

Bill passed through the remaining stages without debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9-27 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 13th December, 1904.

	PAGE
Land Sold for Rates in Arrear	1772
Questions: Jandakot Railway Route	1772
Railway Tickets, Tenders for supply	1772
Sunday Special Trains, cost	1773
Bills: Early Closing Act Amendment (Fruit Shops), second reading, in Committee, progress	1773
Distress for Rent Restriction, third reading	1778
Brands, in Committee resumed, reported	1778
Roads Act Amendment, in Committee, progress	1779
Assent to Bill, Truck Act Amendment	1781
Press Reporting, Speeches not heard	1776
Motion: Nangeenan Settlement, to discontinue, debate concluded	1781
Annual Estimates resumed, Mines continued, passed	1784

MR. SPEAKER took the Chair at 2-30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR WORKS: Return showing estimated cost of Marble Bar Section of Port Hedland-Nullagine Railway, with books of plans.

By the MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND LABOUR: 1, Return showing stock killed on and cost of fencing Bridgetown Railway, as ordered by the House on 6th December. 2, Closing of Wiley's railway siding, papers moved for by Mr. Nanson.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Additional Regulations relating to the management of Prisons.

LAND SOLD FOR RATES IN ARREAR.

MR. RASON had given notice to ask the Premier:

1, What are the number and particulars of the blocks recently sold at Cottesloe for non-

payment of rates? 2, What are the names of the purchasers and the prices paid? 3, What is the amount of rates due upon each lot?

MR. SPEAKER: The proper form would be to move for a return.

THE PREMIER: The information was now available, if desired.

MR. RASON: That being so, any member besides himself desiring to see it could do so.

QUESTION—JANDAKOT RAILWAY ROUTE.

MR. GORDON (for Mr. Diamond) asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has the route for the Jandakot Railway as far as the Agricultural Hall, Forrest Road, been decided on by the Government? 2, If so, will the Government inform the House as to the details of such route?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Route has been decided upon as far as the Agricultural Hall. 2, Plan showing details will be laid upon the table to-morrow.

QUESTION—RAILWAY TICKETS, TENDERS FOR SUPPLY.

MR. NEEDHAM asked the Premier: 1, What was the latest date to receive tenders for the supply of railway tickets? 2, Is there a local firm that required extension of time in order to allow them to get information to enable them to tender for the supply? 3, Were any tenders received from England, or elsewhere outside of the State, after the date advertised for receiving same? 4, If so, why was the local firm refused extension of time by the Tender Board?

THE PREMIER replied: 1, Noon, 21st November, 1904, simultaneously in London and this State. Advertisement first appeared in local papers on the 28th September, 1904. 2, Yes. Messrs. Detmold, Ltd. This application was not entertained, as the Tender Board considered ample time had been given, viz. between seven and eight weeks, to enable intending tenderers to obtain necessary information. 3, No. 4, Answered by No. 3. The lowest local tender was £117 13s. 1d., and the Agent General's cable tender was £84 3s.

QUESTION—SUNDAY SPECIAL TRAINS,
COST.

MR. NEEDHAM asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What was the cost to the Railway Department of the two special trains from Fremantle to Perth on Sunday, 4th December, 1904? 2, What was the return to the Railway Department for this outlay?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The two special trains were rendered necessary owing to the traffic offering, and were filled. 2, It is not customary to take the cost of each train run, and the revenue resulting from these trains cannot be definitely stated. As the trains were full, the result to the department is regarded as satisfactory.

EARLY CLOSING ACT AMENDMENT
BILL (FRUIT SHOPS, ETC.).

SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND LABOUR (Hon. J. B. Holman) in moving the second reading said: This Bill is introduced in accordance with a resolution passed in this House on the 30th of last month, the object being to amend the Early Closing Act in such a manner that it will better serve the convenience of the general public and the business people. It also regulates the hours of working for shop assistants, the present Act not affording the necessary protection. Section 10 of the 1904 Act states the closing time for certain exempted shops, and fruit shops are in the second schedule. At present fruit shops cannot be kept open after ten o'clock, and members know the inconvenience there is when men are going home a little late at night and are unable to get fruit. The object of this clause is to allow fruit shops to remain open until eleven o'clock, which will not only be of great assistance to business people conducting fruit shops, but also to the general public who desire to buy a little fruit on their way home. Some amount of loss and inconvenience has been caused through fruit shops being compelled to close at ten o'clock, thus causing a lot of fruit which the shopkeepers might sell between the hours of ten and eleven to go bad. In this Bill provision is made whereby no male assistant 16 years of age or over shall be employed for

more than 56 hours in any one week, exclusive of meal hours. Male assistants under 16 and female assistants are already protected, the number of hours in their case being 52 per week. I think that as we are making provision whereby fruit shops can be kept open an extra hour, it will be only fair to compel employees in these shops to work an extra hour. As the Bill will prevent the employment of any person for more than 56 hours a week, the extension of the time for closing will not involve longer hours for employees; and the fruit shops, being allowed to keep open till 11 o'clock, will be able to get rid of more stock. Many requests have been made that fruit shops be allowed to remain open till that hour, and that the Government should avail themselves of the section in the parent Act by which the operation of the Act may be suspended by proclamation as regards any class of shops; but this was considered unwise. However, the House having affirmed by resolution the desirableness of allowing fruit shops to remain open longer, I do not anticipate any opposition to this measure, which will prove very convenient to the general public. I move the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. BATH in the Chair; the MINISTER FOR LABOUR in charge of the Bill.

Clauses, 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Act No. 1 of 1904, s. 10 (hairdressers):

MR. FOULKES: Some suburban hairdressers of Perth and Fremantle had asked him to secure an amendment of the Act so as to allow them to keep open longer. Most of their work was done in the evening, after suburban residents reached home. The Bill had gone unexpectedly into Committee; and he would like an opportunity to draft such an amendment.

MR. H. BROWN supported the preceding speaker. A hairdresser and tobacconist had to shut up his hairdressing department at 6:30 p.m., after which he sat idle in his shop except when selling goods. As he had to be there as a salesman, there was no reason why he should not act as a barber, not employing assistants. This clause should be

altered to allow fruit shops to remain open till midnight for the convenience of theatre-goers. He suggested an amendment:

That the word "eleven," in line 5, be struck out, and "twelve" inserted in lieu.

MR. CARSON: The amendment was necessary. A recent arrival from the North-West on a Wednesday afternoon found that he could not get a shave after one o'clock. This was a hardship to the public and the hairdressers alike. Closing barbers' shops at 6:30 p.m. was unnecessary. Why debar the proprietor from working, provided he did not work his assistants?

MR. F. F. WILSON: No harm would be done to the workers, and suburban barbers would be considerably benefited, if they could keep their shops open till 8 o'clock. North Perth barbers complained bitterly of having to close at 6:30. The majority of working men reached home between six and seven, and did not care to enter a barber's shop without changing their working clothes. Closing at 8 o'clock would not inflict hardship on journeymen hairdressers, wages and working conditions being distinctly laid down in the Act and by the Arbitration Court. Barbers who did not employ assistants had to keep their shops open till after 6:30 to sell tobacco; and that they should be allowed to act as barbers till they closed was but reasonable. He would support an amendment by the member for Claremont.

THE PREMIER welcomed the suggestion for an additional clause dealing with hairdressers' shops. Last session he spoke strongly on the matter, believing that the 6:30 closure had caused great inconvenience to the public, and had done much harm to working hairdressers. It seemed that a certain number of these had been thrown out of work, because they could not earn their wages in the unduly restricted hours; and the early closing had caused many people to refrain from patronising the barber, either by remaining unshaved or by shaving themselves. Naturally there was a diminution in the trade, which result he had anticipated during last Parliament. There was no objection to the proposed amendment.

MR. DIAMOND: In seaports the restrictions as to hours for hairdressing were not only bad for the proprietors,

but bad for the trade of the towns, because passengers landing from steamers could not obtain the services of barbers. Many proprietors of hairdressing saloons in Fremantle had spoken of their willingness to pay overtime to men if allowed to employ them after hours, while it had also been suggested that in a seaport it would be necessary to work employees double shifts. In any event the proprietor of the saloon should be allowed to work whatever hours he wished. The particular restrictions of the Early Closing Act in this regard prevented the expenditure of money in Fremantle, and the amendment would cause no hardship on any member of the community. During last Parliament he (Mr. Diamond) had assisted in trying to get an extension of the hours.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS during the last Parliament had moved an amendment to extend the time of closing hairdressing saloons to half-past seven, but did not receive sufficient support to get the amendment passed. It was pointed out then that if the closing time was fixed at half-past seven employers would keep their employees working until the closing time, and would not allow them off to get tea. The amendment he (the Minister) had moved was to extend the hour to half-past seven, at the same time compelling the proprietors to allow their employees to have their tea before half-past six. If the member for Claremont would include a similar provision in the proposed amendment it would find support from every member.

MR. NEEDHAM: No amendment would be moved to lengthen the hours worked by hairdressers. It was recognised that great inconvenience was caused to the general public through hairdressers' shops closing at half-past six; but the difficulty could be overcome, either by opening the shops an hour later in the morning and closing them an hour later at night, or by working double shifts.

MR. DIAMOND: Did the hon. member desire to interfere with the hours of the employers?

MR. NEEDHAM: There were many shops in the State where the owners knew nothing about the business.

MR. H. BROWN: Such owners ought not to be in the shops.

MR. NEEDHAM: They were earning an honest livelihood by employing men.

MR. HARDWICK supported the suggestion that fruit shops should be allowed to remain open until midnight. It was necessary, particularly during the summer months and at Christmas time, when thousands of people did not leave the business centre of the city until after midnight. It would be only a permissive clause; because the fruit sellers would not remain open after their fruit had been sold. Fruit unsold on the Saturday night was not of any use when kept until the Monday.

MR. WATTS: Fruit shops should be allowed to remain open until midnight during holiday times, and this should also apply to confectioners' shops. Many fruit sellers had confectionery on their shelves, and it would be a hardship to compel them to refuse to sell confectionery or to compel them to partition off the confectionery part of their business after the usual hour for closing confectioners' shops. He moved an amendment:

That after "except," in line 3, the words "confectioners and" be inserted.

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR: There was no objection to the amendment. In most cases fruit-selling and confectionery businesses were identical.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. H. BROWN moved an amendment:

That in line 5 the word "eleven" be struck out, and "twelve" inserted in lieu.

MR. DIAMOND supported the amendment. At present fish shops and eating-houses were allowed to keep open until almost any hour of the night. The shopkeepers in Fremantle who sold oysters and fish, and provided suppers at night time, were practically open for the best portion of the night. If that were in accordance with the Act, why should people who were vending eatables, especially fruit, at this time of year be prevented from keeping open until midnight? The amendment would be a benefit to the public.

MR. WATTS: The amendment might provide for an extension of the hours when there was a glut of fruit in the market in the summer time; but during the six winter months it was not neces-

sary for fruit shops to remain open until midnight.

MR. DIAMOND: It was a permissive clause.

THE MINISTER: Keepers of fruit shops had only asked to be allowed to remain open until 11 o'clock at night. No time was specified for the closing of fish shops or eating-houses; but for fruit shops the hours of closing were 10 o'clock on week nights, and 11 o'clock on Saturday nights. If we extended the time for one hour and agreed to the request of the fruiterers, that was all that was needed. We should not extend the time unnecessarily.

MR. DIAMOND represented the people generally, and not the keepers of fruit shops only. The vast majority of the people would be better served if the fruit shops were allowed to remain open in the summer time until 12 o'clock at night.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The majority of people were in bed at that time.

MR. DIAMOND: In a shipping port there were numbers of people moving about, whether residents or people in transit he could not say, and fish shops and eating-houses did a large trade. Why should not fruit shops be allowed to remain open as well?

MR. H. BROWN: We were not studying the shopkeepers, but the public generally. If the keeper of a fruit shop did not require to keep his premises open until midnight, he was a free agent and could shut up. Lots of people went into fruit shops at 10 o'clock or half-past 10 at night, and did not like being bundled into the streets at 11 o'clock. In the majority of instances, fruit shops took more money during the last hour or two than during the whole of the day. The amendment, if carried, would be a boon to the people.

THE MINISTER: Almost every fruit shop was a refreshment shop as well, and if people went into a fruit shop, they could have as much fruit and refreshment on the premises as they wished up to midnight, but no fruit could be sold to be taken away after that hour. People who wished to take fruit home could do so before 11 o'clock at night.

MR. A. J. WILSON: The word "closed" in the Act meant "closed to the admission of the public for the purposes of trade"; therefore people could not go to a fruit shop to have refreshment in that shop. It was customary with people who patronised theatres to go to a fruit shop to have supper after the theatre. They entered the shop perhaps at a quarter to eleven o'clock, and at present had to leave at eleven o'clock. There was little, if any, occasion to have any restriction of the hour as to the time of closing. People were not going to get out of their beds, after retiring, to buy fruit. People patronised the fruit shops if they were in the streets. If the interpretation given in the Act was placed on the word "closed," a considerable hardship was likely to be inflicted on the public. The Bill had been sprung upon members.

THE MINISTER: It had been down a fortnight.

MR. A. J. WILSON: The amendment would add three hours per week to the working hours of a considerable number of shop assistants. Section 12 of the principal Act, which was amended by this Bill, provided that women or any young persons under 16 should not be employed more than 53 hours in any one week, and yet we found in this Bill a provision regarding hours to apply to everybody. Whilst providing that males over 16 working in shops should not be compelled to work longer than 56 hours a week, the Bill would enable employers to compel women and youths under 16, who were exempted by a portion of the Act—

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could not discuss that on the present clause.

MR. A. J. WILSON wished the clause to be recommitted for remedying a mistake.

THE MINISTER: There was no mistake, except that made by the hon. member.

MR. A. J. WILSON only desired to express his opinion so that he might be assured the position he had indicated was a false one. As to the closing time, we ought not to tie ourselves down to 11 o'clock. In regard to barbers, a difficulty was likely to arise unless the provisions regarding working hours of employees were very carefully safeguarded. He

had sometimes found the inconvenience of not being able to secure a shave after 1 o'clock on a Wednesday. He understood there was a provision in operation under the original measure to enable an employer to arrange so that if an employee worked on Wednesday afternoon he should be entitled to a half-day on, say, the next day. An arrangement like that would be a convenience to the public and would not rob the employees of a privilege they were entitled to.

PRESS REPORTING, SPEECHES NOT HEARD.

THE CHAIRMAN said he had received a note from the Press Gallery, stating that the speeches of some members were inaudible to reporters in the gallery. He thought it was largely due, sometimes, to the conversations and interruptions which went on. He would like members to refrain, so that speeches might be heard by the Press reporters.

RESUMED.

MR. F. F. WILSON: The half-holiday question had frequently been referred to, but he hoped the Committee would not interfere with the half-holiday. In course of conversation, several suburban barbers complained bitterly of some men working during the half-holiday, and said they would like to see all the shops closed.

THE CHAIRMAN: An amendment was to be brought forward in regard to hairdressers, and the hon. member could discuss the question then.

MR. QUINLAN supported the member for Perth. The Early Closing Act had had a very detrimental effect upon the community. Employees were entitled to every consideration, and should have the hours limited; but if we went so far as the Early Closing Act had done and was intended to do, we should be interfering too much with the liberty of the people, and in fact be returning to the old days when a policeman asked a man in the street after a certain hour whether he was bond or free. The Minister should realise the reasons adduced by the member for Perth, the object being to give as much liberty to people as possible. He was not a frequent attendant at the theatre, but people should be entitled to enjoy them-

selves as they chose, and if they wished to buy fruit on leaving the theatre they should not be debarred from doing so. He took it that the amendment applied only to owners, and so long as it was restricted to them he saw no reason why the Government should object to it.

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The member for Forrest said that this Bill was sprung upon the House; but nearly a fortnight ago the member for Canning moved that in the opinion of this House all shops should be allowed to keep open till a later hour, and he (the Minister) promised to introduce a measure to that effect, also that he would make provision to restrict the hours of employees in those shops. These were the only two matters he had introduced into the Bill. The member for Forrest was wrong in asserting that the Bill had been sprung on the House. The hon. member was also wrong in regard to Section 12 of the principal Act, which provided that males under 16 years of age and females should not work more than 53 hours a week. In 1904 the hours were reduced to 52. There was in this measure no alteration from the present Act in relation to the hours of females and young men, and he believed the hours mentioned in this Bill were ample.

MR. HARDWICK: In the interests of public health the time should be extended to twelve, and he hoped members on the opposite side of the House would make no party question of this. The law allowed a man to poison himself with whisky up to twelve o'clock at night, and why should not the law allow him to obtain fruit up to that hour also?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS opposed the amendment to extend the time of closing. If we fixed the hour at twelve it would not be optional with proprietors to close at an earlier hour, because the hours of closing were governed by one man. If one man decided to keep open until twelve o'clock at night, every other shopkeeper would have to do the same.

MR. HARDWICK: How would it be if they sold out by eleven?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: If customers went to a fruiterer's shop which should be open till twelve and found it closed at eleven, they would not go to that shop again. A few years ago

the Early Closing Act allowed stationers to remain open on Wednesday afternoon. Perth, as usual, did not wish to close on Wednesday—he believed shopkeepers in Perth would keep open all night if they were allowed to do so—but in other parts of the State an attempt was made by shopkeepers to close on Wednesday afternoon. In Kalgoorlie only one man said he would not close, and that man governed the situation, for whilst his shop remained open all the others had to keep theirs open also. So would it be in relation to fruiterers. It had been argued that if we allowed shops to remain open, that would not mean increased hours of labour; but that was not correct. It was impossible for anyone to check the hours of labour unless we said the shops should close. He was extremely surprised to find members on that (the Government) side of the House advocating the closing of shops at twelve o'clock. The majority of respectable people in this State were in bed by twelve o'clock, and had bought their fruit before eleven o'clock. We had had some experience of the Act that ten o'clock did not work as well as we should like. Proprietors said "Extend the time to eleven o'clock and we will be satisfied." Why should we go farther than these shopkeepers asked? Surely they were the best judges of what the people required. Another point raised was that theatre-goers could not buy their fruit or fruit-supper after they left the theatre; but were we, because there were a few shops in Hay Street opposite the theatre, to say that every shop in this State should remain open until twelve o'clock? If we fixed the hour at twelve, every shop would remain open till then.

MR. CARSON: Let there be a compromise.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS would stick to eleven o'clock, though he believed this was a forlorn hope, because even Labour members were supporting the later hour. In the large majority of fruit shops the wives and children of the proprietor would be compelled in the latter's absence to work till midnight, often against their will; yet the only argument for this extension of time throughout the whole State was that some theatre-goers in Perth wanted fruit suppers.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	14
Noes	...	...	...	17

Majority against ... 3

Ayes.	Noes
Mr. Brown	Mr. Angwin
Mr. Burges	Mr. Bolton
Mr. Carson	Mr. Daglish
Mr. Diamond	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Hastie
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Henshaw
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Holman
Mr. Keyser	Mr. Horan
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Johnson
Mr. S. F. Moore	Mr. Lynch
Mr. Quinlan	Mr. Needham
Mr. Rason	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. A. J. Wilson	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hardwick (Teller).	Mr. Troy
	Mr. Watts
	Mr. P. F. Wilson
	Mr. Gill (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived, and the clause as previously amended agreed to.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

BILL, THIRD READING.

DISTRESS FOR RENT RESTRICTION, read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BRANDS BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from the 7th December.

MR. BATH in the Chair; the COLONIAL SECRETARY in charge of the Bill.

Clause 45—Unbranded cattle (partly discussed) :

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The amendment moved by the member for York (Mr. Burges) to alter "one year" to "fifteen months" in the case of horses, evidently sought to allow more latitude to the horse-breeder. If that were desired, better pass the clause as printed. Horses, until two years old, were called "yearlings," and were then called "two-year-olds," in pursuance of the rules of racing and of agricultural shows. [MR. BURGESS: No.] Possibly not in this State; but elsewhere this was the custom, and being the custom it had the force of law. The clause would enable a foal to be left unbranded till practically two years old.

Amendment (Mr. Burges's) negatived, and the clause passed.

Clause 46—Owner may mortgage brand;

MR. RASON: When dealing with a clause saving existing brands, we were told that an existing brand could be transferred.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: No brands under this Bill could be transferred. Existing brands would expire with the owners.

MR. RASON: Surely the Bill allowed the transfer of any brand to the mortgagee, who could transfer to someone else.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: On recomittal certain clauses would be altered, including this clause, if necessary.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 47 to end—agreed to.

Schedules 1, 2—agreed to.

Third Schedule (Clause 15) :

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This schedule showed that the fee for registration was 10s. Should an amendment to Clause 15, reducing the fee to 7s. 6d., be passed on recomittal, it would be necessary to recommit the schedule also. He moved an amendment:—

That the word "diamond" in the second paragraph be struck out, and "numeral" inserted in lieu.

Amendment passed, and the schedule as amended agreed to.

Fourth Schedule—agreed to.

Fifth Schedule (Clause 23) :

MR. HAYWARD: Could existing brands not be transferred?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Bill did not nullify existing brands; but only brands registered under the Bill could be transferred.

Put and passed.

Sixth Schedule—agreed to.

Seventh Schedule (Clause 26) :

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Members had expressed a desire to permit the branding of cattle on the cheek. To meet this desire he moved an amendment:

That the words "or near cheek" be inserted after the line "first portion—near rump."

This would enable the breeder to brand on the near rump or near cheek—one or the other. The second owner of the beast must brand on the off rump. The first breeder only would be allowed to brand on the near cheek.

MR. BURGESS: What about the off cheek?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In all Brands Acts in Australia the breeder of the beast was the only person allowed to choose two places for the brand. The off portion of the beast was for the second brander, who was not the breeder.

Amendment passed, and the schedule as amended agreed to.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

ROADS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. BATH in the Chair; MR. FOULKES in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Short Title:

THE PREMIER: Certain remarks having been made affecting this Bill and its position on the Notice Paper when the question of dealing with private members' business was under discussion on Thursday, he now desired to say that he had to-day placed it well up among the Orders in accordance with his intention previously expressed. The member for Claremont had on Thursday made certain statements which were in his (the Premier's) opinion quite unwarranted in regard to the position of the Bill; but the fact that he (the Premier) had all along done what he could to ensure the passing of the Bill, as he was endeavouring to do to-day, showed that the complaints of the hon. member were not justified. The hon. member's attitude on Thursday had compelled him (the Premier) to speak in a manner which he now regretted, and to say more in the heat of the moment than he would have said under ordinary circumstances. He took the first opportunity of expressing his sense of regret at what occurred on Thursday.

MR. FOULKES thanked the Premier for his kind remarks. He (Mr. Foulkes) admitted having spoken rather strongly in regard to the position of the Bill among the Orders of the Day, but would plead in extenuation the fact that Thursday was exceedingly hot, and the people of Cottesloe having for a long time been anxious to have the Bill passed so that they might have facilities for the construction of bathing places and a jetty, the House would readily understand that on such a warm day the necessity for the construction of bathing facilities was

forcibly brought to his (Mr. Foulkes's) mind. He apologised for having spoken in the way he did on the previous occasion, and was grateful to the Premier for the assistance now given to the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2, 3, 4—agreed to.

New Clause—Governor may appoint board a drainage board:

MR. W. B. GORDON moved that the following be added as a new clause:—

4. The Governor may, by Order in Council, appoint the Board a Drainage Board for any drainage district constituted within the road district.

(2.) Upon the publication of such Order in Council in the *Government Gazette*, the following provision shall apply:—(a) The board may, within the drainage district, exercise the powers and shall perform the duties of a drainage board elected under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1900. (b) All drains and drainage works constructed within the drainage district under the said Act shall be vested in the board. (c) The members of any drainage board appointed or elected for such district under the provisions of the said Act, and the officers of such board, shall go out of office. (d) The assets and liabilities of the drainage board shall be taken over by the road board, and may be recovered by and against the road board.

The object of the new clause was to save expense, which was found to be serious in the case of the existing drainage board in the Canning district; for the board was spending about £60 a year in order to collect £30, for the payment of interest on a loan of £500 borrowed at 6 per cent. The drainage board had to maintain separate machinery for collecting the drainage rate, thereby entailing unnecessary expense, which could be saved by transferring the duties and responsibilities of the drainage board to the Canning Roads Board. That board had agreed by resolution to accept the same and carry on the work, and this clause would enable that to be done.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Was the new clause in order? The mover's object could be better accomplished by amending the Drainage Act, instead of trying to do it by inserting a clause in this measure amending the Roads Act.

THE CHAIRMAN would not express an opinion off-hand, but thought the clause was one merely providing that a roads board might perform the duties of a drainage board under the Drainage Act.

MR. GORDON: The Drainage Act was administered by the Lands Department, and the Roads Act was administered by the Works Department. Therefore to alter the Drainage Act for the purposes of the new clause would not have the desired effect; as this measure would not in that way be brought under the administration of the Works Department.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The amendment should properly be made to the Drainage Act. He had not observed the notice of this new clause on the paper, and therefore had not obtained an opinion on it. Even if the new clause were in order, he must oppose it because it would interfere with the powers given to certain boards under the Lands Drainage Act under which drainage boards in certain districts had been appointed. The effect of this clause would be to supersede the boards which had been appointed under the Drainage Act, and would take from them the powers they were appointed to exercise under that Act, also transferring their liabilities to roads boards. While it might suit the Canning Roads Board to take over the duties of the drainage board in that district, other drainage boards might not be willing to merge themselves in the local roads boards.

MR. GORDON: The new clause would be optional.

THE MINISTER: This matter had been brought under his notice formerly, and he told the persons concerned that the Government could not undertake to introduce a Bill for amending generally the Roads Act until next session, when a comprehensive measure for that purpose would be brought in. He hoped the mover of this new clause would not press it.

MR. GORDON: It was extraordinary for the Minister of Public Works to force a roads board to spend money unnecessarily. The Minister admitted that he had already been consulted on this matter; yet he came here to-day having practically done nothing, not having even obtained an opinion. The Canning Drainage Board had to pay £30 a year interest on the £500 borrowed, and it would practically cost that board £750 to repay that £500 because of the unnecessary expense which this double system of collecting entailed. If the Drainage Act were to be amended as suggested by the

Minister, the Canning Roads Board could not work under the Drainage Act; and what was wanted was that the roads board should be authorised to perform the duties of the drainage board as proposed in this new clause. The roads board had shown its willingness in the matter by passing a resolution to take over the liabilities and duties of the drainage board, thus saving about £25 or £30 a year. Only one or two other drainage boards were in existence, and probably those boards would be willing to exercise the optional power under this clause and arrange to transfer their duties and liabilities to the local roads boards. It was very expensive and inconvenient to have several Acts in existence for practically the same purpose. Here was a simple solution, but the Minister would not agree to it. He (Mr. Gordon) could not withdraw the amendment, but was agreeable that progress be reported so that the Minister might consider.

MR. FOULKES: A drainage Act was passed in 1900, and under that Act the Canning Roads Board commenced certain operations. In the year 1902 a Roads Act was passed giving power to roads boards to carry out certain drainage works. The Canning Drainage Board was anxious to be relieved of its responsibilities and hand them over to the Canning Roads Board, who were equally desirous of undertaking them. As to whether it was a wise step to incorporate the amendment in the Bill, he would not express an opinion. It was difficult to drag in provisions relating to one statute and place them in a different statute. He suggested that the roads board should take advantage of the provision of the Lands Drainage Act, by which the Governor-in-Council could cancel the operation of any drainage board.

MR. GORDON: But the board had to pay off the liability.

MR. FOULKES: It could be done in this way. The Governor-in-Council could cancel the operation of the Canning Drainage Board, and the roads board could take over that operation. There was power to do that under the provisions of the Roads Act. If the mover would agree to that proposal, it would meet the wishes of his constituents. If the amendment were passed, it did not ensure that

the wishes of the hon. member would be carried out, for it was not a mandatory provision. We had an undertaking from the Minister for Works that he intended to introduce a comprehensive Bill in six months time; therefore the member for Canning should abandon his amendment, which would only give a permissive power that might never be put into effect.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS:

There was no desire to report progress now out of consideration to the member for Claremont; for that member introduced a Bill into the last Parliament to overcome some difficulty in regard to the Cottesloe Roads Board, and the amendment would only apply to the Cottesloe board. The Bill was not passed last session, and it was now reintroduced. The Bill was of great importance to the residents of Cottesloe. If the amendment were persisted in, he would be compelled to report progress, as he desired to go into the question in regard to other drainage boards. He again appealed to the member to withdraw the amendment and wait until next session for a comprehensive measure to be brought forward.

MR. GORDON said he would be failing in his duty if he did not press the amendment now, or arrange to report progress.

On motion by the **MINISTER FOR WORKS**, progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read, assenting to the Truck Act Amendment Bill.

MOTION—NANGEENAN SETTLEMENT, TO DISCONTINUE.

Debate resumed from 22nd November, on the motion of Mr. Watts "That in view of the unsatisfactory conditions surrounding the settlement at Nangeenan, this House considers that the settlement should not be persisted in;" and on the amendment by Mr. Nelson, to strike out all words after "that," and insert the following, "the question of conditions surrounding the Nangeenan Settlement be referred to the committee appointed to deal with the Hamel settlement."

MR. F. F. WILSON (North Perth): In continuing the debate on this motion

by the member for Northam, that the settlement at Nangeenan be discontinued—

MR. SPEAKER: There is an amendment moved by the member for Hannans.

MR. F. F. WILSON: In speaking on this matter, I feel more inclined to support the amendment than the motion moved by Mr. Watts. While I realise that the scheme of land settlement as propounded by the late Minister for Lands has not altogether been a successful one, still we must give him credit for an honest attempt to cope with the unemployed difficulty at that time, and an honest attempt to settle the people on the land so that they could establish homes of their own. Unfortunately, the experience not only of Western Australia but of the other States in reference to what are known as village settlements—and this to my mind is a system of village settlement—has not been very fortunate. Some years ago the Victorian Government instituted a scheme of this kind with the idea of settling people on the land. They gave the settlers a grant of £40 each, at the rate of 10s. a week, and 20 acres of land on which to settle so as to make their homes. While there were many failures in this direction—and no doubt there will be failures in Western Australia—to the credit of the settlers in Victoria, and no doubt it will be to the credit of the settlers in Western Australia, many have succeeded. I know men in Victoria who left the city of Melbourne and went into the bush to establish homes on this grant of £40, given at the rate of 10s. a week, who are there to-day making a comfortable living for themselves and families. But while this has been the exception rather than the rule, I think we can hardly condemn those settlements *holus bolus*. They have not had a fair trial. A select committee has recently inquired into the Hamel Settlement; and the interim report points out that the settlement has not been so successful as was expected; but I do not think we should go so far as the motion proposes, by altogether discontinuing these settlements. I am informed that even since this motion was tabled men have left the Nangeenan Settlement because they have been unsuccessful. Perhaps the fault may lie in taking the people so far inland to what may be the dry country.

If such settlements are to be persisted in, we must try to find the best land available; land contiguous to some market and to some place where the settlers in their spare time or at certain portions of the year can get employment which will help them to tide over their difficulties. Instead of settling people at places like Nangeenan, where they have to go straight into the virgin forest and to clear green timber, it would be better to prepare an area for settlement by ring-barking and clearing, so that settlers might subsequently commence straight away to make homes for themselves, to put crops in, and in a few months to reap some reward for their labour. It is a mistake to expect settlers to clear green timber and to get a return in the following season. The plan adopted by the older and more experienced agriculturists is first to ringbark the land. While the timber is drying the land goes through a sweetening process; and then when cleared it is put under crop. A mistake has been made in rushing the people on to areas of green timber, and practically leaving them to fight their battle unassisted. All they have to depend on is their clearing contracts. We have had the assurance of the mover (Mr. Watts) that the prices paid for clearing have been insufficient to enable the settlers even to eke out an existence. The clearing has been so heavy and the contract prices so small that many settlers have had to leave. Since the motion was moved I have spoken to one or two men who were on the settlement, and they confirm the hon. member's statements. I think it would be better, as proposed in the amendment, to have a thorough inquiry as to whether the settlement can possibly be kept alive; whether there is any chance of its ultimately becoming successful, or of those at present settled there making a success of their blocks. Let us, as in the case of the Hamel Settlement, ascertain the true position of affairs, rather than discontinue the settlement in pursuance of this drastic motion.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson): It is rather late in the session to refer this question to a select committee. I have consulted the chairman of the Hamel Settlement Select Committee, and he informs me it is

impossible for that committee to undertake the task of enquiring into the Nangeenan Settlement. The Government have already considered the motion, and feel that they cannot give it any practical effect as framed; but we are prepared to go thus far, that we guarantee to the mover that the Minister for Lands will personally inquire into the working of the settlement, with the view to overcoming existing difficulties. I trust that neither the motion nor the amendment will be passed. The inquiry will be made as soon as time permits. It is impossible for the Minister to inquire during the session; but when in recess he will make a personal inquiry, and I hope the mover will accept this assurance, and not press the motion to a division.

MR. R. G. BURGESS (York): I said that I would support neither motion nor amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has already spoken to the amendment.

MR. BURGESS: Can I speak to the motion?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes; if the amendment is not carried.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. R. G. BURGESS: I hope the motion will not be passed, but that the Government will take it on themselves to give the Nangeenan Settlement a reasonable trial. The evidence of the mover assures me that it has not had a fair trial for any purpose whatever. It would be dangerous if a new Government not long in power condemned a settlement started only a few months ago. The Hamel settlers are not suffering any great hardships. They have contracts; and if they are not satisfied with these they can leave. Some of them are satisfied; and after what I have seen of such settlements, it is in my opinion far better for the dissatisfied men to go away, even if the Government pay them something for going; because they are only a source of annoyance to the other settlers, and they keep up a continual agitation. I hope the Government will give this settlement a reasonable trial.

MR. WATTS (in reply as mover): I should like to reply to one or two assertions made chiefly by the preceding speaker. He asks that the settlement should be given more time, so that we may judge whether it is likely to be

successful. It should be well known to the hon. member, and it is known to many other members, that some eight years ago many men took up land adjoining this settlement, and that with one exception all have abandoned it.

MR. BURGESS: That has happened in many places.

MR. WATTS: The fact that every settler who depended on the land for a living has dropped out, and that practical men who have lived there for years and who thoroughly know the Eastern Districts have dropped out, proves that the land is not suitable for the purpose intended. I have received several letters from men who are perhaps better authorities on the Eastern Districts than even the hon. member. Mr. Beard, one of the oldest settlers in the Eastern Districts, tells me that one of his sons took up land at Nangeenan about eight years ago, strongly against his father's advice. The son was born and bred in the Eastern Districts, and after having lived there all his life he went on this land and was eventually starved off. That has been the experience of every original settler, with the exception of one who is still there. He got his living by procuring mining timber and sending it to the fields; and although he has been able to exist he was in a precarious condition until within the last two years, when good seasons have enabled him to grow payable crops. During the last two years crops have been grown even on the goldfields; but I do not think anyone would therefore describe the goldfields as suitable for farming. At Nangeenan this year, the crop of Mr. Growden, the settler who has been there so long, almost perished during a spell of dry weather; and if that dry weather had continued, the whole of his crop must have perished. My reason for moving is not to discourage agricultural settlement. No member has a greater desire than I to encourage such settlement. To induce land settlement has been my aim and object ever since I came to Western Australia. I have taken as active a part as any other member in so doing; and I should be the last to condemn any settlement which had a prospect of success. But I say we should enquire whether this settlement is likely to prove successful before continuing to

squander money on such a place. The select committee on the Hamel Settlement advise that we should spend more money there in order not to lose the large sum already spent, but that it would be impossible to make the settlement a financial success. Is it not better that we should take time by the forelock in regard to the Nangeenan Settlement, and should inquire, before we spend an enormous sum on the project, whether it is likely to prove satisfactory? Mr. Leake, of Kellerberrin, one of the oldest settlers there, has written to the newspapers stating, and every farmer to whom I have spoken has assured me, that close settlement is impossible in the district. It has been asserted by the ex-Minister for Lands (Mr. Hopkins) that he intended to lease sheep to these settlers; but it is impossible for anyone to carry on sheep farming on such small areas with any chance of success, even if a fair quantity of feed could be grown on such areas. It is also asserted that additional blocks of land can be added to the allotments taken up by the settlers. But where such land is cut up and a man establishes his home on one allotment, he cannot subsequently get land adjoining that which he occupies; and it is not convenient for him to take up land several miles away. It would be as easy for a man to take up land adjoining his holding in Perth as it is for a man to take up land adjoining his holding at Nangeenan. The inquiries which ought to be made into this settlement should be made now; and if there is a prospect of the settlement being made satisfactory, I need only say that as the settlement is in my electorate I shall be glad if by any chance it can be made successful. I am sent here to do my best for this country, and I will not agree to public money being wasted where I consider it is not possible to make a success of this settlement. Members generally should give credit to any other member who is attempting to prevent a waste of public money, and at the same time endeavouring to prevent an injustice being inflicted on the settlers at Nangeenan who were induced to go there at the instance of the late Government, and have found it impossible to get a living on the land. I believe that already eight of the settlers have gone away, and the present Minister for Lands informs

me that five more have given him notice of their intention to go, making 13 out of about 18 settlers. Those who have already left, and others who have given notice to leave, have borne out the statements that I have made in submitting the motion to the House, that the settlers at Nangeenan as a body were dissatisfied. The late Minister for Lands, in replying to my remarks, read a letter from one of the settlers there which was supposed to bear out that member's contention that only two settlers in the place were dissatisfied. Already, I say, my contention has been proved, eight having left and five others having given notice to leave. It has been asserted that no injustice is being done to those settlers; but I would ask the present Minister for Lands to give consideration to the fact that settlers are there who have gone on the land without previous experience of the conditions of clearing it, and have not found it possible to get a living under the conditions offered to them. I take it that this House does not wish to impose on any class of men nor to get any class of men to do work at less than a fair remuneration, and to go on doing it until they are starved off. This House should surely have more dignity than to expect or allow such to go on. I hope the Minister for Lands will undertake to make this inquiry, and will visit the settlement personally. We have had a report placed before the House which professes to give the rainfall in that district for 17 years, as recorded in the Lands Department. I would point out the fallacious character of such reports in regard to the rainfall of that district, knowing as we do that there has not been a railway there for the whole 17 years, and that nobody has been living there all that time, so that there was no one to take the record of the rainfall. Reports of this character show the value of some departmental reports, which are trotted out for the purpose of gulling members sent to this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot make that statement.

MR. WATTS: I say that reports have been brought in by responsible officers who must have known those reports were not reliable; and there can be no reason for bringing in such reports unless it is to deceive members of this House. I

believe sincerely that some reports have been sent in which the officers knew were not correct. That is a strong statement to make, but I believe it is true. I shall be pleased to withdraw the motion on the undertaking that the Minister for Lands will make the inquiry which has been promised. But I would urge the Minister to make the inquiry as quickly as possible for the purpose of saving the waste of money which is going on, and at the same time acting in an honourable and upright manner towards the settlers on the land.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

MINES DEPARTMENT (HON. R. HASTIE, Minister).

Mines Generally (partly discussed).

Item—Clerks £5,170, increase £550:

MR. GREGORY asked the Minister to inform members what was intended to be done in regard to retrospective increases which had been promised for some years. He hoped the Minister would be able to make provision for those increases. It was his (Mr. Gregory's) intention, with the Minister's concurrence, to get a few items reduced, particularly in the Mines Water Supply. Referring generally to the salaries of clerks, the retrospective increases which were approved by him (Mr. Gregory) when Minister for Mines totalled some £200, and in no instance would the increase exceed £10 to any officer. Those increases were approved by him on account of the fact that the Public Service Commission was sitting in 1902, during which year salaries were not increased as they would have been if the Commission had not been sitting; and it was expected at the time that the work of the Commission would have been completed at an earlier date. A few increases which were actually made and paid in that year would not have been made, were it not for the purpose of giving effect to the promise made by the Government that all increases made on the recommendation of the Commission should be retrospective. The increases actually given were not given sooner

because the Government were expecting the report of the Commission to be ready at an earlier date. In other departments of the Government he understood that some increases were made and passed by the Cabinet; but in the Mines Department that course was not taken for the reason he had stated. He wrote a minute to the then Premier, explaining that the increases he was then recommending were not recommended previously because the work of the Commission was not completed. It would be for the present Minister for Mines to decide whether those increases should be given, or whether other officers should receive increases. In bringing this matter now under the notice of the Minister, his desire was that the officers in the Mines Department should be treated in the same way as officers in other departments were treated. He noticed that in the present Estimates there was an increase in the clerical staff of the Mines Department, and he did not think that increase was necessary. No increase in the clerical staff was made during the years he was in charge of the department, and he hoped the present Minister would keep down expenses in this direction, because it was desirable that all available funds should be expended in assisting public batteries and small leaseholders. He did not know whether he was quite in order in dealing with this matter of retrospective increases in regard to clerks. It certainly appertained to them to some extent. There was no other opportunity on these Estimates of dealing with the question.

THE MINISTER wished the hon. member had said the other night he intended to bring up the question of retrospective increases. Some time ago the same question was asked in this House, and he thought a motion was passed for the papers to be laid on the table. Was not that so?

MR. GREGORY did not think it was.

THE MINISTER: A request was made that papers should be laid on the table, but whether that was complied with he could not say. At that time he (the Minister) inquired into the matter, and was then informed by the Premier, on the authority of the late Premier, that the question of retrospective increases had

been settled. That being so, he did not inquire into the question of retrospective increases in making up the Mines Estimates. He saw, however, in the Lands Estimates there was a sum for retrospective increases that had been agreed to by the late Government and had been paid. He of course passed that on at once, and it was on the Estimates. He believed there was another retrospective increase on the Estimates, that being in connection with the Education Department; also a small sum of about £130. So far as he knew, those were the only two items on these Estimates dealing with retrospective increases. However, it was only fair that if officers in one department received increases, officers in other departments should also get them. He had no doubt arrangements would be made by which such increases would be paid, but it was impossible to make provision upon the Estimates at the present time. He would have been glad if the hon. member had brought the matter up when the Treasurer was present, this being essentially a Treasury matter. He (the Minister) had seen the list prepared by the hon. member. It seemed a very reasonable proposal, so far as he could see, and he had no fault to find with it. The matter would be considered. The hon. member called attention to the fact that there were increases, and said farther that whilst he was in the department there were no fresh clerical appointments. This increase was made up of payments to three juniors who were appointed during the last half of the financial year, and the sums accounted for were £120. He thought the hon. member forgot it was done before he (the Minister) came into office. He was not finding fault. He believed extra service was required. Still, that was done last year, showing that the hon. gentleman himself recognised it.

MR. GREGORY: The juniors?

THE MINISTER: Yes; but they were clerical officers, all the same. Then there had been the appointment of a new clerk in the accountant's branch, which accounted for £160, and a new clerk in the correspondence branch, accounting for £120. He had gone into this question, and was convinced it was absolutely necessary to make these changes. The work of the department had increased

very considerably. The work of these branches was getting behind to some extent, and it was considered absolutely necessary to make these appointments. Then there were increases of £10 to officers who received under £200 a year, these amounting to £40 during the last financial year, but whether it was during that period or not the increases were justified and necessary, if we acted on the principle that those receiving under £200 a year should get an increase. It was a very easy thing for one to say we should go in for economy and not make an increase here, but the great difficulty was to find out exactly the work that required to be done. No man could say that absolutely, unless he was acquainted with every detail in the case. He was informed, and he had tried to get the best possible information and had set his face against any increase where he possibly could, that these increases were absolutely necessary.

MR. GREGORY: The small increase made during the time the Minister referred to were in relation to messengers. One or two messengers were brought into the department on account of putting some of the clerical staff up a little bit higher. Although the amount spent on temporary clerical assistance last year was only £589, this year £1,000 was wanted. It appeared that the work of the department must have increased very considerably during the past few months to have necessitated this extra expense. He wished it to be distinctly understood that he had no objection to any increase of the items for the junior officers. That had to be done each year. It was impossible for the department to keep a junior officer unless one could give him a fair increase each year. If that were not done, the junior would soon leave the department, and we should have only the worst class of officers and none of the best. It was essential for increases to appear for the junior officers until they reached a certain standard; but he thought the total amount put down for clerical work was more than was necessary; and he wished to draw attention to it, and to the fact that we had this clerical staff again increasing after we had for three years been consistently reducing these items.

THE MINISTER: It was true there had been a reduction in the clerical staff during the last three years; but the expense for clerical work in connection with mining generally was less by a good bit than in the year 1899-1900. There had been in the past a great deal of economy exercised, in spite of the fact that work had much increased. He much regretted it was necessary to increase those items, but when it came to getting the work done he was unable to do anything else.

Item—Wardens: 2 at £700, 1 at £600, 4 at £500, 1 at £480—£5,378:

MR. TROY: There was an increase of £48, and he wished to know how it had been caused.

THE MINISTER: That item was for the warden at Phillips River. There was no particular allowance made in the matter, and it was held over for some time, and the officer got 10 per cent. It was done during the early part of this year.

MR. GREGORY: When might we anticipate the new regulations under the new Mining Act? Those regulations were to a great extent framed by himself (Mr. Gregory) earlier than May, and then sent to the Crown Law Department. It seemed a pity there should be any delay that could be avoided. He knew the Crown Law officer had had an enormous amount of work, but until these regulations passed the Crown Law officer it was impossible for the Minister to have them gazetted. He would like to know from the Minister what was done up to the present regarding those regulations; whether those he (Mr. Gregory) framed had met with the hon. gentleman's approval, or whether he intended to make changes, more particularly in regard to prospecting areas. One found in his experience in travelling about the fields that a large number of prospectors took enormous risks. They would start developing a small property, holding on to it for some time with a view of trying to locate a reef or to see whether it was sufficiently valuable to take up as a gold-mining lease or not. He had known a party of three or four men who had worked ground without any title month after month, and they were always in danger of some persons coming along and taking up their

property. He therefore hurried on the proclamation of a regulation dealing with prospecting areas, giving to any holder of a miner's right the right to peg out an area not exceeding 18 acres. An area under 10 acres would only cost 5s. for registration. If the area was over 10 acres and under 18, it would cost 10s. for registration, and upon that small registration fee one could hold for 18 months. For a period of six months he could hold free of all rent. The only thing necessary was that he should comply with certain labour covenants. And if, at the end of six months, one wanted more time to try and still farther develop the ground, the warden had power—it was at the discretion of the warden whether the prospecting area should be gazetted—to extend the term for a farther period of three months. One had to comply with the labour covenants all the time. We gave him that piece of ground for nine months free of rent or anything, except the small fee for the purpose of registration. Doubtless that was a considerable help to prospectors on those fields. He (Mr. Gregory) knew of many cases in the old days where men who had located a show had been compelled to give away large interests in their holdings because they were unable to find the big sum of money necessary for the purpose of paying rent and the survey fees. He proposed to deal with the question of survey fees a little later, when we came to the question of surveys; but by passing this regulation we gave the prospector the title to a piece of ground to enable him to develop it, and we also gave him the power, subject to the approval of some officer of the Mines Department, to have stone crushed off this prospecting area. That was another very great advantage to him. Still, that regulation was framed quickly, and had not, perhaps, the consideration which might have been devoted to it. Therefore he thought we might have some information from the Minister as to what it was proposed to do in the future in regard to assisting these people; when we might anticipate having the regulations out, and what course the Minister intended to pursue in relation to these matters.

THE MINISTER: The regulations referred to had been in operation for some time and had been taken advantage

of by a large number of people. They had acted well, no suggestion having been made for any alteration; but it was as yet too early to see whether any alteration should be made. It was difficult to get the regulations framed by the Crown Law officers, who had so many others to deal with; so that he (the Minister) was not in a position to say what, if any, regulations drafted by the member for Menzies would need alteration; but when they were drafted he would consider them, and with the assistance of the member for Menzies he hoped to improve them and to get them printed at the earliest possible moment. During the last three months the Crown Law officers had been particularly busy, which fact had served to prevent many of the Government's good intentions from coming into force at present.

MR. GREGORY: It was necessary to deal with these regulations as speedily as possible because one or two amendments were necessary. The last regulations were a great advance on the old regulations. Under the old regulations a lease could be protected indefinitely if one of the leaseholders went insolvent. That had been remedied. Another regulation dealt with subterranean water rights. The man who discovered gold on a water right should have the first right to peg out a lease. Should the gold be discovered by the holder of the water right or any of his workmen, he should be entitled to a preferential right to mark out a lease; but any other person discovering the gold on a water right—which might be 100 acres in extent—should have the right to peg out a lease provided he paid a fee to cover any damage to the holder of the water right.

THE MINISTER: That matter was in hands of the Crown Solicitor just now.

Item—Inspectors of Mines, £3,200 :

MR. HENSHAW: Inspectors were empowered to take proceedings against companies who might infringe the Act; but in many instances the inspectors had acknowledged that complaints made by workmen with regard to ventilation were correct, and that if the restrictions of the head of the department were removed they would, in all probability, have taken action. He (Mr. Henshaw) had seen correspondence from the workers in the

coal-mining district regarding bad ventilation, and he knew that there was restriction on the inspectors.

THE MINISTER: It was customary at one time for inspectors of mines to institute prosecutions without consulting anybody, but experience showed that some inspectors, through not being sufficiently careful in collecting evidence, had laid the department open to heavy damages in one or two instances, and inspectors were instructed to send to the head office a note of any matter on which they wished to institute a prosecution, and to give a fair idea of the evidence, so that the head office might advise them as to the best course to adopt. Probably inspectors had not in one or two instances conducted prosecutions because they could not bring forward evidence sufficient to justify officers at headquarters advising prosecutions. If there was any serious breach, the officers of the Mines Department would be the first to advise a prosecution; but it was a matter of opinion as to whether a breach was serious or not, and such matter should be left to the judgment of the inspector of mines as advised by the officers of the head office. Since he (the Minister) had been in charge of the department he had not heard any other complaint about an inspector not securing the permission of the head office to institute a prosecution.

MR. SCADDAN: At Kanowna there was a case in which several men were injured through the breaking away of ladders; and certain instructions were issued to the inspector of mines at Kanowna, but nothing farther was done. The last papers he (Mr. Scaddan) had seen were marked "pending." That was not the way to do business. When inspectors were instructed to take action they should act immediately. He (Mr. Scaddan) was at a loss to understand why no action had been taken. Another matter arose at Kalgoorlie a little time ago. He did not know whether the Kalgoorlie inspector had asked the chief inspector if action could be taken in this case. It was not the case of a corporation, but that of an individual who was injured, probably through his own fault; and the man who had evaded the Act in some little regard was soon brought to justice. On the other hand, inspectors were directed to

take action, but did not do so. It was time inspectors of mines did their duty. It was well known on the goldfields that complaints were numerous. Inspectors should be stirred up, and the Minister would do good work if he saw that the inspectors did their duty. This should be a warning to the Minister, so that no farther complaint need be made on the floor of the House.

MR. HEITMANN: Did the individual officer carry the salary?

THE MINISTER: The officers at Kalgoorlie and Cue received the highest salaries. Should one of these officers leave the service his successor would probably be appointed at a lower salary. He (the Minister) was pleased that the member for Ivanhoe (Mr. Scaddan) had brought forward matters which required to be ventilated. The Kanowna case happened over two months ago, and he (the Minister) had advised a prosecution, while the State Mining Engineer had given similar advice. He would inquire into the matter at once, and would get all the information possible for the hon. member. It was only the other day that he (the Minister) had become aware that the prosecution was not completed. With regard to Kalgoorlie, he had not received a single complaint with regard to the Kalgoorlie inspectors wishing to prosecute and not receiving permission to do so. He would inquire into the matter. He desired members to furnish him with any information; but it was better to have specific cases which could be inquired into, rather than general charges which could not be inquired into.

MR. HEITMANN: Mines were not inspected as they should be. The very fact of accidents occurring showed that the inspectors were not doing their duty. No doubt the Minister would reply that no complaints had been made; but he (Mr. Heitmann) would make a complaint that in one mine in Western Australia stopes were being worked 200 feet high.

MR. GREGORY: Where?

MR. HEITMANN: At the Fingal mine men were working with the roof 200 feet over them.

MR. GREGORY: Were they working with balloons, or how did they get up to the roof?

MR. HEITMANN: If the member for Menzies was as well acquainted with mining as he (Mr. Heitmann) was, he would know. He (Mr. Heitmann) did not wish to be ridiculed by a man who had not handled a chisel. On the Murchison the mines were not being inspected as they should be. The action of the previous Minister for Mines in removing an unsuitable officer from one district and placing him in another district was not right. If an officer was not suitable for one district and not conscientious in carrying out his duties he should leave the service. Inspectors were allowed travelling expenses; yet many inspectors were under obligations to mining managers in outback places. Although there were hotels in these places, the inspectors ate, drank, put up horses, and stayed at the mine manager's house. That was not right. If an inspector was appointed unknown to the other inspectors and the mine managers, and the report of that inspector was presented to Parliament, many of the inspectors would be qualified to receive the noble order of the "sack."

MR. GREGORY: In regard to the complaint of the member for Collie that an inspector was not allowed to bring an action against a company at Collie, from memory he (Mr. Gregory) believed the circumstances of the case were that the manager of the mine called at the department and made arrangements with the State Mining Engineer for an extra delay of a fortnight in regard to the issue of his general rules. In the interim an inspector at Collie had issued a summons which was countermanded by the State Mining Engineer.

MR. HENSHAW: That was not the case referred to.

MR. GREGORY: It was necessary on many occasions for reports of inspectors to be sent to the State Mining Engineer and for inspectors to send for legal advice, for in many cases the inspectors had issued summonses which had been dismissed, causing the department to pay heavy damages. The majority of the inspectors carried out their duties well.

MR. HEITMANN: The fact remained that many men were being killed.

MR. GREGORY: The member should hurry up the Minister with the new Mining Bill, which would be far better

than making idle statements that stopes were being worked 200 feet high. There was a report by Mr. Lander as to a special system adopted in regard to stopes in the East Fingall mine, and the same thing applied to the Fingall. A new method had been adopted. The ore was taken out from one level to the other, but the ore was not removed until the next level was reached. That system was described by Mr. Lander, and from what he (Mr. Gregory) could learn it was the safest principle to adopt. It could not be carried out in other mines, for the same facilities did not exist. It was a splendid system, and a great deal more safe than many of the old systems where there was a high stope. From reports sent to him (Mr. Gregory), no stoping as high as 200 feet was carried out; the men were working on the ordinary broken-down ore, and when they had loosened all the ore they relieved the stope and filled in mullock. That system was highly commended by the inspector for the district. The removal of officers from one district to another was carried out in consequence of the desire expressed by members that officials should be transferred from time to time. There was not a mark in the department against the officer referred to by the member for Cue. If members wished to make complaints against officers they should do so straight out and not by innuendo, and if the complaints were of a serious nature they would be investigated by the Minister. Idle statements damaged the reputations of officers. Most of the inspectors did their duty conscientiously. A short time ago there was a complaint about a report from Mr. Lightley. When the Minister introduced the last Mining Bill he stated there had been some carelessness in regard to explosives, but no action was taken. A prosecution should have followed in that case. Whoever was responsible for the carelessness should have been prosecuted. Some time ago he (Mr. Gregory) instructed a prosecution against the manager of one of the biggest mines in Western Australia. The manager went into the magazine and struck a match. That was the first time he believed the manager was in the magazine, and he was going round to show what a splendid building he had, and the first thing he did was to strike a

match in the magazine. Of all persons around a mine the manager should know the regulations. That was why he wished to know when the new Mines Regulation Bill would be brought forward. A Royal Commission had been appointed, and recommended that no persons should be employed under ground except they could speak English. Fresh regulations should be framed to meet this recommendation.

MR. HEITMANN : Did the hon. member hurry up the reports only at the election time?

MR. GREGORY : The reports were required speedily. There was one phase of the reports which had a great deal to do with the elections. Idle statements had been made as to the enormous number of alien labourers employed on the mines. That was simply an electioneering statement, and it was absolutely incorrect.

MR. HEITMANN : It was borne out by the report.

MR. GREGORY : It was stated that English workmen were flooded out of the mines.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : It was correct.

MR. GREGORY : There seemed to be one or two mines in the State where a number of alien workmen were employed. It was stated at one time that a man could not get work on the Associated unless he was an alien. From the report of the Commission it was found that on the Kalgoorlie field there were three per cent. of aliens employed amongst the mines. He (Mr. Gregory) would have thought that members would have been ashamed to have brought the matter up again. The report of the Commission showed that the whole thing was an electioneering dodge to try and get the votes of the workers.

MR. TROY : Who made these statements?

MR. GREGORY : Nearly every candidate on the fields made such statements. We desired to know when the new Mines Regulation Bill would be brought down, for fresh legislation was needed to give more protection to the workmen. It was known that several matters required amendment, and these matters were allowed to remain in abeyance until the Commission reported. In most of the mining districts, at any rate in the

Menzies district, the inspectors were eulogised by the men and the managers. In the Coolgardie district there was a most capable man, and in the Kalgoorlie district probably Mr. Lightley was rather old for the heavy work he had to perform, but he had a young and intelligent officer beside him. The two officers were doubtless careful administrators of the Mines Regulation Act. The Minister would doubtless instruct Mr. Lightley to take action with regard to mines in which anything was wrong. The Minister and the inspectors could be trusted to administer the Act. The inspectors might not succeed in pleasing some trades unionists; for it did not always follow that the report of a union secretary was true. The inspector had to use his discretion, and that discretion should be used; for inspectors, unlike some tradespeople, ought not to be afraid of any union secretary, but should carry out their duties without fear of either employers or workmen.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES agreed with the member for Menzies (Mr. Gregory) that it was undesirable and unfair for members to make general charges against inspectors of mines. But the hon. member claimed the privilege of making such charges against members of Parliament. He (the Minister) had heard many members address their constituents on the goldfields, but had not heard one of them use such language as was attributed to them by the hon. member. Those members did complain of the large number of foreigners in the different mines; but none had complained that it was impossible for a Britisher to get work on the Boulder Belt, or that foreigners were there employed in large numbers. The report of the Alien Commission showed that there was not a large increase in the direction feared, and that the recent increase had diminished. As to the remarks of the member for Cue about inspectors, the question of high stopes, especially at the Fingall mine, came up frequently. Within the last month a responsible person in Cue complained, and a report was secured which the hon. member could peruse at the Mines Department. Any suggestion he might make would be considered. The utility of the present system of stoping, and of any

system yet tried, was doubtful. The present system was still on its trial, and an improvement would be welcomed. The hon. member seemed to cast doubt on the ability of the inspector already named. This was surprising. Surely all were agreed that this inspector was sufficiently experienced. He appeared to have done his work, probably not to the satisfaction of everybody, and one could not say whether he did as much work as other inspectors. It appeared that inspectors had all the power required to protect life. Some farther regulations might be needed. If so, they would soon be made. But after the passing of the amending Bill now in another place, the general powers of the inspectors were sufficient to guard against any serious accident in the future. Many accidents had occurred at Kalgoorlie, where the mines were more closely watched and inspected than those elsewhere. The two inspectors at Kalgoorlie had by common consent worked hard and faithfully; and it was probably due to them that the number of accidents had decreased. Taking the State as a whole, we could not maintain that mining accidents were numerous.

MR. TROY: Early in the session he made a statement regarding the inspector of mines at Cue. This statement he repeated, not by way of innuendo, but as an absolute fact. While he was contesting his election, a man named Ryan was hurt at Mount Magnet; and the inspector of mines, although he knew that Ryan was hurt, did not hold any inquiry at the mine, and did not bother his head about the matter.

THE MINISTER: The inspector denied that statement.

MR. TROY: Ryan could be found, and had asked whether he could get compensation for his injuries. The ex-Minister for Mines (Mr. Gregory) could not contradict the statement that an inspector had been removed from Kalgoorlie because of complaints made by the people. In the Lennonville mine the manager employed none but Italians, and employed them for a specific purpose. The Fingall mine at Day Dawn employed few but Italians, and employed them for a specific purpose. The Peak Hill mine employed Italians for a specific purpose. To these he had made no reference at the elections.

Complaints made by the unions were borne out by the report of the Royal Commission. He also testified to the qualifications of some inspectors of mines. Inspector Greenhard in particular had come under his notice on the Murchison. This inspector did work fearlessly and well, and no complaints were laid against him; but when people found inspectors who did not do their duty, people were fully justified in complaining. The hon. member (Mr. Gregory) was everlastingly denouncing trades unionists. Queen Mary of England said that when she died the name "Calais" would be found written on her heart. Similarly trades unionism would be the death of the hon. member. The hon. member lost his temper on every possible occasion.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order!

MR. TROY: In straying from the subject he had followed the hon. member's bad example. The Minister should see that the responsible duties of inspectors of mines were properly carried out. Serious complaints had been made of one inspector at Kalgoorlie, and the Government of the day had to shift him. If a man did not do his work well, he should be dismissed. When he (Mr. Troy) had anything to say against a man, in the House or outside of it, he would say it directly, and not by way of innuendo.

MR. LYNCH: Could the vote for inspectors be increased in the event of the Inspection of Mines Bill passing in another place, and necessitating a greatly increased outlay? Inspectors were now worked fairly hard; and when it would be necessary thoroughly to inspect the stopes, they would be much overworked, or we must appoint additional inspectors. There was a less sum on the Estimates than last year for the inspection of mines, although it was hoped that the number of inspectors would be increased in view of a stringent measure passed for the inspection of machinery, and seeing that many mines were approaching the border of danger, especially in regard to stopeing.

MR. GREGORY: An additional inspector should be appointed for the East Murchison field. The present inspector there had a large area to travel over, and the same might be said of the inspector in the Cue district. In view of the progress made in that part of the country

an additional inspector should be provided.

MR. HEITMANN, to show the necessity for greater inspection, mentioned that in the Fingall mine, at No. 9 men could see a light at No. 7. That could not be a good system of stoping, and he knew the system was so dangerous that aliens were put in to shovel the stuff out of the stopes. It was a fact that white men could not get work on the Fingall mine two years ago, because aliens took their places. The amount of money put down for inspection in these estimates was not sufficient for the work to be done, and this was not fair to the workers nor to the inspector. It would pay this country from a workman's point of view to pension off some of the present inspectors of mines.

MR. SCADDAN: When speaking on the Mines Estimates generally, he made certain charges which were since borne out by the reports of inspectors, who stated that after issuing instructions for certain things to be done in certain mines, no action was taken. Not only was he confirmed in what he had said then, but he had to-day made a specific charge against the inspector of mines at Kanowna. It had been stated in connection with these estimates that the number of aliens on our mines had diminished. The report of the Commission on the alien question showed that the tendency was for the number of aliens to increase. It also showed that the large decrease in the number of aliens employed in certain mines had resulted since the agitation was commenced against the employment of aliens; and his assertion previously made on this subject was thus borne out by the report.

MR. RASON: The report of the Commission which had inquired into the alien question contained other statements besides those already quoted. The Commission's report showed that 716 aliens were employed on the mines of this State, out of a total of 17,321 miners employed. Clearly it was an exaggeration to say that the employment of aliens was great and was increasing. What could be gained by arguing that because one or two mines employed a larger proportion of aliens than other mines, therefore there was a large proportion of aliens

employed in the mines in this State? The report showed that even on the two mines referred to particularly, the proportion of aliens employed was never higher than 40·6 per cent. of the whole, and in July the proportion was only 19·8 per cent. It was better not to exaggerate in matters of this kind, because such statements only came back on those who made them. The report of the Commission showed that at the very worst only 4½ per cent. of aliens were employed on mines in this State.

At 6·30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.
At 7·30, Chair resumed.

Item: Registrars, 3 at £300, 1 at £280, 6 at £260, 9 at £240 (one at 9 months at £220), 1 at £230, 1 at £220, 1 at £200—£6,622:

MR. HENSHAW: In connection with the duties of registrars in the Collie district it was the custom, or had been, to post up the labour conditions getting on to the middle of the month. The notice said "The following labour conditions are to be observed in the current month." The unfortunate part was that they had not been posted up until perhaps the 12th of the month. This had been remedied during the last month or two. There was one aspect of the question he would like to draw the Minister's attention to. These labour conditions were fixed by what was known as a special license under the Mineral Lands Act. It would do much good if these conditions were raised a bit, and considerably more men employed on the mines. When the Act was passed, labour conditions were laid down for so many men to the acre. Then there was a provision for a special license. Unfortunately for Collie the special license had become the general license. He did not desire to be harsh on the owners and raise the conditions with a sudden jump, but the Mines Department ought to bring them up until they approximated somewhat to the general conditions fixed in the Mining Act.

THE MINISTER: The labour conditions fixed month by month only applied to the leases for coal. It was true there was some laxity a month or two ago; but the circumstances which could not then very well be avoided and which necessitated what was referred to, had passed

away. The number of men to be employed had been based on the number required to supply a fair amount of coal, and the quantity which the inspector of mines believed would be in demand. Unfortunately, the quantity had been very low in the past. He (the Minister) would not like to fix anything definite on the matter. An investigation was being made by Dr. Jack, and if that gentleman made any recommendations conducive to an increase in the amount of coal for consumption, those recommendations would be carried out. Every reason he (the Minister) could possibly use for increasing the labour conditions he would be only too glad to give effect to, being assured that it would be to the interest not only of the Colliery but of the State as a whole to have as much coal produced as was required.

MR. KEYSER: There was an increase in this item of £187, and he would like to know the reason.

THE MINISTER explained that an additional registrar was required, and the increase was due to the appointment of such an officer to one of the most promising districts, Black Range, and not to increases of salaries.

MR. KEYSER: Was one to understand from the Minister that none of the permanent officers had had their salaries increased?

THE MINISTER: Only those whose salaries were under £200.

MR. TROY thought the appointment of a registrar at Black Range justified. He would like to ask if the officer appointed at Lennonville was receiving any salary for his services. Some correspondence had taken place on the matter. This officer was carrying on the duties of registrar in that locality, and there was no reason why he should do this work for nothing.

THE MINISTER: The question was, he thought, brought forward before he took office. According to his recollection the work was not very great, and not sufficient to justify the department in appointing an officer specially as mining registrar. The postmaster was appointed, and was paid a certain sum of money. The arrangement was that an officer should not receive money direct from two or three different departments, but that one department should pay a man's

salary and the other department for which he did any work should pay the department to which the officer belonged a certain amount of money; and we expected the Federal authorities to give the man something on account of the extra work done.

MR. GREGORY: There was a registrar within eight miles of this officer.

MR. TROY: Some means should be adopted by which this man should be paid for the work he did.

THE MINISTER: Several of our officers also worked for the Federal Government. We stipulated that the Federal Government should not pay them without our knowledge. If they were not employed full time in doing our work, we gave them a considerable portion but not the whole of the money the Federal Government paid. This was a case where we were paying a certain sum to the Federal Government for the use of that officer.

MR. GREGORY: The same thing was done at Hall's Creek.

Mining Schools (subdivision 2, salaries), £3,080:

MR. TROY: Was it the intention of the Mines Department to establish a branch of the School of Mines on the Murchison? This had long been asked for; and considering the progress the field was making, the request should be granted? The people in the Murchison district should have equal opportunity to gain knowledge with the people at Kalgoorlie.

THE MINISTER: Last year technical classes were started at Cue with a view to giving preparatory instruction, and to see if there would be sufficient demand to justify the establishment of a branch school of mines. It was intended to extend these classes, and to give every assistance to the students on the Murchison to pass the preliminary examinations of the school of mines.

MR. GREGORY: The policy of having the principal School of Mines at Kalgoorlie under the Mines Department, and technical schools in other mining districts where mining subjects were taught, should be continued; but some action should be taken in regard to Cue. It was desirable to give some mining instruction on the Murchison, and he hoped it would not be

long before an up-to-date school of mines was established at Cue. People in each mining centre should have opportunity to gain more mining knowledge than it was possible to gain in the past. We might soon have some spare lecturers from the School of Mines who would travel over the fields giving lectures; and municipalities might be asked to have mineral exhibits in public halls and reading rooms to give people a little knowledge of minerals. Often a man passed over mineral country which, with a little technical knowledge on his part, might have been of great benefit to him.

THE MINISTER: The suggestions of the member for Menzies would certainly be considered; but there was a considerable increase for the school of mines on the Estimates already, and it was enough for this year. We should not confine this instruction to one portion of the gold-fields, but should endeavour to have lectures in the various districts.

MR. HORAN strongly supported the suggestion of the member for Menzies. In the Eastern States lecturers travelled round mining centres, and there were small cabinets of mineral exhibits in the different mining centres.

THE MINISTER: The item "Geologist" in this subdivision should read "Lecturer in Geology."

MR. GREGORY: When bringing forward future Estimates, provision might be made to have travelling lecturers to impart information in mining camps.

State Batteries (subdivision 4), £33,430:

MR. SCADDAN: The expenditure last year on temporary labour was £33,525. This year it was estimated to be £32,600, almost £1,000 less. As it was the intention of the Government to proceed with the erection of State batteries, the estimate would be considerably under the actual expenditure.

MR. GREGORY: The estimate was considerably under the mark. He (Mr. Gregory) had noticed in the past the necessity for increasing the estimate supplied by the head of the department. Probably the Minister would have to use Form J to get farther funds to carry on the work.

THE MINISTER: The figures were curious, but having gone into the item

as closely as possible he believed the vote would not be extended.

Steam Boilers Act (subdivision 5), £3,886:

Item—Clerks (five), £700.

MR. GREGORY: In this department we found increases in the clerical staff, but no increases among the inspectors; and he intended to move to reduce the item "clerks" with a view to increase the item "inspectors." The State batteries staff dealt with an expenditure of £60,000, so that members would see the Steam Boilers department staff was well manned. There was no department in Western Australia where the work was kept more up-to-date; but he (Mr. Gregory) was afraid the Chief Inspector went in too much for red-tape, and that there was more clerical work than was necessary. There was an increase in the item. He knew how this staff was worked. On many occasions he (Mr. Gregory) had come out of his office at 10 o'clock and half-past 10 o'clock at night when the officers were working; still there was no necessity for the increase. The Minister for Mines would tell the Committee that when the Machinery Bill passed, there would be a good deal of extra work. Perhaps there would, but the work could be more simplified than had been the case in the past. There were four inspectors in this department receiving £280 each. He (Mr. Gregory) made a definite promise to those inspectors that they should have an increase this year. Mr. Latimer in the Malcolm district, and Mr. Jones in the Cue district, were highly qualified and well trained men, whose opinions had been spoken of well by mining engineers on the fields. Unless we could give these officers an increase, we would not be able to keep them in the service. Members might think £280 a year a fair salary, but these officers were not allowed to stay in one township, but were continually travelling from one district to another.

MR. HENSHAW: They were allowed travelling expenses.

MR. GREGORY: The travelling expenses amounted to 13s. a day and a 20 per cent. advance, which would make 12s. 6d. a day. That only paid for a

man's meals and bed on the goldfields. There were clerical officers receiving £280, £300 and even £400 a year. The inspectors were specialists and particularly good men. He moved an amendment:

That the item be reduced by £100.

Later on he would move that the item "Inspector of boilers" be increased by at least £50. In addition to an increase of £311 in the clerical staff of this department, the temporary staff was increased by £60.

MR. HEITMANN: Although not aware whether the increases were necessary, he would support them on the understanding that an amendment were moved to increase the salaries of the inspectors of machinery.

THE CHAIRMAN: A member could not move to increase an item.

MR. GREGORY: Would it not be possible to increase an item so long as the total vote was not increased.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Standing Orders provided that an item could not be increased.

MR. GREGORY: The Minister, having saved £100 on this item, could make provision for increases to the inspectors of boilers.

MR. KEYSER: Did the member for Menzies wish to dispense with a member of the staff in this department?

MR. GREGORY: No.

THE MINISTER: The member for Menzies had told the Committee that he had left his office at 9 and 10 o'clock at night when officers in this department were working. He (the Minister) could go farther and assure members that he had often left his office up till 11 o'clock at night when these officers were working. That was one of the best reasons why an increase should be granted. This was one of the best equipped departments; and that being so, it was only fair to allow of some assistance being given. The increase was a little less than £200.

MR. GREGORY: No; £311.

THE MINISTER: Last year £530 was voted, and this year there was an addition of £200 on the Estimates. That was accounted for by one additional clerk in the head office. It was needless to say that the increase was absolutely

necessary. Why should officers be required to work 12 or 14 hours per day? And the work was increasing. From inquiries made, the officers of this department worked longer hours than any other employees of the State.

MR. TROY: Having heard that these officers had to work very long hours, he would not be a party to decreasing the item. He also intended to vote against any increase to the goldfields inspectors of boilers. Two of the inspectors had not to pay rent, for they were provided with quarters free, and they received 12s. 6d. a day travelling expenses. Members must know that three meals a day and a bed cost 10s. on the goldfields, therefore the inspectors receiving 12s. 6d. a day received half a crown above the cost of living. The Committee were inclined to deal too generously with some officers and too niggardly with others.

MR. GREGORY: It was hardly fair for the Minister to quote the amount voted last year. The proper way to look at the matter was to examine the amount expended in administration, which was £485 when £530 was voted. There were specialists in this department who had been promised increases, and these officers were to be refused increases because of a small advance in the clerical office. The statement that the inspectors received quarters free was inaccurate. We did not want the cost of departments to be continually mounting up. Let the Minister compare the cost of this department with the cost of the State batteries department, which was undermanned. The sum of £32,500 was to be devoted to the batteries department and a sum of £25,000 for temporary labour. Probably there would be a farther sum on the Loan Estimates for the erection of batteries, and £27,000 for supplies and maintenance, making over £100,000 to watch and control some 25 batteries. There was a large amount of work if the batteries were to be looked after. He would not have been surprised if there had been an increase in the working of this department.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	14
Noes	...	...	...	21

Majority against ... 7

AYES.
 Mr. Brown
 Mr. Burgess
 Mr. Carson
 Mr. Diamond
 Mr. Gregory
 Mr. Hardwick
 Mr. Hayward
 Mr. Isdell
 Mr. Layman
 Mr. McLarty
 Mr. S. F. Moore
 Mr. Rason
 Mr. Frank Wilson
 Mr. Gordon (Teller).

NOES.
 Mr. Angwin
 Mr. Bolton
 Mr. Butcher
 Mr. Daglish
 Mr. Hastie
 Mr. Heitmann
 Mr. Henshaw
 Mr. Holman
 Mr. Horan
 Mr. Johnson
 Mr. Keyser
 Mr. Lynch
 Mr. Needham
 Mr. Nelson
 Mr. Scaddan
 Mr. Taylor
 Mr. Troy
 Mr. Watts
 Mr. A. J. Wilson
 Mr. F. F. Wilson
 Mr. Gull (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Item—Inspectors of boilers, four at £280:

MR. LYNCH: For at least one of these inspectors, referred to by the member for Menzies, the salary was inadequate. The officer was well qualified for a better position in private employment. The State should reward a good man with a fair salary. That principle was regarded in assessing the value of the services of wardens and inspectors of mines, where there was a marked differentiation of salaries. This officer was a specialist in every way—an excellent boiler inspector, an excellent inspector of machinery, and an expert engine-driver. Recently, when called on for a report on a catastrophe at the Great Boulder, his report did credit to himself and to the department.

THE MINISTER explained that at least two of these officers should be paid at a higher rate; but this was impossible owing to the decision that salaries exceeding £200 should not be increased. The two officers referred to were expert engineers; their good qualities were appreciated by many large mining companies; and one of them could have increased his income by accepting private employment. We should probably be able to increase their remuneration.

MR. SCADDAN: The Blue Book described these officers as "four inspectors at £326."

THE MINISTER: The difference represented goldfields allowances.

MR. GREGORY understood that there were three of these officers. Had one received an increase while the others were passed over? One of them was a highly intelligent and efficient officer;

but unlike the others, he was not a specialist, and had not the knowledge which he would need if the Inspection of Machinery Bill passed.

THE MINISTER: So far as he could ascertain, there had been no increase.

MR. FRANK WILSON: The Committee were drifting into the old fault of valuing the officer instead of the office. In the public service, as in private employment, we should value the work done, and should not increase one inspector's salary because he was a man of special ability, while his colleagues, though not so able, had ability enough to do the work required. All experienced persons knew that for inspecting boilers and machinery specialists were needed, and to offer such an inspector an ordinary miner's income of £4 or £4 10s. a week was absurd. The Minister should see that his officers were properly remunerated. One could not congratulate the Minister, if he was in earnest, on his statement that his predecessor was responsible for the Mines Department officials working till ten at night, and that he (the Minister) was responsible for working them till 11. If that were true, the Minister was guilty of sweating. It was surprising to hear a man of the Minister's well-known tendencies boasting of sweating his clerks.

THE CHAIRMAN: 'The hon. member must confine himself to "Inspectors of boilers."

MR. FRANK WILSON: Diminish the number of men, and pay better wages. Get rid of some of the dead-heads, and let others do proper work. It was said one inspector had done some excellent special service at an inquiry. If so, pay him specially. If the State were in danger of losing his service, it would be a disgrace to the Minister if such service was lost. The number of public servants in the departments could be reduced, and better service secured from those who remained.

MR. TROY, without denying that good work was done by these officers, and that they were well qualified, moved an amendment:

That the item be reduced by £18.

MR. KEYSER: Was this £18 an increase?

THE MINISTER: Not so far as he was aware.

MR. HEITMANN was surprised at the amendment. It was well known that these officers had an enormous amount of work to do, and the men appointed were the best obtainable at the time. One inspector that he knew was greatly dissatisfied with the amount of payment. Such men should receive at least six pounds a week.

MR. GREGORY: The amendment was quite consistent with most of the remarks made by the mover (Mr. Troy) in connection with this discussion. A goldfields member was usually expected to try to get the most efficient men as inspectors, especially in view of the Bill just passed for insuring more complete inspection of machinery; and how could this be expected if the item was to be reduced in amount? Until lately the inspector in the Cue district had to pay £1 per week rent until the department could build a house for him. These officers well deserved a higher salary.

Mines Water Supply (subdivision 6, salaries), £6,130.

Item—Wages, £4,900:

MR. GREGORY: The wages here provided were in connection with water supply generally on the goldfields, and we were asked to pass no less than £15,130 for wages, whereas last year the work was done for £12,608, being less by £2,422 than the amount now asked for. Why was this big increase required? A larger amount of work was done last year than was likely to be done this year.

THE MINISTER: If there was a probability of no more work being done this year than was done last year, he would not have asked for an increase in the vote; but he knew that a larger amount of work would be done this year. Last year the department found water for a good number of new places, and the men engaged were so busy that they spent little or no time in providing dams; their first object being to find water as far as possible within a convenient distance, in as many localities as possible. Now the department had to tackle the repairing and cleaning of the various water catchments, and this work would require a considerable sum of money. Within the last twelve months there had been on the Eastern Goldfields at least

six or seven new localities, and many of them could not get the ordinary cheap water supply by boring, but must have a dam built.

MR. GREGORY: This was not for construction, but for wages.

THE MINISTER: This was not altogether for construction; but he had explained the reason why it would cost more for labour in maintenance, that the repairing had been neglected for the last eighteen months. This year the department wanted to see that all the water supplies were put into good order.

MR. LYNCH regretted there was not a more liberal provision for this necessary work. He did not know a more worthy object than that of supplying the inland areas on the goldfields with water.

MR. GREGORY: This vote was only for wages, not for the purpose just mentioned. This amount was not for construction at all. It was not for putting down wells or boring, but was simply increase in wages generally for water supply. What he complained of was that this large sum of money was not for any new work, but only for wages to carry on ordinary work, practically upkeep. For this enormously large increase in wages he could not see any reason; therefore he moved an amendment:

That the item be reduced by £700.

As an instance showing how a saving in wages might be effected, he found during his administration of the department that some men remained on wages at certain dams long after the dams were dry.

THE MINISTER: There would be increased expenditure in opening up new water catchments, and that would mean a considerable augmentation in the wages of those looking after them. It was absolutely necessary to repair a number of catchments. On the first part of the vote there was an increase of £900. The hon. member assumed that what had been done last year was the high-water mark by which to judge things, and would not take his (the Minister's) assurance that it was necessary to provide for new dams and new water places which the Government intended to erect, and also places which they wanted to repair. If members would turn to the Revenue Estimates they would see we expected a considerable increase, and in

order to get that we must appoint caretakers. It was absolutely necessary to have this expenditure, if we wished to keep up our water supply on the goldfields to the present comparatively high rate.

MR. FRANK WILSON : Where were the new dams to come from ?

THE MINISTER : The vote on the next page would provide for some, but not all.

MR. TROY : There was necessity for supplying the residents on the goldfields with water. This amount was rather high, and unless the Minister could show that it was going to be spent for the best purposes, he would consider whether he should vote for or against it.

MR. GREGORY : There was a large increase for salaries of caretakers, and we were told there were going to be some new public works. The Minister might take the Committee into his confidence in regard to what he proposed to do. A lot of work had been done in the past in various places, and he was sure the hon. gentleman intended to do a great deal in the future ; but there was nothing on the Estimates to show that those new works were going to be constructed ; nothing but the £7,000, and that would not go far to open up resources. We were asked to grant the Minister £15,130 for wages.

MR. FRANK WILSON : £7,000 was for the purchase of plant.

MR. GREGORY : Not necessarily so ; it was for mining development generally, and the Minister might be able to utilise the money as he thought fit. The Minister should make some announcement in regard to what was proposed to be done if possible. He understood from the Minister that a sum of money would be provided on the Loan Estimates for the purpose of getting water supplies. There were many demands in regard to water supply, and there was no worse district in the whole of Western Australia than the one which he (Mr. Gregory) represented. A good deal of work would be required in that district. The district which the hon. gentleman himself represented also required the money for small or large dams or other methods of water supply. There were other districts also, including Leonora, where it was necessary to spend large sums. The Minister asked us to pass £15,000 odd in wages

for upkeep ; this being an increase of £2,000 on what was wanted in the past. If the Minister could assure us that other works would be put in hand which would require an extra amount for caretakers, he (Mr. Gregory) would withdraw his objection.

THE MINISTER was sorry he was not in a position to give the hon. member detailed information about this increase. The Revenue Estimates, page 9, showed that we expected to get altogether from water supply £12,700 ; this being an increase of £2,700 on the estimate of last year, which was about £400 more than the actual income last year. That was to a large extent because the Government believed they would be able to get a very considerable increase from water supply. We must provide on Loan Estimates a very considerable sum for the supply of water to various places. It would not do to stand still and allow any place to practically close down because of the want of water. He was not in a position to give exact details as to the different dams required to be built.

MR. GREGORY : The increase in revenue was only £2,700, and the increase in cost of administration £2,400.

THE MINISTER : The increase was £900 in this division.

MR. GREGORY : We must take the two together.

THE MINISTER : This was all for administration, and the other was not. He thought the hon. member would see it was absolutely necessary to have caretakers in the various places where we provided water, and so increase our expenditure, but we got more than a corresponding amount in revenue.

MR. FRANK WILSON : No member would object to money wisely spent on our goldfields, to provide water in any promising centre where people were residing and working that industry ; but the member for Menzies was perfectly in order in asking for information which would be satisfactory to the Committee. If we could show that the additional expenditure was only £2,400 and the additional revenue to be derived from that expenditure would be £2,700, we should all be satisfied. He doubted very much whether that was the true explanation, but at the same time he was quite willing to take the Minister's word for it.

It would be well to have all this information at one's fingers' ends when the Estimates came up. These matters would receive the attention of all politicians, and the member for Menzies was bound to challenge the Minister on them.

Amendment put and negatived.

Contingencies Generally (subdivision 7), £19,250.

Item—Surveys on goldfields, £400 :

MR. GREGORY wished to draw the attention of the Minister to a statement made recently at a conference in Kalgoorlie that there had been some considerable delay in regard to the surveys on the goldfields. He would like the Minister to make a note of the matter, because if there had been delay it should be brought under his notice. He had also heard statements with regard to the cost of surveys. Under the regulations framed some time ago, very considerable reductions were made, but the reductions apparently had not been sufficient to satisfy the ordinary applicant. What used to cost about £5 cost now £3 10s.; and that which used to cost £7 10s. now cost £5 10s. He did not think that farther reductions could be made under the present system. He would like the Minister to consider whether it would be wise that we should carry on a system of surveys similar to that in the Lands Department, by having salaried officers, or was it intended to continue the old system which had been in vogue so many years?

THE MINISTER was not aware there was complaint regarding surveys. It was the first time the matter had been brought to his attention. There had been a considerable increase in the number of mine holdings taken up, and a great paucity of officers, so possibly there had been considerable delay. He would make inquiry into the case and see if surveys could be expedited. In regard to the reduction in charges he had not heard any complaint. He agreed that the reduction was considerable, and he thought we should wait for some time to see how the present system worked before we made another change.

Item—Reward for discovery of gold at Black Range, £300 :

MR. GREGORY: How did the Minister propose to distribute this money?

THE MINISTER: It would be divided amongst the discoverers. When the sum was voted, steps would be taken to discover the people responsible for finding the field.

MR. TROY congratulated the Government on making this grant.

MR. GREGORY: The present Government were not responsible for it.

MR. TROY: Then the member for Menzies was entitled to the credit. By the efforts of the discoverers of Black Range, other mining centres had been prospected in the neighbourhood.

Item—Purchase of 5,000 copies of *W.A. Mining Industry*, £650 :

MR. SCADDAN: It was almost tantamount to extravagance to spend this money. Having an advance copy of this publication, he found it well printed and thought it would compare favourably with the Christmas number of the *Western Mail*, but the latter would give more information. This *W.A. Mining Industry* was a re-hash of the reports of the Mines Department and the Lands Department. There were some beautiful photographs. Mining magnates would be interested in photographs of Perth and scenery on the coast. We should not spend £650 in a foreign State. The money could be better spent in the interests of mining. He moved :

That the item be struck out.

MR. TROY: Had this money been paid?

THE MINISTER: Members should not strike the item out. If he were sure that the expenditure was not for the development of the mining industry, the item would not be on the Estimates; but his predecessors thought the publication would assist the industry. It was always argued that we should advertise our resources, and it was necessary to send some authoritative publication to London to give the people there a true account of our goldfields. It was with that idea that the previous Ministry subsidised the publication. He believed the publication would do good, but if the proposition had been put before him lately he might have come to another decision in regard to it.

MR. GREGORY: Not having a copy of the publication, he was not in a position to judge whether we would get our money's worth or not; but the arrangements in regard to the publication were made four years ago, before he (Mr. Gregory) took control of the department. A deposit of £100 had been made, and it was now for the Minister for Mines to make the final payment; but he (Mr. Gregory) had been able to make some better arrangements than previously existed. A draft of the publication led him to believe that it would be a good advertisement for the State.

MR. SCADDAN: It was not better than the *Christmas Mail*.

MR. GREGORY: The hon. member was not an excellent judge in regard to such matters. The publication was not filled up with photographs of Ministers and with matters of no assistance to the industry. It was published by the *Australian Mining Standard*, the best mining journal in Australia, and the articles they had taken special means to secure, particularly those dealing with Kalgoorlie, would be interesting to people who might invest money in the State. The publication contained a great fund of information. He hoped the House would approve of the expenditure.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mining Schools (Contingencies, subdivision 8), £1,740:

MR. FRANK WILSON: Why did this subdivision appear on the previous page and again here? It was the same right through the Estimates.

THE MINISTER: On one page salaries were given, and on the other page contingencies appeared. This was the usual custom, and was usually found the more convenient system.

MR. F. WILSON: There was no reason why salaries and contingencies should not appear under the one heading, so that members could see the total cost of each branch of the department at once.

Purchase of Copper Ore at Phillips River (Contingencies, subdivision 9) £74,650:

MR. RASON: As it was intended to move an amendment to the heading of

this subdivision, it would give an opportunity of discussing the items of the subdivision generally. The words "purchase of" under existing circumstances were a mistake. The correct heading should be, "Advances against copper ore at Phillips River."

THE MINISTER: No.

MR. RASON: This did not represent the purchase of copper ore, but advances against ore brought to the smelter, as was originally intended. We showed an expenditure under this item of £74,650; and the Revenue Estimates showed that the revenue from this smelter would be £75,000. We actually swelled the items of revenue and expenditure by £149,650 to show a profit of £350. That profit might never occur. There might be a loss. On the other hand, there might be a larger margin of profit; but the principle was wrong, and could be avoided. It would go forth that the Estimates showed a deficit of £62,721. Every member wished to avoid that, if it could be done; and it seemed to him (Mr. Rason) that we could go a long way to avoid it on this subdivision alone. Any one understanding the question of smelting admitted that with £25,000 it would be easily possible to run the smelter to the best advantage of all concerned. One expert in the House on this particular subject said that he would be glad, if given a working capital of £25,000, to run the smelter on the best possible lines. An item of expenditure of £12,150 last year under this heading seemed to have gone by the board altogether in the minds of the Government; but the greater part was expended in the purchase of copper ore. There was an asset of over £11,000 in hand. If to that we added another £20,000, did any one say that with £31,000 we could not run a smelting business at Phillips River, or anywhere else? That was possible under the existing law, for the Audit Act of last year permitted a suspense account to be opened, to conduct a business of this kind. If that were done, we could show the result of the working of the suspense account. If there was a small profit it would be brought to credit, or if there was a small loss it would be placed to debit. Members would see exactly the result of running the business, having a proper

balance-sheet. In other words we would see the transaction as a commercial man would desire to see it. The Minister for Mines seemed to be in doubt as to whether the Audit Act would allow him to do this. If the Minister would refer to the sections of the Audit Act to which attention was called the other day, any doubt in his mind must disappear. There could be no question as to the power, and surely no question as to the desirability. By doing what he (Mr. Rason) proposed, to reduce the item very considerably, it would go a long way towards removing the deficit which it was desirable should be removed because it was only an apparent one; there was not the slightest necessity for it to appear, and it would not interfere with the working of the smelters. He (Mr. Rason) would be glad to do all he could to encourage the working of the smelters, and given a sufficient capital to work on, that was enough. He moved an amendment:

That the words "purchase of" be struck out, and "advances against" be inserted in lieu.

THE CHAIRMAN: The same opportunity would have been given to discuss this matter on the first item; maintaining at the same time the practice which had always been followed after a general discussion. There would then be no confusion of the item which was being considered by the Committee.

THE MINISTER: The alteration would not make very much difference, yet the term "purchase of" was the proper one. The Government had been buying copper at £50 a ton. Under certain conditions the ore was bought outright, and if the price of copper rose above the amount at which it was purchased, the people whom the Government bought from would receive something more. All calculations had been made on a £50 basis. If the ore was sold for £50 a ton after all expenses were paid, the persons from whom the ore was obtained would be entitled to nothing. The fairest way was to say that the ore had been bought; it was the ordinary term used everywhere. The member for Guildford proposed that the Committee should reduce the item, which was for £57,000 odd, and he said that by doing that we would take away a part of

the deficit; but the member did not explain how that would be done. The member proposed that the Committee should reduce the item considerably and then also reduce the amount of the income that was shown on the Estimates to be derived from the smelter. If the two amounts were equal, that would in no way reduce the deficit. There would be no advantage in following the lines proposed, for as much money would be required one way as the other. It might be that the Government were asking for more money than they would require; but it was safe to ask for the amount set down, and the Government felt that that amount would be recouped before the end of the financial year. The smelter started in an experimental way at first, and had produced nearly £7,000 worth of copper. It was getting on very well, and there was a large amount of copper in hand. He believed development was going ahead, and development would be able to go ahead if we at an early date were able to buy ore right out. It had been said that we could ask for a small sum of money which could be placed to a suspense account. That would not relieve the present position. It would unduly swell one side of the estimate, and instead of decreasing the deficit would increase it. In New Zealand there was a special Coal Mines Act, which gave power to raise money by debentures, and in this way the Government dealt with the coal. If this money came from loan the matter would be easily managed; but the Government would require the money before the end of the year. We would have fully as much money as was spent last year. This was the best way to deal with the estimate. The member for Guildford said that £11,000 worth of ore was provided for last year, giving the idea that the whole amount had been wiped away. On our present basis there would be the furnace as a going concern, and necessarily there would be a large amount of ore on hand that could, at the least, be valued at £14,000 more than the amount voted last year, so that we would not lose. In addition to the £75,000, there would be £14,000, which would make £89,000 as an asset against the expenditure. Last year the hon. member (Mr. Gregory) brought forward the estimate in the ordinary way, and

this year the same system had been followed. If he (the Minister) had been able by the Audit Act to make an alteration, that alteration would have been carried out.

MR. GREGORY: It was very hard indeed to follow the Minister, for he told the Committee in the first place that the method adopted was the correct one, and then he said if it had not been for the Audit Act he would have treated the subject differently. It did not matter much if the term "purchase of ore" was left in, but by the alteration it would be made clear to the public what was desired to be done. The term "purchase of ore" was a misnomer, because the object was to make advances on copper. The Government made advances, less 10 per cent. of the value of the ore, up to £50 per ton. No matter what the value of the copper was—it was £57 per ton when advances were started, and now it was £64—the Government only made advances up to £50 a ton. This was according to the regulations. The Government started last year, and from June, 1903, to the end of the year advances were made on 3,000 odd tons of ore at £50 a ton, amounting to £11,398, but the total value of the ore was between £26,000 and £28,000. Since the 1st January, or during this year, more ore had been taken to the smelter, but the Government had made no advances. The banks had been assisting the people, so that there must be a large accumulation of ore at Phillips River. The Minister did not tell the Committee the quantity of ore there was at the smelter, and what its value was. If the Minister did not know this, how could he give the Committee an estimate? Not long ago there was a rich discovery of silver, and the Government treated the gold contents as well; therefore a good deal more than £75,000 would be required for carrying out the scheme during the year. If the ore was as rich as in the early days of the field, and as much ore was brought to the smelter to be treated as previously, then the amount would not be sufficient. What would the Minister do if £75,000 was expended? If there were a trading account, the money need not go near the Treasury. If in addition to the £11,000 worth of ore now on hand there

were a working capital of £26,000 or £27,000, that could be placed to the credit of the Minister's suspense account, and utilised again and again by the department. At the end of the year an audit could be made, and any profit paid into the Treasury, or any loss recouped therefrom. Thus the Estimates would not be unduly swollen; for nothing would appear therein but the balance-sheet. It might be objected that this had not been done with the State batteries; but only the cost of wages and maintenance was shown for these on the Estimates, which did not show the value of the gold won. He (Mr. Gregory) had arranged with the Treasury that the gold won by the assay plants should go to a suspense account in the Mines Department; and thus the department paid the owners of the gold without a special vote from the Treasury. If the Crown Law Department said the Audit Act would not permit of this, pass a short Bill to amend the Act. That was his intention when Minister. We should have a trading account for the State hotel also, as well as for State batteries. The receipts and expenditure this year showed increases of nearly £150,000. Outsiders must think we were very extravagant, and very heavily taxed.

THE PREMIER admitted that much could be said in favour of treating such branches as trading concerns; but in preparing these Estimates he followed a beaten track. Past Estimates had not contained a single balance-sheet of a trading concern, and he had not attempted to supply one. It was impossible at this date to change such an item. Members must recollect that any alterations in these items for the purchase of ore at Phillips River would necessitate corresponding alterations in the Estimates of revenue which were governed by these Estimates of expenditure. If the preceding speaker's suggestion were adopted, we must show in the Revenue Estimates simply the balance to be handed to the Treasury, instead of showing £75,000 as the total of the estimated receipts. An alteration of these items would not mean a saving of expenditure, or a reduction of the difference between our total estimated revenue and expenditure: it would mean a corresponding alteration in the Estimates of revenue already submitted.

MR. RASON: First as to the power under the Audit Act, Section 55 of the Act of last session provided that the Governor might direct that any special vote by Parliament should be carried to the credit of a suspense account, into and from which all moneys receivable and payable in connection with the undertaking should be paid and withdrawn; that every such account should be operated on by such Minister as the Governor might, direct; that the sums standing to its credit should be paid into the consolidated revenue as the Auditor General should direct; that every such account should be audited at least half-yearly; and that an annual return showing such suspense accounts and the reasons therefor should be laid before both Houses. The Minister gave an extraordinary reason for his statement that the Government were actually buying copper ore and not advancing against it. He said the Government bought ore at the rate of £50 a ton, and that if it realised more than that the difference was returned to the man from whom it was bought. That was a peculiar method of buying an article. The Minister did not say what would happen if the ore realised less than £50.

THE MINISTER: The Government would lose.

MR. RASON: Then the arrangement should be altered forthwith. It was "heads I win; tails you lose." Manifestly this was an advance; had been so treated in the past, and must be in the future. The Minister contended that as he must advance £75,000 or more against copper, he must have £75,000 to do it with. Would a business man with a turnover of two millions a year require a capital of two millions? Surely it would not take a year, in every transaction, to realise on the copper. It would be frequently turned over. In reducing the expenditure by £50,000 it would be necessary to reduce the revenue; and no one would contend that by striking out the figures an ultimate saving would be effected. The reduction would, however, reduce the deficit; because if members perceived that our revenue would fall short of the estimate by £75,000, they would effect reductions which would ultimately wipe out the anticipated deficit. Surely that idea was present in the minds

of many members when first we received these Estimates, that they would spare no effort to make reductions to wipe out the deficit. But this desire was not recently manifested. To-day, when legitimate reductions of £100 and £700 could have been effected, they were prevented; and so far, no reduction had been made. It was proved that this item was not for purchasing copper, but for making advances against copper. It was admitted that the business should be treated as a trading concern. If so, an available capital of £25,000 or £30,000 was ample.

Amendment put and negatived.

Item—Purchase of ore, £30,000 :

MR. GREGORY: When Minister for Mines, he intended to try to get this business treated as a trading concern; and the present Minister must admit that this would have been an improvement. The Treasurer also would prefer the suggestion if he understood the trouble which would result from using Form J. He (Mr. Gregory) moved an amendment—

That the item be reduced by £15,000.

He would move subsequent reductions in other items so as to give the business a working capital of about £36,000. An annual balance-sheet would clearly show how the enterprise worked. A considerable sum must have been expended since the 30th June. The Minister should tell us what sum he would need in order to carry on the business for the remainder of the year as a trading concern.

MR. FRANK WILSON: By reducing an item of expenditure on one hand and an item of revenue on the other hand by an equal amount, we got the same result; but the Minister overlooked the fact that he had a considerable reserve of £12,000 worth of ore on hand, and that he could reduce the deficit to that extent. The revenue would really amount to £87,150. The Minister anticipated expending £30,000 on purchase of ore, £37,000 on smelting costs, and £1,000 for incidentals; making a total of £68,000. This gave a credit balance of £19,150; but against this there was to be an expenditure from capital account of £6,650 on the erection of a smelter. This was not a just charge to revenue, but at the same time it was the only system the Government had of keeping these accounts at present. Even

deducting this charge, there would be a balance of £12,500, which might go to reducing the deficit. If the ore was purchased as the Minister mentioned, at £50 per ton, and should the present market value of copper be maintained, the smelter was going to make a huge profit.

MR. GREGORY: Not under the regulations.

MR. FRANK WILSON: No; because any proceeds above the £50 advanced would be returned to the owner of the ore. Therefore it was not a purchase, but an advance. On the other hand, it should be stipulated in the interests of the State that any loss on the advance of £50 should be refunded by those supplying the ore. The State should not run the slightest risk. This item of £50 should not be a fixed figure; but the advance should fluctuate according to the market value of copper. Mention was made of the Cue-Day Dawn water supply item, which might be taken to reduce the deficit. There was an amount of £17,000 there which, with this item of £12,500, would give a total of £29,500.

MR. GREGORY: There was a revenue item to balance the Cue-Day Dawn item of expenditure.

MR. FRANK WILSON: Where could it come from? It was capital expenditure which could not be taken back to revenue. We should keep these trading accounts separate; but we must be careful to have them under the control of the Treasury and not, though under responsible officers, without any adequate check. The member for Menzies wished them kept separate from the Treasury; but the Treasury should have a check on the accounts.

MR. GREGORY: The Audit Office.

MR. FRANK WILSON: If the accounts were operated on by heads of departments beyond the control of the Treasury, the State might run a serious risk. They must be safeguarded, not only by the Audit Department, but by the Treasury Department. The principle was right, but the details must be carefully looked into.

THE MINISTER agreed that we should be careful in framing regulations for the control of trading concerns. Seeing that we had started the present financial year on the present basis, and that we were

unable to put the smelter into a trading account, he had not thought it wise to follow on the lines suggested by the member for Menzies. The Estimates showed the amount of money required to carry on the business. He did not think the vote would be exceeded, because calculations were made on a little higher basis than the average value of the ore discovered at Phillips River.

MR. GREGORY: What ore was at the smelter when it started?

THE MINISTER could not remember the particulars.

MR. GREGORY: At the end of January there was £26,000 worth of ore there; on which we had advanced £12,000.

THE MINISTER thought the estimate overstated. The supply could only be kept up by continual development, and continued development could only be maintained by the State giving advances on the ore. The owners of the leases could not afford to get advances from the banks at the present high terms; so it would be necessary for the Government to enter into the market, and for the Committee to pass the sum on the Estimates. There was no innovation. It was the principle adhered to in all the trading accounts except public batteries. The matter of trading accounts would be thoroughly gone into; and if it was possible, by an alteration of the Audit Act, to put this matter into a trading account, regulations would be published giving the Treasury as far as possible full power to check accounts, and Parliament would receive full information of the exact condition of the accounts to show how much the State had benefited by the erection of the smelter.

MR. GREGORY: In January last we made advances on 3,000 tons of ore to the extent of £11,398 4s. 4d. On every ton of ore 10 units of its value was deducted, or £5 a ton, which on 3,000 tons represented £15,000. Again, advances were made only up to £50; but copper for a long time was valued at £60. Therefore the statement that there was £26,000 worth of ore at the smelter in January last was considerably below the mark. The provision of £75,000 for advances would in all probability be exceeded. The Minister could not tell us the quantity of ore at the smelter or its value, so it was simply guess-work.

With that knowledge one might know whether the sum on the Estimates was sufficient. We should have these matters in trading accounts. One admitted the argument of the member for Sussex in regard to controlling money of this sort; but the ore kept coming in and we must realise on it; and the money so realised could be utilised time after time for the benefit of the people at Phillips River. One did not wish form J to be unduly used for swelling expenditure. That was why he was more especially arguing in connection with this work that we should treat it as a trading concern.

THE PREMIER: It was impossible on these Estimates to alter the system of treatment of the expenditure, unless the revenue was likewise altered. Therefore it was impracticable to carry the amendment submitted by the hon. member. It would really mean that it would be necessary to introduce a new estimate of revenue altogether. The question of whether these matters should be dealt with as trading concerns or not was one which, as he had said, he did not feel it necessary to discuss on this occasion, because it was impossible to suddenly deal with them to alter the system of our accounts.

MR. GREGORY: The argument must do good for next year's Estimates.

THE PREMIER: Undoubtedly, but to reduce the item by £15,000 would entail harm on this year's Estimates, and create the very evil the hon. member was anxious to avoid. It would render it necessary for the Minister for Mines to come along with form J.

MR. GREGORY: It would be necessary to bring in a small Bill.

THE PREMIER: It would be just as reasonable to deal in the same way with the Railway Estimates, which, after all, were essentially estimates of a trading concern, and say we would reduce this deficit or wipe it out by reducing the expenditure on the railways by £50,000. Members would see at once that if one side of the balance-sheet had to be affected, the other side must likewise be altered, and that it was impossible for us at present to alter the system with regard to these Estimates.

MR. GREGORY: Not impossible; nearly so.

THE PREMIER: To alter the system would necessitate having an entirely new

set of Estimates, which he did not think even the member for Menzies wished to call for. He hoped that having had the assurance given by the Minister for Mines, the hon. member would see fit to withdraw his amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

State Batteries (contingencies, subdivision 10), £60,100 :

MR. GREGORY: We had again the same error, to his mind, as in the item dealing with temporary labour for State batteries. The expenditure on general supplies and maintenance of State batteries was £26,378, and this year, although we knew that very many new batteries had been erected and were in course of construction, the Minister only asked for £27,100. He was afraid the hon. gentleman would find the amount very short of what would be required.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Many batteries, being new, would not require quite so much done to them as did the batteries last year. He had gone into the matter very carefully. He admitted we were steering very close to the wind, and if he had had power to increase the amount for public batteries he would have done so; but as it was necessary to economise as far as possible, a smaller vote was named.

[MR. BATH took the Chair.]

MR. TROY: It was desirable to have an amount on the Supplementary Estimates to provide for State batteries for the goldfields. People were asking for more batteries to be erected, and their complaints were justified. It was the duty of the Government to take the matter in hand and give these people the assistance they desired. The Government had, on several occasions, subsidised public batteries, but he did not think that would meet with great success. He hoped that if the Minister found it necessary to expend more money than the sum specified in the Estimates in the direction of batteries, he would do so. One wished to see a reduction made in the cost of treatment of sands, that, in his opinion, being absolutely essential if the public battery system was to be a success. Previous to the last elections, or when those elections were being contested, the then Minister, the member for Menzies, spoke at Lennonville, and said he had

intended to reduce the cost of treatment of cyanide plants, but Mr. James had asked him not to do so, as it was on the eve of a general election. After the elections he (Mr. Troy) had occasion to go to the member for Menzies and place before him certain matters concerning the Lennonville public batteries; but the hon. gentleman did not favourably receive the application for a decrease in the cost of cyanide treatment. The only reason, he believed, was not because he went out of his way to attack the member for Menzies—

MR. DIAMOND: The hon. member would not do it.

MR. TROY: If there were any necessity for it, he would. He merely did it in justification of the present Minister for Mines; because if it went forth that the previous Government were going to reduce the cost of treatment and that the present Government did not do so, we should have the goldfields people unjustly accusing the present Minister. He repeated that the answer given to him by the late Minister was not a favourable one.

MR. GREGORY: What was the answer?

MR. TROY: The hon. member knew the answer. Were he (Mr. Troy) to give the answer, the hon. member would probably say it was entirely incorrect.

MR. SCADDAN: The Minister would find the vote for general supplies and maintenance considerably under the actual expenditure. Form J was used pretty freely last year, and he thought it might be so this year. Votes could not be increased by members, although the Minister had power to increase them to any extent he felt inclined.

MR. GREGORY regretted that the Government had not been able to provide a larger sum for the erection of batteries. The Minister desired to do all he could to assist leaseholders by still farther increasing the battery system, which had done a great deal of good in the past and would continue to do good in the future as long as there was careful administration. During the last year we had a couple of batteries manufactured in the State, and it was to be hoped the present Government would continue the policy the late Government started. Although the late Government paid a little more for the construction of local plants, still

he believed the batteries were well made and reflected credit on the manufacturers. There was also the advantage of getting a reduced price from the foundry in future, and a knowledge that the Government were promoting the industry in Western Australia. It was good to know that we had manufacturers in the State who were prepared to supply plants and to give facilities to mining people to obtain machinery here. It was too bad that year after year large sums of money had to be sent away to South Australia and Victoria for batteries. The Government should continue to foster local industry. Some information was required from the Minister as to what it was proposed to do in the future in regard to the erection of more batteries. During his (Mr. Gregory's) visit round the fields he saw many places requiring assistance. Large batteries were not needed at these places, but simply a 5-head mill fitted with a cyanide plant, rock breakers and self-feeders. Such plants would not cost much money, and would give facilities to many places which were languishing for the want of a battery. At present there were a good many batteries in course of erection. There should be standard plans and persons made responsible for errors that occurred. There was no desire on his (Mr. Gregory's) part to complain, but to-day he received a telegram as to the construction of a battery, and it was pointed out that certain parts were not on the ground. It was over 18 months since the money authority was given for the erection of a battery at Norseman, and that battery was not completed yet.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The battery was working.

MR. GREGORY: But the whole plant was not complete. Then there was the slimes plant at Mulline.

THE MINISTER: That had been going for the last six weeks.

MR. GREGORY: While the department had a staff of officers, why should there be continuous delays which were a source of annoyance to the Minister as well as to members. He would like to know what officers recommended the batteries recently purchased for Pig Well and also at Randell's. He was given to understand that the battery at Randell's

was not a first-class plant. A quantity of piping was in very poor condition. The other plant at Garry he believed to be a good one, the Minister having secured a good bargain, but the department should be careful in purchasing plants to see that they were up to date. Every effort should be made to bring the batteries up to date, supplying them with rock breakers and self-feeders, so that with first-class plants the department would be able to make a farther reduction in the charge for treatment.

MR. LYNCH: Notwithstanding the expert knowledge brought to bear on the erection of batteries, he had noticed two glaring instances of want of judgment in the erection of batteries on a far field. He noticed that a portable engine had to be stopped in one place because the engine was short of some power. It was a Government job of course, and consequently was not expected to be run on lines of common sense.

THE MINISTER: Where was that?

MR. LYNCH: At Lake Way. It had been wisely hinted by the member for Menzies that the State batteries now were in a peculiar stage of development; they needed farther attention by being provided with self-feeders, so that people who sent their stone to the batteries could insist on the stone being broken to a certain size. In the matter of management he was glad to think that it had come under the notice of the Minister that there was need for reorganisation. At some places it was found necessary to have a second man on the job as a cyanide expert. The two positions should be combined, which would mean a material reduction in the cost of running the batteries. Members recognised that the sum on the Estimates for State batteries was too small. Very seldom the Committee found it necessary to find fault with the Minister for an illiberal allowance. It was to be hoped that this would be remembered by the Minister, and when the next Estimates were brought down, and instead of spending £32,000 on State batteries he would be able to make the amount larger. There was no more worthy object than supplying batteries in out-back districts of the State, keeping a well-deserving population constantly wedded to the mining industry.

THE MINISTER thanked members for encouraging him in the direction he would like to go. State batteries should be expected to pay, not the interest and sinking fund, but working expenses. That should be looked for in almost every case, and if there was a chance of erecting, in places where people could not otherwise get good crushing done, batteries that would not cost anything for upkeep, he would do his best to see that such plants were erected. The Premier in introducing the Estimates mentioned that a sum of money would be placed on the Loan Estimates in addition to the amount on the present Estimates for the erection of public batteries. On the whole that was about as much as the Government should ask the people of the State to contribute. So far as he could, he would endeavour to make the charges for crushing and cyaniding combined such as would in his opinion make the batteries pay upon the whole. He was doubtful that batteries would pay if in every instance there were up-to-date plants erected with self-feeders and rock-breakers combined. Private people had tried experiments in this direction, and found it would pay only when large parcels were being dealt with. The member for Mt. Magnet did not like subsidised batteries; and so far as he (the Minister) was concerned he had never agreed to subsidised batteries when he knew that by the erection of a battery the work could be done cheaper. The present Government had not bought any absolutely new batteries; but the parts purchased had as far as possible been manufactured locally; and this system would continue. As to the slimes plant at Mulline, the heaviness of the roads delayed for a couple of months the arrival of a new boiler; but this was now working satisfactorily. He believed that Mr. Allen, the inspector of batteries, recommended the purchase of the Pig Well plant, as being worth more than the price. It was bought in the neighbourhood; and an imported plant would have cost £2,000 or £3,000 more. The plant would work satisfactorily for a year or two, and would effect a considerable saving. The Randell's battery was inspected by Mr. Sergeant, an officer of the department. The department believed it was worth more than was paid for it, and that with a comparatively small

additional expenditure it could be made a first-class plant. Care was taken not to get an ordinary battery erected at Randell's, but a battery with every possible appliance for working the refractory ores at a comparatively low price; otherwise the experiment would not have been successful. [MR. GREGORY: True.] He hoped to be able to keep within this vote. However if it was exceeded, the goldfields members, and most of the coastal members, with their usual generosity, would not be sorry.

Item—Purchase of tailings, £3,000 :

MR. GREGORY: The other night he said that about May he recommended Cabinet to reduce the cost of cyaniding to about 8s. a ton. That reduction he thought reasonable, knowing the cost at various places; and he hoped the Minister would make the reduction, regardless of political considerations. As to the statement he (Mr. Gregory) made at Lennoxville, it was made six months before the general elections. He told a deputation that it was his intention to reduce the cost of the cyanide treatment, he hoped speedily. However, the ex-Premier (Mr. James), when the matter was brought before him, said it would be unwise to make such an announcement just before the general elections. Subsequently he (Mr. Gregory) did not make any statement, save that he hoped to make a reduction. Those who had to do all the battling out back should have every possible encouragement.

THE MINISTER: If the Minister considered this suggestion from a political point of view, he would make a considerable reduction in the price. He had made up his mind to ascertain how the batteries stood during the year ending 31st December, and whether batteries and cyanide plants had paid during the last two years, and if so, whether we were justified in making a reduction. Members must trust him for another two months at all events, before he could give a decision. This was a new item, and would enable the Government to buy tailings direct, thus removing the present complaint that people had to wait a month or two before being paid for tailings. The new system would not be instituted at all the batteries; but a few had been picked out where the gold

was free, and prospectors were offered the alternative of getting out the gold in the ordinary way after paying all expenses, or of the Government buying the tailings direct, on the basis of 75 per cent. of the extraction. This system was adopted by all the private batteries which crushed for the public; and he believed it would be satisfactory to customers.

MR. GREGORY: A new complexion was put upon the matter. Having thought this item would simply mean that the Minister would make advances to 50 per cent. of the value of the sands and then make a final payment, he protested against a departure from the old principle. No doubt it was a departure which would please the prospectors, but there would be danger to the public battery system. He moved an amendment.

That the item be struck out.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mines Water Supply (Contingencies, subdivision 12), £28,410.

Item—Goldfields Generally; upkeep of watering places, roads, etc., £9,000 :

MR. GREGORY moved an amendment.

That the item be reduced by £1,000.

MR. TROY: Taking into consideration the fact that members were continually asked to get water supplies in the districts, it was highly desirable the item should not be reduced. If the full sum were not granted, the Minister would not be able to grant new wells.

MR. GREGORY: This item was for upkeep.

THE MINISTER: This vote should not be reduced. It was required, and not a shilling would be wasted.

Amendment put and negatived.

Item—Cue-Day Dawn water supply, £17,060 :

MR. GREGORY: There should be some explanation of this item.

THE MINISTER: The item had already been sufficiently explained. The board created under the Act passed by last Parliament would take over the work, so far as it was completed, next week. The board would borrow money and take over the entire debt.

MR. N. J. MOORE: Would the board be representative?

THE MINISTER: On the board there would be three representatives from each of the Cue and Day Dawn municipalities, and one representative from the roads board. The scheme would cost the State nothing.

MR. SCADDAN: Why did the item appear on the Mines Estimates?

THE MINISTER: Because it was the custom, and because the people represented by the member for Ivanhoe had been supplied by the Government free of cost. This was only a book entry.

MR. N. J. MOORE: Where would the money be borrowed?

THE MINISTER: If the board borrowed from the Savings Bank, interest and sinking fund would be paid; but the board had the power to borrow elsewhere if money could be got cheaper.

MR. GREGORY: Explanation was desired to show why the item appeared on the Estimates. Arrangements were made that, as soon as the work was completed, an advance would be made from the Treasury through the Savings Bank to the people in the district on their debentures; but here the Estimates of expenditure were swollen by this item, while the Estimates of revenue were also swollen to the extent of £21,600. It was simply a book entry similar to the item dealing with the purchase of copper ore. The system was foolish, if we could do without it. There might be a suspense account from Loan Funds.

MR. SCADDAN: Without offering serious objection to the item, he regretted that it should unduly inflate the Estimates, and show that money voted for the Mines Department was not all devoted to the advantage of mining as it might be. The Cue and Day Dawn people should have their water supply, but on the same conditions as other people got theirs. Had the money expended in giving the Eastern Goldfields a water supply appeared on the Estimates, there would have been a howl from both sides of the House. The money should have been provided out of the Loan Estimates. He strongly objected to inflating the Mining Estimates in this regard.

HON. W. C. ANGWIN: The placing of the amount on the Estimates showed that the Mines Department or the

Government were doing a certain amount of work in a certain portion of the State, and were providing the funds for so doing. The Minister for Mines had done quite right in showing the Government provided funds for municipalities sometimes in certain difficulties by advancing money for them to carry out certain works. Doubtless in future other municipalities would like work carried out in a similar manner, and this vote would be a key to them, showing they could ask the Government to advance the money as had been done in this instance. The amount looked better here perhaps than it would on the Works Estimates. Doubtless the sum for the large water scheme in the metropolitan area would go on the Estimates of the Works Department, but this item showed that if the money were not obtained under the works vote it might be got under the mines vote.

MR. HEITMANN: If members objected to this system why did they not object to the whole vote? One objected because the money was to supply people with water, and that it was on the Mines vote, but the greatest consumers of this water would be people engaged on the mines.

Development of Mining (Contingencies, subdivision 13), £7,000:

MR. TROY: Last year a sum of £7,000 appeared on the Estimates and the expenditure was £2,147. This vote was supposed to assist prospectors in developing their properties, and he hoped the Government would provide a larger sum, because it was very essential that these people should receive assistance. With the exception of Kalgoolie the gold-mining industry depended on prospectors. Under the Mines Development Act provision was made for assistance to prospectors up to £300, and he believed that persons able to give good security could obtain a larger amount. He had heard members speak about assisting prospectors on the Murchison, but he wanted to know what assistance had been given in the past. Had any assistance been given in the way of developing property? The only people he knew of to whom assistance had been given were companies carrying on business in the

State. £300 could be advanced to a prospector, but that amount was useless to any man who wished to develop his property. [MEMBER: It was for prospecting.] He wanted the Government to give assistance to those prospectors who on account of their work in the past deserved it. Unless people were encouraged to prospect, there could be no home market for the agriculturists.

THE MINISTER: The amount on the Estimates last year was £7,000, the sum expended being £2,147. We now proposed to spend £7,000, and seeing that £2,147 was all that was spent last year we were hardly justified in asking for more, especially as in the ordinary course there would be a vote on the Loan Estimates.

MR. GREGORY hoped the Minister would go into this a little bit more fully. The hon. gentleman might have informed the House that out of this vote £2,000 was taken for constructing State batteries, and there were two or three promises of an advance of £1,000 each. One was to Chesterman, Hayden, & Co., at Cue, and another amount was paid at Kalgoorlie; so that almost every penny of the sum had been earmarked. Only £2,000 of the amount was for the purchase of drills, £2,000 was spent in the erection of batteries; and £2,000 for subsidies to companies and prospectors. He was satisfied that the Minister would find he had not too much money. Only lately he (Mr. Gregory) ordered two special horse jump-drills which would prove the ground anywhere between 200 feet to 400 feet. A diamond drill was purchased and sent to Peak Hill to assist some prospectors there, not a company. Some delay did occur as to the purchase of diamond drills because he (Mr. Gregory) would sooner let the work by contract than carry it out departmentally. Only one diamond drill was purchased. The cost of diamonds was great, and when there was a large diamond drill company in the State, it was better to get the work done by contract without taking the responsibility of the loss of diamonds. There was one drill at Peak Hill on Francisco's lease; there were two other expensive drills to come from Victoria, which would be found to do very good work indeed. There were a number of hand-drills, but they were of no special

value except for shallow work. The two new percussion drills were good for deep development, to prove ground to a depth of 400 feet. Seeing the small amount of money, at the disposal of the Minister, he (Mr. Gregory) was satisfied with the item. Probably next year better work could be done than last year.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

Geological Survey (division 21),
£5,890:

MR. GREGORY: This was an important vote, and he asked the Minister, in view of the late hour and the long sitting, to report progress.

THE MINISTER: Already the Mines Estimates had been discussed for two nights, and the Committee would be glad to hear what the member for Menzies had to say on this vote.

MR. GORDON called attention to the state of the House.

THE CHAIRMAN: There was a quorum present.

MR. GREGORY moved that progress be reported.

Motion put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	7
Noes	...	...	...	18

Majority against ... 11

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Brown	Mr. Angwin
Mr. Diamond	Mr. Bolton
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Hastie
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Heitmann
Mr. N. J. Moore	Mr. Henshaw
Mr. Frank Wilson	Mr. Holman
Mr. Gordon (Teller).	Mr. Johnson
	Mr. Lynch
	Mr. Moran
	Mr. Needham
	Mr. Nelson
	Mr. Scaddan
	Mr. Taylor
	Mr. Troy
	Mr. Watts
	Mr. A. J. Wilson
	Mr. F. F. Wilson
	Mr. Gill (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

MR. GREGORY: The Public Service Commission recommended that this department should be made subsidiary to the Mines Department, and should be controlled by the State Mining Engineer. In no other department in Western Australia was the work of such a responsible nature. He (Mr. Gregory) had always contended that the Government Geologist

should, when possible, precede the prospector, thus giving early information as to our mineral resources. The Royal Commission, however, did not examine Mr. Maitland, and therefore no consideration should be shown to the Commission's report. We could not afford to ignore the necessity for keeping this department distinct, and for extending its usefulness. There was no comparison between it and the corresponding departments in other States. The departmental report showed the large amount of work done last year, including notes on our maps of auriferous reefs in the Cue and Day Dawn districts, a report on the Lennonville, Mt. Magnet, and Boogardie districts, supplemented with maps showing the reefs; a report on the geological features and mineral resources of the Northampton district; a splendid contribution to our knowledge of the carboniferous fossils of the State; and a fine report on the country between Edjudina and Yundamindera, and the geological features of the Mulline and Davyhurst districts, together with a geological map of the Boulder Belt. Subsequently we had reports on the geological and auriferous deposits of Leonora and other parts of the Murchison field, and a report had been prepared on the North-West country. Special facilities should be given for printing such reports as soon as possible after they left the geological office. If printing was delayed for months, and sometimes for years, the reports were of no use. The action of the Minister regarding the retirement of Mr. Jackson, one of the officers, was not quite proper. Mr. Jackson should have been retained, so as to obviate the need for recalling Mr. Maitland from the North-West. Mining men wanted full and complete reports regarding the Pilbarra and Gascoyne districts. Mr. Jackson had treated the State very badly by leaving a good appointment on such short notice. The promised increase to Mr. Maitland did not appear on the Estimates for this year. Mr. Lefroy, when Minister for Mines, promised that the salary should reach a maximum of £800 by annual increases of £25. Mr. Maitland's was a very responsible office. Dr. Jack, when Government geologist of Queensland, received £1,200 per annum. Mr. Pitman, Government Geologist and Under-Secretary for New South Wales, received

£1,000, and the senior geologist there £600. Professor Gregory, when Government Geologist of Victoria, received £800, and the present geologist received £600 with the right of private practice. Here that was absolutely forbidden. Some time ago, the department were asked to allow the Government Geologist to publish a report on New Guinea.

MR. GORDON called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung, and quorum formed.

POINT OF ORDER.

MR. MORAN drew attention to the fact that some members left the Chamber when attention was called to the absence of a quorum. If these obstructive tactics were to be resorted to, let them be properly resorted to. The member for Perth (Mr. H. Brown) and the member for Sussex (Mr. Frank Wilson) left the Chamber when attention was called to the state of the House.

MR. SPEAKER (on report made) said it was distinctly improper for any member to leave the Chamber when attention was drawn to the want of a quorum.

MR. GREGORY: Was the member for West Perth in order in talking about obstruction?

MR. SPEAKER: On that point he had not distinctly heard the hon. member, who would be out of order in accusing other members of obstruction.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member (Mr. Gregory) was thinking of what was in his own mind, and not of what had been said.

MR. H. BROWN protested against the statement that he left his seat to evade the count. He had not entered the Chamber at all.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member left his seat in the Chamber after attention was called to the absence of a quorum.

MR. H. BROWN denied the charge. When the bells rang he was in the corridor.

RESUMED.

MR. GREGORY was anxious that we should discuss this item to-morrow, by which time he would be able to get some information he desired. There was no intention on his part to discuss these items in an antagonistic spirit. Members would recognise that no such spirit had been manifested by him during the

discussion. The Minister should say whether the staff would be kept up to date. At present the mineralogist was absent from the State through illness, and the assistant geologist had left us, so that the Government Geologist had to remain in the office when he should be out travelling through the State continuing the good work that had been done during the past 12 months. He (Mr. Gregory) hoped the new appointment would be made speedily, and that reports would be prepared and speedily published.

THE MINISTER: The matter of the increase to the Government Geologist had been dealt with previously. The mineralogist would soon resume his duties, and the successor to the assistant geologist would be appointed almost immediately. The staff would be kept up to its present strength. There was an increase of £170 in incidentals in order to carry on the work of the department better. He (the Minister) indorsed the remarks of the member for Menzies generally, but we had already spent two and a half nights debating the Mines Estimates, so much time not having been spent on the estimates of the department since he had been in Parliament.

MR. GORDON: The Minister seemed to treat the subject of his department lightly. The member for Mt. Magnet had pointed out that there should be more money for prospecting. It would be a good idea to have a full geological staff to accompany each prospector; because it would save the prospector money, and there might also be a saving to the State in the matter of money advanced to help the prospector. The idea seemed charming. He had not thoroughly gone into these items. [Remarks continued.]

MR. BOLTON: The hon. member's remarks ought to be in *Hansard*.

MR. GORDON: The hon. member ought to be in gaol.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must withdraw.

MR. GORDON withdrew the statement that the hon. member for—which hon. member was it?—ought to be in gaol.

THE CHAIRMAN warned the hon. member to be careful in the manner in which he was going on. He asked the

member for Canning to withdraw the statement against the member for North Fremantle.

MR. GORDON withdrew the statement against the hon. member. Probably a man on a geological staff going with a prospector would only be engaged for a day, and supposing he were dismissed, would it be necessary to take a bank so that the money could be paid if a man were dismissed? We had been sitting since half-past two, and a man naturally felt a little tired. He was not physically capable of sitting here hour after hour listening to dreary remarks.

MR. BOLTON: Was the hon. member confining himself to the point under discussion?

MR. GORDON: The hon. member said something about being confined. Was that an insinuation that he should be confined in gaol?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must confine himself to the question before the House.

MR. GORDON said he could not confine himself to anything.

MR. H. BROWN believed there were two or three laboratories at present in the hands of the Government. He thought one was under Geological Survey, another under Explosives, and a portion of a third under the Water Works Board. It would be far better if these could be consolidated, so that there should be one laboratory and one chemist to do the whole of the work. There were complaints in Perth that practically the Government were almost sweating and taking bread out of the mouths of persons of private enterprise who had erected plants of their own. If the Government were going to be monopolists, the sooner we all became a race of civil servants the better. That seemed what members on the Opposition benches were driving at. [Interjections.] The gentlemen who interjected would be the first to squeak if their bread-and-butter were taken away by any action of the Government.

THE MINISTER: The question the hon. member brought forward was important, but the hon. member referred particularly to number 6, which was for laboratory assistance in the Geological Department.

MR. H. BROWN said he had not touched a single item. In item 12 there were laboratory expenses, also expenses on the next vote, "Explosives and Analytical."

MR. FRANK WILSON: What did the Government geologists do for their money? There were four of them, and no report was furnished of their work. Perhaps the Minister could explain what the duties of these officers were; for we might be able to dispense with the services of some. Without being charged with any wish to obstruct, he thought the Minister was wrong in trying to force the items down members' throats by refusing to report progress. The fact that the Committee had spent two days over the Mines Estimates proved that they were of such vast importance to the country that members had taken advantage to discuss the various items. The member who had taken up most of the time of the Committee was the Minister for Mines, who had been most ready to respond to every invitation of members for information.

MR. GORDON called attention to the state of the House.

THE MINISTER: Was not that obstruction?

THE CHAIRMAN: There was a quorum present.

MR. FRANK WILSON: The Minister had taken the proper course in furnishing members with information, but it came with bad grace from the hon. gentleman at this hour to accuse members of the Opposition with wishing to obstruct the discussion, in fact to block the Estimates. Why not report progress? How far did the Minister wish to go to-night? Did he want to get the whole of the Estimates through? If so, then one could promise the Minister he would not get them. At 20 minutes to 12 we might report progress.

THE MINISTER: Was the member threatening the Committee?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The member for Sussex had accused the Minister for Mines of trying to thrust these Estimates down the throats of members. When the Estimates were going through Committee last session the Minister for Mines reached his estimates just before three o'clock in the morning, and then the Ministry refused to explain those estimates.

MR. GREGORY: Absolutely untrue.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The members of the Opposition deliberately left the Chamber, and he (the Colonial Secretary) was the only one who remained to discuss the Mines Estimates.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Was the member for Menzies in order in saying that what the Colonial Secretary said was absolutely untrue?

MR. GREGORY withdrew the remark, but would have something to say on the point directly.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY repeated that he was the only one on the Opposition side who last year discussed the Mines Estimates. That was within the memory of some members; and it came with bad grace from the members for Menzies, Canning, and Sussex to now wish to report progress, for those members knew what attitude the Opposition adopted last session.

MR. FRANK WILSON was not in the House at the time, and knew nothing about it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member might not have been in the House; but he knew and the country knew full well what took place, and it came with bad grace from the member for Menzies and the member for Canning to say that the Minister for Mines was trying to force these estimates through.

MR. GREGORY: Who said that?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It had been stated on the Opposition side.

MR. FRANK WILSON had said so, and repeated it now.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There were no grounds for such a statement. More opportunity had been given this year for discussing the Estimates than during the four years he had been in Parliament. He entered his protest against members of the Opposition making charges which were not borne out by a reference to *Hansard*.

MR. GREGORY: Why should the Colonial Secretary have lost his temper and made statements which were inaccurate? for it was not correct to say that he (Mr. Gregory) refused to explain his Estimates, but it was the class of statement which the Colonial Secretary usually made. Could the Minister say that he (Mr. Gregory) had tried to obstruct the Estimates to-night? We had been

sitting from half-past two to a quarter-past eleven when he asked that progress might be reported.

MR. GORDON: The Government wanted to get into recess without a decent burial.

MR. GREGORY: The Geological vote should be discussed in a full House. The member for Magnet had occupied more time to-night than he (Mr. Gregory) had. No attempt had been made to block the Estimates, for if that had been the system adopted there were administrative items which he (Mr. Gregory) could have discussed and raised objection to by the hour. After treating the Minister for Mines so well and showing a desire to push the Estimates forward, the Minister might have given way and agreed to report progress. The Opposition, he admitted, had delayed the business since 11 o'clock. At the same time the Minister might have shown some consideration for members on the Opposition side.

MR. BOLTON: The hon. member when Minister for Mines started to consider his Estimates at three o'clock in the morning.

MR. GREGORY: If the Government had given some intimation of their wishes to go on, the Opposition would have known what to do. The request made to report progress should have been acceded to.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: There was a general understanding that we should finish the Mines portion of the Estimates to-night. The Government had asked the hon. member to proceed with his remarks for a little while, because the Fremantle members left by the 11.30 train; and to adjourn when the hon. member requested an adjournment would have been an unnecessary waste of time. But the hon. member, instead of proceeding, tried to report progress. Naturally the Government resented this, because he admitted he had little to say on the Geological Survey. Now that the hon. member had kept us here till a late hour, we should finish the Mines Estimates.

MR. GREGORY: No such understanding was arrived at with the Opposition.

MR. N. J. MOORE: The understanding had evidently been come to by one or two persons. Opposition members knew nothing of it. He, who had never

previously heard the Mines Estimates discussed, had listened with pleasure to the explanations and criticisms of the ex-Minister (Mr. Gregory). Only by discussing these Estimates could young members ascertain whether the public interests were being safeguarded and the money spent to the best advantage. The Geological Survey was an important vote, and the ex-Minister might well be allowed an opportunity for farther criticism. So far, his criticism has not been captious, but in the interests of the country; and in view of his experience it ought to be listened to with respect. He (Mr. Moore) moved that progress be reported.

Motion put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	6
Noes	...	...	...	18

Majority against ... 12

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Brown	Mr. Angwin
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Bolton
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Hastie
Mr. N. J. Moore	Mr. Heilmann
Mr. Frank Wilson	Mr. Henshaw
Mr. Gordon (Teller).	Mr. Holman
	Mr. Johnson
	Mr. Lynch
	Mr. Moran
	Mr. Needham
	Mr. Nelson
	Mr. Scaddan
	Mr. Taylor
	Mr. Troy
	Mr. Watts
	Mr. A. J. Wilson
	Mr. F. F. Wilson
	Mr. Gill (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

MR. N. J. MOORE, had he wished to lecture on geology, would have made a few notes. The departmental report on the Pilbarra Goldfield would prove interesting reading. The Colonial Secretary had referred to the attached maps, which appeared to be the work of a born artist. Could not some economy be effected in the compilation of such reports, especially in the lithography? Reports, to be of value, should come out soon after surveys were completed. He (Mr. Moore) was informed that members intended to sit until 6 o'clock. He was prepared to do this.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must confine his remarks to the sub-division.

MR. MOORE: Officers who were now absent on leave would be able to resume their duties with redoubled energy. One

draftsman must have a considerable quantity of work in the Government Geologist's office, and the salary of £250 seemed inadequate. The Government Geologist should work in with the Lands Department in making surveys, and should especially work in with the trigonometrical stations.

[12 o'clock, midnight.]

Item—Temporary labour, £650 :

MR. LYNCH : Where was this money spent, especially in relation to the Black Range district ?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES : Geologists examined different parts of the State, and engaged people on the spot.

MR. N. J. MOORE : Would the item "incidental" include allowances to professional men ?

THE MINISTER : The allowance to professional men while travelling was on a regulation scale.

Item—Laboratory expenses, £250 :

MR. TROY : The Government were to be congratulated on having increased the item by £4.

MR. H. BROWN : There was a similar item farther on. It was waste of money to keep two laboratories going, when there was not sufficient work for one. Could not some retrenchment be effected in this connection ?

THE MINISTER : All laboratory work, except that of the Geological Department, would be concentrated. It was necessary to provide a laboratory for the Geological Department, so that the specimens collected by the officers could be treated in their own office.

MR. H. BROWN : What was the laboratory in Wellington Street required for ?

THE MINISTER : That laboratory was under the Explosives Department.

MR. H. BROWN : Surely all the work could be done in one building, and all the work concentrated under one head. One analyst was quite sufficient for the State.

Vote put and passed.

Explosives and Analytical (division 22), £4,505 :

MR. SCADDAN complimented the Minister on the appointment of the travelling inspector of explosives. If

there was one thing necessary it was that we should have an inspector to travel throughout the State and examine the explosives periodically.

MR. H. BROWN : It was very interesting to read the debate on this vote last year when Mr. Moran, the member for West Perth, said "I move that it be now put."

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. member was not in order. That had nothing to do with explosives.

MR. MORAN : Besides, that was entirely incorrect.

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. member (Mr. H. Brown) was not in order.

MR. H. BROWN : This was his first experience of Parliament here, and it was pitiable to see the force used to get these particular items through to-night.

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. member was not in order. He must discuss the question under debate.

MR. MORAN : The hon. member was losing the little sense he ever had.

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. member for West Perth must withdraw

MR. MORAN would say the hon. member was not losing the little sense he ever had.

MR. H. BROWN called on the hon. member to withdraw the insulting remark.

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. member must withdraw.

MR. MORAN : Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. member must rise to withdraw.

MR. MORAN had much pleasure in withdrawing everything he said about his dear friend the member for Perth.

Item—Incidental, including postage, stationery, travelling, etc., £325 :

MR. GORDON : There was an increase of £35 over last year. Was that on account of our joining the Commonwealth, or had the Government engaged more office boys ?

MR. LYNCH wished to take advantage of discussion on this item to refer to remarks put forth as serious by members on the other (Opposition) side of the House.

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

MR. LYNCH : There was a lot of insincerity in the remarks made by members on the other side of the House. The

debate was being protracted in a light way by the very men who professed sincerity.

MR. TROY: There was an increase of £25 on this item, and he was not satisfied.

MR. GORDON: It was £35.
Vote put and passed.

[12.20 o'clock, midnight.]

THE MINISTER moved that progress be reported and leave asked to sit again.

Question put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	18
Noes	...	...	...	8

Majority for ... 10

AYES.

Mr. Angwin
Mr. Brown
Mr. Gordon
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Hastie
Mr. Hayward
Mr. Holman
Mr. Jacoby
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Lynch
Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Moran
Mr. Nanson
Mr. Nelson
Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Frank Wilson
Mr. Gill (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Bolton
Mr. Heitmann
Mr. Henshaw
Mr. Needham
Mr. Watts
Mr. A. J. Wilson
Mr. F. F. Wilson
Mr. Troy (Teller).

Motion thus passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 25 minutes past 12 o'clock, until Wednesday afternoon.

Legislative Council, Wednesday, 14th December, 1904.

	PAGE.
Question: Air Space in Government Offices	1816
Bills: Public Service Select Committee, Request for Premier to give evidence	1817
Law of Libel Amendment Act (Imperial) Adoption, first reading	1817
Agricultural Bank Act Amendment, first reading	1817
Bills of Exchange Act Amendment, first reading	1817
Municipal Institutions Act Amendment, in Committee resumed, reported	1818
Licensing Act (Suspension, second reading, deferred for six months	1821
Distress for Rent Restriction, second reading passed	1827
Factories Act Amendment, second reading passed; in Committee, reported	1835
Business Days and Hours, Additional	1817
Return ordered: New Parliament Houses, annual cost	1818

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

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR LANDS: Report of Royal Commission on Immigration of non-British Labour.

QUESTION—AIR SPACE IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

HON. G. RANDELL asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What cubic space is available for each employee in the Government Printing Establishment, stating for compositors, pressmen, and bookbinders separately? 2, What cubic space is available for the officers of the Government Savings Bank? 3, Are the ventilation and light provided in the public room of the Land Titles Office considered sufficient for the comfort and health of the officers employed therein?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied:

1. Government Printing Establishment:—

Compositors—	46 with	535 cubic ft. ea.
	47 "	823 "
	1 "	3,864 "
Pressmen—	2 "	1,784 "
	4 "	1,449 "
	2 "	2,047 "
	9 "	1,850 "
	4 "	7,570 "
Bookbinders—	47 "	889 "
	12 "	1,789 "
Readers—	10 "	386 "
Publishers—	4 "	1,953 "
Clerks—	3 "	1,190 "
	2 "	2,310 "