other colony in Australia maintained medical officers for the different towns, though they might do so for the back country. A large town like Coolgardie or Hannan's did not require a medical officer provided by the Government, because there was population enough to support doctors in private practice. It was different



in a thinly-settled district, where there was little or no private practice, for there was the greatest difficulty in inducing medical men to settle in such places, even with the aid of a salary from the Government. Surely, the Government should not be expected to provide doctors in places where there was a large population. He had protested against these medical increases every year. There was no necessity for the Government to pay a salary for a doctor in Perth or Fremantle or Geraldton, except for hospitals. The hon. member for Coolgardie should not advocate the wants of his own district only, but take a broader view of his duty as a member.

MR. MORAN said too much had been said about spoon-feeding. While the principle existed, he asked for an equal share for the goldfields. Many poor men there had no friends near them, and when they fell ill the Government should provide for them. As to his politics being local, if the hon. member for West Kimberley had not brains enough to represent niggers and bullocks and a few white people, that hon. member should not blame him for representing the wants of his own district.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said, with reference to Fremantle, it was intended that Dr. Barnett should, in future, devote his whole attention to the Lunatic Asylum, but this could not be carried out until a house was built for him near the asylum. Dr. Hope would then be appointed the medical officer at Fremantle. It was thought advisable to remove the asylum into the country; but the Government, after considering that matter, had deferred the removal for a time, because the asylum buildings in Fremantle, when the present enlargement was completed, would admit of a rearrangement of the patients, and this increased accommodation would serve for some time. To remove the asylum would cost some £20,000, and such a sum could not be conveniently voted for that purpose at present, when there was no urgent necessity. It would be a great advantage to have the whole of Dr. Barnett's attention and experience given to the patients at the asylum, without other duties. As to the medical officer at Coolgardie and the remarks on Item 28, he agreed to a large extent with the view stated by the

hon. member for West Kimberley. He did not see why large towns should desire to have Government medical officers. One was appointed to Coolgardie when it was a small place, and it was still necessary to have a medical officer representing the Government and attending to the poor when sick. That service cost the Government at present about £1,200 a year, and the expenditure seemed to him very large. He did not think those miners who could afford to pay would desire to have a Government medical officer attending them, as if they were too poor to pay for a doctor's services. He had received a request from the Progress Committee at Hannan's, who asked the Government to provide some tents. The Government did not wish to compete with private enterprise, because that would interfere with the other medical practitioners in the place and prevent doctors from going there.

MR. WOOD wished to refer back to the first few items relating to Perth.

THE CHAIRMAN ruled that members could not go back to items earlier than Item 31 (Fremantle medical officers, &c.). The Perth items had been passed.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said, if that were so, he would move that the Chairman's ruling be disagreed with. He understood the discussion of the Medical vote had been general, up to this point, and not on specific items.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) also understood the discussion was general before dealing with particulars; and he hoped the hon. member for West Perth would not now be debarred from dealing particularly with the earlier items.

THE CHAIRMAN said several hon. members had taken up specific items in succession, and then the Premier referred particularly to the Fremantle items. If, however, there was a general wish on this occasion to go back to particular items, let that be so; but he would not permit it to be done again.

MR. WOOD, referring to the Perth items, said the Principal Medical Officer and Colonial Surgeon, whose salary had stood at £475, ought to have an increase to £500, as he had a tremendous lot of work to do outside of his hospital duties.

MR. JAMES moved that progress be reported, and leave asked to sit again.

Motion put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

# ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11:30 o'clock p.m.

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 2nd October, 1894.*

Mullewa-Cue Railway: route of—Colonial Prisoners Removal Bill: second reading; in committee—Small Debts Ordinance Amendment Bill: in committee—Homesteads Act Amendment Bill: in committee—Municipal Institutions Bill: second reading—Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages Bill: first reading—Friendly Societies Bill: first reading—Marriage Bill: first reading—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the chair at 4 o'clock p.m.

# PRAYERS.

## MULLEWA-CUE RAILWAY—ROUTE OF.

THE HON. H. MCKERNAN, on behalf of the Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM, asked the Colonial Secretary what was the proposed route of the Mullewa-Cue Railway, after leaving Mullewa, as near as the Government could say?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) replied: From Mullewa to Yalgoo, from thence to Mount Magnet, and from thence to Cue.

## COLONIAL PRISONERS REMOVAL BILL.

### SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): The object of this Bill is simply to give power to the Governor from time to time to remove local prisoners from one gaol to another. Under the local statutes there is full provision to enable the Governor to order removals in

the case of convicts, but there is no such power as regards local prisoners, many of whom have been removed without any proper authority for it. I move the second reading of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### IN COMMITTEE.

The Bill was considered in committee, agreed to without amendment, and reported.

## SMALL DEBTS ORDINANCE AMENDMENT BILL.

### IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 8 and 9 agreed to.

Clause 10—Service of process:

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER moved that the words "out of whose Court such process shall issue," be inserted between the words "magistrate" and "and." He said: As the clause stands it reads that any summons, &c., may be served by any member of the police force, the plaintiff, his solicitor or clerk, or by any person authorised by the magistrate; but it does not state by what magistrate.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I understand that the hon. member is desirous of making it clear that the authorising magistrate must be the magistrate of the Local Court out of which the summons or process issues. The word "magistrate" here has a technical meaning, and means the judge of the Local Court, but not a justice. There is, therefore, no occasion for the amendment.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: There is more than one local court in the colony. If the clause is not altered the magistrate in Perth may give authority for the service of a summons or process issued at Geraldton.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): If my view be correct, this cannot be, because it says any summons or other process of a Local Court, and then it says *the* Magistrate, which seems to me to mean the Magistrate of the Local Court where the process is issued.

THE HON. J. C. G. FOULKES: The 6th clause says:—"A Magistrate of a Local Court shall have jurisdiction to make any order, or exercise, on an *ex parte* application, any authority or jurisdiction