

remember that, although he may hold three or four leases, they all form one holding, run, or station, and if one portion be taken away, the value of the other portions must be deteriorated. In the matter of a well ten miles away, the judge may say that is a question of degree, and I do not suppose any arbitrator would give a penny compensation for a well under such circumstances; but suppose the well be only a few feet away, on another lease? It is just as well to look these matters fairly in the face, and apparently this Bill has slipped through the other House without attention having been drawn to this point.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: There cannot have been much discussion on the point, because it says here "the value of such improvements shall be ascertained by one competent person" appointed by each side. The improvements may consist of fencing under the original Act, and the improvement only becomes a "fence" when approved by the Minister and a certificate has been given by him; but, as I said before, not one squatter in the colony has that certificate. This certificate must come from the Minister himself, and not from a surveyor or any other person; in fact, it was argued in Court, with some show of force, that it was necessary for the Minister personally to inspect the fence before he could give a certificate. How then can this Bill have received the attention it deserved in another House? If improvements are to be valued, the arbitrators themselves should decide whether it is sheep-proof or stock-proof fence, because they could form a better opinion than the Minister for Lands. There are clauses which require considerable discussion, and, inasmuch as there are not many hon. members representing grazing interests, I hope members generally will give this Bill careful consideration. Inasmuch as it is necessary that there should be some amendment of the definition of "improvement," I think that itself is sufficient to justify the second reading of the Bill. I shall support the second reading, and I entreat hon. members to carefully consider the amendment and see how far they will allow it to be introduced. I myself think there is considerable doubt whether it is a good amendment.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON (North): I do not intend to oppose the second reading of this Bill, on the assurance of the Colonial Secretary that it will not go into committee to-night. It is a very important Bill, and we want to be able to compare it with the principal Act. There are a lot of clauses struck out from the principal Act. The pastoralists have quite enough difficulties under the principal Act, and we do not know what harm will be done if we strike out some of the provisions.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It will not affect the North-west settlers.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: It affects settlers in my province.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON: I do not know about that.

HON. J. M. DREW (Central): I support the second reading of the Bill, and in committee I will give my reasons at length for supporting almost every clause. I congratulate the Government on the introduction of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 8.48 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday 18th October, 1900.

Perth Electric Tramways Lighting and Power Bill: Letter from Perth Gas Company—Cottesloe, etc., Electric Light and Power Bill (private), Select Committee's Report—Leave of Absence—Roads and Streets Closure Bill, first reading—Truck Act Amendment Bill, third reading—Annual Estimates, Debate on Financial Policy, fourth day (concluded)—Votes passed to page 36, Defences; progress—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PERTH ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS LIGHTING AND POWER BILL.

LETTER FROM PERTH GAS COMPANY.

THE SPEAKER: I would like to draw attention to the fact that I have received

a letter, as probably other members have, from the Perth Gas Company, drawing my attention to the circumstance that the Standing Orders relative to private Bills have not been complied with in reference to the private Bill promoted by Mr. E. E. Rogers, for the supply of electric light and power in the city of Perth. Of course it was not for the Select Committee to which the Bill was referred to inquire as to whether the Standing Orders had been complied with or not; but I think it is very important that the Standing Orders should be complied with. I will ask the Clerk to read the letter to the House.

THE CLERK read the letter, as follows:

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Re the Perth Electric Tramways, Limited, Bill (Private Act).*

Perth, 18th October, 1900.

SIRS,

We beg to draw attention to the following matters in relation to this Bill.

1. Clause 44 of the Standing Orders of your Honourable House relating to Private Bills states that no Private Bill shall be brought into the House but upon a Petition signed by one or more of the suitors to the Bill. An incorporated Company can only sign by affixing its seal, consequently the Petition for this Bill should be sealed by the Perth Electric Tramways, Limited, or signed by some person duly authorised under the Company's seal. The Petition is signed by Mr. E. E. Rogers, as Attorney for the Company. Upon production, however, to the Select Committee of the Power of Attorney granted to him by the Company, it was found (and, indeed, admitted by his Counsel) that Mr. Rogers was not authorised to sign any Petition to Parliament nor to promote any Private Bill on behalf of his Company. We therefore respectfully submit that the Standing Orders of your Honourable House have not been complied with. This objection was taken before the Committee, but the Chairman pointed out that Clause 43 of such Orders precluded the Committee from considering the question.

2. An incorporated Company cannot undertake any work, or apply any part of its funds to any object not mentioned in its Memorandum of Association. The Memorandum of Association of the Perth Electric Tramways, Limited, was not produced to the Select Committee, and in its absence it is impossible to say whether the Company is empowered to undertake the works contemplated by the Bill or not.

3. The preamble of the Bill states that the Perth Electric Tramways, Limited, are desirous of acquiring the rights and powers

necessary for carrying on the business of electricity manufacturers and generators for the purposes of heat, light, motive power, or otherwise. The Standing Orders require this to be strictly proved. Obviously to do so it was necessary to produce not only the Memorandum of Association of the Company, to establish the power of the Company to undertake the work, but also some resolution of the Company or the directors in proof of the desire of the Company to acquire such rights. No such memorandum or resolution was produced to the Select Committee, who were apparently satisfied to accept statements made by Mr. Rogers as ample proof of the allegations above mentioned. We respectfully submit that the Committee were not justified on the evidence before them in finding that the preamble had been proved.

4. The memorandum, as well as the Articles of Association of the Company, should also have been produced before the Committee in order to prove that the Company possessed the necessary powers to promote the Bill, and further that the directors were authorised to delegate such powers to an agent in the colony.

We have the honour to be, your obedient servants,

THE PERTH GAS COMPANY, LIMITED,

By Thomas Blackney, its Secretary.

Our Standing Order number 43, which the Chairman of the Select Committee said precluded them from inquiring into this matter, is as follows:

No committee shall have power to examine into the compliance or noncompliance with the Standing Orders, unless by special order of the House.

I think the House ought to pass a special order, asking the Select Committee to inquire into the compliance or noncompliance with the Standing Orders in the particular case.

MR. MOORHEAD: As Chairman of the Select Committee, I beg to move, without notice and by leave, that power be delegated to the Select Committee to inquire as to whether the Standing Orders have been complied with or not.

Question put and passed.

•COTTESLOE, Etc., ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER BILL (PRIVATE).

SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

MR. MOORHEAD brought up the report of the Select Committee on this Bill.

Report received and read. Consideration of the report made an order for the next Tuesday.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by MR. ILLINGWORTH, leave of absence for one fortnight was granted to the member for Plantagenet (Mr. A. Y. Hassell), on the ground of urgent private business.

## ROADS AND STREETS CLOSURE BILL.

Introduced by the COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS, and read a first time.

## TRUCK ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time, on motion by MR. KINGSMILL, and passed.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

## DEBATE ON FINANCIAL POLICY.

## IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Fourth day of debate, resumed from previous Tuesday.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. B. C. Wood): I moved to report progress the other night, so as to give hon. members time to get the nasty taste out of their mouths which had been put there by the member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes). I am justified in calling it a nasty taste, because of the offensive manner and offensive things stated by the member for East Fremantle.

MR. VOSPER: You will soon put the taste back again.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: As to the statements referring to the Treasurer, he is well able to fight his own battles, and I think to fight them fairly well; at all events, he does not want me to look after his interests—he can look after them himself. With reference to the question of the railway in which Jobson was concerned, I think the whole of the circumstances were fully explained during last session by the then Commissioner of Railways, who went fully into the matter. I think it is quite unfair that these things should be brought up over and over again. There ought to be some finality to statements of this kind. So far as I remember the case—I was not concerned in it, and I am not concerned in it now, except as being the head of the department, and I should feel some concern, at all events, in the matter now—the agreement with Jobson was entered into under a great amount of pressure, that pressure being the absolute

want of water; and from what I hear to-day, if it had not been for this water coming at the very moment that it was wanted, I may say, the Kalgoorlie express would have been stopped and the trains would not have run. As to all the accusations against the department, I think they are very unfair. Such terms as “thieves” were used. It was said “the thieves should be brought to justice.” I want to know who “the thieves” are. I do not think it is fair that any member of the committee should accuse reputable men of being thieves, unless he can substantiate the statement. I suppose the evidence that has been given in connection with the so-called Ice Company’s frauds has given rise to a great many remarks of that kind, and I suppose all the officers of the department are looked upon as a lot of rogues and vagabonds. But they have not been proved to be thieves, at all events, and I think members should be cautious in using terms such as that. When I was a private member on this side of the House, I never applied such terms to members on the other side. I might have thought I had cause to do so, the same as the hon. member who makes this accusation no doubt does, although there is no justification for making the statement, but I suppose he thinks he is justified. The hon. member did not say who were the thieves, but the head of the department I suppose is implicated in the working of the department.

MR. VOSPER: Why did you not Robsonise him?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: I think it is very bad form indeed for any member in any part of the House to take such a stand as that taken by the member for East Fremantle. The hon. member touched on a great many things. We had all about the audit again; we heard that last session, and it was fully replied to by the then Commissioner of Railways.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We want to hear it until it is altered.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: I suppose the speech of last session is not without effect. Surely to goodness two months have not elapsed since that speech was made, and you cannot expect alterations to take place so quickly as that. Reforms are not

instant things : they must work their own way. The whole of the speech which we heard from the member for East Fremantle on Tuesday was a repetition of what he gave to us last session, very nearly the whole of it; and it is easy for a man to become fluent in making the same speech over and over again. We have heard the same speech from the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) on the Financial Statement for the last six years.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : You have heard the Premier's speech for the last eleven years.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS : I have heard the hon. member's speech in reply for the past six years, and I could have put down what the hon. member was going to say before he came into the House. A man can get quite fluent and roll his remarks off by the yard, if he delivers the same speech time after time.

MR. VOSPER : How many years would it take to make you fluent?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS : A good many. I do not profess to have the gift of language which the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) has, and I should not care to use that language in the way he uses it here and by his pen. I should often feel ashamed of myself if I did. The repetition of these speeches is right enough from hon. members' points of view. I am not going to delay the House to-day, as we have all the Estimates to go through. I am sorry the hon. member is not in his place, because he objects to anyone speaking about him in his absence. He did not like the Premier's reference to him when he was not in the House, although he did not spare the right hon. gentleman when he was speaking. I have nothing further to say on the question. I only desired to intimate that the matter of Jobson's agreement was of extreme urgency. I hope that is the last we shall hear of it, although the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) says we shall have it brought up again. When the Royal Commission is appointed, then will be the time to go fully into the working of the Railway Department, and if there are officers in the department who ought not to be there, it will be for the department to decide who are the

men to go. We have a lot of work before us in the Estimates; therefore I do not intend to say more on the subject now. I do hope hon. members, in referring to the Railway Department, at all events, will refer to it in decent terms, for I believe that, taking the whole department from the General Traffic Manager downward, hon. members will find it is composed of some of the best public servants in Australia.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie) : I intend to follow the example of the Commissioner of Railways in one particular, and that is in being brief in my remarks on the Estimates. At present we are engaged in considering the first item dealing with the salary of His Excellency the Governor; and this, according to parliamentary practice, is made the groundwork for the ventilation of all grievances which have arisen since the last annual Estimates, and before supply is granted for the current year. I think, however, we may give a little consideration to the item itself. I am aware that the salary of the Governor is fixed in the Civil List, and does not properly come within the scope of the annual Estimates; but I would suggest that the time will shortly arrive, in view of federation coming into operation, when we shall have to begin to curtail some of the expenses of State government in this colony, and this may lead to a diminution of the salary of the State Governor, whoever he may be. The time is not only particularly appropriate, but particularly easy, for considering a question of this kind, because the present occupant of the office, the Administrator, is in a temporary capacity, and the new Governor has yet to be appointed by the home authorities. It may be well to make arrangements before a new appointment is made, because as soon as the Commonwealth commences, we shall have to moderate the expenses incident to the Legislature and the Government of this colony, and that may properly begin at the top of the tree, by the salary paid to the State Governor being reduced. I want to congratulate the Government on the transcendent success of their efforts to have this colony strongly represented at the Paris Exhibition, and the cost of that is estimated to reach some £32,000, of which sum we are

asked to pay a portion this year. The result of that Exhibition in regard to this colony, so far as I can see, is nothing at all. We have seen some photographs laid on the table, showing the West Australian exhibits in the Paris Exhibition; and it seems to me, from this and other evidence, that West Australia has made a very small show indeed. It is worthy of notice that the general opinion of persons who have visited the Exhibition, as shown by notices published in many newspapers, particularly in some leading newspapers in London and on the Continent of Europe, is that the show made in the West Australian Court was very small indeed. Indeed one newspaper, published at Glasgow, said that Western Australia simply exhibited a pile of sticks in an obscure portion of the Exhibition. It is unfortunate that the Paris Exhibition should have proved somewhat of a "frost," for we find that many of the intending exhibitors refrained from sending their exhibits, also that some parts of the Exhibition were unfinished a long time after the opening; and altogether the Exhibition seems to have been a gigantic failure. If the exhibits of this colony were not altogether the success we could wish, that is no doubt due to the bad management of the Commissioners in charge of the Exhibition.

THE PREMIER: That is mere surmise.

MR. VOSPER: No; it is not surmise. I am speaking on the authority of London and other important newspapers, and some of the Continental journals too. I fully exonerate the Government of this colony from blame, but I said the bad management or the failure of the Commissioners in charge of the whole Exhibition; and I said also that a Glasgow newspaper had condemned the West Australian portion of the Exhibition. Now even had that section been altogether successful, I should still hold that £32,000 was a great deal too much money to spend on it.

THE PREMIER: There is £12,000 worth of gold in the exhibits. Probably the cost will be nearly £30,000.

MR. VOSPER: I find there has been £400 expended on the curator of the mineral section alone; and it appears to me that the sum of £32,000 is a great

deal too high a cost. If the Government intend to send the same collection to Glasgow, they should take care to put the expenses on a more moderate scale. So far as I know, the Commissioner (Hon. H. W. Venn) has received no remuneration for his services, though none of us would wish him to be out of pocket over the affair. With regard to the supply of water to the railways on the goldfields, I may say that to people on the goldfields, and to myself among them, it appears to be a peculiar thing that the Government should first have built a dam, and having got water into it, they leased the dam to a private company at a nominal rate, and then they bought that water back from that company at an extravagant rate, for use on the railways.

MR. GREGORY: About £10,000 was the cost of the dam. Those dams were not cemented.

MR. VOSPER: I think the cost was much higher than that.

THE PREMIER: It is a good big dam.

MR. GREGORY: An ordinary dam, with good holding ground, is not expensive to make there.

THE PREMIER: It cost about £10,000.

MR. VOSPER: If I were to say the dam was not worth a damn, I might get into a difficulty; but I will say the dam was erected at the Government expense, the water was accumulated at the Government expense, and then the Government leased the dam with the water in it, and bought the water back from that company. If it has paid a private company to buy a lot of old sleepers from the Government and build a railway to a dam, why should it not have paid the Government to build a railway with those materials?

MR. MOORHEAD: What a rumpus we should have had in this House if the Government had done that!

MR. VOSPER: No; the Government might have used cast-off sleepers and rails to build a railway for this purpose, and if there had been a rumpus on that account, there ought to be a rumpus now on account of the Government having bought water from their dam they had already built and leased. The fact that they have done so shows bad management somewhere. Coming to the details of the Estimates, I want to say a word about the Premier's Department.

THE PREMIER: Surely there is some bigger game than that!

MR. VOSPER: This is the game I am going for. With regard to this department, when we first heard of it in the House we were told it was going to be a very small affair—a matter of only some £800 a year; and members were asked to leave it alone because the Premier wanted it for the convenience of carrying on his public work, and it would cost very little. We find now that the department is growing, for while in the first year, 1898-9, the expenditure was £745, in the next year it was £888, and for 1901 the cost is set down at £1,249. Let us see how the extra cost is arrived at. We have an Under-Secretary getting £200 a year, concurrently with salaries he receives in other directions; next a Chief Clerk has been appointed, who receives the munificent salary of £425 a year; his duty as Chief Clerk being to look after a registrar, a shorthand-clerk, and a messenger; and for revising the work of these three juniors he is paid £425 a year. This department is more of a benevolent asylum than anything else, and I only say it seems to me to be growing into what is practically a "Tammany" in Perth. The Under Secretary is brother-in-law to the Premier, and the Chief Clerk is brother-in-law to another Minister. This person who is now Chief Clerk in the Premier's Department was formerly Chief Clerk in the Post Office, and was removed from that position because he was declared to be practically useless, by the Royal Commission which investigated the department some time ago.

THE PREMIER: I deny that.

MR. MOORHEAD: The Commission said the officer was unnecessary.

THE PREMIER: He is an excellent officer.

MR. VOSPER: His late departmental chief, the Postmaster General, does not share that opinion, and he is about the best judge of that.

THE PREMIER: You do not always think so.

MR. VOSPER: If the Postmaster General is not able to judge of the capability of his own Chief Clerk, he is not fit to occupy his position; and I say his opinion is distinctly adverse, and that he was glad to get rid of that officer, although this has been done at the cost

of £425 added to the Premier's Department. As far as I can ascertain, he has shown his unfitness to hold any position in the public service except that of a sinecure.

THE PREMIER: You do not know anything about it.

MR. VOSPER: I intend to find out something about it. If he were the best clerk that was ever appointed, the salary he is now receiving is too high; and I say it is absurd to place a man in charge of three juniors who are receiving respectively £180, £199, and £105, while the Chief Clerk is paid £425 to revise their work.

THE PREMIER: They carry on the correspondence of all over the colony.

MR. VOSPER: The wages of supervising and looking after these three assistants comes to more than the combined salaries of the assistants. I see by the Estimates that the unfortunate messenger has been sacked by way of compensating to some extent for this increase of £425 in the cost of this department.

THE PREMIER: He resigned, as a matter of fact.

MR. VOSPER: I congratulate the Premier on the economy he has effected by saving this small amount at an increase of £425. It will be interesting to know, as the years roll on, what this department is going to cost; and I expect it will gradually be turned into a benevolent asylum, and that the cost will run into thousands of pounds per annum.

THE PREMIER: Do not be rude.

MR. VOSPER: If I had a better example opposite, perhaps I might be a little more gentlemanly. In speaking last night I then congratulated the Government on the expenditure set down for the two lunatic asylums. I am glad to see that amount provided, because anyone looking at these two institutions must recognise the expenditure is badly required. I am glad, also, to congratulate the Government on their spending money on our Museum and the Victoria Public Library, in providing additional accommodation. The sum of £1,400 is set down for expenditure there, and I do not think anyone will be likely to find fault with that. Additional accommodation has long been required in the Museum, where there have been a great

number of specimens lying for years hidden from the public, because cases cannot be provided for their exhibition. At the same time, I would again suggest to the Committee that it would be as well if we were to concentrate the various exhibits under one roof. At present, I believe we have a timber exhibit at the Lands Department, we have an exhibition of agricultural produce, models, and things of that sort, in the Agricultural Department, at the top of four flights of stairs, in the *West Australian* building, a geological museum next to the *Morning Herald* office, and a public museum away up in the centre of the town. It seems to me that for strangers visiting Perth, and those desiring to get a comprehensive grasp of the resources of the colony, it would be much more convenient to have all these exhibits housed under one roof; because few have the time, in the course of a flying visit, to take a cab and drive round to four or five distinct museums. These are a great deal too many for the size of the town and its population; and economy would be effected if all these different collections were brought together under the charge of one competent curator. It will be within the recollection of hon. members that, some years ago, I moved for a Royal Commission to inquire into the penal establishments of this colony, and now that the Estimates are before us, I want to express my mingled satisfaction and dissatisfaction at the manner in which the recommendations of the commission have been carried out. Certain structural alterations have been made in the Fremantle Gaol which will improve that place very considerably, and to some extent the work of classification of prisoners has been effected. But a great many of the recommendations have been entirely neglected; and this is the more regrettable when we consider that their adoption would not have involved any great expenditure. I wish to call the attention of Parliament to the ticket-of-leave regulations. I think the idea of issuing a ticket-of-leave is, first of all, to reward good conduct in a prisoner, and, secondly, to relieve the State of a heavy charge, and to give the man an opportunity of earning an honest livelihood, instead of remaining a convict all his life. The regulations for ticket-of-leave men

in this colony are dated as far back as 1869; they have never been revised or remodelled since that time; consequently they are entirely out of date and unsuited to present conditions, and their only effect is utterly to prevent any convict who desires to live honestly while holding a ticket-of-leave from so doing; in fact such men accept tickets-of-leave for the purpose only of being able to go out for a week or a fortnight, have a holiday, and then come back again to gaol. The regulations prevent a man from obtaining a livelihood. Take a few of them: In the first place, the convict has to go to an employer and obtain an engagement for at least six months. That was all right at the time these regulations were framed, because in those days the only kind of labour available was convict labour, and it was necessary and desirable that a master should be able to retain that labour as long as possible, and plenty of masters would at that time be willing to give such engagements to ticket-of-leave men. But now-a-days an employer can pick up in the streets a man of unblemished reputation, employ him for a couple of days, and send him about his business; consequently, employers will not give a man a six months' engagement, such long engagements being most unusual. The convict is, therefore, handicapped by having, firstly, to tell the employer he is a convict, and by having to obtain from the employer a six months' engagement; and even if the employer were willing to accept a convict as a servant, he would not be willing to employ him for six months. The next point is, supposing the man, in spite of all these difficulties, succeed in obtaining employment, say in Fremantle, and the employer be desirous of sending him on a message to Perth, the man, before he can leave Fremantle, has to go to the police court to interview the resident magistrate. The magistrate may be away, and the man may have to wait a day or two before he sees him. He goes, we will say, to Mr. Fairbairn, and asks for a pass to go from Fremantle to Perth. When he arrives in Perth, he has to go, firstly, to the police station to report himself, and then, having done his employer's business, he has to look for a resident magistrate in Perth, and get him to indorse the ticket-of-leave before he can go back to Fremantle; and,

arrived at Fremantle, he must once more present himself to the resident magistrate there, and return the pass which he got to go to Perth. This would take two or three days, and renders it practically impossible for a man to do any kind of work. Another absurd provision in the regulations is that no such man can take any kind of work on the Swan River. He cannot go on board a ship as a wharf lumper; cannot get into a boat; cannot even cross the ferry to South Perth. That offence is sufficient to send him back to prison for the remainder of his term. And so, right through these regulations, which are some sixty in number, we find they teem with absurdities of that description, which make it absolutely impossible for a man to reform, to do anything in any way to earn an honest livelihood, or to do anything at all except gravitate back to gaol. And I say, in the interests of humanity and economy, it is about time these regulations were revised. Then we shall remove what is probably the only serious blot upon our penal system at the present time. And I do earnestly ask the Minister in charge of this department, represented in this House by the Premier, to take these regulations into consideration, and to see if anything can be done to introduce something more sensible. I want to call the attention of the Committee to another point. I do not know whether this properly comes under the heading of "Education," or "Printing." It is not of much value from an educational point of view, so I shall deal with it under printing. I want to ask how long the House propose to tolerate the Government using the printed publications of the State for the purpose of advertising the political party which happens to hold office in this colony. We see it here in *Hansard* day after day and week after week. Before the Premier's Budget Speech can appear in that book, it is subjected to more revision, more amendment, and more alteration than that of any other member in this House. The Premier has greater privileges with regard to publication of his speech in *Hansard*, and in pamphlet form, than are accorded to the Premier of any other colony of Australasia.

THE PREMIER: I deny that.

MR. VOSPER: The importance of the speech is not the point. The mere fact

that it is uttered by the Premier is quite sufficient to magnify it above the utterances of any other member of this House. We may perhaps say that when the Premier tells us of the financial receipts and expenditure, his speech should have a wider publication and a wider circulation than those of other members, because it is a very important utterance.

THE PREMIER: And carries more responsibility.

MR. VOSPER: Yes; but when it comes to writing books and handing them over to the children in our schools, and sending books like "A Land of Promise" home to the old country, which are full of booming notices about the Premier, about his transcendent genius, his remarkable wisdom, his undoubted ability, his statesmanlike qualities, and all that bluff and tommy-rot which are poured forth in every page, the thing is past a joke. All this jam and butter continually smeared over the Premier's political character at the expense of the taxpayer is something unique. There is only one parallel that I know of in modern history; namely the plan carried out by the great Emperor Napoleon III., when he caused some eulogies of himself to be published in certain French school books; and now we have a kind of little imperial system in this colony, and our local emperor must have the butter laid on.

THE PREMIER: I never heard anything of it until I saw it in the paper.

MR. VOSPER: You are going to have that omission remedied now, for you will hear all about it right away.

THE PREMIER: You might save your time.

MR. VOSPER: It appears there is an obscure sheet called the "Education Circular," printed by the Government Printer, and issued by the authority of the Minister of Education, Mr. George Randell. This is published monthly, and in the September number this article appears:

Teachers in their teaching of the geography of Western Australia will, of course, note the great difference which is likely to be made in the colony by completion of the Fremantle harbour scheme.

Why not a lesson on the Coolgardie Water Scheme, on the Kalgoorlie sly-



grog shops, and on the effect of the water scheme on the whisky sold in the grog-shops ?

Teachers will find a *résumé* of its history in the daily Press. . . . It will be easy, in taking a map with the children, to show how it is natural that Fremantle would be the best distributing centre in the colony, and also how it is always practically essential that the principal port should be nearest to the most settled portions of the country ; and in most cases the capital is naturally found near the chief port.

That reminds me very much of the gentleman who congratulated the Creator upon the fact that he always made large rivers to flow through large towns ; as if the chief port were likely to be anywhere else than near the metropolis. The article goes on :

In Standards IV. and V. the trade routes of Western Australia are laid down in the geography syllabus. Teachers will, of course, have to modify their maps to some extent.

It shows what a valuable argument that must be, when we have to modify our maps in order to prove that Fremantle is the best centre in the whole colony. That is a nice compliment to the port.

And will have to call attention to the fact that where goods were imported to Albany they would have a long railway journey to the settled coastal districts and to the fields. The magnitude of the works in the harbour, of which probably most teachers have a plan—

It will not be the fault of the Engineer-in-Chief if they have not plans, considering the prodigal way in which these plans have been distributed.

—will make a very instructive contrast with the natural harbour at Albany ;

This is practically a vote of censure upon the Almighty. The natural harbour at Albany is placed in comparison with the artificial one at Fremantle, greatly to the advantage of the latter !

And teachers can well give lessons showing how natural harbours are generally the first places to which settlement tends, but the nature of the surrounding country ultimately may have a tendency to drive population to some place where natural advantages are not apparently so great, and where great efforts have to be expended and large expense incurred.

There again we find another quarrel with Providence, because Providence has a habit of putting good harbours in the midst of bad country. Of course the

country round Fremantle is remarkable for its fertility ! Then it goes on :

To quote the Right Hon. the Premier's memorable phrase—

The modesty of this document is so astounding that one would think we were quoting something from Charles Dickens, or Solomon, or some other great sacred or profane literary light of the past :

The Premier's memorable phrase, the completion of the harbour works has placed Fremantle on the high road of Australian trade and commerce,

A very memorable phrase indeed ! A thing we have had drummed into our heads by the daily Press for the last fourteen years, and probably in use as far back as the day when Sir James Stirling first landed at Fremantle—memorable in this respect, that it will never be forgotten here, seeing we have heard it so often.

And has therefore brought that part of this colony into closer touch, not only with the Australian colonies, but with the rest of the world. It is to be hoped that the old port of Albany will not ultimately suffer,

There is a sneaking benevolence in that.

And will quickly recover from any temporary depression which the change may bring. It may or may not become a naval station of importance.

That is a fairly safe prediction. I am glad to see the author of this brilliant article has not departed into the realms of prophecy. It reminds me of the predictions of our Government astronomer, in which he tells us we shall get rain, hail, frost, snow, fine weather, or anything else ; and then he boasts at the end of the year that his predictions are always correct.

It should always have an important trade in timber and the products of the southern districts.

I should like to make the acquaintance of that gentleman. He is a man who ought to be able to earn a decent livelihood.

THE PREMIER : It is not by praising people, but by abusing them, that you make money.

MR. VOSPER : I have tried both, but I find there is not much money in either.

THE PREMIER : You know it pays best to abuse them.

MR. VOSPER : I am willing to abuse people free of charge or to praise them

free of charge, but I hope I shall be driven out of public life if I should ever be found using the public Treasury to carry on political propaganda. What right has the Government of the day to push themselves forward in the Education Circular of the colony? If the Premier and his colleagues were on this side of the House and the members sitting here were on the Treasury benches, and if the members now on this side dared to venture on a course of action such as this, the condemnation from those now on the Government side would be beyond description; yet the Government expect to escape scot-free. I quite understand there should be an education circular, but are our teachers to be instructed not only to teach the children to add up sums, but how to vote when they grow old enough? One would have thought the Premier expected to remain in office long enough to get the votes of these children when they do grow up. Of all the indecent things permitted by the Government, I have never heard such a thing as this being done, the advertising of the Government from one end of the colony to the other.

**THE PREMIER:** There is no occasion to get excited about it.

**MR. VOSPER:** I am not excited! I am rather enjoying it. I shall not weary or amuse the House, as the case may be, with any further remarks on the Estimates; but I hope that when the Government have any spare cash to spend, they will not again devote it to a task of this kind. There are right ways of going about the work of political propaganda. The Government might subsidise the newspapers, but already the Government do enough of that. Apart from the subsidising of newspapers, there is the ordinary barn-door billposter which can be obtained from the printing offices of the town, and it would be more creditable for the Government to spend their own money in the work of political propaganda than to spend the money of the country. I shall conclude by saying that when the Estimates are being dealt with in detail, there are many points, which, in pursuance of my duty, I shall question the Premier and other Ministers about, and possibly make other remarks; but for the time being I am prepared to say no more about the Estimates; but I hope in

the interests of the Committee generally we shall get through the Estimates as soon as possible.

**MR. PIESSE (Williams):** It was not my intention to have spoken at this stage had it not been for the statements made by two members; the statement of the member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) made a few evenings ago, and the remarks made by the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) to-night. The member for East Fremantle stated that the reservoir which had been leased to the West Australian Goldfields Firewood Company, but which he called the Jobson company, contained 16 million gallons of water, and was leased for £16 a month. The only part of the statement which is correct is as to the leasing of the dam. It has been leased for £16 a month; but the contents of that dam—I will quote the accurate figures—were 3,121,000 gallons.

**MR. GREGORY:** Two dams?

**MR. PIESSE:** One dam at the 42-Mile contains 3,121,000 gallons. There were two puddle dams constructed, not of concrete as the hon. member stated; and instead of costing £50,000, which he stated in the first instance, but subsequently reduced, the whole cost was £4,535.

**MR. GREGORY:** Two dams?

**MR. PIESSE:** It is not the old dam, but the one which was made last to hold three million gallons, that was leased to Jobson for a time: it cost £4,535. There is a good deal of difference between that and the cost put down by the hon. member to-night.

**MR. GREGORY:** That will be about £7,000 altogether.

**MR. PIESSE:** I notice by the report of the hon. member's speech that he stated the dam contained 16 million gallons of water. That will be most misleading if it is not corrected, and will go to show that there is a very large quantity of water impounded there. Had we 16 million gallons of water, it would have been worth while for the Government to construct some sort of tramway to the place to get at the water. But there never was such a quantity of water there: it was very much less. The quantity which the dam will hold ordinarily is 2,700,000, and this was the quantity which the company was prepared to supply to the Government at

the time, and which the Commissioner of Railways stated to-night the Government were anxious to obtain. As to the statement made by the member for East Fremantle, it is not my intention to touch on that again, except to say that I thought he had entirely disposed of that subject. The hon. member has frequently referred to it, and I have given an explanation as to the understanding which was come to between the company and the Government. It was not entirely on account of the water that the railway was constructed, but the company had constructed a railway through a lease where they could obtain a large quantity of firewood, 12 miles from the main line; a place called Kurrawong, about 12 miles on the Perth side of Coolgardie. We were at that time very short of water, and a proposal was made by Mr. Teesdale Smith, offering to supply the whole of the water within a certain period—that time was one month—provided the Government would sell to the company sufficient rails to reach from the 12-mile to the 42-mile tank, a distance of some 20 miles. It is misleading to state that we supplied 42 miles of rails, because the “42-mile” means 42 miles from Coolgardie.

MR. GREGORY: How far is it from your railway line at Bardoc. About five miles, is it not?

MR. PIESSE: Oh! certainly not. It is 42 miles on the Coolgardie road; therefore it is misleading to say the distance is 42 miles. It was only portion of that line of railway that was required to be constructed, from Kurrawong to the 42-mile. Therefore the quantity of rails supplied to the company was only 20 miles. At the time the rails were asked for, certain rails had been taken up from the main line in consequence of the re-laying of the line with heavier rails; and I had made an arrangement that these rails should be used in the making of the Goomalling line, but the Engineer-in-Chief refused to place these rails down, saying they had been used for 10 years on the eastern railway and five years on the Kalgoorlie railway, and were not in a condition which he considered safe for use on the railway for ordinary traffic. Therefore he condemned them, and upon their being condemned they were disposed of to this company at

£4 10s. a ton. An understanding was arrived at that at the end of the month a balance was to be struck, the amount due to the company for water being deducted from the cost of the rails; and a balance was to be arranged afterwards by the Government in the ordinary way, as we had some other accounts with the company to adjust. There was another understanding with those people. It has been said the Government might have put down this line themselves; but had it not been for the prospect the company had of obtaining firewood in the district, no doubt they never would have offered to construct the line or have bought the rails; and the Commissioner of Railways to-night, in referring to the matter stated that I had not mentioned at the time the difficulty the department was in with regard to the water supply. I did say in this House the department was in a difficulty, and that the water came at an opportune time. The express train which was to have left Kalgoorlie at that time for Perth was waiting for a supply of water from some place, and the only water available was that brought in from the 42-Mile. Of course this company have no philanthropic motives, their desire is to make money, but their offer was one which the department was very glad to accept. The offer was made on proper business lines and was accepted by the Government in good faith with the object of obtaining water at the time. I may say that the Government made the contract on condition that if they did not want the water—that is if rain fell and replenished the Government tanks—we had the right to cease taking the water from the company by giving them 24 hours' notice; so that after all the arrangement was satisfactory to the Government. As to the interest which it is said some of those connected with the railway department have in this matter, I may say that I am confident that no one in the railway service has any interest in this matter. An inquiry is courted by those concerned, and I say as the Minister who was controlling the department at the time, I have every confidence in the officers who were carrying out the work. It was an entirely *bona fide* agreement made with the company who were doing certain business there, and they agreed

to supply water and to purchase rails at the price which was being paid by others who were purchasing rails at the time. There are hon. members in the House who know that is the price which we had sold rails at previously. No special consideration of any kind was given to the company but it was a *bona fide* transaction. It may be asked why did not the Government obtain the water themselves? I may say that if the Government had attempted to build a line to this point it would have meant the taking away of the water in a fortnight and the railway would then have been of no service to the Government afterwards; the advantages to be gained by having a line to the 42-Mile tank would not justify the construction of a line for that purpose.

THE PREMIER: What was the water costing us at the time?

MR. PIESSE: I do not remember.

THE PREMIER: It was £1,000 a day, I think.

MR. PIESSE: About £6,000 a week—nearly £1,000 a day. These people supplied the water at a price which was very acceptable to the department; 6s. per 100 gallons, and had it not been for the supply of that water the traffic would have ceased for some time. We should not forget that had we not obtained that water we should have had to take water from Bulong as we had previously done, and there would have been a necessity to place eight trains on the road taking away from the traffic the engines which were required in other directions, and taking away trucks to carry tanks while those trucks were required elsewhere, thereby lessening the railway stock which was needed at the time. I consider that the arrangement was a satisfactory one, and it is open to members to call for an inquiry. If an inquiry is asked for and made, hon. members will find that the statements which I made previously are borne out by fact. An inquiry will disclose that the Government entered into an arrangement which they should be commended for instead of blamed; and I am sorry to see these misstatements made, because they mislead the public very much, and I only speak to show how these figures are exaggerated by some members, who ought to be more careful in giving figures to the House. It is unfair to those who have to administer

the department, and who are trying to do their best in the interests of the country.

MR. WILSON (Canning): One reason why these Estimates will be received with satisfaction by the House is that a sum of money is provided for paying the Contingents sent by this colony to take part in the war in South Africa. I think every hon. member will be satisfied to vote money for paying the expenses connected with the sending of men to risk their lives in the defence of the Empire. I want to draw attention to a matter of local defence. Some time ago a large and influential deputation waited on the Premier in connection with the formation of a citizens' corps, in order to provide sufficient arms and ammunition to enable the citizens of Western Australia to acquire skill in the use of those arms, so that they may be able to protect the country in case of need. The case set forth by the deputation was backed up by expressions of approval from nearly every local governing body in the country, from municipalities, chambers of commerce, roads boards, and like institutions, who all united in supporting the request that some steps should be taken by the Government for the supply of sufficient arms and ammunition, and to give facilities for the use of same. The Premier received the deputation favourably, and promised to make some provision on the Estimates. Whether he intends to do so on the Loan Estimates I am not aware, but I see nothing in these Estimates that will provide for this expenditure. The only provision made in the same direction is the sum of £300 for additional rifles for cadets; but that will not "fill the bill," and I should like to know when the Premier intends to carry out his promise by providing a sufficient sum of money. It is a matter of extreme urgency that we should take some steps, when this martial spirit is abroad among our people, to enable the inhabitants to qualify themselves for defending the country in case of need. The next matter I wish to notice is that of making adequate provision for the construction and maintenance of our main thoroughfares. Large sums of money were promised by the late Director of Public Works (Mr. Piesse), before he resigned office, for the maintenance and upkeep of

the main thoroughfares in and around Perth, and I believe in other centres also, though I speak of Perth particularly because I had the honour to introduce several deputations in connection with the Perth-Albany road and the Guildford road. Sums of money amounting to several thousands of pounds were promised by the then Director of Public Works for putting these main thoroughfares into proper condition; but looking at these Estimates, instead of £2,000 being provided for the Perth-Albany road through Victoria Park and £1,000 for the Guildford road, also a further sum promised to the Belmont Roads Board for that portion of the Guildford road running through Belmont, I find that the sum of only £750 is provided altogether. I am aware that £500 of that amount has already been granted to the Victoria Park municipality, so that only the small sum of £250 will remain available for the Guildford road, to enable the local authorities to maintain that road during the next twelve months. The promises made by the late Director of Public Works ought to be honourably carried out; and the fact of the Minister having retired since the promises were made should not affect the due carrying out of definite promises to which that Minister committed the Cabinet before he retired from office. When contracts have been entered into by public bodies for the improvement of their roads, on the strength of money promised by the Works Department, those promises ought to be carried out so as to enable those contracts to be completed. Apart from that, these local bodies have entered into liabilities in connection with their roads; and I say that if those main thoroughfares are not put in thorough repair at once, the effect will be that sooner or later enormous sums will have to be provided for reconstructing those roads. I do hope this aspect of the question in connection with the proper maintenance of our main thoroughfares will be taken into serious consideration by the Government, and that some provision will be made in the Supplementary Estimates for carrying out those promises. With regard to salaries, I notice by casually glancing through the Estimates that nearly all heads of departments are set down for

considerable increases, and that, as usual, the rank and file get little or nothing. That seems to be the policy throughout, for we find the General Manager of Railways gets an advance of £250 on his salary, equal to 20 per cent. of the amount, whereas clerks getting something like £2 per week are in many instances not to get any advance, while others are to receive increases of £5. It does seem invidious that the heads of departments should be so liberally treated, and that those public servants who can least afford to go without an increase are deprived of what they are justly entitled to. The item of public batteries, referred to by the Premier in his Financial Statement, I am sorry to see is not at all satisfactory, for we find that comparing the figures for last year, the loss was something over £10,000. When the first Bill to provide public batteries was brought into this House, the Premier made a great point that public batteries were to be reproductive in their working, and would even leave a margin of profit. But I warned the House at the time that members were speculating on a "white elephant," and that sooner or later there would be many public batteries for sale cheap in Western Australia. That is rapidly coming about, for we find something like £40,000 has been expended, and we have a loss of over £10,000 in one year. It is time we should hesitate before increasing the number of our public batteries. Even this year it is estimated there will be a loss of £3,000, according to the Estimates; and I do not hesitate to say that this loss will probably swell into £10,000 before the year expires. With regard to the low rates charged for crushing, it was expected that pressure would be brought to bear on the Government to make the rates very low. But the Government should not give way to that pressure. These batteries should be self-supporting, and it would be far better, in the interests of the public, if we had granted bonuses in aid of the erection of batteries, instead of erecting batteries through the department.

THE PREMIER: People do not believe in private batteries, somehow.

MR. WILSON: Of course they do not believe in them. They will have their crushing done at the Government batteries, if we are foolish enough to do it for

them at a rate below cost. Here is a loss of £10,000 in one year, and we are giving away that amount to persons who get their ore crushed at less than cost.

THE PREMIER: You would give away, anyway.

MR. WILSON: I do not know why that remark is made, for I have had no opportunity of giving away. I know I am of a generous disposition and like to give what I can; but I do not think I would play fast-and-loose with the public funds.

THE PREMIER: But you do.

MR. WILSON: These figures speak for themselves, showing a loss, and that loss is going to increase; and I say the Government and this House should think twice before erecting any more public batteries. That is my contention. I was pleased to learn that the Speaker (Sir James G. Lee Steere) had referred to necessary additions which ought to be made to these Assembly buildings; and I may say we made a great mistake in ever putting up the additions to the Legislative Council building; for it would have been better to have made this place larger and more habitable, and to have combined the two Chambers under one roof. It is in the interests of the country that the members of both Houses should be kept together, for we could exchange political ideas and become better acquainted with each other, and that would do good in many ways. These additions to the Legislative Council buildings will cost, I suppose, £4,000 or £5,000.

MR. PIESSE: £2,400.

MR. WILSON: That would be about the cost of the additions here if the two Houses were put under the one roof, whereas now we have to go to further expense to make this place more convenient and comfortable for members of the Assembly. The Premier in his speech expressed astonishment that the population of the colony had not increased as fast as he had expected it would, and he said this was due to our isolation, and that the colony had not had a good name. I join issue with him there. I think Western Australia has had an excellent name; at any rate since I came into the colony, some nine years ago, it has had a name that has attracted people here, and one that has warranted the expenditure of enormous

loan funds. I do not accept the Premier's explanation as right; but I say that if we had turned our attention to reducing taxation and the cost of living, and making the conditions of life better within the colony, we should not now have cause to complain of a lack of population. We have made a mistake, for we ought to have done our utmost to cheapen the cost of living, and then I believe we would have had some thousands more of people than we have to-day.

THE PREMIER: Living on the goldfields has been cheapened by the construction of railways.

MR. WILSON: I need not enter into the financial condition of the colony, for that has been fully debated several times during this session; and the liabilities were entered into so explicitly and fully by the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Illingworth) that little is left to be said. I want to point out that the argument advanced on this and the other side of the House, that a large expenditure on our rolling-stock must be made immediately, is confirmed in the annual report of the General Manager of Railways, just issued. Several members have stated that in order to properly equip the existing lines we must spend at least half a million of money; and the General Manager of Railways says, in his report, that £464,000 at least must be expended before the end of 1902, in order to provide the necessary rolling-stock for properly equipping existing lines. Surely the Premier must admit that the contention of members on this side, that we had better stop any further loan authorisations and turn our attention to completing the works in hand and the proper equipment of our railways, is a right and sound contention; and I hope that when the right hon. gentleman reads the report of his responsible officer he will see that is the right course to pursue, and I hope the Premier will turn his attention to equipping the railways instead of trying to force on this House such new works as the Coolgardie-Norseman railway. One matter to which my attention has been drawn is an error in the Estimates in connection with the Land Titles Department; an error in the addition of the totals, while I mention merely that it may be corrected.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** Yes; an error in the addition.

**MR. WILSON:** Exactly. This puts the department in a false position, because it would appear from these figures that the expenditure has increased this year by some £1,100, instead of being the same as last year. That ought to be rectified, so that the department may not be put in a false position.

**THE PREMIER:** The total on page 107 is all right.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** Yes; the summary is right, but they have made a mistake in an addition under the particulars.

**THE PREMIER:** That is a clerical error, and does not affect the total of the Estimates.

**MR. WILSON:** I dare say not; but it looks as though they wanted to spend more this year than is asked for, and I called attention to the error, lest hon. members should take exception to it. Again, I should like to draw attention to the Architectural Department. Every year, I think, I have mentioned that we have an expensive department here, the cost of which is much greater than would be entailed if the work were done by outside architects. We have an expenditure on buildings projected of something like £146,000, I take it; and the staff expenses in connection with the carrying out of that work amount to 10 per cent.

**MR. PRIESSE:** That includes repairs to buildings.

**MR. WILSON:** I am taking them into consideration.

**MR. PRIESSE:** They are more expensive than supervision.

**MR. WILSON:** They are not more expensive than supervision. When we take into consideration that a great number of the new buildings projected in this colony are erected from standard plans which have been prepared for some time, we shall see that what I state is quite true. Such buildings as temporary post offices, schools, police quarters—we are not building hospitals now, but are simply repairing them—are, I take it, all erected from standard plans, therefore there is no need to design them; and we see this department is costing something like 12½ to 14 per cent. of the gross expenditure on buildings. Now any

architect in Perth would be very glad to undertake the Government work at from 5 to 7½ per cent.; and here we are paying double the money. My idea is, we could well dispense with this department, with the exception of the supervisor of buildings, the officer who has the care of the present existing buildings, with the duty of seeing that they are kept in proper order; and if we put our new work up to public competition, we should not only save money, but should be able to give good bonuses for the best designs, and to get the best class of architecture throughout the country, instead of having designs which are practically a disgrace to us. I hope this matter will receive serious consideration at the hands of the Government. Money can be saved, and I think it is our duty, if possible, to adopt such a plan as I now suggest. Further matters in connection with these Estimates I shall leave till we come to the details. I would simply say, in conclusion, we all regret to hear that the Premier has decided to retire from public life, at any rate, so far as regards the Premiership. We trust if he does not decide to return to this Parliament, which he certainly can do if he choose, he will make up his mind to represent this colony in the Federal Parliament, always presuming, to far as I am concerned, that he is a freetrader, and is prepared to fight for a revenue tariff only in the Federal Parliament. I think we are all agreed on that, as well as the right hon. gentleman. If that is the case, I am sure his candidature will have the support of every member of this House, and he will be returned without opposition to represent us in the Parliament of the Commonwealth.

**MR. DARLOT (DeGrey):** The only items in these Estimates to which I take exception are in connection with the defence forces. There is a capitation allowance put down at £2,500, and I am quite sure that this amount is just about half of what is required to carry out the usual military programme throughout the year, with the number of men we are likely to get as volunteers. If loan money be not specially used for increasing this allowance to something like £5,000, we must either reduce the present number of volunteers in the colony, or else the money will have to be found

somewhere. Then there is Item 73. The annual encampment is put down at £2,000. When we consider that all the men who attend those encampments get 8s. a day, and their railway fares have to be paid, it really seems to me as though some £8,000 should be found to cover the cost.

MR. A. FORREST: The amount was £1,200 last year.

MR. DARLOT: The hon. member interjecting says we spent only £1,200 last year. That may be true. I suppose it is true, if he says so; but I may tell him we had no annual encampment at all last year, because the South African contingents were encamped at the time, and it was impossible to hold an annual encampment; and moreover, the year before, the money was not available, and there was no encampment then. For the proper training of our volunteers it is absolutely necessary that they should be at least once a year gathered together in a large encampment, to be trained as one whole force, otherwise it is only making a farce of the game. Another thing, an encampment arouses a spirit of competition among the men, which is highly desirable if they are to be proficient at their work. And this is more particularly the case with regard to men from the country, who all look forward to gathering in Perth, where that spirit of rivalry and competition becomes so keen among them. As an instance, we had a good display the other night in the Drill Hall, where the interest taken by civilians as well as by the volunteers was very evident. Then, on the goldfields and in other centres, new corps have been recently established; but there is no provision made in these Estimates for new rifle ranges. There is also a paltry amount of £300 for accoutrements. Now at the very least these accoutrements will cost over £1,000, and I would ask the Minister of Defence, who, I believe, is the Premier: are these corps to be disbanded, or is the money to be found? For one or the other must be the case. I am with the member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson) that while all the young men are so willing to join, and put so much enthusiasm into the volunteer movement, the matter should also be taken up in the like spirit by the Minister. There is another thing I should have liked to see

among the Estimates; that is a special grant of, say, about £1,500, so that some five or six non-commissioned officers could be annually sent to England to be trained in the most modern military schools. These young men could return to the colony, and would be eligible for positions as instructors, or in case of war, as officers; and they, I maintain, would be better able to handle their fellow countrymen, thoroughly understanding their temperament, than, perhaps, would English officers. We have heard so much about the colonials, and how adaptable they are to guerilla warfare, that, probably, if our troops had been led by men of their own sort, they would have done even better. As to these new corps which have been formed, it is a general rule to have a drill hall in a central position in each district, in which the men can be drilled at night, where their arms can be kept, and to serve them as a general meeting place. There is no provision at all on the Estimates for drill halls. I am quite sure the Premier cannot get away from these items I have quoted. I should like a statement from him as to whether the number of the men is to be reduced, or where is the money to come from to carry on the volunteer movement as started by himself? I will go on to the salaries in the Railway Department. Several members have noticed that the high officials in the various departments, and in the Railway Department in particular, are listed for rises of salary. My experience in connection with these Government officials is that in every department, wherever you go in Western Australia, you always find the head of the department a regular slave, working morning, noon, and night, and especially at night; and I do not think, for the sake of a little bit of cheap advertising for the coming elections, hon. members have any right to speak in disparaging terms of those good officials who are to receive an increase. At the same time, I regret the Government have not been able to increase the salaries of the rank and file of the civil servants.

THE PREMIER: They have received their increases.

MR. DARLOT: Well, not sufficient to please the members of this House; and I should like to see higher salaries and fewer men.



MR. ILLINGWORTH: That is it; that is what we want.

MR. A. FORREST: The same thing has been said for twenty years.

MR. DARLOT: Yes, and the sooner we have a good "Black Wednesday" in this country, such as Mr. Berry had in Victoria, the better; and the departments need not fill the places of the men dismissed. They could cull out a few and distribute the salaries thus saved over the rank and file of the civil service.

MR. PISSE: Where would the dismissed men be sent?

MR. DARLOT: Send them to some place where their services will be rated at their true value.

THE PREMIER: At the present time the departments will not allow the Government to get rid of men, even when there is nothing for them to do.

MR. DARLOT: In connection with the different museums we have in Perth, I quite agree with the hon. member (Mr. Vosper) who suggested they should be brought under one roof. At the same time, when putting them under one roof and one caretaker, I think it would also be necessary to have a certain amount of office accommodation in the same building, so that an expert in each department may be always handy, as he is at present, to show people over these museums and thoroughly explain their contents. Undoubtedly, our Agricultural Bureau, although a long way up several flights of stairs, is a credit to those connected with it. The mineral exhibits of the colony, notwithstanding what has been said about the gold exhibits of Western Australia at the Paris Exhibition, are the finest in the world, and I think the Government were quite warranted in spending the money. It is expected to cost us some £80,000, and, notwithstanding what some of our newspapers say, that expenditure is justified. I presume some of those papers have not as many shares in some good companies as they would like to have, and therefore they speak disparagingly of our exhibits; but at the same time, though we may have tons of gold in this colony, that is no reason why we should have acres of floor accommodation in the Paris Exhibition to represent them, because only a small space is required to show mineral exhibits of great value.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I did not intend to speak again, only I would like to clear up one or two matters which were referred to the other evening by the member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes). That hon. member seemed to complain of some return which was furnished by the Treasury. I think if anyone has cause to complain it is this House and the Treasury, because I think it would be pretty difficult for anyone to understand what was meant by the return asked for. He asked for "the total amount of salaries and wages due to public servants payable out of loan and revenue respectively for the month ended 30th June, 1900." It was on the 12th September the hon. member asked that question. What does anyone make of it? The Treasury answered by giving the amount of the salaries and wages paid for the month of June. They thought the total amount of salaries and wages payable out of loan and revenue respectively for the month ended 30th June, 1900, meant the amount of money paid for the month of June, 1900.

MR. WILSON: He wanted to know what was outstanding.

THE PREMIER: The question did not say the amount that was not paid. The next question was: "The total amount due to sundry persons, payable out of loan and revenue respectively, for the year ended 30th June, 1900." The answer was, the amount that was paid from loan for the whole year was £1,012,672 13s. 3d., and out of the consolidated revenue £2,615,674 14s. 11d. The whole amount of salaries and wages due to public servants, payable for the month ended 30th June, 1900, was £124,174 5s. 10d. The only way the Treasury could have found out what wages or salaries were not paid on the 30th June for services rendered during that month would be to go round to all the departments and ask them if they had any accounts which had not been sent in, because the Treasury would not have had them. The Treasury pay all accounts that come in to them—all the salaries and wages on the 30th June. I think they are paid the day before, now—on the 29th June—but if they are not all paid on that day, it is within two or three days afterwards. The Treasury close the

accounts on the 10th of the month. The hon. member went on to say that the salaries and wages that were earned in June—that is what he says, according to the newspapers: perhaps he was not well reported—were paid in June and charged to July; therefore the balance was fictitious. The £68,000 and the £56,000—that is about £124,000—he says was charged against July, and that June did not bear this expenditure. That is an extraordinary statement for a public man to make in this House. I think it would be extraordinary to think that there was such a state of affairs as that.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Did you not say yourself you would not pay 53 weeks in a year.

THE PREMIER: I said I would only pay 52 weeks in the railway department, and quite right too. I had quite enough to pay that year. There was a lap over at the beginning of the year, and at the end of the year too.

MR. WILSON: That has been going on for a long time.

THE PREMIER: It has been going on for a long while; yes, always. We ask only for 52 weeks, and surely that is enough for the year. If we pay more, we shall have to ask for more in the year's appropriation. I explained all that in a speech on a previous occasion. Notwithstanding that the hon. member has told the people of the colony that the Government did not charge against June the salaries and wages of its public servants, and that all were charged against July; I say that is an abominable statement, devoid of truth in every particular.

MR. GREGORY: Why did you not answer his question? He asked you the amount due.

THE PREMIER: I did not understand the question, to tell you the truth. If the member stated that he wanted the amount of salaries and wages outstanding on the 30th June and rendered during the previous year but not paid, then there would have been no misunderstanding. If the hon. member will ask conundrums, how does he expect us to understand them? Then the member for the Murray (as reported) said the man who answered the questions must have been drunk. I can assure hon. members that has given a great deal of pain to the Under Treasurer,

and he has written to me about it. It is a charge against his reputation and honour, and it has given him, as it has given me, great pain. Remarks of that sort should not be made in regard to returns, because they give great offence and pain to high-minded and honourable public servants.

MR. WILSON: Why did you answer the questions if you could not understand them?

THE PREMIER: Would hon. members have us come back and say we do not understand the questions?

MR. WILSON: Yes.

THE PREMIER: The practice has been that when an answer does not satisfy a member, he comes back and asks again until he gets what he requires. As to the question raised by the member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson) in regard to defences, I did desire to place a larger sum on the Estimates under this head, but the fact is there have been so many demands on the Treasury that we could not find as much as we wanted. Apart from that we have to pay £15,000—I think that is the amount—for the Contingents: perhaps the amount will be more before the year is out. And then I was also influenced by the fact that federation was upon us. One of the great objects we had in joining federation was that the defences of the country would come under one head, and that they will be kept in good order I hope. It is far better, at any rate at present, we should not do much. I did not think the Committee would like to spend too much money in defences, seeing that in a short time the whole question of defence is to be taken over by the Federal Government. Of course it may be said we are recouped for any expenditure in this direction. Do hon. members know what that means? It is very easy to spend money, but there is a great deal of trouble in getting recouped for all this money which we spend on public works. Depend on it, the chances are we shall not get anything like the amount the works have cost us.

MR. WILSON: You have provided nothing for rifles.

THE PREMIER: I think you will find something on the Estimates.

MR. WILSON: For the cadets only.

THE PREMIER: I think there is something. There is an amount for small arms—£2,000, that is one thing.

MR. WILSON: Where is it?

THE PREMIER: The item is No. 74. If hon. members look through the Estimates they will see there is not a very big margin, only £7,000 after all the trouble of cutting down we are accused of. Therefore, having fixed our revenue at what we have fixed it, unless we are prepared to take out some other items which might be saved, we could not appropriate anything to this purpose. I should like to say in regard to what the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) said, although I feel that I should not refer to it at all, because there is no necessity for me to refer to statements made by the hon. member, but I may tell hon. members I never saw the circular referred to, nor was I a party to the article. I was not even asked about it. The first I saw of it was some reference in the newspapers. I never heard of the article referring to Fremantle. I never saw it until this day, except a reference in the newspapers. I had nothing whatever to do with it. In regard to the Financial Statement and the wasting of public money in revising and correcting it, all I have to say is that it is necessary to have the figures correct. I think it is the only speech of the year that I do look through carefully to see that all the figures are right. I receive no more consideration in respect to my speeches than other hon. members do. I do not ask for any, although I think I could receive some consideration, and perhaps I am entitled to some in my opinion; but I do not receive any more consideration than any other member of the House does. Hon. members always have a certain number of days in which to correct their reports. I believe the number of *Hansard* which is circulated amongst members is not the final printing, and if anyone finds an error there is time to send a correction to the Government Printer. That is very necessary. I wish we could all revise our speeches, because errors will creep in, however good the reporting may be; and the reporting has been really most excellent. At any rate it would be a very good thing if we could all revise our speeches, could we find time.

MR. LLLINGWORTH: We might make them worse if we did.

THE PREMIER: I may say in regard to the Financial Statement, the reporting was most excellent, and I think the reporters will say that the alterations were very few indeed. There was only one figure wrong and that was a clerical error, the transposition of a number, so that there is nothing in that. I should like to say before I sit down that I thank the member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson) for his generous observations in regard to myself. The only time I do not like the hon. member is when he speaks in the House. On every other occasion I have great regard and admiration for the hon. member. But somehow he takes up the cue of the Opposition: still that is one of the results of the system of government under which we live. Probably it is necessary that it should be so. However, I am very much obliged to the hon. member for his kindly references, and I hope we may for a long time continue to work together or to work in opposition for the good of the country.

At 6:30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

Question—that the first item in the Estimates, "His Excellency the Governor," be agreed to—put and passed.

*Executive Council*, £300—agreed to.

*Legislative Council*, £2,465—agreed to.

*Legislative Assembly*, £5,485—agreed to.

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

*Treasury*, £8,989 8s. 1d.—agreed to.

*London Agency*, £4,370—agreed to.

*Customs*, £29,430—agreed to.

*Harbour and Light*, £20,266:

MR. HOLMES, referring to Item 32, "Assistant Pilot, £300," asked if this was a new appointment, and whether the pilot who had been acting as leading hand for 7½ years at Rottnest, and had held a pilot's license 4 years and a master mariner's certificate 9 years, was to receive this appointment.

THE PREMIER: The appointment could not be made, presumably, until the vote was granted. He did not know whom the Harbour-master would recom-

mend for this position ; but he would say, from what the hon. member had stated, that a person who had been in the service 15 years and acted as pilot would have a claim to promotion.

MR. HOLMES : The reason why he asked the question was that a Select Committee which inquired into the working of the Harbour and Pilot Services some time ago recommended that men who had done good service at Rottnest should receive any promotion that became available in the service. An opportunity for promotion became available at Geraldton, and this man among other officers was available for the position ; but on the recommendation of the Geraldton people, an outside applicant received the appointment, and an injustice was done to those in the service.

THE PREMIER : In these matters the Minister had to be guided to a large extent by the advice of the head of the department. The position of pilot was one of great responsibility, and probably no member of this House would like to appoint a pilot against the advice of the head of the department. Of course one might use argument or influence in regard to some person who was known to be competent for the position ; but no Minister would go against the advice of the permanent head of his department. Suppose the head of a department had advised against the appointment of a particular person, and suppose some disaster happened, that a ship was lost with many lives, what would be said by any select committee inquiring into that case, if it was found that the officer in charge at the time had been appointed against the recommendation of the head of the department ? And what would be thought of the Minister who had appointed that officer ? A Minister was practically bound to appoint those whom the head of the department recommended for important positions, and in fact that was the rule throughout the service. Scarcely a man was appointed unless the head of the department recommended him as fit and proper for the position. A Minister did not like to take the responsibility of appointing men without such recommendation.

MR. HOLMES : If this was not a good man, he ought not to be in the service.

THE PREMIER : He might be a good man, but not suitable for a particular position. The Chief Harbour-master had told him (the Premier) that the rule was that persons appointed as pilots must have been in charge of ships, and that he liked to get those who had been recently in charge because they were *au fait* in the business. That applied to new appointments, and not to men already in the service. A master mariner in charge of a ship trading along the coast must be a competent person to take charge of ships, and he was regarded as specially suitable for such a position as this. Pilots at the port of Fremantle had now great responsibilities, with vessels coming in worth a quarter of a million in some cases. When the appointment was being made, he would bring the hon. member's remarks under notice.

MR. HIGHAM : The hon. member (Mr. Holmes) was evidently mistaken. The officer said to be recommended by the shipping community at Geraldton was represented by Item 70 in the Estimates.

MR. HOLMES : To that officer he had merely referred as an instance. The man acting as leading hand at Rottnest had been there  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years, and should be appointed assistant pilot.

THE PREMIER : He had received a £25 increase.

MR. HOLMES : But probably a new assistant pilot would be appointed with a salary of £225. This man acted as chief pilot in the absence of his superior, and had to take charge of any vessel entering the harbour, even a mail steamer. It was said that because he had given valuable evidence to the Select Committee on the Harbour Service, he had been a marked man ever since, and promotion was withheld from him.

MR. ILLINGWORTH, referring to items of lightkeepers' salaries, said many lightkeepers at these stations had been in the service for years without increment. They were on duty every day, and had few holidays. They must be sober and reliable men, and were paid the small salary of £2 a week.

THE PREMIER : They had fire, light, and house.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : And a good many fires would be required to make a man comfortable at Cape Leeuwin.

**THE PREMIER:** More was paid to the men at Cape Leeuwin.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** The light-keeper at Point Moore had been 16 years in the service, without increment or chance of promotion. Something should be done for all these men, either by giving longer holidays, or increased salaries.

**MR. SOLOMON:** As these men worked day and night all the year round, they were entitled to consideration.

**THE PREMIER:** No complaints had been brought under his notice.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** The men felt aggrieved, whether they complained or not.

**MR. A. FORREST:** The pay was certainly small.

Vote put and passed.

*Government Stores, £5,335—agreed to.  
Literary, Scientific, and Agricultural  
Grants, etc., £15,150:*

**MR. A. FORREST:** No provision was made for grants in aid of municipal park lands in Perth. The Premier had practically promised £1,000 to a deputation, and in view of that promise expenditure had been incurred. Coolgardie, Albany, and Geraldton had not been forgotten in the vote, but the city of Perth, with all its parks, was overlooked.

**THE PREMIER:** There was £500 for Hyde Park.

**MR. A. FORREST:** The City Council had no control over that area.

**THE PREMIER:** There was an amount for the Salvation Army Rescue Home.

**MR. A. FORREST:** What had the city of Perth to do with that? Unless provision were made on the Supplementary Estimates, the Council would find themselves short of money during the next financial year.

**THE PREMIER:** The hon. member, like others who had to do with municipalities, forgot that the Government granted these bodies 10s. in the £ subsidy.

**MR. A. FORREST:** Yes; but the Government paid no rates, and had deprived the city of ratable property.

**THE PREMIER:** There was £35,000 provided for the municipalities of the colony, and grants for improvements to the new cemetery, for improvements to recreation grounds generally, in which, however, Perth did not apparently parti-

cipate. There was a grant of £2,500 in aid of Perth Park.

**MR. A. FORREST:** What had that to do with the Perth City Council?

**THE PREMIER:** A good deal; and the grant to the Zoological Gardens was of benefit to the city. All these items showed the Government were most anxious to help the city of Perth. He should be glad to find money to assist the council in the good work done during recent years in making Perth clean, habitable, and artistic, and by improving waste spots in the city, but there had been great difficulty in making a balance at all.

**MR. A. FORREST:** Why not strike out other items, and utilise the money in this direction?

**THE PREMIER:** Every possible economy had been exercised.

**MR. A. FORREST:** It was not altogether satisfactory to be reminded that municipalities received 10s. for every £1 collected in rates. In Perth a considerable amount of ratable property from the eastern portion to the end of the western portion of the city had been taken away from the municipality, from which no rates were now collected. All the churches and schools in the city paid no rates, and the municipality could not find funds to beautify the city. The municipality of Perth required further funds to go on beautifying the gardens which had already been laid out; and on the strength of receiving something from the Government, money had been expended.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** It had been customary for the Swan River Mechanics' Institute to receive a grant every year. Did the item of £1,250 for mechanics' institutes and working men's associations and art societies cover that?

**THE PREMIER:** The Swan River Mechanics' Institute received £50 a year, which came out of this grant. In a former year the Government gave the institute £2,000 to help them in erecting their building, and the committee of the institute were satisfied with the amount granted.

Vote put and passed.

*Pensions, £5,943 7s. 2d.:*

**MR. A. FORREST:** Although several new names had been added to the pension list, there was no amount voted for the widow of the late Commissioner of

Police. For 50 years the late Commissioner served the colony, and during the whole of that time he received a very small salary. He lived up to his income, and had left his widow and family not well off. No one had worked for the colony with a greater desire for its benefit than the late Commissioner. One did not know whether the Treasurer had been approached on this matter.

THE PREMIER : Only recently, since the Estimates had been placed on the table.

MR. A. FORREST : No request had been made to him to bring this matter forward, but seeing that fresh names had been added to the pension list, some consideration should be given to the widow and family of the late Commissioner of Police. He suggested that the vote should be increased by £100.

THE PREMIER : This matter had not been brought under his notice until yesterday or the day before, when the widow of the late Commissioner wrote to him. He had expected that someone would bring the matter before him, because he was aware that the late Commissioner was not well off when he died. This officer had served the colony long and faithfully, and he (the Premier) had expected that some application would be made to the Government; but Mrs. Phillips hesitated to move in the matter, thinking the Government would do something on their own account. But the Government could do nothing until the matter was brought under their notice. He was not aware of the exact circumstances, but he knew that the widow was not well off. This question had not been dealt with by the Cabinet yet. When it was considered, and the exact circumstances were found out, some recommendation would no doubt be made to the House.

MR. MONGER : If ever West Australia owed a debt, it was to those who had been left behind by the late Commissioner of Police. It would be only becoming on the part of the Premier to say he would recommend to his colleagues the advisability of providing a vote in the direction asked for by the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest). Some small tribute of respect should be shown to the widow of the late Commissioner by the people of Western Australia.

Vote put and passed.

Refunds, £2,000 :

MR. ILLINGWORTH : Would the Treasurer throw some light on this vote?

THE PREMIER : A good deal of it came under customs. Moneys were often paid which had to be refunded. The amount was not large; last year £2,150 Os. 8d. was paid. In every business moneys had to be repaid.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : There ought not to be any provision for refunds on the Estimates. If moneys were received which the Government were not entitled to they ought to be refunded without a vote.

MR. SOLOMON : These refunds might occur in cases where duty had been paid on goods, and the goods had been re-shipped.

THE PREMIER : That was not the case, for there was an adjustment of such amounts every month. Once the money was paid into the revenue it could not be got back again, and a refund on the Estimates had to be made.

Vote put and passed.

Aborigines, £5,000 :

MR. PHILLIPS : Was it intended to amend the Aborigines Act to prevent natives from inhabiting towns in the way they did? A good deal of the amount was for rations given to natives who did not deserve them, as it was a means of bringing aborigines into the towns, where they got drink, and, instead of being a benefit, the assistance was really a curse.

THE PREMIER : This was rather a big order. What to do with the unfortunate natives who frequented towns and got drink was a difficult question to deal with. The Chief Protector had a lot of plans before him, and he was trying to form places outside towns, but so few of those aborigines would go to them. If there were a large number of aborigines, the Chief Protector might be able to deal with them, but some of the old hands, accustomed to certain haunts, would not go away, and it was the duty of the Government to see they did not want, and if they got ill to look after them.

MR. D. FORREST : The aborigines took care they did not want; they were spoon fed.

MR. DARLOT : This question had cost the Protector of Aborigines a lot of

trouble. The way in which aborigines in outside settlements were allowed to "loaf" about the town and partially work for a livelihood was to be deplored. It was difficult to deal with the aborigines, for one day they were ten miles away and the next they were living in a deplorable state near the towns. In some places the police rather encouraged aborigines about the towns. The police who were married men liked to have a little cheap labour about their premises, and they fed the native women so that they could get them to do a little work. If the police were the first to harbour the aborigines in the towns, it was hard to deal with them. The native assistants of the police also liked to have their countrymen about for companions. The "loafing" about tended to a very low and immoral life. In the town of Nannine the trouble was very rampant. He had gone into this subject with the travelling inspector, and found that a deplorable state of affairs existed. If the Aborigines Department insisted that the police themselves should not harbour the natives, and thus started a remedy, the citizens in the towns would have very little trouble with them.

Vote put and passed.

*Miscellaneous Services, £100,113:*

MR. GREGORY: Some explanation was needed for this large vote, especially as to what was included in item 3, "Incidental expenses, £9,000." Last year the Government expended under this heading £14,235 19s. 11d., and the Committee ought to be informed as to how this had been expended, the term "incidental expenses" being very vague. Another matter needing explanation was the large cost for the Coolgardie Mining Exhibition, for which a further charge of £750 appeared in these Estimates. Was this the last amount to be paid? Another important item was the Paris Exhibition, for which £18,000 more was put down in addition to £8,000 voted last year; although the Committee were then informed by the Premier that after voting the £8,000 a further sum of £4,000 would probably cover all expenses. We found now that the expenditure had been enormous, and it should be stopped to-night. The present estimate of the total expenditure for exhibiting at Paris was about £30,000.

The PREMIER: £12,000 of that was for gold specimens, which were worth that value.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The gold was all right.

MR. GREGORY: The Commission appointed in this colony to prepare exhibits had been very liberal, especially to themselves. One item was in regard to a "spread" at the Stock Exchange Club in Perth, for which £37 17s. had been charged, practically for a "burst." The commissioners also purchased a cabinet sideboard costing £85, and a dinner-wagon costing £90. There were also many items for wines purchased; but surely persons in this colony interested in wines should have been willing to give samples, and glad to have them exhibited in Paris as the product of this colony.

MR. PIESSE: The commissioners offered to buy samples, and the people who had samples to sell did not refuse the money.

MR. GREGORY: The thing was costing too much altogether.

THE PREMIER: £80,000 was passed last night on the hon. member's motions [eight-hours system for railway servants, also payment of members].

MR. GREGORY: If members of Parliament received the money, the people would know how it was spent; but they did not know what this expenditure was for in connection with the Paris Exhibition. The Government were now desirous of going further and of forwarding these exhibits to the exhibition which was shortly to be opened in Glasgow; and if that was to be done on the same scale of expenditure, what would it cost? Better stop the whole thing.

THE PREMIER: Doubtless the hon. member voted for exhibits being sent by this colony to the Paris Exhibition.

MR. GREGORY: But it was understood then that the cost would be about £12,000. Members must recognise that this expenditure had been wasteful.

THE PREMIER: Wait till all the details were received; then we should be better able to judge.

MR. GREGORY said he did not see why the Commissioners should have purchased a sideboard and a cabinet, he supposed for exhibiting West Australian timbers.

MR. KINGSMILL: They ought to have sent some of the Government members, for that purpose.

MR. GREGORY hoped the proposed expenditure for the Glasgow Exhibition would be crossed out.

THE PREMIER: All the information he could give in regard to "incidental expenses" was that all expenditure which was not classified in the Estimates, and had to be incurred in the course of the year, came under the head of "incidental expenses." He could not say from memory how the total was made up, but there were thousands of items, and a return might be obtained showing the details.

MR. GREGORY: Were grants for sanitation and progress committees included in this item?

THE PREMIER: No; there was a separate item for sanitation grants. There had always been a vote for "incidental expenses," and he supposed there always would be, because a great many expenses in the course of a year could not be classified under any existing vote, and had to be included in this item.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: How much whisky?

MR. GREGORY, referring to item 8, "Improvement of recreation grounds generally, £5,000," said a few months ago the Commissioner of Railways, when visiting Menzies, promised that £300 should be provided on the Estimates for the recreation reserve. The local body had expended the money; but he had inquired to-day at the Treasury, and learned that the money for this grant had not been ear-marked, and he believed it was not available.

THE PREMIER: Did the Commissioner promise it in a letter, or how?

MR. GREGORY: It was promised by the Commissioner during his visit.

THE PREMIER: If the Commissioner made a definite promise, and said the money would be available, of course that promise would be carried out; but if the Commissioner made a promise to see what he could do, it might not be so easy to provide the money.

MR. HOLMES, referring to item 17, "Coolgardie Mining Exhibition, £750," asked when these charges were to cease. The amount set down this year was larger than that voted last year, in addition to the large grants made previously.

THE PREMIER: These Exhibitions were a great trouble to the Treasury. He knew the history of the Coolgardie Exhibition in regard to its finances, and they were very unsatisfactory. They caused much trouble, and in the end the Government had to provide nearly all the money. The Municipal Council and the people of Coolgardie asked in the first instance if the Government would give £5,000 towards the holding of a Mining Exhibition, if £3,000 were provided locally. The Government agreed to do so, and Parliament voted that amount. This further amount of £750 in the present Estimates was to pay for some timber provided by the Canning Jarrah Company, of which the member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson) was formerly the manager. The whole building was floored with the timber, and the understanding was that out of the profits expected to be made from the Exhibition, the cost of the timber was to be paid, or that the timber would be sold and the company would be recouped. In these ways £8,000 was to be provided; but we found that the £3,000 promised by the people of Coolgardie was not provided, only £2,700 being forthcoming, and £1,000 of that was provided by the Municipal Council of Coolgardie as a loan. (On this last point he might say that in these Estimates would be found a sum of £3,000 to recoup the Municipal Council for the loan so advanced. When the Exhibition was nearly ready for opening, constant demands were made on the Treasury for more money or the whole thing would go. The Government had spent £5,000 already, and the intended Exhibition had been advertised all over the world, and we thought we must not have a failure. The Exhibition Commissioners mortgaged the property as a last move to the Savings Bank, for an advance of £3,000, and an Act of Parliament was passed authorising the loan. Neither the principal nor the interest of that loan had been paid. He, as Treasurer, had made it a condition of advancing the £3,000 through the Savings Bank that the property should be re-vested in the Crown, and therefore transferred from the Municipal Council, in whom it was now vested, unless the money was repaid. The Municipal Council would rather have the £3,000 than keep the property; so if the



property reverted to the Crown, it might be used for some other purpose at a future time. He expected that the Coolgardie Exhibition would altogether cost the country about £15,000. Those persons on the goldfields who were supposed to know best, had told him that the Exhibition had been the means of attracting a great deal of attention to this colony, and had been one of the finest things that had ever happened to the colony.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Did the Premier believe that?

THE PREMIER: These were mining men who told him this, and among them was his friend Captain Oats (member for Yilgarn). The end of it was that Parliament had to pay the piper.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Mind, the Government did not do it again!

MR. WILSON: It was due to the Committee that he should explain how this timber for the Coolgardie Exhibition was obtained from the Canning Jarrah Company, of which he was formerly manager. The Exhibition Commissioners applied to lease the timber, and the company foolishly agreed to do it; the timber to be returned in the same good order as received, or to be paid for at market rates. When the Exhibition closed, the company could not get the timber and could not get payment for it, and they found also that the timber had actually been mortgaged to the Government for an advance of £3,000. This transaction took place some three years ago, and now the Government proposed to pay the £750, the amount for the timber, if the Committee would pass it. Over 200 loads of timber were supplied, and it was only fair that the money should be passed by the Committee for payment to the company, or that the timber should be returned in the same good order as received.

THE PREMIER: The timber was mortgaged.

MR. GREGORY, referring to item 18, "Paris Exhibition, £13,000," moved, as a protest, that the amount be reduced by £1. A stop should be put to this kind of expenditure, and especially such items as that of providing a "spread at the Perth Stock Exchange."

MR. ILLINGWORTH: As one of the commissioners in Perth for arranging to

send exhibits to Paris, he believed there was a "spread" at the Perth Stock Exchange, but he was not present at it.

THE PREMIER: This charge was not for a "spread," but for holding the sittings of the commission in that building.

MR. MONGER: It was a question what the hon. member (Mr. Illingworth) would give them, if he provided a "spread."

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Whatever he gave them he would pay for himself. Speaking of the vote generally, he had been much surprised, when the accounts came in, that such a large sum had been expended on the Paris Exhibition. It was generally understood that some £12,000 or £15,000 would be required.

MR. MONGER: The specimens cost more than that.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Evidently not less than £35,000 would be the total cost; of which about £15,000 would be represented by gold specimens and artistic exhibits, which were valuable assets and would realise good prices. There should be a distinct expression of opinion regarding the next item "Glasgow Exhibition, £5,000"; for the cost of this would be at least £10,000, and perhaps £12,000. It would be useless to complain after the money had been spent. Now was the time. The president of the Commission, Hon. H. W. Venn, went to Paris with *carte blanche* from the Colonial Treasurer, and sent his accounts to the Agent General in London. These accounts had not come before the Commissioners, who had no control over the expenditure; and much of the money spent latterly had been spent in that way, no doubt judiciously, although the Commissioners generally could not be held responsible. The two exhibitions would cost the country close on £50,000, from which must be deducted £15,000, to be recouped by sales of exhibits, leaving a net cost of something like £35,000. For this money there had been done a vast amount of advertising; tens of thousands of books had been distributed over England, the United States, and Europe; and attention had been directed to this colony in ways that must be ultimately advantageous. A cinematograph had been in operation, exhibiting views of the colony to thousands of people at a time. There had been sent to Paris the greatest collection of gold specimens ever brought together in the world's

history. What effect their display would have on professional men, geologists, mineralogists, and large investors, could not be measured; but the resources of the colony had been advertised by pamphlets printed in English, French, and German, and scattered all over the continent. Allowing that there had been some waste and a little unnecessary expenditure on whisky, these two Exhibitions would cost £35,000, which could not be considered extravagant.

**MR. A. FORREST:** Money well spent.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** With the possible exceptions of London and New York, Glasgow sent abroad for foreign investment more money than any other city, and incalculable benefit must result to the colony from exhibiting these specimens in Glasgow. Though the expenditure was larger than anticipated, still, such ventures, once begun, must be finished. There had evidently been no material waste, and it only remained to pay the bill. Better withdraw the amendment, and spend the extra pound. If intended as a protest, the next item might be struck out, so as to stop expenditure on the Glasgow exhibition.

**THE PREMIER:** The mover of the amendment (Mr. Gregory) had jumped to the conclusion that the expenditure, because large, had been wasted; but probably satisfactory explanations would be forthcoming. Paris was an expensive city, and the details of the accounts were not yet available. It was necessary that someone on the spot be trusted with the expenditure. The commissioners wrote from Paris asking for control; and he, desiring to assist those who had done all the work, agreed to their request. No doubt the president of the commission drew on the Agent General in the ordinary course, with supporting vouchers for moneys required. It was difficult to estimate the great good such an exhibition could do. If we hid our light under a bushel, none would know anything of it. To-day he had received a letter from the president, dated 20th September:

Paris is becoming more full every week. Visitors to the Exhibition now number 300,000 daily, up to almost 600,000 daily. These are enormous figures; but it is impossible to realise them without seeing the crowds, stretching I may say for miles.

Depend upon it, many saw our small West Australian court, and were attracted by the wonderful exhibits of gold and other minerals. Who could estimate the resulting good to this country? Surely it was not measured by £30,000! We were not the only people exhibiting; for, with the exception of the Eastern colonies, exhibits came from all the world over. As could be seen by photographs on the table, it was a magnificent spectacle.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** The prices were also magnificent.

**THE PREMIER:** As a rising gold-producing colony, we had not done unwisely by showing the country's produce in the best place where it could be exhibited. This opportunity might not come again for years. Hundreds of thousands might be spent without doing anything like the amount of advertising obtainable through this channel. The mover of the amendment (Mr. Gregory) had apparently lived too long out of the way at Menzies, and, being economically inclined, did not like to see money spent, which he considered wasted. Let the hon. member take a trip to Paris. Those who had not rubbed shoulders with the outside world thought nothing which cost money could do any good, and were especially upset when it came to footing the bill. They asked, Why, when money was not available for culverts or mechanics' institutes, should it be distributed so lavishly amongst the gay and festive Frenchmen? This vote should pass, and the colony should also exhibit in Glasgow. Having embarked on the matter, having the exhibits at hand, no reasonable man would demand abandonment of the project. Give the colony a chance, not only in Paris, but in Britain. The site alone in Glasgow had cost some £1,000 or £1,200.

**MR. A. FORREST:** There should be no charge for that.

**THE PREMIER:** Exhibitions had to pay their way. Let us not turn back, having put our hands to the plough. Regarding the Glasgow Exhibition, he believed the Agent General would manage it better and more economically than the commissioners, as the former would be more under the control of the Government than honorary officers, who naturally did not like interference.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Could the Agent General talk Gaelic?

**MR. KINGSMILL:** The defence which had been set up for this expenditure seemed to be based on the principle that it was no good crying over spilt milk, and there seemed to have been a little milk spilt in regard to the Glasgow Exhibition. We should soon find that Western Australia possessed a kind of travelling show or circus, and he did not know whether the Premier intended to place the Agent General in charge of that. There seemed to be some anomalies in the way in which the exhibition was entered upon. In most exhibitions in Australia and other parts of the world it was customary for private individuals to exhibit goods for the sake of the advertisement, but the commissioners for the Paris Exhibition purchased articles of furniture, wines, and other goods; whereas the makers of those articles ought to have taken their chance of selling the goods after the exhibition was over. This was not altogether the fault of the exhibitors, who wanted to give the goods for nothing, but the commission insisted on buying the articles. As to the gold specimens, he admitted they were very well bought indeed.

**THE PREMIER:** A great many were lent, not bought.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** Those specimens would realise as much as was given for them, if not more.

**MR. HALL:** If the Paris Exhibition cost £50,000 without considering the value of the mineral specimens the money would have been well spent. Not only were we exhibiting our resources to the French nation but to the whole world. On the authority of the French consul who had just arrived from Paris, he could inform the Committee that the Western Australian court was a credit to Western Australia. The French consul had said that the court was visited by a large number of people, and very considerable comments were passed on the extraordinary wealth of the colony, as exemplified in the gold and timber exhibited. The only complaint the French consul made was that the building in which the exhibits were placed was not suitable, and that it was out of the way; that was not the fault of the commissioners.

**MR. WILSON:** The cost of the Paris Exhibition exceeded considerably our expectations. Although he moved the motion for the colony to be represented, he never expected that the cost would run into such large figures. However, he believed the colony would reap an enormous benefit from the exhibition, and it was the cheapest way of advertising any country. So far as the Glasgow Exhibition was concerned, there was no need to have it controlled by the present commissioners, who were appointed mainly for the purpose of collecting exhibits and making the preliminary arrangements. However, the chairman of the commission went to Paris, also the chief architect, which meant an additional expense. Now that the exhibits had been properly arranged it was only a question of removing them and re-arranging them in a similar fashion in Glasgow. The business could be transferred to the Agent General who, with his staff and with the assistance of one or two persons in Glasgow who could be obtained at moderate cost, could run the thing very well. The cost ought certainly not to exceed £10,000. The benefit to Western Australia would be enormous. There were gentlemen largely interested in this colony in London who might be appointed as honorary commissioners to assist the Agent General, and no doubt they would willingly undertake the work. The exhibition would do far more good than distributing copies of the *Land of Promise* and other circulars and books. People read books and forgot them, but after seeing the splendid specimens of gold and timber from this colony people would not forget it. He was surprised to hear that the commission purchased exhibits, and he hoped this did not apply to timber and furniture, which ought to have been provided free. When he was connected with the timber trade he supplied certain exhibits of timber, and private companies and individuals were only too pleased to provide exhibits for the sake of the advertisement.

**MR. GREGORY:** What he complained of was the gross extravagance in connection with the expenditure on this exhibition. He did not say the exhibition did not do good. He saw one item, "Stock Exchange Club, luncheon £37 13s.," such an item as that should not appear.

Then there was a cabinet sideboard purchased for £85.

THE PREMIER: But look at all the photographs.

MR. GREGORY: There was also a nice little bill for photographs, £565. It was necessary to draw attention to extravagance when members noticed it.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. A. FORREST, referring to grants in aid of fire brigades, said that different municipalities were receiving grants from the Government of from £50 to £200 for the upkeep of fire brigades. Bunbury Fire Brigade was to receive a grant of £350.

THE PREMIER: That was a special grant for an engine.

MR. A. FORREST: Boulder last year received £300, and this year £150 was set down for the same fire brigade.

THE PREMIER: They had no water there.

MR. A. FORREST: All the municipalities were receiving large sums of money except the municipality of Perth. On the Estimates there was a sum of £450 for the upkeep of the Perth Fire Brigade, while the municipality of Perth had to pay £2,000, and the insurance companies another £2,000.

THE PREMIER: That was according to the Act.

MR. A. FORREST: Was there not any chance of the Act being altered? It seemed to be a most unfair Act; how the members for the city of Perth allowed such an Act to pass he did not know. The municipality of Perth had to pay four-ninths of the upkeep of the brigade and the insurance companies another four-ninths, while the Government paid one-ninth. The Government should be paying the four-ninths and the municipality of Perth one-ninth.

THE PREMIER: The Government insured their buildings.

MR. A. FORREST: The municipality of Perth also insured their buildings. If there was time this session he would introduce a short Bill amending the Fire Brigades Act in the direction indicated.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member could not bring in a Bill making a charge on the public revenue.

MR. A. FORREST: The rates received by the municipality of Perth totalled £22,000, and out of that £2,000

had to be paid for the upkeep of the fire brigade. It seemed that Perth received little attention from the Committee, and the members for Perth did not seem to pay much attention to their duty. There was the member for Perth (Mr. Hall) who knew very well that grants were promised by the Government, but he did not see that the promises were carried out. He (Mr. A. Forrest) drew the attention of the Commissioner of Railways to certain omissions from the Estimates, but that member came so late. The member for East Perth (Mr. James) was never in his place, and the member for North Perth (Mr. Oldham) had bolted from the country. He had nothing to say against the brigade or its officers, but he objected to the city of Perth being neglected, being robbed he called it, of £2,000.

MR. HALL: It was very well for the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) to discharge a lot of unnecessary venom on the members for Perth, but the arrangements in reference to the Fire Brigades Act were authorised by the Perth City Council. The members for Perth were not consulted in the matter at all; they never were consulted by the Perth City Council. If the Perth members dared to interfere with anything appertaining to the City Council, they were looked upon as a lot of interlopers. The onus of this wrong lay with the Perth City Council themselves and not with the representatives of the city. There was no doubt the insurance companies had "got at" the Perth Council in this matter, for in other parts of the world the companies, for whose benefit fire brigades were maintained, did pay almost the whole of the cost, whereas here the citizens had to pay as much as the companies for maintaining the brigade, and that was certainly wrong. If the member for West Kimberley would bring in a Bill as suggested he (Mr. Hall) would be pleased to support it. To throw blame on the members for Perth, as the hon. member had done, was not just, because there was not one instance on record in which the Perth Council had approached any of the city members to ask for their support in any matter. The Fremantle members worked hand-in-hand, and got more money for their district than was granted for Perth or any

other part of the colony; yet they were always asking for more, and got it; whereas in Perth the City Council seemed to look at members representing the city as useless to them, and they seldom asked the members even to introduce a deputation—no doubt because there were several budding politicians in that council, who perhaps did not want to add anything to the influence of the city members.

MR. MONGER, referring to item 50, "Purchase of land for racecourse, Northam, £300," said it was seldom he referred to anything where the town adjoining the one he had the honour to represent was concerned, but he did think that when the Government placed on the Estimates a sum of £300 for the purchase of additional land for a suburban racecourse for Northam, some notice should be taken of it, especially considering that some few years ago, when there happened to be items on the Estimates for Queen's plates for Perth and Roebourne racing clubs, he (Mr. Monger) was the mover in having those items struck off the Estimates. Therefore he would hardly be doing his duty without calling attention to this vote, apparently supported by the Government, whereby it was proposed to buy additional land in connection with the Northam racecourse. The W.A. Turf Club had purchased several thousand pounds worth of land in the vicinity of their racecourse near Perth; and if any country club or town club required to purchase land for that purpose, it ought to do so out of the club funds. He believed that a member for this or another place had some connection with this item on the Estimates; and sooner than support the voting of this money, he (Mr. Monger) asked for some expression of opinion from hon. members. Only a few days ago his attention was called to this item; and whilst desirous of doing all he could for the town adjoining his constituency, yet in connection with racing and gambling, and vices of that sort, if the Northam Racing Club could not out of its own funds find sufficient money to carry out these "nefarious practices," it was hardly reasonable to apply to this House for money to do so. He moved formally that the item be struck out.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS: With regard to this item, the town of Northam stood in the position of many of the old districts of the colony, in not having reserves of land set aside in the early days for recreation and other public purposes; and Northam was not the only district which had applied to the Government for assistance of this kind. Northam had received very little assistance from the Government hitherto, and he hoped the hon. member who had moved the striking out of this motion was not in earnest in his action. Although he (the Commissioner) was not a sporting man, Northam had done a great deal in helping itself, and in that respect it set a good example to other districts. He hoped that this item would be passed.

MR. DARLOT: It would be a pity if the old racecourse at Northam was to be rendered almost useless for want of the purchase of an additional bit of ground, and there ought to be further action in regard to this item.

THE PREMIER: The facts were that during some 30 years at least there had been a piece of land near Northam used by the people as a racecourse; and the construction of the Goomalling Railway had so altered the condition of things that it had become desirable for the people to acquire this land for public recreation which they had been so long accustomed to use. It was not a valuable piece of land for cultivation, but was useful for racing, being level and convenient for the purpose; and the people of Northam wanted to acquire the fee simple of the land, which belonged to Mr. Dempster, being a portion of the Chidlow estate. That gentleman had offered to sell this area of land for £300, and the people had asked the Government to provide them with this land as a suitable place for public recreation. Such requests had been granted in regard to other places, when money had been available; and the Government thought they could not do better than reserve this land for the use of the people of Northam for ever for recreation purposes.

MR. HALL: While not objecting to this item, it was rather strange that a Government holding in abhorrence such things as sweep-promoting, betting, and other things incidental to racing, should

place on the Estimates a sum of £300 for purchasing a racecourse. He only hoped the Government were now seeing the error of their ways, and were becoming more liberal-minded.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Could not people race without betting?

MR. KINGSMILL: A lot of them bet without racing.

Amendment (to strike out the item) put, and negatived.

HON. SIR J. G. LEE STEERE (referring to Item 54, "Purchase of site for recreation ground, Peppermint Grove, £300"): The other evening when drawing the attention of the Government and the House to the fact of additional accommodation being required in connection with this Chamber, he had mentioned that he believed there were several items on the Estimates which could well be spared, as a means of obtaining sufficient funds for providing this necessary accommodation. He had then in his mind's eye two items particularly. He recollected some time ago reading an account of a deputation to the Premier, asking him to provide funds for purchasing a piece of ground at Peppermint Grove for public recreation purposes. He thought then it was such a ridiculous proposal that the Government would not pay the slightest attention to it; but he was afterwards surprised to see the sum of £3,000 put on the Estimates for the purchase of land at Peppermint Grove. Now Peppermint Grove was a very small place, having not more than 50 houses; and it was too much to ask this House to expend £3,000 in purchasing a very small piece of land, which he believed was not required for recreation purposes at the present time. He had himself a valuable property in that district, and the purchase of this land would rather benefit his property than otherwise; but he could not look at the matter in that way. He did not believe the land which was proposed to be purchased was worth one half of what the Government proposed to give for it; and in order to make some saving in these Estimates, which saving was very much required, especially in view of two resolutions passed last evening which would require an extra expenditure of £80,000 or £90,000 a year—where this money was

to come from he could not imagine—it was necessary we should make some saving, and he therefore moved that this item be struck out.

THE PREMIER: If the Speaker (Hon. Sir J. G. Lee Steere) had been surprised at seeing this item on the Estimates, he (the Premier) was sure hon. members who knew this ground would be very much surprised at the speech which they had just listened to. It seemed to be assumed that this land was only required for the use of the people at Peppermint Grove, whereas the object was to preserve this site as a recreation ground for the people of Perth, for all time. This land, comprising 8 or 9 acres, was especially convenient for pleasure parties who used the river. The Speaker had said there was no necessity for purchasing this ground for the public; but if the hon. member were to go there on a holiday and see the large number of people visiting that locality, and, not having the use of any public ground, had to play on the road adjoining the riverside, he would realise the necessity for securing this convenient recreation ground for the public. This was in fact the most frequented place on the whole river for holiday people and pleasure parties; and this ground fronted the river, except that a public highway separated it from the river, so that persons using the land could cross the highway to and from the river.

MR. KINGSMILL: What about Point Walter?

THE PREMIER: Point Walter was further down, and that had been secured to the public also; but this land at Peppermint Grove was in a sheltered bay near the residence of Mr. Keane. The Government should never have allowed that beautiful piece of land to get into the hands of private owners, but should have reserved it for the public. If eight or nine acres of land in that very suitable situation, adjoining the road and fronting the river with only the road between, could be obtained for a moderate sum, it would be a good thing to purchase the land. If the item were struck out, no harm would be done, for there was no obligation to buy; but if this eight or nine acres of level ground, fenced in and supplied with water, were not acquired now, it would be impossible to find in the neighbourhood other vacant land large enough for

a public reserve, and the loss would be a misfortune for ever.

MR. WILSON: Was there a water frontage?

THE PREMIER: Between the land and the river there was only a road.

MR. A. FORREST: Having been the owner of the original grant of 250 acres, including this land, he knew there was no other available spot at Peppermint Grove. The land was cleared, was fairly level, and the big peppermint trees had been left standing. He valued the land some time ago at £4,500. If put in the market and sold in sections, it would fetch much more than the price asked; but the present owners, who being practically forced to sell, had accepted the Government offer. He could commend this as a good purchase, much needed in the district.

MR. GREGORY: Being so close to the sea, it smelt fishy.

MR. A. FORREST: It was not near the sea, but was close to the river.

MR. WILSON: This being one of the most beautiful spots on the river, frequented on holidays by large crowds, he could not support the amendment, though the land should have been secured years ago, when it could have been bought much cheaper. Open places for recreation grounds must be provided. In this respect Perth and Fremantle had been neglected; and before the increase in land values resulting from improved commercial prospects came about, something should be done generally in this direction.

MR. KINGSMILL supported the amendment, as a great many of the visitors to this place went by water, for the sake of a trip on the river, and they could as well be accommodated at Point Walter or Point Chidleigh. The Premier complained that people played on the road. If this land were purchased they still would do so, as their object in going there was to get near the water.

Amendment put and negatived, and the item passed.

MR. WILSON, referring to item "Purchase of land at Bicton for recreation ground, £3,000," asked what area of ground was under offer?

THE PREMIER: The amount had been placed in the Estimates on a requisition signed by all the Fremantle

members of Parliament in both Houses, and the mayors of all the local municipalities. There was some 19½ acres, with a frontage to the Swan just beyon Bicton, in going from Perth to Fremantle. The face of the land had been quarried, and it extended to the old ferry.

MR. HIGHAM: The whole of the Fremantle municipalities, councillors and mayors, as well as members for the district, were unanimous in asking for this site.

MR. KINGSMILL: Was it a national work?

MR. HIGHAM: It was certainly a municipal work, of great benefit to all Fremantle residents. If this land were not worth the money allocated, that represented by the last item was not worth one-quarter of the money. This 19½ acres was properly sheltered, suitable for a park and garden, and had all the elements of a good recreation ground for the people.

MR. DARLOT: Was there any reason for the purchase?

MR. HIGHAM: Having passed the last item, there was no reason for rejecting this.

MR. HOLMES, referring to item, "Leederville, Refund of moneys illegally obtained from the Treasury, £418," asked what this was for?

THE PREMIER: The Leederville municipality had made erroneous claims for the Government subsidy, alleging that they received more money for general rates than had actually been collected. The Auditor General had called on the Council for a refund, and the Treasury were compelling a refund by stopping the subsidy; consequently the Council were in a difficulty. The present mayor and councillors acknowledged the error, which, however, had been committed by their predecessors; they were loaded with debt and could not carry on; and the only way to help them was by a vote of the Legislature. Knowing the difficulties in that sandy district, where so much work on roads, etcetera, had to be done with borrowed money; seeing also that the fault was that of a former council's servants, and that if Leederville had asked for this money from the Government years ago, it would probably have been granted; seeing also the immense amount of work done by the Council, he

had thought the least he could do to get them out of the difficulty would be to ask the Committee to vote the money.

MR. A. FORREST, while supporting the item, said he did not believe Leederville was the only municipality in the colony which had played the same game. It would be advisable for the Government to send one of their auditors to various outlying municipalities, where the rates collected were so small that the health and other rates were probably added to the general rate with a view to getting the 10s. in the £ subsidy for the gross amount received. Through some trouble in the Leederville municipality this method had been discovered, but no blame attached to the present council, and taking into consideration the difficulty of carrying on municipal work in that sandy district, the expenditure was justifiable.

MR. GREGORY, referring to item "Compensation to J. B. Roe for loss of office as District Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, Perth, £350," asked the Premier to explain.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Roe had held this office for many years, together with that of Sheriff, and his pension for the former office would have amounted to more than his salary for the latter. The Government did not think it justifiable to pay that pension, and refused to do so. As the officer was paid by fees, they maintained the office did not come within the Pensions Act, and compromised the matter by paying the officer a year's fees. It was not desirable that the Sheriff should be the District Registrar, for the latter office should be connected with the Registrar General's Department. Moreover, the income from the registry had been very considerable. The fees amounted to £350 per annum, and would probably greatly increase. The Government thought it best in future to receive the fees, and appoint a salaried officer to supervise the registry. By that means the Government would make some money now, and a good deal more in future. Owing to the increase in the size of Perth, the District Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages received a considerable amount in fees, probably not less than £350 a year; and a sum equivalent to one year's fees was given to this officer.

MR. GREGORY: Had he any legitimate claim to compensation?

THE PREMIER: He had held the position so long that he could not be got rid of without compensation. The Government found it better to have the work done in the Registrar General's office, and it was expected that the Government were now making a good deal of money by the transaction.

MR. HOLMES, referring to the item, "Compensation to the widow of the late Geo. Harris, workman at Dardanup bore, £371 2s.," asked whether this man was killed at the bore put down on the estate of the member for Wellington (Hon. H. W. Venn).

THE PREMIER: All the questions of the hon. member had been answered on this matter.

MR. HOLMES: But the House did not understand the position exactly, and it ought to be explained. Mr. Venn undertook to put down a bore, and when it became expensive to him, the Government came to the rescue and spent £1,500, this man being killed in the process. The Premier last night was very much opposed to payment of members, but the member for Wellington had received in this connection some £2,000.

THE PREMIER: And the member for Wellington said he had been ruined in consequence; that it had cost him £1,000, for which he got nothing.

MR. HOLMES: And the Premier seemed to be in great doubt as to whether the statement of the member for Wellington was correct.

THE PREMIER: No doubt was expressed.

MR. HOLMES: The Dardanup people seemed to think this looked very much like a job.

MR. MONGER: Was the hon. member in order in discussing last year's expenditure?

MR. HOLMES: This item was never voted last year, but had been paid without any authority from Parliament.

MR. KINGSMILL: With what object was the bore put down?

THE PREMIER: It was put down at first to bore for artesian water.

MR. KINGSMILL: It was hard to imagine any circumstances in which Dardanup suffered from water, either in summer or winter, because in summer the water was a little below the surface,



and in winter it was considerably above the surface. Who would have reaped the benefit of the bore, if the object had been obtained?

**THE PREMIER:** The arrangement was the one usually made in regard to boring, namely that the Government found the plant and the owner paid the wages. The bore was put down for the benefit of the owner.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** Then the owner ought to pay for it.

**THE PREMIER:** Perhaps the owner ought, but the hon. member ought to try to get the money out of the owner.

Item passed; other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

*Premier's Department, £1,249 10s. 7d. :*

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Was it necessary there should be another chief clerk for this department, at a salary of £425 a year? This was a vote on which he looked with grave suspicion, because a similar department in Victoria proved so unsatisfactory that it was abolished. It was a step in the wrong direction to have this department here. At present he desired to know whether it was necessary to increase the expenditure of this department by practically 50 per cent. when probably in the coming year there would be no necessity for such a large vote as in the past, and probably not so much. The vote last year was £888, and this year it was £1,249, and he would like to know to what dimensions the department would grow. Why was the department there at all?

**THE PREMIER:** There was a Premier's Department in every colony so far as he knew, and certainly in Victoria and Queensland.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** The Premier would find that it was not a general practice elsewhere to have a Premier's department, and, in any case, it was desirable to know the reason for an increase of 50 per cent. in the expenditure.

**THE PREMIER:** Why was it that every year a set was made at this department simply because he presided over it? Hon. members seemed to think they could say anything of any department closely connected with himself, and that if they got him annoyed they did service to the State. Why should this depart-

ment not have a chief clerk as well as any other department?

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Why should the department exist at all?

**THE PREMIER:** Why should there be a chief clerk in each of the other departments, and not in the Premier's office? Was there nothing to do in the Premier's office? Under this department there were a number of other departments, and a vast amount of correspondence, public, semi-public, and private, came in from all parts of the country, while people were continually asking to see the Premier on all kinds of business. All this concentrated in the Premier's office, and there were only these few men to do the work. But if only one man were engaged in the department, members of the Opposition would complain, because they seemed to think that by striking at the department they could annoy him. He made that statement for what it was worth.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** It was not worth anything, because it was not true.

**THE PREMIER:** In any other part of the world, with the revenue and expenditure of this colony, the Premier would be surrounded by a dozen clerks, who would be at his beck and call as in Victoria, where all the Premier had to do was to ring a bell and have one or two shorthand writers at a moment's notice. As he had said, in Queensland there was a department of this kind, with secretaries and clerks; and the reason this chief clerk appeared on the Estimates, was because some good man was required who understood correspondence and could write letters, at any rate grammatically—a qualification not always to be procured. Some hon. members seemed to think that if a man had superior qualifications, there was something wrong about him. This officer had been in the Postal Department, but could not get on with the Postmaster General. This had been known for years, because this chief clerk was a very old officer with a very good career. He entered the service in the Survey Department before he (the Premier) was head of it.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** The man had not been attacked.

**THE PREMIER:** But the man had been attacked by others if not by the member for Central Murchison (Mr.

Illingworth), and he (the Premier) wished to speak for him. This officer was transferred to the Governor's office in the time of Governor Broome, who, if anything at all, was a martinet, with a liking for smart people around him, from the Governor's office he went to the Post Office, and had been acting Postmaster General on more than one occasion. He (the Premier) had known this officer for twenty years as an intelligent, well-educated, smart officer, trustworthy and reliable in every way, and yet, simply because he could not get on with the Postmaster General, all sorts of things had been said about him. Was it likely that he would be taken into the Premier's office if he were not competent, or that he (the Premier) would concern himself with officers who were no good? One of the officers holding a subordinate place at £200 a year went to the war, and then this officer, Mr. Williams, offered to come temporarily and take up the drudgery of the work of registering, which was certainly an occupation no chief clerk would undertake. Mr. Williams threw himself into the work, because he felt he was not recognised or getting on well in the Post Office, and was glad to get away with the chance of doing some good, which he could not do owing to his not getting on well with the Postmaster General. Something had been said about the Commission which inquired into the working of the Post Office, and he looked to see if they condemned this officer. He did not find that they condemned him. The report said:

At present, information with regard to any particular branch is obtained by the Postmaster General from the head of that branch, and he admitted he could not find the Chief Clerk so much work to do as formerly.

That was a curious thing in a big department containing thousands of people. The report continued, "The Chief Clerk stated, in his evidence, he was not fully employed, as the Postmaster General had taken the work out of his hands, and did not use his services to the extent he might." The Chief Clerk was a loyal officer, not desirous of saying more than he need. The member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson) and the member for Toodyay (Mr. Quinlan) were members of that Commission. This officer did not blame the Postmaster General in any way, but

he acted like a gentleman and said the Postmaster General had taken the work out of his hands and did not use his services to the extent he might. The report proceeded:

He also said that on his return to duty, after twelve months leave of absence, he found a number of officers doing the work he was performing prior to going on his holiday. The evidence shows that the Chief Clerk has now duties allotted to him which can easily be carried out by a subordinate officer. Most of the duties which were formerly entrusted to the Chief Clerk are now performed by the Chief Inspector. Under the circumstances, we think that the position of Chief Clerk, as at present constituted, should be abolished.

The Government were willing to carry that out and abolish the office; but he (the Premier) had always been, and hoped he always would be, opposed to pensioning off young men with plenty of work in them. Surely in the civil service we could find some place for a person without pensioning him off, and giving him what he would be entitled to if we abolished his office—perhaps five or six years' service added to his pension. In order to carry out the recommendation of the Commission, the Government had been looking for a place for this officer. This Registrar went away and another was obtained, and after three or four months' experience of that officer in his (the Premier's) office, they found he was so useful that they did not like to lose him; therefore he (the Premier) then said to Mr. Williams, "Would it not be better for you to leave the Post Office and come in here? If you do, I shall be glad to recommend this position for you." The officer agreed to that, and he (the Premier) did not know that the officer had acted wisely, because in a few months the Post Office would be transferred to the Federal Government. There were lots of good berths in the Post Office; but rather than carry on under the conditions which existed, Mr. Williams was ready to go anywhere and do anything. As to his present office, we were quite satisfied with him and glad to have him. We must have trustworthy persons about us, men of some ability; and it was a good thing for the Government when this opportunity occurred to obtain such an officer without any extra cost to the State, for although the amount appeared on the Estimates to be

extra, yet that officer had then his engagement in the Post Office, and was therefore a public servant.

MR. A. FORREST: Was he Registrar?

THE PREMIER: No; there was a Registrar besides, at £180 a year.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What was his position in the Post Office?

THE PREMIER: Chief Clerk.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What was his salary now?

THE PREMIER: The same as before. He was a very old officer, of more than 20 years' standing. It was very necessary to have a Chief Clerk in the Premier's office. One person alone could not look after the papers. Every night there was a boxful of papers for him (the Premier); often there were a hundred papers in one night, which had to be looked into and reported upon, and there must be men to do it. He had much pleasure in asking members to support the vote.

MR. WILSON: During all the boom time, when we had great pressure on all our public departments, and when (he ventured to say) the pressure on the Premier's office was far greater than at the present time, that office was carried on without a chief clerk; but now a chief clerk had been appointed. We knew the reason why, but it was the duty of the leader of the Opposition to call attention to this matter. If a chief clerk was not required three or four years ago, when the work was probably 50 per cent. more than at present —

THE PREMIER: Oh, no! There was more work now than ever.

MR. WILSON said he could not understand it.

THE PREMIER: It was true.

MR. WILSON: Then the right hon. gentleman must have taken more work on himself.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: The hon. member would be able to put it right next year.

MR. WILSON: Probably. He was going to refer to the Postal Commission. The Commission did not find anything against the ability or character of the officer referred to, but simply found on the evidence that he was doing boy's work in the Post Office. Whether that was due to the Postmaster or the Chief Clerk, one did not know. It was a question of

abolishing the Postmaster General or the Chief Clerk, and they judged the Chief Clerk should be abolished.

THE PREMIER: Certainly; quite right too.

MR. WILSON said he did not blame the Premier for finding a billet for this gentleman in his department, provided the Premier could profitably employ him. If the services of that officer were required, no one could object; but it was only natural for the members of the Opposition to criticise the appointment, when they bore in mind that such office was not in existence in this department three or four years ago. The vote for this office showed on the face of it £888 expended last year, and the amount rose to £1,249, the bulk of the increase being the salary paid to this officer. Members were all willing to accept the Premier's statement that the work had increased, but he confessed he could not understand it.

MR. KINGSMILL: It was a pity the Premier should always be called on to defend this department. He congratulated the right hon. gentleman on the way in which he backed up his officers. It must be very satisfactory to the officers to know they had so sturdy an advocate in the House; so loyal a chief as the Premier had always shown himself. An increase of 50 per cent. seemed to point to only one conclusion. Two or three years ago the Premier had the credit of doing all the work of the Ministry, and if this 50 per cent. increase was to be established, he must congratulate the other Ministers on having so little left for them to do. The Premier seemed to gather into his hands all the credit of all the departments. Judging from the remarks which had fallen from the Premier he (Mr. Kingsmill) did not think there would be any motion to strike out the £425. The Premier's remarks seemed rather to point to the conclusion that when we came to the salary of the Postmaster-General we should make an effort to strike that out.

THE PREMIER: Oh, no! The Postmaster General was a good officer, too.

Item passed; other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

Police, £115,913:

MR. SOLOMON: The police force was not at all adequate in many parts of the colony. Although the amounts crept up, the condition of the force did not seem to

be up to the same mark as it was some years back, more particularly in regard to the coast. He believed there were eight men who had to do a beat of about four miles, and he supposed they put in about eight hours each. It was impossible for those men to prevent anything like smuggling along that four miles. These men had to take the whole of the coast for that distance, including the esplanades and jetties, and now there were vessels on either side of the river, there being three at the present time. Doubtless smuggling had been carried on, judging from what one heard, more particularly in regard to tobacco and cigars. The colony lost more through want of surveillance in this respect, than the amount it would have to pay for thoroughly good men to watch. Now vessels were coming from all parts of the world, more particularly foreign vessels, it was necessary that the strictest caution should be shown regarding those vessels, and what was landed from them, especially in the night time. He believed that on the north side of the river there was a patrol kept in the day time, but no watch in the night time, so that the colony could be robbed of any amount of revenue during the night time, by the stuff being landed surreptitiously. He hoped the Government would take this view of the question and get the force up to what it ought to be.

MR. HIGHAM: In connection with this matter he asked the Premier the other day whether it was the intention of the Government to reorganise and increase the police service of Fremantle. He got a reply which at the time he deemed satisfactory, but on making inquiries he found it was necessary to have more constables in the service. Supposing there were twelve constables, if they divided that beat into three watches of eight hours each, they found there were four men to watch something over eight miles of beach; and that small number could not properly do it. Four men were absolutely inadequate to do the service required of them. During the last two or three years many accidents had happened on the beach, and a great deal of loss to the revenue had occurred through smuggling. Unless the Government could afford adequate police protection along the beach the revenue would suffer.

MR. HOLMES: There was a certain amount of friction existing between the police and the customs department as to whose duty it was to prevent smuggling. While the quarrel was taking place the smuggling was going on. The police contended that it was not their duty to prevent smuggling, and the customs department said they had not a sufficient staff to do the work. As soon as a satisfactory understanding was arrived at the better it would be for the revenue of the country.

THE PREMIER: No complaint had reached him as to any friction, and both the departments named were under his control.

MR. DARLOT: Was it a fact that the salaries and allowances of one sergeant and five constables who were employed exclusively at the Mint, amounting to £1,061 13s. 3d., were provided for in the Police estimates, and the amount refunded by the Mint authorities, not paid back to the police, but into the Treasury? There was an item of £1,200 for remounts. He was travelling a good deal about the country, and noticed that the horses used for the gold escorts were in very bad condition. In one stable the police had six corn-fed horses, but having to do a 50 miles journey the police had to hire a grass-fed horse from him (Mr. Darlot) to do the work. He made the police pay for the hire as a lesson to the Government, although he generally lent the police horses for nothing. The horses used by the police in the country were far from good. It was about time the practice of condemning horses in the town and sending them into the country to do 50 miles journeys was dropped. It was a disgrace to the country to keep horses in such a condition for the work required of them. One of these days a gold escort would be stuck up, and a man with a grass-fed horse would be able to get away from the corn-fed horses used by the police troopers. It was no good putting good feed into old "corks"; when the horses were once condemned they should be sold and got rid of.

MR. KINGSMILL: Complaints were constantly being received by him as to the bad condition of the police horses in the country. Some slight steps had been taken to remedy the complaint, but in some of the districts in his

electorate the horses were absolutely a disgrace. It was even said that any criminal whatever could get away on foot from a mounted policeman, in the country. There was not a proper distribution of members of the police force in country districts. At Marble Bar there were three policemen, but the place did not require much police protection, whereas in large centres 10, 18, or 20 miles away there was no police protection whatever. Did the Premier intend, in the future, to adopt any different mode with regard to the selection of candidates for the police force? At present too little attention was paid to the educational test.

**THE PREMIER:** That would be altered.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** A police officer in country districts had powers calling for great tact. Though making no individual reference, he must say that tact, mostly owing to its absence, was not always exercised.

**MR. WILSON:** It was gratifying to see an item of £500 to provide arms and ammunition for the police in view of the recent robbery under arms in Perth, when a Chinese laundry was raided by four desperate characters who also attempted to murder the arresting constables. It was commendable that the Commissioner had decided to arm his officers on night duty. This would give residents of the city a new confidence and security, and strike a wholesome fear into violent criminals. While some improvement might be made in the office work of the department, he must pay a tribute to the excellence of the police force compared with what it was eight or nine years ago. The action of Constable Harris the other night in arresting the criminals referred to, when he was shot at four times, should be recognised. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] The Commissioner of Police was evidently a man of determined character, who could be trusted to suppress these frequent highway robberies.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** On fairly good authority he had learned that dissatisfaction existed in the force regarding a regulation entitling every constable to a new suit of clothes each year. On application being sent in for a suit at the beginning of the year, several months elapsed before the clothes were delivered, and the date of delivery was recorded. If, within

the year, the constable applied for another suit, to which he was fully entitled, he was informed that a year had not elapsed from the date of delivery of his last suit. The date when the clothes were due should be entered up, and not the date of delivery. Again, he would ask, had the Police Department made arrangements for a Sunday off for its officers; and if not, why not? Especially as regards the city, there was no necessity for employing men seven days a week.

**MR. DOHERTY:** What about Sunday trading?

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** For detecting Sunday trading the police were of little avail, as their evidence was not accepted in courts. Special informers were needed. A man should at least have every second or third Sunday off. Apart from religious considerations, a constable had a right to his weekly holiday, and also to go to church if he desired. The holiday would conduce to the efficiency of the force. He supported the observations of the last speaker. No doubt the department would recognise the service of Constable Harris. Within the last few years the force had greatly improved, and the suggestions just made would tend to still greater perfection.

**THE PREMIER:** The Commissioner of Police proposed to appoint a board to examine candidates for the force, and there would in all cases be an educational test. The Inspector General of Schools would be asked to become an examiner. The question of a Sunday off had not recently come under his notice, and he could not answer the query of the last speaker.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** That was always the reply.

**THE PREMIER:** The matter would be brought under the notice of the Commissioner; and, further, if the procedure regarding clothes were as the hon. member stated, it could hardly be called reasonable. He regretted the police vote was not larger, but unfortunately the money was not available. The reason was that money was not very plentiful, and though the Commissioner wanted more money, the Government were not able to give it to him. At the same time, the Government would have liked to give the Commissioner another £10,000, and when the revenue exceeded

the expenditure, it might be possible to do something.

Item passed; other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

*Defences, £38,610 10s.:*

MR. HOLMES asked that some better provision might be made, in some of the principal towns at all events, for drill halls for the volunteer forces. There were many capable officers and men in the volunteers, and hon. members knew the good services the West Australian soldiers had done in South Africa. The only complaint at present was that there was no place in which to drill the men under cover from the weather.

THE PREMIER: The Government had fully intended to make provision for these necessary drill halls, but were met with the difficulty of want of money. The Defences would be given over to the Federal Government, and he did not see how any more could be provided than the £1,050 which appeared on the Estimates. He could only express his regret that more money was not forthcoming.

MR. HIGHAM: In Fremantle the Government were vacating the girls infants' school, which, with an expenditure not exceeding perhaps £500, could be made into a splendid drill hall. Volunteering ought to receive every encouragement, especially at Fremantle, where the movement had a very strong hold.

MR. DOHERTY, referring to item "Chief Staff Officer, £350," expressed surprise that the Government had not recognised the service of the chief staff officer, who had performed very arduous duties in preparing the West Australian Contingents for South Africa. On several occasions men of the Contingents were so pleased with that officer's services that they offered to give him testimonials; but, under the regulations, that could not be done. From the Estimates it appeared this officer's remuneration was to be the same as last year; but it would be an act of grace on the part of the Government to recognise his services with an extra allowance, seeing that the chief staff officer was the primary cause of the good results which had followed the despatch of the Contingents to South Africa.

MR. HALL: While the Contingents were being dispatched to South Africa,

the chief staff officer had a great deal of hard work, and everyone felt justly proud of the fine manner in which he prepared raw recruits for service. It was to be hoped the Government would recognise these valuable services, and, when the period of service of the present Commandant expired, would see their way to appoint Major Campbell to the position, because with such a man in the colony there was no necessity to go to England for an officer.

THE PREMIER said he was glad to hear the remarks of hon. members in reference to the chief staff officer, Major Campbell, and a note would be made of what had been said. If there were any increases to be made, no doubt this deserving officer should be remembered, because he threw himself heart and soul into the work of preparing the Contingents for South Africa.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: If no increase of salary could be given, a gratuity might be offered to the officer.

MR. WILSON, referring to item "Small arms, care and maintenance of, and gymnastic appliances," said it was of no use having men and drill-halls, if there were no rifles. How many rifles could be bought for the amount available? The Imperial Parliament ought to be asked to give this colony a share of the Mauser rifles which were to be issued, because to wait until the Federal Parliament took the Defences over would mean another two years. In any case, money spent on arms would be returned; and at present it would be impossible to raise in the colony 100 rifles worth handling.

MR. DARLOT: If the Premier, as Minister of Defence, had not the ways and means for building these drill-halls, it would be worth while, in this fine climate (anyhow on the goldfields), to see if he could not raise a few pounds to erect some electric light poles, so that men might be drilled by electric light at night.

Item passed; other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

On motion by the PREMIER, progress reported and leave given to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at two minutes after 11 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.