

would learn to write English as readily as possible. The argument that the introduction of coloured labour would tend to the deterioration of the English race was all humbug. The true objection was that those races worked harder and for less money than the whites. He objected to restrictive legislation; but he was in that House to carry out the wishes of the majority. The Abrolhos Islands were about 60 or 80 miles out in the Pacific Ocean, and the coloured labourers there employed, who could not possibly get to the mainland, were necessary to the guano industry. If coloured labour were not allowed on those islands, the price of guano would become almost prohibitive to agriculturists.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: To prohibit coloured labour on the Abrolhos Islands would simply mean shutting up the important industry of guano gathering.

HON. W. ALEXANDER: The amendment was a necessary one, because it was impossible to get Europeans to undertake the disagreeable work which was conducted on the Abrolhos Islands.

HON. D. M. MCKAY said he had much pleasure in supporting the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

HON. A. B. KIDSON moved, as a further amendment, that between the words "shall" and "have," in the 17th line, the words "if not inconsistent with this Act" be inserted. The reasons for the insertion of similar words in other measures had been given on many occasions.

Put and passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 17 and 18—agreed to.

Clause 19—Saving of Act 48 Vict., No. 25; and the Pearl Fishery:

HON. R. S. HAYNES moved, as an amendment, that after the word "fishery," in the sixth line, the words "or upon the Abrolhos Islands" be inserted; further, that in the same line, after the word "fishery," the words "or on such islands" be inserted. These were consequential amendments.

Amendments put and passed, and the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 20—agreed to.

Schedule—agreed to.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and report adopted.

# ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9:50 p.m. until the next day.

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 7th December, 1897.

Papers presented—Question: Supply of Clothing to Railway Department—Auctioneers Act Further Amendment Bill: third reading—Public Notaries Bill: third reading—Circuit Courts Bill: third reading—Workmen's Lien Bill: third reading—Roads and Streets Closure Bill: in committee—Annual Estimates, 1897-98: Treasury Estimates further considered in Committee of Supply; Division on Defence vote; Division on Central Board of Health vote—Steam Boilers Bill: first reading—Adjournment.

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

## PRAYERS.

## PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Reports of Inspectors of Rabbits, 1897. Return showing particulars of Volunteers' trip to Albany. Ordered to lie on the table.

## QUESTION—SUPPLY OF CLOTHING TO RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

MR. ILLINGWORTH, for Mr. Oldham, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways:—1. Why tenders were not called for the supply of clothing for the men employed in the Railway Department. 2. Why the contractor who held the contract was allowed an extension of two years. 3. Whether the original contract was carried out in accordance with the conditions supplied under which all tenders were received.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piessé) replied:—1. There were exceptional circumstances which led the Government to extend the

term of the contract. 2. Owing to the cost of labour being very much higher at the date of the expiration of the contract, it was assumed that the department would have to pay an increased rate if tenders were called for. Owing also to the continued increase of traffic, and the extension of the railway system generally, necessitating great additions to and changes in the staff, it would have been extremely difficult to prepare even an approximate estimate of the requirements in regard to uniforms. 3. Yes. It is intended to call for fresh tenders six months prior to the expiration of the present contract, with a view of giving the successful tenderer sufficient time to make all the necessary arrangements to enable him to carry out the contract in an efficient manner.

#### AUCTIONEERS ACT FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL.

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

#### PUBLIC NOTARIES BILL.

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

#### CIRCUIT COURTS BILL.

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

#### WORKMEN'S LIEN BILL.

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

#### ROADS AND STREETS CLOSURE BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Schedule:

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) moved, as an amendment, to strike out the description of the street in the townsite of Northam.

Put and passed.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS moved, as a further amendment, to strike out the description of the street in North Fremantle, and to insert in lieu thereof the following:—

*In North Fremantle.*—All that portion of John Street commencing at a point on the south side of John Street 75 links east of the

north-eastern boundary of North Fremantle Town Lot 22, and running northwards at an angle of  $61^{\circ} 17'$  for a distance of 85.4 links; thence eastwards at an angle of  $118^{\circ} 43'$  for 661.5 links; thence southwards at an angle of  $71^{\circ} 31'$  for 79 links; and thence westwards at an angle of  $108^{\circ} 29'$  for 676.5 links to the starting point.

Put and passed.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS moved, as a further amendment, to strike out the description of the street, in the townsite of Chidlow's Well and to insert in lieu thereof the following:—

*In the Townsite of Chidlow's Well.*—1. All that portion of Thomas Street lying between the southern side of Herbert Street and the eastern side of Onslow Street. 2. All that portion of Hensman Street lying between the southern side of Herbert Street and the north-eastern side of Thomas Street, being the eastern boundary of Lot No. 45, and the western boundary of Lot No. 46. 3. All that portion of Onslow Street between the southern side of street (unnamed), and north-east side of Thomas Street, being eastern boundary of Lot No. 53. 4. That portion of street (unnamed) lying between the north-east side of Thomas Street and east side of Onslow Street, being northern boundary of Lot No. 53.

Put and passed.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS moved, as a further amendment, that the following new paragraph be added to the schedule:—

*In the Townsite of Bridgetown.*—Commencing at a point 2 chains 20 links from the south-west boundary of Bridgetown, Town Lot 23; thence along the same boundary of same allotment a distance of 3 chains 93.3 links to a point forming the south-east corner of said allotment; thence by a line 1 chain  $\frac{1}{2}$  link bearing  $14^{\circ} 19' 25''$  west of south; thence westerly by a line 3 chains 93.3 links long forming part of the northern boundary of Lot 11, township of Bridgetown; then by a line bearing north by east  $14^{\circ} 5' 15''$  to the starting point.

Recent surveys made at Bridgetown, in connection with the extension of the railway, had rendered the closing of the street described, as it was required for a railway station.

Put and passed, and the schedule, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and report adopted.

#### ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1897-8.

##### IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Consideration of Treasury Estimates resumed.

**TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest).**

Vote—*Printing*, £27,475 16s.:

MR. VOSPER asked that a higher rate of wages might be paid for the extra labour employed in the Government Printing Office. The item for extra labour was much larger this year, and the Government might consider the advisability of increasing the wages of these men. It was notorious that the wages paid at the Government Printing Office in this colony were lower than those paid at the Government Printing establishments in the other colonies, while the cost of living here was higher. A minimum rate of wages might be specified. There was an amount set down for apprentices, which gave the Government Printer an opportunity of obtaining cheap labour. The 8s. 6d. a day paid in the Government establishment was 1s. a day lower than the rate paid in private printing offices. A good compositor was worth more than 7s. 6d. a day, and a bad compositor had no right to be in the Government Printing Office.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Some trade returns which would be valuable to the commercial public were compiled in May, 1896, he was given to understand, and they had not yet been printed. He was also informed that the Blue Book which was sent to the Government Printer in April last was not yet printed. The work ought to be done by some means.

MR. KENNY said that, having employed compositors for the last ten years, he was astonished to note the small wages paid to these workmen by the Government Printer, the rate being far below that ruling in private offices. The Government Printing Office ought to be the last to cut down wages.

Item—*Extra Labour*:

MR. VOSPER moved, as an amendment, that this item be amended by inserting after the words "extra labour" the words "at a minimum of 8s. 6d. per day of eight hours." The sum set opposite the item, £10,000, was sufficient to permit of this alteration. The committee would notice a large number of increases in the salaries of superior officers, and even of some of the compositors. Why should casual labour be paid for at lower rates than obtained in any other colony? A minimum wage should be fixed.

THE TREASURER: Why not fix a minimum wage all through the Estimates?

MR. VOSPER said he was not trying to enforce that, but the minimum wage here should be at least as high as in other colonies.

THE TREASURER: The men were better treated over here.

MR. VOSPER: Why, then, had they so many complaints? Men who were contented with their situations would not have sent in such a petition as he read in the House a short time ago. A compositor was worth just as much in this country as in New South Wales or Victoria, and the cost of living was at least thirty per cent. higher here than in the Eastern colonies. He had no objection to the increases in the higher salaries, but why should the rank and file be neglected, as they were most grossly throughout the whole of the Estimates?

THE TREASURER: The hon. member forgot that the conditions were not so severe in the Government Printing Office as in private establishments. Whether it was right that this should be so was another matter. The men, as a rule, had not to work at night. They had their holidays without stoppage of pay, and if a man lost a day through sickness his pay was not stopped. During the Christmas holidays, for instance, they got paid all the same. Such concessions were not made by private employers.

MR. KENNY: Yes, they were. He had always paid for holidays.

THE TREASURER: The hon. member was an exceptional employer. He (the Treasurer) had received a memorandum from the Government Printer, which read as follows:—

Item 47, *Extra Labour*, is entirely a question of supply and demand. At present 45 are provided at 9s. per day, the balance (about 60), the number of which fluctuates with the work, at 8s. 6d. per day. This latter is the bone of contention. The rates have been recommended on the principle (rightly or wrongly formed) that in a mechanical business the scales of Government wages should follow, not lead, those of private trade, so that those engaged in the latter may have the opportunity of securing the best labour. Except in a few instances, the hands are not required to possess the greatest ability: plodding, assiduous attention being more appreciable where nearly all the work is of a plain, straightforward character. If the principle be wrong, it is easy to be remedied by those who have the power to do so.

I can only say, that the happening of this want of hands has been a god-send to dozens of men at a time, when, from many unfortunate causes, so many were thrown out of employment; and that there are at the present moment numbers of others who would gladly take advantage of it.

From this it appeared that 65 men were getting 8s. 6d., and that 45 were getting 9s. per day.

MR. VOSPER: If the minimum wage were already 8s. 6d., the Treasurer would have no objection to the amendment.

THE TREASURER: Yes.

MR. VOSPER: It was evident the men were being paid less during the last session than they were at the present moment. Perhaps this was only a temporary increase, and, as soon as the Estimates had been passed, the Government Printer might revert to the old rate.

THE CHAIRMAN: The amendment could not be permitted. This vote was calculated for a certain number of men; and the effect of the amendment would be to alter the amount of it, which would be done by giving each man 8s. 6d. per day. This could not be done in committee.

MR. VOSPER (acting on a suggestion) moved that the vote be reduced by £1,000.

MR. SIMPSON: It was evident that the low rate of wages accounted for the gross delay in getting the returns for which we were waiting.

HON. H. W. VENN: The amendment was objectionable, in that it would be introducing a principle which could not properly be dealt with in the Estimates, the principle of a minimum wage. This question was fraught with such weighty consequences that it should be introduced as a separate motion. If the principle were once applied to the Government Printing Office, it would ramify through the whole of the industries of the colony. Whether it was a good or a bad principle he would not argue at the present time; but, after the clear memorandum of the Government Printer, the committee should be satisfied that the Government were paying the full rate of wages.

MR. SIMPSON: The position was that we could not get the returns, and everybody was dissatisfied with the department.

MR. LEAKE asked whether any of the Government printing was let out to private firms for execution.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Yes; and it was paid for out of the departmental votes.

MR. LEAKE: Then we did not know from the Estimates what the printing cost the Government?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: It would be seen in the Railways vote this year that the provision for railway printing was £11,000.

MR. LEAKE: The total must be £40,000 or £50,000.

THE TREASURER: It must amount to about £40,000.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said that last year he tried to abolish the vicious practice of debiting the Government Printing Office with work done for various departments. Any work done in that office for a department should be charged to that department, and shown as an asset in the Government Printer's balance-sheet. The Government Printer was supposed to be primarily engaged in doing the work of Parliament. In future Estimates, this system should be adopted.

HON. H. W. VENN agreed with the suggestion of the last speaker. Every department should clearly show its earnings, otherwise Parliament could never know its true position. With regard to the printing for the railways, a great deal of this had to be done on short notice, and we must recognise that much of it must be taken to private establishments.

MR. VOSPER: The Government Printing Office was not a charitable institution, and should not employ inferior workmen, as it appeared, from the remarks of the Treasurer, it was the custom to do.

THE TREASURER said he had understood from the hon. member that those whose interests he was advocating were a splendid set of men.

MR. VOSPER said he was taking the Treasurer's own statement, or the statement of the Government Printer. Inferior men should not be employed by the Government. Rather than do so it would be better to abolish the department altogether.

MR. A. FORREST: It was due to the printing department to say that the work done for Parliament was perfect—in fact, too good. There was no occasion for such expensive paper and artistic

printing. The Government Printer could not do the work of all the departments, and it was right and proper that printing should be given out to private offices, thus leading to the employment of labour, and benefiting the community. He failed to see the object of the amendment. The permanent staff of the department had a fair wage for the work done, and for temporary hands 8s. 6d. or 9s. per day was not unfair. If the hon. member wished to reduce the vote and the amount of labour employed, he could do so by 75 per cent. by importing linotypes.

MR. VOSPER said that was not his intention.

Amendment negatived, and the item passed.

Other items agreed to, and the vote put and passed.

Vote—*Registry*, £5,810—agreed to.

Vote—*Charitable Institutions*, £15,631 4s. :

Item—Superintendent of Relief and Inspector of Charitable Institution :

MR. A. FORREST asked what steps had been taken to appoint a superintendent of the pauper department. This officer would have a great number of poor people under his control.

THE TREASURER: When we unfortunately lost the services of Mr. Dale, who had occupied the position for many years, it was thought well to import a skilled person to fill this position, which was an important one. We required a man with special knowledge and experience, who could superintend and do a great deal in assisting the Government in regard to all sorts of charitable work, reformatories, industrial schools, outside relief to the poor, care of destitute children and infants, and all those matters which were attended to in other places by this kind of institution. He should be a man who could give the Government some good ideas and have had suitable experience elsewhere. The Government having communicated with the Agent General at home, an officer had been obtained at the salary stated in the Estimates. The Agent General had telegraphed that a certain gentleman had been highly recommended; and he (the Treasurer) replied that, if the Agent-General was satisfied the man would suit, he was to employ him. The result was the engagement of this officer, and his

arrival in the colony might be expected at any moment. Although there were many capable persons in various walks of life in the colony, yet when technical knowledge was required, the Government might well depart from the ordinary rule by engaging a skilled person from outside. In regard to charitable relief, the Government, in going to the old country, went to a large field; and although it would have been more pleasant for himself to have given employment to someone in the colony, someone he knew rather than someone he did not know, yet on this technical question the Government thought it advisable to obtain the services of a man who had been experienced in the work and could give useful ideas as to how to proceed in the future. The Government wanted to get rid of the terrible system which had been in force in this colony all along. There was too much of prison about it. We wanted to get into another groove altogether, and he hoped the person selected was a good officer and able to start on a fresh course in this important matter. In all the colonies, the relief of the poor and the care of infants left destitute were troublesome; and he (the Treasurer) did not feel competent to deal with the question without expert assistance.

MR. QUINLAN suggested that the Old Men's Depot in Mount Bay Road be removed from the present site. Some light work might be found for the old men in a country place, and butter, eggs, and milk might be supplied from a farm on which these men could be placed. The present site where the old men were housed was a valuable one, and if the Government was disposed to sell it, they would realise a sum which would more than recoup them for any outlay they would be put to in obtaining another place.

THE TREASURER: It had been proposed that the Government should take a part of the site purchased for a lunatic asylum at Whithy Falls, and erect a building for the housing of these poor old men. There was a small item of £1,000 on the Estimates for starting such a building, and he supposed that was for getting out the plans and specifications. For a long time past the Government had thought the present arrangement was expensive and not convenient. The present

site was too public, and was a very bleak spot during one part of the year, besides which there was nothing for the old men to do to occupy their time. If the Government had a more extensive area, many of the old men would perhaps do useful work. The present site was too near the city, which conduced to the old men's discomfort. The Government would take the matter in hand, and try to remove the institution into the country on a healthy site, where the old men would be able to live a more quiet life.

HON. H. W. VENN: The idea of taking the present comfortable home from the poor old men was not a good one. There was an advantage in having the institution at the particular spot where now situated, as it was ever before the eyes of the public, and was a wholesome lesson to the people that the poor had to be provided for. It would be well to leave the institution on the present site.

MR. QUINLAN: The buildings on the present site were only temporary. He was glad to hear the Government had an idea of removing these old men to some place in the country, and the inmates would then be removed from the evil influences of town life.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There was a supposition abroad that the measurements and weights in connection with supplying food to the various charitable institutions were not the ordinary measures and weights which were used in commerce. It had been pointed out to him that a pint of milk might be got into half-a-pint measure, perhaps into a smaller vessel, and that a pound of meat would about turn the scale with a half-pound weight. He did not wish to make any charges, because he had not sufficient data to go upon. It was a despicable thing to trade on the unfortunate poor whom the Government were endeavouring to help and to comfort in their old age. It was utter meanness to try and deprive these poor people of what the Government supplied them with. He hoped the Minister in charge of the department would take steps to see that what was contracted for was given.

MR. A. FORREST: If what the member for Central Murchison said was correct, he deserved the thanks of the House for bringing the matter forward. It was the duty of the Government to at

once take steps to hold an inquiry to see if such a state of things existed, and if such was the case the Government would know how to deal with those who were imposing upon the poor. It would be better, he thought, to keep the old men where they were housed at the present time. If these poor people were removed to a country district, there would be more chance of this short-weight business being carried on, because at the present time the men were situated where they could make complaints. He would be sorry to see these old men removed. A man when he was old did not care to go away into the country, where he would see no one except the officers of the institution. The present site was not required for any particular purpose, and he hoped the Government would not remove the men. As to the appointment of a gentleman from England to take charge of the charitable institutions, he thought the Government might have been able to have appointed some gentleman at present in the colony. There were a good many officers who were deserving of promotion in the service, and this position would have been a chance of promotion to one of them.

Item passed.

Other items agreed to, and the vote put and passed.

Vote—*Government Gardens and Government House Domain*, £1,400—agreed to.

Vote—*Defences*, £26,701 11s. 4d.:

MR. MORAN: The House knew less about this than any other vote on the Estimates. The Imperial officers seemed to desire to engraft a certain imperialism which did not fit in with the ways of the people here. In South Australia at present there was no Imperial officer, and the Government there did not send home whenever there was a position vacant. In South Australia there were two staff officers who were both colonials. They were efficient and recognised as such.

THE TREASURER: The Commandant, Colonel Gordon, was an Imperial officer.

MR. MORAN: The commandant in this colony was a man of great experience, well up in his work, and *au fait* with all modern improvements, and although the officer had not seen much active service, he was a highly efficient officer. It was now proposed to import another imperial

officer to Western Australia—a staff officer at £300 a year and £110 allowance. We had a very competent officer in Captain Campbell, who visited England recently, not in connection with the military contingent from this colony, but when Captain Campbell arrived, he was attached to the staff of one of the leading generals at home, which was a high distinction. He (Mr. Moran) did not know how it was that the military who went to England were placed in charge of a volunteer, when we had such a capable officer as Captain Campbell to place in charge of them. There was no reason at the present time for importing another staff officer from the old country. There should be men who had been engaged in military training for years in Western Australia sufficiently capable to fill the position. If the Government could not find such a man, then it would be better to wipe out the military vote altogether. He did not think the military were as efficient here to-day as they were when there was only one officer in charge. When the Government could not afford to give increases to officers in the Lands Department, who were justly entitled to increases, they surely could not afford to send for another staff officer and appoint him at a salary of £410 a year. He held in his hand a return which had been laid on the table by the Premier, which showed that only recently it was decided to take some volunteers down to Albany to give them experience in gun practice, but he could not understand why 27 bandsmen and 12 men for hospital service were taken down at the same time. There was also a Church of England chaplain taken from Perth to Albany to say prayers for these military men. It seemed there was not a chaplain in Albany who could say prayers for the men. He would like to say here that the time had arrived in Australia when we should recognise no denomination whatever in the public service. On the Estimates he saw an amount of £150 for a Church of England chaplain for the gaol, and £75 for a Roman Catholic chaplain for the same institution. He did not believe in recognising any denomination whatever, and if the Government recognised one denomination, there were other denominations as large and important as the two he had mentioned, in the colony.

The Church of England was not a State Church here, and there was no reason why the Church of England minister should be taken to Albany as a chaplain. There was just as much reason to take down three other chaplains, a Presbyterian chaplain, a Wesleyan chaplain, and a Roman Catholic chaplain.

MR. LEAKE: And a Salvation Army officer.

MR. MORAN: Yes; a Salvation Army officer was just as much entitled to be sent down. As to the military vote, we should be prepared to establish a system by which we would encourage the young men of the colony to go in for military training. At Kalgoorlie the young men had been trying to get a corps established, but they could not. It would have been far better to spend the money in establishing a corps at Kalgoorlie than to spend it in this trumpety nonsense in sending a band to Albany to watch the volunteers going in for gun practice. The principle was bad. There was a little too much jingoism about it. Would the Premier inform hon. members how long it was since there was a drill instructor in Bunbury?

THE TREASURER said he did not know.

MR. MORAN: There had been no instructor there for two years. Imperial officers were brought out to figure at ladies' tea-parties in Perth, whilst young men throughout the colony could not get drill instructors. We had no country corps whatever, but merely a little military centre in Perth. We knew with what vigour the Victorian and New South Wales rifles held their own against the world at the jubilee celebrations in England. Where was the insignificant force of this colony on that occasion? A guard of honour from the police force would have shown as well as did the troops from New South Wales. This was not the time to bring out another Imperial officer. We had a commandant; and the staff adjutant was a worthy and distinguished officer, not only for his theoretical knowledge, but for actual service in battle; and now we were asked to import a third staff officer to be paid at the same rate as Staff Adjutant Campbell. When the proper time came he would move to strike out the item.

**THE TREASURER:** The reason for the proposed appointment of a third staff officer was given in the words of the Commandant, whose memorandum said: "For a long time past the staff adjutant and myself have had more than we can manage to do properly." The hon. member had expressed surprise at this being allowed to be on the Estimates, but every single item on these Estimates did not come under his (the Treasurer's) personal observation. He would prefer not to increase the military establishment, but it must be remembered that great responsibility rested on the officer at the head of affairs, and it was therefore desirable to encourage him to the utmost extent possible. It was useless for us to import an officer from England for defence purposes unless we treated him with consideration, and granted his requests. When we appointed a man as manager, or entrusted him with important duties, we had to treat him considerately, or he would become discouraged and lose his enthusiasm. Everyone was satisfied that the Commandant was a very capable officer, and had thrown a good deal of energy into the volunteer movement. If the committee was of opinion that this was not a good time for increasing the establishment, he would bow to that decision; but, unless we were prepared to follow the advice of those who were entrusted with the control of the force, subject to Parliament, we would probably impair the efficiency of the defence force.

**MR. MORAN:** We had all officers and no men.

**THE TREASURER:** Men could be made efficient only by placing them under competent officers. Although this vote had apparently increased during this year, many sums voted last year had not been expended. For instance, with regard to the item "Small arms ammunition," there was £700 on the Estimates last year, and only £26 was expended; also the item "Small arms and maintenance" stood at £2,000 last year, and only £41 was expended; then for field-day expenses, guards of honour, and parades, £5,000 was voted and only £3,235 expended; for two Hotchkiss quick-firing guns and carriages for Fremantle, £2,000 was voted and nothing was expended. The expenditure for the upkeep of the Aus-

tralian Auxiliary Squadron was increasing; but this was only in proportion to the increase of population. When we came to look into the items, it would be found that the vote was not excessive.

**Item—Staff officer:**

**MR. A. FORREST:** While it was true that officers in charge of departments should be encouraged, the Commandant was leaving the service, as his time was up, and the principle need not hold good in his case. The extra officer was not required, and the department ought to be cut down to a large extent. The expenses had been growing without any increase in efficiency. The volunteer movement was practically dead in nearly all the country districts. Even in Perth and Fremantle it was not very popular. The whole of the Estimates bristled with expenditure which was totally unnecessary. He now moved to strike out the item, "Staff officer, £300."

**MR. HASSELL** supported the amendment. The colony's volunteer force had disappeared, except in Perth and Fremantle. He could speak very highly of the garrison at Albany; but the volunteer force of the colony, so far as his district was concerned, was a mere farce. He would support any proposal for reducing the vote.

**MR. MORGANS** disagreed with the amendment. The training of volunteers was of vital importance. An application from Coolgardie for assistance to establish a volunteer corps had been refused. But if the volunteer movement had failed, that was all the more reason for redoubling our energies, and trying to make it successful; and, when the Commandant applied for another staff officer, it would be an undignified proceeding on the part of the Assembly to refuse the request.

**MR. HIGHAM** heartily supported the amendment.

**THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS** (Hon. F. H. Piesse): After all, we must rely upon the officer in charge of the force. When we put a man in charge of a business we should act on his recommendations, or get rid of him. The Commandant was entitled to great credit for the manner in which he had trained the cadet corps. A great improvement in the behaviour of the boys was noticeable; and he (the Minister) was sorry that,



owing to lack of accommodation and the insufficient funds voted, the number which could be trained was limited. If we struck out this item, we might as well do away with the vote altogether.

MR. MORAN: The committee must have been rather astonished at the statement of the Director of Public Works, that we should always accept the recommendation of our manager. He (Mr. Moran) had always sided with the hon. gentleman when accused of being overriden by his officers; but why take such an extreme view as had just been stated?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. member should deal with the matter reasonably, and not with such bias as he had exhibited.

MR. MORAN: The hon. gentleman should not get heated. Such votes were frequently cut down in the House of Commons. He hoped the statement that he was biassed would be withdrawn, as he was not the only member who had proposed to strike out the item, having been preceded by the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest). Not only in Great Britain, but in France, Germany, and Italy, the men, and not the boys, were trained for military service.

MR. CONOLLY: Without additional officers, it would be impossible to increase the defence force. The comparison between our force and the troops of New South Wales and Victoria was not a fair one, considering the enormously larger populations of those colonies, giving a much wider field of selection. If the appointment of the staff officer stood in the way of an increase in the number of drill instructors for country corps, he would oppose it; but he hoped the Treasurer would supply further information in regard to the duties which this officer would be required to perform.

At 6:30 p.m. the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 7:30 the CHAIRMAN resumed the Chair.

MR. JAMES: This was essentially a question on which a gentleman in charge of a department had a right to express an opinion. He hardly

thought any hon. member was competent to say whether an officer was required or not. It had been our misfortune in the past to have gentlemen as commandants who—brave soldiers though they might be—did not instil any enthusiasm into the men under their command, and these commandants did not succeed in bringing the corps to that state of efficiency which it now occupied. Previous commandants had been weak-minded, and allowed themselves to be dominated by some of the regular staff, and, instead of the commandants bringing into force their own knowledge and experience, they were more or less the puppets of those in office. There was an absolute need of discipline in the force, and this need of discipline rested on the shoulders of the field marshal downwards, and those occupying responsible positions in the military forces should recognise this. It had been the colony's good fortune to have Colonel Wilson here. He was one of the ablest and worthiest Commandants we had yet had. More thoroughly than any Commandant, he had inspired his men with that *esprit de corps* which was necessary in military matters. We had at the head of affairs a man worthy of the uniform he wore, and he wore a uniform which had been worn worthily by many brave men of his race. The colony was under a debt of gratitude to Colonel Wilson for the position in which he had placed our military forces. He (Mr. James) believed that 90 per cent. of the men under Colonel Wilson would speak in unbounded admiration of their Commandant. This gentleman, who had handled the force most admirably, and who was his (Mr. James's) ideal of a British officer—a gentleman who had thrown so much enthusiasm into his work, asked in the Estimates that he should have a staff officer appointed, and he (Mr. James) could thoroughly understand the need of having another staff officer in Western Australia. It seemed to him altogether wrong to have simply one officer here. He believed that another staff officer was required, so that the Commandant could have assistance in carrying out the work he had in hand. It was intended to extend the military force in other centres, and if the force were to be made efficient, the Commandant should have some assistance, and he was the best judge

as to what was required. It would be a great loss to the colony if Colonel Wilson went away.

**MR. MORAN:** That was where the mistake came in. The Commandant would go away, and a new Commandant would come who might undo all that his predecessor had done.

**MR. JAMES:** There was a deal of force in what the hon. member said; but any good soldier always liked to be with his regiment, and the better a man was, the more difficult it was to keep him away from his regiment. It must be very galling to Colonel Wilson to be away from his regiment at the present time, when there was some active service going on upon the frontier of India, where his regiment was now stationed. This item for another staff officer had been suggested as desirable by the Commandant, who had shown himself a really good man. He had not shown himself afraid of work, and had not taken up the position he might have taken and whiled away his time. The result of Colonel Wilson's labours was that to-day there was a more efficient volunteer force in Western Australia than the colony had ever had before. The Government expended a certain amount of money on the defence force, but he (Mr. James) did not think sufficient money was spent in carrying out the defences properly; and, if the Parliament was not prepared to grant sufficient money for the work to be carried out thoroughly, then perhaps it would be advisable to knock the vote out altogether. This item was recommended by a man whom they could trust, and he (Mr. James) would support it.

**MR. HASSELL:** The Commandant of the forces was a good man, but he (Mr. Hassell) did not believe in the system now in force. He believed in what the hon. member for East Perth had said that, if we were not prepared to allow the work to be carried out thoroughly, it would be better to strike out the vote.

**MR. MORAN:** The member for West Perth (Mr. Wood) had pointed out that we had a good man at the head of this department, and we should give him a *carte blanche*; but he (Mr. Moran) disagreed with that. The same argument would apply to heads of departments; for if we had good men at the head of a department, there was no need for any

Minister. The member for East Perth (Mr. James) had laboured this matter, and had spoken highly of Colonel Wilson; but no one had spoken a bad word against the Commandant. It was a scandalous thing that it should be proposed to import another ornamental officer from England, when Parliament denied to civil servants their just increases. South Australia was commanded by two officers, and neither of them was an imperial officer.

**THE TREASURER:** One of them had served in the Imperial army.

**MR. MORAN:** That was so, but when he came out to South Australia he was simply a police trooper. South Australia was well served by two colonial officers, but in this colony there was a Commandant at £700 a year and a staff adjutant, both of them Imperial officers, no doubt of the highest quality in their own grades; and now it was proposed to import another officer. No one said a word against Colonel Wilson, but he was the servant of the country, and Parliament was his master. Granted that Colonel Wilson was right in asking for this additional officer, the country could not afford to pay for him at the present time. In South Australia, where they had two staff officers, one commanded the permanent artillery at the forts in addition to his other duties. This recommendation to have another officer would bring the amount up to £1,600 a year to command the forces in Western Australia. The volunteer movement of the colony was dying under this system of Imperial squelching, as he would call it. If we devoted this £500, which it was proposed to spend on this Imperial officer, in paying for four drill instructors, he believed a great deal of good would be done. He did not believe in the cadet system which existed in Perth. We had people in Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie, 200 or 300 men, willing to link themselves together to form a corps, and they were denied the service of a drill instructor. In Victoria the chief staff officer was a local officer: in that colony the Government had got tired of importing Imperial officers.

**THE TREASURER:** The Commandant in Victoria was an Imperial officer.

**MR. MORAN** said he was speaking of the chief staff officer. Why could we not,

in this colony, train our own men to do this military work? If there was not the material here, then where was the efficiency of which the hon. member for East Perth spoke? The officers here were good men, but they did not have the work to do that the officers in the other colonies had; therefore there was no reason to import an additional officer.

**THE TREASURER:** Too much time was being wasted over this item. It seemed to him it was not a great matter, after all. The reason that officers were imported from England was that the Government were enabled to be continually changing them, and no officer remained here for the whole of his life and became a permanent charge on the civil service. The plan followed in this colony was that every three years the Commandant or staff officer, lent to the colony by the Imperial Government, returned to his regiment, and another officer was sent in his place. That was a great advantage; far better than the plan followed in South Australia, where they had local officers, none of whom had experience.

**MR. MORAN:** Why not send officers home for two years, and train them?

**THE TREASURER:** The Government did better than that: they sent home for officers every three years, and got them already trained. The plan in South Australia, he believed, was not a good one. We could adopt it to-morrow; but it was far better to send to England every three or five years and get a man already trained. In his opinion the force here was equal, if not superior, to South Australia.

**MR. MORAN:** Did it look like that at home?

**THE TREASURER** said he thought so. The system in vogue here was better than that followed by South Australia.

**MR. MORAN:** What did the system cost South Australia?

**THE TREASURER:** They were cutting things down there, but he expected that the cost was more than the cost in this colony. There were experienced men in this colony, and the question was whether we should have another officer at the cost of £300 a year. His opinion was that it was better to vote the money, and he thought that was the general opinion of hon. members. He asked the hon.

member to withdraw his amendment, and let the committee get on with the Estimates.

**MR. LEAKE** asked whether it was the intention of Colonel Wilson to retire?

**THE TREASURER** said he was not in a position to state. He had requested the Commandant (verbally) to remain two years longer, but had received no official reply from him. He hoped, however, to be able to retain Colonel Wilson's services.

Amendment (Mr. A. Forrest's) put to the vote thus, "That the item stand as printed," and division taken with the following result:—

Ayes ...	20
Noes ...	10

Majority for ... 10

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Conolly	Mr. A. Forrest
Sir John Forrest	Mr. George
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Hassell
Mr. Hubble	Mr. Higham
Mr. Illingworth	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. James	Mr. Moran
Mr. Kenny	Mr. Oldham
Mr. Kingsmill	Mr. Quinlan
Mr. Leake	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. Holmes (Teller).
Mr. Locke	
Mr. Monger	
Mr. Morgans	
Mr. Pennefather	
Mr. Piesse	
Mr. Rason	
Mr. Simpson	
Mr. Throssell	
Mr. Venn	
Mr. Doherty (Teller).	

Amendment thus negatived, and the item passed.

**MR. MORAN** moved, as an amendment, that the amount of the item be reduced by £50. He said the Staff Adjutant, who was a most efficient officer, had no allowance for horse forage; therefore was it reasonable that the new staff officer, when he came, as also the Commandant, were to have such allowance? Would the Treasurer state whether that allowance had been drawn by the Commandant last year?

**THE TREASURER:** Certainly, it was drawn and paid.

**MR. MORAN:** The fact was the Commandant never had a horse in Western Australia. When he did want a horse he borrowed it from the police department. He (Mr. Moran) made this statement deliberately. Was it fair that this £50 forage allowance should be drawn, while not applied to the purpose intended?

MR. JAMES: Was it consistent in the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) to have said, a few moments before, that he had no complaint to make against the Commandant, whereas now the hon. member had made a serious and deliberate charge against the Commandant, that of having drawn £50 under false pretences? A charge made by a member who was so reckless in his statements could carry no weight. He (Mr. James) must decline to accept the statements of the hon. member, which he looked upon with suspicion. The object of the amendment was simply to enable the mover to have an indirect dig at Colonel Wilson.

MR. MORAN asked the Chairman whether the hon. member for East Perth was in order in imputing motives.

THE CHAIRMAN: No improper motive had been imputed.

MR. JAMES: The same observation might be made with regard to the travelling allowance of £50 for the staff adjutant, which would come directly home to the hon. member. Was this allowance represented by vouchers?

MR. MORAN said he had asked the Premier a question, and could not allow the future Premier to answer for the present Premier. Was it constitutional, and was it allowed in the public service, to put down £50 for forage allowance to a servant who never owned a horse in the colony, and who, when he required one, never paid a penny for it. If the item had not been used, the money should not be paid.

THE TREASURER: It often happened that officers had received forage allowance, though no inquiry was made as to whether they kept a horse. In such cases they were supposed to supply themselves with horses when required for the service.

MR. MORAN: Were the Government supposed to supply them with police horses?

THE TREASURER: No; but he believed there had been cases where police horses had been lent for field-days. There could be no great objection to that. There was an allowance to the Commandant for a house, but the Government did not inquire whether he paid more or less than that allowance for his residence. The forage allowance simply meant that

the Commandant must supply himself with a horse whenever necessary.

MR. A. FORREST: The only reason he had had for moving the reduction of the item was on the score of economy. He should be sorry if it were thought he had a word to say against any officer of the department. He did not believe in importing a new officer, as proposed. The forage and horse allowance were necessities, and he saw no reason why they should be withdrawn.

MR. GEORGE: Too much time was being taken up over a small item of £26,701 11s. 4d. If the colony could afford to spend that amount, we could afford to pass these forage items. The new staff officer might or might not be required, but as to the Commandant, he had seen the good work that officer had done in drilling his men, and the country could certainly afford to pay for it. By organising a cadet corps, the physique of the boys was being improved at the proper time, and helping to train up men who would afterwards join the volunteer force and become a credit to the colony. Even if the Commandant did borrow a horse, he would have to pay for the grooming, and would have to provide forage for it.

MR. MORAN: The point was to get at the item for the new staff officer; and his reason for referring to this item of forage was because the Government had refused a grant for forming a volunteer corps on the goldfields. The volunteer system should be encouraged throughout the colony. His application had been refused; but if the Government could afford to pay £50 forage allowance where no horse was kept, and could afford to import another Imperial officer, thus making one more than any of the other colonies had, they could also afford to establish a volunteer corps on the fields.

MR. OLDHAM: The colony could not afford to pay such a sum as £26,701 for the inefficient defence force we possessed.

MR. MORAN again moved that the item "Staff officer, £300," be reduced by £50.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could not do that, as the committee had already decided to leave the item unaltered.

MR. MORAN said that, while feeling the greatest respect for the Chairman of

Committees, he must ask for the Speaker's ruling as to whether the committee could reduce an item after a motion to strike it out had been negatived. He simply did this for the sake of information.

#### SPEAKER'S RULING.

The point of order, raised by Mr. Moran, having been formally stated,

THE SPEAKER said : I am of opinion that the hon. member cannot move to reduce the vote, after the committee has agreed that the vote, as printed, shall stand.

#### IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

MR. MORAN asked whether he was to understand, from the ruling just given, that after a division on an item, the committee could not deal with that item further.

THE CHAIRMAN: Not with that item.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said that, in a case like the present, it had been usual to first put the question "That the item be struck out," and then to put the question "That the item stand as printed." If the Chairman had put the question in the first form, the hon. member would have been in order in moving to reduce the amount after the first motion had been negatived. The mistake in this case had been made by the Chairman putting the question "That the item stand as printed." That was not the way the question was usually put. The ruling of the Speaker was correct beyond a doubt, because the question had been put, that the item stand, and on that question the committee had divided.

THE CHAIRMAN: There was something in what the hon. member said ; but he was following the practice adopted in South Australia, on which the Standing Orders of this House were framed. There was an instance given in *Blackmore*, which he would read :

An amendment to reduce the item of a vote : "The Legislature—Legislative Council: Item, Clerk of Legislative Council, £500," read :—Mr. Bright moved that the item stand at £450. Debate ensued. Question, "That the item stand at £450." Committee divided—Ayes 15, Noes 14.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That was not the case here. The first question to be put was that the item be struck out, and afterwards that the item stand as printed.

SIR J. G. LEE STEERE (speaking as a member) said he agreed with the mem-

ber for Central Murchison that the ordinary way of putting the question was that the item be struck out. The committee ought to have an opportunity of moving the reduction of the item, if it were not struck out. The way in which the question had been put was "That the item stand," and the Chairman was quite right in not allowing an amendment for a reduction of the item afterwards.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It was the carelessness of the committee in allowing it to be put in that way.

MR. MORAN: Would the Chairman tell the committee in what way he would put the question in future?

THE CHAIRMAN said he was quite prepared to follow the practice which had been followed, and put the question "That the item be struck out."

Amendment (Mr. Moran's) negatived, and the item passed.

Item—Field-day expenses, guards of honour, and parades :

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he was opposed to the whole military system, and the condition of the finances of the country for the present year did not warrant the spending of £3,300 on a show-day for volunteers.

THE TREASURER: Not one day.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Five days, if the Treasurer liked. Some reduction would have to be made in the figures. There was nothing we could spare better than this item, and he moved that it be struck out.

MR. GEORGE: If we could not afford to give this field-day, which the men looked forward to, and the citizens of Perth and Fremantle looked forward to, we could not afford to spend the £26,000 for the total military vote. He did not think the country could afford to spend the £26,000; but as long as the Treasurer had the power, it would be spent. He would not vote for striking out the item of £3,300, but would be prepared to vote for striking out the total vote, if any hon. member moved it.

Amendment negatived, and item passed.

Item—Incidental Expenses (including travelling expenses of Commandant and volunteers) :

MR. MORAN: The whole of this £800 was spent around Perth, and no portion was allowed to drill instructors to go round the country to instruct volunteers.

**THE TREASURER :** There were four instructors now, and only two before.

**MR. MORAN :** There were no travelling expenses set apart for these drill instructors. In outside centres like Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie, York, Northam, and Newcastle, the men should be allowed to form into corps, and be supplied with rifles and ammunition, and the drill instructors should be allowed to go there and instruct the men. He would like to see every man in Western Australia go through a course of military instruction, and if a vote of £50,000 or £100,000 was set apart for the training of every man in Western Australia over a certain age, he would vote for it. He would make military drill compulsory. Because an Imperial officer did not look with favour on the volunteer movement in this colony, the House should not be afraid to express its opinion. Country corps should be allowed to be formed, and drill instructors supplied.

**THE TREASURER** agreed that it was desirable to have corps established on the goldfields, especially where there were so many suitable young men willing to enlist; but there had been some difficulty owing to the expense of erecting drill-sheds. The present Commandant had an objection to corps being formed without drill-sheds. The men could not be drilled, and the discipline could not be kept up, without a drill-shed. When the Commandant recommended that a corps be not formed, he (the Treasurer) did not feel justified in saying it should be formed. The request for a corps on the goldfields had only been made recently.

**MR. MORAN :** Twelve months ago.

**THE TREASURER :** The people on the goldfields were more settled now than they used to be, and perhaps now was the time to get a corps together at Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie. He would remember what the hon. member had said, in framing the Estimates for next year, and he hoped then to be in a position to give the hon. member what he required.

**MR. MORGANS** said he was in accord with the member for East Coolgardie as to the formation of volunteer corps on the goldfields. There had been a great deal of disappointment in Coolgardie in connection with the disallowance of the formation of a corps, and in the interests

of the young men on the Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie goldfields he wished to extract from the Treasurer a definite promise to members to see that a corps was formed. He asked whether the Treasurer was prepared to take some steps at once for the purpose of commencing the formation of a corps on the fields. The young men on the fields were most anxious to commence, and he would like the Premier to give some promise at once.

**THE TREASURER** said he would communicate with the Commandant on the matter, and see how far he could meet hon. members' wishes.

Item passed.

Other items agreed to, and the vote put and passed.

Vote—*Admiralty Surveys*, £8,282 6s. :

**THE TREASURER** said this vote had given him great anxiety, inasmuch as the amount was considerable, and although valuable work had been done, it was not done to the extent he had desired. The colony had a very experienced officer controlling the surveys, and he had done a great deal of work of a valuable character, which was at once required. First of all we had had a good admiralty survey of the Swan River from Fremantle: that was a small matter, but it was an important one. Then a survey was made of Port Hedland, an important port in the North, east of Cossack, between the Yule and Roe Rivers. It was the nearest port to the Pilbarra goldfields and Marble Bar. This was an excellent survey, and gave an exact description of the port and the approaches, which were not quite as good as we would like. At high water there was 18ft. spring tide, and ships could enter the port also at neap tide. The Government were building a jetty there, and no doubt that would be the port for the Pilbarra goldfields and Marble Bar.

**A MEMBER :** There was the survey of Esperance.

**THE TREASURER :** That was done by the Admiralty. A small survey had been made at Camden, and another north of the Gascoyne, and up to North-West Cape. A good harbour had been discovered there, but it was not, he regretted to say, where they had built the jetty. The jetty was put at Maud's Landing, and not at the place where this good harbour had been discovered. The result

from this department had not been so great as we had a right to expect from the expenditure, and the reason was that there were only one officer and an assistant, whom the officer had trained. The officer was a naval officer and a marine surveyor. His work was carried out slowly in consequence of the small staff. The officer's time with the Government expired about the end of the year, and he purposed retiring from the navy, consequently from the service of the Government. The question arose, what would be the best to do in the circumstances? When in England he (the Treasurer) had an interview with the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Goschen, and the Hydrographer, and he impressed upon these gentlemen that the work should be done by the Admiralty, and he (the Treasurer) offered on behalf of the Government to supply them with the ship. He urged this very strongly on the Secretary of State, and on his return to the colony he (the Treasurer) received a stereotyped answer that there was no officer available, and that the Imperial authorities were unable to meet the wishes of the Government here. He had written to Mr. Chamberlain and to Mr. Goschen, and had promised them, on behalf of the colony, that the Government would not only contribute liberally towards this surveying, but that the Government would place a ship at their disposal. He (the Treasurer) did not mind the £8,000 a year. If we had a surveying ship on the coast with five or six officers, they would do as much work in one year as one officer would have been able to do in five or six years. The work would be done quickly, and the coast would be properly surveyed. He did not want to evade any responsibility in the matter. The Government were willing to contribute to the survey, if the work was properly carried out with a properly equipped ship, and the Government offered to lend to the Admiralty the "Victoria." He had not received an answer to the private letters he had sent. If it met with the views of hon. members, for a little while, until we heard definitely, it would be advisable to lay the ship up. We could not get an officer out for some time. The season would be advanced by the time an officer would arrive, and in the circumstances he

thought we would be acting wisely by laying the ship up for a few months until we found what the Imperial Government was willing to do. He (the Treasurer) had pointed out that when the Imperial Government found a Parliament willing to bear half the expense—he thought he said for three years, not exceeding £7,500 for each year, as he had anticipated the survey would cost more than £15,000 a year—then he thought the Imperial Government should consider the proposal, as the Imperial authorities were making surveys in other parts of the world without any contribution whatever. In those circumstances the Imperial Government should meet the colony willingly. The chief reason they did not meet our wishes was that they had no officer; but that objection had existed for five or six years, and if that objection continued, the present surveyors would die out, and there would be none at all directly. It seemed to him that the Imperial Government should set about training some more surveyors. The conclusion he had come to was for this Government not to carry out any further survey until we heard from the Imperial Government what they were prepared to do. No great loss could occur. One or two men would have to be left in charge of the ship; and, in any case, the survey could not be completed until we got other officers from England to do it. It might be thought that this ship was rather an expensive luxury, and that the eight or nine thousand pounds spent on the survey was a very large sum; but there was good value for the money in the work already done. The Port Hedland survey had been a most excellent piece of work, and a jetty was being built there which would make that a most valuable harbour for the Pilbarra goldfields. Some good harbours had also been found along the coast south of North-West Cape, which would one day be turned to account, possibly as ports of refuge for ships. It was not advisable, however, to continue the survey, unless we were prepared to pay a little more money and increase the number of officers. One officer could not carry out such an extensive survey expeditiously. Three or four would be required, and the only additional expense would be their salaries, amounting to from £800 to £1,000 per

annum for each man. There was, certainly, a difficulty in getting officers; but, if we were to carry out this work at all, we must do it quickly. At the present rate of progress, many years would be required to complete the work. He was sorry to have to advise that the surveys should be stopped for a few months, at any rate, for it was appalling to think that ships should have to pass along this coast through what were practically unsurveyed seas. This side of North-West Capewas bad enough; but the other side, in the direction of Cossack, was one mass of reefs. Even the coast from Fremantle to Albany was not surveyed as it ought to be, and in the Recherche Archipelago, to the east of Albany, there were hundreds of islands. The chart which was the outcome of the voyage of the *Investigator* and *Flinders* in 1802 was to some extent used to this day; and he hoped arrangements would be made to have this survey completed in the very near future.

MR. GEORGE: The Treasurer's references to the retiring officer were not at all satisfactory. Was it true that this gentleman had been forced to retire in consequence of friction between himself and a certain high official?

THE TREASURER: No. He was leaving in accordance with a regulation of the royal navy, to the effect that any commander who reached a certain age without being made a post captain must retire. Certainly the officer could remain in the service of the colony after leaving the imperial navy; but he (the Treasurer), did not think this officer desired to stop at this work. He had been engaged for two years, and had loyally carried out his engagement; but did not feel able to complete the survey single-handed. He (the Treasurer) knew of no reason for friction between Captain Dawson and anyone else.

MR. GEORGE said he knew there had been considerable friction between this officer and "the autocrat of the Public Works Department." It was not very graceful of the Premier to speak of Captain Dawson as a slow man.

THE TREASURER said he had not spoken of him as slow, but that the work of the survey was necessarily slow, because there was only one officer to do it. Captain Dawson had told him so. Captain Dawson had been in com-

mand of H.M.S. *Rambler*, and was one of the most competent officers in the navy.

MR. GEORGE said that, while pleased to see the Treasurer do justice to an excellent officer, he knew there had been friction. A gentleman of Captain Dawson's age would be only too pleased to crown his work by completing this survey.

Vote put and passed.

Vote: *Central Board of Health*, £369.

Item—Secretary and Chief Inspector of Nuisances:

MR. GEORGE: What had this officer done to deserve an increase of £25 a year, making his salary £150? The principal duty of the Central Board of Health seemed to be to inform the City Council of nuisances about three months after they had been done away with.

THE TREASURER: The board, apparently, was not in the condition that it should be; but there was an amending or consolidating Bill about to be introduced; and he understood that one of its objects would be to give this body further power. As for the increase of this salary, it was thought that a slight increase would not hurt, as the salary was small.

MR. GEORGE: So were the duties.

THE TREASURER said he had not put on the increase.

MR. GEORGE: Then the right hon. gentleman might knock it off. We were asked to vote £369 for a board which did nothing at all. He did not know the secretary, and was not biassed against him; but this committee should not countenance an increase in the salary of a useless official, while disallowing the small increases due to hard working men in the Public Works and other departments. He moved, as an amendment, that this item be reduced by £25.

MR. WOOD: The hon. member would do well to withdraw the amendment. The Central Board of Health was a useful institution, if only for keeping the local boards of health in order. If it did little work, that was owing to lack of funds and opportunities. Additional powers should be conferred on it. The whole question of quarantine on land and sea should be placed in its hands, instead of being, as now, under a sort of dual



control. The members were attentive to their duties.

MR. GEORGE: What did they do?

MR. WOOD said he could not say exactly, for he was not now a member of the board, though he had been some years ago.

MR. GEORGE: What did they do then?

MR. VOSPER: Who and what were this board, and what were the duties? The secretary was also chief inspector of nuisances. He (Mr. Vosper) always had an impression that inspectors of nuisances were municipal officers. Was it the duty of the chief inspector to inspect the biggest nuisances? This officer also held another Government position.

THE TREASURER said this officer was also Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Board; but that office would shortly be abolished.

MR. VOSPER: What were his duties as Secretary to the Board of Health?

THE TREASURER: He was secretary to the board, which had some powers over the local boards. He could not say exactly what those powers were, but believed this was an important body.

MR. VOSPER: Both the Treasurer and the committee were going to vote this money blindly.

THE TREASURER: It had been voted during many years.

MR. GEORGE: The member for West Perth (Mr. Wood) had signally failed to explain the duties of the board. If he (Mr. George) had been a member of the board, he could at least have told the committee what their duties were; but neither the hon. member nor the Treasurer could do this. The board could well be dispensed with.

MR. A. FORREST said he would not vote for the amendment; but it would be far better to give this officer a pension. For the last 15 or 20 years it had been notorious that the Central Board of Health had done no work at all, for the whole of the work was done by the local boards. When there was small-pox in Perth, this board did nothing. Yet a paternal Government now proposed to increase the secretary's salary! The only possible justification for the increase was that the officer was losing his other appointment. As for the board, they had done nothing for the health of the city.

THE TREASURER: They had charge of the health of the whole colony.

MR. A. FORREST: That made it all the worse.

THE PREMIER: What could they do with £282 voted last year? They could not do much.

MR. A. FORREST: This officer ought to be pensioned off.

MR. WOOD: If this vote were struck out, the Government would have to come down next year with a very much bigger estimate for the same purpose. The Central Board controlled the local boards of health throughout the colony, and the members of the latter were appointed by the Government, on the recommendation of the Central Board. They used to do so, at any rate, in places such as Cossack, where there was no municipality.

MR. VOSPER: It was mysterious that no one could satisfactorily explain the duties of this body, or what its powers amounted to. The last speaker said it took charge of places where there were no sanitary boards; but in his (Mr. Vosper's) district there were many small towns which were not municipalities, the inhabitants of which had in all probability never heard of the Central Board of Health. The money for sanitary purposes was raised partly by local subscriptions and partly by Government grants. This vote for the Central Board was an absolute waste of money.

MR. HIGHAM: The duties of the board were not carried out as they ought to be; nor could this be expected, considering the meagre funds provided. The main business of the board was to see that the local boards throughout the colony performed their duties properly, and to step in when this was not done.

MR. VOSPER: But they did not step in.

MR. WOOD: They did so, when necessary.

MR. HIGHAM said that, as an old town councillor, he knew the efforts of this board were most feeble. It should either be abolished or placed on a proper basis.

THE TREASURER: Probably there was some ground for saying that the Central Board was not so efficient as might be desired; but it had really no funds with which to do anything. There was a consolidated Health Bill nearly ready for

submission to the House, and the matter could then be considered and put on a proper footing. Too much responsibility was thrown on the Government whenever there was a case of small-pox or scarlet fever. There should be some board to act in such emergencies, rather than make every case a political question; because, after all, Ministers were politicians. When a ship arrived at Fremantle or Albany and the yellow flag went up, the whole responsibility was thrown upon the Government. In the same way, diseased stock were said to be "admitted by the Government." It would be much better if such matters were controlled by persons not liable to be attacked on political grounds. This had been done in the other colonies. He (the Treasurer) did not want to have the administration of the diseases in stock, in apples, or human beings submitted to him. A board should be appointed consisting of persons qualified to deal with these diseases. Because he was a Cabinet Minister, it was not to be supposed that he knew all about diseases in men and animals. He hoped that when a Bill dealing with this matter was introduced, it would receive the support of hon. members. He would advise the committee to leave the estimate alone this session, and he hoped that by next year there would be a different system in vogue.

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

Ayes ...	...	...	...	3
Noes ...	...	...	...	26

Majority against... 23

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Holmes	Sir John Forrest
Mr. Vosper	Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. George (Teller).	Mr. Gregory
	Mr. Higham
	Mr. Hubble
	Mr. Illingworth
	Mr. Kenny
	Mr. Kingsmill
	Mr. Leake
	Mr. Lefroy
	Mr. Locke
	Mr. Mitchell
	Mr. Monger
	Mr. Morau
	Mr. Morgans
	Mr. Oldham
	Mr. Pennefather
	Mr. Piesse
	Mr. Quinlan
	Mr. Rason
	Mr. Simpson
	Mr. Throssell
	Mr. Venn
	Mr. Wilson
	Mr. Wood
	Mr. Russell (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived, and the item passed.

Vote put and passed,

Vote—*Treasury*, £10,468 8s. 8d.—agreed to.

Vote—*London Agency*, £4,160:

MR. ILLINGWORTH asked whether the Government had considered the question of removing the offices of the Agent General to the centre of the city of London, as the other colonies were doing. It was desirable that some practical work should be done by the London Agency.

THE TREASURER: Nothing had been done as yet, but there was a general feeling, in which he shared, amongst the Governments of the other colonies that it would be better to have the Agent General in the city rather than at Westminster. The question was the obtaining of a good habitation. He did not like the idea of having the various agencies here, there, and everywhere in the city of London. He would like to see them in some central place, where they could have a good habitation. The agency of South Australia had been placed in the city, but in some out-of-the-way place—in a building the approaches to which were very insignificant.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Downing Street was not very large.

THE TREASURER: The hon. member had not been there of late years, or he would not say so. There were imposing buildings there now. In Westminster, where the Agent General now had an office, there was a good street with large buildings. He would see if he could not get a habitation in a somewhat imposing building in the city of London. He was in accord with those who thought that the Agent General should be located in the city portion of the metropolis. It would be better for the financial business of the colony. As the present Agent General had expressed a desire to retire at the end of his term of office, which was some time in April next, probably nothing would be done until the new Agent General was appointed.

A MEMBER asked who was likely to be appointed.

THE TREASURER: The opportunity generally made the man, and the Government would, no doubt, be able to find a suitable person to take the position. The present Agent General had had over

six years in office, and had stated to him (the Treasurer) that he no longer desired to continue. Hon. members must remember that the country had had the services of the present Agent General more cheaply than they could expect to obtain the services of an Agent General in the future. All that they had paid was £800 a year. The country had saved £500 a year in pension. He knew that differences of opinion existed about the present Agent General, but all he could say was that if we never got a worse Agent General who looked after the financial position of the country, at any rate, he would be satisfied. One thing, we expected in every man, but did not always get, was a high character and probity, and we found these in the present Agent General. That was something in these days.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : Especially when big commissions were paid.

THE TREASURER : There were great temptations surrounding people in London. After six years' experience, he said it with the fullest confidence, the Agent General had always been most anxious to try and meet the wishes of the Government here. He (the Treasurer) might not have another opportunity of speaking in regard to the Agent General, therefore he was glad to record it now that Sir Malcolm Fraser had done good service for the country. He was the first Agent General to altogether begin the work, and was a man trusted and highly thought of by men residing in London, and certainly by the financial advisers of the Government. He had been a very old servant of the colony, since 1870, and had done a share of work both in the colony and as Agent General. It was not to be wondered at, at his time of life, that this old servant wished to have a little leisure. It was pretty arduous to be always at the desk, day after day, year after year ; and the Agent General had told him (the Treasurer) that he had not the energy he had in years gone by, and was not anxious to continue in the position, unless it would inconvenience the Government. He went further, and said that, if it was convenient to the Government, his services could terminate earlier than April. The Government only had to let him know, and he would meet their wishes. He (the Treasurer) was not able to give

the House any information as to who the successor of the present Agent General would be, because the Government had not yet considered the question, but we would have to make some arrangement so that the Agent General would get home about the middle of the next year. Sir Malcolm Fraser would no doubt be quite willing to continue, should it be the desire of the Government that he should keep the office until his successor arrived.

MR. GREGORY asked if there was any reason why the chief accountant should have an increase.

THE TREASURER : Last year the under-secretary and the treasurer of the London Agency received an increase of £50, and this increase was now made to bring the amount equal to that of those officers. The chief accountant was an important and trusted officer. Referring again to the Agent General, he would say the office was an important one. At times there was a considerable amount of money to the credit of this officer at the bank. When the Government gave a man a large credit at the bank, and a cheque book, the Government needed to have great confidence in that man. The Agent General could appoint the under-secretary to act for him, and the Government had confidence in both these officers. The under-secretary had been an officer in the Treasury of this colony for some years ; he was also a magistrate of the colony, and a tried officer, and being now trusted with important business in London for this colony, the Government could not treat him too well.

MR. GREGORY asked why the three clerks in the Agent General's office had now been placed on the fixed list. Would that entitle them to a pension ?

THE TREASURER : It would.

MR. GREGORY : Did the Treasurer think that judicious ? A session or two ago the Treasurer had said he was in favour of abolishing pensions altogether.

THE TREASURER : The hon. member must have misunderstood him. He had always been an advocate of pensions. The officers referred to had been removed by the Agent General from the temporary to the fixed list. They had now been with the Agent General for a long time, and it was only fair to the officers that they should be placed on the fixed list.

An officer had to remain in the service for 10 years before he was entitled to a pension, and then only to ten-fiftieths of his salary. When an officer arrived at the age of 60 years it was generally thought, if he retired, the service would not lose anything. If an officer retired at the age of 60 years he was allowed a pension of twenty-sixtieths of his salary. If a man was in good health, he would have to serve a long time before he could get a pension.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Customs*, £32,370 :

MR. ILLINGWORTH asked why the statistical clerk, who had previously stood No. 2 on the list, had been put down to No. 4 at £310, while the warehouse-keeper had been placed No. 3 with a salary of £325.

THE TREASURER said he did not know that the order in which the officers appeared on the list had anything to do with their standing. The only reason he could give for the change was that the Collector of Customs had recommended it.

MR. MORAN: The goldfields members wanted to know why there was such strong opposition on the part of the Collector of Customs to the establishment of bonded stores on the goldfields. It was inconvenient, unsafe, and impracticable for the merchants of Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie to keep large stocks of goods, such as were required on the goldfields, at Fremantle. The merchants should be enabled to keep the goods close handy, without having to pay large amounts for duty. The storekeepers on the fields were quite willing to build their own store, and all the Government were asked to do was to find the locker. In the case of large importations of merchandise, which required *ad valorem* valuation, it might be found necessary for the Government to keep a valuer on the fields, but at present that was not asked for by the merchants. The principal objection to bonded stores being established on the fields came from the Collector of Customs, who, having got into a certain groove, objected to innovations. There were internal bonded stores in other colonies.

THE TREASURER: This matter had been under the consideration of the Government several times, and a decision had been arrived at adverse to establishing bonded stores on the fields. The system

of internal bonded stores did not find much favour anywhere in Australia. In Victoria there were bonded stores only on the sea board, or where there was water carriage. In New South Wales there were very few internal bonded stores. The objections of the customs officials in this colony to these stores were numerous. There was the expense of building places; then the Government had to take the responsibility of loss by carriage, and the responsibility of obtaining proper duty. In Fremantle, where the collector and the chief officers were located, questions of value could be dealt with, but at places like Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie this would not be an easy matter. Personally he had been always somewhat favourable to the establishment of these bonded stores in large centres; but considering the present condition of matters he had not pressed the question forward: he had given way to the Collector of Customs' objections. No doubt these stores would mean a great deal of trouble and expense; there would be loss in transit, and it was after all a question whether the benefit would be so great as was anticipated. In some lines of goods, such as spirits, beer, and tobacco, these stores might be advisable; but he did not think the system of internal bonded stores could be made to apply to goods generally. He would take a note of this matter and bring it up again. He knew there was a strong feeling on the fields in reference to it.

MR. MORAN: What the Treasurer had suggested would meet with the wishes of the storekeepers and others interested on the fields.

THE TREASURER: Under our system, people could only bond their own goods.

MR. MORAN: Even so, a number of people could erect one building and divide it into departments.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said that on several occasions he had, by request, brought this matter under the notice of the Government. All that was asked was that one or more individuals should be permitted to erect a building at their own cost, and that the Government should declare this building a bonded store, and should appoint a locker to collect the duties. On the goldfields, great delay was caused by having to send, say, to Fremantle for goods out of bond; and it was difficult to understand why the facili-

ties granted to the storekeepers and merchants on the coast should be denied to those of the inland districts. No great expense could be incurred by making the experiment in one or two of the principal centres. All that the merchants in the Murchison district asked for was that they should be allowed to send up their goods from the coast in bond, and to put them in some recognised bonded store, from which a Government officer could issue them as required.

**MR. HIGGAM:** With the exception of Perth, only seaport towns were at present allowed to have bonded stores; and he hoped the day was far distant when the Government would permit of the establishment of bonds, either public or private, throughout the inland portions of the country. It had been contended that large staffs would not be required; but in such places as Roebourne and Wyndham, the customs revenue had suffered greatly owing to the local bonds being too far away to permit of proper supervision.

**MR. GREGORY:** Some time ago the Premier had promised that this matter would receive consideration. Great losses were sustained by the goldfields storekeepers through having to purchase their goods in large quantities. At the recent fire in Coolgardie, some individuals lost goods to the value of from five to ten thousand pounds each, duty included; whereas the value of the same goods in bond would only have been about three-fifths of the full amount. Especially was this the case with regard to spirits and stores. The system advocated had been adopted with success in Broken Hill, in consequence of the heavy fire risk there.

**MR. A. FORREST** said he supported the goldfields members in their request for bonded stores in any place to which there was railway communication. Beyond that he did not think the committee should go. One of the great objections to storing large quantities of goods in merchants' warehouses was that the insurance companies would only take very small risks. For the same reason they had great difficulty in borrowing money on the security of their stocks. This change in the law would enable firms to take their stores to the fields without paying duty, and the duty on tobacco and spirits was two or three times the original cost of the goods. The in-

surance would be much less in a Government bond than in a private store; for even in the event of a fire, the loss on the goods, less duty, would be a comparatively small matter. He failed to see why Fremantle should have the bondage of all the goods in the colony, and if it could be shared with Perth, it could be shared with the goldfields. He hoped the Government would consider this question during the recess, because it was absolutely necessary, if farmers and merchants were to do business in a safe way, that these goods should be bonded on the goldfields, and in case of fire they would not have to pay a duty on goods from which they had received no benefit.

**MR. VOSPER:** The points made by the member for West Kimberley (Mr. Alex. Forrest) were sound. It would be a very great advantage to Kalgoorlie, Coolgardie, and right through the goldfields generally, if the goods were bonded there. The danger from fire would be considerably lessened, and the insurance charges would in consequence be lessened too. He hoped the Premier would give the goldfields this small concession, the more so as it would cost the Government nothing at all.

**MR. MORGANS** congratulated the member for Fremantle on the disinterested manner in which he had brought up this question. Although it was one which affected the interests of Fremantle and the goldfields, he had regarded it from a patriotic point of view entirely. He (Mr. Morgans) was sorry to say that he could not agree with that view. On the contrary, he was a strong supporter of the establishment of bonded stores on the goldfields. He quite agreed that the places in which these stores should be established required very careful consideration, and that they should not be erected unless there was a considerable amount of commerce and population; but that they were very necessary on the goldfields there could be no doubt. The representatives of the goldfields must not ask the Government for too much, and should confine their request to bonded stores for spirits, tobacco, and wines, but they should not go beyond these. That would be quite sufficient to meet all the desires of the goldfields at present. He thought the Government had been actuated to a very

large extent on this question by the Chief Collector of Customs. He noticed that this gentleman enjoyed a salary of £700. He would very gladly see that salary augmented, as he considered it was too small for the important duties that officer fulfilled; but the Collector of Customs would not have his (Mr. Morgan's) sympathy in obtaining an increase, in view of the tremendous opposition that officer constantly offered to the best interests of the goldfields in regard to these bonded stores. He was glad, however, to have the assurance that the Premier would look into the matter. In view of the fact that the goldfields did not desire to put the Government to any expense whatever in regard to the erection of buildings, but simply asked the Government for bonded stores for the articles mentioned, he did not think any reason could be urged by the Government against it.

Mr. MONGER supported the application of the goldfields members. He considered that the Collector of Customs was most inadequately paid. According to the Premier's estimate, one third of the total revenue of the country, or a million a year, passed through this officer's hands, and yet he was only in receipt of a salary of £700.

THE TREASURER : £800.

Mr. MONGER : The time had arrived when the salary of that officer should be very much increased.

Mr. HUBBLE : Considering the enormous amount of money which passed through the Collector of Customs' Department, the salary paid to the Collector was small. He hoped the Government would, if not this year, next year, increase this officer's salary.

THE TREASURER : It was gratifying to him to find that the officers of the Government were so good that they were deserving of higher salaries than the Government were able to give them. He (the Treasurer) did not consider that the Collector of Customs was badly paid: his salary altogether was £825. The Collector of Customs was a very good officer; but there were a number of other officers—the Under-Treasurer, the Auditor General, and the Under Secretary—all of whom had grown grey in the service, and he could not see why one officer should be picked out and the others not. The

Government had a number of good old officers, thoroughly trustworthy, whose sole desire was to further the interests of the colony, and the Collector of Customs was one of them. As time went on his salary would no doubt be increased, but the Government could not increase one salary and not another. He did not think the Collector of Customs in South Australia was paid more than the Collector in this colony. In Victoria the Collector of Customs (Dr. Wollaston) received £1,000 a year. The officials in this colony would compare to some extent with the officials in the other colonies, but this colony was not so far advanced as the other colonies. As time went on the salaries here would be increased. In regard to the question of establishing bonds in different centres, he admitted that the arguments in favour of bonds on the goldfields was strong. There were exceptional conditions there. Large consuming populations lived on the fields, and it was difficult to combat the arguments in favour of the bonds there. He admitted that the conditions were becoming more favourable daily to the establishment of bonds on the fields. When these bonds were first asked for, no doubt a good deal could be said against the idea. There was no railway communication then in the hands of the Government, and the fields were not settled as they were now. The Government now had the control of the railways and the conditions were more settled. We must soon make a commencement in the direction of these bonded stores; but the Government would have to be stiff-backed enough not to give bonds to each town that asked for them. Bonds could be established in large centres. The Government would have to insist on a certain class of buildings being erected for the protection of the goods. He promised to look into the matter.

Mr. HIGHAM : The general administration of the Customs Department had met with entire satisfaction, and he hoped the claims of the Collector for increased salary would be viewed with more favour when the next Estimates were being considered. The Collector of Customs was a thoroughly conscientious officer. He collected nearly one-third of the revenue of the colony. The Government would find it impracticable to establish bonds in

private buildings on the goldfields. The bonds must be Government buildings, to be of practical benefit.

MR. CONOLLY: The bonds in large centres would be of great benefit to the commercial and consuming people, if established. The Government would not be inundated with demands for the establishment of bonds all over the goldfields. He did not think bonds would be asked for by any other centres than those which had railway communication with the metropolis. The establishment of bonds would obviate in a large measure centralisation.

Item—Landing Waiters (2) and Assistant Landing Waiter:

MR. HIGHAM: The first-named of these officers was to receive £210, while an assistant landing waiter was to get £230. The latter officer, whose name was Back, had been made junior officer to one Joseph, who received less pay. He moved, as an amendment, that the word "Assistant" be struck out of the item.

Amendment put and passed.

Item—Landing Waiter at Cossack:

MR. HIGHAM: The landing waiter at Cossack, in addition to a salary of £275, was allowed £50 for "lodging." It was understood arrangements had been made for providing this officer with a house.

THE TREASURER: Should the officer be provided with a house, the allowance for lodging would cease.

Item passed.

Item—Landing Waiter at Onslow:

MR. HIGHAM: The Estimates showed that one landing waiter at Onslow, who received £250 last year, received £260 this year.

THE TREASURER: This was a smart officer who had been transferred.

Item passed.

Item—Inspector of Explosives:

MR. HIGHAM: The Inspector of Explosives received £350 a year, and earned it. But, in addition to his ordinary duties, he was called upon, without any extra remuneration, to perform the duties of public analyst. He ought to receive special recompense for this additional work, which comprised analyses for the coroner, and involving a certain amount of risk.

THE TREASURER: The officer in question had applied for an increase of

salary, but the Government had not been able to meet his wishes. This officer had no cause of complaint, for he had been getting a very small salary where he came from, and had been in receipt of a good one ever since he came to the colony three years ago. He had been well recommended by the Inspector of Explosives in Victoria, and was a very valuable officer. To a man of his qualifications it was a pleasure and not a labour to make these investigations, for which the Government furnished all the necessary appliances. His travelling expenses in connection with any official trips were of course paid by the Government.

MR. HIGHAM: An immense amount of explosives came to the colony, and he considered the officer in question was entitled to a special allowance for acting as analyst to the coroner at Fremantle.

MR. A. FORREST: When this officer was away in the country his expenses were doubtless paid; but how did the inspection of explosives proceed at Fremantle in his absence? It was apparent that the Fremantle officers had special advocates in the House, and that the Fremantle members thought it their duty to press for extra pay for them.

MR. MORGANS: The inspection of explosives was probably the most important duty any officer in Fremantle had to perform. There was more swindling in connection with the trade in explosives in this colony than in regard to any other article of commerce. Good dynamite, as used in mining, was composed of 75 per cent. of nitro-glycerine and 25 per cent. of infusorial earth. But several dishonest manufacturers, especially in Europe, had an unhappy practice of using glycerine which had not been nitrated in any way; and a careful analysis would show in many instances that dynamite which should contain 75 per cent. of nitro-glycerine actually contained only from 15 to 20 per cent. of that explosive, the balance consisting of glycerine and other compounds, with an excess of the infusorial earth. In view of the fact that this was one of the most extensive articles the mines had to deal with, and as it involved a very heavy cost, the Government might well take steps to enable the consumers of dynamite upon the goldfields to send parcels of dynamite to the

Inspector of Explosives, and have the exact amount of nitro-glycerine or other compound determined, so that he might contrast the results of the analysis with the statements of the seller. There was a very serious chemical objection to some of these compounds, arising from the fact that, in many instances, decomposition set in after these explosives had remained for a certain period in a hot climate, and there was a strong exudation of the nitro-glycerine portion, with the result that serious accidents occurred. He did not blame the manufacturer for this, because the exudation depended entirely on the temperature and on the place where the dynamite was stored; but the Government should take special care to see that the quality of these explosives on the goldfields was good, and that it was not impaired by the climate. Several accidents had occurred on the goldfields owing to the bad quality of the explosives; and, in view of the tremendous amount of risk that the miner ran in putting these dynamite cartridges into the holes and in ramming down the charge, he asked the Government to take some immediate steps in the direction suggested. He knew of 30 or 40 cases of explosives that were unfit to use, and which should be submitted to the public analyst at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. GREGORY: While sub-inspectors were being appointed for Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie, no officer was being appointed for Menzies, and he thought Menzies deserved consideration along with the others.

Item passed.

Other items agreed to, and the vote put and passed.

Vote—*Harbour and Light*, £28,962 :

Mr. HIGHAM: The time had come when the question of appointing a harbour master specially for Fremantle should be considered. The Chief Harbour Master for a considerable period was unable to carry out his duties; he had resumed his office now. This officer should be appointed Harbour Master-in-Chief, and a younger and more active officer should be appointed to attend solely to all questions affecting Fremantle harbour.

THE TREASURER: Representations had been made to him about this, but nothing had been done up to the present

time. He had not had time to look into the matter, but he did not see why two officers should be required. The Chief Harbour Master with the officers under him, he thought, would do very well. If the Government had too many officers with high-sounding titles, these officers wanted high salaries. He did not wish to commit himself to anything just now. He had had an interview with the Chief Harbour Master that day on the subject, and that officer's views would be placed before him in a few days.

Mr. GEORGE asked who was the inspector of boilers and engines under the Boat Licensing Act.

THE TREASURER: The man's name was Rammage. He had been some time in the service.

Mr. GEORGE: What were the particular duties of this officer?

THE TREASURER: He inspected all the boilers under the Act, superintended by the Harbour Master.

Mr. GEORGE: Would there be any objection to laying on the table a return showing how many boilers this officer inspected during the last twelve months?

THE TREASURER: That could be done, if the hon. member wished.

Mr. WOOD: This was a fitting opportunity to make a strong protest against the absence of the Blue Book. This was the third session there had been no Blue Book to enable hon. members to thoroughly understand the Estimates, and it was a great scandal.

Mr. GEORGE: A public scandal.

Mr. A. FORREST asked whether the item "Steam Launch and Harbour Tug for Fremantle, £10,980," referred to a steamer which had been purchased locally, and had been found to be useless.

THE TREASURER: This steamer was purchased in England for the use of the harbour authorities in looking after the lighthouses, etc. The hon. member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) was on the wrong track. The steamer had cost more than anticipated, but considering its capacity it might after all be an economy.

Mr. A. FORREST: By whose authority was this boat purchased?

THE TREASURER: £6,500 was voted by Parliament.

Mr. A. FORREST: Who recommended the purchase?



**THE TREASURER:** The Harbour Department. This sum was voted for two launches—one for Fremantle and one for Albany. The former cost £1,370 14s.; but the latter, when the expense of fitting her up was added, brought the cost of the two boats up to about £12,000. He had never anticipated that they were going to get such a big boat: in fact, she was really a steam tug fitted up with steam winches for lifting heavy weights, and was used for the general purposes of the Harbour Department throughout the colony. The Harbour Master had drawn up the specifications.

**MR. GEORGE:** Did the Treasurer think the Harbour Master sufficiently versed in mechanical matters to make up a specification and design for such a steamer?

**THE TREASURER:** The Harbour Master, he understood, designed the fittings.

**MR. GEORGE:** The Government got a vote of £6,500 for these vessels, and spent twice that amount. Would the Treasurer tolerate that sort of thing in his private business?

**MR. HUBBLE:** The boat at Fremantle was absolutely necessary in rough weather, when pilots had to be taken over to Rottnest.

Item—Upkeep and insurance, uniforms for officers and crew of s.s. Penguin:

**MR. A. FORREST** considered this item very heavy, £850.

**THE TREASURER:** Part of the expense was for coal.

**MR. A. FORREST:** The Treasurer had put the pruning knife through these Estimates very badly.

**MR. HIGHAM:** When the Penguin was ordered, the need of such a vessel in Fremantle was very urgent. Private enterprise had since stepped in and provided Fremantle with vessels far more efficient and cheaper than the Government had done. It was unfortunate that the Government had purchased such a vessel as the Penguin, as she would probably prove a white elephant. She would dodge about the coasts, putting the buoys in order, looking after the light-houses, and so on. It would be advisable to consider if they could not get rid of her as soon as possible.

**MR. HUBBLE:** Now that the Government had got a suitable boat, private enterprise did the same. The Govern-

ment should not be sneered at for having got a good boat.

**MR. A. FORREST:** The Fremantle members had let the committee pass a sum of £1,400, and now they wanted to pass £2,250 on account of the Penguin.

**MR. GEORGE:** The Government should consider the advisability of doing away with this boat altogether.

Item passed.

Other items agreed to, and the vote put and passed.

Vote—*Government Stores*, £6,290—agreed to.

Vote—*Library, Scientific, and Agricultural Grants*, £18,350:

**MR. GEORGE** asked if the sketch hanging in the parliamentary smoking room was intended to indicate to hon. members what the £4,000 for the Perth Museum and Art Gallery was for.

**THE TREASURER:** It was a drawing of the building.

Put and passed.

Vote—*Bureau of Agriculture*, £7,000:

**MR. A. FORREST:** It was desirable that the report of the select committee on the Bureau of Agriculture should be before the committee when dealing with this vote. If the member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson), as chairman of the committee, would say he was satisfied, this vote might be passed.

**MR. SIMPSON:** In the evidence given before the select committee, there was nothing likely to induce the House to curtail this vote.

**MR. GEORGE:** Did the vote include provision for State farming?

**THE TREASURER:** No; he was going to manage that himself.

Put and passed.

Vote—*Pensions*, £4,431:

**MR. GEORGE** said he objected on principle to pensions. The State should do as private employers did—pay their employees according to value, and leave them to provide for their old age themselves. There was no reason for keeping a man's salary down, and dangling before him the promise of a pension if he lived to grow old. People in England were getting sick of pensions, and doing away with them.

Put and passed.

Vote—*Miscellaneous Services*, £56,591:

Item—*Queen's Plates (racing)*, Perth and Roebourne:

MR. GREGORY moved that the item (£200) be struck out.

MR. MORAN said he had intended to move a reduction, at the request of several prominent racing men. In the present condition of racing in the colony, the vote was a farce, though it might have been useful in the old days.

MR. MONGER: As a member of the West Australian Turf Club, he was of opinion that, in the present condition of the finances of that institution, it was *infra dig.* for an item like this to appear on the Estimates. In the old days the desire of the Government was to improve the breed of horses, and this vote was granted with that object; but, if the item were increased to £2,000 or £20,000, it would have no such effect. It was ridiculous for two such racing clubs to ask for these subsidies; for these clubs were strong enough, financially, to face all their difficulties.

MR. A. FORREST: This vote had appeared on books of the clubs for some 30 or 40 years, and he hoped it would not be struck out; for, if so, there would be no such thing as a three-mile race in the colony.

MR. SIMPSON: There was no racing club which had not plenty of funds. To talk about improving the breed of horses was a perfect farce. These clubs had plenty of money to run their own races, and he did not see why the country should be called upon to subsidise them. The vote was ineffective for the purposes for which it was designed, and he hoped the committee would permit the item to be dropped out.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. GEORGE: There were a number of grants-in-aid for the up-keep of fire brigades in different parts of the country; and he did not see why one place should be specially favoured more than another.

MR. GREGORY: These grants-in-aid were very unevenly distributed. He considered Menzies was entitled to more than £50.

MR. GEORGE asked if the Perth Park Board were going to issue a balance-sheet showing how the vote of £2,000 was expended.

THE TREASURER: The board would be quite willing to do so, but there was nothing in the statute compelling them.

The Government gave money to municipal councils and to various institutions, without getting reports as to how the money was spent; so that there was no necessity it should be done in this case, unless the hon. member specially desired it.

MR. GEORGE said he did desire it.

THE TREASURER said he would make a note of it.

Vote (reduced by one item, struck out) put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

### STEAM BOILERS BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and read a first time.

### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11:55 p.m. until the next day.

## Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 8th December, 1897.

Return: Steam Boiler Explosions—Immigration Restriction Bill: third reading—Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill: President's Ruling—Industrial Statistics Bill: in committee; re-committal—Employment Brokers Bill: in committee; re-committal—Police Act Amendment Bill: second reading; in committee—Imported Labour Registry Bill: second reading; in committee—Public Notaries Bill: second reading; in committee—Circuit Courts Bill: second reading; in committee—Companies Act Amendment Bill: Select Committee's Report—Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill: question, clause passed or postponed?—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.