

to change the date of our financial year and make it the same as in New Zealand, where the financial year ended on the 31st March. Then, if the financial year ended on 31st March, during the succeeding three months the Auditor General and the Treasurer would be getting their accounts in order, and the report could be presented to Parliament when Parliament met in June or July, in which case it would be of real service. As it was now, the report was so old that it was useless to members. In fact, he doubted whether members took the trouble to look at it.

MR. GARDINER said he had been looking at it for information.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: A previous administration had already recommended an alteration of the terms upon which the report was made. He would make it his duty to get the Auditor General to report, with a view to seeing if we could not have his report earlier; and if it were necessary to amend the Act or any regulation—and he thought it was the regulation more especially that needed alteration—he would take care the amendment was effected.

Vote put and passed.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10:33 o'clock, until the next day.

## Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 15th January, 1902.

Question: Tariff, how enforced—Question: Villiers v. Government, Appeal—Question: Reserve at Wanneroo, Fencing—Question: Firewood Cutters, License Fee—Question: Canning Timber Railway, to Purchase—Question: Railway Duty, as to neglect—Question: Immigration of Italians—Leave of Absence—Motion: Government Business, Precedence—Motion: Railway Rolling-stock, to Increase—Question: Lease 37s, Kalgoorlie, how granted—Papers: Railway Duty, as to neglect at Burswood—Papers: Gold Mining Lease 3285s—Return: Plumbers, List of Licenses—Papers: Education, Teacher at Boulder—Papers: Clerk of Courts, (assistant) at Coolgardie, Removal—Return: Railway Engine Sparks, Fires and Compensation—Return: Royal Visit, Expenditure—Papers: Tonnage Dues, Hamelin Bay Remission—Return: Fruit Industry and Pests—Papers: Londonderry Dam, Leasing—Companies Duty Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Return: Education, School Attendance at Boulder—Motion: Coal-Mining, to Stimulate—Question: Agricultural Bank, to Improve and Extend—Annual Estimates (resumed), Treasury votes to Miscellaneous, progress—Adjournment.

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

#### PRAYERS.

#### QUESTION—TARIFF, HOW ENFORCED.

MR. F. McDONALD asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Whether the Tariff Act has been re-enacted? 2, If so, whether the Collector has power to administer the same? 3, Why the Collector refuses to allow manufacturers to manufacture essences in bond at the old rate of 5s. per proof gallon.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. Illingworth) replied: This question can only be answered by the officers of the Federal Parliament, but I may be able to obtain the answer.

#### QUESTION—VILLIERS v. GOVERNMENT, APPEAL.

MR. F. McDONALD asked the Attorney General: Whether it is the intention of the Government to appeal to the Full Court against the decision of the Local Court, Fremantle, in the case of Villiers v. the Government.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. G. Leake) replied: Yes. The magistrate who tried the case has been requested to state a case for opinion of the Full Court.

#### QUESTION—RESERVE AT WANNEROO, FENCING.

MR. M. H. JACOBY asked the Premier: Whether a reply can now be

furnished to the question asked on the 28th August last, referring to the reported fencing by private individuals of portion of Reserve 1490, at Wanneroo.

THE PREMIER (Hon. G. Leake) replied: An inspection of the reserve proved that about 25 acres of it was enclosed in Pastoral Lease 66/1189, and the lessee has been called upon to remove the fence to the boundary of the lease.

#### QUESTION—FIREWOOD CUTTERS, LICENSE FEE.

MR. M. H. JACOBY asked the Premier whether the Government propose to give effect to the promise made to a deputation on 30th August last, by the late Minister for Lands, Mr. Sommers, to reduce the fees now payable by firewood cutters.

THE PREMIER replied: Provision is made in the Land Act Amendment Bill now before the House for reduction of the fee from 5s. to 2s. 6d., but this cannot take effect till the Bill becomes law.

#### QUESTION—CANNING TIMBER RAIL- WAY, TO PURCHASE.

MR. M. H. JACOBY asked the Premier whether it is the intention of the Government to take steps toward the purchase of the Gooseberry Hill railway.

THE PREMIER replied: The present Government have not finally considered the matter, but will consult Parliament if necessary.

#### QUESTION—RAILWAY DUTY, AS TO NEGLECT.

MR. G. TAYLOR asked the Commissioner for Railways: 1, Whether he has received a report regarding an alleged breach of railway rules by an official or officials, on the 5th inst., in connection with the passage of a train carrying His Excellency the Governor General and the Governor of this State, whereby their lives were jeopardised? 2, If so, what action it is intended to take in regard to this occurrence, and by whose authority the rules, as laid down by the Executive Council for the safety of the public, were set aside. 3, Whether he has approved of punishment being inflicted on the officers in charge at Burswood and Cannington for not being on duty for the passage of the Governor General's special;

if so, what is the nature of the punishment. 4, Whether it is a fact that the officer at Burswood was on duty 17 hours continuously, and that he applied for and was granted leave by his superior officer, before he left duty for rest and food. 5, Whether it is a fact that had the officer at Burswood remained on duty till the arrival of the special, he would have been on duty for a period of 24 hours continuously without food or sleeping accommodation.

THE PREMIER (on behalf of the Commissioner for Railways) replied: 1, No. A report has been received that no officer was in attendance at Cannington and Burswood for the purpose of arranging for the passage of the Governor General's special train from Armadale to East Perth on Sunday, 5th January; and the Acting Chief Traffic Manager, who was in charge of the train, made special arrangements for continuing the journey, but at no time during the journey were the lives of the passengers jeopardised. 2, No rules approved of by the Executive Council were set aside. 3, No; the matter is under consideration. 4, The officer at Burswood commenced duty at 6 p.m. on the 4th inst., and should have been relieved at 6 a.m. on the 5th *idem*, but owing to the absence of the officer in charge, through illness, he did not leave work until 10.30 a.m., and subsequently reported the circumstances to an officer in the District Superintendent's office, and arrangements were made for relief to be sent out. 5, Yes; but this was not necessary.

#### QUESTION—IMMIGRATION OF ITALIANS.

MR. R. HASTIE (for Mr. Daglish) asked the Premier: 1, Whether his attention has been drawn to the continued influx of Italians to this State. 2, What was the result of the inquiry made some months ago at the instance of a deputation respecting the importation of Italians under contract. 3, What steps the Government proposes to take to check this immigration and protect British traders and workers.

THE PREMIER replied: 1, Not up to the present. 2, Careful inquiry was made, and the Government could get no trace of Italians coming to the State under contract.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by MR. M. H. JACOBY, leave of absence for one fortnight was granted to the member for Plantagenet (Mr. Hassell), on the ground of illness.

## MOTION—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. G. Leake) moved :—

That after this day, Government business take precedence of all other business, during the remainder of the session.

If it were the desire of members that the session should be completed as soon as possible, no doubt they would support the motion. By a glance at the Notice Paper, members would see there were very important matters, particularly the Estimates, to be got through. The Government did not desire to ask the House for a fresh Supply Bill, but it would be necessary to do so unless the House were prepared to pass the Estimates. Anxious as he was to get the Estimates and the Appropriation Bill passed, he did not propose to take any unfair advantage of members by reason of the fact that supplies had been granted. It had been suggested, and indeed there was a notice of motion on the paper, that some steps should be taken to determine what measures should be immediately proceeded with. Without unnecessarily trespassing upon or anticipating a motion which might ultimately be discussed, it had been suggested to him that the leaders on the other side should confer with him, with the idea of going through the list and determining what business should be given due prominence. That proposition entirely met his view, and he would be only too glad if members on the other side of the House would arrange for a meeting to-morrow, in order that they might discuss it. He frankly admitted that he was very anxious to see the Estimates passed, but at the same time he did not desire to slaughter the innocents, as was the custom at the end of the session particularly, unless due notice was given. He trusted that members opposite would carry out the suggestion made, and accept his assurance that he would be only too glad to consider with them the situation.

MR. HOPKINS: Could not the hours of sittings be amended?

THE PREMIER: That was a matter he would be glad to deal with, but he first desired to test the feeling of the House on the question of precedence of Government business. If it were left to himself, he would certainly propose an extra day of sitting; but he took it that was one of the matters they might well discuss when there was a meeting between him and the leaders opposite. He therefore confidently submitted the motion standing in his name.

MR. T. F. QUINLAN (Toodyay) said he rose on behalf of the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans), who was absent to-day, and also as the mouthpiece of the party, to move an amendment which he ventured to say the Premier would be good enough to accept; this being that the words after "day" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu, or perhaps an amendment might be submitted in a better form which might meet with the approval of members present:—

With a view of expediting public business, the House sit on Fridays from 4:30 onwards in addition to the days already ordered.

The object of this party (Opposition) was to facilitate the business of the country, and, as the Premier properly pointed out, to pass those measures which were of great importance, some of which necessarily required to be passed this session. In view of the delay which had taken place, or the disturbance at any rate of business generally, this party wished to facilitate the business of the country, so that the Government of the day should be able to get into recess and exercise that reform which they had proffered.

THE SPEAKER: What the hon. member now proposed did not appear to be an amendment.

MR. QUINLAN: The amendment was to add Friday as a sitting day.

THE SPEAKER: The question before the House was that Government business should take precedence of all other business.

MR. QUINLAN: The amendment was hurriedly drawn a moment or two ago. The object was for the House to sit on Fridays at the same hour as on other days.

THE PREMIER: Might one suggest that the debate be adjourned, and that a motion be framed which might be agreed

upon in the morning. He was sure there would be no difficulty.

MR. QUINLAN: Oh, no.

THE SPEAKER: Would someone move that the debate be adjourned?

HON. F. H. PIESSE (Williams): The passing of the Premier's motion, that Government business take precedence of all other, would no doubt interfere much with private business; but if the proposed extra sitting day were substituted, the motion need not be passed. The extra day would enable the House to deal with private business on the days hitherto set aside for that purpose, such business being taken until the tea-hour, and not afterwards, save with the consent of the House. He supported the Premier's suggestion that a consultation be held on the subject, after which the whole question could probably be dealt with in the House without farther discussion.

MR. W. J. GEORGE moved that the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and passed, and the debate adjourned.

#### MOTION—RAILWAY ROLLING-STOCK, TO INCREASE.

MR. M. H. JACOBY (Swan) moved:

That in consequence of the shortage of trucks and rolling-stock between Midland Junction and Chidlow's Well, throwing a large number of people out of employment, this House is of opinion that the Government should take immediate steps to remedy a state of things which is causing such serious injury to the interests of the State.

He said: Anyone acquainted with the particular railway stations referred to in this motion will not require telling that the matter is of considerable urgency. The necessity that has arisen for the Government to send water trains long distances along the Eastern line, and also from Chidlow's Well to Midland Junction, has caused a great disturbance of the ordinary traffic on the railways; and that has led to throwing out of employment a large number of people concerned in the firewood industry. Another cause which helps to create the difficulty in regard to railway trucks is the fact that a large number of these trucks is awaiting repair in the workshops at Fremantle. I am informed that before the holidays there were 400 trucks there, and that, owing to the fact that the shops were closed for a

fortnight, the number waiting has now increased to 700. I should have thought that owing to the large number of trucks awaiting repair, some arrangement might have been made to keep the workshops open during most of the Christmas holidays, instead of closing them for a whole fortnight, and that those holidays might have been taken at some other time. In addition to this large quantity of 700 trucks waiting, there are, I believe, from 65 to 70 engines. The normal quantity of trucks which should be in the repairing shops ought not, I believe, to exceed about 100 or 150; whereas we have now at least 700 trucks laid up for repairs. I brought forward this motion to impress on the Government the urgency of taking into consideration the possibility of erecting some temporary shops at Midland Junction, to expedite the repairing of trucks. If we had in use our normal number of trucks and engines, the present block in traffic would not occur. I should like briefly to refer to a return laid upon the table a few months ago by the Commissioner of Railways, showing the number of trucks and the state of the railway traffic on one line for one month. It gives the number of trucks applied for at various stations, as well as the number supplied. At Greenmount, 75 trucks were applied for in one month, and 47 supplied; at Smith's Mill, 467 were applied for, and the department were able to supply only 193; at Mahogany Creek, 120 were asked for, and 55 supplied; at Mundaring, 75 trucks were asked for, and 57 supplied; at Sawyers Valley, 11 trucks were required, and 7 supplied; at Lion Mill, 112 were asked for, and 27 supplied; at Parkerville, 312 were asked for, and only 150 supplied; whilst at Chidlow's Well, 55 were required, and only 20 supplied. That state of things did not exist prior to the present block in the railway service; and when I inform hon. members that, bad as the position used to be, it is now twenty times worse, they can easily understand the great loss which is being sustained by the men employed in the industries which require trucks. The stone, gravel, and firewood industries at these particular stations employ large numbers of men who absolutely rely for their living upon the trucks supplied;

and when we find that they are at present able to get only about one-tenth, or even less, of the trucks for which they apply, we can understand the hardships these men are now undergoing. I hope some temporary arrangement will be made to overcome the difficulty. I ask the Government to agree to this motion, to take the matter into serious consideration, and then, if possible, to go to some extra expense—not to allow a little expense to block their efforts; and if my suggestion can be carried out, to erect a temporary structure at Midland Junction, the block should be overcome; and this I trust the Government will see their way to do. I beg to move the motion on the Notice Paper.

**MR. QUINLAN (Toodyay):** I second the motion.

**THE PREMIER (Hon. G. Leake):** The Government do not see any objection to this motion; but at the same time I think that after some explanation the House will admit we have attempted to do everything that is possible in the circumstances. It is not only in this part of the country that there is a shortage of trucks: for that shortage exists all over the railway system. Representations come to us from all directions, and the Minister for Railways is doing his very best to overcome the difficulty. Perhaps it would shorten matters if I read to the House a memorandum written only yesterday by the Acting Chief Traffic Manager, Mr. Douglas, on this very subject. He says:—

I enclose herewith a statement showing trucks ordered and supplied for firewood from 1st December, 1901, to 13th January, 1902. The very best is being done to meet the orders at the stations named, and at the present time a rough estimate shows that there is about 48 tons of firewood stacked on Lion Mill, 480 tons at Chidlow's Well, 300 tons at Log Landing, 12 tons at Sawyers Valley, 300 tons at Mundaring Weir, and 100 tons at Parkerville. We are experiencing great difficulty in supplying those places, owing to the fact that very few empties are coming through from Northam, owing to the heavy loading from the goldfields and the large number of trucks which are required at stations between Southern Cross and Northam, including Goomalling line, and on Great Southern line for produce. The orders for these two lines alone amounted to about 200 trucks daily—yesterday's order being 213. The water supply trouble also considerably increases the difficulty which we are labouring under, as,

with so many tanks to haul in addition to loaded trucks, it is scarcely possible to get empties through at all. Empty trucks are frequently available at Midland Junction, which would be suitable for firewood traffic, but we have not the engine power to shift them in addition to the loaded trucks which must be worked forward. This morning Inspector Shillingworth visited Mundaring, Log Landing, and Sawyers Valley, and conversed with a number of the senders at those stations. They one and all expressed themselves as satisfied that the department is doing its best in the face of the great difficulties under which we are working, there being about 20 engines and 200 trucks in use in water traffic alone. The people at Sawyers Valley and Log Landing informed Inspector Shillingworth that their sidings had never been so clear as they were shortly before Christmas. As a proof that some of these stations order in excess of their requirements, I would draw attention to the fact that although Sawyers Valley ordered 107 trucks and only received 37 during the period under notice, and Lion Mill ordered 647 and only got 314, yet both these places are practically clear of firewood, which fact speaks for itself.

**N. DOUGLAS.**

In the circumstances, I trust the hon. member will see there is no necessity to press the motion, but will withdraw it after the information I have given. I may tell him that negotiations are in progress between the Government and the Midland Railway Company with the idea of facilities being given for the repair of trucks at their siding. If we can carry out that proposal it will be done. I cannot say more.

**MR. TEESDALE SMITH (Welling-ton):** In supporting the motion, I do so because the Premier has led the House to think there is no necessity for more trucks.

**THE PREMIER:** Oh, no.

**MR. TEESDALE SMITH:** The latter part of the letter is misleading. The Government officials when they visit the various stations do not, in my opinion, make the careful study of the material to be lifted, and they often send in such a statement as that which the Premier has read to-day. It has been stated in the newspapers and elsewhere, that the truck difficulty is being overcome. I flatly deny that, as I have denied it before; and, until the Government take this matter up properly and order sufficient trucks, it will be a recurring difficulty every day until the Government see the

necessity to order a sufficient quantity of trucks.

**THE PREMIER:** Orders have gone forth.

**MR. TEESDALESMITH:** The orders that have gone forward will not amount to more than 20 per cent. of the necessary requirements at the present time. The Government will not recognise the importance of the question, and though I do not wish to take up the time of the House, I wish to combat a portion of the remarks made by the Premier.

**MR. JACOBY (in reply):** I should have been pleased if the Premier had been able to inform the House of the number of trucks ordered and the shipments expected at an early date, also how long it will take before these shipments arrive and the trucks be put into use. Regarding the statement as to the quantity of stuff the Railway Department report as being at the sidings, I would like to mention, in reply, that though the department may have succeeded in temporarily clearing a siding or two, there are 600 or 700 times the quantity of stuff lying in the bush, and it is no good bringing it to the sidings. There are hundreds of tons of firewood in the bush which it is no good bringing in, because there are no trucks to take it away. It is time the country demanded to have sufficient trucks, so as not to block the commerce and business of the country in all directions. I am thankful to the Premier for agreeing to the motion, which I think will meet with the sympathy of the House.

Question put and passed.

#### PAPERS.—LEASE 37E, KALGOORLIE, HOW GRANTED.

**MR. J. RESIDE (Hannans)** moved—

That all papers in connection with the granting of a block of land situate on lease 37E, Boulder road, Kalgoorlie, to Messrs. Clemenger and Co., be laid on the table of the House.

Although he did not anticipate any objection to the motion, he would like to take an opportunity of entering his protest against the manner in which this transaction had been carried out. Yesterday he received a petition, signed by a good number of people resident about the locality of the Boulder road—between the Boulder road and the Boulder railway line. These people gave him to understand that negotiations had been entered

into whereby Messrs. Clemenger and Co. were endeavouring to obtain a large block of land for the establishment of a foundry, and when he (Mr. Reside) went to the Lands Office he found that the whole transaction had been completed. It was not right and just to those old residents who had lived for a considerable time in this locality that the ground should be taken from them without knowing of the fact at all. The people living in this locality had permission to build their homes there from the mining lessee. After the lease was abandoned, or forfeited, these people lived there in apparent security, and with the idea that the Government would throw open the land for business occupation and residence areas. The people should have known what was being done in this matter, and they should have had a prior right to compete for this land. Instead of that these foundry people managed to get the land through in what he (Mr. Reside) considered a secret and hurried manner. In justice to the Minister for Lands he must say that the whole transaction was completed before the present Minister came into office. Some time ago the Government Geologist made a survey of the auriferous area, and included this land within it: the land was only to be used for mining purposes. He (Mr. Reside) endeavoured to get the land thrown open for residential purposes, but was met with a refusal on the ground that the Government Geologist had reported that it was auriferous land, and should not be used for any but mining purposes. This transaction had not been carried out in the manner in which it should have been. When a departure was made from the usual accepted policy of the country, the member for the district should be consulted; at any rate he should have known something about it. He believed this matter had been referred to the Kalgoorlie Roads Board, but it was not referred to the people on the lease. The roads board approved of the matter and recommended that the application be granted. If the Government of the country wished miners to bring their wives and families to settle on the gold-fields, the Government should give the miners more consideration. It was not fair and just that people after living on land should be sent off with no place on

which to erect their camps. He took this opportunity of protesting against this transaction, and he believed there would be no opposition to the motion.

MR. W. J. GEORGE (Murray): This transaction had been carried out in a similar way to that in which transactions which had gone through during the past four or five years. It was not that he (Mr. George) came into competition with the firm that he spoke about this matter; but he did not think the State should subsidise any person in any particular industry. If a subsidy be granted to a person in a trade, then every person in that particular trade should be similarly treated. There were three foundries on the fields, the proprietors of all of which had the land on which the foundries were established granted to them on very easy terms. The land was given to Clemenger & Co.—at any rate the rent which they paid was a mere bagatelle, about £10 a year. The people in Perth who owned foundries had received no assistance from the Government: they never asked for any. If the State gave a subsidy to one particular firm, it should be given to all firms in that particular trade. He (Mr. George) had written to the department stating that if this kind of transaction was carried on he should expect the department to grant him a piece of land. He had only done this to show the fallacy of the matter, but he did not think the State had power under the Commonwealth Act to give a bonus. The fact remained that the estate of the people was given away to individuals under the plea of establishing a new industry when it was no new industry. Messrs. Clemenger & Co. had come to this country to make steel; his (Mr. George's) firm had made steel for many months in this country; and why should people, for the purpose of cutting into a trade, be subsidised by the Government. The principle was wrong in the first instance, and the Government had no right to assist an industry under the Commonwealth Act. The establishment of this business did not mean increased employment or increased population: it meant the transfer of population from one centre to another. If the Government were going to encourage the transfer of artisans from one place to another, where was such a thing going to end?

MR. GREGORY: The Government were not doing that.

MR. GEORGE said he did not blame the Government: he did not know whom to blame at present. At any rate the principle was vicious and wrong.

THE PREMIER: Not being in a position to give the House any information on the subject, which was an important one, he undertook that the papers should be laid on the table at the earliest possible moment.

MR. W. D. JOHNSON (Kalgoorlie): The late Minister for Lands (Mr. Nanson) should give the House some explanation of this matter. A considerable time ago a firm of engineers came to the goldfields and desired to make a practical study of rock drills, their manufacture and repair. The representatives of the firm went about trying to obtain a piece of land on which to establish their foundry. They discovered some residential areas away back from Kalgoorlie, outside the municipality and outside the Boulder municipality. These people set about to discover who were the owners of the areas, and then bought the land at a fair price. Then they desired to hand over the blocks to the Government, to get a lease on which to establish a foundry. They came to him (Mr. Johnson) as member for the district, and he concluded that the firm were acting fairly and justly with the Government and the people on the fields. He (Mr. Johnson) waited on the then Minister for Lands (Mr. Sommers), and pointed out that he thought the arrangement a fair and honest one, and asked the Minister to give the matter his favourable consideration. It took some months to deal with the subject, and one could not say now whether the land was granted; but, in the face of that straight and honest transaction, we had this other transaction, which had been brought forward and completed by a Minister during the few days in which he held office. It was only right that the Minister who granted the land should explain to the House why he did so. It was only right that the member for the district should be approached in a matter of this kind, instead of obtaining the opinion of a board, which would not be worth much. This showed that the action taken by the members on the Labour bench in

connection with the late Ministry was a just one. The Labour members said the late Ministry was corrupt; and this one action would prove to the people of Western Australia that the Labour members were correct, unless the Minister who granted the land could justify his action.

MR. THOMAS rose to a point of order. Was it right for a member of the House to call any Ministry a "corrupt Ministry"?

THE SPEAKER: No; such an expression was out of order. He had not understood the hon. member to say that, and he did not believe the hon. member intended to apply the word "corrupt" to the late Minister for Lands.

MR. JOHNSON: In connection with this matter he felt very strongly; but if he had said anything wrong, he would withdraw.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS (Boulder): It was a matter for regret if residents on the site granted to Messrs. Clemenger and Company were being removed to make room for that firm. Such a state of things, if it existed, indicated faulty administration somewhere. On the other hand, it was hardly fair to say that the transaction savoured of corruption; because it was not carried out secretly, but was referred to the local governing body, namely the Kalgoorlie Roads Board. Of course the matter should also have been referred to the local land agent. The practice of the Lands Department in the past had been to evict people, and that practice should be stopped. We were at pains to offer inducements to people to settle in this country, and the eviction of those who had settled here was hardly in consonance with such a policy.

MR. J. L. NANSON (Murchison): Probably it would save time if, instead of now giving his own explanation of the transaction, he waited until the papers relating to the grant were laid on the table of the House. No useful purpose was to be served by indulging in strong language or lengthy speeches at the present stage. He was perfectly ready to take every responsibility of his action in the matter; but he would prefer to defer any farther observations until the House was in possession of the facts. He would be prepared to go farther, if

the mover thought fit to proceed after the papers had been laid on the table.

Question put and passed.

#### PAPERS—RAILWAY DUTY, AS TO NEGLECT AT BURSWOOD.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) moved:

That all papers in connection with the punishments of the officials of the Burswood railway station, if any, be laid upon the table of the House.

The subject of this motion needed looking into. Anticipating no opposition, he would content himself with formally moving the motion.

Question put and passed.

#### PAPERS—GOLD-MINING LEASE 3285a.

MR. W. D. JOHNSON (Kalgoorlie) moved:

That all papers in connection with Gold-mining Lease 3285a be laid upon the table of the House.

This lease was taken up in the early part of 1896, since when little or no work had been done on it. It might safely be said that the lease had been under continual exemption. A shaft 100 feet deep, which would take but a very short time to sink, represented the whole of the work done on the ground. The lease was now forfeited, and a party of miners had applied for the underground workings only. The Warden had refused the application on the ground that the lease had been reserved. It seemed strange that the men should be refused the right to search for gold; and he moved for the papers in order to ascertain the reason of the refusal.

Question put and passed.

#### RETURN—PLUMBERS, LIST OF LICENSES.

MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco) moved:  
That there be laid upon the table of the House a list of all licensed plumbers.

On applying for this information to the Metropolitan Waterworks Board, he had been met with a refusal. A similar application previously made by the secretary of the Plumbers' Union was likewise met with a refusal. He had interviewed the secretary of the board and pointed out there was no reason why secrecy should be observed in regard to the list



of licensed plumbers. There was, in fact, no reason why the list should not be published annually in the *Government Gazette*. It seemed absurd that he, as a public man, should have to take up the time of the House in order to get a piece of public information.

Question put and passed.

#### PAPERS—EDUCATION, TEACHER AT BOULDER.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS (Boulder) moved:

That all documents bearing on the appointment of Wm. Hill, of Boulder City, to the position of Assistant of the Boulder Mines School, be laid upon the table of this House, accompanied by—1, All reports of inspectors and other superior officers bearing on Mr. Hill's conduct during the term of his engagement; 2, Minutes, if any, made by the hon. the Minister for Education, and more particularly those referring to increments referred to in a departmental communication dated October 9th, 1901, No. 602/1900; 3, All papers bearing on retirement of Mr. Hill.

In replying to some questions asked by him yesterday, the Premier stated that Mr. Hill's appointment dated from the 1st April, 1900, which was a Sunday, and that therefore his pay started from the 2nd April, one day after his official appointment. This was one of the grievances Mr. Hill felt himself to be under when he requested that the papers might be produced. It seemed mean and shabby on the part of the Government to appoint a person as from the first of the month, and pay him as from the second.

Question put and passed.

#### PAPERS—CLERK OF COURTS (ASSISTANT) AT COOLGARDIE, REMOVAL.

MR. F. REID (Mt. Burges) moved:

That all correspondence, papers, and other documents referring to the removal of J. E. Pombart, late Assistant Clerk of Courts at Coolgardie, from October, 1898, to the 17th ult., be laid upon the table of the House.

It was necessary that inquiries should be made into the circumstances attending the removal of this officer from Coolgardie to Perth. It was within his personal knowledge that Mr. Pombart had been instrumental in saving the Government a large amount of money.

Question put and passed.

#### RETURN—RAILWAY ENGINE SPARKS, FIRES AND COMPENSATION.

MR. C. HARPER (Beverley) moved:

That a return be laid upon the table, showing—1, The particulars of all claims made since November last upon the Commissioner of Railways for damages alleged to have been caused by the escape of fire from locomotives; 2, The amount of compensation, if any, offered by the Commissioner in each case; 3, The description of fuel used in each case when a claim has been made.

The information asked for in the motion would be of value to the country. It was advisable that the public should know what damage had been caused during the past year by the escape of fire from locomotives, and what the Railway Department had paid as compensation for such damage. He desired to move only the first three paragraphs of his motion. As for the fourth paragraph, asking for the production of departmental reports on the subject, he could realise that the reports of officers who had made inquiries into these fires might contain confidential information which should not be given to the House. He had therefore moved only the first three paragraphs of the motion.

THE PREMIER (Hon. G. Leake): As for the third clause in the motion, there were certain cases pending in the Courts, in view of which it would not be well to divulge the contents of confidential communications, since the result might be to prejudice the trials of these cases.

Question put and passed.

#### RETURN—ROYAL VISIT, EXPENDITURE.

MR. C. HARPER (Beverley) moved:

That a return be laid upon the table, giving a detailed account of the total expenditure incurred by the State in connection with the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York.

While, of course, we were all glad to welcome their Royal Highnesses, it was well that the country should know how its money had been expended.

Question put and passed.

#### PAPERS—TONNAGE DUES, HAMELIN BAY REMISSION.

MR. M. H. JACOBY (Swan) moved:

That there be laid upon the table of the House all papers dealing with the remission of tonnage dues by the late Government to the Karri Davies Company at Hamelin Bay.

The Karridale company, when starting operations at Hamelin Bay, had found it necessary to incur considerable expense in making a safe harbour for their timber vessels. He understood that in cases where private individuals made a harbour or carried out harbour works, the Government had still the power to collect dues on all shipping using the harbour or the works, even from the people who constructed the works. There appeared to be an impression on the minds of some members of the House—amongst them a member of the Ministry—that the late Forrest Government, in remitting tonnage dues in connection with the jetty and harbour constructed at Hamelin Bay by the Karridale Company, had been guilty of something like corruption.

THE PREMIER: Oh, no.

MR. JACOBY: This was practically the view of certain members, he understood. It was well that the papers should be laid on the table, in order that the matter might be cleared up.

MR. H. J. YELVERTON (Sussex): Having on a previous occasion commented on this matter, he desired now to say that he had no objection to the papers being laid on the table. Indeed he would be glad to see them produced; because he found he had been somewhat incorrect in stating that the Karridale Company had spent from £20,000 to £25,000 on their harbours. He had since learnt that the Karridale Company had spent no less a sum than £27,000 on their harbour at Hamelin Bay, and in addition between £16,000 and £20,000 on their Flinders Bay harbour. In view of these circumstances he could see nothing wrong in the action of the late Forrest Government in remitting the dues they had received in respect of vessels entering these harbours, and thus in some small measure recouping the company the heavy expenditure incurred.

#### RETURN—FRUIT INDUSTRY AND PESTS.

MR. W. J. GEORGE (Murray) moved:

That a return be laid upon the table, showing—1, The number of orchards known to exist in this State. 2, The number gazetted in accordance with the provisions of the Insect Pests Amendment Act. 3, The number inspected and reported on by inspectors appointed under that Act. 4, The number in which the San José scale has been detected. 5, The

number in which this scale has been eradicated, and in how many trees. 6, The length of time considered by the Department of Agriculture necessary to elapse after an orchard is declared free of scale, before they pronounce the scale eradicated.

The object of the motion was to get information which would be useful to those engaged in the fruit industry. The main thing was in regard to the San José scale; for some orchardists felt, justly or unjustly, that they had been treated rather severely, and his object in moving for the return was to ascertain the exact facts. No doubt the department would be able to say if they had done the proper thing, and, if they had, this feeling would be removed.

Question put and passed.

#### PAPERS—LONDONDERY DAM, LEASING.

MR. A. E. THOMAS (Dundas) moved:

That all papers in connection with the leasing of the Londonderry dam be laid on the table of the House.

Some time ago papers were produced, but he now asked the House to pass the motion, so that the papers might again be placed on the table, as members had not had an opportunity of thoroughly reading them, and some he knew would like to look at them again.

Question put and passed.

#### COMPANIES DUTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by MR. A. E. THOMAS, and read a first time.

#### RETURN—EDUCATION, SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AT BOULDER.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS (Boulder) moved:

That a return be laid upon the table showing—1, The number of class rooms in the Boulder School. 2, The number of class rooms in the Boulder Infants' School. 3, The number of children each room is supposed to accommodate under the department's regulations. 4, The average attendance in each room for the month of October, 1901. 5, The highest number recorded in attendance on any day during the month of October, 1901, showing each class separate. 6, The number of children refused admission during the month of October, 1901. 7, The excess attendance, if any.

For the last two or three years since

Boulder had been declared a municipality, there had hardly been a week or a month without the school being overcrowded; and this was a state of affairs that should not be allowed to exist in a large and important centre. There was a population within the municipality of something like 7,000, and within a radius of a mile and a half there were some 17,000 people. The present state of things meant that children were forced to go elsewhere, because there was no room for them in the Boulder school.

Question put and passed.

#### MOTION—COAL-MINING, TO STIMULATE.

MR. J. EWING (S.W. Mining) moved:

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the best means of farther stimulating the coal-mining industry of the State.

He said: My reason for asking the House to pass the motion is that the Collie coal-mining industry in my opinion has had a rather unfortunate career; and I think that if a committee were appointed it would clear up many difficulties and tend to the farther development of this great industry to the advantage of the State. I desire to make the inquiry as extensive as possible with a view to giving assistance to the Government in lending aid to the industry. I think a great deal can be done in the way of establishing facilities at Fremantle and Bunbury without great expense, and I have no hesitation in saying that if such be the case not only intercolonial boats, but a great number of large steamers will use bunker Collie coal. It has been said from time to time that Collie coal is not fit for bunkering; but I think that assertion will be proved to be erroneous, and that if facilities are given, which I trust will be the case, one of the outcomes of the appointment of the committee will be that we shall have facilities there, and that trade will be enhanced. I further wish to clear up a lot of what I consider mis-statements, not purposely made but made, I think, through want of knowledge on the subject. It has been said it does not pay to use Collie coal for locomotive purposes, but I believe the assertion to be untrue, and that the committee will prove it to be untrue. My chief desire is to impress on the Government through the

committee and the evidence they will take, the necessity of using nothing but Collie coal within the boundaries of the State. I think that can be done, and I am perfectly satisfied that every member of the House, provided the statements I make are verified, or even if the finances suffer to a certain extent, which I do not think will be the case, will be only too pleased to see the development and expansion of this industry. We have a population of about 2,000 people at Collie now. I regret to say that from circumstances which we cannot help now, but which I hope will soon be overcome, the miners are practically working half-time. I believe that in the near future this will be remedied. I did not speak on the shortage of trucks a few moments ago because I knew I should have the opportunity of doing so now. The shortage of trucks is one of the chief things crippling the industry. We know the Government have ordered a number of trucks specially for this trade. I think it a serious thing that a large body of men should be living on half wages. I feel sure, without farther trespassing on the House, that members will grant me this committee, and I believe the outcome will be in the very best interests of the State, that there will be a greater encouragement to people to come to this particular district, and that if the industry be properly looked after—I do not say subsidised, but properly treated—we shall in four or five years have a population of ten or twenty thousand people at Collie. I have every confidence in submitting the motion to the House.

MR. F. CONNOR (East Kimberley): I have pleasure in seconding the motion; and I assert, in reference to what the hon. member stated as to the development of this trade, that he has not exaggerated. The greatest drawback at present to the Collie coal industry is certainly the want of railway trucks. I have had some connection with the sale of this coal in Fremantle, and have no hesitation in saying that, with proper facilities for haulage, a very great industry can be established in the State which will be of benefit to the port of Fremantle, to all the other principal centres of population, and the country generally. In a very short time the goldfields will require an enormous quantity of fuel to be carried

over the rails, and I hope the Government, now they have settled down to the work of the State, will not forget this is one of the things that need to be developed, fostered, and taken care of. Next to the gold-mining and pastoral industries, I should say the coal-mining is the most important in the State.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: What about agriculture?

MR. CONNOR: I say the coal industry, because the agricultural industry takes such a long time to develop. The agricultural industry will not be neglected by members of this House. I do not know what are the feelings of members sitting on the Government benches at present with reference to the agricultural industry, but I take it as being rather bad taste for the member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse) to haul me up in reference to this particular industry, because he knows as a matter of fact he has always had my best support, and always will. However, that is away from the point. Whether or not this committee will do much good in connection with the coal industry, I do not know, but it is due to that industry that it should have a chance of having a committee appointed to place the requirements of the industry before the country, and any help that can be given by the Government to that industry will be of benefit to the country generally.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret): I would like the House to be told, before the motion is adopted, what form this select committee will be likely to take. I do not think the committee could do anything by farther investigating at the Collie mines. We want to arrive at the value of the Collie coal as against the Newcastle coal for producing steam, and in my opinion that can only be done by an actual test on locomotives by experts. Certainly there have been a lot of arguments against Collie coal, and of course the member for the South-West Mining District has very ably advocated the value of that coal. I have spoken to a good few people who have used it, and have heard that it is satisfactory when the gratings are suitable; but if you use Collie coal on the ordinary grating on which the Newcastle coal is used, with ordinary bars, it is a failure. Given proper and necessary ventilation, it is splendid coal for steam

purposes. That is, apart from locomotives where there is a likelihood of fire. If the committee is simply going to the Collie to have a look at the coal and pass judgment, it will be of no use. The only way to decide is to have an actual expert test of the coal on the engines and get the true value; and if the industry can be stimulated, I shall be only too eager to assist to place it on a sound basis. I will not oppose the motion.

MR. EWING (in reply): In answer to the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor), I desire to say I think the committee will do good work in the direction he has pointed out. That is really the object for which I have asked for a committee, to go into all these particular points and lay them clearly before the House. I believe that if we send for papers and persons we shall get all the evidence without any farther trial; and the object of the motion is only to facilitate the matter, to get everything in a condensed form, so that members may see what a valuable product we have there.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken and committee elected, comprising Mr. Connor, Mr. Reid, Mr. McDonald, Mr. Yelverton, also Mr. Ewing as mover; with power to call for persons and papers, and sit during any adjournment; to report this day fortnight.

#### QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK, TO IMPROVE AND EXTEND.

MR. M. H. JACOBY (Swan) moved:

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the Agricultural Bank, and examine proposals for the improvement and extension thereof.

He said: It is recognised by everybody interested in the progress of the Agricultural Bank that the time has arrived for considerable improvement. We have had much discussion on this subject in the various agricultural conferences held for years past; and the conference members have suggested improvements in many directions, notably in regard to the system of loans, and to the securities on which advances should be made. The administration of the bank also requires improvement, a fact which members will readily admit when I mention that I am told an application for a loan from this

bank has to make 16 journeys among various offices of the public departments in order to be complete. But it is not so much to improve the administration of the bank as to enlarge its scope that I have asked for this select committee. For instance, a borrower can at present obtain an advance upon work to be done in the future only: he cannot get anything on the security of work already done. He can make application only for work that is to be done, and when that work is done he can get an advance. Now it would be a considerable advantage to the State if, as has been allowed in the other States of Australia, farmers were given advances on improvements already effected, or advances to pay off mortgages already held over their properties at very high rates of interest by ordinary private banks. During recent years, a large extension of these agricultural banks has been effected in Australia and in various European countries also; and if the select committee were to examine carefully the methods of working these banks, and into their success or failure, I think they could suggest to this State a satisfactory extension of the operations of our own bank. I do not intend to speak at any length on this subject, as the select committee, if appointed, will go fully into details, and their report will explain these more completely than I could now attempt to do; but I should like to quote from the bank manager's report, to show how satisfactory and how valuable the Agricultural Bank has been, even when working to its present limited extent, and what assistance it has given to the rural industries of this country. For the sum of £94,567, which the bank has lent on mortgage, applicants have effected the following improvements on their properties, which the bank holds as security. There has been the clearing of 55,734 acres, at a cost of £141,231. There has been 41,296 acres cultivated at a cost of £33,813. At a cost of £6,733, 59,261 acres have been ringbarked; and at a cost of £8,973, 26,576 chains of fencing have been erected. There are wells, dams, reservoirs, etc., costing £3,937, drainage works completed costing £542, and farm buildings costing £11,219. Therefore the bank, by lending £94,567 on satisfactory security, has assisted to carry out work to the value of £206,448. I think

this exceedingly satisfactory, particularly when we note that during the years the bank has been in operation the amount lost totals, I believe, only a few pounds. At present, advances are made practically to farmers only. The bank altogether loses sight of the enormous advantage this country is likely to gain from the extension of our orchards. I am fully convinced that if there be any rural industry in this State which will reach gigantic dimensions, it is the fruit industry. Fruit-growers have many advantages in Western Australia, and I should like to see the bank so organised that adequate encouragement should be given to orchardists. Most of us know that the amount of produce per acre obtained from orchard land much exceeds that obtained by cultivation for hay or grain; but the bank makes advances upon holdings that are likely to be satisfactory from only a grain-growing or a chaff-growing point of view; and it is impossible for a man who proposes to expend from £20 or £30 up to £60 an acre in the preparation of an orchard, to get from the bank anything like a satisfactory advance. The working of the *crédit foncier* system in Victoria, adopted from France, has had a wonderful effect. I would like to quote a short paragraph wherein the manager of the Agricultural Bank mentioned that system. He says:—

The advisableness of increasing the functions of the bank, so that it may advance moneys on improvements already effected, has recently been heard much of. It must be at once admitted that if it is right to help the new man, it is only proper that the same treatment should be accorded to the old settler, who in many cases became involved, at high rates of interest, in effecting improvements which the new settler has cheap State assistance in carrying out. It is purely a matter of inspection, and so long as the staff is sufficient and capable enough, the State should run little risk. The *Crédit Foncier* of France, of which one hears so much, is a huge private institution whose interest on capital is guaranteed by the State. Its operations run into millions sterling, and even advances are made on houses erected within towns. Judging by the experience of the Agricultural Bank, there should be small risk in making State funds available to freeholders, provided that good cover was obtained, and careful and reliable valuation was made.

I commend the motion to the House, and trust it will be adopted. I feel sure the committee will be able to make such

recommendations as will be to the advantage of the State, if carried into effect.

HON. G. THROSSELL (Northam): I have pleasure in supporting the motion, and I believe that nothing but good can result to the country if a committee be appointed. The manager of the Agricultural Bank made certain recommendations that the operations of the bank should be extended, and I think it will be fully recognised that the time has arrived when the operations of the bank should be extended in this direction. A select committee will be able to satisfy the House and the country as to the soundness of the institution and the wisdom which has guided its operations. I believe it can be easily demonstrated that the bank's operations can be extended with safety to the country and with great gain to the borrowers. An extension is required at the present time so that assistance can be given for the purchase of stock. I think the committee appointed to inquire into the food supply made reference to this institution in this direction. Without desiring to dwell on the matter farther, I may say that I believe the best results will be obtained from the appointment of the committee.

MR. J. EWING (South-West Mining): I desire to support the motion. Those in the constituency that I represent around Donnybrook have, I will not say pestered, but have written to me repeatedly to expedite this matter. What they particularly wish is the extension of the bank on the *crédit foncier* system, as in vogue in Victoria. I have read the Act, and I have no doubt that a select committee will report in favour of an extension in that direction. I have no hesitation in saying that it will be a great boon to the persons interested.

MR. C. HARPER (Beverley): I have pleasure in supporting the motion. When I recollect the difficulty we had originally in getting the Bill through the House which enabled the bank to be established, it is refreshing that people have now realised that some good may be done in this direction. One thing I would like to impress on members is that something will very soon have to be done to relieve the manager of the Agricultural Bank of some of his duties. We very nearly killed him, and he will not last much longer if he attempts to do

all the work, if the bank is extended in the direction indicated.

MR. JACOBY: They take him away too much from his duty.

MR. HARPER: Something should be done to relieve him of the drudgery of the work of his department.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. Illingworth): The Government have no intention whatever to oppose the motion; indeed, they desire to give it every consideration. I would like to take the opportunity of saying that I think the great success which has undoubtedly followed the establishment of this bank is very largely indeed owing to the Government being enabled to secure so capable a manager as Mr. Paterson. I think, too, that the time has come when that officer should receive greater consideration. I regret that this year it has not been possible to do so, but I hope, in succeeding years, we shall be able to recognise his work in a substantial manner on the Estimates. Members have made reference to the *crédit foncier* system. I should like to say in the first place—and I do not mind confessing it—that I opposed the establishment of the Agricultural Bank; and I did so because I feared that there would be a waste of money by bad management. I did not know that we had in this country a man so completely capable of running an institution of this kind as Mr. Paterson. When it is suggested now to go into the *crédit foncier* system, hon. members will have to give the question some considerable thought. The principle intended by the bank was to encourage the settlement and cultivation of the land already held. The bank has already been an undoubted success in this direction; there is no question about it that most valuable results have come from the establishment of the bank; but when we proceed to what is known as the *crédit foncier* system, which has been established in Germany, in Belgium, and in France on a large scale, then we open a very wide subject. Hon. members know that these institutions, although supported and guaranteed by the Governments of the countries named, are practically, to a large extent, private institutions; and the proposal to take up ordinary land mortgage bank business will require capabilities which even Mr.

Paterson does not possess. Besides that, we are opening up a vast area for consideration. One great question which comes home to me as Treasurer is how the necessary money is to be provided. I think, perhaps, we may "hasten slowly" in this matter, and, while extending the operations of the bank, not go so far as the *crédit foncier* system, or what is involved in that expression. The institutions involved in that expression lend money to all and sundry persons established on the land. The idea of the establishment of the Agricultural Bank at first was not so much to help the individual as that of obtaining good settlers on the land. I am quite with the member who moved this motion that it is desired to extend the operations of the bank for mere agricultural work, and to assist vignerons and orchardists, and even farther than that. I think the committee could advise the House what particular direction and extension should be made. At the same time, I hope members, in selecting the committee, will choose those members who will not be disposed to throw the door open to spend the money of the country on any land, but to carry out practically an extension of the principle for which the bank was established—the cultivation of the land already held, as well as the taking up of other land for cultivation purposes. The member for Beverley (Mr. Harper) some time ago presented to the House some most valuable figures in connection with orchard work in California. I hope hon. members have not forgotten the impression which the hon. member then made. I have not, and I desire to remind hon. members of it, and to say that if members have forgotten the remarks, to suggest that they will take the trouble to look them up and read the figures. What we have to expect in this State is some development in the land which will be a permanent settlement and increasing industry. I think we have in our fruit just the very industry that seems to fit this country and the climate, and not only that, but its locality, its nearness to the great markets of the world. I hope members will bear in mind the almost astonishing figures which the member for Beverley placed before the House. For that reason, and with those figures in my memory, I

think the direction the bank should take should be an extension of the operations of the bank particularly in this class of industry. We may just go slowly. We have done very well in the past, and we are most anxious not to throw the little available money away, not to spread it on too much ground so as to make it ineffective. We have done good service with the small amount of money that has been at the disposal of the bank in the past. Perhaps by doubling that amount, or trebling it, or raising the amount to say half a million of money, we can do an amount of work in establishing and helping the fruit industry in conjunction with the agricultural industry as before. I deprecate the taking up of existing farms and properties and paying off mortgages. I deprecate the lending of money on properties already improved: not because they are not worthy, or that their securities are not good enough, but the direction in which I would go would be in increasing the industries themselves rather than relieving existing properties of mortgages, which perhaps would be a relief in reducing the interest, but to an extent which does not meet with the practical object for which the bank was instituted. I have been most pleasantly and happily disappointed in regard to the operations of the bank, and I attribute it to the great care and the suitability of the person managing. I do hope we shall not kill the official in endeavouring to extend the operations of the bank. The manager came to me the other day and said that I had only made provision on the Estimates for forage for one horse, and that was not sufficient, but that I should have to supply the feed for another horse; and I hope the House will not be disappointed if they find on Form J a little assistance for the help of this bank. I hope the committee will be selected so as to comprise members who are specially qualified to advise as to the most suitable direction in which to extend the operation of the bank. I hope we shall go forward slowly and carefully in this matter. The bank has been a success in the past, and I want it to continue a success. The best means of achieving this object is to continue the bank on the lines on which it has been started, namely those of encouraging and increasing the cultiva-

tion of land and the extension of the agricultural industry, rather than allowing it to become a mere mortgage bank or *crédit foncier*. The Government, so far from opposing the motion, are in sympathy with its object, and will assist the mover in every possible way.

HON. F. H. PIESSE (Williams): As one who strongly advocated the establishment of this bank, I am indeed pleased to hear the Colonial Secretary and Treasurer speak in such high terms of its operations. When it was first proposed to introduce a measure for the establishment of an Agricultural Bank, many members were sceptical as to the results. The strongest advocates of the establishment of the bank, although they had no doubt as to the eventual result, knew that success depended on the most careful management. The country, I consider, is to be congratulated on the selection of the manager, who has been alluded to by the Colonial Secretary and other hon. members in glowing terms. Having had the opportunity of observing that officer's work more closely than anyone who has yet spoken, I am glad to be able to state that, in my opinion, he deserves all that has been said about him. At the same time, I consider that the time has arrived when the manager should receive some assistance. The results of the bank's operations so far have been most encouraging, and the development of agriculture consequent on the assistance rendered to farmers by the bank has been most gratifying. The member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) referred to what he considered the slow progress being made by the agricultural industry in this State. I am in a position to inform the hon. member that at the present time our agricultural industry is making most rapid progress. It may be interesting to hon. members to learn that I, as a practical agriculturist, have had my eyes opened a good deal recently in regard to the capabilities of this country. Although, of course, I always knew that Western Australia possessed a certain area of good agricultural land, I was not aware eight or ten years ago how great the capacity of our land really is. The farmers have proved during the last five years the extraordinary value of what may be termed our second-class lands, from which really

wonderful results have been obtained. I will give an instance in point which has come under my notice recently, so that I can speak with authority. Certain land adjoining the township of Katanning, which was taken up in 1891 and was at that time looked upon as very poor land, almost third-class land, and which was indeed cleared mainly for the purpose of providing timber for the use of the township, has now been brought under cultivation. Although I knew that this land with proper treatment, suitable farming, and the application of the phosphates now being introduced into this State, was capable of producing large crops, I was greatly astonished this year to find that the crops grown on it were largely in excess of my expectations. The proper application of the phosphates, at the rate of one hundredweight to the acre on an area of 450 acres, resulted in a crop of hay equal to about two tons to the acre. This means that the area would have yielded about 18 or 20 bushels of wheat to the acre. Such a result has been obtained from land which at one time was considered to be quite valueless. We are learning its value only from the treatment which it is now receiving, and the manner in which it is now being brought under cultivation. I mention this instance particularly because I observed recently in one of the Perth papers an erroneous remark to the effect that this State has not a large area of agricultural land available. The mistake was, no doubt, an excusable one, because the writer who made it must have heard the statement repeated many times. Recent experiments, or rather I may say, recent events, since the matter is beyond the stage of experiment, demonstrate that we have in the past greatly underestimated the capabilities of the country. I am quite satisfied that we shall, in the near future, see such results as will astonish the people of this State. The climatic conditions here are very favourable to the cultivation of cereals. I have heard it stated recently that the wheat of Western Australia contains more gluten than that grown in almost any other part of Australia, and that the flour from our wheat is much sought after by bakers. We know large imports of wheat are brought into the Eastern States from Canada and other places. Manitoba wheat, for



instance, is highly esteemed in the Eastern States because of its richness in gluten. Western Australian wheat being very rich in gluten, it is reasonable to suppose that our wheat will in time be very largely sought after; so that the period should not be far distant when we shall begin to export wheat. The influx of population has naturally made it difficult to grow locally sufficient for the consumption of our own people. I shall be glad if we continue to keep behind the local consumption for some little time, because such a circumstance offers a strong incentive to the farmer to extend his area of cultivation. The time cannot be remote, however, when we shall be producing, and producing largely, for export. All these considerations go to show that the operations of the Agricultural Bank are justified, and indeed more than justified, and that anything we can do to assist the farther development of the Agricultural Bank by extension on the principles so far adopted, should receive careful consideration from the House. The lending of money is, of course, a matter requiring serious consideration. I repeat now what I have often remarked, that the very greatest care in this respect is necessary. We can go too far in assisting the farming community in certain directions. Undoubtedly there are numbers of worthy men in the ranks of the farmers, but still the same difficulties will be encountered in dealing with the farming class as is experienced in the case of other classes of people. The possibility of losses must be taken into account; and therefore the greatest circumspection is necessary. The principles of the existing Act are sound. In granting advances on the security of improvements to be made, the State is perfectly safe; but if it goes beyond the lines indicated it will encounter difficulties. A great deal has been said recently as to the advantages accruing to the farming industry and also to the pastoral industry in Victoria from the establishment of the *crédit foncier* system; but it is somewhat early in the day to speak of the system as a proved success. It will take some time to discover the difficulties which must be involved, and which are bound to make themselves felt eventually. I consider that Western Australia has gone far enough, for the

present, in farthering the development of the agricultural industry. We shall do good service to the country by extending the operations of the Agricultural Bank on the lines we have taken hitherto. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that the lending of money under the conditions imposed by the present Act has been productive of great good to the whole State by giving a strong impetus to the farming industry. The remark of the Colonial Secretary that the operations of the bank should not extend to vineyards is one I do not agree with. In my opinion, money might be lent on vineyards, orchards, and any other landed security in the same way as on agricultural land. True, applications for loans on vineyards and so forth have not been frequent; but the amending Bill provided for such applications being entertained. Drainage and indeed any other improvements incidental to farming might well form the subject of advances from the Agricultural Bank. One object should be as far as possible to remove existing restrictions on the operations of the bank without imperilling the safety of advances. To attain this end, we must give the manager assistance. Great care, however, will have to be exercised in the selection of officers whose duty will be to pass properties as fit subjects for loans and to pass the improvements on which the moneys lent are spent. For unless we have experienced and reliable men for these purposes, the country would suffer loss. It cannot be too strongly impressed on hon. members that careful and competent men are needed. I trust that the select committee to be appointed will look into every feature of the subject, with a view to framing practical recommendations for extending and facilitating the operation of the Act on the successful lines which have obtained in the past. The object of the committee should be to devise means of removing the difficulties which are now felt in protecting the interests of the State, while at the same time fostering and advancing the agricultural industry. For although the discovery of the gold mines undoubtedly gave the first great impetus to agriculture in this State, and although the farmers could not have advanced as they have done, and are doing, without the market afforded them

by the goldfields, nevertheless I consider that the interests of our great industries, the gold-mining, the agricultural, and the pastoral, must go hand in hand. I am always ready to admit that it is from the opening up of the goldfields we must date the advance of Western Australian agriculture. The impetus given to farming springs solely from the great market offered by the mining community. Up to the present our land has been neglected to a certain degree; but I look forward to marvellous developments in the near future. I have pleasure in supporting the motion, and trust that good results will follow from the appointment of the proposed select committee.

MR. W. J. GEORGE (Murray): One remark made by the Colonial Secretary in speaking on this motion I failed to understand. If I misquote him I am sorry, but I understood the hon. gentleman to say that the assistance of the Agricultural Bank should be confined to absolutely new settlers—to fresh settlers on agricultural lands. I rise only for the purpose of stating that, in my opinion, any man proposing to develop and improve his land should be entitled to assistance, whether he be an old hand or a new hand. It is well that both classes of settlers should receive the benefit of State aid.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I referred to new improvements, fresh developments.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken and committee elected, comprising Mr. Harper, Mr. Hopkins, Dr. O'Connor, Mr. Teesdale Smith, also Mr. Jacoby as mover; with power to call for persons and papers, and sit during any adjournment; to report this day fortnight.

At 6.41, the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7.45, Chair resumed.

#### ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

##### IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

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

THE CHAIRMAN: I should like to say to hon. members that a habit has developed, in the Committee stage, of having firstly a general discussion on the whole vote, and afterwards repeating the

process on subdivisions of the vote. In future, I propose to rule that any general discussion must be on the first item, and that members will then go to the other items. This is with a view of curtailing unnecessary debate.

TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT (Hon. F. Illingworth, Colonial Secretary and Treasurer).

*Treasury, £9,434:*

THE TREASURER desired to correct a clerical error. Item 6, "Clerk £210," should be £200.

Item corrected accordingly.

Item—Companies Duty Act, collector, £250:

MR. W. J. BUTCHER asked whether there was not an error in this also, seeing there was an increase of £32 on last year's amount.

THE TREASURER: This officer was not appointed at the beginning of the year; and though his salary was £250 per annum, he had been paid for a portion only of the year the sum of £218.

Item—Secretary to Minister, £225:

DR. O'CONNOR: What was the meaning of this new item?

THE TREASURER: This was not a new appointment, but the transference of an officer from the Public Works Department to the Colonial Secretary and Treasurer's Department. He (the Minister) controlled three departments—Colonial Secretary, Colonial Treasurer, and Education; and had found it necessary to have a secretary.

MR. W. J. GEORGE: The title "secretary to Minister" conveyed the idea of an important office, whereas the salary was unimportant. Why not give a title commensurate with the salary?

MR. F. C. MONGER: Last night the Government, in the absence of a number of Opposition members and of the member for the district interested, reduced by £100 the salary of one of the oldest Government officials in Western Australia. He (Mr. Monger) understood that the appointment now under discussion, of secretary to the Minister, was to be filled by an old friend and servant of the Treasurer. Last night had witnessed a cruel attack on one of the kindest, best, and noblest officials who had ever served this

State; and now when this friend of the Treasurer — a man who, whatever his ability, was unknown to the House—was foisted upon us, it was the duty of the Committee to reduce the item, to show our disapproval of the action taken last night in the absence of members interested. He moved that the item be reduced by £25, and would, if necessary, divide the House, even though he were not supported by a single member.

**THE TREASURER:** The hon. member laboured under two great mistakes; first, that the Government had something to do with the reduction of the salary of the officer to whom he referred. [Mr. GEORGE: Who?] Mr. Elliott. The Government did all they could to retain the salary at the amount appearing on the Estimates; but the Committee reduced the salary, and for the reduction it was not fair to blame the Government.

**MR. MONGER:** The amendment would be pressed to a division.

**THE TREASURER:** As to the suggestion that this officer was in some way connected with himself, the fact was that this officer was never a servant of his. This was not a new appointment. The officer was secretary to the Commissioner of Railways for a long time, and was considered one of the most efficient shorthand writers in the service. When he (the Treasurer) took the position of Colonial Secretary, Treasurer, and Minister for Education, it was found necessary to have the services of a shorthand writer. He did not want to appoint a new officer, but he found that an officer could be spared from the Works Department; and when he made application for an officer, this officer was sent to him. The suggestion that the officer was any friend of his was altogether a mistake. The hon. member was labouring under a misapprehension. The officer was in the service, was a good officer, and his services were required in the Treasurer's Department. There was no increase in the salary, although he believed the Hon. F. H. Piessé, when in the Works Department, had made a promise that the salary should be increased, which had not been done.

**DR. O'CONNOR:** Had this officer's position been abolished in the Works Department?

**THE TREASURER:** Yes.

**MR. H. DAGLISH:** Being responsible for the act of last night which brought forth the condemnatory remarks of the member for York, he might say that it seemed the proposition was just an instance of what he (Mr. Daglish) was sent to the House to object to—attacking certain members of the service, and heaping benefits on others for personal reasons. He declined to know any person holding an office in the public service. He did not know the officer affected. The vote which he gave last night would have been just the same had he known the officer in question. He was not in the House to benefit certain personal friends of his own at the expense of the taxpayers of the country. Too much of that had been done in the past. He intended, so far as he could, to prevent that sort of thing; and if members had friends on whom they wished to confer benefits, let them confer these benefits out of their own pockets, and not out of the pockets of taxpayers.

**MR. W. J. GEORGE:** Prove that such had been done in the past.

**MR. DAGLISH:** There were certain members whose friends had got on well in the service, while officers doing more important work were getting less remuneration. If there should be any difference in the remuneration, the secretary to the Treasurer should be drawing £500 and the other officer referred to half the amount. He objected to introducing personal friendships into the discussions of the House. The Government did not pay officers because they were personal friends of Ministers or members, but according to services rendered to the State. He objected to the mud-slinging of the member for York, and he objected to the introduction of personalities. Those who voted in a certain direction last night were not responsible for the absence of members who sat in Opposition. If members did not attend to the business of the country, for which they were paid, it was an absurdity to complain of things which were done in their absence when they should have been present to have stopped it if wrong, or have assisted if right. The bulk of the members sitting in Opposition last night thoroughly agreed with the action which the Committee

took. The attack on the Treasurer was unjustifiable, if not cowardly.

**MR. W. J. GEORGE:** While agreeing that members were not elected to bring forward their personal friendships or personal animosities, he objected to the assertion that such had been characteristic of members of the House in the past. Since he had been a member no one had attempted to forward the interests of their private friends. It was almost impossible for anyone in the State, at least in Perth or Fremantle, to have no friends in the civil service, but while that was so it was not for members to advocate an advantage for their private friends. If this was an important office, as the title seemed to indicate, then the salary should be much higher.

**MR. HOPKINS:** Strike out the word "secretary" and put in "shorthand writer."

**MR. GEORGE:** If shorthand writer fulfilled the requirements of the Treasurer, he would have no objection to that course. This was not a single instance in which the title of an office had been altered on the Estimates. There had been instances in which high titles and low salaries had appeared on the Estimates, and in after years the argument was used that the position was an important one and the salary should be raised.

**MR. J. GARDINER:** Was it competent for a member, under Standing Order 126, to refer to any vote which had been passed previously? If members were not present when votes were passed, they were not entitled to criticise at a later stage any votes passed in their absence.

**HON. F. H. PIESSE:** The officer alluded to was no relation of the Treasurer's.

**MR. MONGER:** A personal friend, he had said.

**HON. F. H. PIESSE:** It was impossible for him to say whether the officer was a personal friend, still he was a very competent officer; but a little vanity on the part of some one had brought him into trouble. The title of "secretary to Minister" had drawn the attention of the Committee to the salary. He could speak most highly of the capacity of this officer, who was a most useful man, and the salary was not too much. It seemed that the Committee were finding fault with the

title of the officer. This title was high-sounding, and the salary did not appear sufficient for the position. The Treasurer might consider whether the title should not be altered. The officer was a secretary, after all.

**MR. MONGER:** There was no desire on his part to make any personal reflection on the officer occupying the position. He had raised the question only to call attention to what occurred in the House on the previous night, and he threw back in the teeth of the member for Subiaco the remarks made. It was cowardly and unfair to take advantage of the absence of the member for the district to speak of an officer who had done good service to the State.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member was not in order.

**MR. MONGER:** The member for Subiaco had said that in attacking this officer one was acting in a cowardly manner. No member would dare to accuse him of being cowardly. If he wanted to hit a man, he hit him straight, and did not take advantage of the man's absence; but if he wished to say anything about a man, he would do so in his presence either in the Chamber, the reading-room, or the refreshment-room. The attack on the officer last night was absolutely unfair. He left it to the judgment of the Committee to say whether there had been anything cowardly in his own remarks to-night. He hoped that the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish), and others attacking items, would leave them open until such time as the representative of the particular district concerned was present, so that there might be a fair chance of the item receiving that support to which it was entitled. He asked leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

**MR. HOPKINS** moved, as an amendment of the title, that the word "secretary" be struck out, and "clerk" inserted in lieu. The use of the word "secretary" lent an air of importance to the position which, judging by the salary, did not belong to it.

**THE TREASURER:** The amendment would be accepted.

Amendment put and passed, and the item passed as altered.

Item—Paymaster, Imperial accounts, £100 :

MR. W. J. GEORGE: Did this officer receive any other emolument? What work did he do? Was he employed in connection with the South African Contingents?

THE TREASURER: This item referred to the Under Treasurer, who was paid £650 by this State, and £100 by the Imperial Government for the care of Imperial accounts here.

MR. GEORGE: Then the Under Treasurer was in receipt of £750 per annum. The Imperial accounts to be dealt with here now could be only a few pensions. Moreover, there was in the same connection a clerk to be paid £170 a year. The item would well bear consideration during the recess: £270 per annum was an absurd amount to pay for whatever Imperial work had to be done in this State.

THE TREASURER: The matter was really of no importance to this Parliament since the Imperial Government provided the money. It was not in the power of this Parliament to alter the amount.

MR. GEORGE: Was there a contra?

THE TREASURER: Yes.

MR. W. H. JAMES: How came the item, then, to appear as a debit against us?

THE TREASURER: The amount would be recouped.

Item—Clerk, Imperial accounts, £170 :

MR. JAMES: What was the reason for an increase of £10 in the salary of the clerk for Imperial accounts? Did the Imperial Parliament leave it to us to grant an increase while the Bill was footed by Great Britain?

THE TREASURER: As to the clerk's salary, he was not certain. Possibly this State had to provide that amount.

MR. GEORGE: Would the Treasurer give an assurance that he would look into the matter during recess, and be prepared to give a proper answer next session?

THE TREASURER: Yes; he would promise that.

MR. JAMES: In the meantime, was there any reason for granting an increase of £10? If this State had to find the salary, there was no reason for giving the clerk in question an increase, since

there could have been no increase in his work during the past two or three years. The probabilities were rather that his work had decreased.

THE TREASURER: The question was not one he could answer straight away. He could only say these Estimates, so far as salaries were concerned, were pretty well prepared when the first Leake Government came into office. The arrangement as to increases was that an increment of £10 should be given in the case of salaries up to £300, where such increment was deemed necessary by the head of the department. The present Government had reduced the margin of increase to £200. Therefore, the present Estimates contained no increments other than those proposed for officers receiving less than £200 per annum. The officer in question had been recommended by the head of his department as worthy of an increase. There was no reason for not giving effect to the recommendation, so far as one could see.

MR. GEORGE: Had this clerk any other emolument?

THE TREASURER: No.

Item—Salaries, provisional and temporary, £419 :

MR. W. H. JAMES: From a footnote to Item 45, "Clerk, £165," it appeared this salary had been "previously paid from temporary clerical assistance." The item of "Temporary Clerical Assistance" figured on the estimates at £140; so that the real total was £305 for this year. What was the reason for the large increase? The item was more than doubled.

THE TREASURER: This was really a case of the transference of an officer from the temporary to the permanent staff.

MR. JAMES: No; it was more than that.

THE TREASURER: Another officer had been appointed. While not prepared to justify the appointment for the moment, that was what had occurred.

MR. M. H. JACOBY: The Treasurer had said this item represented an additional officer, and yet the fact was that the clerks in the Colonial Secretary's office were absolutely looking for work.

THE TREASURER: Such was not his experience. Most of the officers of his

department were working overtime, and a good deal of it too.

MR. JACOBY: A good deal of the work previously done by the Colonial Secretary's Department was now being done by the Premier's Department.

THE PREMIER: But this item had reference to the Treasurer's Department.

MR. JACOBY: It came to the same thing. The Premier had stated last night that a good deal of the work done previously by the Colonial Secretary's Department was now done by the Premier's Department.

THE PREMIER: But that referred to five or six years back.

MR. JACOBY: In the present overcrowded state of the public service, he objected altogether to fresh appointments. We had frequently heard from the Treasury bench assurances that there was plenty of scope for reductions in the public service; and yet here we found a fresh officer added to the staff. In this connection, he would like to refer to a discussion which arose the previous night when he asked for some information as to what would happen in the case of the total abolition of an office by the Committee. A good many members would like to be informed as to the exact position of the Government in such a case. He had looked up the Pensions Act, and also the Public Service Act, but after reading them he did not clearly understand whether or not the Government would be forced to give a pension to the holder of an office which was abolished. He could not make up his mind as to whether an officer was abolished with his office, or whether the officer was entitled to remuneration or compensation from the Government for loss of office. Last night the Premier first informed the Committee that if a public servant's office were abolished, the Government had nothing more to do with that public servant; but subsequently the Premier corrected that opinion by informing the Committee that in such a case the public servant would be entitled to a pension. A good many members beside himself would be glad to know the exact position the Government would stand in if the Committee, in the exercise of their rights, abolished an office. Would the Attorney General inform the Committee what

would be the position of an officer under the Act in such a case?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member had the Act before him.

MR. JACOBY: There was considerable confusion in the minds of hon. members as to what would happen, and it would be satisfactory to many of us if the Attorney General would give a legal opinion.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: If he proceeded to do that, he would be ruled out of order, he feared.

MR. JACOBY: Section 14 of the Public Service Act provided:—

No public servant whose pay is once determined by the Governor and approved by Parliament shall afterwards, whilst doing the same work, suffer any loss or reduction of pay, except as follows:

- (a.) On abolition of office; or
- (b.) On removal; or
- (c.) By reduction by Parliamentary vote of the amount proposed on the annual Estimates; or
- (d.) On reduction affecting generally the public service, recommended by the Governor and accepted by Parliament.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: That was quite right. He had alluded to the pension.

MR. JACOBY: Did the Pensions Act, then, entitle an officer—

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member had the Act before him, and could read it.

MR. JACOBY: Section 6 of the Pensions Act provided:

It shall be lawful for the Governor in Executive Council to grant to any person retiring or removed from the public service under the Colonial Government, in consequence of the abolition of his office or for the purpose of facilitating improvements in the organisation of the department to which he belongs, by which greater efficiency and economy can be effected, such special annual allowance by way of compensation as on a full consideration of the circumstances of the case may seem to the Governor-in-Council to be a reasonable and just compensation for the loss of office; and if the compensation shall exceed the amount to which such person would have been entitled under the scale of superannuation provided by this Act if ten years were added to the number of years which he may have actually served, such allowance shall be granted by special minute stating the special grounds for granting such allowance, which minute shall be laid before the Legislative Council, and no such allowance shall exceed two-thirds of the salary and emoluments of the office.

Were we to understand from this section that it lay in the discretion of the Governor-in-Council whether pensions should be granted or not?

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** To reply to the hon. member, one would have to enter into a dissertation as to whether the Pensions Act was a mandatory or a directory enactment. Hon. members, on looking into the distinction, would see it was a pretty fine one. He thought, however, that the Pensions Act was really a mandatory enactment. At any rate, he felt certain the member for the Swan would consider it very unfair on the part of the Government, in the event of the abolition of an office, to refuse to the public servant whose office was so abolished any compensation whilst the power lay in the hands of the Government to compensate. It was of no use to put hypothetical cases, but he might say at once that if he found it necessary to abolish an office, and that office was held by a servant who had done his duty efficiently and well for many years, he would feel it his duty to consult his colleagues and recommend that the officer be compensated under that statute.

**MR. JACOBY:** It was understood last night that the Attorney General wished to have a repeal of the Public Service Act, in order to escape paying pensions. It seemed now that it would be necessary to abolish the Pensions Act also, if the Attorney General was to carry out his idea.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** said he could not lay down a general rule by taking a specific item or case.

**MR. W. J. GEORGE:** Who made the appointment? Was there anything disgraceful about it? If so, let us know what it was.

**THE TREASURER:** The appointment was not made by him, and he did not know who made it. Some officer who was generally occupied in temporary work had been put upon the temporary staff, and the provision that had been made was for temporary clerical assistance. During the year a man might be appointed for a week or a fortnight, or whatever it might be, and it was estimated that the total sum would be that which appeared on the Estimates. That sum was not exceeded last year, and he did not think it would be this.

**MR. GEORGE:** A lot of those public servants we had been discussing could not have pensions.

**MR. F. CONNOR:** Would it not be well if the item were put in as "temporary clerical assistance"? The present entry created an office right away, and that was the objection.

**THE TREASURER:** This item was for temporary work.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

*Post Office Savings Bank, £6,986:*

**MR. F. CONNOR:** Was this amount the same as that which was expended last year?

**THE TREASURER:** It was, he thought, slightly under.

**MR. W. J. GEORGE:** The control of the Post Office had passed from the jurisdiction of this State, but the Savings Bank apparently was still under our jurisdiction. He did not know whether arrangements in connection with the Savings Bank could be made apart from the Post Office, without serious inconvenience to the country, but he thought the taxpayers and also those who had to vote the money were entitled to know what measure of control the Ministry and Parliament had over the Post Office Savings Bank. The Post Office Savings Bank belonged to this State, and should be as far as possible under the absolute control of the people who were delegated into a position of authority here.

**THE TREASURER:** The Post Office Savings Bank was entirely under the control of this State.

**MR. H. DAGLISH:** Could any arrangement be made whereby depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank could draw small sums without giving the long notice they had to do now? It would be a good plan if sums up to, say, £20 could be drawn without notice. He did not know whether it would be possible to arrange for that here, but he knew it was done in the Eastern States, in the Commissioners' Savings Bank; and it would be a very great convenience to small depositors, most of whom had their nest-egg in the Post Office Savings Bank, to be able to get their money out at a day's notice.

**THE TREASURER:** The matter had already been looked into by him, and he had made arrangements whereby any depositor could, by giving notice before 12 o'clock, draw a sum by 3 o'clock the same day.

**MR. F. C. MONGER** suggested that a charge be made for keeping small accounts, if the depositors desired to operate on them in the same way as on ordinary banking accounts. If a person deposited £20 or £50, and wished to draw sums in the same way as a person operated on an ordinary banking account, why should not the State get the benefit now derived by banks from the charge made for keeping these small accounts? It was a charge he was opposed to as being absolutely unfair; but if the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) and the member for Albany (Mr. Gardiner) were desirous that these accounts should be treated in the same way as ordinary banking accounts were treated, let the people who availed themselves of these privileges pay the same to the State as they would pay an ordinary bank.

**THE TREASURER:** The suggestion by the hon. member was one of which he entirely disapproved, and he thought the Committee also disapproved of it.

**MR. J. M. HOPKINS:** Some better system of inspection in regard to savings banks was desirable, as was shown by a case at Kalgoorlie heard at the last Quarter Sessions; for there was no doubt that lax supervision was the cause of temptation to men who received poor salaries.

**MR. TEESDALE SMITH:** The question of savings banks all over the State was one he would ask the Treasurer to look into. It was difficult to get a savings bank opened at any of the outside places at the present time. To get a savings bank opened at a timber mill, for instance, the mill-owners had to give a guarantee to the Post Office that the men's money would be collected, and the money during transit had to be also guaranteed. In any township away from the railway, the Government absolutely refused to open any post office savings bank. Wherever it could be shown that men had their little savings to put by, there should be no difficulty in opening a post office savings bank.

**MR. W. J. GEORGE:** For something like three years he had tried to get a savings bank at Waroona sawmill, but the reply of the Postmaster General until lately had been—he did not know what his views were now—that owing to the absence of police protection, it was not wise to accept a large amount of money. There were 300 or 400 men who received their wages regularly, and there was police protection now. Apart from that, he would like a post office savings bank established there. He would like the Treasurer to look up the archives of his office, and if the hon. gentleman did so he would find there had been a lot of petitions on the subject.

**THE TREASURER:** The Government were responsible for the money, if they received it. If there happened to be a robbery, it would be a loss to the State; consequently the rule had been not to open savings banks unless there was an ordinary bank within a reasonable distance, so that the money could be conveyed every day or every second day to a banking institution. He had made some slight alterations in reference to this matter, and he hoped to be able to extend the system wherever it was possible. Still we must protect the money we took from the general public.

**HON. F. H. PIESSE:** The Treasurer having stated it was his intention to introduce a new system in regard to the drawing of money, would this increased convenience for drawing money apply to all offices throughout the State, or only to those in the immediate neighbourhood of Perth?

**THE TREASURER:** It should apply wherever possible.

**MR. GEORGE:** It could not be done in country districts.

**THE TREASURER:** No.

**HON. F. H. PIESSE:** If the promise or statement made by the Treasurer were to go forth without explanation, people would be under the impression that the system would apply in every instance; therefore there should be an explanation as to where it would apply.

**MR. TEESDALE SMITH:** Instances could be mentioned where money from a savings bank could be sent to Perth once or twice a day, or to Bunbury. In regard to Bunbury, there were a number of men in the district who went to Bun-



bury Junction; and these men had repeatedly been applying for a savings bank. There would be no difficulty in opening one, for the railway passed the door, and the money could be sent to Bunbury or Perth. It could be sent in the post-bag just as safely as letters were sent. Where men desired a savings bank to be opened, facilities should be given, and the Government should take a certain responsibility as to conveying money to the head office from a branch bank.

**THE TREASURER:** Since he had been in office he had given all possible attention to this matter, and he hoped to make farther improvements.

By request of the **TREASURER**, clerical errors were corrected as follow:—Item 5 altered in amount from £180 to £175, Item 19 from £100 to £90, Item 20 from £80 to £90, Item 21 from £60 to £65.

Vote (as corrected) put and passed.

*London Agency, £4,607:*

**MR. J. L. NANSON:** Did the Government intend to reduce the expenses of the London Agency?

**THE TREASURER:** So far, the work had not decreased but rather increased. After a Federal Agent General was appointed, there might be less work, and then steps must be taken to reduce the expenses of the State Agency in London.

**MR. W. J. GEORGE:** And probably abolish the office.

**THE PREMIER:** In the file dealing with the appointment of the present Agent General, there was no record of a stipulation that this officer's salary should be reduced. When appointed, there was a rumour that his salary would be reduced; but as no reduction was stipulated, the estimate now submitted was similar in amount to that of last year, and it was for the Committee to say whether the circumstances justified a reduction. The Government recognised that the position was comparatively of less importance than prior to federation; but he did not feel justified, without the consent of the Committee, in reducing the salary of this officer, who, it was understood from a private source, was clearly under the impression that he would receive £1,500 a year for three years.

**MR. J. GARDINER:** Until it was definitely known what steps the Commonwealth would take in this matter, it was not worth while questioning the Agent General's salary. If a Commonwealth Agent General were appointed, probably we should reverse this item and call our officer a general agent. Evidently South Australia intended to do so, and doubtless the other States would follow suit.

**MR. R. HASTIE:** What were the salaries paid by the other States?

**THE PREMIER:** Without definite inquiry he could not say, but some of the States had reduced the salaries. The present Administration had no binding arrangement with the Agent General that his salary should continue during his term of office. The Committee could reduce the salary, though the Government would not urge a reduction.

**MR. J. M. HOPKINS:** A reduction at present would be inadvisable. The officer should be paid a salary on which he could live respectably in London, and which would place him above suspicion.

**MR. W. D. JOHNSON:** Were the other salaries in this department based on salaries in Western Australia, or on the rates paid in London?

**THE TREASURER:** For several years there had been no change in the salaries.

**MR. TEESDALE SMITH:** What about items five and six?

**MR. H. DAGLISH** protested against the salary of the Agent General remaining unaltered. It was too high, and should never have been granted at a time when Parliament had ceased to exist and a fresh Parliament had not been elected. The public generally had then understood, and most hon. members had advocated, that the expenses of this department should be reduced; yet to-night the tone of the Committee appeared to be against reduction. He would vote for a reduction if it were proposed. The whole system of the London Agency was bad.

**MR. GEORGE:** And so was the commission paid on goods bought in England for the State.

**MR. H. DAGLISH:** Instead of a politician, a permanent officer of the public service should be appointed. He was speaking, not against the present officer but against the system, which was injurious to the State, whether the agent

were a good or a bad man. For years past South Australia, he understood, had been paying two-thirds of this amount.

MEMBER: The salary at present paid by that State was £1,200.

MR. DAGLISH: In proportion to the work done, we paid double, for we had a larger staff.

MR. HASTIE: To test the feeling of the Committee, he moved that the amount be reduced by £250.

MR. NANSON: Would the Premier state whether, in the event of the duties of the officer being lessened before next year's Estimates were framed, the Government would consider a reduction? If a Federal High Commissioner were appointed, he might take over some of the duties.

THE TREASURER: This provision was for one year, of which seven months had elapsed.

THE PREMIER: If the duties of the office were materially reduced by the appointment of a Federal High Commissioner, the Government would be bound to bring the fact under the notice of Parliament. He urged the member for Kanowna (Mr. Hastie) not to press his motion for a reduction, because the Agent General had practically drawn his salary on the assumption that it would be £1,500 a year, he having received no hint from the Government that there would be any reduction made or proposed; and it would appear as almost a breach of faith on the part of the House if a reduction were made without a hint to the gentleman who well and honourably filled the position. Due warning would be given the Agent General to be prepared for an emergency which might or might not be imminent.

MR. HASTIE: Ministers said seven months had gone and that this officer had already drawn his salary. If that argument were valid, as well pass all the Estimates *in globo*, because the same could be said of every officer in the service. If an arrangement be come to by which some of the work were taken away from the Agent General, a reduction might be submitted, but he had grave doubts as to whether there was anything in that, for he had never yet known of any high-salaried officer's remuneration being reduced unless there was an all-round reduction. This was the first year the

officer received the salary, and it was almost certain that that salary would remain until the officer retired from the position. If the Committee were of the opinion that the Agent General's salary should be reduced, he would not press his amendment to a division, but in the circumstances he was compelled to let the matter go.

MR. GEORGE: There was a department which should be controlled by the Agent General in London. A large amount of money had to be paid in London in fees to a consulting engineer. In one year the fees paid to that officer ran into five figures.

MR. JACOBY: How much?

MR. GEORGE: Certainly over £10,000; he believed double that amount. This year a large amount of loan money was about to be spent, presumably under the inspection of the consulting engineer; and how good that inspection had been was proved by instances brought under the notice of the House during the last few months, when work costing a lot of money came here in a condition which would be a disgrace if a blind man had had to pass it. He did not say the Agent General should be skilled in dealing with these various matters; but it should be part of his duty to see that when huge indents had to be paid for, on which there were large commissions, recommendations should be made to the Government by which the work could be done for less money. The commission should be paid on a sliding scale.

HON. F. H. PRESSE: That was the case.

MR. GEORGE: If that was so, and an amount approximating five figures had been paid, then the scale required reducing. There had been no inspection of goods for this State during the last few years which was worth £22,000 in one year. When large quantities of the same material were being ordered, there should be no necessity for the amount of commission to rise above a certain sum. There should be a maximum amount, and it should be less than £22,000 for one year. If the London Agency had nothing to do with this matter, then it ought to have. The sums paid on commission had been exorbitant, and in some cases the inspection had been merely superficial.

**THE TREASURER:** The matter referred to applied to the Loan account, and the commission paid was in proportion to the amount of the orders. However, he thought the scale required reducing and looking into. No doubt the Minister for Works would take note of what members had said.

**MR. GEORGE:** Had the London Agency any control over the inspection?

**THE TREASURER:** No; only to pay the money.

**MR. A. E. THOMAS:** A little while ago he brought this matter before the House on a series of questions in regard to scour rings which had been repaired locally and put into the Coolgardie water scheme. How long the rings would last he did not know. Whether it was a matter of £5 or £5,000, the principle was bad, and he would like to be assured that when we had to pay on machinery or material in London we should buy subject to inspection when landed here. We should not receive material subject to inspection by a man who possibly paid some understrapper to pass the work. The fact remained that material had been landed in Western Australia which should not have been passed. When we had a consulting engineer in London who was receiving tremendous sums of money, which the return before members showed, the least we could expect was that the goods would be landed here so that they could pass the inspection of our own officers, and in sufficiently good condition to be used in the work for which the materials were intended. There were people in the State—even the Black Swan Foundry—who could turn out material that would be no worse than the scour rings which were seen in the Fremantle yard. If the rings only cost £1, the very fact that they were passed by the consulting engineer in London, and holes were found into which a member of the House had put a stick of a half-inch or a five-eighths inch diameter—and these were intended for the Coolgardie water scheme—that led him to suppose that something was generally rotten in regard to the consulting engineer's branch in London. He trusted the Government would look into the matter in a searching manner. The people who were responsible for sending such work out here should be dismissed.

**MR. GEORGE:** If the firm referred to by the hon. member turned out such work as the condemned scour rings, the prestige and honour of that firm would not be so high in Western Australia as it was to-day.

**MR. GARDINER:** The commissions received by the consulting engineer, according to the return, were in 1896-7 £9,672, 1897-8 £8,914, 1898-9 £3,638, 1899-1900 £4,882, and for the year ending 30th June last £8,960. The rates of commission were: on indents up to £20,000 2½ per cent; for the Coolgardie water scheme, on machinery, pumps, and valves 2½ per cent., on pipes 1¼ per cent. Possibly that was why the engineer did not exercise such a keen inspection over the pipes. It would be wise for the Treasurer to draw the attention of the Agent General to the manner in which the pipes arrived here, and with the authority of the Government to say that if such a thing occurred again there would be no hesitancy on the part of the Government in changing their consulting engineer. He would change the officer straight away, if what the member for Dundas had said was correct, and the hon. member was generally accurate in his statements.

**THE TREASURER:** There was a good deal of reason in the remarks of members. The Government had already taken some steps to put this department in better order, and with the suggestion of members and the strong remarks made, the hands of the Government would be strengthened. He thanked members for the criticism given.

**MR. TEESDALE SMITH:** Instead of reducing the salary of the Agent General by £250, if the Government added another £800 to the amount of the vote for the Agency General, the Government could appoint their own inspector here, send him home, and abolish the commission business, which was a pernicious one. Although consulting engineers charged very highly, they put the work into the hands of understrappers who, if not interested, did not give the required attention. If we had our own inspector working with his own testing appliances, under the eye of the Agent General, we should save these amounts of £5,000, £6,000, and £8,000 now being paid annually to the

consulting engineer, and at the same time get much better materials.

MR. A. E. THOMAS: The former Minister for Works (Mr. Kingsmill), in regard to scour rings, had been asked to see that steps were taken to dismiss the officer or sub-officer responsible for the passing of those rings. The question might be renewed at this opportunity.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: The officer in fault was doubtless not an officer of this State.

THE TREASURER: It would be extremely difficult to carry into effect the proposal of the member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas), since, on inquiry, it would be found that the officer in fault was employed by the consulting engineer, to whom this State paid commission. The suggestion of the member for Wellington (Mr. Teesdale Smith) was worthy of consideration, and the Minister for Works had already taken a note of it. Inspection of materials purchased on behalf of this State at home had formed the subject of much criticism by the members of the present Government when sitting in Opposition. If the present Ministry were given time, they would endeavour to effect some reforms.

Amendment put and negatived.

Item — Stationery, typewriters, etc., £120:

MR. HOPKINS asked for explanation. The same item represented £121 ls. in last year's expenditure. Surely typewriters in the London office were not renewed every year.

THE TREASURER: The item represented mainly stationery.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

*Explosives and Analytical, £2,025:*

MR. F. CONNOR: Was it the intention of the present Government to carry out the express instructions given to former Governments for the removal of the explosives stores from their present site at South Fremantle? The House had on half-a-dozen occasions decided that the explosives stores on their present site were a danger to the town of Fremantle, particularly to its southern portion. It appeared almost as if the magazines would never be removed. The

matter was one of urgent necessity, particularly as the magazines were absolutely unprotected. It was common to see swagmen boiling their billies under the shelter of the explosives shed.

MR. W. J. GEORGE: What place would the hon. member propose to remove the magazines to?

MR. CONNOR: Garden Island, or one of the islands in its neighbourhood. Half-a-dozen suitable sites had been suggested.

MR. F. McDONALD: The Treasurer some time ago stated the Government were considering whether the explosives magazines should be removed to Garden Island or to the Darling Range. So far, no decision appeared to have been arrived at. Within the last ten days the caretaker of the magazines had found six kegs of gunpowder on the doorstep of one of the magazines, and two swagmen were seen sitting smoking at the other end of the magazine. The caretaker could not keep people off the reserve: they could come in from the open road or the jetty.

MR. CONNOR: The magazines were built on an absolutely open road.

MR. McDONALD: Having repeatedly questioned the Treasurer as to the intentions of the Government, he would be glad to hear now a statement on the subject.

THE TREASURER: The Government were perfectly satisfied that the explosives magazines must be removed. The only reason why the magazines were left exposed was that the Government, having decided to remove them, deemed it unwise to improve the present site. But the difficulty arose when we came to the question of selecting a new site. The matter had been discussed by the Ministry almost every week since they came into office in May last. The people most interested seemed unable to arrive at a consensus of opinion as to the new site. Garden Island, Case Point, and Subiaco had been suggested. Personally, he was disposed to favour a site in the Darling Range. The magazines might be erected in a gorge, where, if an accident did happen, the least possible damage would result. A special loop line might be constructed for convenience in conveying the explosives. The Chief Inspector of Explosives strongly favoured Case Point, where, however, the same difficulties might be expected shortly to arise as existed in

connection with the present site: in two or three years there might be dwelling houses all round Case Point. The Government had requested the chairman of the Perth Chamber of Commerce and the chairman of the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce to bring the matter before their respective chambers. Reports had been obtained from both bodies, one recommending Garden Island and the other Case Point. The military officer, on being asked his advice, had suggested that magazines should be erected well inland, on the ground that if a hostile ship put a shot into one magazine, the tendency would be for that magazine to explode and also blow up the rest of the magazines. As soon as a new site was determined on, the work of removal would be undertaken. With the assistance of hon. members generally, and particularly with the assistance of the Fremantle members, the Government hoped to be enabled to fix on a site convenient to those trading in explosives, and at the same time safe for the general public.

MR. G. TAYLOR: Had Albany ever been contemplated when the Government were considering the removal of the explosives magazines? It had been stated there was nothing at Albany which an explosion could damage.

MR. A. E. THOMAS: The suggestion that the magazines should be removed to an island led him to suppose that the consumers of explosives on the goldfields would have to pay water freight to the island and back. It was to be hoped that the Government, in fixing on a new site, would give due attention to the matter of expense. The mining industry could not afford to pay a higher price for dynamite: in fact, the cost was too high now.

MR. McDONALD: If the magazines were placed on an island, the expense of handling etc. would be less than under present conditions. The explosives would be taken direct from the ship's side to the island, and brought back as required.

MR. F. CONNOR: A farther reason why the magazines should be removed was that at present they were taking up extremely valuable ground, which the Government might cut up into allotments for working men. The magazines, with the reserve, covered an area of about

100 acres. Under present conditions, the land was, and could be, of very little use to the Government. The removal of the magazines would set free an area of land from the sale of which the Government would realise a big profit, even after paying the expenses of the removal.

THE TREASURER: So soon as a new site was decided on, the work of removal could proceed.

MR. GARDINER: Was not Garden Island private property?

MR. CONNOR: But there were other suitable islands near it.

MR. THOMAS: If there was any trouble as to the selection of a site, then one could surely be obtained on the goldfields, where there was plenty of spare land.

THE TREASURER: There were magazines on the goldfields at the present time.

MR. THOMAS: More might be constructed.

Items 7, 8, 9—Watchman, Powder Magazine:

MR. McDONALD: Watchmen employed at the powder magazines were paid at the rate of only £2 2s. per week. They had no other emolument, and were compelled to work on Sundays. Surely their services were worth 8s. per day.

THE TREASURER: A note which he had before him showed that the watchmen had quarters and water, also uniform valued at £3.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

*Harbour and Light, £27,119:*

MR. H. DAGLISH: What was the reason of the large increase in this vote compared with last year? The money actually expended last year was £21,300 odd.

MEMBER: Necessary increase for the new harbour.

THE TREASURER: One item was "Purchase of launch, £2,379," and there were several other new items which would not occur in future Estimates. The expense had been put off from year to year, and it had been necessary to make provision this year. He thought that, on the whole, the estimated cost of the harbour for this year was less than it was last year.

MR. J. GARDINER: There was an officer at Albany performing the duties of shipping-master. He was previously a customs officer, and in the employ of this Government; he was now an officer under the Commonwealth, but was still performing the duties. Was provision to be made for the payment of that officer? If he was not to be paid, we could hardly expect him to do the work. At present, he was receiving no pay from this Government. In the event of his declining to do the work, would the Government purpose to appoint a shipping-master at Albany?

THE TREASURER said he could not answer the hon. member, because he simply did not know. He would make the necessary inquiries and give the hon. member the information. He would say, generally, that no doubt if the officer was doing work for the State, the State would pay him a salary commensurate with the work performed. As to whether in the event of his ceasing to do the work it would be necessary to appoint another officer, on full salary, that was a question the Government would have to consider. He would make the necessary inquiry.

MR. G. TAYLOR: How was it that the lighting and other arrangements for Fremantle, Rottnest, Albany and other places cost so much, as against Esperance? He could only see £20 down for Esperance, whereas some thousands were down for those other places.

THE TREASURER: The amount put down for Esperance was only for a jetty light-keeper.

MR. F. CONNOR: What was done with launches or steam or sailing boats that were bought by the Government and became of no use to the Government? Was it better to put them on shore and let them rot there, or put them up to auction for what they would fetch? A paddle-boat named the *Emu* some time ago went out of service, and the Government could have let the boat to some people at Fremantle, but refused to do so unless there was an absolutely silly guarantee given that she would be returned in the same order. The people who wanted her would have put her into proper order and have handed her back to the Government in a better state. She was lying idle now. This was a

kind of waste in which retrenchment could be made. In reference to Cambridge Gulf harbour, he made some inquiries, and put his application in the proper manner. He wrote to the department, and also to the Chief Harbour Master, asking that beacons should be put up. The erection of those beacons would only have cost a few pounds, and would have effected a saving to the Government, because the harbour was buoyed, and the drift of sand shifted the buoys, which were consequently of no use. He received no reply either from the Minister's department or the Chief Harbour Master. More attention should be paid to requests from members of Parliament from outside places, who knew the requirements of the districts. This harbour was one of the most important, and one of the finest, if not the finest, in Western Australia. It wanted a few beacons put up. We had three or four steamers a month there.

THE TREASURER said he was thankful to the hon. member for calling his attention to this matter. He was not aware of it previously. He would make immediate inquiry about the *Emu*, and he would take a note with regard to Cambridge Gulf harbour requirements. He would endeavour to meet the wishes of the hon. member as far as possible.

Item—Shipping-master, £270 :

MR. W. J. GEORGE said this office was a new one, and perhaps we might learn what the officer had to do.

THE TREASURER said he would make inquiry.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

Government Stores, £9,124 12s. 8d. :

MR. F. CONNOR, referring to the first item, "Government Storekeeper, £500," asked how the vacancy was to be filled, if the appointment was not already made.

THE TREASURER: The next in command, Mr. Flynn, had been placed temporarily in control. That officer was getting £330 a year, and he had been placed in control temporarily at £400 a year. The item would have to remain pretty well as it stood, because the salary would have to be provided in regard to

the deceased officer. There would be some saving. If the Government found that the chief officer could do the work, that would give an opportunity of promoting all other officers below. Wherever there was a person in a department holding a high position, and his work could be done by the next in order, in the case of the head officer ceasing to fill the position, the Government proposed to raise the officers in the department instead of appointing a new officer.

MR. W. J. GEORGE: We might take it that the officer who had acted as chief clerk and as under-study would have a fair show of displaying whether he could do the work?

THE TREASURER: Yes.

MR. H. DAGLISH: It was desirable for the Government to make a thorough investigation into the management of the stores branch, and also to see if some reorganisation could be effected which would include the establishment of a Government stores tender department or a tender board, because there was great need for it in this State. In several departments, when stores or works were required the particular department called for tenders, but in other instances the tenders were called for by the Government stores branch. In both cases there was one individual solely responsible for the opening of tenders and so on; and as this work was often not done in public, the system did not give satisfaction to the persons or firms tendering. So far as he could gather, all sorts of dissatisfaction existed among the various classes of tenderers, and he thought the present a not inopportune time for inquiry to be held. He did not in any way desire to cast reflections upon Mr. Flynn, but the whole department would bear looking into.

THE TREASURER: The hon. member (Mr. Daglish) had expressed exactly the feelings of the Government on this subject, and the Government were taking steps to work in the direction indicated.

Vote put and passed.

*Literary, Scientific, and Agricultural Grants, etc., £15,050:*

Item—Agricultural and Horticultural Societies, £1,200:

MR. J. M. HOPKINS moved that the words "and traders' galas" be added.

Goldfields agricultural shows were impossible, but traders' galas were held instead.

MR. W. J. GEORGE: Were not the latter provided for in the £1,750 for mechanics' institutes and similar societies?

MR. HOPKINS: No. The traders' display was similar to an agricultural show.

MR. GEORGE: No. Traders' galas should come under "working men's associations."

MR. YELVERTON opposed the amendment because it would reduce the amounts available to agricultural and horticultural societies. A traders' gala was a mere show; whereas the other gatherings tended to foster State industries.

MR. QUINLAN supported the amendment, but suggested that the additional amount be provided in Supplementary Estimates.

MR. YELVERTON: There was no objection if it were so provided.

MR. J. EWING supported the amendment.

MR. HOPKINS: At traders' galas, as at agricultural shows, prizes were given for horses; and instead of giving prizes for flour, which could not be produced on the goldfields, prizes were given for bread. Why discriminate when the objects were identical?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The objects were scarcely identical. For the encouragement of agriculture and horticulture in the southern districts, the amount set down was not sufficient, the number of societies having increased; and the grant should not be lessened by the inclusion of traders' galas, for which provision might subsequently be made.

THE TREASURER: The words proposed might be added without lessening the amount available for agricultural and horticultural societies.

MR. YELVERTON: Would the Treasurer promise that funds would be provided without adding the words?

MR. HOPKINS: It was only in two large districts, Kalgoorlie and Boulder, that there were traders' galas, while there were numerous agricultural shows.

MR. J. GARDINER: This money should be distributed with care. South Australian experience had shown him there was too much tendency to hold little shows at numerous small centres.

The same prize exhibits were found at different shows, instead of local stock only, consequently the societies interested had a constant struggle to keep out of debt. Small shows should be amalgamated.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH supported the last speaker regarding the concentration of shows, and opposed the amendment. To reduce the amount available by one half would be practically giving the other societies no "show" whatever. Leave the £1,200 intact, and deal with traders' galas in next year's Estimates.

MR. HOPKINS: If all agricultural shows were concentrated in a Royal show at Guildford, Mr. James Morrison would take all the prizes, and the encouragement to the small farmer would be infinitesimal.

THE TREASURER: Once more: the agricultural societies would not suffer if the words were added.

MR. GEORGE: The proposed amendment could be a separate item.

THE TREASURER: Not now.

MR. GEORGE: Yes; the Treasurer could put a new item on the Supplementary Estimates. No doubt £500 would satisfy the member for Boulder.

MR. HOPKINS: The sum of £500 was not required. Boulder only wished to be treated as other places were.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. DAGLISH: Provision might be made for an amount for a firemen's demonstration to assist the volunteer firemen of the State. There were a number of volunteer fire brigades which protected Government property, among other things, without fee or reward.

THE CHAIRMAN: That would not come under "Literary and Scientific."

MR. DAGLISH: The matter could be brought up later, under "Miscellaneous."

Item—Perth Museum and Art Gallery, £3,800:

DR. O'CONNOR: This amount for the Perth Museum and Art Gallery was rather much, and he moved that the sum be reduced by £800.

THE TREASURER: The request of this body was for £5,000, and it was represented that the whole of the money would be required; but as he (the Treasurer) had to make both ends meet,

the sum was cut down to the actual expenditure of last year.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Item—Zoological Gardens, £3,900:

MR. R. HASTIE: Did any of this money go towards the various "sprees" which took place at this institution?

THE TREASURER: It did not.

MR. HASTIE: Under what item did that expenditure come?

THE TREASURER: Under "Miscellaneous."

MR. W. J. GEORGE: Were the salaries of the officials of the Zoological Gardens paid out of this £3,900?

THE TREASURER: Yes.

MR. GEORGE: Had Parliament any control over this expenditure? Parliament had a right to say what salaries should be paid, but in the way the item was set out there was absolutely no control over it, and there was nothing to prevent the salaries being increased to whatever amount the board desired.

THE TREASURER: The remarks of the hon. member applied to all items of this description. The Zoological Gardens were managed by a board, and the public paid certain admission fees. The amount of money available to the board was expended on the gardens as a whole. If members visited the gardens they would see that a good deal of money was expended and that a good deal of excellent work was done. To interfere with this item would be tantamount to moving a vote of want-of-confidence in the board. Probably the board would resign, and another board would have to be appointed. In regard to the Perth Park, moneys were voted in a lump sum, and the board had to be trusted. These boards had been successful so far, but Parliament had no control over the individual salaries paid. Parliament must trust the boards, and if we lost confidence in one board another board would have to be appointed. It had not been deemed desirable here or in any other State to burden the Estimates with the individual salaries of all small departments like this. Parliament did not manage or control these departments, but trusted to the honour, integrity, and ability of the boards, and these boards had been fairly successful in the expenditure of the money so far. The request of the board of the Zoological



Gardens was for a much larger sum, but for the same reason that he had already given, he had to cut down the amount to the actual expenditure of last year.

MR. GEORGE: Surely members could ask about items of this sort without reflecting on the capacity of the members of any board. We, as trustees of the public purse, had a right to see that the expenditure was being properly carried out. Reports from these boards were laid on the table, and of course an adverse motion could be tabled, but members did not like doing that because there were personal friends of members on the boards, and these gentlemen were respected most highly; but in the conduct of business these gentlemen might not meet with the approval of members. The salaries paid should come under the purview of Parliament, and because members wished to know what salaries were paid, they were not reflecting on the honour of the members of the board. In regard to the Waterworks Board, Parliament did know what was paid; therefore we should know what salaries were paid by other boards.

THE PREMIER: There was great force in what the hon. member said; but in the schedule to the report would be found details of the way in which the money was expended. These votes were rather in the nature of grants-in-aid, and did not represent the total cost of the up-keep of the Zoological Gardens. Some money was spent in the purchase of animals, but the largest bill was that for food. The board had under their control the gate money which was received, and he was glad to say that the takings amounted to a very considerable sum.

MR. F. CONNOR: The gardens should be self-supporting now.

THE PREMIER: That would be a desirable thing, but it would be a long time before the gardens were self-supporting. It was astonishing how popular the gardens had become, and how great the attendance was on holidays. It was a great resort for children and holiday makers. Something like 3,000 to 5,000 people visited the Zoo on Boxing Day. There was nothing unreasonable in the request of members that details of the expenditure should be placed before Parliament; and a recommendation might be made to the board for the

details, also for an account of what the receipts were. He fancied that all these details could be found in the report of the manager, who was always crying out for more money, as he could not do all he desired with the amount at his disposal. These gardens had been practically built in the bush, the site was pure bush three years ago, and consequently a good deal of expenditure, so to speak, had been on capital account. He knew that hon. members were aware of the difficulties which existed, and he was in no way protesting against the views expressed. The Committee were certainly entitled to know every detail of expenditure when Parliament was called on to vote the money. This matter would be brought prominently before the board, in order that regard might be paid to the wishes of the Committee.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS: The attitude of the Government with regard to the Acclimatisation Board should be the same as that adopted in regard to municipalities. The accounts of the municipalities were audited by the Government and published in the *Government Gazette*. The same rule, applied here, would meet the case admirably.

THE PREMIER: The accounts of the board were audited.

MR. HOPKINS: They were not published, though.

THE PREMIER: They were being printed now, and would be published.

MR. HOPKINS: They should be published in the *Government Gazette* every year.

MR. F. CONNOR: In connection with this item, there was the danger that it was in the power of certain persons to buy animals all over the world. Therefore it might be a wise thing to limit the expenditure on purchases. He had no desire to reflect on the management of the Zoological Gardens, but he thought that Parliament should have more control over the funds. The gardens would be self-supporting but for the expensive purchases made.

THE PREMIER: Still, a good deal of money was being spent in permanent improvements.

MR. CONNOR: Quite so; but the Premier would admit there should be some limit to the amount expended in the purchase of wild animals.

**MR. M. H. JACOBY:** Hon. members appeared to be forgetting that the society carried out very important work in acclimatisation. A good deal of money was spent in the successful acclimatisation of birds and fishes. He would suggest that the balance-sheet should, in future, be attached to the report of the board.

**THE TREASURER:** A manuscript balance-sheet, passed by the Auditor General's Department, was attached to the report.

**MR. R. HASTIE:** A farther matter which the Premier might bring to the attention of the board was the advisability of their ceasing to expend considerable amounts of money in entertainments for the benefit of a select few. From the composition of the board it was only necessary to draw attention to the matter.

Item—Grant for Acclimatisation of Fish, Birds, and Animals, £250 :

**MR. F. CONNOR:** As a result of the operations of the Zoological Gardens authorities, the Kimberley districts were being denuded of birds. Ten thousand birds were recently brought down by steamer. The Government should frame regulations for the protection of these beautiful creatures, which formed one of the few delights of the people in the far North. As a result of proceedings similar to those now complained of, Queensland had been denuded of bird life. Various settlers in the Kimberley districts had asked that this matter might be brought under the notice of Parliament.

**THE PREMIER:** The danger could be met by protecting birds under the Game Act, or prohibiting their destruction.

**MR. T. HAYWARD:** The amount of this item was too small: it should be £500. Money would be well spent in introducing fish into our rivers. Fish was scarce and dear in Western Australia, which had rivers capable of producing hundreds of tons. Moreover, the stocking of rivers with fish would afford sport to the people, and thus prevent numbers from leaving this State in search of recreation.

**THE TREASURER:** The hon. member had discovered a weak spot in the Estimates. The deficiency would be remedied next year.

**MR. R. HASTIE:** During the two previous years an item of £250 for a museum in Coolgardie had appeared on the Estimates. Why had this amount disappeared.

**MR. HOPKINS:** The museum was only one for experts, and the experts had left Coolgardie.

**THE TREASURER:** That amount had disappeared from the Estimates, how or why he did not know.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

*Pensions, £6,661 2s. 2d.:*

**MR. W. J. GEORGE:** Without presuming to think that a protest would make any difference, he would restate the objections to pensions to which he had given expression on previous occasions. The time would come, it was to be hoped, when the State could afford to pay people a fair remuneration for their work and relegate pensions into the background altogether. The prospect of a pension was often urged as a reason for paying a man less than he was really worth. This was a highly objectionable practice. If a man lived long enough he got his pension, of course; but if he happened to die after eight or ten years' service the Government derived an unfair advantage. The pension system in the old country had caused and was causing a lot of trouble; and we ought to benefit by instead of repeating the mistakes of the past. We should be in the position to consider the question of dispensing with a man's services without reference to whether, in view of his pension, it would pay us to get rid of him. Pensions, moreover, were demoralising, inasmuch as they led public servants to live right up to their means in the enjoyment of a fictitious prosperity.

**MR. R. HASTIE:** It was impossible to go into the items of this vote, but one would like to know what new items, if any, appeared as compared with previous years. Had the pension list been increased, and, if so, in what respects?

**MR. G. TAYLOR:** From the Pensions Vote and the Emoluments Return it appeared that the same person was drawing a pension of £170 as "late Assistant

Engineer-in-Chief" and a salary of £300 per annum as "architect."

OPPOSITION MEMBER: No; they were different men.

MR. TAYLOR: The names and the initials were the same. The officer in question appeared to be drawing a pension of £170 and also a salary of £300. Perhaps the Premier or the Treasurer would inform the Committee whether a civil servant who, having become eligible to draw his pension, resigned but subsequently re-entered the service and drew a salary, was competent to continue to draw a pension. Surely this was against the intention of the Pensions Act. If the officer referred to was able to re-enter the service at a salary of £300, he ought not to continue to draw a pension. The officer in question was quite unknown to him.

THE PREMIER: The amount must necessarily appear in the pension list. The officer would draw the pension but not his full salary. Which page did the hon. member refer to?

MR. TAYLOR: See item 56 on page 45 of the Estimates, also page 35 in the Emoluments Return. All the figures and everything else tallied. He did not know if the man tallied.

THE PREMIER: It would not necessarily follow from this return that the officer was drawing both. As architect, or whatever he was, he would draw £300 a year, less the amount of his pension.

MR. TAYLOR: Why was £470 down?

THE PREMIER: That was a mistake, he thought.

MR. TAYLOR: It was well to draw attention to mistakes.

THE PREMIER: Quite right. The Government would make inquiry into the matter, which would come up again in the estimates for the Works Department.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: The opinion expressed by the member for the Murray (Mr. George) was one against which he desired to enter his protest. If a man served the State faithfully and well at a moderate salary, it was only right for the State to make provision for him, and the State was not a penny out of pocket by doing so in this way. The member for the Murray urged, as a better plan, that officers should have higher salaries. The chances were that, if they got their salaries increased by one Government,

another Government would come in and reduce the salaries. He would be sorry to see the pension list abolished, provided it was safeguarded to a certain extent.

MR. GEORGE: The position of every salary on the Estimates to-day was that whatever amount it might be to-day, another Government could come in and drop it, pension or not. He believed the amount of pension was based on the salary at the time the officer retired. If an office was worth £500 a year, we had no right to employ a man at £450 and say, "We know your office is worth £500, but we give you £450 because if you behave yourself and do not die you will get a pension."

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: A pension was an incentive.

MR. GEORGE: There was no incentive about it. All a man had to do was to behave himself and be decent, and then he could not be shifted. A pension was simply a means of getting a man to work for less; and if a man died before he was entitled to get a pension, he would really have been robbed of his emolument each year.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS: Whilst not having much sympathy with the pension list as it existed at present, he thought it proper that some deduction, say one per cent. or two per cent., should be made from the salaries of civil servants, and that the fund thus obtained should be subsidised by the Government, so that when the time came for the men to retire they would be able to draw something in the shape of a pension or retiring allowance. In South Australia the Government paid their police, in addition to their increments, an advance of 1d. a day per annum for every year they were in the service, so that at the end of 12 years each man would get an increase of 1s. a day. This pension list seemed growing. The fact that this young country was paying £6,661 for pensions would, he thought, necessitate some action to put the matter on a reasonable basis. For that reason he would like to have an assurance from the Government that they would give the question of pensions some consideration. Also he would like to know what would happen if we struck these pensions out.

MEMBER: We could not.

**MR. HOPKINS:** Presumably if it was in the power of Parliament to grant pensions, it was in the power of Parliament to abolish them.

**MR. H. DAGLISH:** There was not much to be gained by discussing what we could do with the pension list at present, as naturally we were legally bound to pay, or we must repudiate our engagements. At the same time, he would urge on the Government the desirability of amending the Superannuation Act, and if the member for the Murray (Mr. George) would bring forward a motion against pensions he would be very happy to support it, because whilst he did not agree altogether with the hon. member's utterances, he agreed with the purport of those utterances that pensions should be abolished. If there was to be a pension scheme established by Government on the lines suggested by the member for Boulder (Mr. Hopkins), it should apply not only to the public service but to the whole of the community. He would like to see a compulsory State assurance scheme of a general character. In regard to this particular pension scheme he wished to call attention to its unfairness as it at present stood. If a man was paid by the week or fortnight he was not regarded under the Public Service Act as a permanent employee of the State, and he might therefore have served for 40 years without being entitled to a pension or any compensation, whereas if paid by the month or year he was, as soon as he was on the fixed salary list, entitled to qualify for a pension. In the State service, one class, the lowly paid particularly, was barred from pensions: all others on a better footing were entitled.

Vote put and passed.

*Refunds, £1,000—agreed to:*

*Miscellaneous Services, £126,127 15s. 3d.:*

**MR. H. DAGLISH** asked if the Premier could see his way to make a grant of say £200 or £250 towards the volunteer fire brigades' demonstration. This demonstration was of great service to firemen in the direction of making them efficient. He referred only to the volunteer firemen, who gave up their time to the benefit of the different communities in which they lived. The object of the money asked for was really to

provide the cost of the railway journeys to the place where these demonstrations might be held.

**THE PREMIER:** Personally, he would be glad to render the required assistance, for which he had recently been asked by representatives of country volunteer brigades, who desired to have annual demonstrations for practice. Such meetings might fairly be encouraged, say by the issuing of free railway passes.

**MR. DAGLISH:** The late Commissioner of Railways (Hon. J. J. Holmes) was unwilling to grant free passes, contending that these should not be charged to his department, and suggesting a vote from the Treasury. As public buildings were protected by volunteer brigades, the cost of the passes might be borne by the Works Department.

**THE TREASURER:** This was a matter of detail only. A distinct promise had been made of free passes to a working company of each brigade in the State—say 12 men, though eight might suffice—desiring to attend the annual competition.

**HON. F. H. PIESSE:** The Committee should pause before agreeing to issue free passes. To these he had previously objected; because, once free passes were granted to fire brigades, where would their issue end? He would not oppose a vote; but free passes had been refused to other bodies, and should not be granted at the caprice of a Minister, but solely by Parliament.

**THE TREASURER:** It would be difficult for Parliament to vote the exact sum requisite, as it was not known how many brigades would compete, nor where the annual competitions would take place. It was desirable to encourage a sufficient number from every brigade in the State to come to the annual competitions, though too many must not be withdrawn from any district. Every brigade should be restricted to a maximum of 12 passes.

**MR. A. E. THOMAS:** Many of the items already passed in this and previous votes represented luxuries. During the present and last summer there had been formed in leading goldfields centres what were termed "fresh air" funds, or rather "change of air" funds. The funds were established by public subscription to send sick children, whom doctors considered ought to be sent away, to the coast for change of air for two or

three weeks. Up to the present some hundreds of children had been sent to Bunbury, and had derived immense benefit from their sojourn there. The Government might do something to help these funds in some way by putting an extra car on the railway train running to the coast, which would involve a very few shillings extra cost, instead of charging the funds with the full fare for carrying the children by train. If the children were not sent down to the coast for change of air they would perhaps have to be buried in the district. The Government might easily charge a nominal amount to carry the children to the coast, if not carry them free altogether.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS: These "fresh air" funds were established by subscription, and a large number of children of poor parents, whose only opportunity of regaining health and strength was to come to the coast for change of air, had been sent away for change. The people on the goldfields had subscribed liberally up to the present, but not a sixpence had been received from the Government, although the Government had given facilities for the carriage of the children when it was known that the children were to be sent down; but there had been no decrease in the railway fares. No member of the committee would take exception to a grant of £250, to be expended on the basis of £ for £ to the amount subscribed. This was a matter which would commend itself to the Government, to Parliament, and to the people of the country. The reformatory at Rottneest was now idle, and this establishment might be offered to this fund as a residence for children when at the coast for change of air. Then there was an old Government hospital at Bunbury which the Government might put in repair and allow to be used for the same purpose. He hoped that some provision would be made on the Supplementary Estimates in aid of the "fresh air" fund.

THE TREASURER: This was somewhat a new idea. He had first heard of it only a few weeks ago on the opening of the Ministering Children's League. Personally he could express the sympathy of the Government with a movement of this kind. He did not think any money of the State could be better expended

than by helping these funds to bring poor children from the goldfields districts to the coast. The Government might make some provision without interfering with the Estimates, and something substantial might be placed on the Estimates next year.

MR. A. E. THOMAS: Committees were established in Boulder, Kalgoorlie, and Coolgardie, and it cost about £3 to send each child down to the coast for change of air, of which sum the Government received about 30s.

THE TREASURER: This question might be submitted to the Minister for Railways to see what would be the cost of carriage to the Railway Department, as the Government did not desire to make any profit on this transaction. If members would leave it to the Government, we would discuss the matter with the Minister for Railways to see what could be done for this very worthy object, either in giving a cheaper trainage or by a direct vote on the basis of £ for £ subscribed: perhaps the latter would be the better plan. The Government had every sympathy in a movement of this kind and would assist to the best of their ability.

MR. PIGOTT: When the Government were considering this matter, they might remember there were children in other places outside the goldfields to whom assistance could be given.

Item—Destruction of Wild Dogs, £11,000:

MR. HOPKINS moved, as an amendment, that the words "and kangaroos" be added. The report of the select committee on food supply, which was on the table of the House, contained the evidence of Mr. Joseph Blyth, who described himself as a butcher residing at Bunbury, and that witness stated that the country was overrun by kangaroos in the Kimberley district. The kangaroos were to be found in hundreds at present near Derby, and were reducing the carrying capacity of the East Kimberley district to a great extent. If the words proposed were added to the item, the Government could grant a bonus for the destruction of kangaroos.

THE TREASURER: The amendment raised an important question. The hour

being late, he moved that progress be reported.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at two minutes past 11 o'clock, until the next day.

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 16th January, 1902.

Petition: Camels Importation—Papers presented—Question: Rabbit Invasion, particulars—Question: Tramways to State Forests—Motion: Government Business, Precedence—Annual Estimates, resumed in Committee of Supply; Treasury Votes, Miscellaneous Services to end; Colonial Secretary, Votes to page 68; progress—Adjournment.

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

#### PRAYERS.

#### PETITION—CAMELS IMPORTATION.

MR. T. F. QUINLAN presented a petition from Faiz Mahomet, praying the House to inquire into the prohibition of the importation of certain camels into this State.

Petition received, read, and ordered to be printed.

THE SPEAKER pointed out that the petition ought properly to have been presented before Notices of Motion were given.

MR. QUINLAN explained that he got up half a dozen times, but so many members rose in succession that he lost the opportunity.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By THE TREASURER: Return showing Expenses in connection with the Royal Visit, on motion by Mr. Harper.

By THE PREMIER: Report of Registrar of Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks, for 1901.

Ordered to lie on the table.

#### QUESTION—RABBIT INVASION, PARTICULARS.

MR. A. E. THOMAS asked the Premier: Whether it is a fact that rabbits have been found west of the proposed line of fence which is now being constructed.

THE PREMIER (Hon. G. Leake) replied: Rabbits are reported to have been seen near Nannine, which is some 70 miles to the westward of the proposed route of the rabbit fence, but this report has not yet been confirmed by an officer of the Rabbit Department.]

#### QUESTION—TRAMWAYS TO STATE FORESTS.

MR. HASTIE asked the Premier: When he will lay on the table the regulations for the construction of tramways from the railway into the State forests.

THE PREMIER replied: No regulations have yet been created, but the matter is receiving the attention of the Government, and is now before the Crown Law Office.

#### MOTION—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

Debate resumed from the previous day, on the motion proposed by the Premier, "That after this day, Government business take precedence of all other business during the remainder of the session."

THE TREASURER (Hon. F. Illingworth): To this motion he had an amendment, to which hon. members would probably agree. He moved:

That all words after "that" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu: "for the purpose of expediting business, the House shall sit on Mondays at 4:30 p.m."

MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco): Instead of sitting on an extra day, the House should meet earlier on the present sitting days. That would better suit the country members. To meet two hours earlier than hitherto would be reasonable.

MR. G. TAYLOR: Sit on an extra day also.

MR. DAGLISH: First try his suggestion, and if it were found insufficient, have an extra day. The plan of meeting at 2:30 p.m. had been adopted in other States, and he would subsequently move an amendment with that object.