

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 10th November, 1903.

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THE DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair at 2:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PETITION -- PRIVATE BILL,
KATANNING.

MR. FOULKES presented a petition of Frederick Henry Piesse, praying for leave to introduce a Bill for the electric lighting of Katanning.

Petition received.

PETITION--PRIVATE BILL, FRE-
MANTLE.

MR. J. J. HIGHAM presented a petition of the mayors, councillors, and rate-payers of Fremantle and East Fremantle municipalities, praying for authority to construct tramways and to generate electricity jointly within these municipalities.

Petition received.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR WORKS: Fremantle Public Hospital Report, 1902-3. Goldfields-Esperance Railway Survey. Electric Light at West Perth Railway Station, return of cost.

Ordered, to lie on the table.

QUESTION--RAILWAY ACCIDENT,
BRIDGETOWN.

MR. HASTIE asked the Minister for Railways: Whether it is his intention to have an open inquiry held by an independent tribunal to ascertain the cause

of the recent serious accident on the Bridgetown railway.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The accident referred to is being inquired into departmentally, and until that investigation is complete no opinion can be expressed as to the seriousness or otherwise of the occurrence and the need for any farther inquiry.

QUESTION--SCHOONER "RIP," PUR-
CHASE.

MR. PIGOTT asked the Premier: 1, Whether it is a fact that the Government have purchased the schooner "Rip." 2, If so, what was the price paid, and for what purpose is the vessel to be used.

THE PREMIER replied: No.

QUESTION--LIQUOR INSPECTION.

MR. FOULKES, without notice, asked the Treasurer: When may I expect the balance of the return moved for on the 30th September, with regard to inspection of liquor sold in licensed houses?

THE TREASURER replied: I am trying to hurry on this return, and I cannot do more than present the information as soon as I get it.

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL (PRIVATE).

MR. NANSON brought up the report of the select committee on this private Bill. Report received.

FREMANTLE AND EAST FREMANTLE
TRAMWAYS BILL (PRIVATE).

Introduced by MR. HIGHAM, and read a first time.

Select committee appointed by ballot, comprising Mr. Connor, Mr. Diamond, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Moran, also Mr. Higham as mover; with power to call for persons and papers, and to sit on days on which the House stands adjourned; to report on the 17th November.

PRISONS BILL.

Read a third time, and returned to the Legislative Council with amendments.

MINING BILL.

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

EARLY CLOSING ACT AMENDMENT
BILL.

Read a third time, and returned to the Legislative Council with amendments.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT APPLICATION
BILL.

Read a third time, and *passed*.

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT
BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James), in moving the second reading, said: This is a very short Bill, introduced to confer on any Commissioner of the Supreme Court the full powers of a Judge. The right and the power to appoint a Commissioner are given by Section 12 of the Supreme Court Act 1880, which section provides that the Governor may, by Commission, either general or special, assign to any Judge or Judges of the court, or to any practitioner of the said court of at least seven years' standing, the duty of trying or determining within any place or district specially fixed for that purpose by such commission, any causes or matters, or any questions or issues of fact or of law or partly of fact and partly of law, in any cause or matter affecting the said Supreme Court, or in the exercise of any civil or criminal jurisdiction capable of being exercised by the said Supreme Court. Therefore that section was intended to give the fullest power to confer on the Commissioner all the powers of a Judge in relation to those matters over which by that section the Governor had jurisdiction to give the Commissioner power to try. Now a Commissioner has been appointed to hear cases, and he has been hearing them. But the Criminal Court has jurisdiction over appeals from the magistrates; and in certain cases those appeals are heard when the Criminal Court is sitting. It has recently been decided that owing to the wording of the Justices Act the Commissioner has no power to hear these appeals; and it is desired by this Bill to make it clear that the Commissioner has that power. For instance, Mr. Commissioner Roe has cases in Perth on the criminal side and on the civil side also. [MR. TAYLOR: As Commissioner?] Yes. But when an appeal comes up from the police court be

has no power to hear it. That does not create much difficulty as regards Perth; but it certainly does as regards Kalgoorlie; for it really means that Mr. Commissioner Roe or any other Commissioner cannot be sent to Kalgoorlie for circuit court work unless the appeals from the police court which in the ordinary way would come before the circuit court are allowed to stand over. If a Judge were sent to Kalgoorlie, that Judge's other work, mostly Full Court work, would be delayed. But as the Commissioner exercises in Perth the power of hearing civil cases of the greatest importance, and has the power of sitting in the criminal court also to decide upon persons' lives and liberties, it is thought he ought to have power to hear these more or less trivial appeals. The Bill is intended to give that power. Firstly, I am inclined to think that Section 12 of the Supreme Court Act as it stands now vests that power in the Commissioner; but a doubt has arisen owing to the wording of the Justices Act, which directs that such appeals shall be heard by a Judge of the Supreme Court. And although by Section 12 we have a right to confer on the Commissioner all the powers of a Judge, he is not as a fact a Judge; and it is to clear up that doubt and to enable those appeals to be heard that the Government have introduced this Bill, which I ask the House to pass.

MR. TAYLOR: Does it put a Commissioner on the same footing as any Judge of the Supreme Court?

THE PREMIER: It does.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ELECTION OF SENATORS BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James), in moving the second reading, said: This Bill is introduced under the powers given to us by Section 9 of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, which section provides that the Parliament of the Commonwealth may make laws prescribing the method of choosing senators, but so that the method shall be uniform for all the States. Subject to any such law, the Parliament of each State may make laws prescribing the method of choosing the senators for that State; and the Parlia-

ment of a State may make laws for determining the times and places of election of senators for the State. Members will doubtless recollect that after the passing of the Federal Electoral Act a question arose as to the power of the Federal Parliament to deal with all the matters which that Act purported to cover, more particularly in relation to the times and places of election of senators in the States. Objection was taken, I think on behalf of South Australia, that by virtue of the Constitution this was a matter which rested with the States. The validity of that contention has now been recognised; and in each of the States other than this, an Act has been passed making the necessary provisions. The present Bill is almost an exact copy of the Act passed in Victoria, and is in substance the same as the Act just passed in South Australia. The Bill provides that the Governor shall by proclamation have power to fix the places at which elections shall be held, and the dates for the nomination, the polling, the declaration of the poll, and the return of the writ. It therefore deals with the times and places of elections, which is the phrase used in Section 9 of the Constitution Act. Clause 2 provides that the proclamation must issue not less than seven days before the issue of the writ; and the proclamation must prescribe the times for the taking of the steps mentioned in that clause. Clause 3 fixes the date for nomination. Clauses 4, 5, and 7 are copied from the existing electoral law of the Commonwealth; so that we make, in relation to the matters with which we deal, the law which refers to the Senate elections the same as the law which relates to elections for the House of Representatives. Then by clause 6 we provide that the polling shall be at the place appointed under the law of the Commonwealth for the time being. By Clause 8 we give power to extend the time in the event of any difficulty—a power usual in Bills of this nature; and by Clause 9 we provide for communication by wire where it is impracticable to communicate through the post by letter. Members will therefore perceive that this Bill is necessary, and that as far as possible we have drafted it in accordance with the laws which relate to Federal elections for the Lower House, merely providing in

Clause 2 the most important substantive power to fix the times and places for the proceedings to which that clause refers. I move the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. ILLINGWORTH in the Chair; the MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Commissioner of Railways:

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Not having had an adequate opportunity for studying the Bill, he was not prepared to discuss this and following clauses until to-morrow. With the consent of the Government he moved that progress be reported.

Motion passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Resumed from previous sitting; MR. ILLINGWORTH in the Chair.

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT (Hon. Walter James).

Crown Law Offices, £5,798 10s. (further considered):

Item—Under Secretary, £550:

THE CHAIRMAN: There was an amendment before the Committee to reduce the item by £100.

MR. MORAN: When progress was reported on the previous Thursday, the question before the Committee was whether, until something satisfactory was done in a comprehensive manner dealing with the civil service, big increases should be made; but no attack had been made on the competency of the officer in question. If a vote had been taken at the last sitting, the Committee would have decided that until a comprehensive scheme was brought forward by the Government large increases should not be made. As to the personal occupant of the office of Under Secretary, that officer was not a fit person at the present time to become the recipient of an increase of £100. This

officer's rise had been phenomenal. He (Mr. Moran) did not doubt the capacity of the officer to do his work, but there were many civil servants equally competent and equally entitled to increases. There were many juniors and many seniors who had not had the opportunities Mr. Hampton had to prove their worth. This officer, who had only been for a few years in the service, had received rise after rise very rapidly. Unwittingly a Minister was led to favour particular men who were at his elbow all the time, and Mr. Hampton had come in touch with the Premier, and had impressed on the Premier the value of his services. What both sides of the Assembly were anxious for was a thorough reorganisation of the civil service. Taking the recommendations of the Under Secretaries and the Commission, and taking the experience of the other States, we could adopt a system of classification; and until that was done members should strongly protest against a gigantic rise of £100. It could not be put forward that the Civil Service Commission had recommended this increase, because if the Government took the Commission's recommendations it could be pointed out that there were dozens of instances in which the Civil Service Commission had recommended increases to juniors and seniors, and the Government had taken no notice of the recommendations. He (Mr. Moran) had had some correspondence with a Minister in reference to some juniors who were obtaining very poor salaries, and in these cases it was stated that the Civil Service Commission had not recommended the officers for increases. It appeared that the recommendations of the Civil Service Commission were taken when it suited the Government and put aside when they did not suit them. If the report of the Commission could not receive serious consideration as a whole, it should be left out altogether, but he thought the report should receive serious consideration. High or low, good, bad, or indifferent, the wisest plan would be for the Government to have no increases at all—which would be in keeping with the policy of the Government and the leading members of the direct Opposition bench of last session—but wait until a proper classification was adopted. No one doubted that there were officers in the

service to whom increases should be given, but Ministerial predilection should be done away with. In the Lands Office there were cases in which increases had been given, and the Minister had not even condescended to give the reasons for the rises.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Reasons would be given for every increase when his estimates were under consideration.

MR. MORAN: The correspondence with the department had shown that the Minister refused to give reasons. There were cases of big rises in the Lands Department. Young officers had been brought up equal to seniors, and men who had worked hard had to stand still. The Premier had interfered in the Lands Department and recommended that an officer should get an increase.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That was another exaggeration.

MR. MORAN: This was only giving what was common report. He (Mr. Moran) did not go behind the back of Ministers to say these things; he stated them openly. All through the Estimates there was evidence of Ministerial predilection. He was in favour of a civil service board, admission to the service by open competition, classification of officers and a proper system of retrenchment by which seniority, all other things being equal, should have the preference. The civil servants were more discontented in Western Australia than elsewhere, and with the example of all the other States before us we ought to be able to evolve a good system of classification and admission to the service. Those who supported the Government on policy should also assist members in endeavouring to keep the Government to their policy.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: If there was to be any test vote, it should be as to whether any increases were to be granted at all this year. Members would appreciate the fact that if we once got away from that and allowed one man £10, another £50, and another £100, we would be going into questions of detail. When the Civil Service Commission were appointed, we anticipated that their reports would be sufficiently advanced to enable the Government to place the question of salaries on a satisfactory footing in time for the present session. The Commission had lasted longer than was anticipated—

he did not say that had happened because the commissioners were not doing their work properly—but perhaps it was due to the fact that we were not aware of the difficulties, and were too optimistic in expecting that the work would be carried out in 12 months. That being the anticipation of Ministers last year, it was thought inadvisable to deal with the question of increases then, as no reports had been received from the Commission. When the question as to the Estimates for this year arose, Ministers had before them certain recommendations, for the Commission had gone through some of the departments and all the out-stations of every department, and the Government were anxious as far as they could to give effect to the recommendations. Was it ever thought for a moment that the Government could bring before Parliament a complete classification scheme in the course of a month or two? Members could appreciate the difficulty in the way of attaining that object. It could not be done satisfactorily by Ministers unless they were prepared to put aside their other work and go into details which Ministers had no right to do. A scheme would have to be devised for fixing a classification, and the Government did not propose to have two boards or commissions going at the same time. Until the present commission had ceased their labours, which would not be until the end of this month, nothing could be done for the purpose of obtaining a board or tribunal for fixing the classification. That he thought was pretty generally known, and members agreed that we ought not to have two boards or tribunals dealing with this question at once. Until however another tribunal could be brought into existence the Government thought some effort should be made to carry out the recommendations of the Commission so far as the Government agreed with the suggestion, and in relation to the departments which the Commission had not gone through, Ministers desired to exercise their own discretion. It was with a desire to assist the civil service that the Government had done what they had. If the main objection of members was that no increases should be granted until a proper system of classification was carried out, members would be keeping back increases from

officers who the Government thought ought to have increases.

MR. TAYLOR: The increases could be made retrospective.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was difficult to make increases retrospective, as increases were too often due not so much to the fact that an officer was doing certain work to-day which he was not doing 12 months ago, but that there had been a rearrangement and retrenchment carried out that had increased the burden of the work of an officer. It was so difficult, therefore, to ascertain what was a fair increase and make it retrospective. If he thought that any of these increases were for a larger sum than would be recommended under classification he would not ask the committee to consent to them, but he was satisfied that they were within the limit of what would be advised by any classification board or tribunal. Members pointed out that the Under Secretary came into close contact with the Minister, and therefore might be favoured. The mere fact, however, of such close contact made the Minister a competent judge as to whether that officer was worthy of an increase. That might be a hardship to some other man whose virtues were not brought forward, but how could we say such man was injured? Any comparison could be made between the salaries in this department, particularly the Crown Law branch, and those paid in other departments. These estimates were prepared before we had the report of the Civil Service Commission, which showed he did not propose such an increase to the Under Secretary as the commissioners recommended, and other officers, prominent officers like the Registrar and Official Receiver, were not getting the increases recommended by the commission. He only referred to that to show that not every official who came into close contact with the Minister necessarily got an increase. So far as this department was concerned every increase recommended was deserved, and would be received whatever a classification board might say. He knew the value of these officers, and the salaries and value of other officers, and had no hesitation in expressing his opinion that whatever tribunal was created to settle classification would give these officers at least the

increases recommended in this scheme. If no increases were to be given, then so far as the general departments were concerned the increases would all come out. We ought not to have a reduction in the case of one man and not in that of another. If increases were to be given the Minister should, where there was a difference of opinion, have the benefit of the doubt and be permitted to take the responsibility, because *prima facie* he knew more about it than anyone else. If the Committee thought there should be no increases at all, that would settle the principle, and all the salaries could be dealt with accordingly; but that would be doing a great injustice to a large number of deserving civil servants. If members departed from that and dealt with individual cases, this particular increase should be given on account of the efficiency of the officer, the good working of the department, and the Minister's recommendation. He asked the House to discuss the question whether we were to have any increases at all.

MR. WALLACE: To increases in certain grades he had no objection, but he had always voiced his opposition to the giving of increases to those with the higher salaries. Those men who received £250 a year could better afford to stand on over a year or two than could those unfortunate men receiving under £200, the majority of whom got from £170 downwards. He would not vote that there should be no increases, but this was a question of fighting for equality amongst these people. He wished to see all equally treated in proportion to the offices they held, and when we found all through that only the more highly paid officers had had their salaries raised, naturally opposition was created. As to this particular salary, he had a very high opinion of this officer socially and had always found him very good in his office, but did not know what ability he possessed. One did not suppose the Premier would say this officer was a professional man; and was it not time we arrived at a maximum for these unskilled clerks?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: We were speaking about the Under Secretary.

MR. WALLACE: Every year we got alterations whereby clerks became under secretaries. The majority of these under

secretaries were chief clerks and were very highly paid if they received £500 a year, which should be the maximum. If they were in similar positions outside the service not one-third of them would receive £500 a year in commercial offices. There was a desire to see the salaries of the smaller men raised to a liberal rate. Classification must come ere long, and if we postponed it we should be doing an injustice to the majority of civil servants.

MR. HOLMES: Some finality should be reached in relation to the civil service. Deserving officers had been kept on for the last three years on the understanding that increases would be given them when the classification was brought about. Three years ago when the Leake Ministry came into power they were going to classify the service and put everything in order, but they found it necessary to appoint a Royal Commission, and now the Premier told us that when the Royal Commission had finished their work it would be necessary to appoint some other tribunal to bring about the classification. As long as a number of men remained underpaid and overworked there would be dissatisfaction; and plenty of them were underpaid.

MR. MORAN: Did the hon. member see the statement that in Western Australia civil servants were 40 per cent. more highly paid than those elsewhere?

MR. HOLMES: No. We should give a higher rate of pay and employ less men. It was necessary in almost every instance to have the principal officer well paid, but it was no use paying an officer well and expecting him to carry on the work unless he had an organised staff receiving fair remuneration. Until we brought about general classification there was bound to be discontent occasioned by the giving of increases to some officers. It would, however, be gross injustice to strike out all these increases. There were men in the railway service who were promised increases when he was Commissioner three years ago, and he was glad to know that in some instances increases were proposed on these Estimates.

MR. ATKINS: What did the hon. member propose?

MR. HOLMES: Would the member for West Perth suggest something definite?

MR. MORAN: That had been done by him. The service should be classified before next session, a proper scheme should be laid down, we should do away with Ministerial favouritism, and entry into the service should be by examination.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: All agreed with classification.

MR. HOLMES: Referring to officers in the lower grades, the bulk of the warders at the Fremantle Lunatic Asylum were getting £120 a year salary with £40 lodging allowance; and although they had been promised increases of £5 a year, these had been in abeyance for some years past. The Commissioners had recommended in their classification £178 per annum for these warders.

MR. MORAN: Was the hon. member in favour of adopting the Commission's report *in extenso*?

MR. HOLMES: There was nothing better to be done that he could see than adopt their report. It had cost sufficient money, and if the report was not satisfactory there was a great waste. We should adopt the report, but not allow the Commissioners to go farther, as they had gone too far already.

MR. DAGLISH, while supporting the amendment to reduce the item by £100, agreed with the member who had just spoken that there were in the service a number of men who were obviously underpaid. Some of them would benefit under these Estimates by the increases recommended; but he would like to see others set down for increases whom he knew to be deserving of them. There had been unnecessary delay in regard to the promised classification. Last year he raised the point on a motion for the purpose of closing the work of the Commission at an early date, by reducing by one-half the amount voted for it; but that motion was negatived. The Treasurer, in speaking on that occasion, said the Commission would probably finish their work by the middle of the next January. Now, after about ten months had elapsed, the work of the Commission was not finished, and we had not got their final report. Two years ago a promise was made by the then Premier (Mr. Leake) that not only should the classification of the Commission be

accepted, but that any increases recommended by the Commission should be made retrospective. That promise was given just before the Commission was appointed. In opposing the present increase of £100 to an officer in the Attorney General's department, he (Mr. Daglish) would support any moderate increase to an officer whom he knew to be deserving; therefore he would not oppose all increases in the present Estimates. He did object to giving so big an increase as £100 to an officer, because it might be a precedent later for other such increases. He wanted to see the maximum salaries of officers and their positions defined. It had been stated that no increases would be given to officers receiving over £200 a year; yet each year some exceptions had been made in favour of officers who were receiving comparatively high salaries.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: No one had said that such a rule prevailed this year.

MR. DAGLISH: Such a rule should not be made, because he did not think every man receiving £200 a year was necessarily paid in accordance with his merits and the importance of his work. There were no such advances as £100 made in the case of officers receiving miserable salaries such as those in the Audit office, where men were doing responsible work for £150 a year, in regard to which the expert who specially reported on that department had recommended salaries nearly double the amounts that were paid. As to bringing in a special officer from outside to examine the Audit Department, he (Mr. Daglish) could not understand why that department should not have been examined by the Royal Commissioners if they were fit to examine the other departments. A large number of cases might be mentioned in which officers were doing work that was much above the value of the salary received in those cases; but while he desired to see increases made where they were clearly deserved, he must oppose any such large increase as that recommended by the Attorney General in his department.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Then strike out the whole £100, and allow no increases at all.

MR. MORAN: The suggestion just made by the Attorney General was

reasonable. We were drifting back to the old position, for unless we were prepared to grant increases to particular officers who were known to the Ministers to be deserving, it was not fair for any one member, like the member for Subiaco, to set up his judgment in regard to officers whom he knew to be deserving of increases. We must trust the Ministers to recommend increases, or vote against all increases until a proper classification was obtained. Officers wanted firstly the great boon of classification, together with certainty or fixity of tenure and a right to certain holidays and to certain conditions of service. He regretted that in starting with the Estimates the Committee did not agree to put aside entirely the question of increases, and to insist on a classification before voting for any increases. By this plan all officers would be treated alike, though certain officers who were recommended for increases in these Estimates might suffer. The Government should either bring down a proper classification next year, or we should have another Government that would do so.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: In the absence of any classification, there was no doubt the members of the Government had worked hard in connection with these Estimates; and probably there would have been less said by members in criticising the Estimates if Ministers had devoted less attention to the recommendation of increases where they were known to be deserved. In connection with the Lands Department, remarks had been made to the effect that there were large and numerous increases. The fact was that the increases totalled only $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the total expenditure for last year, and these increases were more than balanced by items struck out and by reductions made. He would invite criticism on every item in the Lands estimates when they were dealt with, and if he could not satisfy members that any proposed increase was reasonable, let the increase be struck out.

MR. HASTIE: Members agreed that it would be better to have a proper classification, by which the amount payable to each officer should be put outside of Ministerial control and outside of any detailed criticism by Parliament. If any scheme could be devised by which officers

could rise automatically or according to their merits, members would agree to that. Every classification scheme that he had known to be brought forward in other States had provoked as much hostile criticism as was raised in connection with the classification schemes recommended by the Royal Commission in this State, and in saying this he was referring particularly to what he knew in regard to New Zealand and Victoria. It must be admitted that the present Commissioners had made some ridiculous recommendations; but so would every Commission that was appointed. If the Government intended, as was suggested, to appoint some board to go into the classification after the present Commissioners finished their labours, he would not be surprised then if there was as much trouble next session as this. The member for West Perth had argued that none should have an increase unless all who deserved increases could be accommodated; but surely half a loaf was better than no bread.

MR. MORAN: In the absence of a classification, salaries should remain as at present until next session.

MR. HASTIE: Was it desirable that no deserving officer should have an increase because it was not proposed to give increases to others equally deserving?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: If it was fair to give increases to men we knew, what about the men not known to any member of Parliament?

MR. TAYLOR: Ministers should have a better knowledge of officers' qualifications than private members could possess.

MR. HASTIE: Undoubtedly. The proposed increase to this Under Secretary seemed too high; for though he was a good man the only reason given by the Royal Commission for an increase of £150 was that this would put his salary on a level with those which were paid to the corresponding officers in other States. Did the mover of the amendment (Mr. Pigott) intend it as a protest against any increases pending classification of the service?

MR. PIGOTT: No.

[Sitting suspended for 10 minutes.]

MR. HASTIE (continuing): The increase given to this officer was very large compared with that given to other officials.

There must be classification by a Royal Commission or a board, as the Premier suggested, or else classification must be carried out by the under secretaries. There was no other means by which it could be done. Already a Royal Commission had been tried and a meeting of under secretaries had been tried, and every member of the Committee and most people outside agreed that both these bodies had proved unsatisfactory. He would be glad if the debate evolved some method by which an end could be put to the present difficulty.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Nothing could be done now to bring the difficulty to a satisfactory conclusion. He had said several times the question of classification must be settled, and as soon as the present Commission had concluded their labours steps would be taken to appoint a tribunal to deal with the question of classification and to submit a scheme. He agreed with the member for Kanowna that if it were to be a purely official body composed of under secretaries why should Ministers interfere, but if it was not to be a purely official inquiry, a board should be appointed. At present the only point for consideration was whether there were to be increases or not before the classification was brought into force.

MR. PIGOTT: When would the classification be brought into force?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: How could one tell? From short experience he had thought classification would be an easy matter, but he found it was not. He candidly admitted he had hoped, as all hoped, that we should have a classification scheme before Parliament this session. It was thought the labours of the Royal Commission would be so far advanced that they would have submitted, not only the outlines of a classification scheme, but the application of the scheme to the various officers. It was easy to establish a scheme theoretically, but the difficulty arose when the application of that scheme to the various officers was considered, and the difficulties which cropped up afforded the only means of testing the accuracy or efficiency of the scheme. All had hoped that the labours of the Commission would be so far advanced that the Government would have been in a position to come before the

House with a scheme of classification, but that had not been the result. It was seen some little time ago that a scheme could not be submitted in time for this session of Parliament.

MR. MORAN: In this morning's newspaper the Commissioners said they were not given full power to go into the matter of classification; they stated their powers were limited.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The fact was, the commission was very ample and full indeed, and if what the hon. member stated was to be regarded as the interpretation of the commission by the Commissioners, if the Commissioners were anxious to do the work but had not the power, why did they not say so before?

MR. WALLACE: The Commission were given the power, but they stated they had not the power.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The commission was worded as follows:—

To inquire and report as hereinafter mentioned—(1) As to any legislative provisions which it is desirable to make in relation to the public service, and particularly as to the probable effect and cost of any legislative provisions which may be recommended. (2) As to a scheme for the reorganisation of the public service. (3) As to a scheme for the classification and grading of the public service.

MR. MORAN: The paragraph which appeared in the newspaper this morning was as follows:—

In their classification of the public service, the Commissioners have followed the directions of their commission, and visited each department and investigated the nature and value of the work performed by every officer therein, and each office has been allocated to the class in which the duties entitle it to be placed. The question of the character and efficiency of individual officers has not been dealt with by them, because they are not required by their commission to do so; and, farther, it would be quite impossible for them to determine the fitness of every officer for the duties he may have to perform. This is a question which cannot be dealt with effectually except by the head of the department in which the officer is employed, because he is the person having the time and opportunity, and whose duty it is to come to a proper judgment. If the heads of departments cannot be relied on in this matter their services should be dispensed with.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Commission took the position that they dealt with the office and not with the officer.

That was a half-hearted way of doing the business, leaving the difficulty to those who had to apply the scheme. He did not agree with the concluding remarks of the commission if they suggested that by the wording of the commission they had no right to consider the fitness of the individual. Every individual who filled an office assumed that he was the most fit person for that office and was entitled to the full salary. The commission gave authority to inquire and report as to a scheme for the reorganisation, classification, and grading of the public service.

MR. PRIGOT: What was the date of the commission?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: June, 1902; and no powers had been taken from Commissioners, only a department or so had been exempted. It was expected that the Government would have been in a position to put forward a scheme of classification for acceptance or rejection, and he (the Premier) became aware that that was impracticable a few months ago. It would be inadvisable to have a Civil Service Commission sitting with power to deal with classification, and at the same time appoint a board or tribunal to deal with classification and grading which the Commission had the power to carry out. He had expressed the intention that as soon as the Commission's labours were concluded by the end of this month, the classification of the service should be dealt with. He assured the Committee he was as anxious personally as any member could be to have the question of classification settled; for if it was a standing source of trouble to members, it must also be a standing trouble to Ministers. Of course if Ministers did not give some increases in their departments, there would be dissatisfaction in the service, and dissatisfaction expressed by some members in this House; while if they were to give increases all round, there would be dissatisfaction expressed, if not in the service, yet by 49 out of the 50 members in this House. He hoped members would now take up the position suggested by the member for West Perth and vote on the present item as being for or against increases generally; the voting to be an expression of opinion that increases should not be brought about

until the classification of the service was carried out. If, on the other hand, some members were of opinion that increases should be given in cases recommended by the Ministers, he asked the Committee to place confidence in Ministers who recommended increases to particular officers in the present Estimates, believing that Ministers were as anxious as was any member of the Committee to secure economy and also efficiency.

MR. JACOBY: This trouble would recur year after year until greater responsibility was placed on the working heads of departments, particularly the under secretaries. They should be made fully responsible for the efficient working of their departments, and should be practically given a free hand in the selection of instruments or servants suitable for carrying out particular duties, and should not be interfered with by the Minister as was the case at present. It was practically impossible under the present system for any under secretary to carry out his ideas as to what should be done, because he was not a free agent in his department. In those departments which were notoriously ill-managed in this State, instead of the under secretary in each of these cases being directly responsible for the ill-management, we found they were overruled by Ministers. He doubted whether any department was so ill-managed as that of the Lands, for all members who had work to do with this department must have had serious cause of complaint at times in regard to the way its business was managed.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Parliament was responsible for the bulk of that trouble.

MR. JACOBY: The Minister now in charge of the Lands Department sought to overcome the shortcomings of the system by practically doing the work of the Under Secretary, and bothering with details which a Minister should leave to others. The Minister should not be overloaded with details as in the case of the Lands Department, where practically everything had to be passed through and initialled by the Minister. The Ministerial head of a department should lay down principles and be the guiding head in his department, and he should not be there to do with his own hands the work

properly belonging to an Under Secretary. The same want of system was noticeable in the Railway Department, resulting from the lack of what he was suggesting, that of placing responsibility on the shoulders of responsible officers in charge of branches of the work. The Railway Commissioner should be held responsible for the working of the railways, and he should pass that responsibility down to other officers in succession according to their grades, and a freer hand should be given to the heads of departments and the subheads of branches. Under the present system we found that it was hardly possible for even an office-boy to be dispensed with without moving practically the whole machinery of the department to bring that about. An incident came under his notice recently which was worth mentioning. Certain work had to be done in relaying a portion of the Eastern Railway, and the inspector in charge of the work had two men sent to him, and was told to put them on. The inspector returned those two men, stating they were more fitted for office-work than such work as he had to do; but in spite of that those two men were again sent back to him with instruction to put them on doing something. As a result, they were put on to carry bags of water for men employed in the work. How could this House blame that inspector when he was deprived of all choice or judgment by being dictated to as to the men he should put on the work? Responsibility should be put on the under secretaries and on responsible officers, and the Minister should see that they produced good results. The whole system would doubtless have to be altered before the change he was suggesting could be brought about; but the change ought to be made now, for the system he was recommending was the one which produced good results in private undertakings, and was the only system likely to produce good results in Government undertakings. Something could be done by placing greater responsibility on subheads, with more freedom of action in employing or dismissing and securing the proper carrying on of the work of each department or each branch. If we expected Ministers to be politicians capable of passing legislation through this House and taking part in debates, we should

not also expect that every Minister could be an administrator capable of organising every branch of the work in his department. It was useless to go on changing Governments and expecting successful results under the system now in operation. A particular Minister might be highly capable as an administrator; but one Government going out and another coming in, the next Minister of that department might not be a good administrator, though under the present system he might upset all the good that the previous administrator had done. It was necessary that more reliance should be placed on the permanent heads of departments, and they should be held directly responsible for producing good results. The reports of the Royal Commission did not satisfy him; for while their recommendations were practical in some cases, there were other recommendations that certainly ought not to be acted on. He would support the amendment for reducing the present item, and he trusted the outcome would be some good in regard to this vexed question.

MR. TAYLOR would support the reduction of the item on the ground that a classification of the service was necessary before particular increases should be given. Referring to the civil service deputation to the Premier, and to the public meeting of civil servants held afterwards, he was impressed with the fact that they were in favour of all increases being suspended until there was a proper classification of the service; and it was a complaint even with them that increases were invariably given to those officers who were highly placed or had access to the ear of the Minister, while lower officers in the service did not obtain increases. About 400 public servants were present at that meeting, and as they expressed a desire that classification should go before increases of salary, he (Mr. Taylor) would vote against increases until classification was obtained. Those servants recognised that some persons would probably suffer as a result of classification; but they said the service should be reduced where necessary, and good pay be given to those who were to be kept on.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Those at the meeting represented only about one-fifth of the salaried officers.

THE TREASURER: There were about 2,000 altogether.

MR. TAYLOR: The 400 who were there were very representative of the service, even if there were 10,000 in the service. All grades of the service were presumably present; and they cheered the speakers to the echo. The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) now pleaded for certain officers receiving £120 per annum who had been promised increases of £5; yet the Premier proposed to give an officer receiving £450 an increase of £100. Better strike out all the increases until there was a classification.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member could not ascertain from the Estimates what increases were proposed, not knowing what items represented transfers; and this could not be ascertained from any Estimates.

MR. TAYLOR: That was not the fault of members. It was pleasing to hear the Minister affirm the very argument which had been advanced earlier in the debate by members opposing increases. But we must take the Estimates as they stood; and they showed that the increases were invariably given to highly paid officers.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: No.

MR. HOLMES: Should the principle apply to wages men as well as those receiving salaries?

MR. TAYLOR: Wages men would be dealt with in a separate Bill. We were now dealing with civil servants, who at their public meeting enthusiastically demanded classification. He hoped the amendment would pass, that all other increases would be struck out, and the whole service classified before next session.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Anyone who like himself had been a Minister would agree that classification of the service would greatly relieve the Government. Much had been heard of promises to classify made when he was in office, and not fulfilled; and the immediate predecessors of the present Ministry had also promised a scheme, which could have been effected simply enough. The present Ministry did not acknowledge responsibility for the appointment of the Public Service Commission; still, Ministers should have disbanded that Commission and brought in a Public

Service Bill to make a classification. In New South Wales such an Act had been in force for some years, and last year it was consolidated and a farther classification made, which seemed to work satisfactorily. When our civil servants were classified the regulations would not be more acceptable to them than were the present arrangements; but under classification discontent would soon cease, for officers knew that they were bound by regulations made under the Act, which regulations had the force of law during the life of the Act or until it was amended. It was said that civil servants at a public meeting in the Queen's Hall cheered the proposal for classification. No doubt many of them would be glad to see the service classified; but many would be just as discontented as they were to-day. There never would be contentment in a large body of public servants; for they always expected more than was granted by private employers. Having had several years' experience of the two largest departments of the State, and having brought about in them a measure of classification which was fairly satisfactory, he knew that there would always be the same trouble about increases; for no matter what increases were given, there was an undercurrent of dissatisfaction, and often of expressed dissatisfaction. In private employment dissatisfaction soon ceased, because steps were at once taken to remove it; but in the public service members in whose constituencies there were many civil servants would voice their complaints year after year. Take the case of an officer receiving £180 a year as a shorthand clerk. How many shorthand clerks in private employment were as well paid? Very few. No doubt some salaries were too small, and classification might be advantageous to some officials; but the service should be classified by a board, for no classification by under secretaries or with the help of Ministers would give satisfaction. As to the item under discussion, if, as some suggested, the passing of the amendment was to be an indication that all other increases should be struck out, many members would regret voting for the amendment. The recommendation for this increase had been made by the Premier; and if the Under Secretary was worthy of his posi-

tion, he should receive the same salary as officials in corresponding positions. True the amount of the increase was open to discussion; but he (Mr. Piesse) did not care to vote for the amendment if it were understood that its passing involved the striking out of all farther increases. Would the leader of the Opposition explain?

MR. PIGOTT: When he moved the amendment to reduce this item by £100, he distinctly stated that he did not move with the intention of attacking this Under Secretary, who should get the increase if worthy of it; but he moved to strike out the increase in order that the Premier and the Government might clearly state their intentions as to classifying the service. This the Premier understood. Some members present to-night were not present last Thursday, and did not know the reason for the amendment. The object was to get a Ministerial statement, so that members might know before Parliament prorogued what was the intention of the Government regarding the service. We were now in exactly the same position as we occupied two or three years ago. We had been promised a classification; and though the Royal Commission had been appointed and its labours were drawing to a close, the Premier had led members to understand that its work must be considered almost useless. The hon. gentleman had told the Committee that he would have done so previously if he thought the Committee would approve of two commissions sitting at one time. All agreed that two commissions to inquire into the civil service should not be sitting at the one time; but the Government had been lacking in their duties, for they should have foreseen that the result of the Commission would probably be fruitless, and should have been prepared to disband the Commission or improve it in such a way that its work would have been of some use. During the debate that followed the amendment to reduce the item, several members refused to acknowledge the true question put to the House, and he (Mr. Pigott) was extremely sorry the Premier had thought fit to lead members farther astray by saying that the amendment was to decide whether there were to be increases or no increases. That was not the intention when moving the

amendment. He (Mr. Pigott) desired that there should be increases given, in fact he was inclined to believe that there were many officers who deserved increases. Many officers had been promised increases for three years and had been put off with a statement that something would be done as to classification. Now we were nearly at the close of another year and there was to be no satisfaction given. Was it a wonder that the civil servants were dissatisfied or that the officers had taken the steps which had been taken recently? Something might have been done before now, and he was sorry the Government had not given members to understand that something would be done in the near future. There was no reason why the Government should not state their reasons fully to the House. The Premier had refused to do so, and so far as one could understand the Premier did not intend to do so. There was no possibility of classification being brought about within the next session.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Premier had made a definite statement.

MR. PIGOTT: The Premier had made no definite statement. He (Mr. Pigott) had asked for a statement but received no reply. Probably the Premier thought that the request was not worth replying to. The Premier had stated that he was exceedingly anxious to get the civil service classified.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: And said he would get it classified.

MR. PIGOTT: That was what was objected to. The member for the Williams had said that a promise was made years ago that the service should be classified; how long was this to continue? Was it to go on for years and the service continue in a disorganised state? Members desired to see classification, and why should it not be brought about? If the Civil Service Commission had not done their work properly, then the Commission should be disbanded at once. Why should it remain in existence for another month? The Premier had stated that the suggestions of the Commission were not to be accepted. He (Mr. Pigott) did not say the suggestions were good, for he knew of many officers about whom the suggestions of the Commission were most ridiculous. This vote was to be considered a test vote, but

members had deliberately burked the question. One member had said that he approved of the principle of the amendment, for he did not think the Government had done their duty in the matter of classification, but he objected to the reduction of £100 in an officer's salary. That member said he would vote for a reduction of £50, but not for the reduction of £100. That member knew that the amendment had nothing to do with a reduction by £50 or £100. We desired to get a definite statement as to the action of the Government, and he hoped that when the vote was taken it would be on the principle he had enunciated, and would not interfere in any way with any farther votes to be considered on the Estimates.

Amendment (to reduce by £100) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

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

Majority for ... 3

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Atkins	Mr. Diamond
Mr. Bath	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Ferguson
Mr. Courner	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Duglish	Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Hastie	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Hicks	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Moran	Mr. Holmes
Mr. Oats	Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Piesse	Mr. James
Mr. Pigott	Mr. Rason
Mr. Stone	Mr. Reid
Mr. Taylor	Mr. Higham (Teller).
Mr. Wallace	
Mr. Yelverton	
Mr. Jacoby (Teller).	

Amendment thus passed, and the item reduced.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The amendment had been submitted to determine whether increases should be allowed generally or not. [MEMBERS: "No," "Yes."] It was to be hoped the Committee would be consistent if members were going to interfere in a matter like this in which he (as Minister) was more competent to express an opinion than any member in the House, for he had worked side by side with this officer for 15 months and knew exactly the value of the services rendered. He was therefore in a better position to judge as to the value of this officer than any other member, unless it was thought he was prejudiced or biased in the matter. If members thought the vote should be reduced, he accepted the

principle and asked members to accept the position that there should be no reductions until there was classification.

MR. PIGOTT: There was some misunderstanding. When he moved the amendment he distinctly stated that his intention was to get the opinion of the Committee as to the past action of the Government in regard to the civil service. He had repeated that statement this afternoon and had distinctly stated that he did not move the amendment with the intention of reducing the officer's salary in any way, or with the intention of reducing any other officer's salary.

MR. MORAN: It was a vote of censure really.

MR. PIGOTT: The Premier knew what the intention was in moving this amendment. Any member looking through *Hansard* of last week could see that the Premier knew what was the idea. The object of the amendment was to get a vote from the Committee that members did not approve of the action of the Government in regard to the civil service.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Why then should this officer be made to suffer?

MR. PIGOTT: There was no intention to knock off all the increases on the Estimates, for he had said over and over again that there were many civil servants who were underpaid, and it was the duty of the Committee to see if there was some way of paying these officers better and giving them more equitable payment for their service. There must be dozens of cases of deserving officers who should have increases, and he had no intention of wiping out the increases entirely. The vote which had been taken was practically one of no confidence in the Government—that was the point he wished to make clear; and the Premier understood the position, because the Premier asked him (Mr. Pigott) if it were intended to make the amendment a test vote, and he had replied that the Premier could do so if he wished. There would be an opportunity for another test vote, on this particular matter later on, at the same time he felt exceedingly sorry if through his vote civil servants had been robbed of increases.

MR. WALLACE: When speaking previously he had distinctly stated that he voted to reduce the salary because

he considered that beyond a certain amount increases should not be allowed. When the present Attorney General was in Opposition, it was the practice of that party to criticise the Estimates in detail, and to refuse increases in many cases where they were recommended. The Opposition of that day contended that Sir John Forrest should not be allowed to say whose salary was to be increased and who should not have an increase. It was to be regretted that the present Attorney General did not follow that practice; for in the present instance he was claiming a right to say that his Under Secretary should have an increase, while members of the House were objecting to increase that salary or give a large increase to any salary until the whole service was classified.

MR. MORAN: Those who voted in the last division voted as one man to affirm their dissatisfaction with the present position of the question; for a classification had been promised time after time, and although we had not yet got it, Ministers went on recommending particular increases. Members voted against that. The leader of the Opposition had made it clear that he did not agree to a suggestion made that there should be no increases until a classification was provided. But suppose we settled the matter now by another vote? In that case he (Mr. Moran) would vote against all increases until a classification was provided.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: That was not the position taken by the Government. He did not want to tie down any member. He understood that certain members thought this item was too large, but that in voting against the increase they reserved freedom of action in connection with other items. The whole discussion to-day had been on the suggestion made by the member for West Perth. What he (the Attorney General) desired was that if there were not to be any increases because a classification was not yet provided, that rule should be persistently applied throughout these Estimates.

MR. DAGLISH: That would put off the increases for three years.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Whether we had to wait three years or thirty years, some principle could be laid down.

MR. FIGOTT: When would the Attorney General produce a classification?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: One had no sympathy with a member who argued that a servant who deserved an increase of £5 should get it, while another civil servant receiving £450 a year and worth £500 should not have that increase. The member for West Perth wanted no increases until a classification was provided, and he (the Attorney General) understood that the last division was on this point. If the intention was to attack the general principle of increases, that should be made on the first item in a vote.

MR. MORAN: It did not matter what item was taken, so long as the principle was affirmed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Why could we not have a vote on the question whether increases in these Estimates were to be dealt with or not? If he as Attorney General did not know enough of the value of the services of his Under Secretary, there was no member of this House who better knew the value of any friend or any elector who happened to be a civil servant.

MR. JOHNSON: There were too many leaders in the House, and they were contending now as to the interpretation to be put on the last division. He (Mr. Johnson) wanted a classification of the whole service; and though he thought that some of the officers in these Estimates were recommended for increases without deserving them, and though he knew of other officers who were not recommended for increases who did deserve them, he would still vote against all increases until a classification was provided.

MR. FIGOTT: When would that be?

MR. JOHNSON: After the next general election the new Government would be forced to classify the civil service.

MR. ATKINS: The Attorney General had been asked to make a definite statement on the question of classification, and he had not done so.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: What he had said twice this afternoon and several times before was that as soon as the present Commission had finished their labours and presented their report at the end of the present month, steps

would be taken to create a tribunal to classify the whole service. He had also said that there ought not to be two commissions going on at the same time.

Item—Crown Solicitor and Parliamentary Draughtsman, £800:

Item—Assistant Crown Solicitor, £700:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Before Mr. Justice Burnside was raised to the bench, the positions of Crown Solicitor and Parliamentary Draughtsman were held by separate officers. After the retirement of Mr. Justice Burnside from the Crown Law Office, an Assistant Crown Solicitor was appointed, Mr. Sayer being Acting Crown Solicitor and Mr. Barker the Assistant. The Government now considered that the Crown Solicitor and the Assistant Crown Solicitor could perform the work formerly done by the Parliamentary Draughtsman, together with the ordinary legal work of the Crown; and the bulk of the Parliamentary drafting, if not all, was being done by Mr. Sayer. Last year Mr. Barker received £600, and it was now proposed to give him an increase of £100 per year; but that increase would not make the expenditure exceed the figure it reached when Mr. Sayer and Mr. Justice Burnside were acting as Parliamentary Draughtsman and Crown Solicitor respectively. In that sense there would be no increase. But if the proposed increase to the Assistant Crown Solicitor were struck out, that officer would be entitled to receive certain fees. By an old practice which he had become aware of quite recently, where the Crown instituted legal proceedings and recovered costs those costs were handed to the Crown Solicitor when he had conducted the proceedings, or to other officers when they had conducted them. Of this practice neither he nor the Crown Solicitor approved.

MR. HASTIE: Then this increase was in lieu of costs?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes; but it would not represent anything like the costs earned, which were estimated at £400 or £500 a year.

MR. MORAN: The Minister, who agreed that there ought to be no increases pending classification, should make that announcement, and put up a Government supporter to move to that effect.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member could not ask him to move to reduce his own estimates.

MR. MORAN said he would vote for an amendment by any Government supporter to reduce an item with a view to indicating that all increases should be struck out; but if this proposition were not made by a Government supporter, he (Mr. Moran) would not assist in snap-shooting at specific increases.

MR. CONNOR: Surely the Attorney General had challenged the Committee to vote for the last amendment, on the understanding that if it passed all increases would be struck out?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: But certain members stated that they did not vote on that understanding.

MR. JOHNSON said that he did not intend to move to reduce the items "Crown Solicitor" or "Assistant Crown Solicitor," being satisfied that these represented a saving of £50 and no increase. Let other members move a reduction if they thought fit. He moved:

That the item "Two Managing Clerks" be reduced by £40.

This would make the salaries the same as for last year, and would be a test vote as to increases generally.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Let the Committee understand the meaning of the amendment. He did not wish to deal with the specific merits of this item. When he found that members had in mind, not the merits of the item but the general principle, he had a right to ask members to decide that question of principle. He wished the point decided whether in the opinion of the Committee the Government should take up the position that there were to be no increases until the question of classification was settled. That point had not been settled by the last amendment, because some members said they had not voted on that understanding, and the leader of the Opposition said the amendment had not been moved to test the general question of increases. We should be clear that the present amendment was moved to give a clear-cut vote as to whether there should be any increases. The £20 increase to each of these two managing clerks was not of vital importance; and he took it that the vote would be as to whether the Committee considered there should be

any increases until we had a classification.

MR. JOHNSON said his object was to oppose all increases until we had classification of the service. Whether this amendment were passed or negatived he would move to strike out all other increases.

MR. TAYLOR: The Committee should clearly understand the Premier's attitude. If the Minister supported this item, the amendment would be lost; but members would have an opportunity of dealing with all other increases. As the Minister suggested that if this increase were struck out all other increases should be deleted, the present amendment should be moved by a Government supporter.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Not at all. The Government would vote for their own Estimates.

MR. TAYLOR: One could understand Ministers voting for them; but after the Premier's expressed desire to make this vote apply to all increases, the amendment should have come from a Government supporter. The member for Kalgoorlie was being used by the Government, who would defeat his amendment. This made one feel inclined not to vote at all. He (Mr. Taylor) held that there should be no increases pending classification; and the Civil Service Association were on his side, maintaining that the highly-paid officers who had access to Ministers got increases, while low-salaried men, no matter what their merits, were overlooked.

MR. DIAMOND: On Thursday last he stated that in the absence of a properly-constituted board of classification he was bound to accept the decisions of Ministers as to increases; but certain members refused to accept these decisions, and wished to constitute themselves a board of classification. He declined to acquiesce in that proposal; and in voting with the Government against the previous amendment he had voted with the clear understanding that if the reduction of £100 was carried he would vote for striking out all other increases; and to that understanding he would adhere.

MR. ATKINS: The Government were to be blamed for not having brought forward a classification scheme. Were we to punish men who were doing the

work of the Government because Ministers had not done their duty.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: One man had already been punished.

MR. ATKINS: That was to be regretted. It was understood that the Premier had given a positive statement that he would bring forward a classification, and that he would appoint a board after the Civil Service Commission had finished their labours, to go into a scheme of classification.

MR. DAGLISH said he could not vote against the amendment because by supporting it he would be supporting the abolition of all increases on the Estimates.

MR. BUTCHER: The amendment which had been carried was moved with the object of giving the Committee an opportunity of expressing dissatisfaction with the Government for not having brought down a classification scheme. The result of the vote had unfortunately done an injustice to a very worthy officer, and unless the vote were carried to its logical conclusion a farther injustice might be done, therefore he intended to vote to knock off every increase proposed on the Estimates.

MR. HOLMES: It was his intention to carry out the principle which had been decided on and endeavour to knock off all increases. The Premier had told the Committee that the Under Secretary should receive an increase, as he was a very capable officer, and with evidence like that before the Committee members had voted against the increase to this officer.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member would vote for vengeance now.

MR. HOLMES: There were civil servants who were personally known to the member for West Perth and to the member for Subiaco, and these members would vote for increases to the officers they knew and wished members to accept their recommendation, while the Committee refused to accept the recommendation of the Premier in regard to the Under Secretary. He (Mr. Holmes) knew civil servants in Fremantle who had interviewed him and asked him to support their increases and had proved that they were entitled to the increases; but when the items came to the vote he intended to vote against them because the Committee had refused, on the recom-

mendation of the Premier, to vote an increase to the Under Secretary. Some one was to blame for the position we found ourselves in. We had a Civil Service Commission which had been at work for 18 months, costing a large amount of money, and yet in this morning's newspaper there was an announcement that this Commission was appointed to deal with the office and not with the officer.

MR. WALLACE: The Commissioners had never read the commission then.

MR. JACOBY: The same thing was said when the Commissioners reported on the Lands Office.

MR. HOLMES: It was said that the Commission was appointed to classify the office and not the officer. Someone was to blame for not having found out that position earlier. He would support the amendment.

MR. FOULKES: It had been generally admitted that there had been grave dissatisfaction amongst civil servants for many years past. Officers had been humbugged since the year 1897. From personal observation he knew that in the Lands Office recommendations had been made by Ministers as far back as 1895 and 1896 approving of increases for various officers. The Minister for Lands had promised officials that they should get increases the next year, and the same promise was made in 1898 and 1899, the result being that the civil servants were sick at heart and did not know whom to believe. These promises had been made year after year, and the Leake Government in the previous year had appointed a Commission to frame a classification, but all were sadly disappointed in the result of the work undertaken by that Commission. There had been grave cause for dissatisfaction. Various progress reports from the Commission had been received, but the Commission had not gone to the root of the question, and evidently the Premier was dissatisfied, and intended when the Royal Commission had finished its labours in a month to appoint another board to classify the service. It was proposed by various members that the Committee should object to every increase on the Estimates because there was no classification. The Premier had promised that a fresh tribunal would be

appointed to deal with the classification; now the issue was not whether this or that civil servant should have an increase, but whether we were prepared to believe the Premier or not. The member for West Kimberley had stated that other Ministers had made similar promises and the member for the Williams had borne out that statement, but he (Mr. Foulkes) was prepared to trust the Premier. The Government were not to be blamed because the work of the Commission had been so disappointing.

MR. JACOBY: Then close them up.

MR. FOULKES: In a month's time the Commission would finish its work; not much more harm could be done in the meantime; the Government would not run a very grave risk. He was prepared to trust the Premier in carrying out his promise that a fresh tribunal should be appointed to deal with the classification of the service. It seemed harsh that certain civil servants who were entitled to increases should be punished because there had been some delay in bringing forward a scheme of classification. The officer whose salary had been reduced by £100 was deserving of an increase, and it was unjust to punish civil servants who had been waiting for years for increases. He (Mr. Foulkes) wanted to see classification, but that was no reason why officers should not get their increases. The board which the Premier intended to appoint would have an opportunity of dealing with the salaries of the civil servants, therefore why interfere with the increases now? Were members prepared to trust the Attorney General's promise or not?

MR. MORAN: No.

MR. HIGHAM: After the Attorney General's assurance that a classification scheme would be prepared, it would be easier for the new board to classify the service as it was now rather than as it would be if the increases in these Estimates were passed. The principle had been carried in the last division that no increases should be made until a classification was obtained; and the Committee having affirmed that principle, we should wipe out all increases in these Estimates.

MR. TAYLOR: As to the argument that increases had been promised as far back as six years, this only showed that those officers who would put up with

promises and go on working were not worthy of any increase, because if they were worthy they would have left the work long ago when they found the promised increases were not obtained. The ordinary worker in a trade would not be content with his employer's promise to increase his wages next week or next month; but if the increase were not obtained when promised, he would leave that job. These public servants ought to do the same, and the fact that they had held on all these years depending on promises not fulfilled was a proof they were not worth more pay.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Some misunderstanding had arisen in regard to the last division. The object of the leader of the Opposition in moving that amendment was not so much to cut down the particular salary as to affirm a general principle that there ought to be classification. The Attorney General promised clearly this afternoon that it was intended to have a classification of the service as early as possible. A great effort was made to get a classification of the service when these Estimates were being prepared, and to have it based on the recommendation of the Royal Commission; but the Government found that such a classification would not be acceptable to Parliament, because it would entail a large and continued increase in the cost of the whole service. Ministers then made up their minds to have a thorough classification of the service as soon as the Royal Commission completed its work. To refuse all increases because a classification had not yet been obtained would be cruelty to a number of deserving officers who were recommended for increases in these Estimates. There were many such in the Mines Department who had been expecting increases for a long time, and although Ministers recommended increases where they knew that increases were deserved, they did not expect Parliament to accept every increase in the Estimates.

MR. PIGOTT: Why not?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The object of the hon. member in moving to reduce the last item was not to decrease the salary, but to have a classification of the service.

MR. PIGOTT: That was quite right; but were Ministers prepared to stick to their Estimates?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: So far as the Mines Department was concerned, he was prepared to stick to his estimates. A large number of subordinate officers had been recommended for increases. There were 61 officers receiving under £100 a year each, and 44 of these had been recommended for increases of £18 each. In salaries ranging from £100 to £200 there were 33 officers, and 24 of these were recommended for increases. He hoped the Committee would not strike out all the increases in these Estimates.

MR. WALLACE: Were members to understand that the division on the last vote was to affirm the principle that no increases were to be made until classification was provided? If that were not understood, he intended to vote for any increases in items which he approved.

THE CHAIRMAN: The decision on the last vote would bind the Committee only to the particular vote.

MR. WALLACE: Then as the vote did not bind members generally in regard to other items, he would vote on other items as he thought proper; but he was prepared now to settle the whole question on the present amendment.

MR. YELVERTON: In the absence of a classification it was evident that the increases in the Estimates had been arrived at in a haphazard way, without any fixed principle. Believing that to be so, he voted in the last division against an increase, not to reduce the particular officer's salary, but on the general principle, and he would oppose all increases until a classification was brought in. Throughout the Estimates it was evident that a majority of those officers who were to receive increases were officers receiving the higher salaries.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: That was not so. The hon. member was wrong.

MR. YELVERTON: If justice had been done, increases would have been given in a greater degree to those officers who were receiving salaries ranging up to £200 a year, the majority of these men being inadequately paid. Somebody was certainly to blame for the long delay in regard to classification of the service. The Royal Commission had been a great

disappointment to the Government and to members of this House, because the Commission had not arrived at a classification scheme.

MR. BATH: The hon. member should read the Commission's reports.

MR. YELVERTON: In regard to the Lands Office, he knew that great dissatisfaction prevailed.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS denied that.

MR. YELVERTON: Certain members had informed him that one officer in particular in the Lands Department had been singled out for special advance over the heads of other officers.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That case would be justified when the Lands estimates were dealt with.

MR. YELVERTON: The Attorney General had promised that another Commission should be appointed to prepare a proper classification of the service; therefore to strengthen the Minister's hands he would vote against this and every other increase.

MR. BATH: Many members could not forget that many of their constituents were civil servants. It was said the Royal Commission had failed to classify the service; but how could that be maintained until their final report was received? A number of members objected to the Commission because of certain stringent recommendations that some officers should be dispensed with, some reduced, and others increased. He believed the final report of the Commission would be worthy of consideration by the House. The interim reports had not been discussed in the Chamber, and probably nine-tenths of members had not read them. So long as there were civil servants in constituencies we should have members talking about reclassifying the service and complaining of officers' grievances. Before granting increases the Government should have waited for the final report of the Commission. He would vote against salaries exceeding £200 or £250 being increased before the final report of the Commission was dealt with.

MR. MORAN: While it was true that some members could not forget that some of their electors were civil servants, he had known members who could not forget the presence of miners in their electorates;

and other members came to the House pledged to vote for certain measures. All who voted for the amendment by the leader of the Opposition did so to emphasise their belief that some classification should at once be commenced. If the Government did not produce a classification Bill next session they should be turned out. To gratify those members who had a tender regard for some of these increases, he would be in favour of making the report of the Royal Commission retrospective in regard to increases but not to decreases, dating the increases from June of this year. That was often done elsewhere. In discussing the last amendment the Premier said his (Mr. Moran's) position was logical, that no increases be granted pending classification; but the Premier declined to vote so as to give effect to that position. He (Mr. Moran) then announced that if the Government would support that proposal he would stand by them, otherwise he would take a free hand. Now he went farther. On account of the support given by both sides of the House to the leader of the Opposition's amendment, he (Mr. Moran) would vote with those who intended to make the present amendment an expression of opinion against all increases. Let the Government bring before us a Classification Bill first thing next session, and make all increases retrospective to 1st July last. On those grounds he would vote for this amendment, with a view to striking out all increases on the Estimates. This would accelerate the bringing in by the Government of a Classification Bill, to remedy certain injustices which would be done by not granting increases.

MR. CONNOR: Why did not the Government accept the amendment and the proposal which it involved? All were agreed that classification was needed; and although there had been plenty of time, it had not yet come. A scheme good enough as an experiment might have been brought in. If we missed this opportunity, the session, the last of this Parliament, would soon be over, and we should lose control. Though not in favour of deleting all increases, he nevertheless voted that they be struck out for the sake of tying down the Government to putting in hand at once a classification scheme. The next Parliament could

easily make the increases recommended retrospective for six or twelve months.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Classification would not affect the two managing clerks represented by this item. They were the only two managing law clerks in the service; and the increase was given them in view of what was received by men holding similar positions outside. Some attempt at classification had been made, and the results were embodied in the Estimates. The fact that these were unsatisfactory to certain officers did not prove that the attempt had not been made to classify. The deputation from the Public Service Association assured him that they had but few or no complaints to make as to the classification of the Attorney General's department. Like other members, he was strongly in favour of classification; but it would be a hardship to be unable to extend consideration to officers whom Ministers considered deserving of increases, particularly in cases where the Ministerial recommendation was supported by the Royal Commission. He hoped members would pass the item.

MR. HOLMES: The debate clearly showed that the only solution of the difficulty was to knock out all increases. The member for Claremont maintained that some of his constituents were set down for increases and ought to get them. The member for Hannans (Mr. Bath) said he was in favour of giving the working men an increase.

MR. BATH: No such thing had been said. He had not referred to any particular grade, but insisted that all public servants should have a fair deal.

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

MR. HOLMES (continuing): Each member had a different idea as to which officer was worthy of promotion and which officer was not. All this led to complication, and the only way out was to support the amendment and strike out all increases until a properly constituted board was appointed. The member for Hannans was prepared to support any increases of salaries below £200, but he was opposed to increasing salaries above that amount, and the hon. member had

stated that the report of the Royal Commission was a good one.

MR. BATH: Not that it was good.

MR. HOLMES: That it was worthy of consideration and adoption.

MR. BATH: Of consideration.

MR. HOLMES: The increases recommended by the Royal Commission were chiefly to the higher offices of the service, yet the hon. member only desired to give increases to officers whose salaries were less than £200 a year. The member for Claremont agreed that a board should be appointed to put the public service on a thoroughly satisfactory basis, and he also contended that there were a number of valuable officers who were worthy of increases. How did the member for Claremont know that certain officers were worthy of consideration, as that member had not come in contact with the officers in their work? One could only come to the conclusion that certain officers had told the member for Claremont that they were qualified to fill the positions which they occupied. If the Committee were to do anything in the matter, members must take the bull by the horns and classify the whole service. If each member was to tamper with the Estimates and vote for increases to individuals known, it would be a pretty sorry day for those officers who had no friends amongst members. Ministers knew who were the most valuable officers in the service, and a distinct statement had been made by the Premier that his right-hand man was the best officer in the service and entitled to an increase, still the Committee had decided that no increase should be given. The Royal Commission did not deal with the officers in the Railway Department: what was proposed to be done when we came to the consideration of the Estimates dealing with the railways? Was it proposed that the board to be appointed should deal with those officers?

MR. PIGOTT: We could not get that information.

MR. HOLMES: It was right that members should know whether the board would deal with the officers of the Railway Department, the wages and salaried staffs. If the board were to deal with the wages staff, he knew one section of members who would object to any reduction being made there. He was still

open to conviction, but so far as the debate had gone he had come to the conclusion that the only satisfactory solution of the difficulty was to strike out all the increases, on the understanding that there would be a classification brought into existence at the earliest possible moment.

MR. PIGOTT: One hardly knew whether the Committee were agreed that the question was to be made a test one as to all increases on the Estimates or not. The Committee did not seem to be agreed on that point. It seemed that the Committee might be placing hardships on some officers if all the increases were struck out. He took it that the Estimates, in the opinion of the Government, were correct, that they were just and that the increases provided should be given to officers; but what did the Premier say when the first or second item was under discussion? The Premier gave it out that he was agreeable to accept the vote as an indication that members wished to strike out the increases.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Nothing of the sort was said by him. It was absolutely without foundation.

MR. PIGOTT: If he were not mistaken, the Premier said that the vote meant that all other increases must go. The Premier asked the Committee to be logical and strike out all other increases.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: What he had said was that the Committee should deal with the item as one of a lot or on its merits.

MR. PIGOTT: Which way did the Premier think the Committee dealt with the item?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: In a general way, but the explanation of the hon. member showed that it was not so.

MR. PIGOTT: Did the Government intend to stick to the Estimates?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: It looked a good deal like that, as the Government were voting for them.

MR. PIGOTT: If the Government said they intended to stick to the Estimates, then as a protest he intended to vote for the amendment. It would bring things to a head, and if the amendment were carried it would show that the Committee was determined that the civil service shall be reorganised without farther delay.

MR. WALLACE: Almost every member who had spoken was in favour of deferring increases till after classification was provided; that when that classification was obtained, the increases so recommended should be retrospective. If that was so, the increases should operate back for some years, and there might be cases in which increases had been promised for six or seven years. If the increases were to be retrospective but were not to apply to all such cases, that would be unfair, because some claims had been standing over for years.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Committee should deal with this question free from any farther question as to whether increases which might ultimately be recommended in the future were to be retrospective or not. That would be a question for the Ministry or the Parliament then in power; and members of this Committee had no right to suggest that increases to be recommended in the future, as a result of classification, should be retrospective, because a vote of this Committee on that point could not bind the action of a future Parliament. As he had explained, the Government made an honest and determined effort to apply a classification as far as Ministers could do it, when preparing these Estimates; but having prepared a rough classification, which was entirely provisional, the increases recommended in these Estimates as the result of that were such as were not likely to be decreased by any future classification that might be made. The Government, however, felt when preparing these Estimates that it would be an injustice to keep servants another year without increases and unless some of the anomalies were removed, although Ministers knew they could not remove all anomalies; and even if a classification were to be made by a board, there would be instances which would tend to show that the board had not done justice in every case. No body of men in this State had previously made such an honest attempt to remove anomalies as Ministers had made in connection with these Estimates. Each Minister had gone into the matter not only with the Under Secretary of his department but with subdepartmental heads, in trying to remove at least some of the grounds of complaint; and he regretted

that those officers for whom the Ministers had been endeavouring to do their best were so ungrateful in connection with their action. Members of this House knew that whenever increases of salaries were proposed by Ministers, there were always attacks made by some members on those increases. That was a cheap way of getting popularity, by attacking increases.

MR. MORAN: The Attorney General ought to know that, because he lived on it for a long time.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was a part of the stock-in-trade of a member of Parliament to make a serious attack on increases proposed by Ministers, though no such serious attack was made when decreases were recommended. The Government had fully anticipated this difficulty would arise in recommending some increases in these Estimates; but the difficulty had been added to by disappointed members of the civil service, who thought they also ought to have come in for increases this year, but found they were not to have them. Those members of the civil service by the action they took were doing their best to deprive their more fortunate brethren from getting increases which Ministers recommended in these Estimates. Whatever might be the opinions of hon. members in relation to the need for classification, their opinions were not nearly so emphatic as his own, because he had felt the absolute need for a classification, and it was necessary also for the protection of Ministers to have a system of classification carried out. The increases in these Estimates were those of men who were well entitled to them, and were such that no board of classification would be likely to reduce in the future. It would be a gross injustice if the Committee were now to pass a general vote affirming that no increases should be granted merely because all civil servants who, in the opinion of some members, might deserve increases were not to obtain them in these Estimates. He was confident that although some of these increases might seem large, they were well deserved; and he hoped the Committee would not pass a general vote against increases. If, however, the majority of members were opposed to these increases, that opinion should be

expressed on some question of principle, because the Committee should not interfere with particular items, but leave the responsibility of those items to the Ministers concerned. If these increases did not go as far as all the members of the civil service desired, let us at least do the justice which these increases would do to those in whose favour the increases were recommended.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The remarks of the Attorney General did not help members to understand the question more clearly. If we decided the question on principle, as the Attorney General suggested, it would mean that the Government would have to take back their Estimates and rearrange them, because it would be impossible for each Minister to give effect to that general principle in regard to every item where an increase was recommended. Some of the increases were in clusters, as for instance eight clerks who were to receive amongst them a total sum, being an increase as compared with the total sum paid to the same number in the previous year. If that increase were disallowed, how could the particular Minister give effect to the decision of the Committee? In regard to the division which had been taken, he understood the objection was to that specific increase, and that members were not voting on any general principle. There would be some increases in these Estimates which should be made, and those officers who really deserved increases should not be made to suffer because some members of the Committee might wish to affirm that all increases should be disallowed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The present amendment was intended to affirm that principle only.

MR. HOLMES: The Attorney General had asked members to be logical by striking out all increases if they struck out any. He (Mr. Holmes) intended to be logical, and would ask the Government to take back their Estimates if necessary and rearrange them without the increases. As to every increase in these Estimates being deserved, the Attorney General had pointed out that his right-hand man, the Under Secretary, one of the best officers in the service, was well deserving of the increase, but a majority of members refused to grant it.

If members of the Committee were to vote for particular increases because they had received information from this or that officer in their particular electorates, what other information could those members have about increases generally in these Estimates? The Committee should vote against increases on principle, or they should leave the responsibility for particular increases to the Ministers concerned. The present Royal Commission had not attempted to report on or to classify the employees engaged in the railway service. They were a large body, and how were they to be dealt with? Would the Minister for Railways state whether the railway staff would be classified by the tribunal to be appointed to deal with the departments which had been reported on by the Royal Commission? Dissatisfaction in the service would continue to increase so long as highly-paid officers' salaries were raised and no attention was given to the rank and file. He (Mr. Holmes) would vote against a few favoured officers being singled out, while the rank and file were told to wait for increases until a proper tribunal was appointed. Every increase we now passed created a fresh anomaly.

MR. PIGOTT: Had any increases been given to juniors?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Ninety per cent. of the increases were to juniors.

MR. PIGOTT: The Committee were convinced that such was not the case; and the Minister for Lands had said that nobody could by perusing the Estimates understand what increases had been given.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That would be true of any Estimates; for one would not know who was represented by the number of an item.

MR. PIGOTT: None wished to know the names; but if these Estimates were in the form adopted last year, when the items were separately stated, proposed increases would be apparent. Members wanted the service classified, and their wish would probably be attained sooner than if this debate had not taken place. The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) spoke wisely when he said that Ministers were the only persons in a position to say who should have increases; but when the Committee decided not to accept the first Ministerial recommenda-

tion, they must logically follow the member for Kalgoorlie by striking out the remaining increases. He (Mr. Pigott) was not a rail-sitter; and if he brought down Estimates he would not submit to their being knocked about.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Take the item "Clerks." Included in this were various increases to juniors. The salary of £270 represented a £10 increase; one at £200 an increase of £10; one at £170 an increase of £20; one at £140 an increase of £19; one at £130 an increase of £10, and one at £100 an increase of £10.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) asked whether the railways would be classified if a certain board were appointed. It was not at present the intention of the Government to commit the classification of the railway service to such a board. Ministers considered such classification would be better made departmentally. A certain classification now existed in the department.

MR. STONE regretted that the Royal Commission had not completed its work in time to permit of a classification board being appointed ere this; but after the assurance of the Attorney General that some 90 per cent. of the increases were to junior officers, these ought not to be deprived of their increases by a whim of the Committee. He would support the Government rather than see injustice done to so many young officers.

Amendment (to reduce by £40) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	13
Noes	...	...	...	18

Majority against ... 5

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Bath	Mr. Burges
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Duglish
Mr. Connor	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Diamond	Mr. Ferguson
Mr. Hicks	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Holmes	Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Hastie
Mr. Moran	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Pigott	Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Taylor	Mr. James
Mr. Yelverton	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Higham (Teller).	Mr. Quinlan
	Mr. Rason
	Mr. Reid
	Mr. Stone
	Mr. Wallace
	Mr. Gordon (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

MR. PIGOTT: After the division, it would be generally acknowledged that the reduction made in the salary of the Under Secretary should not be insisted on. There would be little occasion to question the salaries now when going through the Estimates. [MR. MORAN: None whatever.] When the Committee had gone through the Estimates, probably the Government would see their way to recommit the Estimates with the object of putting back the £100 which had been struck off the salary of the Under Secretary to the Attorney General. The debate was brought about by an amendment moved by himself, but he had a distinct object in view, and not that of reducing the officer's salary.

MR. HASTIE: It was to be hoped the Committee would not go the extent of adopting all the items as they stood. When dealing with the Estimates last year, members knocked off many amounts, and probably members would desire to do so on this occasion.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Every item would be defended.

MR. HASTIE: There was no doubt the Committee would criticise the items this year in the same manner as was done last year. Members on the Opposition side were not satisfied with the way the Committee had treated the last amendment; and now it was desired that the Estimates should be passed without consideration.

MR. MORAN: A principle had been fought for, and a sufficient majority had voted that the time had come for a classification. As a corollary to that, some members thought no increases should be given; but the member for Kanowna thought that because some civil servants he knew were entitled to increases, the Committee should vote them. He (Mr. Moran) would vote to get the Estimates through as they stood.

Vote (reduced by £100) put and passed.

Friendly Societies, £3,500 :

Item—Registrar, £500 :

MR. REID: In the two previous divisions he voted that the increases should be paid to the officers, and he believed deserving civil servants should have increases, for he was not prepared to wipe off all the increases proposed. It was

proposed to give an increase of £50 to the Registrar of Friendly Societies, and he now moved—

That the item be reduced by £50.

He had been brought in contact with this officer, who occupied a high position in the service; and he (Mr. Reid) was of opinion that the officer was utterly unfitted for the position he occupied. He was one of the least capable servants in the State at the present time. This officer had not a mind of his own or a will to back up what he believed to be right, and an officer in such a position as registrar should have a will of his own. He (Mr. Reid) had been put to personal inconvenience by this officer, who had been found wanting. On one occasion the registrar caused him to travel from Coolgardie to Perth in connection with the registration of certain societies on the goldfields. On one occasion the officer told him that a case which had been made out for the registration of a union was a good one, and on another occasion this officer said he had changed his opinion.

MR. TAYLOR: The registrar had seen the Premier in the meantime.

MR. REID: Unfortunately the Premier was not in the country at that time. The reason the officer gave for not sticking to his opinion was that the Premier was not in the State. This officer, who occupied a high position, was not prepared to act on his own initiative; and surely the Premier must have been a monster of iniquity to control that officer, seeing that the Premier was 2,000 miles away at the time. This officer had been receiving £450 a year, and he (Mr. Reid) was credibly informed that the bulk of the work devolved on a clerk in the office whose name did not appear on the Estimates at all. Those who did the work should receive the emoluments. If so the clerk should be receiving the money now paid to the registrar, who was not worth £250, was not worth anything, and should not occupy the position. He (Mr. Reid) would like to hear the opinion of the Premier in regard to this officer.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL regretted that the member for Mt. Burges should make the observations he had, for that member rarely spoke, and when he

did so his observations carried great weight. One was sorry the member had formed such an opinion of the Registrar of Friendly Societies; but it might be due to the fact that the registrar was called on to administer the Conciliation and Arbitration Act during a period of difficulty. The Act was subject to a good deal of criticism at the time between the A.W.A. and the A.M.A., and questions arose which created much difficulty. Some questions had to be referred to the President of the Arbitration Court. The hon. member had referred to one occasion when the registrar intimated an opinion one day and changed it another, which put the hon. member to some inconvenience. He (the Premier) sympathised with the registrar to a certain extent, because he had an opportunity of hearing the case of the A.M.A. and the A.W.A., and he thought both cases were abundantly good. The registrar was a hard-working and painstaking officer, who was conscientious and did his best. We should to a large extent be guided by the work he had done. This officer was appointed in 1894, and was chosen specially in Victoria to come to this country to administer the Friendly Societies Act. The registrar had a fairly good reputation in Victoria and had been here since 1894 in charge of the Friendly Societies Act. Since that time the officer had also the administration of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act added to his duties, and the administration of the Trades Union Act and the administration, the other day, of the Co-operative Societies Act. In addition the officer was a public actuary. Members would recollect that Mr. Owen gave an actuarial report in connection with certain probable financial results of federation.

MR. MORAN: The Premier did not accept that report.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: That did not lessen the value of the work. The report represented a good deal of hard work and he believed a good deal of ability.

MR. MORAN: A good deal of what was stated had been proved true.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: No doubt. As the registrar had these duties added to his work, the increase from £450 to £500 was not too large.

MR. TAYLOR: The officer could not have been fully employed before if these duties had been added.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: There must be a Registrar of Friendly Societies with special actuarial knowledge, and there must be a special class of man to carry on this work. The officer was hard-working and not a 10-to-4 man. The member for Mount Burges had heard rumours that the registrar did not discharge his duties but that a clerk performed them. Members often heard outside the service that so-and-so was no good, as the work was done by somebody else; or one officer said that he ought to get the same salary as the chief clerk because the chief clerk was absent for a week or two and the work was performed by someone else. He (the Minister) believed the registrar did do the work, and although he did not say that the registrar was the one perfect officer in the service, still the official was entitled to the increase. If one compared the £450 which this officer received with the salaries paid elsewhere, it would be seen the amount was not too much. The increase to Mr. Owen was recommended by the Civil Service Commissioners, an increase of £50; and it would be seen that this was the same amount as he (the Attorney General) recommended in the Estimates.

MR. MORAN: The Committee had been asked to reduce this item by £50 because it was said the officer had not been quite civil to the member for Mt. Burges. So the hon. member's argument was that this officer was worth nothing, but he should receive £450 a year and not £500.

MR. TAYLOR: Speaking from personal knowledge, he could say this officer was a civil, energetic, hard-worker but was not a strong administrator; for when the officer wished to carry out his duties in a particular case according to his own judgment, he had to admit that he could not do anything without consulting the Attorney General. It was evident that this officer had to act under the direction of the Attorney General when any political capital was to be made; and so in regard to the registration of a certain friendly society, two unions were competing, and the Attorney General was on the side of one union for political reasons

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL : Which union was that?

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. gentleman was in favour of the association which the member for Mt. Burges was representing, and the Attorney General's advice to the registrar was not upheld when it went before the Arbitration Court. The mover of this amendment had not realised that the particular officer was a weak administrator who was squeezed by the Attorney General for political purposes. He (Mr. Taylor) would support the increase, and would not vote spitefully for the reduction.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The member for Mount Margaret was always funny. He had told the Committee that he (the Attorney General) was in favour of the society known as the A.M.A. Well, of the Labour party, four were members of one society and two were members of the other. He (the Attorney General) was supposed to have favoured the two as against the four, and was said to have made political capital out of it. That could be left to the judgment of the House.

Amendment put, and a division taken (called for by Mr. Holmes) with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	4
Noes	...	...	...	23

Majority against ... 19

AYES.
Mr. McDonald
Mr. Pigott
Mr. Reid
Mr. Holmes (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Atkins
Mr. Bath
Mr. Burges
Mr. Butler
Mr. Dalglish
Mr. Ferguson
Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Gordon
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Hastie
Mr. Hayward
Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Jacoby
Mr. James
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Quinlan
Mr. Bason
Mr. Stone
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Wallace
Mr. Yelverton
Mr. Higham (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

Land Titles, £9,500:

MR. DAGLISH asked for particulars of increases in the item "nine draughtsmen."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL explained that there were a few increases ranging from £3 10s. to £20 each, and that the work of these officers was not identical in all cases.

Vote put and passed.

Patents and Trade Marks, £1,895—agreed to.

Stipendiary Magistracy, £30,262 11s. 7d.—agreed to.

Supreme Court, £16,115—agreed to.

This concluded the votes for the Attorney General's Department.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT (Hon. W. Kingsmill).

Office of Colonial Secretary, £5,828 8s. 7d.:

Item—Immigration, £2,000:

MR. DAGLISH: Was it proposed to continue to assist persons to bring their relatives from the Eastern States, or was there to be a new departure?

THE PREMIER: No new departure. In the past this expenditure had been drawn entirely from loan; but it would be taken this year from revenue, the loan authorisations having been exhausted. Any suggestion from the hon. member would be acceptable.

Item—State ceremonials, £500:

MR. DAGLISH: Last year £100 only was voted and £871 spent. For what ceremonials was the £500 needed?

THE PREMIER: For odds and ends. We had now to pay the Commonwealth Government for guards of honour for Governors. Expenditure incurred in entertaining distinguished visitors was included in this item.

Vote put and passed.

Aborigines, £6,500:

MR. BATH: Were the Government granting aid to settlers for the relief of aborigines, and allowing such settlers to utilise the labour of the natives thus relieved, without any rebate or allowance for such labour being made to the Government?

THE PREMIER: It was impossible to thrust on settlers the obligation to main-

tain the blacks. Unhappily the aboriginal native was not now so useful on stations as he was a few years ago. A small amount per head was set apart to provide destitute blacks with blankets; but natives working for settlers were supposed to work under signed contracts pursuant to the Aborigines Act; and the contracts provided that food and clothing should be found by the employer.

MR. MORAN: One man signed on, and the squatter had to keep the tribe.

THE PREMIER: That was the difficulty. A black might have more than one wife, a large family and many relatives. As far as possible abuses were checked; and on the whole it appeared that the squatters behaved exceptionally well to the natives. The salaries in this department were about £770; the grants in aid to various orphanages and industrial homes about £1,600; £9,000 was paid for food to aged and destitute natives, blankets and medicine, transports, shelters, and police supervision, giving a total of about £11,500, of which £6,500 was provided in these Estimates in addition to the £5,000 provided by statute.

MR. BUTCHER: From the report of the Chief Inspector of Aborigines it appeared there were 515 half-castes in the State. The men, numbering 176, might be left to take their chance; but the Government should endeavour to remove the women from their present haunts and prevent their taking to vicious courses. Many half-caste girls were now living in various goldfields and seaport towns. A Bill had been drafted to deal with the matter, but had not been brought in.

THE PREMIER: True; a Bill was in rough draft, and he hoped to bring it in next session. He had discussed the matter with the member for Pilbarra (Mr. Isdell), who had made several valuable suggestions. Our success in treating natives would largely depend on administration. To keep efficient control over natives in distant parts was difficult; and trouble arose where they came in contact with non-aborigines, coloured or otherwise. He (the Premier) would shrink from applying to a half-caste native who had acquired European habits and methods of living the treatment applied to the aborigine. It was hoped that during recess the draft Bill

would be printed and submitted to members having experience in the treatment of natives, brought in early next session, and referred to a select committee. The main object of the Bill must be to secure effective administration by giving somewhat wider powers to protectors of the natives; and we must bear in mind that to be effective it must strengthen the hands of those called on to carry out its provisions.

Vote put and passed.

Charities, £31,630:

Item—Cooks, 2 at £100 and 1 at £70:

MR. MORAN: Who were these?

THE PREMIER: The two at £100 were cooks at the Old Men's Home, Perth, and the one at £70 assisted generally at the Women's Home, Perth.

MR. MORAN: The generosity of the Government might have been extended to these underpaid workers rather than to the highly salaried officers who received increases of £100.

THE PREMIER: In addition to their salaries, these cooks were provided with quarters, fuel, light, sanitation, and uniform.

MR. MORAN: The work of the two cooks at the Old Men's Depot must in this climate be pretty heavy. He had endeavoured to get some allowance made to them, but Mr. Longmore replied that the Civil Service Commission recommended that one of them should receive £120 per annum inclusive of all emoluments, being a small increase on the present salary and emoluments. The letter pointed out that the matter was not worthy of consideration, seeing that the increase was only £4. In the other case the Civil Service Commissioners recommended that the officer should receive £117, which really was an increase of £1 in the salary. These men were working long hours, and the Government might see if something could be done for them, as they appeared to be underpaid. If the Civil Service Commission was quoted against underpaid and badly paid officers, why was it not quoted in other cases?

THE PREMIER: Was not £100 a year and quarters for a plain cook very good?

MR. MORAN: The recommendations of the Civil Service Commission ought

not to be quoted. Was it contemplated giving these men better accommodation? for that provided at the Old Men's Dépôt was not worth quoting. If the Government intended to bring forward supplementary Estimates, matters of this kind might be noticed. In regard to the dépôt, it was in an unsuitable place, for these men wandered about in the park amongst the children there.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: A new site had been chosen near Gallop's.

MR. MORAN: It was to be hoped proper accommodation for the old men would be set apart.

Vote put and passed.

Electoral, £9,750 :

Item—Clerks, one at £170, one at £150, and one at £70; £390:

MR. DAGLISH: To which of the clerks was the increase given?

THE PREMIER: The £10 increase was given to the clerk at £70, who at present was receiving £60 a year.

MR. DAGLISH: Was there any reason why the other two clerks should not receive an increase?

THE PREMIER: Several clerks on the Estimates had not received increases. He would inquire about the matter, and let the hon. member know.

Item—Electoral Registrars, £1,200 :

MR. BATH: Which electoral registrars had been done away with, seeing that the amount voted last year was £1,470?

THE PREMIER: It had been thought that £1,200 would make adequate provision for the electoral registrars who were necessary. In fixing the sum at £1,200 he was not aware that any particular place had been knocked off entirely, but in some places it was thought that the work might be done by the permanent staff of the Government and not by outside men. The amount of £1,200 would, he thought, be an under-estimate in view of the approaching general election. The amount of £1,200 had not been arrived at by taking the various electoral officers and adding the existing amounts together, but it was a lump sum. The object was to avoid the payment of a permanent staff.

MR. BATH: In regard to the preparation of rolls a great deal of uncertainty was occasioned by the fact that no rolls had been published for some time past. There was a desire on the part of electors to have their names placed on the roll. These persons were handicapped because they did not know whether their names were on the roll or whether they should file a new claim or transfer from one roll to another. The transfers which would be effected would mean extra work for the registration office in Perth. When would up-to-date rolls be issued.

THE PREMIER: The object was to avoid the expense of printing the rolls, for in all probability new rolls would have to be compiled under a new Electoral Act; that was the reason why the printing of the rolls had not been undertaken. When the new Bill was passed, steps would be taken to have the new rolls prepared. It was hardly necessary to go to the expense of reprinting the existing rolls at the present time. What the member evidently had in mind was the need for reprinting rolls to give persons notice as to what rolls they were on.

MR. DAGLISH: Was the Premier abolishing the office, Chief Electoral Officer, or was it intended to appoint the Inspector of Parliamentary Rolls as Chief Electoral Officer?

THE PREMIER: The idea was to keep the Chief Electoral Officer without pay; the Inspector of Parliamentary Rolls being a separate officer to carry out the work of the inspection of the rolls.

Vote put and passed.

Fisheries, £3,040 :

Item—Trawling expenses, £500 :

MR. CONNOR: What was the meaning of this item?

THE PREMIER: An offer had been made to the Government by the owner of the schooner "Rip," who had been carrying out some trawling experiments on the New South Wales coast, to carry out some trawling experiments in Western Australian waters. A suggestion had been made that the Government should assist the owner of the "Rip" to carry out experiments. The offer was that the owner of the schooner should see if he

could find suitable banks on the coast, and on finding one he should at once report the fact and proceed with the trawling experiments. The Government thought the work should be taken in hand, for in Victoria, New South Wales, and New Zealand—he was not certain of the other States—certain experiments of this nature had been carried out; and it was strongly urged on us by the Colonial Secretary, who was himself an enthusiast in this direction, and was also urged by the Inspector of Fisheries. The object of the item was to make provision to carry out this experiment, which should be tried sooner or later, and the Colonial Secretary strongly advised the acceptance of this offer.

MR. CONNOR: It was not easy to see why this amount should be invested for trawling along the coast, when a Fremantle merchant some years ago procured a steam trawler which he proposed to work along the coast, but the Government absolutely refused him a license to work it.

THE PREMIER: That was for pearl-shelling, and there were objections raised to trawling for pearlshell.

MR. CONNOR: Surely trawling for pearlshell was a legitimate private enterprise. He did not approve of any favoured selection being made in this way, and he moved

That the item be struck out.

MR. DIAMOND: The inspection of fisheries along the coast was totally inadequate. At present young, immature fish were being destroyed recklessly; and even after the steps taken recently in trying to control and stop poaching in closed waters, poaching was going on to a large extent. The estimates provided for five inspectors, but the number should be at least double to adequately protect the closed waters; for while the Perth inspector was looking after the Canning River some night, the Swan River would be drawn with nets, and fish would be taken down and sold at Fremantle wharf as having been brought in from outside. It was the same at Fremantle; while the inspector was looking after fishing grounds in some other part, the shore along Garden Island was being dragged. He wanted to tell the Minister and to inform the department

generally, from facts within his knowledge, that the destruction of fish was going on recklessly in every direction, and the number of men engaged in the destruction of fish were increasing every month. Many of these men, Greek and Italian immigrants, were practically brought over as slaves, and when landed at Point Perrin and elsewhere these men were housed, fed, clothed or rather covered in gunny-bags. It was impossible for the small number of inspectors provided in these Estimates to look properly after the closed waters. Along the coast from Geraldton to Albany there should be at least five or six more inspectors. He had been told by one member that to interfere with these foreign fishermen would raise the price of fish; but experience showed that ever since these foreign fishermen came into the business the price of fish had been raised in this State. The ground was being worked out in many places. He knew one place not far from Fremantle where there was a large establishment on which many ducks and fowls were kept, and these birds were fed largely on immature fish that had been dragged up on the beach and left to perish. In addition to the necessity for having more inspectors, the fish regulations were entirely inadequate. He understood there was sufficient power in the Act to make the regulations effective, and he hoped the Attorney General would see if this could be done. One item in the Fishery estimates was for a clerk at £160. A clerk formerly in this position made away with a good sum of money; therefore if a clerk was to handle considerable sums of money, it was hardly wise to pay so small a salary as £160 a year, if losses were to be incurred by defalcation.

THE PREMIER: The loss was not so much, £300 or £400.

MR. DIAMOND: But that loss would pay a better salary.

THE PREMIER promised to look into the points suggested by the hon. member.

MR. MORAN: A large total sum was proposed to be expended in connection with Fisheries, namely £3,040 for the year. It appeared that this expenditure was really for the benefit of a fish-ring around Perth and Fremantle; and he hoped the Government would devise some means by which the price of fish to

the consumer could be reduced. Meat and fish were abominably high in price.

MR. BURGESS: Some frozen meat was selling at 1d. a pound. Was that dear?

MR. MORAN: Perhaps some frozen pork was being sold at 1d. a pound. At present a bit of decent meat cost one shilling a pound. In Perth to-day fish was dearer than in any other part of the Southern hemisphere, yet we had the best fishing grounds. If young fish were allowed to be destroyed, no wonder that the fish were scarce in some places where they used to be abundant. It would be better to improve the fish supply rather than spend money in a trawling experiment, as proposed in the item under discussion. He supported the amendment. Should not the departmental officers be asked to recommend a scheme by which fish could be cheapened?

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

Ayes	...	...	...	6
Noes	...	...	...	24

Majority against ... 18

AYES.
Mr. Daglish
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Moran
Mr. Stone
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Connor (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Atkins
Mr. Bath
Mr. Burgess
Mr. Butcher
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Ewing
Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Gordon
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Harper
Mr. Hastie
Mr. Bayward
Mr. Higham
Mr. Wallace
Mr. Jacoby
Mr. James
Mr. Morgans
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Pigott
Mr. Rason
Mr. Reid
Mr. Yelverton
Mr. Holmes (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived, and the vote passed.

MR. CONNOR: The item of £500 was given to this trawler in order that he might oppose a small company formed to fish in Sharks Bay to supply the Perth market. It was scandalous that local enterprise should be crippled by a State subsidy to an outsider.

THE PREMIER said he had never heard of the private company.

MR. CONNOR: It had been formed, and he had not mentioned it previously because he was personally interested.

THE PREMIER: None would have attributed personal motives to the hon. member. Had the local company a ship capable of trawling? This arrangement was made with a man who had successfully carried out trawling experiments for the State of Victoria. He was not fishing for the market, but searching for fishing grounds, and his schooner had been equipped and successfully used for trawling.

THE CHAIRMAN: The discussion was out of order, as the vote had been passed.

Gaols, £26,884:

Item—Inspector of Prisons, £200:

MR. DAGLISH: The State had only one prison, and a special inspector to visit it occasionally. He had three clerks; and there was a superintendent of the prison with two clerks. By appointing the superintendent as inspector and putting him in charge of the department, or making the inspector a superintendent and combining the two staffs, probably half the labour would be saved. Full consideration did not seem to be given to the need for an experienced criminologist as inspector. The inspector should be resident in the prison.

THE PREMIER: There was a difference between a resident superintendent as head of the prison and the inspector of prisons. Police gaols and other gaols throughout the State came under the control of the inspector, who early last year, for instance, visited the North-West coast with the inspector of police, and inspected all the gaols as far as Wyndham. In some of these aborigines were confined. The head of the prisons department could not be resident superintendent of the Fremantle Gaol.

MR. TAYLOR: Did the inspector receive any salary as Comptroller General?

THE PREMIER: A Comptroller General was not yet appointed. The inspector now exercised the powers which the Prisons Bill would give to the Comptroller General. The Bill would abolish the position of inspector, who would be merged in the comptroller. The superintendent at Fremantle could not discharge the duties of comptroller or inspector, for he had enough to do to look after his own prison. Surely the Sheriff was the fittest officer to be

inspector of prisons. The two offices had been conjoined for years past, thus saving a conflict of authority; for the Sheriff had charge of prisoners till they were convicted, and of persons imprisoned for debt or default.

MR. TAYLOR: A Comptroller General was necessary here as in other States; but the prison inspector had numerous other positions to fill. Had he not something to do with the rolls? He must have had a varied experience if competent to deal with rolls and criminals, and probably many other matters. This appointment was evidently made in the good old period.

THE PREMIER: The officer was very competent.

MR. MORGANS: Was there sufficient accommodation in the gaols for the criminals? He had heard of several cases in which men who had been convicted on the goldfields and sentenced to rather long terms of imprisonment and who had been sent to Fremantle gaol, in a very short time were discharged from gaol because there was not sufficient room for the prisoners. Had any case of that kind come under the notice of the Attorney General? He knew of one case in which a man was sentenced to a term of imprisonment and sent to the gaol, and before a fourth of the sentence had expired the man was discharged for the reason that there was not sufficient room for the prisoner in the gaol. If there was ground for this statement it was time the Government provided accommodation for prisoners. Western Australia was the gathering ground for some of the most notorious criminals from the other States, and if these criminals were sentenced to terms of imprisonment there should be sufficient room to accommodate them in the gaols. The Fremantle gaol was not a big establishment, and he would like to know if there was sufficient accommodation in the State for persons sentenced to terms of imprisonment?

THE PREMIER: There was not too much room in the Fremantle gaol, and the Government desired to relieve the pressure there as far as possible by the establishment of penal out-stations to which good-conduct prisoners could be sent. There was an out-station at Drakesbrook which had proved satisfactory, and at Rottneest as soon as the

Prisons Bill was passed a penal out-station would be established, and the island would make a first-class place, for the men could be given their freedom almost. It was not intended to enlarge the Fremantle gaol. He knew of no case in which men had been liberated because there was no room in the gaol. If there had been such a case he thought it would come under his notice.

MR. MORAN: What had been the experience in removing prisoners from Derby to Broome and back again? He was informed that the present system was more expensive than that formerly in vogue. The matter was spoken of lukewarmly by the officials when it was proposed. Was the system satisfactory or not?

THE PREMIER: There was no information as to how this system was working, but he would ascertain before the estimates of this department were passed.

MR. STONE: Seeing that the Inspector of Prisons received £550 as Sheriff, there was no reason why his salary should be increased by £50. He moved that the item "Inspector of Prisons, £200," be reduced by £50.

Amendment negatived, and the vote passed.

Government Gardens and Government House Domain, £2,608 2s.:

MR. PIGOTT: Was the director of the gardens in the habit of doing work for private people?

THE PREMIER: No. The only instance in which this officer did other work was in connection with the King's Park Board, for which an amount of £50 was paid. There had been a practice in the past for gardeners employed in the public gardens to work occasionally for other people. It was an improper practice and had been stopped: an inquiry was now pending in regard to the matter.

MR. TAYLOR: Had any charge come under the notice of the Premier as to the gardeners? He had heard some startling statements as to how the gardener in charge, Mr. Feakes, and those under him receiving salaries, were sent to private houses to attend to gardens. The people who had mentioned this were prepared to make a statement on oath.

THE PREMIER: An inquiry was pending in the matter.

MR. TAYLOR: But the evidence of these people had not been taken.

THE PREMIER: If the hon. member would let him know the names, he would see that the evidence was taken.

MR. TAYLOR: The charge was practically one of fraud.

THE PREMIER: That was the charge. If the member would supply him with the names, he would see that the evidence was taken. He was not prepared to discuss the question now, as an inquiry was pending.

MR. GORDON: The item "Contingencies" was increased from £650 to £740, and amongst the reserves attended to was the one at Mill Point. How was the amount apportioned?

THE PREMIER: There was no rule. There being a number of places, a large amount could not be expended at each place.

MR. GORDON: Was it proposed to spend any money at Mill Point?

MR. STONE: Should not the municipality of South Perth look after the Mill Point reserve?

MR. GORDON: The municipality desired to keep the reserve in order, but they received no money from the Government for doing so.

THE PREMIER: The Government expended money on these spots, the object being to beautify the public reserves. There should not be a separate agreement in connection with one reserve. At Mill Point there was a public reserve and personally he would like to add to that reserve, for he always had a keen desire to buy the old mill and re-erect the sails, as the mill was one of the interesting relics about Perth. It stood out well and was one of the oldest buildings about Perth. If the mill could be purchased at a reasonable price he would feel inclined to purchase it.

Vote put and passed.

Harbour and Light, £21,335 3s. 4d. :

MR. MORAN: Was this the proper time to discuss the Harbour Trust, for various ramifications had been brought to light which would lead to an interesting discussion?

THE PREMIER: There was no item under this vote on which the matter

could be discussed, although the Colonial Secretary was the Ministerial head of the department.

MR. MORAN: On the Works Estimates there was an item for steel bars or steel pipes or steel jaws, on which the matter could be discussed.

MR. STONE: When the Harbours and Light branch was taken over by the Federal Government there would be a big saving. Last year £30,000 was voted for this department, and this year the amount was £21,000.

THE PREMIER: Against the expenditure some revenue must be credited for light dues.

Vote put and passed.

Medical, £95,352 6s. 9d. :

Item—Principal Medical Officer :

MR. WALLACE: The Royal Commission had recommended that an amalgamation of offices should take place, the effect of which would be to provide a position for one of those Commissioners. The Commission recommended that the position of Principal Medical Officer should be abolished and that the duties should be performed by the chairman of the Health Board. Did the Government intend to give effect to that recommendation?

THE PREMIER: The Government had no intention of carrying out that recommendation, and effect could not be given to it until a new Health Act was passed.

Item—Cooks :

MR. WALLACE asked whether the three Chinese cooks employed in the North-West could not be dispensed with and Europeans employed.

THE PREMIER understood that Chinese cooks were employed only where it was found impossible to get European cooks. He would draw the attention of the Minister to the point.

Item—Fremantle Lunatic Asylum :

MR. HOLMES: Here was a case where justice might be done to a number of warders in this institution. There were 12 warders, and eight or nine of these had been blocked from getting the annual increase in salary during the last three years. Some warders had been in the

service many years, beginning at a low salary and rising by a small annual increase until they reached the maximum. It was unfair that others of these men had lost the benefit of annual increases through the action of Parliament in blocking increases during the last three years, and they had not got the benefit of the full payment which would otherwise have been due to them, while there were officers who had reached the maximum previously and were not put to this disadvantage. Justice should be done in these cases.

THE PREMIER: Attendants were employed under the medical rules and regulations, being taken on at £90 per annum with allowance for rations and lodging, and they received an annual increase. If some warders had been deprived of this increase during the last three years, he would inquire into those cases.

Item — Fremantle Public Hospital, £5,500:

MR. PIGOTT: From statements in the Press it appeared that the hospital board had nominated a doctor for appointment to the honorary medical staff; that the Colonial Secretary had disapproved of the nomination, and that a deadlock had resulted. Surely the board were not obliged to get Ministerial sanction to an honorary appointment. What was the legal position?

THE PREMIER said he had not looked up the legal point.

MR. PIGOTT: If there was a doubt, the Minister's attitude was not to be commended.

THE PREMIER: The Minister, if requested to consent, had surely the right to refuse.

MR. PIGOTT: The request might have been made out of courtesy. The only reason given for refusal was that the doctor nominated had a partner on the medical staff of the hospital.

THE PREMIER: A partner on the board.

MR. PIGOTT: So had other doctors. All the laymen on the board, the chairman included, unanimously picked out Dr. Martin as best qualified for the position.

MR. FOULKES: The majority did, but the laymen were not unanimous.

MR. PIGOTT: This doctor was stated to have held a high position in St. Thomas's Hospital (London); yet the board were denied his service.

THE PREMIER: Such appointments were bad in principle.

MR. PIGOTT: Then why not ask other doctors similarly situated to resign?

THE PREMIER: There was a difference between asking existing officers to resign and objecting to a new appointment.

[**MR. QUINLAN** took the Chair.]

MR. PIGOTT: The objection to this officer seemed to come from long-established practitioners.

THE PREMIER: Inquiries would be made and information furnished.

On motion by **MR. PIGOTT**, progress reported and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 22 minutes past 10 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 11th November, 1903.

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

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the **COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Return showing number of Royal Commissions held during the present Parliament, moved for by Hon. G. Bellingham.

Ordered, to lie on the table.