

panies Act of 1886. The provisions of Part III, which are to be incorporated in the Midland Company's Act, are as follow:— Clause 19, gates and cattle stops; Clause 22, Commissioner may fix charges; Clause 23, the Commissioner may from time to time make by-laws; Clause 24, provision as to by-laws; Clause 25, custody, carriage and delivery of goods; Clause 26, special agreements; Clause 28, power to collect and deliver goods outside limits of railway; Clause 29, penalty for giving false consignment note or way bill, extra charge also payable; Clause 30, lien; Clause 31, goods may be sold on refusal to pay charges; Clause 32, goods left by unknown owner may be sold; Clause 33, application of proceeds of sale; Clause 34, conveyance of dangerous goods; Clause 40, exemption from liability in certain cases; Clause 41, penalties for injuries to railways; Clause 42, penalties for grave offences on railways; Clause 43, offences on railways punishable by fine or imprisonment; Clause 44, removal of passenger not paying his fare; Clause 45, penalties for offences relating to tickets; Clause 46, penalties for travelling without payment of fare; Clause 47, definition of free pass; Clause 48, offences on railways punishable by fine; Clause 49, persons committing certain offences may be arrested; Clause 50, summary interference on breach of by-law; Clause 51, penalty for offences by railway servants; Clause 52, railway servants responsible for damage; Clause 53, railway servant may impound. All of these, I think, are provisions that any company carrying on a railway should have power to enforce. It will be noticed that not the whole of the powers contained in Part III. of the Government Railways Act of 1904 are to be conferred upon the Midland Railway Company by the Bill. The only powers conferred on the company by the Bill are those mentioned in the schedule, that is to say, Sections 19, 22 to 34, inclusive, 40 to 53, inclusive. The first three sections of Part III. would not apply. Sections 20 and 21 are omitted; that is to say, the privileges contained in those sections are not incorporated in the Bill. Sections 35 to 39, inclusive, also are not included in the new powers granted to the company, for the reason that it is considered these sections confer special privileges upon the Commissioner of Railways which should not be enjoyed by a private company. For instance, in Section 37 it is provided that no action shall be maintainable against the Commissioner unless commenced within three months after its cause has arisen in the case of loss or damage of goods, or within six months in other cases, while Section 39 limits to £2,000 the amount of liability for personal injuries. Briefly, the object of the Bill is to carry out the obligation set up in the contract for the construction of the railway, to vest in the company in fee simple the land on which the railway has been constructed, to confer on the company statutory powers for the work-

ing of its railway, and to incorporate such provisions of the Government Railways Act, 1904, as are necessary for the proper management, maintenance, and control of the railway, including the fixing of rates and charges and the making of by-laws. But in regard to the fixing of rates it is important to bear in mind that such rates will require the approval of the Minister. This is made clear by Subclause 2 of Clause 5, which further provides that the proviso to Section 22, under which the Commissioner may from time to time fix special scales of charges, shall not have effect in the case of the Midland company, without the consent in writing of the Minister. I think it will be found that the Bill protects the interests of the public whilst giving to the company something necessary to enable it to carry on its business in a proper manner. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.11 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 23rd October, 1919.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAY SLEEPING BERTHS AND COLOURED PASSENGERS.

Mr. DUFF asked the Minister for Railways: In view of the pronounced objection on the part of the travelling public, who at present are compelled to occupy sleeping berth accommodation in compartments with coloured passengers, will he undertake to amend the railway regulations to provide separate accommodation for such passengers?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The matter will receive consideration.

QUESTION—MOTOR AMBULANCES ON RAILWAYS.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has a motor vehicle been placed on the Albany to Denmark spur railway? 2, Is this a motor ambulance? 3, If so, will he consider the application for a similar vehicle being placed on the York-Bruce Rock-Merredin line? 4, Is he aware that this request has already been before his department, and that of the Minister for Health?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1 and 2, A motor trolley, with ambulance attachments, is now being fitted, and will be available for the Denmark line shortly. 3 and 4, If, after trial, it proves satisfactory, steps will be taken to introduce the system of motor ambulances on other spur lines where necessary.

QUESTION—MUNITION AND WAR WORKERS, LAND SETTLEMENT.

Mr. DUFF asked the Premier: Whether, in view of the definite decision of the Commonwealth Government to make available to munition and war workers who may desire to go upon the land the same financial assistance as it does in respect of soldier settlers, is it the intention of the Government to agree to include such war workers in their land settlement schemes?

The PREMIER replied: The matter is receiving consideration.

QUESTION—RAILWAY CARRIAGES, OVERCROWDING.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Railways: Will he have leather straps, as provided in tramcars, fixed in the railway carriages used between Perth and Fremantle to assist passengers to keep their feet, in view of overcrowding?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The matter is receiving attention. If the hon. member is referring to the paragraph on overcrowding of trains, appearing in the report of the Commissioner of Railways, Queensland, 1919, in which it is stated:—"Occasionally complaints are made regarding overcrowding in our suburban trains, and the Railway Department is adversely criticised. It may be of interest to suburban residents to know that the suburban train and other public conveyances in America are provided with stanchions and straps for the comfort of people who have to stand on the journey. Overcrowding appears to be the rule rather than the exception, and I never heard any complaints regarding it. It is taken as an unavoidable condition of suburban travel where large crowds have to be conveyed within a short period, morning and

evening." It is known that occasionally there is some overcrowding in some of the compartments in the suburban area, but with the issue of the new time table an increased number of trains have been provided, which should meet requirements. In the meantime arrangements have been made for relief trains to run when necessary to ease the tabled trains.

QUESTIONS (2)—HAMPTON PLAINS.

Water Supply.

Mr. GREEN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that a total cessation of work on the Hampton Plains leases will be necessitated if the water supply service is not completed to that district within five weeks? 2, Will he rush the work forward so as to complete it within the required time?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. 2, Arrangements for a temporary supply are being considered. At present ample water is provided in Wullubar dam. In an emergency water can be trucked via company's line at short notice.

Road from Boulder.

Mr. GREEN asked the Minister for Works: 1, From what particular portion of Boulder district will the surveyed road be started to connect with the Hampton Plains goldfield? 2, When will the work be started?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, From Hamilton Street, Boulder. 2, Instructions were given on Wednesday last to start the work at once.

QUESTION—ROYAL COMMISSION, NATIONAL WORKERS.

Mr. JONES asked the Premier: 1, What has been the cost to date of the Royal Commission on the National workers? 2, Is it intended to end this Commission in the near future?

The PREMIER replied: 1, £140 0s. 5d. 2, It is expected that the Commission will shortly complete its labours.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced and read a first time.

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS.

Report of Committee adopted.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1919-20.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair.

Vote—London Agency, £7,526:

Item, Special Child Emigration Officer, £150.

The CHAIRMAN: An amendment has been moved by Mr. Mullany that the item be struck out.

Mr. MALEY: I hope the Committee will not agree to the deletion of this item. I may have misunderstood the hon. member who moved to strike out the item at the previous sitting, but he appeared to me to impute something in the nature of motives to Mr. Fairbridge, the officer in question. Mr. Fairbridge, as we know, was a Rhodes scholar, and before leaving Oxford at the termination of his university career, attended a gathering of Rhodes scholars, the outcome of which gathering was that he took upon himself the task of founding the Child Emigration Society of Great Britain. This institution has carried on operations at Pinjarrah for some years. The work of the society has been carried on with the aid of voluntary subscriptions from Great Britain, and up to date no less a sum than £6,500 has been spent by the society, and the State Government have contributed very little more than £1,000.

Hon. P. Collier: The Government were not under any obligation to contribute.

Mr. MALEY: When the war broke out people who had money to give to institutions such as this devoted it to other purposes.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But they wanted assistance before the war broke out.

Hon. P. Collier: They were on the rocks before war broke out.

Mr. MALEY: I do not think so.

Hon. P. Collier: I am sure of it. We were in office at the time.

Mr. MALEY: One of the greatest problems facing us is that of securing agricultural labourers. Only recently a question was asked in the House of Representatives on this subject, and Mr. Glynn, in replying, said that great difficulty was experienced in England at the present time in securing farm labourers as emigrants, and he mentioned that a recent appeal had only brought four applications.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He does not know anything about it.

Mr. MALEY: Having regard to the breaking up of old estates in the old country and the high cost of production, the problem will be accentuated for the next five or ten years. I know it to be a fact that at the present time it is almost impossible—and that has been the position for two years past—to secure any assistance from the industrial schools or any similar organisations. We know that there are many returned soldiers going on the land who are incapacitated to some degree.

Hon. P. Collier: Incapacitated! That is nonsense.

Mr. MALEY: It is not nonsense. On the Yandanooka estate, two one-armed men have been allowed to engage in farming operations.

Hon. P. Collier: My experience is that the authorities are very strict.

Mr. MALEY: I wish to read an extract from a letter from Mr. Kingsley Fairbridge as follows—

The Government have offered me the position of Assistant Emigration Officer at £25 a month for six months after I arrive in England, and I am very grateful for this, but it will be of little use I am afraid, unless the Government are also prepared to continue the present subsidy in respect of future parties of child immigrants during their period of training at the farm school. I wrote to the British Government early this year, advising them that the Western Australian Government were giving the farm school a capitation grant of 6s. per week and asking them to give us a similar capitation. Since then I have heard from the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the Hon. the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the latter, as Chairman of the Oversea Settlement Committee, has invited me to wait upon His Majesty's Government to discuss my proposal with them. It is quite obvious that if the Western Australian Government now withdraw their capitation grant in respect of future parties of children, I shall not be able to ask the British Government for a capitation grant, and the opportunity to secure a grant from the British Government will have disappeared—probably for ever.

It should appeal to members of the Opposition that these children who have no chance of life whatever, may well be taken from the slums of the Old Country and given a chance of life here. It has been suggested on more than one occasion that Mr. Fairbridge was trying to hang on to his job. What sort of job is it? His motives have been of the best. The gentlemen who have assisted by acting on his committees in this State, are of very high standing in the community and would not lend themselves to anything of that kind. These boys would make desirable citizens. Of the boys who have been trained in the institution, not one has drifted into the towns. The biggest problem we have to face is that of obtaining agricultural labour and, if we can bring out these boys, give them a chance and make good citizens of them at very small cost to the State, we shall be doing a good service to the country and to the children in the slums of London.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Members might be interested to know that on the board of trustees controlling this school are the President in another place, Dr. Harvey, Professor Shann, Professor Murdoch, Mr. James Brennan, and other citizens who would not lend their support to an institution if there was anything of a shady nature attaching to it.

The Minister for Works: No one suggests that.

Hon. P. Collier: Have you not a better line of defence than that?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany) made a statement last night which was only a half truth and I must contradict it. He said these people had brought out children and had not fulfilled their obligations but had left the children to be kept by the State. Is that quite true?

Mr. Mullany: Yes, and I shall show you presently.

Mr. Munsie: Of course it is true.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Considering that £6,500 was sent from England and spent in this country—

Hon. P. Collier: And they were left to be maintained by this State. That is absolutely true.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: England contributed half of the capitation grant.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Some of the boys were receiving it up to 17 years of age and other children do not get it after the age of 14.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: In July, 1915, the first capitation grant was received from the State Government, and that was due to a condition of affairs brought about by the war. The source of revenue was cut off; many people who had been contributing could no longer do so, and it became necessary to apply to the Government for assistance. It is not true to say that these people did not fulfil their obligations and that the children were left on the State. Up to a certain extent, only half the usual capitation grant was made to the institution. Those responsible for the movement were filled with the highest motives. They saw the opportunity to stop some of the economic waste of man power taking place in the old world and, at the same time, to strengthen our position by sending us boys who would become capable, useful Australian citizens. All expenses were borne up to July, 1915, nearly a year after the war started, without Government assistance. At that time application was made for the capitation grant.

The Minister for Works: What did they get?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: A sum of £6,500 has been received from England, and the State Government have provided something over £1,000. Looking at it merely from the two sides of the ledger, it has been a good investment. We have 40 capable young fellows filling positions with credit to themselves and to the school in which they were trained. There is great need for the labour they can provide, and the demand for them has been in the ratio of three to every one who could be supplied.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They are cheap.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I should expect that remark from the hon. member.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What are the farmers paying?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The current rate of wages.

Hon. T. Walker: What is the current rate of wages?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Bring documentary proof and make your case good.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I have come into contact with many of these boys and they are delighted with the life and quite contented. Is it not better to get these boys, who will make capable farm labourers, than to assist, as we have done, incapable townsmen who come out ostensibly to go on the land and who finally drift back to the towns?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Did you come out with the intention of going on the land?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I did, and was on the land within a few years after I came here.

Mr. Smith: You were not trained at Fairbridge.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: No; perhaps it would have been a good thing for me if I had been. These boys are proving their worth as farm labourers, while other immigrants, who came out to go on the land, have drifted back to the cities to swell the population there. Canada has for some years gone in for a policy of child immigration, long before this school was instituted in Western Australia, and they are working this form of immigration for all they are worth.

Mr. Munsie: I would not mind that here if it was under the control of the State.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Is it not better for us to encourage this form of immigration and to get young fellows here and train them to be farmers, than to import a number of men who remain about in the city?

The PREMIER: This item represents a sum of £150, which will be given to Mr. Fairbridge for six months' services in London while he is attached to the Agent General's office. His passage Home was not paid for him.

Mr. Munsie: What work will he do?

The PREMIER: He will attend to work in connection with child emigration, and do any other work the Agent General may wish him to do.

Mr. Munsie: And bring immigrants out here to be controlled by himself?

The PREMIER: Mr. Fairbridge proposes to raise for child emigration at least £15,000. The Government have given no undertaking to assist him any further, or to support the children when they come here. When he can raise this money and the lads are available, he will communicate with the Government through the Agent General, and his proposals will be considered. If the boys are brought here and there is no money forthcoming from London to keep them, no doubt they will fall back upon the hands of the State. Up to the present Mr. Fairbridge has turned out about 40 boys, and the State has assisted to the extent of about £1,100.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And £6 8s. for fares.

The PREMIER: There can be no objection to the expenditure of this small sum. If Mr. Fairbridge can raise the money, and go on with his scheme, the State will benefit to the extent of getting a very cheap form of immigration.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I hope we will consider this matter without regard to the per-

sonality of Mr. Fairbridge, or the motives which actuate him in taking on this child immigration scheme. Hon. members on the cross benches will persist in making this a personal matter, but there is no attack intended upon Mr. Fairbridge. I am prepared to accept him on the estimation of hon. members on the cross benches. There is behind this matter, however, a great principle, the principle of child immigration. The scheme undertaken by this gentleman broke down before the war, and since then he failed to make good without Government assistance. What is the use of hon. members saying how fine it would be to take the children from the slums of England and bring them to sunny Australia! Are we in a position to be God-father to all the destitute children of Great Britain?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It would be a splendid thing if we had the money.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We must take into consideration our own financial position and the welfare of the children at present in the State. Notwithstanding Mr. Fairbridge's assurance that he can raise £15,000, he still has had to fall back upon the State for a paltry £150 to enable him to carry out his object. This State will be responsible for any children connected with the scheme in the event of its breaking down. Is it right that we should encourage Mr. Fairbridge to embark upon a scheme of this kind when we have no voice in the selection of the children or in the management of the scheme? It appears that this venture is receiving more support than the institutions within the State are receiving.

Mr. Harrison: What asset have you for that expenditure?

Hon. P. COLLIER: We have our own children up to the age of 15 to consider. These are thrown on the world to earn their own living without any financial backing. How old will the children be that Mr. Fairbridge brings out?

Mr. Harrison: From six to eight years of age.

The Colonial Secretary: From nine years of age upwards.

Hon. P. COLLIER: At what age will they be sent out to the farmers?

Mr. Pickering: At the age of 16.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Is this the first step in a proposal to put cheap child labour on the farms?

Mr. Pickering: No!

Hon. P. COLLIER: We ought to know the full effect of this scheme and what wages will be paid to these young fellows.

Mr. Hickmott: I had two 16-year-old boys last harvest, and gave them £2 a week and their keep.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not want to see any system of cheap child labour encouraged by the Government.

Mr. Pickering: Do you advocate that children should be paid the same rate of wages as men?

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, but they should get a fair rate.

Mr. Pickering: And so they do.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The scheme is an elaborate one, and, if it is to be so beneficial to the sons of Great Britain and ultimately to Western Australia, why is Mr. Fairbridge in need of such a small amount as £150 to carry him on for six months?

The Colonial Secretary: Mr. Fairbridge will be used also to assist in securing adult immigrants for Western Australia. Whenever he goes lecturing he will do that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In six months the man is to raise £15,000, and organise a scheme to bring out children; yet it is expected that he will have sufficient time to assist in the general immigration policy as well.

The Colonial Secretary: He will be out lecturing all over the place, advertising Western Australia.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We have had 30,000 West Australians in Gallipoli and France. If they have not sufficiently advertised Western Australia, I do not think Mr. Fairbridge can do much better. In the past this State had to undertake the responsibility of maintaining, to an extent, destitute children brought out here under Mr. Fairbridge's scheme. What guarantee have we that the same thing will not obtain under his new scheme?

The Minister for Works: He has to submit his proposals to the Premier.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Premier has no control over him. He has not to get the consent of the Premier. The Government have nothing at all to do with it, beyond paying him the £150. He can bring out 1,000 children if he likes, and if his scheme breaks down the State will have to maintain those 1,000 children. We have no control, no safeguard against financial obligations. Had Mr. Fairbridge not been a prominent member of the Country party, this item would never have been on the Estimates.

Mr. MULLANY: I regret the attitude taken over this question by members of the Country party.

Mr. Pickering: Perhaps we regret yours.

Mr. MULLANY: You are at liberty to do so.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Somebody will be writing a letter and calling you a damn liar.

Mr. MULLANY: They have made this a personal matter in favour of Mr. Fairbridge. I am not considering Mr. Fairbridge personally at all. In sending Mr. Fairbridge to England to-day—

The Colonial Secretary: We are not sending him.

Mr. MULLANY: But you are. How can you say that? What sort of camouflage is this?

Hon. P. COLLIER: He could not have gone without assistance, and the Government have assisted him.

Mr. MULLANY: He has gone with the authority of the Government; he is sent as immigration officer.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He is attached to the Agent General's office.

Mr. MULLANY: That is so. The member for York has said that my remarks last night were not true.

Mr. Griffiths: They were a half-truth. You said the children were maintained by the Government.

Mr. MULLANY: So they were. For the year ended 30th June, 1917, the farm school at Pinjarrah received from the Government £293 16s.; for the year ended 30th June, 1918, it received £182, and for the year ended 30th June, 1919, it received £329.

Mr. Money: How many boys are there?

Mr. MULLANY: Seven. I believe that most of the original number have gone out to work. This scheme was started in England in 1910; the boys arrived here in 1911 or 1912. Before war was declared the scheme had broken down, the responsible persons in England apparently having tired of contributing to its maintenance.

Mr. Griffiths: You do not make allowance for the war.

Mr. MULLANY: I tell the hon. member the scheme had broken down before war was declared. The member for York has said that the people in England could not continue their contributions owing to the strain of the war. But Western Australia, owing to the strain of the war, was unable to do justice to her own destitute children. We have quite sufficient destitute children in this State, yet Mr. Fairbridge is sent Home to bring out more.

The Premier: No.

Mr. MULLANY: So long as Mr. Fairbridge can find in England sufficient assistance to organise the scheme and pay the fares of the children to Western Australia, he can on arrival throw the whole of the children on to the Charities Department. The member for York is the only member of this Committee who has made any imputation of shady transactions against this gentleman.

Mr. Griffiths: I referred to previous debates.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Who did so in previous debates?

Mr. MULLANY: If the Government think the policy of encouraging child immigration a good one, let them come out in the open and say so.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I will have to support this, because the Government are under a contract. They will have to pay £150 to Mr. Fairbridge because he went away under that agreement. But the paying of that sum should not be taken as an indication of State sanction of his scheme. It is quite obvious that, laudable as Mr. Fairbridge's scheme is, any large number of children that he may bring out under it will ultimately become a charge upon the State. I have gone through the farm school, and, notwithstanding the comments of a certain newspaper, no member of Parliament has attacked either the school or the character and standing of Mr. Fairbridge. I believe him to be a cultured gentleman of high motives, and one who could do much better for himself financially

in other pursuits; but I regard his scheme as premature for Western Australia. If the Colonial Secretary gave the figures of the State Children and Charities Department, they would prove an eloquent discouragement of Mr. Fairbridge's scheme. Moreover, in the timber industry there are large families growing up with no outlook for the boys. Our first duty is to the children of Western Australia. Again, with regard to the goldfields there is a scheme in operation to transfer the boys there to the farms. However, there is need to see that the farmers do not exploit boy labour. It is a notorious fact that in the farming industry sweating is more prevalent than in any other Australian industry. Dairying has never yet flourished in Western Australia for the simple reason that that industry is never resorted to until conditions in other industries become utterly unattractive. The reports of Government inspectors in New South Wales show that children engaged in rural industries there work such long hours in the morning and in the evening as to be unable to learn at school, for sheer weariness. Reverting to the timber industry, I may point out that a big fight was necessary in order to secure adequate wages for the few boys employed on the sawmills. The newspapers constantly publish advertisements from farmers requiring "a strong youth," which in practice means one fit to do a man's work for half the pay of a man. As regards Mr. Fairbridge's scheme, if it is to be proceeded with, it should not be restricted to children in the east end of London, but should include the children of other large English towns and also children from Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. However, I consider that the Government would not be justified in spending public money for the encouragement of child immigration on a large scale, until everything needful has been done to give our own little Australians a start in life.

Mr. ROCKE: There is no worthier work than that of uplifting children and giving them that chance in life to which every human being is entitled. I do not for a moment question Mr. Fairbridge's motives, but for a long time I have felt that in this city of Perth we have an army of slum children, and that these have the first claim on any funds which the State can make available for the uplifting of child life. My opinion on the point has been confirmed by the evidence given before the select committee into the State Children and Charities Department. That evidence, if it is true, shows that the condition of many children in Perth to-day is almost hopeless. Only this afternoon the chairman of the select committee and myself visited a place where, we had been informed, a neglected child resided. We found the place to be a brothel. We have not yet discovered the child, but we are determined to do so. We also visited another house where children were residing, and there was not a stick of

furniture in the place. Thus is the criminal class being recruited in this very city of Perth. If Mr. Fairbridge has been sent Home as a lecturer, the amount of this item could be put to better use. In view of the partial failure which Mr. Fairbridge's scheme has already experienced, it would be better to reserve this money until the time when the State will again be called upon to maintain the children already at the farm school. I shall support the amendment of the member for Menzies because I consider that our own children should have first call on our public funds.

The PREMIER: I promise the member for Menzies that the Government will treat this question with all the seriousness it deserves. The member for South Fremantle is absolutely wrong in suggesting that we are not providing for our own children.

Mr. Roche: We are doing it only in part.

The PREMIER: There is no country in the world that is more generous to its poor than Western Australia is.

Mr. Green: We ought not to have any poor.

Hon. P. Collier: We are not providing for our own children to the same extent as for these other children.

The PREMIER: Yes, we are. For my part, I wish we had twice as many children in the State. I hope the Committee will not be led away by the remarks of the member for South Fremantle. No one has made any representations to me about the needs of the children of this State. Where are the boys about the streets of Perth who are not cared for?

Mr. Roche: The select committee will furnish Parliament with a report proving that the children are not cared for.

Mr. Nairn: You cannot do it.

Mr. Munsie: A lot more can be proved than the member for South Fremantle has stated.

The PREMIER: Let the proof be produced.

Mr. Munsie: We will do that if you are not careful.

The PREMIER: I want to do what is right for the children.

Mr. Roche: We saw the houses where these children are living. They are not fit places for them to be in.

The PREMIER: The hon. member is not telling the truth.

Mr. Munsie: Why do you say that, what the hon. member has stated is not true?

The PREMIER: The hon. member stated that we were not protecting our young children. I do not say that some children are not neglected by people who have means, but I do say that the State is providing money and will continue to do so for the welfare of these children. I want hon. members to definitely understand that we have not committed ourselves in any way in connection with the expenditure of the £150 in question.

Mr. Munsie: How do you get out of the fact that you have put it on the Estimates?

The PREMIER: Mr. Fairbridge is going to the Agent General's office.

Mr. Munsie: What will he do?

The PREMIER: Before Mr. Fairbridge left the State he approached the Government and represented that the British Government would very likely help in the child emigration proposals. We told him then that we would attach him to the Agent General's office. Mr. Fairbridge stated that he would raise a large sum of money in England, that he had friends there who were interested in this child movement and he would find the money. It was then that we agreed he should become associated with the Agent General's office while carrying out this work and that when the British Government had agreed to help with the project, he could then submit his proposals to the Government of Western Australia. We are not committed to one penny of expenditure on behalf of these children. If they are brought out they will be brought out as in the past. They will require assisted passages. I promised hon. members that assistance will not be given to bring them here. We shall have to be satisfied with Mr. Fairbridge's proposal to raise an amount of money before we commit Western Australia to a single penny of expenditure beyond the £150 now on the Estimates. Is there any hon. member who would have objected to such a proposal if it had been submitted to him as a Minister. We require population in this State and we believe that the bringing of these children out here is the right thing to do, and if we can also get funds subscribed by those interested in the movement in the Old Country surely no objection can be taken to it. It is more than likely that these children will be orphans or children of soldiers who have fallen in battle. If we are desirous of getting people, there is no cheaper way of securing them. When the Loan Estimates come down and the immigration policy is discussed that will be the time to indicate just what our wishes are in regard to this question but at present, as I have already stated, we are not committing the country to the expenditure of a penny more than £150.

Mr. PICKERING: It must be fresh in the memory of hon. members that on a previous occasion an attack was made on Mr. Fairbridge. I have before me a copy of the "Call" of the 26th September last which replies to those attacks. The defence of Mr. Fairbridge which appears in this newspaper is worth reading. It says—

The recent attacks on Kingsley Fairbridge by Parliamentarians are deeper in their significance than they may appear at a cursory glance. The man singled out is a worker for an ideal, as distinct from one who strives for commercial gain. The question suggests itself: Why is an idealist selected for disparagement? Other men have come to this State to make a living by running a "two-up school," others to live on the shame of women. There has never been a record in Parlia-

ment of any of these types being named disparagingly by politicians. Why a man who devotes his life to the uplift of his fellows and consecrates his services to the ennoblement of character should be selected for abuse from tongues of men silent on the misdeeds and often loathsomeness of others, is one of the perennial problems of Australian public life. Certain it is that the tendency to disparage loses many an idealist for the country and gives it a mercenary instead.

We have had an emphatic protest from the member for Hannans against child immigration and the member for Fremantle on similar lines.

Mr. Munsie: You are wrong. I said, "Unless the Government had some control over the children." Why do you not add those words?

Mr. PICKERING: I did not hear the hon. member.

Mr. Munsie: You did not want to hear.

Mr. PICKERING: I am in favour of child immigration. I was a member of the deputation which waited on the Government recently to impress upon them the importance of bringing children out.

Hon. P. Collier: What deputation was that?

Mr. PICKERING: A deputation of members of the Country party, and I am not ashamed of it.

Hon. P. Collier: We are not saying that you are.

Mr. PICKERING: I have yet to learn that there are children in the State in the deplorable condition we have heard about from the member for South Fremantle. If what we have heard is the case, the Government should take steps towards providing immediate relief.

Mr. Smith: What would you do with them?

Mr. PICKERING: There are means for dealing with them in homes which already exist, and if we have not enough let us start a State home for them.

Hon. P. Collier: Why not recruit our State children for farm work?

Mr. PICKERING: There is no inclination to send them on the land. I have been engaged in active farming pursuits during the past 15 years and during that period I have employed several boys. They have been paid the wages requested by the institution from where they came and that rate of pay has been up to 25s. a week and food.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Did you train them in farming work or politics?

Mr. PICKERING: At that time I was not thinking of politics. I trained them in farming work.

Mr. Jones: What age were they?

Mr. PICKERING: I suppose they were 16 or 17 years of age.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They were men.

Mr. PICKERING: The hon. member can call them what he likes. The fact remains they were never dissatisfied with either the wages or the food they received. What I

cannot understand is the objection which is raised to child immigration. If there is anything we are crying out for now it is male population. We know that the countries of Europe have been devastated and we have a large population of women for whom we shall be anxious to find husbands in the future. If we bring out boys from nine years of age upwards, we shall be able to instil into them the principles we believe in, bring them up in an Australian environment, and provide what is absolutely necessary to the farming community—trained and skilled labour. Great stress has been laid on the vital necessity for developing the farming industry, but all farmers are confronted with the difficulty of getting adequate labour. As soon as boys reach maturity, the tendency is for them to flock to the towns and take up avocations there.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Would not these boys do likewise?

Mr. PICKERING: So far they have not done so.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They are only boys yet.

Mr. PICKERING: Some are 17 years of age. I have investigated Mr. Fairbridge's work and I can say that the boys on the farm were well fed and clothed and healthy, and received proper rest and instruction. They received school instruction and, on off days, were instructed in farming pursuits. Many of the boys have gone to farms and have given complete satisfaction and proved themselves capable, hardworking, and conscientious. This State requires population, and the advantage of introducing such boys is that they have survived those ills responsible for so much mortality in early childhood. They are healthy boys, and there is every prospect of them developing into good, vigorous Australians. I regret that the policy of the Government is so short-sighted, and I regret the reiterated expression of the Premier not to assist the movement. The Government are misguided in this action, especially when we consider the small amount required to obtain this asset for the State. I shall support any suggestion for the introduction of such child immigrants subsidised by the State to the same amount as by the British Government.

The Minister for Works: In what action are the Government misguided?

Mr. PICKERING: The elections are rather too near to tell the Minister.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You have no guarantee that the British Government will subsidise it. I shall agree to 20,000 if the British Government will keep them.

The Honorary Minister: That is the proposal.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I would take the British Government's proposal; not this.

Mr. PICKERING: Mr. Fairbridge proposes that the sustenance allowance should be increased to that which would be given by the British Government. The sop of £150 was not mentioned at the time of the deputation

three or four months ago. If the Government consented to grant a small sum, Mr. Fairbridge would be able to get an equivalent amount from the British Government and we should obtain very necessary and desirable immigrants. The Premier said it would be impossible to get passages during the next 12 months. If so, there would be no expenditure and, if the House desired, either the expenditure or the number of boys to be brought out could be limited until the movement had been proved to be of advantage to the State. Have members any objection to Mr. Fairbridge going to England and raising funds for this purpose?

Hon. T. Walker: That is not the point.

Mr. PICKERING: The expenditure would not be considerable. Therefore, the responsibility of the Government would be small. The member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loghlen) referred to the bad treatment meted out to children engaged in the dairying industry in New South Wales. I have no knowledge of child labour being similarly exploited in this State, and I would assist to prevent it by imposing an age limit on the children so employed.

Hon. P. Collier: The sweated children in Victoria are mostly the children of the farmers themselves.

Mr. Smith: Has it occurred here?

Mr. PICKERING: It has been alleged by the "Sunday Times." The Government were wise to include this item in the Estimates and I hope the necessary assistance will be given. If such children should have sustenance allowance till they attain the age of 16, I hope the same privilege will be extended to the children in our institutions.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Pilbara and myself have been picked out for having cast reflections on Mr. Fairbridge. When this discussion came up some time ago, I pointed out the necessity for the Government taking control of this institution, as of other institutions to which subsidies were paid. The member for Sussex was not satisfied with that and urged me to speak out if there was anything at the back of my proposal. I told him what I had seen with my own eyes, nothing else, and I gave reasons why the Government should have the supervision of such an institution. I am pleased to hear that since then, there has been an improvement, and I believe the school is now being conducted in a proper manner. Neither the "Call" nor the "Primary Producer," nor any other producer or consumer, will prevent me from telling members of the House anything which will be of assistance in coming to a decision on such a question. The Minister for Mines can bear me out that there was need for the Government to control this institution.

The Minister for Mines: Absolutely.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It was necessary that the superintendent of charities should be sent there to report, and no doubt his report could be produced. What I said was true; yet ever since I have been hounded

down allegedly for having said something against Mr. Fairbridge. However, I do not know the man. It was beneath his dignity to see the officer in charge of the department, and apparently to see anybody except the Premier. Perhaps the Premier was softer with him and he was able to get money from him where he could not get it out of me. I did not believe in contributing to an institution unless the State had some say in the control. The best immigrants we can introduce into Australia are children.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The question is not whether we should let children come into Western Australia, but whether this State can afford to add to its burden by promoting child immigration. The children sent from Great Britain to Canada have been mentioned; but they were sent there by well known English organisations which for generations have engaged in child welfare work. Moreover, those organisations looked after the children when they got to Canada. Companies have actually been formed in England for the purpose of promoting emigration to Canada. A gentleman connected with a company which has spent three million pounds on that object asked me whether child immigration would not be suitable for Western Australia. I told him that if he would float a company with a capital of three millions to support the children after they got here, the proposal would no doubt be favourably viewed in Western Australia. I have nothing whatever against the Fairbridge farm school. It does not follow that those who oppose child immigration are opposed to that school. But when an organisation in England has entered into an agreement with this State, we expect the organisation to carry out the agreement. The agreement relative to Mr. Fairbridge's scheme has never been carried out, except that the Government have honoured their obligation by paying £6 per head in respect of the children introduced under the scheme. The Premier will be able to give details of the agreement, which was negotiated by the late Mr. Frank Wilson. It has been urged that we should encourage this immigration in order that the children may be trained as agriculturists because the adult immigrants introduced by the Government have been, not agriculturists, but town workers. In this connection I would like to read, for the information especially of the member for Sussex, an extract from a letter which was widely published in the English Press during 1913; and I may point out that very few immigrants have come to Western Australia since 1914. Mr. R. L. Gilbert was our immigration officer in London at that time, and the extract I am about to quote is from a letter published over his signature—

The Government advertise the State as a field for immigration in its agricultural

capacity only, and whatever representations are made through this office are made to men who have had some experience of farming, or are country workers such as can reasonably be assured of work in the country and not in the towns. I make it clear to your readers that the immigration of unskilled or even skilled town labourers to Western Australia is not encouraged, and that the only class the State will assist is for country or farm work.

If unsuitable persons emigrated to this State after being warned in that manner, the Government cannot be blamed. Nor can our Government officers in London be blamed, because they must have been misled regarding the occupations of the immigrants they sent forward. When the Labour party took office in 1911, we found that the London agency had instructions to send out all and sundry.

The Premier: Oh, no!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Let the Premier lay on the Table a letter of instructions in this connection written to the Agent General by Mr. Connolly when Colonial Secretary.

The Premier: You are not often wrong, but you are wrong this time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Labour party put an end to that policy by limiting immigration as described in the letter from which I have quoted. It has been said that the immigrants whom the Labour Government brought out drifted back into the towns, and therefore were failures. But is it the truth that the men were failures, or is it that they met with disappointments here? When they came here, were they treated as the Government of Western Australia intended they should be treated?

Mr. Pickering: I hope not.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Let me read to the Committee a few applications for men which were received by the Government in 1913—

Will you kindly supply me with two new arrivals of good appearance to learn farming. Wages 10s. per week and board. On no account send a man unless he has references showing good records.

Will you kindly send me along a man to fallow and plough and work cultivator. Wages 15s. a week and keep.

Kindly send me one young man. Must make himself generally useful. Strong and healthy. Wages 10s. to 15s. a week.

Will you please send me a strong young man for clearing land. Experience unnecessary. Will give 15s. a week and keep.

Will you send me a man for picking up sticks and stones off fallow land. Immigrant preferred. Will give him 15s. a week.

Please send me one young man, new arrival, immigrant. Must be healthy and strong. Willing to learn clearing. Wages 15s.

Whether keep is to be included is not stated.

Please send me a new arrival from England for farm work. Wages 15s.

Will you send me a farm labourer; must have knowledge of horses; wages 15s.

I notice in the "West Australian" today that the "Belgie" is due next Wednesday. If you have a good strong farm hand please send me one along; wages 17s. 6d. a week.

These were the wages then offering for immigrants when they arrived here. Is it any wonder that men who were brought out here from the Old Country flocked back to the town? Fancy bringing a man here and giving him these wages, when he expected soon after his arrival to be able to nominate his wife and family for transport to Western Australia! How could a man live on those wages? The conditions, which have been offered to the men after their arrival here have been the cause of driving them into the populous centres.

Mr. Moncy: Are you referring to child immigrants?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, to men. Members on the cross benches have endeavoured to show that it is necessary to bring in child labour because of the scarcity of men, and I thought I was justified in showing the other side of the question. All this damage has been done by Western Australians and not by the officers in England. I believe in immigration. We have spaces to fill which must be filled, and our future prosperity and decreased taxation depend on population. But we want people to come here who can carry out the policy of the Government, to produce. We are paying approximately £60,000 a year for the maintenance of fatherless children and those in subsidised institutions, and the Government should pause before adopting any policy that will be the means in future of increasing this large amount. If the British Government are going to send out young children at their own expense, let them do so.

The Premier: I am certain they would not do that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It would not be fair to our small population to increase the large burdens they already have to meet in respect to the care of children in the State.

Mr. ROCKE: I did not suggest that the State Government were not doing good work amongst the children of the State. I think they are doing so. I would impress upon the Committee, however, that much remains to be done, and that our own shun children should have the first call upon the funds of the State.

Mr. LUTEY: I support the amendment. Our first duty is to the children within our State. There are many young lads in need of employment at the present time. The member for Sussex said that Australian lads could not be kept on farming areas. That is not to be wondered at when we think of how some of these lads are treated. It is time the Country party and their followers were told that there are some employers who should be put in gaol for the way they treat the lads on their farms. Instances can be given to show how bad the accommodation is that

is given to these boys, many of whom have had to sleep in old sheds or in strippers. That is not the way to encourage lads to take up farming.

Mr. Pickering: I have not come in contact with any of those.

Mr. LUTEY: I know how shamefully lads who have been taken from the orphanages have been treated in the country.

Mr. Thomson: That cannot happen so far as the orphanages in this State are concerned.

Mr. LUTEY: Some of the lads who have left farming to go to the goldfields will never go back to farming again, because of the way they have been treated. Of course others have been fortunate in finding good employment. The farmer should be the first man to hold up to scorn anybody who treated a boy in this way. The hours they have to work are very long, and they have to work very hard.

The Colonial Secretary: If a man is to be a successful farmer he must be up before sunrise.

Mr. LUTEY: The farmer is working in his own interests and expects the lads to do the same on 10s. or £1 a week and their keep. I hope members of the Country party will see that a better state of affairs is brought about in our farming areas.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I believe in child immigration, because I think we have thus an excellent opportunity of making good citizens of the younger generation. I have nothing to say against the Fairbridge Farm school. I know that Mr. Fairbridge has had excellent results with his boys, and that this is testified to by the many farmers who have had boys from this institution working for them. Mr. Fairbridge did not start the institution himself. There is an overseas settlement scheme for child immigration, and in this State we have a child immigration society. The chairman is Mr. W. Kingsmill, and there are many others who are also interested in the school and who are practically conducting its operations. The chairman of this society in England is Sir Arthur Lawley. It is a society that we should recognise, and if possible we should not interfere with the channel of immigration between this State and the Old Country. I do not think there is any chance of these particular children being thrown back on the State, because a definite promise has been made that a sufficient sum will be raised in the Old Country for the support of the children if they are brought to Western Australia. Mr. Fairbridge, who takes a deep personal interest in this question, and whose school at Pinjarra has now been largely depleted as the result of the boys going out to work, was making a trip Home of his own accord for the purpose of raising £15,000 for the expansion of his school, and making selection of a fresh contingent of boys. In all Mr. Fairbridge has received from the State for the training of the boys a little over £1,100. In the first place he was granted 4s. per week per boy. Finding that was not sufficient, he made an application for an increase, and

the amount was raised to 6s. During the time he has had the school, those behind him in England have spent £6,556 on the scheme. If the proposed expansion comes off it will mean a big thing for the State. Hon. members need have no fear of child slavery. We have heard a good deal about low wages on farms, but I learn from the secretary of the Labour Bureau that farm wages for boys range from 10s. a week and keep up to 35s. a week and keep, and that of the 492 goldfields boys who have passed through the Labour Bureau to agricultural districts, practically all are quite satisfied with the life and the conditions, while their employers are quite satisfied with the boys. Any boy worthy of a fair wage will have no difficulty in getting it on a farm, for the farmer knows well that when he has a good man it pays to keep him. There may be instances of struggling farmers, not long on the land, who have not satisfactory accommodation either for the boys or for themselves, but in every such instance it will be found that the accommodation provided for the boy is, in every respect, as good as that for the employer. And, let it be remembered, none of the boys employed under these conditions are complaining. They see that they have as good accommodation as the employer has, and they are content. I hope hon. members will not strike out this item. It would pay us to grant a capitation allowance for the boys to be brought out by Mr. Fairbridge. Through the Federal Government we pay £5 for each baby and, having regard to infant mortality, a boy nine years of age is worth much more to the State than is a baby. Moreover, each boy of nine years lands here with three years' schooling provided at the cost of the English Education Department.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Were not some of the last lot younger than nine years?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member would know better than I, for he was a member of the then Government. However, that is the age resolved upon by Mr. Fairbridge for the proposed new contingent. Within six or seven years, those boys will be turned out from the farm school the best of rural citizens, and, trained in the country, they will be the last to drift to the city. Whatever proposition Mr. Fairbridge finally resolves upon must be put up to the Agent General, which means that the Government will be at liberty to turn it down.

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

Ayes	9
Noes	24

Majority against .. 15

AYES.

Mr. Chesson
Mr. Collier
Mr. Holman
Mr. Jones
Mr. Lutey

Mr. Mullany
Mr. Rocko
Mr. Walker
Mr. O'Loghlen
(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Sir H. B. Lefroy
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Broun	Mr. Money
Mr. Brown	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Draper	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Duff	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Durack	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. George	Mr. Smith
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Hardwick

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. HOLMAN: Has special provision been made to supervise operations when the children arrive here?

The PREMIER: Mr. Fairbridge has to submit his proposals and then we shall see that proper supervision is exercised. We really have not agreed to anything.

Mr. Holman: Before anything is agreed upon, will you let us know what the conditions are?

The PREMIER: So far as possible I shall do so.

Item, Clerks, £1,357:

Mr. LUTEY: This item shows an extra clerk and an increase of £68. There is no indication what individual salaries are paid or who is receiving the increase. The total is only £1,357 and, in view of the present high cost of living, if that were divided equally among the eight clerks they would be underpaid.

The PREMIER: The £68 increase is due to automatic increases. I cannot say how much each clerk receives; there are some juniors.

Item, Incidental, including postage, stationery, travelling, rent, fuel, British income tax, etc., £2,500:

Mr. LAMBERT: The Premier should explain the reason for such an extravagant amount for travelling allowances. During the war this position has been more or less ornamental.

The Premier: Oh, no!

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It must have been, because the Agent General has been away.

Mr. LAMBERT: I have a limited idea of the usefulness of the London agency under the present occupant. No doubt most of this amount is used to enable the Agent General to attend different functions.

The Premier: No, it is mostly for rent.

Mr. LAMBERT: A strict watch should be kept on the agency; it needs a thorough overhaul. The Premier should give the various items making up this amount voted to a very much overpaid and inefficient officer.

The PREMIER: I regret the hon. member's concluding remarks. The Agent General is an efficient and certainly not overpaid officer. If the hon. member were in London, he would find it very difficult

to live on the salary. This has been the experience of every Agent General.

Mr. Lambert: It should be an honorary position.

The PREMIER: A great deal of expense is attached to the office, and the occupant often has to draw considerably on his own purse.

Mr. Lambert: They add considerably to their income and never come back here.

The PREMIER: The Agent General is not allowed to add to his income while holding the office. Of the £2,500, rent, taxes, and upkeep of Savoy House amount to £1,600, leaving £900 for all other expenses. That is not a large sum.

Mr. Smith: Not if you say it quick.

Mr. Jones: A lot of people have to live on less.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is important that we know how much the Agent General draws for travelling allowance. We vote £1,500 as salary and, if this is augmented by £500 or £1,000 for travelling allowance, we should know of it. The Premier might also inform us the travelling allowance per day to which the Agent General is entitled. It would be very easy to increase the salary by way of an item like this.

The PREMIER: The Committee cannot expect me to say off-hand how much each official in the London office draws for travelling expenses. There is a fixed scale for officials and I think the Agent General, on his salary, is entitled to 25s. a day. If the leader of the Opposition really wants to know, I shall ascertain the rate and the actual amount paid. It is true we have not raised money or made many purchases in London or sent people out during the last year, but there have been thousands of West Australians in England, and I have been informed that the office has been particularly busy.

Mr. HOLMAN: I do not think the present occupant of the office has any great ability, but the office could be made useful. The agency has been found useful by our people who have been stranded in London. The cost of stationery, fuel, and postages would absorb a big portion of the remaining £900, but the various items should have been shown. If travelling has the effect of teaching, it will require a great deal of expenditure to enable the present Agent General to acquire knowledge. I am not, however, cavilling at the large amount being spent in London in this direction.

Mr. Jones: Would it not be cheaper to send home a man who is already educated?

Mr. HOLMAN: Perhaps, I am satisfied that while the Agent General filled a responsible position in the State, he was the means of money being wasted to a considerable extent. The agency, so far as importance is concerned, is not to be compared to-day with the years that have gone. In the past it was to a considerable extent an advertising agency. Of late years we have been advertised—unfortunately at great expense—all over the world, and we shall not require to

make ourselves known to the extent that we had to do in the past. It is time also that the States worked in conjunction so as to do away with so many agencies in London.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The amount set down here for travelling expenses is a mere flea-bite. When we set the immigration policy in motion, we will find that travelling expenses will be charged to loan.

Mr. SMITH: I am not satisfied with the explanation of the Premier in regard to this item. The way in which the Estimates are put before us now is an absolute farce. Intelligent members are expected to pass the Estimates en globo without being supplied with any information as to how the money has been spent. It is no wonder that a great deal of time is taken up in asking questions. I would like the Premier to tell us why the amount which we passed last year, namely, £2,000, was exceeded by £827. We know that rent was responsible for £1,600 and cables for another £700. What then is there left for stationery, travelling, and fuel? I want to show that the information which has been given to us is not quite correct. I would like to know also why British income tax is paid. We are passing this vote entirely in the dark, and while last year we voted £2,000 and spent £2,800, this year we are voting £2,500. Next year we will probably be asked to vote £3,500.

Mr. HOLMAN: The member for North Perth is severely criticising the Estimates, yet when we desire to bring about an alteration he invariably votes for the Government. What is the use of criticising a vote unless the hon. member who is offering that criticism is prepared to support a reduction or the abolition of it? That is the only way to show the Government that members will not tolerate waste. We have neither economy nor saving in any direction.

Mr. JONES: Our difficulty is that this item gives practically no details. Past Estimates did furnish particulars. To a request for information the Premier gives only the baldest reply. Travelling expenses, we learn, are also paid under other heads of expenditure.

The Premier: This item does not include the Agent General's travelling expenses. There are other officers in the London Agency.

Mr. JONES: Unless the Premier gives a satisfactory explanation, I shall move for a reduction.

The PREMIER: Does the hon. member expect me to be prepared to tell him exactly how many pounds, shillings, and pence have been paid by the London agency on account of postage, stationery, travelling, fuel, and so forth? If the Committee desire a statement of that nature, I shall be pleased to lay it on the Table. I dare say not much of this item represents travelling expenses. Cablegrams will account for a good deal of it, and it also includes rent. The London Agency has been of great use to our soldiers and their parents.

Item, War bonuses to staff, £350.

Mr. HOLMAN: Is the amount allotted for war bonuses distributed at so much per head, as it ought to be, or in proportion to salaries? The man on a higher salary can do better without a war bonus than the lower paid man.

The Premier: The Agent General did not get any of this.

Mr. HOLMAN: No; but did the acting secretary, on about £600 a year, receive six times as large a bonus as the clerk on £100 a year? If the Premier has not the information now, perhaps he will obtain it.

The PREMIER: The war bonuses were paid in consideration of the high cost of living occasioned by the war. The salaries paid in the London office are comparatively small.

Mr. Holman: Was the total amount of the bonuses distributed at so much per head?

The Minister for Works: Practically, it would be. Very few of the men in the London office get over £200 a year.

The PREMIER: The amount was distributed among officials receiving less than a certain salary.

Item, Consideration for surrender of lease of quarters leased by Sir N. J. Moore, and taken over by Government, £200.

Mr. SMITH: This is a very unusual item, and calls for explanation.

The PREMIER: A house was taken by the Agent General under lease, with the consent of the Government of the day. The rent was paid by him until he left the agency. Then the House was no longer suitable, because it was in the danger zone. It could not be sublet, and the result was that £200 had to be paid for the cancellation of the lease.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Public Service Commissioner, £1,226:

Item, Secretary, £408.

Mr. SMITH: Is this the officer whose salary was reduced by the Committee on the 5th March, 1918?

The Premier: You are wrong. His salary was not reduced last year.

Mr. SMITH: The salary was reduced by Parliament, but notwithstanding that fact the officer has, I understand, received the increase for which he was put down.

The Premier: You are mistaken.

Mr. SMITH: An increase was refused, and in the following year it was again proposed, and the item passed through unnoticed. I protest against items being increased after Parliament has reduced them. Why was this salary not reduced in accordance with the vote of the Committee?

The PREMIER: Last year this officer's salary was increased and fixed at £408. In the previous year the proposed increase was struck out.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I, too, wish to protest because of the form in which the Estimates have been presented this year. The mutilation of this form was started in the year before last, and was continued last year. It is impossible to find from the Estimates what the vote was the year before. A promise was given that the Estimates would be restored to their old form, but this promise has not been kept. We used to have a column showing the expenditure, but now there is no means of knowing what the vote was, or whether it was exceeded or not. I hope the Premier will see that the Estimates are not shown in this form next year. The officers of the Treasury knew of the promise that was made and ought to be brought to book for their neglect. They ought to be reprimanded, and it would be a good thing if the salary of the officer immediately concerned was reduced as a lesson to him. The fact that there was an increase in the salary of this officer last year was due to there being no column in the Estimates to show what it was the previous year. I believe the Estimates were presented in the form they were in, so as to mislead the Committee, and in order that some of the highly paid officers might get increases which the Committee would not know about. The Premier is, of course, not responsible in this matter.

The PREMIER: The old form of our Estimates is better than the present one. If I had noticed that the columns were not inserted as before, I should have had them put in. Next year I will see that the Estimates are properly presented.

Item, Clerks, £552.

Mr. LUTEY: There are only three clerks provided for this year, but the amount is greater than it was last year. We have no means of knowing who is receiving an increase in salary. I am pleased that the Premier has given the assurance that the Estimates will be presented in proper form next year. If it were not for the consequent delay in the conduct of business, I should be inclined to move that the Estimates should be sent back and placed in proper form.

The PREMIER: There were four clerks last year but one was temporarily employed, though he happened to be included in the Estimates. There are really only three clerks and a temporary junior.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is it customary to pay clerks in excess of their classification? Are they all served in the same way?

The PREMIER: Yes. Statutory increases have been given.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Has anything been done in the matter of reorganising the Public Service? We know that the Minister for Works has done a good deal in that direction.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is doubtful.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: We have heard of the attempt at reorganisation in the Treasury, but what has been done? It is generally

admitted that something in this way is urgently needed.

The PREMIER: We are contemplating housing the officials of the various departments in Government buildings. The Minister for Works has had alterations made to many buildings and a considerable saving should be effected in that way. There has also been a saving in regard to the payments by the Treasury for practically all departments. The work done by Mr. Glyde and Mr. Munt for the Public Service Commissioner has been useful. We are going into the question of amalgamating industries of kindred nature.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How is it possible for the Under Secretary for Works and the Under Treasurer to assist the Commissioner and carry out their own duties?

The PREMIER: It is possible for them to do all that is needed. Under the Act assistants are appointed to help the Commissioner by doing special work, as may be required by the Government. I do not know how much saving will be effected by the reorganisation, but it will be a considerable one. It will, of course, involve a change in the methods adopted. The great bulk of the civil servants are capable and hard-working men. We shall probably have to ask Parliament to alter many Acts in order to bring about what we desire. The total amount paid last year under the Civil Service Act was £402,658, to 863 officers. It will, therefore, be seen that there is not much room for economy there. There are also 82 fewer officers employed under the Public Service Act than there were in the previous year. It is certainly our intention to effect economies where these are possible.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Motor car service, £4,447:

Item, Clerk, £204.

Mr. SMITH: This appears to be a new item, and the Committee ought to be informed when new officers are appointed in this way.

The PREMIER: The Government motor cars have all been brought together and housed at the Government garage. It is necessary that we should have some control, and that control entails a good deal of work. The clerk is in the Premier's Office. A great deal of expenditure has been saved by the appointment of this officer.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This is a very clever piece of work, designed to cover up an increase of expenditure. By this dodge the Premier's Office shows a decrease of £9 instead of an increase of £195. All that has been done has been to transfer the item to Government motor cars.

The Minister for Works: That is not what has been done.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But it is, precisely. There is not sufficient work in the Government garage to warrant the appoint-

ment of this clerk. The books are kept by the men in the garage.

The Minister for Works: We have nearly every departmental car in that place now.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is impossible to say how many cars are there.

The Premier: There are 16.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Is the police car there?

The Minister for Works: Not the police car nor the lunacy car, but all others are there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I suggest that they, too, should be sent there.

The Premier: We shall have to appoint another clerk.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This item should be shown in the Estimates of the Premier's Office, because more than half the time of this clerk is employed in the work of the Premier's Office. This is merely a cunning move to permit of a decrease instead of an increase being shown in the Estimates of the Premier's Office.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Some time ago it was decided that all departmental cars should be brought into the Government garage. To-day that garage is doing all the repairs, and probably the building will have to be extended. The motor car service is controlled by Mr. Shapecott, who exercises supervision and has a clerk to keep the records. Some of the departments do not like the new system at all, but we are determined to have proper control of departmental cars.

Item, Purchase of cars, £300.

Mr. SMITH: What sort of car is to be purchased for £300?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is necessary to purchase another car, which I understand will be a Ford.

Mr. Latcy: Why are not the police cars stationed at the garage?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was proposed to bring the police car to the garage, but it was found from representations made by the Commissioner of Police that the car was required at the police station at all hours of the day and night.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Lithographic, £5,600.

Item, Government Lithographer, £456:

Mr. SMITH: There is here an increase of £12. What does it mean?

The Minister for Works: It is a statutory advance.

Mr. SMITH: I am not going to agree to increases to heads of departments when the under-dog is scarcely able to get a living wage.

The Minister for Works: They all have their advances.

Mr. SMITH: Nothing of the sort. I know of men in the department getting 9s. 7d. a day. We should treat all alike. The heads of departments get their increases year by year, whether passed by the Committee or

not. On the other hand, men on low salaries have been refused increases. I move an amendment—

That the item be reduced by £12.

Amendment put and negatived.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Printing, £38,985.

Item, Government Printer, £636:

Mr. SMITH: Last year we voted £800 to this officer and he was paid £818. This year the amount is increased to £836. It is monstrous that highly paid officials should continue to receive increases without any protest being raised, notwithstanding that the Treasury is practically empty and the lower paid men are ignored.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I agree with the member for North Perth. Though this might be described as an automatic increase, there is discontent in the Public Service, due to the heads of departments receiving increases and not the men in the lower positions.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When the war broke out, all statutory increases were stopped by the previous Government. Neither heads of departments nor the salaried officers under them received any advances. The previous Government considered the question because of the increased cost of living and because an advance of roughly £10 a year had been awarded by the Arbitration Court to wages men. The Public Service Commissioner inquired into the matter and we found that, for a sum of about £3,000, these increases could be provided. The present Premier considered that it would not be unfair to give an increase of £10 or £12 a year to those receiving £180 or £204. The next question was whether advances should be granted to officers receiving over £250. The Public Service Commissioner was consulted and the Government felt that if for another £3,000, making £5,000 or £6,000 in all, we could bring contentment to the Public Service, the country could well afford it. These increases were given as from the 1st January. I believe no statutory increase was given to the higher paid officials until within the last few months, and then it was dated back to the beginning of the year. The increase was warranted by the increased cost of living.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: If the Minister peruses the Public Service list, he will find that numerous officers in receipt of much higher salaries than £400 or £500 have received increases out of all proportion to those paid to men on the lower rungs of the ladder. I hope the member for North Perth will move to reduce the item. This House should indicate its attitude in regard to increases generally. It is not the conviction of the people that the highly paid officers, receiving £400 or £450, to whom the cost of living does not apply—

The Premier: Of course it applies to them.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: To a very limited extent.

The Minister for Works: We all feel it.

Mr. Smith: The higher paid man has a margin to work on.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: If the man on £500 a year feels it, God help the man on £200 a year!

Mr. Pickering: What about the £300 a year man?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: A public servant on £300 a year might be able to get through. If the member for Sussex is referring to a member of Parliament who has to subscribe to charitable appeals, fight elections, and be at the beck and call of constituents for a few years, and then be tossed out on his pink ear, he is citing a very strong claim. The Minister for Works should not laugh. There seems to be more desire to increase the salary of the heads of departments than that of the man at the bottom. The Minister shakes his head but, for 12 months, we have appealed to him to increase the rate of 9s. 7d. a day paid to wages men in his department. The other day, when it became inevitable, he increased the rate by 11d. a day but, in the last three years, with the cost of commodities soaring to the clouds, those people have been unable to buy boots and clothes for their children. Some of these men have a family of eight to support. We tried to enlist the Minister's sympathy, but failed. The Government could not give these men a little more, though the cost of living was pressing at their very vitals.

The Minister for Works: Are you putting that quite fairly?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I hope the Minister will not accuse me of being unfair.

The Minister for Works: I do not think you see it from the same point of view as I do.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I hope we shall not approve of a policy which will give an increase to men in a fair position—men who could easily wait for another year—and not to the unfortunates on the £200 mark. The Minister knows the inordinate prices ruling for clothes, foodstuffs, and rent. I admit an increase of wages will not solve the problem. If we pay civil servants another £20 or £50, they will be no better off when the merry-go-round comes to an end because, as soon as a rise is given, up goes the price of commodities. If the Government could bring down the price of commodities, most of the salaries paid would be adequate, but they will be unable to do it. A few years ago, they could have prevented prices from going up, but now that they have gone up, it is impossible to bring them down. All we can hope for is that they will be able to prevent prices from going any higher. The teachers are clamouring for increases; many of them are on fairly low salaries.

The Premier: We gave them something.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Only an infinitesimal increase.

The Minister for Works: It ran into a considerable sum.

Mr. Smith: The Premier gave them some cheap advice.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: There is a good deal of discontent in the Public Service which perhaps is not justified. During last week, public servants have rated me because they thought I was partial to a proposition to increase the allowance to members of Parliament. Some of them are getting more than I am, and they have no elections to fight. Some of them criticise one to his face; the others write letters to the paper saying we are robbing the Treasury. I am not prepared to listen to every claim put forward, because many civil servants will fight for a man who is really not entitled to more. The Government should intimate how far they are prepared to go in granting increases to men in receipt of £300, £350, and £400. An officer in the Public Service receiving £500 or more is on a pretty good wicket.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member has practically accused me of not dealing fairly with the men employed by the department. No one knows better than the hon. member that the men he referred to have cases before the Arbitration Court. At present, the timber workers have a case pending, and the member for Murchison is fighting their claims.

Mr. O'Loghlen: That would not prevent you from giving them more bread and butter.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When a Minister has trading concerns to deal with, he has to consider them from the rules of trading concerns and business.

Mr. Holman: That is absurd.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When an appeal is being made to a tribunal, it would be out of the ordinary course of business for a Minister to make any alterations.

Mr. O'Loghlen: You did it last week before the case came on.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I found it had been done by others in the timber trade and I felt we should follow suit.

Mr. O'Loghlen: You should have taken the lead.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It does not matter a dump whether we pay a man 6s. or £6 a day so long as his labour brings in an equivalent or a little more in return. If the commodities a man produces will stand the payment of £1 a day in wages, I am not averse to it being paid. I endeavour to be sympathetic towards the working man. I have worked amongst them and have governed a great many of them, and I claim I have a character in Australia for dealing with men fairly. I have never had complaints from men in my employ but, when one is a Minister, he is a trustee for the people and must consider their interests.

Mr. HOLMAN: The Minister for Works has entirely misled the Committee. He is repeating parrot like the arguments used against the workers at all times. An award made by the Arbitration Court sets out the lowest rate that shall be paid, but no decent, honest, or respectable employer will place every man on the minimum rate. If we are to give increases we should give the man on the lowest rung of the ladder the

£20 and those on the highest grade £5. Instead of that the Government reverse the position. They give the man on the highest rung the highest increase, and the poorly paid man the lowest. We should give the poorly paid people at least a chance of getting enough food to eat, and clothing with which to cover their nakedness, which they cannot do at the present time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is my intention to move for a reduction in this item.

The Premier: This is a grade increase.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: So long as there are men employed by the Government who are in receipt of 9s. 7d. a day, I shall vote against increases to highly paid officers. Those men in receipt of 9s. 7d. a day have been promised that when the Arbitration Court has determined another matter which does not concern them, their wages will be taken into consideration.

The Premier: They will get back pay.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They are starving in the meantime. I know one case where there are six in the family and where rent amounting to 12s. weekly is paid. How is it possible for a family to live on £2 5s. a week? Those people are going short of the necessities of life and consequently are becoming weakened in their constitutions. Why cannot the Government pay these men the same rate as is paid to the men employed by the Harbour Trust, namely, 11s., until the award is given? The Government should see that these men get the necessities of life before increases in salaries are given to officers who are in receipt of £600 and upwards. I move an amendment—

That the item be reduced by £36.

The PREMIER: I understand the hon. member wishes to enter a protest against the rate of wage paid to certain men at Fremantle, but I doubt whether it is the proper thing to select the salary of the Government Printer as the one to reduce in order to enter that protest. The Government Printer is one of the best officers we have in the State service. Every officer in the service has had a grade increase. That is provided for under the Public Service Act.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That was denied in the Press.

The PREMIER: And with absolute truth, too. The under secretaries are not under the Act. Their increases are here for hon. members to deal with.

Hon. P. Collier: We did not pass grade increases last year.

The PREMIER: We thought the time had arrived to grant grade increases. The member for North-East Fremantle knows full well—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That men in Fremantle are starving.

The PREMIER: That these grade increases are made under the Act. It would be wrong therefore to cut out this vote. Can anyone say that the Government Printer is overpaid? He could get a far

better salary elsewhere than he is drawing from the State. He is a very capable officer and is doing important work.

Mr. Jones: We admit that.

Mr. Smith: I think he is a most expensive officer.

The PREMIER: That is not so. He has saved the State a considerable sum of money. We propose to amalgamate the litho. branch with the printing office and in that way we hope to save a considerable sum of money annually. I sympathise with the member for North-East Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Sympathy is no good.

The PREMIER: When we discussed the matter previously I told the hon. member we had agreed to pay whatever was fixed by the court and make the payments retrospective to the 1st August.

Mr. O'Loughlin: Will you also do that with the State sawmills employees?

The PREMIER: It was thought that the Railway award would be available before this, but it has not been possible to avoid the delay.

Mr. O'Loughlin: There is nothing to stop you giving these Fremantle men bread and butter in the meantime.

The PREMIER: Whatever rate is fixed will be paid from the 1st August. The member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlin) can deal with the sawmill employees when we reach the works estimates. The member for North-East Fremantle may rest assured that the men to whom he has referred will be treated justly. The matter of paying increases to public servants on the lower rungs of the ladder is under consideration now. I hope the amendment will be withdrawn.

Mr. SMITH: I do not object to increases but I am going to try to insist that all Government employees shall be treated alike. It is utterly unfair that heads of departments should receive statutory increases while the lower paid men are referred to the Arbitration Court. The man on £600 a year has a margin, but the man receiving the minimum remuneration is almost unable to live. I have in mind especially about a dozen men employed in the Water Supply Department. For the past 12 months I have been trying, unsuccessfully, to get the Minister for Works to pay them a decent wage. The Minister's argument that in connection with a trading concern one must get value for wages paid does not apply in the case of the Water Supply Department, who can charge any rates they please. The department's customers, I am sure, do not desire that the Government should sweat employees. I have also in mind four tramway inspectors who are being paid 11s. 6d. per day for inspecting men receiving higher rates than that. The position is absurd; the pay of the inspectors should be raised. I shall support the member for North-East Fremantle in this matter unless I receive the Premier's assurance that Government employees on 9s. 7d. a day will receive a decent wage. On the Premier's

line of reasoning, why should not the departmental heads be referred to the Arbitration Court?

The Premier: If it were a matter of thousands of votes, it would be all right; but because the departmental heads are few in number they are attacked.

Mr. PICKERING: My sympathies are entirely with the men on the lower rungs of the ladder. However, men in the higher positions, men carrying the responsibilities of entire departments, have had their increments withheld for years; and they should now be encouraged by being granted some reasonable advances. I shall therefore support the item as it stands.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It does not take any more to keep alive a man receiving £600 a year than to keep alive one receiving £150. I do not know that the official responsibilities of the former have increased his cost of living. While I say now, as I have often said before, that the great fault in Australia is that we will not pay men sufficient salaries, I cannot lose sight of the fact that men who are, and have been, almost starving, have already waited six months for an increase. In this matter I am entirely with the member for North Perth. We want to see that the lowest paid Government employees receive sufficient to enable themselves and their wives and children to live. I have personal knowledge of a man on 9s. 7d. per day, who resides in the metropolitan area, paying 12s. 6d. per week rent—the least amount for which he can obtain accommodation—and having five children to keep. Of course he cannot do it; he is going back all the time. Some two months ago I used my endeavours to prevent a strike, and I then obtained from the Premier a promise that the men affected should be paid retrospectively from the 1st August any increase which might be granted them by the Arbitration Court. But now the Arbitration Court has closed down indefinitely. Those men ask the Government to pay them the same rate as the Fremantle Harbour Trust pay for similar work.

The Minister for Mines: They are in a different position.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They are in exactly the same position, and are working side by side with the Harbour Trust employees. The Government employee is paid 9s. 7d. a day, and the man he is working with receives 11s. If the Premier has not got the money at present to make up this difference to them I hope he will at all events give a promise to do so. If men are kept on a wage which is not a living wage it will not be long before the work they do and the worry they have put them underground, and the Government will then have to keep their widows and families. We are now asked to vote a substantial increase to a man earning £600 a year while those other unfortunate men are starving.

The PREMIER: I understand that owing to the unfortunate illness of a member of the Arbitration Court the award, by which we

propose to be guided in the case of the men at Fremantle, cannot be delivered. I will ascertain by the time the House meets again on Tuesday what chance there is of the award being delivered at an early date. I did not know that Mr. Daglish was so ill. I am just as anxious that every man should have a decent rate of pay as is the hon. member.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That will suit me.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This is the first chance we have of dealing with the highly paid officers in the service.

The Premier: This officer is under the Public Service Act.

Hon. P. COLLIER: What we do to-night in regard to this officer we shall be compelled, if we are consistent, to do with regard to every other highly paid officer in the service. If we pass this increase we have no reasonable ground for not passing the others that will come before us later. On what are these increases based? Have the Government agreed to give a grade increase throughout the service? If so, I cannot understand the position. This officer is down for an increase of £18. Is that a grade rise on a £600 salary? Are all the other increases we are to deal with later on merely grade rises as well? In the Mines Department the assistant to the Under Secretary receives an increase of £24 a year although his salary is £432 a year. The higher the salary the higher is the grade rise. The Commissioner of Taxation was drawing £650 last year, and he is now set down for £756. Is that also a grade rise? I admit that when we have capable men in charge of important departments we must pay them a salary adequate to the services they render, or we shall lose them. I hope before we pass any of these increases we shall preserve some degree of consistency. I think we ought to report progress in order that we may look further into the matter. It is important that we should know what we are doing in regard to increases to higher paid officers and others in the service. We should not blindly vote £18 to this officer, £24 to another, and other amounts of £48, £56, £98, £106, and up to £112.

The PREMIER: A grade rise of £36 is granted to this officer as from the 1st January last year. He was paid at the higher rate for six months of last year, which meant that he received £18 more than if there had been no grade increase. Naturally he gets an additional £18 this year to make up the difference.

Hon. P. Collier: What is the grade rise on £600?

The PREMIER: It is £36. The rise there is according to the salary. A man on £250 would get £12, and at another stage £24. These grade rises date back to the 1st January of this year.

Mr. Pickering: He is not getting an increase on last year's rate?

The PREMIER: No, not as applied to the last six months of the last financial year.

Officers under the Public Service Act receive grade increases in proportion to their salaries.

Mr. MUNSIE: How is it that a man on a lower salary gets £52?

The PREMIER: His position may have been changed.

Hon. P. Collier: Is it a grade rise through-out?

The PREMIER: Yes, for officers under the Public Service Act.

Hon. P. Collier: Is it a one grade rise?

The PREMIER: Yes.

The Minister for Mines: Except in special cases reported by the Public Service Commissioner, which would mean a change of responsibility.

The PREMIER: I think my explanation should be satisfactory to the hon. member.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Premier says that a grade rise has been granted all round. This officer on £600 receives an increase of £36. How comes it that another officer on the same mark is down for an increase of £100? It refutes the statement of the Premier that consistency has been observed in these grade rises.

The Premier: In the instance referred to, special duties have been undertaken.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We ought to be perfectly clear as to what the policy of the Government is in regard to increases, some of which are not according to the scale laid down.

The Minister for Mines: There are special reasons for the apparent inconsistencies.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I hope those inconsistencies will be satisfactorily explained. Seemingly this officer last year received a grade rise for a half year, and now he gets it for the full year, which brings him to £636. The question is whether the Committee is justified in voting increases to officers in receipt of salaries of £600 and £700.

Mr. Willmott: This officer's position has been classified to £804, and the terms of the appointment were that he should be automatically advanced to his maximum.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Others on low salaries are finding it very difficult to live. I know that this officer is doing excellent work, and it is only on principle that I am inquiring into the increase.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am still puzzled to a certain extent over these increases. The Premier gave us to understand that an officer receives £12 increases, according to his salary. If that is so, he had better re-print his Estimates because he has not granted those increases. One officer on £300 is receiving £36 increase; another on £312 is receiving £24 increase; another on £360 is receiving £48 increase, and another on £600 is receiving £36 increase.

The Premier: There may be some special duties.

Hon. P. Collier: It seems evident some have received two grade rises.

The Minister for Mines: It was arranged that there should be one grade rise to all public servants, but special cases would be considered on their merits.

Mr. MUNSIE: Under these Estimates, some officers on fairly low salaries will be reduced.

The Premier: No one has been reduced.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yet we are voting increases to men receiving £600 and over.

The Minister for Mines: It is not the individual who is shown on the Estimates but the office, and the office might be filled for only nine months of the year.

Mr. MUNSIE: There are hundreds of cases in these Estimates of men getting £4 a week and less who have received no increase and, while that is so, I am not disposed to increase the salary of a man getting £600 a year.

Amendment put and negatived.

Vote put and passed.

Mr. SMITH: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and passed.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

BILL—PEARLING ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Assembly.

BILL—SLAUGHTER OF CALVES RESTRICTION.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 10.45 p.m.