

up, but he found that the selection contained only 100 or 200 acres of good land, and the rest was third-class land. This complaint had been brought under his notice by people in difficulties. After having gone over the land and gauged the quality of it, they had asked the department to reclassify it, and these people had been asked by the department to pay a deposit on the cost of the reclassification; and then practically they had to forfeit the land, and run the risk of getting it back again. That information had been given to him by selectors who had personally applied and sent down their money to the department. After the reclassification the application became practically a new one. If the department had made an error in the classification, the reclassification paid for by the selector should secure the land for him. The Minister for Lands might give some explanation.

Mr. ANGWIN: In the event of land being applied for in pastoral areas, how long would it be before such land was ready for selection?

The PREMIER: In a district where there were pastoral leases, it was necessary before the land could be thrown open that twelve months' notice in some cases be given to the pastoral lessees before a selection could be made or the land taken up, although preliminary work could be carried on in the interval. With regard to the complaint made by the member for Kanowna, he believed the practice was in a case where reclassification was necessary, that a reclassification was made on a fee being deposited of one or two guineas. In this particular case a reclassification was not asked for, because the selector was afraid that if instructions were issued for a new classification, in the meantime his original application would be forfeited.

Member: It was forfeited, and he had to go before the land board.

The PREMIER: That was in the case of more than one applicant for the block. In the case of the member referred to, apparently the selection was taken up without the selector seeing the country. Selections were often taken up from the rough classification shown on the plan.

In any case if the member submitted the name of the individual, the matter would be inquired into.

Mr. WALKER: The man's name was Main, and his selection was close to Swamp Well. On going over the land, Main had found that he had far more third-class than first-class country; in consequence of this he had desired a reclassification. He was informed by the department, however, that after the reclassification he would have to go before the land board, and might, as a result, lose his selection. In preference to this, although feeling that an injustice was being done him, he had decided to accept the land as it was.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.32 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 6th January, 1909.

	PAGE
Papers presented	1255
Questions: Railway Coal Supplies, Newcastle	1256
Medical, Principal Officer	1256
Timber Trumble, Laverton-Lancefield	1256
State Batteries, Tailings at Linden	1256
Messenger's Patch Plant	1256
Lennonville Plant, re-erection	1257
Railway Construction, Mt. Magnet-Black Range	1257
Personal Explanation	1257
Annual Estimates, Votes and Items discussed	1258

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: 1, Report of Proceedings by the Registrar of Friendly Societies to 31st December, 1907. 2, Amended by-law passed by the Municipality of the city of Perth.

By the Minister for Works: 1, Report of the Public Works Department for 1907-08.

QUESTION—RAILWAY COAL SUPPLIES, NEWCASTLE.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Railways: Is it his intention to place on the Table all papers relating to calling of tenders and letting of contract for Newcastle coal?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied:—There is no objection.

QUESTION—MEDICAL, PRINCIPAL OFFICER.

Mr. COLLIER asked the Premier: 1, Is it true that the Public Service Commissioner has recommended Dr. Hope for the position of Principal Medical Officer, and that the cause of delay in making the appointment is due to the Government's disinclination to adopt the recommendation owing to that gentleman's lack of qualifications and near approach to the retiring age? 2, In view of the great importance of this office, and the delay in making an appointment, and to allay the many rumours as to the real cause of delay, is it the Premier's intention to lay all the papers relating to this matter upon the Table?

The PREMIER replied:—1, Dr. Hope has not been so recommended. 2, The course set out under the provisions of the Public Service Act will be followed.

QUESTION—TIMBER TRAMLINE, LAVERTON-LANCEFIELD.

Mr. TAYLOR asked the Premier: 1, Why did the Mt. Margaret Roads Board's objections to the granting of the permit to the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Firewood Company to run a tramline from Laverton railway station yard to Lancefield receive no consideration? 2, Why was the permit granted to the company in face of the strong objections by the board? 3, Why were the board given no opportunity by the Government to support their objections before the permit was granted? 4, Why has acknowledgment or reply to the board's correspondence on this subject been continuously delayed? 5, Why were copies of the board's letters supplied to the firewood company when all information was withheld from the board?

The PREMIER replied:—1, The Board's objections were considered. 2 and 3, Because of the benefit it would be to the Lancefield Mine (which employed about 240 men) and the district generally, and in view of the fact that the board had previously supported a proposal to construct the line. A petition with some 500 signatures also had been presented in support, and it was recommended by the Timber Tramways Board. 4, There was no intentional delay. An explanatory letter was written to the board on the 21st ultimo, and a copy of the timber permit has since been forwarded. 5, A copy of the board's letter of the 12th September was sent to the company in order that the latter might reply to the charges contained therein. No information asked for has been withheld from the board.

QUESTIONS (3)—STATE BATTERIES.*Tailings at Linden.*

Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Have any assays of tailings from stone crushed at the two-head mill at Linden been sent to the prospectors at Linden, and if not, why not? 2, Does the Minister for Mines intend to keep his promise made to the prospectors at Linden during his last visit there to erect a cyanide plant at the two-head mill? 3, If so, when will a start be made with same?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied:—1, No; because under clause 12 of the regulations, where no cyanide plant is erected, the tailings are either carted away or abandoned. It has, however, been arranged to erect a small cyanide plant to treat the tailings and give the prospectors the actual extraction obtained, less cost of treatment. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, Tenders have already been called for construction of vats and it is expected to have the plant working next month.

Messenger's Patch Plant.

Mr. TROY asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Has the Minister determined upon the class of battery to be erected

at Messenger's Patch? 2, If so, will the Minister arrange the immediate erection of same in order to secure to the prospectors a return from the stone awaiting treatment?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied:—At present it is thought a two-head mill will suffice, but further investigations are being made owing to the representations made by the hon. member. In the meantime arrangements are in hand to determine the quantity of water available near the selected site; if this is found sufficient the erection of the battery will be immediately expedited.

Lennonville Plant Re-erection.

Mr. TROY asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Is the Minister aware that the prospectors and leaseholders at Lennonville are considerably inconvenienced owing to the destruction of the State battery? 2, Has the Minister arranged for the re-erection of same? 3, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied:—1, Yes. 2, An engineer has been sent to put the plant in order. The damage, however, has been found to be greater than was at first anticipated, and this will somewhat delay the renovation of the battery. 3, Answered by No. 2.

QUESTION—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION, MOUNT MAGNET-BLACK RANGE.

Mr. TROY asked the Minister for Works: 1, Have the Government accepted a tender for the construction of the Black Range Railway? 2, In view of the lack of engineering difficulties why was the period provided in the terms of the contract for the completion of the work extended over a term of 18 months? 3, In the event of the departmental estimate being less than that of the lowest tender will the Minister carry out the work departmentally and secure an early completion of same?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. 2, Because in the opinion of the Engineer-in-Chief 18 months is a reasonable time in which to carry out

the work. 3, The departmental price being some £8,000 below the lowest outside tender, the work will be carried out departmentally.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. Johnson and the Surveyor General.

Mr. JOHNSON (Guildford): I desire by way of personal explanation to reply to some remarks made by the Premier last night when speaking on the Lands Estimates. I regret I was not here at the time to put the hon. member right. Speaking recently on a matter of a license and securing land in connection with a railway, I referred to a collusion taking place between officers of the Lands Department and those outside. Those members who were present will remember that the Leader of the Opposition interjected, "You are not referring to a paternal relation?" and I said, "Decidedly not, I am not referring to the father." That is not reported in *Hansard*, but members will remember the interjection, and my definite reply. I had no intention of casting any reflection on or associating the Surveyor General with the matter in any way. There is no one in the service for whom I have more respect. I was referring to another relative apart altogether from the Surveyor General. *Hansard* had evidently not heard the interjection. As the Premier stated, it shows that I referred to the son of the Surveyor General, and consequently it appears that I cast a reflection on the Surveyor General; but it must be incorrectly reported, because of the interjection of the Leader of the Opposition and my definite reply. It is very seldom I read *Hansard*; I never correct my speeches, and I never thought of reading this speech until this morning when I read the Premier's remarks. I then read *Hansard*, and found that there was a reference to the son, and consequently this connected the Surveyor General. That was not my intention in any way.

The Premier: I am glad that the hon. member felt that if he found he was incorrect he should make a correction.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES—1908-9.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day, Mr. *Daglish* in the Chair.

Lands Department (Hon. N. J. Moore, Minister).

Vote—*Lands and Surveys*, £105,167:

Lands, Salaries, £28,008.

Item, Clerks, Land Selection Branch, £5,863.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There were some matters to which attention had been called by him on several occasions, but so far there had been no reply from the Minister controlling this department. The first was in regard to a matter of land selection at Nullagine. This was referred to on the Address-in-Reply, and again last night, yet the Premier had seen fit to treat the matter with contempt.

The PREMIER: It was understood the hon. member was going to speak last night when progress was reported, otherwise he (the Premier) had intended to make a few remarks in regard to the matter the hon. member had mentioned.

Mr. Underwood: There was no desire to speak again if the Premier was prepared to reply.

The PREMIER: As to the conditional purchase case the land was forfeited for non-payment. The applicant paid a deposit and was afterwards refunded the amount and the application cancelled because the holder paid up the rent owing. Where it was found that land had not been actually forfeited, and at the last moment payment was made by the holder, the Minister in his discretion might hold over the forfeiture, and this was done in the case in question. With regard to the Nullagine case, the lease was forfeited owing to non-payment of rent for the first half of 1907. Messrs. Haynes and Company of Nullagine applied in July, 1907, and were sent the forms of application, with a request that there should be certain particulars provided. This was returned in January, 1908. The application would have been approved, but that in October, 1907, Broadhurst and Crofton applied for reinstatement and asked that leniency should be extended to them. It was decided to give the old lessees the benefit of

the doubt, but in order to be fair to both parties it was decided that the matter should be left for settlement to the land board appointed to decide in case of simultaneous applications. This board also settled disputes between applicants. The lease was therefore withdrawn from selection and thrown open again in February on a *Gazette* notice, so that applications could be considered simultaneously, and the lease was granted to Broadhurst and Crofton. The member for Pilbara in referring to the matter said it was ridiculous that a man should be told by letter that he could appear in person in support of his application considering that it would mean an expenditure to him of something like £30 in order to travel to Perth and back. The member overlooked the fact that these words appeared in the letter "Or you may arrange for your agent to do so on your behalf."

Mr. Underwood: That was not overlooked.

The PREMIER: The member did not refer to the fact that the applicant could be represented by an agent when the case was being heard. The board which decided the case consisted of officers of the department, with one exception, and they dealt with disputed applications of this kind. The matter was left entirely in the hands of the board who recommended who should get the land.

Mr. Underwood: You said that the application was not forwarded.

The PREMIER: The letter referred to also said, "In any case the enclosed form should be completed and returned for consideration by the board." That was not done.

Mr. Underwood: Yes it was.

The PREMIER: The report supplied to him stated that the form had not been completed. He had not gone into the question personally for it was impossible for him to go into every file and every application referred to by members. He had received a report on the question from the officers of the department. Then there was the case of the land granted to Munyard. The hon. member said that a certain man had applied for that particular block but could not get it, never-

theless a few weeks afterwards Munyard, a storekeeper, applied for it and got it. He added that the land must have been vacant when the first application was put in. The land was forfeited for non-payment of rent for the second half of 1907. Munyard applied for it on the 19th January, and if the other man applied for it a few weeks previously, as stated, he could not get it as the land was not gazetted as forfeited at that time. The *Gazette* notice did not appear till the 5th January. Forfeited land was not thrown open until it had been gazetted. That was the information he had been supplied with in connection with the case. He had not been able to go personally into the file.

Hon. F. H. Piesse: In such cases the applications would be dealt with simultaneously.

The PREMIER: If a man applied a month previously, it did not follow that he would take precedence. In the case in question the applications were considered simultaneously by the land board, who decided that Munyard should get the block. Then there was the case referred to by the members for Pilbara and Cue, as to Clarkson's application. That man claimed to be the first applicant for a pastoral lease. Mr. Burges also called at the office for the purpose of applying for the lease, but he only applied for 5,000 acres locked up near Lake Austin. The minimum, however, was 20,000 acres, and therefore he did not lodge a formal application. Mr. Clarkson applied on the 21st August for 14,000 acres after Mr. Burges had made his inquiries, and his application was accepted, though it was for a quantity of land less than the minimum. As, however, Mr. Burges had not put in a formal application, and the official had neglected to tell him he should apply, it was considered only fair to withdraw the land from selection and throw it open again in order to give Mr. Burges a chance. This was done and then six applications were received, and another man altogether, Mr. Pearse, was allotted the land by the board.

Mr. Underwood: What about the application of the 14th October?

The PREMIER: The file had been sent for and he would be able to give further details on receiving it. The member said that Mr. Clarkson's agent had stated the land had never been withdrawn. Land could be withdrawn by the Minister, and in the case in question it was withdrawn and thrown open again by *Gazette* notice. Neither Mr. Burges nor Mr. Clarkson received the land. Evidence was not to hand just then as to the reasons which actuated the board in deciding to give the land to Mr. Pearse, but anyhow that was a matter entirely within their discretion.

Mr. BATH: With regard to Munyard's case, the original application was made at the Northam office for a block then marked "vacant" and the applicant was told by the land agent it was no use applying for the block. Afterwards, however, Munyard applied for and was granted the lease. The position therefore was that one man was informed it was no use applying for the block and afterwards another applicant came in and secured it. As to Clarkson's application, the Premier evidently had not the information that Clarkson had amended his application so that it should be for 20,000 acres, which was the minimum. He conformed entirely with the provisions of the Land Act, while the other applicant applied for less than the minimum. Clarkson was therefore entitled to the lease. The land was gazetted as open from the 1st December, and all applications received previously to that date were to be treated as simultaneous. Six applications were subsequently received and the land given to another man altogether who had not previously applied for it. Clarkson was certainly treated unfairly.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The explanation by the Premier satisfied him more than ever that a thorough inquiry should be made into the management of the Lands Department. The information the Premier had supplied was not satisfactory. *Hansard* showed clearly the facts of the Nullagine case, and when dealing with that question previously he had read all the correspondence relating to it. It appeared to him that the Lands Department in Perth could make excuses. The informa-

tion which had been supplied to the Minister convinced him that a searching inquiry was absolutely necessary into the management and working of the department.

Hon. F. H. PIESSE: There was no more important branch of the Lands Department than that in question. Upon the efficiency of the officers so much depended, and although he had heard numerous complaints in regard to the working of the department, and more especially in connection with this section of it, and having listened to the remarks made by members, he was surprised that there were not more complaints. If one who had any knowledge of the work of the department could only give his experience, it would be found that the numerous applications made and the adjustments which followed on account of the imperfect way in which the applications were sent in, entailed a great deal more work than members had any idea of. In consequence of this he thought that the work of the department generally had been a great success. The head of the department was one of the most energetic men we had in the service; he was an exceptional man and did his work exceedingly well, and was backed up by a set of very desirable officers. Could any members find any department which was perfect? The remarks of members, he imagined, were made with the object of removing the objections which had been mentioned and trying to make things as perfect as possible. It was not well to universally condemn the whole department. There were exceptions in every department, and there were men who were perhaps a drag, and he believed that if they did exist they should be removed. There should, however, be some encouragement given to those who had worked hard and had done their best in connection with their duties in the department, which entailed an enormous amount of work. With applications pouring in such as had been experienced, and with the shortage of staff, one could not but think that the work on the whole had been well done. He was in touch with a good many people who had to deal with the Lands Department, and although

there were times when there were delays, on the whole, satisfaction had been given. The comments which members had made would, no doubt, do good in regard to some of the officers.

Mr. Collier: Was the hon. member in order in making a general speech with regard to the administration of the Lands Department while dealing with the item?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was not in order in making a speech on the general question. He should confine his remarks to the item.

Hon. F. H. PIESSE was confining himself to the question of land selection to which the item referred.

The CHAIRMAN: The question of land selection generally should be discussed in connection with the general administration of the department.

Hon. F. H. PIESSE could only add that this branch was one of the most important of the Lands Department, and the Committee should endeavour to encourage those officers who did their best in difficult circumstances.

Mr. HEITMANN: It seemed to him that the Premier's explanation in connection with both cases that had been referred to disclosed an extraordinary state of affairs. It appeared that a person with influence could hold land, as disclosed in one of these cases, and after the non-payment of rent, perhaps for a year or more, the land was forfeited, and it seemed that it was left to the discretion of the department to reinstate the former holder. With regard to the case in the North, mentioned by the member for Pilbara, it seemed extraordinary that after reinstating the first holder the department should see fit to throw the land open for selection, merely giving the second applicant the trouble of making his application and going to a certain amount of expense, knowing that it would go against him. In connection with the other case, it meant that a man, after being disappointed, or finding that someone else had taken the block of land that he had his eye upon, gave the excuse that one of the clerks at the counter had misinformed him. The clerk denied that he gave Mr. Burges wrong information, and it would really be of benefit to the country if the Premier

would inquire into the real facts of the case. It seemed extraordinary that Mr. Clarkson, finding this bit of land vacant and desiring to take it up, and making an application which was perfectly in order, that someone not knowing of that piece of land should come along and get it. If that was the policy to be adopted in the future by the Lands Department some amendment of the Act should be brought forward to take away some of the powers of discretion from the officers of the department.

Mr. TAYLOR: It was his desire to emphasize the point that had been raised in connection with the case of the applicant who wished to take up a piece of land marked "vacant" on the map, and in which case the Government agent told him it was no use preferring an application for it. The agent was there to advise intending applicants honestly and straightforwardly. If it were true that some weeks afterwards some other individual made an application for that same block and got it, it was time that the Minister investigated the case. A specific charge had been made against the Government officer who was land agent, and to say the least of it savoured of something that the House should not admit of. If it were true that the land agent told the applicant that it was no use applying for that land which was marked "vacant," and a few weeks later someone else applied and secured it, the officer should certainly be removed.

Mr. JOHNSON: The instances that had been given with regard to the land selection branch, plus others that had been referred to in the general discussion, only went to show the absolute necessity for a general inquiry into the administration of the Lands Department. He would emphasize how difficult it was for members to criticise a department of that description. Members went through the country and met different people who complained of the action, or the want of action, on the part of the land selection branch. In that way members only got one side of the question; it seemed, however, utterly impossible for them to get the other side. In the general discussion he referred to an instance where partners

had received more land than they were entitled to receive under the Land Act. The Premier replied that he knew of only one instance, and in that instance the land had to be returned, but that was not the case that he (Mr. Johnson) had referred to. He had referred to the case of a man who was still holding land, and holding it in excess of the land to which he was entitled under the Act. There were other instances also. He had heard that there was a gentleman by the name of Piesse who held land in excess of that to which he was entitled.

Hon. F. H. Piesse: Does the hon. member refer to land taken up since the passing of the new Act? The land was held before the new Act was passed, and is not land within the meaning of the Act passed two years ago.

Mr. JOHNSON: The information supplied to him was definite and distinct, but he had heard only one side of the case, and he wanted the Premier to carry on his investigations of the department more closely than he had been doing. The information supplied to him was that this gentleman, by the name of Piesse, not the member for Katanning—he wished to make this statement so that an inquiry might set it right or wrong—that this gentleman had obtained land in excess of that which he was entitled to hold under the Act. Two illustrations had been given, and the Premier had brought up another which made three. If other members would only set their minds to the task they could bring forward other instances which had come under notice of people holding land in excess of that to which they were entitled. These cases in themselves were sufficient to justify members asking for a general inquiry into the administration of the whole of the department. We had an illustration already referred to, of a gentleman named Johnson obtaining land at the head of the Wickepin railway. This, he again asserted, was an absolute scandal, because at the head of that line the Government were surveying an area for a townsite.

Mr. Hopkins: They did the same at Darkan.

Mr. JOHNSON: That showed that the administration of the department was lax,

The Premier: The land was there and was held by Kent.

Mr. JOHNSON: It was held under conditional purchase by Kent, and an application was made to the Lands Department for a transfer of five acres of freehold from Kent to Johnson. He would like the assurance of the Premier that such a course was legal; the land was held under conditional purchase.

Mr. Hopkins: If the period had elapsed, certainly.

Mr. JOHNSON: Still it was conditional purchase.

Mr. Hopkins: Only for five years.

Mr. JOHNSON: Not being an expert on land matters he wanted to be put right. The point was that whether it was legal or illegal, the Lands Department officers should have protected the State.

Mr. Hopkins: It seemed to him the railway engineers should have protected us. Why put the railway station against the man's land?

Mr. JOHNSON: The railway station had been put on the reserve.

The Premier: The station was put on the reserve, but this man's land was adjoining.

Mr. Hopkins: Instead of putting it in the middle of the reserve they put it on the edge?

Mr. JOHNSON: It had been owing to the peculiar form of the reserve that the line was taken to one side of it. It was not a square reserve; it was of an angular shape, which made it difficult to cut up into blocks. The line had been taken to the reserve with the view of creating a townsite. Then a brother of the lands officer in that locality—the very man one would have thought would protect the State—had come along and secured five acres on the other side of the line, obtained a licence, and built a hotel with the view of creating a townsite in competition to that set apart by the Government. Surely the lands officers were paid to protect the State. The incident justified him (Mr. Johnson) in declaring that the administration of the department was very lax indeed and was calling aloud for an inquiry. They had had several illustrations of this; the Premier himself had brought out one. Clearly the methods

of the Lands Department were not in the best interests of the State. It was to be hoped the Minister for Lands would institute the necessary inquiry.

The Premier: You must remember that the department deals with 45,000 clients.

Mr. JOHNSON agreed with the suggestion of the magnitude of the department. Still this only went to emphasise the necessity for a stricter supervision. Closer administration was required, and in order to secure that, it would be necessary to remove the present head of the department, who was not capable of coping with it. A stronger and more vigorous man should be put at the head of the department with the view to its thorough reorganisation. His (Mr. Johnson's) remarks were emphasised by the Public Service Commissioner in all his reports.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not make a general speech.

Mr. JOHNSON: It was desirable to remind hon. members that in connection with the land selection branch the Public Service Commissioner had referred expressly to it, and had commended Mr. Withers upon the introduction of a new system of dealing with applications. The Premier had declared that the credit was not due to Mr. Withers, but to another. He (Mr. Johnson) understood that there was now a third party claiming this credit—Mr. Morris.

The Premier: The Public Service Commissioner said the innovation was made during the absence of Mr. Morris.

Mr. JOHNSON: It was understood from the man in the street that Mr. Morris explained that he had hinted at the possibility of bringing in the new system; and that as soon as he was out of the way the chief clerk, with the view to making a name for himself, had asked Mr. Withers to carry the innovation into effect. However, it seemed that the chief clerk, Mr. Withers, and Mr. Morris each claimed the credit for the innovation. The point was this: the new system was exceedingly simple and yet of considerable value in facilitating business, notwithstanding which it had taken years to discover. If it was so simple and of such importance and had taken so long to discover did it not go to show that Mr. Clif-

ton, the Under Secretary, was not capable of properly fulfilling the duties attached to his post?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not make a general speech.

Mr. HOPKINS: It appeared to him—and he could claim the giving of some consideration to the question—that the only possible settlement of these difficulties in connection with the Lands Department would come with decentralisation. He would be glad if during the debate he could have some assurance from the Premier that in spite of the opposition of the Public Service Commissioner the question of decentralisation would be persevered with. He was convinced that without it they would get no satisfaction. Then, as to the placing of railway stations, one would think that the agricultural railways were going through mountainous country such as might be looked for in New Zealand. As a matter of fact, in respect both to the Darkan and the Wickepin railways, the contour of the country was such that the engineers ought to have been able to place the stations where they would be of the greatest value to the State.

The Premier: But that railway is going all through private property, except when it reaches this one reserve.

Mr. HOPKINS: In the case of the Darkan railway it would have been a simple matter to place the station in a position in which no private individual could have reaped undue benefit from it. If these things were permitted to go on interminably it would mean that instead of the State having the benefit of the townsite as a set-off against the cost of the line, outsiders would reap the whole value as was done at the Darkan, where a free farm of 160 acres was cut up in opposition to the surveyed townsite. The farm had been given to a man, and subsequently the railway station was most conveniently placed for his purpose. In consequence of this, people who had paid their deposits for blocks in the Government townsite had paid no more, while others who had paid the whole of the money down had been sorry for it ever since. He (Mr. Hopkins) blamed the railway officers and not the lands officers. In a country so flat as that to which he was referring it

should have been the business of the railway engineers to place the station in a position where none but the State could reap the benefit from the townsite. So, too, at Wickepin.

Mr. Johnson: It was taken right on to the reserve.

Mr. HOPKINS: Then, had the matter been expeditiously dealt with by the Lands Department there should have been no room for complaint. If it was merely the matter of a hotel licence surely the difficulty might be overcome by the granting of a second licence. A good deal had been said about the officers of the department. He had heard statements made in reference to Mr. Wigglesworth. He (Mr. Hopkins) had had two years in the department, during which time he had found Mr. Wigglesworth the one officer who, in an emergency, could be called upon with confidence and the work expected of him would be done admirably and with expedition. Mr. Morris, who was then the head of the land selection branch was, it seemed to him (Mr. Hopkins), the one man capable of satisfactorily running that division.

Mr. Underwood: He must have deteriorated since.

Mr. HOPKINS: It was not to be thought that he was a special pleader for these officers; they were no friends of his. The difficulties spoken of would never be removed while land selection was being conducted all over this huge State with the department centralised in Perth. While the present system remained so would these difficulties. It was wrong to blame the officers of the department for the faults of the system. As for the Public Service Commissioner, could it be conceived that his was the only true conception in regard to the administration of this department? Right from the time of the late Dr. Jameson every succeeding Minister for Lands had had to admit that the department had become unwieldy, and that until a system of decentralisation was introduced there was no prospect of improvement.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: If the officers referred to were as good as members made them how to be, how came it that these mistakes occurred? He could not agree with the members for Beverley and for

Katanning in their praise of these officers. There was the Nullagine case. A block was gazetted in the *Government Gazette* as being open for selection. Surely a capable officer of the department would have been able to tell whether that land was open for selection or not. In any case, when it was gazetted as being open for selection it should have been open for selection. If the officers were worthy of their places they would not have allowed the land to be gazetted if it were not open for selection. According to the Act, the man who first put in an application was entitled to the land, and these officers should not have been allowed to tiddly-wink and do an applicant out of it.

Mr. Hopkins: Do you think they did that?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There could be no doubt of it. The applicants in Nullagine had not only seen the *Government Gazette*, but they had telegraphed to the under secretary for verification. The under secretary had replied that the block referred to was open for selection. Surely with a message like that one might have been justified in relying upon getting the land. Yet notwithstanding these splendid officers, the applicants at Nullagine had been kept hanging on for 18 months. Their money was paid and they had had to bear the cost of telegraphing and other expenses. After 18 months they had been informed that the lands board had decided against them, notwithstanding the telegraph message of the under secretary. He (*Mr. Underwood*) stated this despite the attitude of the member for Beverley.

Mr. HOPKINS: The reason why he was singled out by the member for Pilbara for these references was not clear. It was very commendable on the part of the hon. member to watch over the interests of his constituents, and from what had been said it seemed that this was a case calling for the attention of the Minister who, no doubt, would inquire into it. Errors such as these would arise in every business, and in one of the magnitude of the Lands Department it could not be hoped that they would be wholly obviated.

The PREMIER: The file dealing with the two matters referred to by the hon.

member had been sent for. The matter would be sifted to the bottom. The member for Beverley desired an assurance that the scheme of decentralisation would be initiated as early as possible, but the proposals put forward some time ago called for such an expenditure that it was thought fit to first of all only decentralise as far as the approval of applications was concerned, which would be a start and a step in the right direction. On the other hand, to carry out the decentralisation proposals in their entirety, to give transfers and issue instructions for survey, would necessitate a large expenditure. On instructions to survey being issued, information in regard to the various adjoining blocks would have to be sent forward, so that it would be impossible to carry out decentralisation in this regard unless there were duplicates of the plans at the head office. However, decentralisation in the matter of approvals would be carried out, and considerable delay obviated. More particularly where survey before selection had been adopted in a district could approval be given immediately a block was applied for if no other application was in for the particular block. In the case of more than one application for a block, a board was immediately constituted consisting of the representative of the Minister, the land agent, and one selector, and this board would deal with the applications at once, instead of, as was now the case, the applicants having to journey to Perth to appear before the simultaneous application board.

Mr. JACOBY: No system would succeed unless the men conducting it were the right men. The present system would work satisfactorily with the right men in the department, but the trouble was that we had men in the department who were not as they should be, and one saw no hope of improving the administration of the department if we had the same men conducting the new schemes. In regard to decentralisation, one could not put on one side as unworthy of consideration the expert opinion of the Public Service Commissioner. The Commissioner was a greater expert in administration than any member of the House; it was his sole

business; and he reported that the decentralisation scheme was shown to be unworkable. One was not prepared to express an opinion as to whether the proposed system of decentralisation was likely to be better than the present system, but one hesitated in accepting the opinion of the officials of the Lands Department, as expressed by the Minister, as against the opinion of the Public Service Commissioner. That the Public Service Commissioner was an expert was shown by the satisfactory way in which he had controlled his department prior to his appointment.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is getting away from the subject.

Mr. JACOBY: The whole question of decentralisation had come up. It would be better to deal with it on a later item; but since it had come up, he took the opportunity of discussing it now instead of creating another discussion on the later item. Admitted the ruling was correct.

The CHAIRMAN: In regard to decentralisation of the receipt of applications, it was quite within the province of members to discuss it on this item, but the general question of decentralisation and the value of the Public Service Commissioner's views could not be discussed, because it was a matter that should have been dealt with on the general debate. The hon. member wished to enter into a discussion of the merits of the Public Service Commissioner, a matter which was foreign to the item.

Mr. JACOBY: It was only desired to give a reason for accepting the Public Service Commissioner's opinion as one worthy of consideration. No matter what system there was in the department, unless the men there were the proper men it would not be a success. It was more a question of good men than a question of different system. We had in a previous Parliament been told about a new system of organisation that had been adopted in the department to get over all difficulties and to obviate the complaints made, but we still found the same chaos.

Mr. TROY had always found the chief clerk most courteous, obliging, and attentive to whatever what was brought under his notice. But there were officers with

whom there was reason to find fault, and there was reason to find fault with the conduct of affairs in the administration of the department. Letters were lost; one letter was discovered days afterwards on another file. While discussing this item he wished to bring under notice the case of pastoral lease 2869/102. Brown, Clinch, & Company had the lease, but did not pay the rent. They were duly notified of the non-payment of the rent, but still did not pay it, and in the meantime sold the lease to Clarkson Brothers. The rent not having been paid, about a year afterwards a Mr. Peck applied for the area. Brown, Clinch, & Company hearing of this, apparently became fearful of the consequences of their action, and applied to the department to reinstate the lease in their names, and by some extraordinary solicitude on the part of the department, the lease, which had been wrongfully transferred and illegally sold, was reinstated in their names. Mr. Peck, whose application was in order and was justly entitled to the lease, could not get it, but the people who had done a wrongful action and an illegal action, had by this extraordinary solicitude on the part of the department been given back the land.

Mr. Hopkins: Would that be without ministerial approval?

Mr. TROY: It could not have been done without ministerial approval. Had Clarkson Brothers taken action, it would have been against Brown, Clinch, & Company, who had sold the lease to them illegally, but the Government helped Brown, Clinch, & Company, the people who had done an illegal and a criminal action, by reinstating the lease in their name. It showed an extraordinary lack of administration; one could call it very crooked administration. That was the sort of thing that was running the department into disrepute. The member for Kaitangia claimed that because only one or two instances were noted by members the administration of the department in the main must be good, but often during recess similar occurrences were brought under the notice of members, though the facts were so hard to get, and members were so busy, that they had not always

the time to devote to them. He (Mr. Troy) had no doubt that if the department were inquired into, it would be found that, though members after all only heard of one or two occurrences, there were hundreds of them. The department needed reorganisation, and needed to be closely inquired into; because probably Mr. Peck had an action against the Government because of the manner in which the department had treated him. If the department carried on this crooked policy it would lead to a great deal of trouble.

Mr. HOPKINS: As an argument in favour of the decentralisation policy of the Lands Department, it might be pointed out that no such complaints as those which had been received in connection with the selection of land were received in connection with the selection of mining areas, simply because, owing to the decentralisation in the mines policy, these matters were controlled by the wardens in the various districts.

Mr. FOULKES: The Premier in referring to the question of decentralisation had referred to difficulties which had been put in the way of carrying out the policy by the Public Service Commissioner. It was well known, and he had it from civil servants and from very good authorities, that the Public Service Commissioner had made many proposals for reform in the department. The Premier when asked whether he would place on the Table copies of those proposals had said that he would do so if he could find them.

Mr. Hopkins: Move for the production of the papers.

Mr. FOULKES: It was useless to bring forward a motion of that kind at this stage of the session, for it would never be reached. It was impossible for members to discuss this question properly unless the proposals of the Public Service Commissioner were before them. All that members at present were in receipt of was the version put forward by the Minister. He was quite satisfied that if Mr. Jull's suggestions were tabled it would be found that he was quite justified in the complaints he had made as to the administration generally of the department.

Mr. ANGWIN: The decentralisation scheme was one of policy and had nothing whatever to do with the Public Service Commissioner. If persons outside pulled wires to work that officer, the Government had done quite right in counteracting any such influences. If the Public Service Commissioner were to be allowed to direct policy, then let the Government and Parliament be done away with, and the whole control of the State be placed in the hands of that officer. Too much attention altogether had been paid on this question to the remarks of the Public Service Commissioner.

Item, District Land Commissioner (six months), £250:

Mr. BATH: In this case salary was provided for six months. This appointment was in accordance with the decentralisation scheme of the Government, but the result appeared to be that another huge and expensive departmental system would be built up. It would mean a largely increased cost of administration, without there being a corresponding advantage.

The Premier: This is merely the transfer of an officer.

Mr. BATH: Yes, at an increased salary.

The PREMIER: The Chief Land Agent was now receiving a salary of £500, and his office would be merged in that of the District Land Commissioner. The salary was unaltered.

Mr. BATH: It was then another case of giving an officer a high-sounding title, and it had been found in many cases that where this was done the result was that before long an application was received for a large increase of salary in consequence of the high-sounding title, and that the official built round him a large and expensive department. It was getting now in the service a case of all colonels, and no soldiers. Certain officers had talked enthusiastically about decentralisation for the reason that they hoped for the result that a new department and new offices would be established.

The PREMIER: The salary of the Chief Land Agent for years past had been £500 per annum, and the change now being made was simply to call the

official by another title, namely District Land Commissioner. The salary was the same.

Mr. JACOBY: It would be well for the Premier to inform the House what officer he proposed to appoint to the position of District Land Commissioner, and where that official would be located. Apparently it was intended that this officer should in the future exercise some of the present functions of the Minister, and therefore great care would have to be taken that the position should not be given to a man who had already proved to be unsatisfactory in the head office. Such an appointment should not be made with the object of getting rid of a man undesirable at the head office. There was only one way of dealing with such persons, and that was to get rid of them for good.

The PREMIER: The District Land Commissioner would work through the various country districts, the idea being that he would be continually travelling to the different centres. On certain days he would be at Broomehill, then Kataning, Wagin, Pingelly, and so on.

Mr. Nanson: Will he go to Geraldton?

The PREMIER: Yes. The officer doing the work now was Mr. Fox. The Chief Land Agent was Mr. Farmer, but he was away at present, and Mr. Fox had been appointed temporarily to carry out this work. That officer had had a good deal of experience. In addition to the duties of approving of applications, etcetera, the District Land Commissioner would report to the Minister in regard to the administering of the offices generally. One of the most urgent instructions he had been given had been to deal with the question of land guides. It had been said that certain of these guides were really drawing money under false pretences, and one of the first questions that officer would go into would be whether it was not advisable to have salaried land guides instead of having casual employees paid at so much per day, according to the number of people they took out to inspect blocks. It had been said a great deal of "dead" travelling was done by the land guides. For instance a man engaged at Wagin would go beyond the head of the

Dumbleyung line. The idea now was that a man should be engaged at Dumbleyung to take people out from there, as it would save considerable time and cost. The same applied to Kojonup, and instead of having the Katanning guide to go all that distance, a man should be obtained in the locality. The District Land Commissioner would also advise as to water supplies. When subdivisions were made he would visit the localities and satisfy himself whether it would not be advisable to declare certain blocks as reserves, and report as to the necessity for putting down dams or bores in the various areas, and generally keep the Minister *au fait* with what was going on in the various districts.

Mr. Butcher: Who deals with applications?

The PREMIER: The District Land Commissioner would deal with all applications except where there were simultaneous ones. In those cases the applications would be dealt with by the boards. Up to now only a temporary appointment of a District Land Commissioner had been made. Mr. Farmer had gone on leave and Mr. Fox had been appointed temporarily. No person would be appointed permanently to the position unless it was shown clearly that he was well qualified.

Mr. NANSON: Was this official to have his head quarters in Perth?

The Premier: No; he would be travelling about.

Mr. NANSON: The officer must have some abiding place, he could not be everlastingly on the move. The head office, presumably, would be in Perth, and he would then perambulate the whole of the land districts. He would like to be shown by the Premier what particular advantage it would be to any outlying district to have this official visiting it, because he could only visit a place at exceedingly long intervals. His idea of the decentralisation of the Lands Department was that in every important agricultural centre of the State, and certainly in the more distant centres, there should be an official who should be able to transact business in regard to applications. At present these

applications had to be sent to the head office in Perth. The whole idea of decentralisation was that instead of having a large number of officials centred in Perth, there should be fewer officials in Perth and completely equipped offices in the leading agricultural centres. He did not say that the appointment of a gentleman under the name of District Land Commissioner was going to make any great difference in the existing state of affairs. We were in great difficulty in dealing with this matter because such a scheme of decentralisation would reach us in a sort of piecemeal condition. It was much to be regretted that the Committee had not before it a scheme set out in the fullest detail, so that members could examine it as a whole. As it was members saw various items on the Estimates, and as these came up, were able to discuss them, but it was difficult to make any very great progress unless there was set forth exactly what the whole expenditure and the scope of the Government decentralisation scheme of the Lands Department was to be. If a scheme in black and white were presented to members it could be taken away and thoroughly mastered, and on the other hand there should be an exhaustive analysis of such a scheme by the Public Service Commissioner, and then it would be for the Committee to judge whether the scheme was of the kind that would commend itself to members. As far as he was able to gather as to the condition of things in his own constituency and in Geraldton, notwithstanding all this talk of decentralisation, the position was worse to-day than it was several years ago when nothing was heard of decentralisation. Some six or seven years ago there was a Government land agent at Northampton, and there was not a great deal of work for him to do at that time, because there was nothing like the amount of land settlement taking place then than was the experience at the present time, and the office was abolished. There was no doubt it could have been retained by the payment of a small annual fee to the officer who could have been given permission to undertake private work. As far as his (Mr. Nanson's) knowledge of the dis-

tricts around there was concerned he was convinced that much more satisfaction would be afforded to persons anxious to take up land if the Government were to restore the old facilities and tell members less about appointing officers, who would travel around visiting places only at rare intervals, officers who would be chiefly conspicuous, not so much by the work they did, but by the high-sounding title they would possess and the salary which they would draw.

Mr. HOPKINS: The title of the officer, District Land Commissioner, was due to the fact that it found a place in the amending Land Act. Great difficulty was experienced at Kalgoorlie and Boulder once upon a time because of the inability to register local residential leases, which were controlled by the Lands Department; everything had to be done in Perth. Subsequently, however, Mr. Tucker, the surveyor, was given full power to register leases, execute mortgages and transfers, and what took some six, and sometimes 12 months to carry out under the prior arrangement, was afterwards fixed up in Kalgoorlie while one waited. Since then there had been no complaint whatever on the goldfields. The question the Committee would ultimately have to consider was whether we would have district commissioners, or whether we would simply have a district surveyor who would be able to deal with every aspect that might arise in connection with land settlement. He sympathised with the member for Northampton in his grievance. There was a land agent at Northampton during his (Mr. Hopkins's) time, and since the abolition of the office he supposed that the business had considerably increased.

Mr. BUTCHER: It appeared that the greatest necessity for the decentralisation scheme in connection with the Lands Department was brought about through the difficulty of getting applications dealt with. Formerly they all had to go to Perth. This District Land Commissioner would be the officer who would deal with the applications, and he took it there would be different districts constituted throughout the country, which would necessarily extend from the Murchison

river in the North to Albany in the South, and would be divided into so many centres. It would be the duty of this officer to have regular dates for visiting these districts and dealing with applications. If applicants had to wait for a month or six weeks, while the officer was travelling about, the position would be worse than it was originally, and there would be greater delay in dealing with applications than was the case formerly. Unless we adopted a system by which land agents would have power to deal with applications in their districts the difficulties we were faced with would not be overcome. There was no reason why the country should not be divided up into districts. The district around Northam could have the head office established in Northam, and the officer there could have the power to deal with applications straight away, and thus obviate unnecessary delay. If that were done in all the different districts no very great expense would be entailed. The districts around Katanning and Narrogin could be similarly dealt with, and officers appointed to deal with matters relating to surveys as well as applications, and there would be no further bother. Where simultaneous applications were concerned, they could be passed on to the central board to deal with and then returned to the officer in charge of the district concerned.

(Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.)

Mr. TROY: The Premier had told the Committee that Mr. Farmer might yet be appointed Chief Land Agent. He (Mr. Troy) thought it would be very unfair to put this officer to more trouble than he had been accustomed to. It would be a pity to give him an arduous position which would involve his travelling around the country and foregoing the luxuries to which he had grown accustomed in Perth. During the debate several members had referred to a certain officer in somewhat disparaging terms. It seemed to him (Mr. Troy) that none but Mr. Farmer was meant. It was a pity that members had not referred to him personally in order

that there might be no doubt about the matter. The State had arrived at a stage when it could no longer afford to have any but officers who would do their duty. If the Government desired to get the best out of their servants it was essential that officers such as Mr. Farmer should be dealt with by the House.

Mr. Monger: Why by this House?

Mr. TROY: The House certainly should be prepared to take upon itself the task of dealing with such an officer if occasion demanded it. During the time he (Mr. Troy) had occupied a seat in the House he had become acquainted with Mr. Farmer, not by reason of any business done with him, but by the fact that he was continually to be found in St. George's-terrace and Hay-street.

Mr. Monger: That is unfair.

Mr. TROY appreciated the hon. member's interjection. It was only right that he should speak up on behalf of one whom he probably held in esteem. But his (Mr. Troy's) duty was to draw attention to the fact that to his mind the officer referred to was not earning his salary and was not carrying out his duties. He had seen Mr. Farmer frequently in St. George's-terrace with a cigarette in his mouth during office hours; he had met him between the Lands Department and Bishop's Court going out with a few cronies, presumably to have a drink. His conduct and vagaries in this respect were known to hundreds of persons. He was drawing a big salary; he had drawn as much as £650, of which £150 was travelling allowance. The Public Service Commissioner, in his classification report, had remarked that this officer was not fulfilling the functions of his office. The only inference to be drawn from that was that the officer was not doing his work. Such an officer, by pursuing such a course of conduct was setting a very bad example to other civil servants. Was it possible to expect the junior officers in the department to do good and useful service if a senior officer were allowed to transgress the regulations as Mr. Farmer had done and was doing? It had even been said that Mr. Farmer at times treated Ministers in a cavalier manner. The time had arrived when he ought to be

told that if he did not see fit to do his work the State was prepared to do without him.

Mr. Monger: You cannot prove that he does not do his work.

Mr. TROY: It certainly would not be easy to prove it. Still it was scarcely possible that the officer could do his work and at the same time stroll around St. George's-terrace with a number of cronies. The State did not pay him to patrol St. George's-terrace seeking his own pleasure. Other members were familiar with the course of conduct pursued by Mr. Farmer, and the sooner the Committee dealt with officials of his class the better.

The *PREMIER*: During the course of the debate several members had referred in not very complimentary terms to Mr. Farmer. He (the Premier) wished to point out that Mr. Farmer was a very old officer in the department. There was probably no other with a better knowledge of the working of the Act. At the same time complaints had been made in regard to his conduct, and he (the Premier) had issued certain instructions in respect to officers leaving the department. He had intimated to the under secretary that if it were brought under his notice that any officer was leaving the department on any but departmental business he would suspend that officer and ask the Public Service Commissioner to deal with him. Complaints certainly had been made, but definite instructions had now gone out, and any officer leaving his duty would do it in the full knowledge of what was in front of him.

Mr. ANGWIN: It was well to speak of an officer as one found him. During the last 12 months it had fallen to his (Mr. Angwin's) lot to interview Mr. Farmer on several occasions. Never once had he failed to find Mr. Farmer in his office. Moreover, Mr. Farmer had always acted immediately and rendered a good deal of assistance in the way he (Mr. Angwin), on behalf of others, had desired.

Item, Land Agents (7), £1,640:

Mr. COLLIER: For the past seven or eight months the position of land agent at Kalgoorlie had been vacant, or it had been temporarily filled by an officer from

Coolgardie who, owing to the calls made on his time by the double duties, had been unable to attend to his work at Kalgoorlie as closely as might have been desired. He (Mr. Collier) wished to point out to the Premier that in the making of a new appointment it would be wise to select an officer with some knowledge of the agricultural resources of the State. Whenever he (Mr. Collier) visited the goldfields he had scores of requests for information with regard to settlement in the agricultural districts. While the State had in Melbourne and London offices at which the fullest particulars could be secured in respect to land settlement, no information of the sort was obtainable in Kalgoorlie. The Minister would realise that some of the most desirable settlers could be obtained on the goldfields. For that reason he (Mr. Collier) emphasised the wisdom of appointing to the vacant position of land agent at Kalgoorlie one having a thorough knowledge of the agricultural districts of the State.

The *PREMIER*: The officer at Kalgoorlie was only occupying the position temporarily during Mr. Tupper's absence on leave. Recently he (the Premier) had visited the office and ascertained that the officer did not know all he should, and had found that the office was not up to date. He had now made arrangements that the whole of the information available in the head office should be supplied at Kalgoorlie so far as lands between Northam and the Eastern Goldfields were concerned. If residents of the Eastern Goldfields desired to take up land in the South-West, it would be better for them to come to Perth to get the information. It was his desire and intention to have the most up-to-date information at the Kalgoorlie office, so that the complaints that had existed in regard to the lack of information would be a thing of the past.

Item, Officer in charge of Information Bureau, £590:

Mr. JACOBY: The utility of this office could be improved if it were associated more closely with the Agricultural Department.

The *PREMIER*: Information as to land selection should go together with advice of value to a new settler. It was

proposed that the lecture room at the Agricultural Department should be a sort of permanent exhibition of Western Australian products, and the Information Bureau, now at the Cathedral Chambers, would be removed to the offices of the Agricultural Department.

Mr. JOHNSON: Members received numerous requests from people asking where they could get land, and it might be possible for the Information Bureau to issue circulars, even confidential circulars, to members to give some idea where land was available, so that they could send their constituents to those localities, and assist them in getting on the land. It would be an easy matter to supply members with the information that was sent to the Melbourne Agency, to assist in an absolutely necessary and good scheme of land settlement.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Three men, genuine would-be selectors from the North-West, had asked him to find suitable blocks of land, and had told him that they would immediately send the money for the applications, but he had made inquiries in every possible direction and could not find land suitable. These were men as good as those we were likely to get from the Eastern States.

Mr. GORDON opposed the idea that members of Parliament should receive some secret information in regard to any land that might be available for selection. Members should not be placed before the public, even to assist the constituents they most favoured. It would be almost impossible for the Government to post members of Parliament so that they might advise any one as to where to select. He would not take the responsibility of advising a friend as to where a block of land could be obtained. If a man wanted land he must go to the department, see the up-to-date plans, and see the land himself. What might suit one man might not suit another.

The PREMIER: The wishes of the member for Guildford might be met if this information were made available at the Information Bureau. With the exception of land already surveyed before selection, it was very difficult to give any one information of more than a general

character, but now we had a certain amount of land surveyed that would be thrown open early this year, land previously held under pastoral lease. It was proposed to have lithographs showing this land, and giving the dates on which it would be thrown open for selection. It was a ticklish matter to give definite information as to land not surveyed. He always told the man to go and look at it for himself.

Mr. Johnson: We do not know even the district the land is in.

The PREMIER: That matter could be remedied. The only definite information that could be given us was in regard to land surveyed before selection.

Mr. BATH: The trouble was that we were not able to get in the State the facilities given to settlers from Melbourne or elsewhere. People in the State had been put to the maximum of inconvenience and expense to secure land, and the money wasted in this way might have been put into the very necessary work of improving the land. It was pleasing that the member for Roebourne possessed all the information; would-be selectors could be referred to the hon. member; but it should not be necessary to send them to a private member. Selectors should be able to get the information from the department presumed to control this business. The information should be available to every citizen of the State. If there should be any differential treatment, preference should be given to our own taxpayers. It was to be hoped the suggestion put forward would not be lost sight of by the Premier.

Item, Officer in charge of Melbourne Agency, £450:

Mr. TROY: A footnote showed that this officer's salary included a special allowance of £220. Was it because of the travelling this officer had to do in various parts of Victoria?

The PREMIER: This officer (Mr. Gilbert) was classified as Minister's clerk at a salary of £230, and when put in charge of the Melbourne Agency carried on at that salary for a considerable time, but last year a special allowance of £100 was given him, making the salary £330. In addition, £120 was allowed for travel-

ling expenses. Mr. Gilbert had to travel to various parts of Victoria, and quite recently had been to South Australia in connection with his work. The salary was £330 per annum, with £120 travelling allowance. This increase was considered perfectly justifiable because of the many calls on Mr. Gilbert's purse, and was made with the approval of the Public Service Commissioner.

Mr. FOULKES: With regard to agencies, it was to be hoped that the Minister realised the necessity for establishing one in Sydney also. Some six or nine months ago the Premier said the Government intended to start an agency there, and the Premier of New South Wales at that time said he would be glad to see one started. The agency in Melbourne had been the means of inducing a great many Victorians to settle here, and equally good results would follow the establishment of one in Sydney.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It was to be hoped an agency would not be started in Sydney. He was against agencies being started anywhere. Recently the Premier of New South Wales was here and said the Government of that State intended to spend £20,000 or £30,000 per year to induce immigrants to settle there, and now it was proposed we should open an agency in Sydney to try and induce those people to leave there and come here. There was no necessity for an agency in Melbourne or anywhere else so long as the industrial conditions here were made what they should and could be. It had required no agency to induce very many Victorians to come over here in the past. Personally he would never rely on any information got from agencies of that description, for they were merely advertising institutions, and just as a man claimed his soap was superior to anyone else's soap, so these agencies claimed that their country was better than any other country. The money spent on agencies could be far better spent in the State itself.

The PREMIER: Apparently there was no unanimity of opinion on the question of establishing an agency in Sydney. This matter had received attention, but previously to establishing further agencies

he wanted to see so far ahead under the system of survey before selection, that if people came here they would not be disappointed in their endeavours to find suitable land. Until the State was in such a position he would not increase the number of agencies. The Melbourne agency had been responsible not only for bringing persons here to select Crown lands, but had also resulted in the introduction of experienced farmers with capital, who bought out a number of settlers who were desirous of going still further back. Practically all the Victorians who came here were the sons of farmers and were men of experience. It was undoubtedly better for Western Australia to get experienced men with a knowledge of the conditions of Australian life and Australian pioneering in the back blocks, than immigrants from the old country.

Lands, Contingencies, £16,950:

Item, Margaret, Yallingup and Yanchep Caves, Grant to Board, £1,000:

Mr. ANGWIN: This was a vote that might well be reduced. Roads boards and municipalities had been reduced to a very considerable extent, and this board should be treated similarly. The Minister might inform the Committee of the work the board had done in the past year, and what rent had been received for the accommodation house.

The PREMIER: The report of the board was tabled last session and in that the members of the board pointed out that so far as finances were concerned they were in a very bad way. They said —

"It is not possible for us to carry out our commission satisfactorily unless the money which is sufficient for the board's expenses is provided. Lately our vote has been seriously reduced. While the vote for the Margaret river and Yallingup caves was £1,000, the Yanchep caves near Wanneroo were added to the board's work, and though a small sum was granted for immediate necessities the original vote was not increased. In addition to the grant being reduced for the previous year by £200, the board had to find nearly £300 for the erection of caretaker's quarters,

and so suffered a reduction of £500 from the vote of general management, while additional work necessitating further outlay has been added to their duties. Fortunately a small surplus had been carried over, and this, along with the proceeds of the coupon system, enabled the board just to live. The statement for the year ending June 30th last will give full particulars of the receipts and payments, from which it will be seen that every conceivable economy, even to an extent detrimental to the best interests of the Caves, has been exercised."

The year before last the vote was reduced by £200, and since then additional work had been entailed on the members of the board in connection with the Wanneroo Caves. This necessarily meant increased expenditure. So far as these boards were concerned he would be prepared to approve of a select committee of the House being appointed to go into the doings of the boards and obtain information as to how they were being conducted and the results that were being achieved. He referred to such bodies as the Caves Board, the Museum, the Public Library and the Zoological Gardens. If this were done, members could satisfy themselves as to how the various institutions were being conducted and whether the funds voted for them were really necessary. The boards were appointed by the Government and naturally when their funds were decreased they complained very bitterly.

Mr. Troy : Who are the members of the Caves Board ?

The PREMIER : The Surveyor General, Dr. Hackett, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Jull, Mr. Farmer, and Mr. Hocking. Originally the member for the district was on the board, but his position was taken by Mr. Hocking. The Caves Board now complained that they had not sufficient funds to carry on the work as they would like. It had been pointed out to them that it was impossible to allocate more money. In the past very excellent work had been done by the

Caves Board, and it would be a pity if the large sum of money already spent were wasted, owing to the work being allowed to deteriorate. As only £1,000 was voted to the various caves in the State, members would recognise that the board had not too much money to play with if they were going to look after maintenance properly.

Mr. TROY : As a reason for not reducing the amount of the vote the Premier had quoted from the report of the Caves Board. The same report could be issued by every other local governing body in the State, for all of them were in the same position, but despite that they had to submit to reduction. He fully appreciated the work done in connection with the Caves, for he had visited them and enjoyed himself immensely. None would be better pleased than he if Parliament were in a position to spend more money on these beauty spots. But it had been brought home to us time after time that economies were absolutely essential, considering the financial condition of the State, and that all the money that could be obtained should be spent in developmental work. If roads boards, municipalities, and other bodies, who developed the State, had to submit to reduction, it was only a fair thing that the Caves Board should be treated similarly. There was more justification for a reduction in connection with this board, as the work they did was not of an urgent character, and was not in the direction of developing the country. Looking over the Estimates he found that his electorate, which was extending and in which the population had increased two-fold within the last three years, was unable to get a small grant for making roads. For instance, in one of the districts, the Minister for Works gave a promise, when at Mount Magnet, that he would grant £100 towards the construction of a road, and to-day the Minister stated he was unable to keep the promise. The people in that locality were therefore, placed at a serious disadvantage, while the Government were thus retarding the development of the country. It was found that in connection with the Caves, for which there was no urgent need, the

same expenditure was being voted as was voted last year. He moved—

That the item be reduced by £500.

Mr. NANSON supported the amendment. It was unfortunate that the report of the Caves Board had not been laid on the table of the House. When we were dealing with these votes we should have the reports of the institutions concerned. Members were in ignorance as to whether this board earned any revenue. Many thousands of pounds had been voted in past years. In one year over £30,000 was spent in providing roads to the Caves and it should be possible now for revenue to be earned which would be nearly sufficient to assist in the maintenance of the Caves. The amendment was one which should meet with the Premier's cordial support, because speaking on the Address-in-Reply he said that Ministers would set their faces against any advances other than for purposes which were absolutely necessary, and he went on to say that the Government realised that in the past, grants had been made for various objects which might have been termed luxuries, and he contended that the Government must now absolutely refrain from expending money on anything in the nature of a luxury, and that they would have to confine their attention to those works which were necessary for the development of the more remote portions of the State, which would tend towards the comfort of the people settled in those parts. In all directions economy was being exercised with regard to works of a highly necessary nature, and yet we found no reduction had been made in regard to luxuries. Members actually found that in the reports of the different boards, which had been presented, that with the utmost self-confidence they stated that this year they must have the amount asked for and that in future years they would look to an increased vote. He welcomed the amendment and hoped the member would divide the Committee, so that an indication might be given to the Government as to the feeling of members in regard to those luxuries.

The TREASURER: It had been realised in all the States, that it was

necessary to advertise the health and pleasure resorts, and the result had been, not only in Tasmania which led the way with a considerable expenditure, but also in New South Wales and Victoria, a large number of tourists had been attracted to their shores. We had endeavoured in a small way to follow the examples set by those States. It was true that we had expended a considerable amount of money in opening up the caves districts in the South-Western portion of the State, but we had not expended quite as much in one year as the member for Greenough had stated, namely, £30,000.

Mr. Nanson: In one year £35,000 had been spent.

The TREASURER: That was the total expenditure to November, 1907, and that money was spent on roads and buildings and improving the Caves, not only in the Yallingup district but in the Margaret River district, and also on the Yanchep Caves at Wanneroo. It was quite right as the hon. member had said, that we must be careful not to increase these votes unless there was a corresponding advantage to the State, and the Government had been particularly careful in this direction. Members would see that the vote had been kept down to the same amount as was voted last year, notwithstanding further responsibilities and requirements owing to the increased number of visitors.

Mr. Jacoby: Should there not be increased revenue?

The TREASURER: It was an indirect revenue. The board received a rental from the Cave House of £150. Not many years ago that Cave House was being carried on at a direct loss; some four years ago it represented a loss of £600, and he was instrumental in having the system altered and having the house leased. The result was that now we had an accommodation house, which cost a considerable amount of money, but it was one that we could be proud of and which visitors could utilise with confidence and pleasure. The indirect advantages to the State were numerous as compared to the direct advantages to the board. The fact of the matter was that the board could not pay its way. It might ulti-

mately do so, but it was doubtful whether it would do so for many years to come.

Mr. Nanson : Was there a charge made for admission to the Caves ?

The TREASURER : A charge was made, he thought it was 2s., and annually several thousand people visited these caves. Last year the number was 2,646, and supposing they paid 2s. a head, that only represented £264. It was not a large amount when members considered the expenses associated with the caves. There was indirect advantage to the State inasmuch as a good deal of money was distributed by visitors who went down there to see the Caves, and then there was a direct advantage to the railway system. Coupons were issued at so much which would carry a visitor through and give him two or three or five days to spend in the district. They got a beneficial outing, an outing which up to recent years they had been accustomed to take in the Eastern States. As he had pointed out, the railways derived a certain advantage, the Cave House received a certain return, the hotels *en route* derived an advantage, and so did the coach proprietors who carried visitors, all of which meant an indirect benefit to the State. He did not think the Committee would quibble over a couple of hundred pounds, as long as members knew that the money was well spent by the Caves Board, and that it brought in an indirect return in the shape of prosperity to certain of our citizens. Apart from this, if we were to cut the vote down we might just as well wipe it out altogether. If we did that, and we were going to close up a certain portion of our State, which was a pleasure resort, it would be a very bad advertisement for the State, and instead of advertising that we had something to show, instead of getting the special commendation, such as we had received from experts, not only the secretary of the Tourist Bureau of Tasmania, but a representative from Colombo who was recently here, and who spoke in the highest terms of the district, not only would the State get that advertisement, but we would advertise that we had closed places which were worthy of being visited, and thus do a great injury to the

State. In the time of the James Government a large sum of money was spent on the roads to the Caves, and the present member for Guildford, when Minister for Works, spent a considerable sum of money also in completing those roads. He recognised the advantage of opening up these resorts for our own people and thus endeavouring to keep them within the State. He had many opinions of gentlemen who were competent to judge, and who stated that these caves were equally as beautiful as the renowned caves at Jenolan, in New South Wales. The neighbouring States were spending considerably more than we were in a similar direction.

Mr. Heitmann : They can afford it. Their population is greater.

The TREASURER : Not in every instance, the population of Tasmania was smaller than that of this State. Having such an asset it would be bad policy to close it up and say that we did not value it.

Mr. Walker : If the Treasurer represented a goldfields constituency he would not talk like that.

The TREASURER was talking in the interests of the goldfields constituencies, and in the interests of the hon. member's own constituency.

Mr. Heitmann : Have you any letters from the diggers amongst that lot ?

The TREASURER : The hon. member meant the goldfields residents ? No, he had not. These were simply extracts from communications received from visitors from outside the State.

Mr. Walker : They all go to Bunbury from the goldfields.

The TREASURER : It was gratifying to hear that. Those who went to Bunbury would get not only a beautiful health resort, but they would see a large amount of shipping going on there, sufficient probably to open their eyes.

Mr. Hopkins : It has also become popular as a birthplace.

The TREASURER : It had for long ranked as a birthplace, and would continue to enjoy that distinction while it was the home of the Premier of the State. He hoped the Committee would not cut down this item. He would re-

mind them that some seven months of the vote had been expended. It would be ill-advised to cut down the vote at this juncture.

Mr. HOLMAN: It was to be regretted that the board had not thought fit to send in their report. He had noticed that in the office at Perth were stationed two officers to carry out the business of the board.

The Treasurer: Only one officer is paid.

Mr. HOLMAN: Just the same the office in Perth, apparently, was costing £435. That amount of money was too great altogether for the administrative work to be carried out for a board of the class of the Caves Board; less than one-half should be sufficient. The Premier had stated that the vote had been reduced by £200 two years ago. As a matter of fact the vote was then increased by £200. Probably the Premier had made the statement inadvertently; still the Committee had a right to expect exact information. The Treasurer talked of the number of visitors who made the trip to the Caves. By close attention to the daily papers one could learn, from time to time, that since the last preceding report some dozen or twenty visitors had been to the Caves. If the Caves were accessible to the poorer classes of people he for one would be prepared to support the item; but only the more fortunate could afford to make the trip to the Caves. For the five day's trip five guineas were required for the coupons alone, while the ordinary expenses for such a trip would mean another four or five pounds, making a total of at least £10 which was altogether beyond the working man for the purposes of holiday-making. At the same time those people who could not afford to go to the Caves were taxed to the utmost in order that distinguished visitors might be taken down free of all personal expense. Even when a visitor found himself in Busselton it cost him 15s. to be driven to the nearest cave and back. As this item on the Estimates was of no direct benefit to the people of the State, he maintained that it should be selected for the purpose of effecting economy. The cost of the head office in Perth was beyond all

reason. He himself would like to take on the position of secretary for the money.

Mr. Osborn: You have taken on two or three already; you do not want another, do you?

Mr. HOLMAN: This post also would be very acceptable to him. He could do pretty good work, and he hoped he would never be like the hon. member who had interjected and who had taken on work he was incapable of performing.

Mr. Osborn: What work is that?

Mr. Walker: The representing of Roebourne.

Mr. HOLMAN: The cost of the head office was far too large; the amount could be reduced by one-half. Then there was the cost of the engineer. Why was it necessary to have an engineer to look after the work down there? Again, there was the cost of the electric light. This was altogether too great. And in addition to the cost of the head office at Perth there was, or leastways there had been two years ago, an item of £150 for travelling and petty expenses. That meant that the office was costing £600 a year. Then there were caretakers at each of the caves; why should not the engineer stationed at Yallingup act as caretaker for that cave? It was absolutely ridiculous to think that there should be a caretaker and an engineer for a cave that, at all events during some weeks of the year, had no visitors at all. In view of the financial position of the country it would be much better to spend the money on the practical requirements of the State. It ought to be applied to the opening up of the country and the giving of assistance to the poorer class of people. He regretted that the report of the board had not been laid on the Table. It seemed that the secretary had not seen fit to produce a report for Parliament.

The Premier: The report is here; I was under the impression that it had been tabled.

Mr. HOLMAN: It seemed a peculiar thing that the report was not on the Table.

The Treasurer: It was merely an oversight.

Mr. OSBORN: This was one of the items that deserved the support of all

members of the House. As the Treasurer had pointed out, this pleasure resort was one that the State could point to with pride. He himself had not had the advantage of visiting it; still many of his friends had done so, and he had been assured by all that the Caves were well worth the money being expended on them. Apparently some members were losing sight of the fact that there were more than one set of caves coming under this item. It was, he thought, regrettable that Western Australia had not paid more attention to the development of her pleasure resorts. Still, it appeared that some progress was at last being made in that direction, and reference to the shipping records would show that there had been a decided decrease in the number of people leaving Western Australia for the Eastern States during the recent holidays. That he attributed, to a great extent, to the fact that they had found pleasures of their own of a local nature quite equal to those to be enjoyed in the other States. The member for Murchison had said that he (Mr. Osborn) had taken on a task he was incapable of doing. One thing he (Mr. Osborn) was capable of doing was of speaking the truth or, at all events, of endeavouring to speak the truth, and not to misrepresent the utterances of others. The hon. member claimed that to the poorer classes these resorts were of no service. Certainly the cost of getting to the Caves was rather much, but there was no need to advertise things that did not exist. While it cost £5 for one class to get to the Caves, others could visit them for three guineas, which covered accommodation, food, and everything necessary. People should not try to run down their country: and if they had not the knowledge, they should certainly seek for it. Although we might be spending a thousand pounds on these Caves, the travelling public would more than repay it by money paid to the Railway Department. We should endeavour to give facilities to the Caves Board, so that they might carry out their developmental work and establish the Caves in an up-to-date manner, so as to make them as popular as possible. We should not endeavour to hamper the members of the board who received no pay.

We should give them credit for being men of some ability who had the interests of the State at heart. There were other items in the way of luxuries on which one might have something to say later, but at least this item should be maintained in its present state.

Mr. JACOBY: No doubt the case made out by the Treasurer in support of the item was an excellent one, but in the position of the State economies were necessary. The Government had recognised this in the heavy reductions made in other items of expenditure, and if a good case could be made out for maintaining expenditure on luxuries, what could be said of the case in favour of retaining items of expenditure for roads and other necessary works? On the other hand, if reductions were necessary, expenditure on luxuries should suffer with expenditure in other directions. It was absurd that school teachers should lose their increments, while we still maintained the full figure of our expenditure on luxuries. The Treasurer asked us not to quibble at an expenditure of £200, but quibbled at expenditure on items for the development of the State.

The Treasurer: Where have I quibbled?

Mr. JACOBY: The sum of £35,000 had been cut off the roads at the instance of the Treasurer.

The Treasurer: No.

Mr. Holman: The Treasurer quibbled over the £5 per annum for school teachers.

Hon. F. H. Piessé: The country has to cut down expenditure.

Mr. JACOBY: The member for Katanning had got all he wanted, but there were other parts of the State that had not railways every five yards and roads every two yards. One of the caves was situated in the Swan electorate, but the people of Wanneroo, if asked, would rather have the money spent on their roads than on their caves. In regard to other items on the Estimates, he intended to deal with them in the same way as this. If there was to be any reduction, it should be on items of not so much importance as items for the development of the State. He would support the reduction of this

item, but would rather have seen a smaller reduction proposed.

Mr. COLLIER: Seeing that most of the Caves were situated in the district represented by the Treasurer, one could appreciate the elaborate speech the Treasurer made in defence of the item, but in view of the financial position of the State we should have no hesitation in reducing this item, and all others of a similar character. When we were faced with a deficit of hundreds of thousands, a deficit which was mounting up month by month, and when we were seeking to place fresh burdens on the people in the shape of taxation, we had an item like this on the Estimates for a luxury. The Treasurer should not take credit for the fact that the item had not been increased. This was a time when we were reducing votes all round on works of an absolutely necessary character. One of the Treasurer's arguments was that this grant resulted in considerable expenditure in hotels and in the coaching business in the Busselton district, but were the taxpayers to consider this a good reason for the expenditure, while people were being retrenched, while men were being dismissed from the Railway Department by scores every week, while civil servants had their salaries reduced, or while increments rightly due were denied them?

Mr. BATH: While there was a great deal in the arguments urged by members on both sides as to the need for cutting down the more luxurious votes when so much money was required for developmental work in the State, still at the same time we had to be careful to exercise some discretion in this new passion which actuated members at slashing at various items on the Estimates. In the present case it must be recognised that certain obligations had been entered into, and we must not be too drastic in the amount by which we sought to reduce the vote. Already six months of the year had gone and it was certain that the expenditure for that period had been incurred on the scale of the old vote, and to cut the sum down by £500 now would result in difficulties. Although the vote were reduced by that sum, money would have to be found to carry on for the next six months

also. While he would vote for a reduction as an indication of the view of the Committee that luxurious votes should first suffer reduction, he was opposed to the proposal to cut the item down by £500.

Mr. WALKER: This was one of those cases where the Committee should be emphatic. Obligations must be carried out, but that should not deter us from making our meaning decided. There should be no misunderstanding with reference to the vote. It was little short of scandalous to provide these luxuries for a select few, while we could not provide proper hospital facilities for the sick and maimed.

The Treasurer: We have provided hospitals for the sick.

Mr. WALKER: The hospital grants had been cut down over 25 per cent. all over the country. It was probable that some of them would be forced to close and yet for the sake of pure luxury, for a pure beauty spot, the sum of £1,000 was being voted.

The Treasurer: No hospitals need close under the present regulations.

Mr. WALKER: Neither need the Caves close. The Caves could not run away and they could well wait until more prosperous times arrived and when there was a more discreet Treasurer, who would spend money for the good of the country and not for the pampered few. Were it not for the fact that the Treasurer was representing Busselton he would be the first loudly to condemn the folly of keeping the Caves open for a few people. Roads were needed all over the country, but they could not be constructed as there was no money. The ordinary vote even for keeping roads in repair could not be provided, not to speak of the necessity for finding money to open new roads, and yet in order to provide a luxury which would not serve 100 people, the sum of £1,000 was to be spent. The school teachers, who were a real national asset, were to have no chances of advancement, and the wage earners of the State were to be cut down. There was now a new agreement with the railway hands whereby the permanent way men, who had received 8s. a day as a minimum wage, were to be reduced to 7s. a day. If the country

were to suffer by the closing down of the Caves he would say let them be kept open: if the Caves brought immigrants to our shores, brought new people here to see them, if they were an important, national, healthful, asset and would result in the creation of a love of art or science, he would also say that they should be kept open; but what benefit did the caves confer to others than the select few pleasure seekers? No asset was derivable from this source of expenditure. Now was the opportunity for the Committee to show what they meant. If members were going in for economy, let it be genuine economy, not in necessities but in luxuries. Money should not be voted to provide luxuries for the few, while the workers and toilers of the State were deprived of the very necessities of life.

Mr. FOULKES: Members were agreed that it was necessary, in order to keep our people here and spend their wages in the country instead of going elsewhere, to provide some facilities for them in the way of pleasure resorts. This must be looked upon as a business concern. But he would draw attention to the fact that there were more pleasure resorts that required developing than those in the locality represented in Parliament by the Treasurer. The first matter of importance to decide was which of the pleasure resorts should be developed first, and in this connection the decision must be upon the basis of which gave the greatest enjoyment to the greatest number of people. Within a few miles of Perth there was an important pleasure resort. This was at Cottesloe. The Treasurer said that 3,000 people visited the Caves during the last 12 months, but this did not compare well with the record at Cottesloe Beach, which showed that 100,000 people had visited that place during the year. In each of the last three years he had impressed upon the Ministry the urgent necessity for spending money in providing attractions along the sea coast in that district. He had asked for £1,000 for the construction of a sea jetty on the foreshore at Cottesloe. From reports of reliable engineers he knew that such a work would cost £2,000 and the local authorities would be prepared to pay even

as much as one-half the cost of the work if the Government found the balance. Whereas the spending of money on the Caves only benefited 3,000 people, the expenditure of a like sum at Cottesloe would benefit all the people in the State. The Treasurer said he was quite prepared to develop pleasure resorts if there were **corresponding advantages** to the State. Members could see which brought most revenue to the railways, the 3,000 people who went to Busselton or the 100,000 people who went to Cottesloe.

The Treasurer: You are misrepresenting what I said. I said that 3,000 people paid for entrance to the Caves. That is very different from the number of people who go to Busselton in the year.

Mr. FOULKES: We were asked to incur an expenditure for the benefit of the 3,000 people who went to the caves and not for those who went to Busselton. It cost a good deal to make a trip to the Caves, and the great majority of the residents of the State could not afford the £5 or £10 necessary for such a holiday. But it would be a very simple and a cheap matter for anyone to get down to Cottesloe and enjoy the pleasures that should be obtainable there. It was nothing more than a business proposition, and it would certainly pay the Railway Department a hundred times over if the Government spent £1,000 in providing the baths at Cottesloe, owing to the tremendous increase there would be in the traffic to that resort. The James Government agreed to contribute £900 towards the cost of constructing a jetty along that sea coast.

The Treasurer: Did you get the money from the James Government?

Mr. FOULKES: Yes; they put the sum on the Estimates and it was passed by the House. The House voted £900 and the local people contributed a sum of £500 towards the cost of the jetty, and that small expenditure of £900 had brought an enormous amount of revenue to the Railway Department. After the James Ministry retired the Labour Ministry contributed a certain amount towards providing shelter sheds along the beach.

Mr. Johnson: It was £250.

Mr. FOULKES: But from the present Government, with the exception of £350

which had been given towards the construction of a road, not a single penny had been provided to develop that seaside resort, while Busselton last year was voted £100 to construct an approach to the jetty. He did not know how many people went to Busselton, but he was quite sure that 100,000 did not go down there. He agreed with the Leader of the Opposition, who said that £500 was too much to take off the vote, and he would give his support to the proposal to reduce it by £200, so as to impress upon the Government the necessity for developing a seaside resort which would give greater facilities for the enjoyment of the people than a pleasure resort situated 200 or 300 miles away.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: One point that had been lost sight of was that during the last eight or ten years there had been a considerable increase in the population of the State, and in that time the votes for matters of this description had remained practically unaltered. Anyone who had been to the Caves must know that the sum granted by the Government was only sufficient to keep them in decent order, and that the money was in no way being expended to enter into fresh undertakings or to extend the work. It was not pleasant to see an interstate boat leaving Fremantle crowded with people going to the East to spend their money, and he sometimes doubted whether we were enterprising enough as far as the development of our own pleasure resources was concerned. One of the troubles of the State was that money was constantly going out to other quarters not only for the necessities of life but for the pleasure of the people. With regard to the difference between Yallingup and Cottesloe, Yallingup was situated in a part of the State where the improvements did not to any material extent benefit the property holders of the particular district. The improvements which had been carried out at Cottesloe had enhanced the value of the property there, and it would be interesting to hear from the member for Claremont exactly what the Cottesloe roads board or the municipality had spent in improvements at Cottesloe Beach.

These bodies were quite ready to take anything that was given to them.

Mr. Foulkes: They spent £500 on the jetty.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: During the last five or six years that was practically the greatest amount they had spent in that locality. He was not against the expenditure of money in the development of Cottesloe Beach. Such an expenditure would be a good investment for the Railway Department.

Mr. Johnson: What about the health of the public, for 10,000 people go down there in a single day?

The CHAIRMAN: Order.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The point was that the locality had its property values considerably enhanced by the fact that it had a public pleasure resort. The money that had been voted for the Caves had not been spent on further extensions. If extensions were to be made he admitted it would be better to spend the money at Cottesloe, but here we had simply to maintain things as they were. If we ceased these grants to Yallingup the Caves would naturally go into disrepair. We could not well go back, and members, he hoped, would take a reasonable view of the situation. He was not adverse to improving Cottesloe as a pleasure resort, but certainly in view of the enhancement of values there the district should contribute more than the people of Yallingup and Busselton should be asked to do for the development of their localities. The cases were not parallel. In a few years' time he hoped to see the Government of the day do much in the direction of developing other pleasure resorts. We must stop this constant exodus of pleasure seekers to the Eastern States. He hoped hon. members would support the vote.

Mr. BOLTON: It was his intention to support the reduction of the item by £200. He did that on the basis of the municipal reductions proposed by the present Government, namely, 20 per cent. for five years. Next year he would again favour a similar reduction, and if hon. members were consistent they would support it also. The argument used by the Minister for Works regarding the en-

hancement of Cottesloe properties by the expenditure of Government funds, did not apply to all other localities. In the case of North Fremantle for every pound granted by the Government the local governing body had also spent a similar sum of money, and not for the local people but for the visitors, so that they might have an enjoyable time on a beach which could not be surpassed in any part of the State. Last year North Fremantle spent £250 on the improvement of the beach, and the Government gave a similar amount. Very few and very small requests for assistance were brought forward from that electorate. Whatever had been asked had been requested on the basis of pound for pound. Not one single grant had been given by the present Government. The difference between Cottesloe and North Fremantle was that the district which was deserving of assistance had been the one which had spent, from its own resources, a pound for every pound granted by the Government. If the Government refused to provide money when a local body was prepared to spend a similar amount, he would be justified in supporting the reduction of the vote under review and any similar vote on the Estimates until such time as the Government would have more funds at its disposal to enable them to assist people who were prepared to assist themselves.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It was his intention to support the proposed reduction, and his regret was that he could not wipe it out altogether. The present was the time when we should endeavour to develop the industries of the State rather than the pleasure resorts. Several members had pointed out that the particular districts they represented were ideal pleasure resorts. He just wished to say that as a pleasure resort 20-Mile Sandy was unparalleled and no money had been spent there. After listening to the remarks of the Treasurer he was impressed with them. In the first place the Treasurer stated that these pleasure resorts would advertise the State, and on the subject of advertising, this very word had got into his soul; he abhorred it. We could do better than advertise, and we should show the world that we were not

running a soap factory. The Treasurer remarked that all the Eastern States advertised their pleasure resorts, and he instanced Victoria. We had only to look up statistics to find with what disastrous results Victoria had advertised its pleasure resorts. During the last 50 years more people had left Victoria than had entered it. If that was the result of advertising pleasure resorts the sooner we ceased to advertise the better. The Treasurer remarked that a good deal of money was distributed by visitors. Members were told that the Cave House would not pay expenses; the Government, when they ran it, lost money on it. If these visitors were distributing money they would distribute some at the Cave House, and if they had not distributed sufficient to make that place pay they had certainly distributed very little. The Treasurer added it would be inadvisable to close up the pleasure resorts. It would be far better to close up the pleasure resorts and open up some of the industries. We had been paying continually towards the upkeep of these pleasure resorts during the last four or five years, and in that time we had been refusing money for the construction of roads and other necessary works to develop the industries. In his own district a serious question was the water supply, and although the member for Roebourne supported this vote he reminded that member that the £1,000 proposed to be spent on the Caves could be more profitably spent boring for water either in his (Mr. Underwood's) electorate or in that of the member for Roebourne. In his manifesto to the electors the member for Roebourne had asked why they should not try a bore for that district.

Mr. Taylor: They have tried one.

Mr. UNDERWOOD was speaking about a bore for water. He held with the member for Roebourne that it was desirable that bores for water should be tried in those northern districts. The money being expended on these Caves would serve the purpose very well. To discover water in those districts would be of far greater value to the State than the bringing of visitors from Colombo to the Caves. The member for Roebourne had declared

that the poorer classes could go to the Caves if they wished to. The fact that they did not go could only be accepted as evidence that they had no desire to go; and if that were so, certainly they should not be asked to pay for the upkeep of the Caves. It would be far better to spend what money the Treasury might have to spare in the development of the industries of the State. The time had come for economy, and economy should first be effected in pleasure resorts. The Treasurer had spoken of the necessity of maintaining this asset. An asset that cost from £1,000 to £3,000 per year appeared to him (Mr. Underwood) to be something rather in the nature of a liability. He was in favour of the proposed reduction, for he was anxious to get rid of this vaunted asset.

Mr. BUTCHER: Even at the risk of incurring the wrath of the Treasurer and of being accused by the member for Roe-bourne of decrying his country he would vote for the proposed reduction. Travelling about the State as much as he did he was fully alive to the necessity for the improvement of the roads in the back-blocks. He had seen unfortunate settlers trying to bring their produce to market with their wagons up to their axles in mud. These people, he thought, were entitled to consideration far more than were those who made a practice of visiting the Caves. He had repeatedly opposed such expenditure, and from year to year had made attacks upon this particular item. Even if the amendment had been to strike out the whole of the item he for one would have voted for it. The member for Fremantle in championing this expenditure had remarked that it was necessary to make a pleasure resort in order to prevent the people taking the money out of the country. It was remarkable that it had not occurred to the hon. member that the first claim on the surplus cash of the country was, or should be, that of the settlers in remote districts. Was it not better to assist them to produce something that would lead to the very end desired by the member for Fremantle, namely, the keeping of money within the State. For it was to be remembered that every day thousands of

pounds were sent to the other States for the necessities of life—necessaries which could be produced in this State if only there were in existence the roads essential to the economical carting of the stuff to market. It was clearly the duty of hon. members to spend the money on the roads in the back country. He would say nothing about the cutting down of grants to hospitals and to roads boards, for if he were to go on touching on the claims that should come before that of the Caves Board he would be there all night.

The Minister for Works: Some of the roads boards pay only £12 for every £100 put up by the Government.

Mr. BUTCHER: There were roads boards in this country rating to only a small extent, but these were fully deserving of the subsidies granted to them. He knew the conditions of life in those remote parts of the country and he could say that the people there were fully deserving of every assistance. The Treasurer had spoken of the thousands who visited the Caves. He had before him a list showing that for the Christmas holidays there were only 30 visitors who had spent their vacations at Yallingup, whereas probably thirty hundred had spent their holidays at Cottesloe Beach.

The Premier: That is where the Minister for Works lives.

Mr. BUTCHER: It would be interesting to know if anything under the sum of £50,000 had been spent in the development of the Caves.

Mr. Holman: Nearer £60,000.

Mr. BUTCHER: If that money had been spent in the development of the natural resources of the State it would have been of far greater profit to the State. In his opinion it was the duty of the Caves Board to make the Caves self-supporting, seeing that the taxpayer had already provided some £60,000 with which to build them up. If it were necessary to continue to find this huge sum of money it would be, he thought, far better to close down the Caves and give more attention to such pleasure resorts as Cottesloe where people of all classes could go and enjoy themselves without any large expenditure of money. He had been glad to notice

from the remarks of the Premier that he was beginning to realise the immorality of the proposition. He (the Premier) had suggested the appointment of a committee—

The Premier: I did not say there was anything immoral about it.

Mr. BUTCHER: Clearly it would be an immoral action on the part of the Committee to continue to pay away the taxpayers' money in that direction. The Premier's suggestion was a good one, namely, that a committee should be appointed to inquire into the expenditure on the Zoological Gardens, the Caves, the Art Gallery, and other institutions of the sort.

Mr. HOPKINS was prepared to extend his sympathy to the desire expressed by hon. members for a reduction of the vote. The list of visitors furnished by the member for Gascoyne had served to illustrate the fact that the Caves were chiefly patronised by but one section of the community. As the Minister for Works had remarked, the Caves had been established and would have to be upkept to at least a certain extent. He (*Mr. Hopkins*) intended to vote for a reduction. Seven months of the year had already elapsed, and in the circumstances he thought that if the vote were reduced by £100 it would meet the requirements. For, as he had said, seven months' proportion of the vote had been expended, and expended on the assumption that the vote would go through as usual. The Premier's offer seemed to him a very fair one. Many of these boards were difficult to deal with, and the proposal of the Premier, namely, that a committee be appointed to look into the question of these boards and make recommendations to Parliament, was in all respects a good one. The time had gone by for the upkeep of institutions of this kind at anything like a great cost, seeing that the country was hard pushed to find money for the carrying out of important developments. The Caves were there and would have to be upkept, and that being so he thought that an effort should be made to render them available to the residents of the Eastern and Northern Goldfields. There should be a system of special trains at reduced rates run in the interests of those engaged

in the mining industry. If they were carried to the Caves at £1 per head on special occasions when the rolling stock of the railway might be otherwise lying idle, there would be no loss to the country and we would get visitors to the Caves at a time of the year when possibly there might not be other visitors, and we would gain revenue for the Railway Department. The board suggested by the Premier should be appointed.

Mr. Johnson: If an amendment to reduce the item by £100 were put, members could not then move to reduce it by £200.

The CHAIRMAN: Until the present amendment was disposed of, no further amendment could be taken. Assuming the present amendment were lost, any further amendment could be made to reduce the amount by a sum less than £500.

Mr. TROY: With the consent of the Committee, and bearing in mind that seven months of the financial year had already elapsed, he would withdraw his amendment to reduce the item by £500, with a view to moving to reduce it by £200.

Mr. Walker: I object.

The CHAIRMAN: As objection had been made to the withdrawal the hon. member could not withdraw the amendment.

Mr. FOULKES: The Minister for Works had called attention to the fact that if Government grants were given to improve the shore at Cottesloe, it meant enhancing of the value of property in Cottesloe.

The Minister for Works: It has enhanced it.

Mr. FOULKES: No doubt the Minister had made that statement knowing well that he (*Mr. Foulkes*) was a considerable landowner in the district.

The Minister for Works: Not at all.

Mr. FOULKES: The statement was apparently made with a view to prejudice his arguments. He took exception to the Minister's remarks, because the only grant given in connection with improving the facilities at Cottesloe was one of £300 given last year by the Minister for Works to construct a road past the Minister's house. When members opposed the item for that expenditure he (*Mr. Foulkes*)

had taken no exception to it on the score that the Minister was a landowner in that district; and he now took exception to the Minister's taunt that the landowners in the district did not contribute to the improvements.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for Claremont had introduced the deputation making the request for the grant of £300, but in view of the fact that his (the Minister's) house was situated on the road, he had suggested that the money should be spent on a road further south, and had left it to the deputation to reconsider the matter and send him their decision. However, this was the main road from the station to the beach. The hon. member must have felt some qualms of conscience in regard to the arguments he had advanced in favour of expenditure in Cottesloe, otherwise he would not have put the interpretation he did on his (the Minister's) remarks. As an owner of property at Cottesloe he (the Minister) was prepared when his property was enhanced in value to put his hands in his pocket to help in the improvements, and he commended that view to the hon. member.

Mr. Foulkes: We have not seen any signs of it on your part.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS had not seen any public spirit on the part of the hon. member in assisting in improvements in the district, unless it was to get money from the Government for the purpose. The hon. member had no right in giving the ex parte statement he had given without a full explanation of the circumstances. It was not a road that was constructed, it was a footpath, and it was on the opposite side of the road to his (the Minister's) house. He had asked that it should be on the other side of the road. The work was very necessary. Many accidents had occurred in Forrest-street prior to the making of the footpath.

Mr. Heitmann: It was urgently needed.

Amendment (to reduce the item by £500) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	13
Noes	31
				—

Majority against .. 18

AYES.

Mr. Butcher	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Collier	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Gourley	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Heitmann	Mr. Walker
Mr. Holman	Mr. Ware
Mr. Horan	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hudson	

(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Keenan
Mr. Barnett	Mr. Male
Mr. Bath	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Monger
Mr. Carson	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Davies	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Draper	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Gordon	Mr. Price
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Swan
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hayward	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Hopkins	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Layman
Mr. Johnson	

(Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. TROY moved a further amendment—

That the item be reduced by £200.

The PREMIER had already intimated to the hon. member that the Government were prepared to accept the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Item, Melbourne Agency, £1,000:

Mr. UNDERWOOD: What became of this money?

The PREMIER: For rent of the premises in Collins-street £400 was expended. In addition there was considerable expenditure in advertising and work of a similar nature, and also in renewing exhibits sent periodically to the agency. A reduction had been made on last year's expenditure in view of the fact that much of it was preliminary charges that would not be debited against it this year.

[Mr. Taylor took the Chair.]

Item. Freights and fares advanced to new settlers, £300:

Mr. COLLIER: It was understood this concession was only extended to settlers from oversea. Free passes were not granted to residents in the State desirous of taking up land. It was the practice some years ago to issue them, but owing to abuses the system had been discontinued. Free passes should be granted to persons genuinely intending to take up

land, and in cases where land was selected, the holders should be refunded the amount they had paid for railway tickets. One case which had been brought under his notice, showed that a man on the gold-fields had spent £30 to take drays and other implements to his block, and his endeavours to obtain a refund were unsuccessful. No greater concession should be extended to settlers from over sea than to those resident in the State.

The PREMIER: The practice now in vogue was that, so far as freights were concerned, they were not given free to anyone either inside or outside the State, but those who received advances for that purpose had to refund the amount within two years. So far as railway fares were concerned, he was agreeable to accept the suggestion that in cases where selectors had taken up land their actual fares should be refunded. As to the freight on horses, etc., the same procedure should be adopted as in the Eastern States where two years were given in which to refund the amount advanced for that purpose.

Mr. HEITMANN: There should not be different treatment meted out to the people coming from over sea, than to those who live in the State. Why should we charge our own desirable people fares, while undesirable people from other parts of the world had free passes? A class of people was coming here which was no more fitted to go on the land, than to fly. Recently in the Busselton district a man who took up land had been for twenty-six years a watchmaker in London. He was put on the land by those "good servants of the Lands Department," and after spending all his capital, amounting to four or five hundred pounds, he had to throw up his selection. His block was no good, and after spending two or three years upon it with his grown-up sons, he opened a business in Busselton, and his sons went to Perth. Every encouragement and facility should be given to our own people.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The residents in the State should receive any advantages granted to people from outside the State. In answering a question on the subject some time ago, the Premier said, that no one from inside the State who was look-

ing for land would get a free pass, the reason being that the privilege previously accorded to them of getting free passes had been abused. It was now well known that the privilege had been similarly abused by people outside the State.

The PREMIER: In future, refunds would be made in cases where land had been taken up. Some time ago it was possible for a man to take up 160 acres of land for £1. A would-be selector might travel all over the country, have the services of a guide for a week or two, and although he did not in the end take up the land, he was granted free railway passes. The privilege was so abused that it had to be stopped, but it might be safeguarded now by making a stipulation that in the event of the selector taking up land, the railway fares would be refunded.

Mr. HEITMANN: That was not the point put forward. Free passes were not objected to, but the question was whether the same facilities would be given to our own people as to those who came from other parts.

The Premier: Equal opportunities will be given to all.

Mr. HEITMANN: Our own people should be placed on the same footing as those coming from abroad.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Those who came from outside the State had money advanced to them in order to pay their passage on the steamboats, which were not controlled by the State. They had, however, to give a promissory note to refund the whole amount. The settler from within the State was in a much better position, for if he took up land, he had his railway fare returned to him. Surely he was in a much stronger position, as he had all his outlay returned, than the man who came from abroad, and had to repay the passage money advanced to him.

Mr. HORAN: What had become of the lady who arrived in the State a few months ago with a great flourish of trumpets and who took up land at Denmark? She was given a free pass and was entertained hospitably by the Government. There was some talk of champagne, and it was understood that she lived at the Palace hotel at the cost of the State.

The PREMIER: So far as champagne was concerned, if any were purchased, it must have been by the member himself, for at all events none had been debited against the Government. The lady arrived under the auspices of the Householders' League. She took a great fancy to the South-Western portion of the State near Denmark, and took up two or three blocks, but unfortunately she became unwell, and had since returned to her relatives in England.

Item, Land Guides, £3,500:

Mr. UNDERWOOD moved—

That the item be reduced by £1,500.

Economy could be effected with advantage to the State in this item, as for the money spent in that direction the State did not receive anything like fair value. Several cases had occurred where the guides had travelled with would-be settlers and shown them no land except that already taken up. Many of the guides did not know the country they went over. In one instance, at Jarrahwood, a guide took a man over the country, and showed him land; this was applied for and the man took his family down to the site and made arrangements to settle there, but after going to all that expense, he was informed that his application could not be approved, because it was timber country, and the land would not be available until the timber was cut off it. In other cases the land guides had failed to show people anything at all, and in one instance a land guide had informed him that he knew of no land within 20 miles of the railway where a man could satisfactorily settle. Yet a great amount of money was expended in paying that guide to take people round and to show them what he knew to be unsuitable land. There were several of these guides who could not be trusted in the bush by themselves. We had an assurance that the Premier intended to introduce a system of survey before selection. Once he did that, land guides would no longer be necessary. If the land was surveyed the land agent in the district where the land was could direct the people to the land. The item should be struck out entirely; but several members considered it necessary to have

some guides until the new system was in force, and in consideration of the wishes of those members he proposed to move that the amount be reduced by £1,500.

The Premier: Seven months have already passed.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Premier could not have spent half of the money already. If that had been done he could do away with land guides for the remaining five months. Hundreds of blocks of land had been taken up without the assistance of guides, and he knew of hundreds of people who had gone out with guides who had failed to show them any land. He knew of guides also who owned many blocks of land which were for sale, and who had told the people that they knew the owners of these blocks. Of course they knew the owners and knew them well. Altogether a great deal of money had been uselessly expended on land guides.

Mr. ANGWIN: There was some reason for complaints about the manner in which land guides carried out their duties. A number of the guides were not particular about the statements they made to the people they were taking round. Many people had been led astray by wrong statements made by the guides, and these people afterwards had to ask to be released because they had taken up land on statements wrongly made by the guides. A gentleman had recently taken up land beyond Kojonup, and he was told by the guide that the extension of the railway in the district was under consideration. Such a line had never even been mentioned in the House. Again, it was found even on the special settlement which the Minister for Agriculture opened a few months ago where no land had been thrown open for selection, that two people went out the other day and found the land guides pointing out blocks that were already held, as being open for selection. A few days ago he (Mr. Angwin) sent a well-known gentleman, who had held the position at Fremantle as chairman of the roads board, in the direction of Denmark. He was taken in hand by a guide who had been in the country only a few weeks, and came back disgusted, and stated he could get no information about the land.

The system adopted with regard to guides was going to do the State more harm than good. We should be very careful, if we wished the State to advance in a proper manner, that those entrusted with the task of taking people out, should tell the truth in regard to the various holdings. For the reasons he had given it was his intention to support the proposal to reduce the vote.

The PREMIER: With regard to the remarks of the member for East Fremantle, he was aware there were occasions when land guides had not carried out their duties in a way we should like them to do. As far as Denmark was concerned, he had issued instructions that intending settlers should not be taken there at the present time.

Mr. Angwin: I said in the direction of Denmark.

The PREMIER: Until the land at Denmark had been surveyed he did not want people to go down there. It was not possible for the department to throw that land open for the next month or two. There was no advantage in people going down there to inspect the locality at the present time. So far as land guides were concerned, as he had already stated, Mr. Fox, who was a thorough bushman and an experienced surveyor, had been appointed to go into the question with a view of remedying the existing state of affairs. It was difficult to get men with experience to act as guides. Mr. Fox would report as to whether it would be advisable to continue the system in force at the present time, by paying certain fees, or whether it would be better in certain districts to engage reliable men as permanent guides. A considerable amount of money had been expended in the past on land guides, and some of these had wasted the time of the would-be selector, and involved the department in a considerable amount for extra fees. But it was absolutely necessary to have land guides. As far as the question of survey before selection was concerned, that had been introduced, though, as he had already explained, it would take a considerable time before the system could be adopted in its entirety. If it were possible at the present time he would say close up all the

unsurveyed land; that, however, would stop settlement, and there was no desire to do that. As far as new areas were concerned, it was proposed to classify that area of two million acres which had been reported on by Surveyor Terry. At the present time, however, it was impossible to carry on the classification work there owing to the dry nature of the country. He had no desire to see settlers take up land any distance from the railway, when there was no possibility of success resulting. He recently dissuaded some men from taking up land 40 miles from the railway, and pointed out there was no likelihood of their making it a success. It should not be the policy to encourage men to take up land where they were not likely to be successful. That was the danger that existed so far as some of the guides were concerned and some intending settlers had to be protected against themselves. They took up land of poor quality with the result that when they made application for assistance to the Agricultural Bank, the inspector who had inspected the land did not consider that it was advisable to recommend the bank to make any advance. When the department carried out the policy of survey before selection in its entirety, the position would be that the bank would be able to put a certain value on the block, and that value would be the one which would be accepted by the bank; so that on every block thrown open we would then be in the position to say how much the bank would advance on those blocks. A man would then see a block and satisfy himself as to whether he was likely to make a home there, and he would know how much the bank would advance on it. He hoped members would not press for the reduction of the item. The Government were making the closest inquiry into the matter, and in view of the fact that survey before selection was practically only in its infancy, no point could be gained.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Having heard the explanation of the Premier, that it was intended to deal with the matter thoroughly, he felt inclined to withdraw the motion tentatively. But still he was of the opinion that a considerable saving

could be made in this item if it were attended to. He hoped the Minister would attend to the matter. By permission of the Committee he would withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Item, Incidental, including postage, stationery, travelling, transport, advertising, rent, etcetera, £10,000:

Mr. DRAPER: The Committee should be given some information with reference to the expenditure which was covered by the item of £10,000 for incidentals. It was frequently urged by the man in the street that all that was required was economy in administration, and it was an easy comment for a man to make who did not know much of what was going on. It was only on an occasion like the present that members had some opportunity of getting at the actual expenditure of departments which was incurred incidentally. If any business man wanted to make a success of his business he must look after the incidental expenses. The item in question applied apparently to postage and stationery; but it was found in the Estimates that altogether there was £132,000 provided for incidental expenses. In asking for information on this point he was only voicing the desire of several members. If there was any economy which could be practised in administration, which was not practised at the present time, it would probably be found that it could be practised as far as incidental expenses were concerned.

The PREMIER: As was shown on the Estimates, this item included postage, stationery, travelling, transport, advertising, rent, and the like, travelling allowances and officers' railway fares and freights. It included all the railway fares provided free to intending settlers, for which the Lands Department had to pay the Railway Department. All these were defrayed from this particular vote. It included all the land agencies' expenditure—an expenditure covering a large number of land agencies throughout the State. It included horse and trap hire also. The vote was cut down to its narrowest limits. With the member who had just resumed his seat he realised the necessity for keeping a watchful eye on this

particular expenditure, and the officers of the department had been given strict injunctions with regard to it. Still, to encourage people to go on the land entailed a considerable expenditure. The fact that during the last six months the total area of land taken up equalled, or nearly equalled, the amount taken up in the preceding 12 months was an evidence that the department was very active in this direction. As far as this particular vote was concerned it could not well be reduced.

Mr. BATH: Attention had been called to this item in previous Estimates. As pointed out by the member for West Perth, no less a sum than £132,000 was represented in incidentals. It was equal to five per cent. of the total expenditure to which the State was committed. That there was a possibility of effecting economy here would be recognised by members in view of the fact that no opportunity was given of discussing the details in this particular item. Hon. members had no knowledge of how the money was disbursed. Members had to be content with the information that it was to cover incidentals, including postage, stationery, etcetera. He had found that frequently requests were submitted by officers for new furniture and fittings, whereas in all probability, in other departments of the Government there would be found furniture available for transference. The fact that there was no effective control over this and other items of the class might easily lead to extravagance. This item represented nearly 10 per cent. of the vote in which it was included. Clearly, the greatest vigilance was needed to see that it did not grow.

Mr. JACOBY: It was peculiar that the item was always spent to the last penny. The department was always able to expend the full amount passed under this item. It led to the suspicion that there was an endeavour to spend every penny of the amount rather than to save it. Now that the attention of the Government had been drawn to it, the money to be voted under the item might be more jealously watched. He would like to hear from the Premier whether the amount was spent under Ministerial authority.

The PREMIER: A considerable proportion of the amount was spent under Ministerial authority. At the same time a further considerable amount was spent in allowances under the public service regulation; that was to say, travelling allowances provided for by regulation under the Public Service Act. These allowances varied to some extent with the vocation of the officers employed. In the case of surveyors stationed beyond a certain meridian of longitude, they received a higher allowance than when in more temperate parts of the State. The whole of the travelling allowances were controlled by the public service regulation. As he had said, there did not appear to be much prospect of reducing the item in view of the fact that the department was so active at the present time in the work of land settlement.

[Mr. Daglish resumed the Chair.]

Mr. DRAPER: The information asked for had not yet been obtained; possibly it was his own fault for having neglected to give the Premier notice of the question. The information he desired was as to what would be the amount spent on each of the details mentioned in this item of incidentals. It might be a small thing, but he had frequently noticed the quality of stationery used in Government departments. It was of far more expensive a quality than any business firm, no matter how prosperous, would dream of using. He mentioned this simply to show that possibly economies could be effected in this direction. He intended to ask this same question upon each of the other items, so that, if possible, hon. members might have some opportunity of checking expenditure in this regard. A business man dissatisfied with his turnover in a year would at once look to see what economies could be effected, and would ask his accountant to show him all the items of expenditure. In the same way, if the Government desired to cut down the cost of administration—and he had no doubt of their sincerity in this respect—they would be in a better position to do it if fuller opportunity were given to hon. members for criticism of the various items.

The Premier: You must remember that the work is increasing.

Mr. DRAPER: That might be so. What he wished to ask for was information in connection with this item of £10,000 for incidentals.

Mr. NANSON: It would assist the Committee if the Government could supply a detailed list of the expenditure under this heading in the preceding financial year. The information could probably be supplied in regard to other departments.

The PREMIER: In future an endeavour would be made to have this item dissected, so that members might be in possession of the information required.

Vote (as reduced to £104,967) put and passed.

Vote—*Woods and Forests*, £8,755:

Mr. JACOBY: We should have recognised the danger of allowing the depletion of our forest resources to continue without any thought of the future; and as we had great possibilities of establishing forests, not only of woods indigenous to Australia, but of woods from Europe and elsewhere, it was time thoroughly comprehensive steps were taken to place the department on a proper footing, and the first thing necessary was the appointment of a qualified Conservator of Forests. We now used an enormous amount of timber for fruit cases and had to send to Europe for it in increasing quantities every year, when we had every opportunity in the State for growing a suitable timber. Probably 500,000 fruit cases would be used this year, costing £12,000 to £14,000, and the demand for the timber was growing rapidly. It had been proved that suitable timber for fruit cases could be grown to the fullest advantage in the State. In South Australia extensive experiments had been carried out with highly satisfactory results. The timber grown as an experiment in South Australia when cut had a marketable value of £200 an acre, representing a gross return of £10 per acre per annum since the forest was planted; and as the maintenance of the forest was very small, it was an excellent return for the outlay. In that State they were now using portions of the forest for supplying fruit

cases and for other purposes of that nature. Last year in Victoria a pine forest had been sold for £360 per acre to an orchardist who wanted the wood for fruit cases. These figures showed that there could be no expenditure for which there could be greater justification than expenditure for establishing pine forests in this State. Even better timbers than those already tested could be established. The Government had made a start on an exceedingly small scale, and it was regrettable that the experimental farm was so far away in the South-West of the State. It was a mistake also to see land devoted to the purpose that could be better devoted to other purposes. Waste lands would be more suitable for pine forests. It was a mistake to clear for the purpose land already heavily timbered. There was an area of land he considered suitable for the purpose extending from the Yanchep Caves to the Moore River. This land could be cleared for a small sum, and should be suitable for plantations of this nature. It was no use putting down 100 acres. We should put down 300 or 400 acres each year if we wished to cater for the demand which would arise for this class of timber in years to come. It was pleasing to see that the Government had reversed their decision not to give ornamental trees to the people in the State. There was no greater asset to the State than the improved appearance of the countryside that must follow the extensive planting of ornamental trees on rural homesteads. So much so was that recognised in Canada, that the Canadian Government took extraordinary means to influence farmers to plant useful and ornamental trees; they even went so far as to offer prizes for those who achieved the greatest success in this direction. The Government stopped this system of granting trees some time ago, but he was glad to see the old system was again resorted to. Some economy was possible in this department, although the amount involved was not very great; still an instance was brought under his notice where two inspectors of the department were in one district at the same time. One went round collecting the royalties on timber cut

by the mills, and the other collected royalties on timber cut by the hewers. It was surprising that the officers in charge of these men should be so lax in their duties as to allow such a state of affairs to exist. It was to be hoped the Government would seriously take in hand the extension of the pine plantations, and at the same time there might also be an extension of plantations of our own native timbers. The management of the department should be placed in the hands of a thoroughly qualified conservator.

Mr. NANSON: The Minister should not confine his attention to planting soft woods in the southern parts of the State; he should also experiment concerning the suitability for the timber of the sandy country in the northern portion of the country. A small experiment in this direction could be made at the Chapman experimental farm. Some 10 acres could be planted, and if it were afterwards found, as there was every likelihood that it would be, that the experiment was a success, the planting could be extended in that part of the State. If it were successful it would be a great thing for the country, as there were tens of thousands of acres of land there most suitable for the purpose. He was not wedded to the idea of making the experiment at the Chapman farm, but he had suggested that site as there would be plenty of supervision for the plantation and because, as the funds of the farm showed a considerable credit balance, they could well afford to do the work there.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: There was but little room for criticism with regard to items in this department. The member for Swan (Mr. Jacoby) had mentioned a case where the duties of the inspectors had overlapped. No doubt that had occurred, but now, as it had been brought under the notice of the Minister, there was no likelihood of its recurrence. He desired to refer briefly to the remarks of the Minister, in dealing with the Land Estimates just previously to the Christmas adjournment, when he said he was endeavouring to get information as to cut-out timber areas, and the applications made by residents of the mills to have the areas thrown open. Some seven or

eight weeks ago he had put a motion on the Notice Paper with regard to this matter, and although it was not probable that it would be reached this session, still, he hoped the Premier would, if possible, secure the information desired. The Premier had also referred to the fact that industrial peace was once more secured in this important industry, and expressed the hope that these happy relations would continue. Every member hoped the same, for largely bound up with the successful working of the industry and its development was the maintenance of industrial peace. Very often too much power was given to the concessionaires of timber lands. It would be interesting to find out the area of country held by Millars' Company and the other large companies operating on timber areas. He would be able to provide the Premier with instances where applications had been lodged for cut-out timber areas, but which had not been paid attention to, or were refused. There was good land on some of the timber mills, and there were many people desirous of making a permanent home upon it. In one instance a townsite was surveyed some 12 months ago, but up to now those resident in the locality could not obtain a block. It was found that the Crown Law authorities advised the Government that there was no chance of throwing those areas open. Therefore, outside competition was prevented. Without doubt the company operating there had altogether too much power. The export of hardwoods from this State for the year 1907 was of the value of £591,393, while in 1908 it was £564,000. All must recognise that these were very important figures. When one inquired into the question it was found that India, in particular, and South America were the largest buyers of our hardwoods. New Zealand was third on the list as a buyer of our products, and in dealing with the New Zealand and Indian orders he hoped to make out some case for the large body of workers engaged in the co-operative concession in the Collie district. With regard to this question it was found that the flora and fauna reserve had been reserved for State purposes. The Premier was aware that

the opinion existed strongly in the State that it was about time that the Government reserved all available land for their own use. We must recognise that the large areas granted in the past had been rapidly cut out, and that the State should now conserve the timber as much as possible. We should, however, make special efforts to find an area of country for those 340 timber workers in the Collie district to operate on. They were anxious that some portion of the 155,000 acres of the flora and fauna reserve should be thrown open. During the last twelve months the area granted in connection with saw-milling permits amounted to 43,800 acres, and when the Government could go to the extent of granting those permits, they should at the present juncture give some consideration to the 340 workers at Collie. The facts of the case of these men were these. They secured an area of 17,000 acres, and they had certainly contributed a great deal to the revenue of this State. It was found that the total quantity of timber produced by those men approximated 23,000 loads. The royalty of 2s. 6d. per load paid by them had amounted to £2,875. The licences per head per annum of £1 10s. had given £495, and approximately the inspection fees had totalled £655; or in all, £4,020. It must be recognised too that these men had demonstrated their ability to enter the market as competitors, and they had for the last three or four years seen that industrial peace had existed, and had gone on developing the industry, and that portion of the district in which they were working. It should be recognised also that they had established their own store, with a turnover of £14,000 per annum, and when it was seen that they had only about 4 per cent. of the area that others had, and contributed 20 per cent. to the revenue, it would be admitted that they were deserving of extra special consideration from the present or any other Government that might be in power. In the first place, these men were supplied with 45lb. rails which had been laying for 20 years on the Brunswick to Bunbury line, and the Co-operative Company entered into an arrangement to replace these with

65lb. rails. It was a handsome deal for the Government; the men had paid their old score and had added four miles of railway since. They had done their duty not only to the district they resided in, but had done their duty to the Government, and had demonstrated that they were able to compete with the larger companies, provided they were given country to operate in. Now they had gone to the New Zealand and Indian markets, and if there was a body of workers who deserved encouragement, it was these men who had fought against adverse circumstances, and had come out on top. He hoped the Premier would give a little more definite reply to these men, and that in the near future the small company would be able to increase their forces to a thousand or even two thousand, because every member in the Chamber would agree that while those men were there and were able to make those profits for themselves, they certainly provided a guarantee that the conditions would be maintained by other companies which would be fair to all the workers in the industry. If there was one thing the State desired to avoid, it was strikes; and he ventured to say that if the co-operative system was encouraged, there would be an end to industrial disputes in the State. He rose only for the purpose of pointing out that past Governments had made great mistakes by handing over too much of the timber areas. He was not going to condemn the present Government, because he recognised that to get the timber industry established, it was necessary to give away large tracts of country, but it was found that at the present time we were forced into the position that we had practically no timber lands to operate on outside the flora and fauna reserve. On the Preston Valley area, there was no more country with the exception of one block of 10,000 acres. In looking through the Railway Commissioner's report, he found the Commissioner stated there was a reserve of 17,000 acres at Nannup. He applied ten weeks ago for the report of the inspector on that particular area, because he was led to believe not only by the people in the district, but by going through it himself, that there was very little timber on

the reserve. Side by side with that fact, we had in the Nannup Railway district Bartram & Sons' concession of something like 100,000 acres. The latest development was that Bartram & Sons were not going to operate on that particular area. There had been an area of 44,000 acres lying idle on which the labour conditions had not been fulfilled in the Kurrup district, and Bartram and Sons were going to operate there and let the other remain idle. If that was the case the Treasurer would have a sorry tale to tell the House when he was dealing with the Nannup Railway. He desired to mention a pet project of his which in his opinion the Government should take on, and that was the establishment of a State sawmill. That might seem impossible to some members, but he had only to point out that in almost every branch of enterprise it had been possible to show that the State could compete with others, and that a set of conditions could be laid down which would be a good thing for private employers to follow. He had before him a report on the State sawmill in New Zealand, but while he could not give many details in connection with that mill, he held the opinion that if we had a State sawmill established on the flora and fauna reserve, it would be possible to put up such a record with figures in connection with the working of that mill by which they would gauge the work of the industry throughout the south-western portion of the State. A sorry feature of the timber industry in the past had been the fact that industrial disputes had been prominent, and it was likely they would occur again. If a proper estimate had been placed on the timber areas in the first place there would not have been so much friction, and the employers would not have been so grasping. In the *Commonwealth Year Book* would be found a reference to the forests of Western Australia, which were there spoken of as being Nature's gifts and deserving of jealous conservation. He agreed with that, and he thought it was time that the State launched out on its own account in respect to the saw-milling

industry. If the State were to start even on a small scale it could demonstrate that at least a fair living wage could be paid in the industry and a considerable saving made in the timber. In New Zealand they had established a State sawmill on the main trunk railway in the North Island, where 52 men were producing the whole of the timber required by the Government together with a considerable quantity for sale to customers. It was worthy of the consideration of the Government, and he trusted that the next Estimates would contain a sum for the establishment of a State saw-mill. It must be recognised that the export of hardwoods oversea, which now reached half-a-million pounds, could not be taken much further.

The Premier: We do not want to go much further.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN was pleased to hear that from the Premier. He was sorry that the Premier, although he had not then as much power as he had to-day, had not taken some action a few years ago. Had he done so perhaps to-day they would not have had the forests in their present denuded condition. He hoped the Premier would look into this question and, consistent with the State's interests, conserve sufficient for State supplies and for the purpose of getting sleepers for all new lines. The Premier might also try to do something for the large body of men who had been operating so successfully by giving them a fresh area for their labours. It was of no use putting them on an inferior patch or on to a small area. They had been extending, they had their railway line and their plant, and they had the ability to demonstrate their capacity for further extension. He thought the Government should at the earliest possible moment take into consideration the project of giving to this company a new area, sufficiently large to ensure employment for the next three or four years.

Mr. McDOWALL: Some information was desired in connection with the Coolgardie timber reserve. A little time ago a point 28 miles along the Widgemooltha railway had been fixed as the boundary of the Coolgardie reserve for timber for the local mines. For cutting timber within

the 28 miles a man had been fined £25 but, strange to say, within a very short period of that, the area was curtailed to 25 miles. Had the unlawful timber-cutting incident been deferred for a few days the axeman would not have been liable to a fine. He (Mr. McDowall) was not worrying about either the fine or the individual. The point on which he desired an explanation was as to why the timber area for the Coolgardie mines had been interfered with. It had been stated on excellent authority that from 18 to 25 miles, the timber had actually been cut out so far as the Coolgardie reserve was concerned; consequently by bringing the distance back to 25 miles the timber was being sacrificed to the Boulder and other mines. He had been further informed that this had been done without anybody having an opportunity of protesting against it; that it had been done without application from the Chamber of Mines and even without the forest ranger knowing anything of it. There was another phase of the question. One named Connolly, actually before the reserve was curtailed, had talked about putting in a siding at the 25-mile. It really looked as if Connolly had had some inside information. As a matter of fact the siding had since been put in, and it was to get some explanation of this from the Minister for Lands that he (Mr. McDowall) had brought the matter up. He trusted that that explanation would be forthcoming as it was really a serious matter so far as the Coolgardie timber reserve was concerned. Certain contracts had been entered into to supply mines in and around Coolgardie with timber, the contractors believing that they had the right to cut the timber from this reserve. In consequence of this action on the part of the department the timber would in a short period be so depleted that it would be absolutely impossible for these contractors to complete their contracts and, in consequence, they would have to forfeit their deposits. Possibly the Premier could explain this matter to the satisfaction of all.

The PREMIER had listened with a considerable amount of interest to the remarks made by members in connection

with this important department and more especially to the remarks of the member for Forrest who had a practical knowledge of the subject. He (the Premier) realised the great national asset the State had in its forests and the absolute necessity that existed to see that they were not abused in any way. He thought the Government might be given some credit for having introduced the system of saw-milling permits as against the leasing system which had been in existence prior to the advent of the Government. The leases had been for 21 years, and by simply having a mill capable of cutting a certain amount once a month the lessees were enabled to hold their areas. Under the existing system a certain area was reserved in proportion to the saw-milling capacity of the plant to give it a life of ten years. Every two years a certain area having been cut up, it again reverted to the Crown, and so on, until the whole of the area was cut up; so all the land reverted to the Crown. It was proposed that this land should be constituted a timber reserve in perpetuity; that was where there was no good land in the area. Generally the best jarrah was found on the ironstone country not suited for anything but fruit-growing or vine-growing. In regard to the position of Conservator of Forests applications had been received but the men who applied were not qualified, in the opinion of the Public Service Commissioner, or the Government, to carry out the functions of that important position. There were men who were orchardists, and others who had been in charge of botanical parks, and things of that sort; but we were not able to secure that happy combination, a man with a knowledge of forestry and at the same time some business knowledge. It was advisable to increase the area under softwoods. No doubt in the near future there would be a big demand for softwoods for fruit cases and such like. The year before last a *pinus insignis*, grown at Hamel, had been cut after eight years' growth and produced 44 cases, evidence that there was every likelihood that the experiment would prove successful. A considerable area of *pinus insignis* had

been put down in the neighbourhood of Hamel, while some hundreds of acres had been cleared and made ready for planting at Ludlow. The area could be increased, and it would be in the interests of the State if other areas were put down in various fruit-growing districts.

Mr. Jacoby: There are better pines than the *pinus insignis*.

The PREMIER: There were none so rapid-growing and so hardy. Of various pines planted near Bunbury, when Mr. Ednie Brown was Conservator of Forests, the *pinus insignis* was the only class that could stand up without being watered in the early stages of planting. Though there were better classes of timber, the *pinus insignis* was the most economical to plant. There was no reason why the experiment should not be extended further North, more especially on lands adjacent to railways, so that there would be no trouble in regard to transporting the sticks to market. In South Australia, he believed, they simply sold the sticks and the mill-owners cut the timber up and sold it at so much a log. The information required by the member for Forrest could be supplied in regard to cut-out timber areas and land held by various companies. Last year a return was presented and the areas had not varied much since then. The return was in regard to areas held under what was known as concession, and those held under timber lease under Section 96 of the Regulations repealed by the last amending Act. In regard to not being able to secure certain land owing to its being adjacent to a mill site, under the provisions of the Act the mill-owners had an exclusive right to within 20 or 30 chains of the mill site. In this case, if mill owners refused permission, the Government intended to subdivide another portion between Worsley and Lunenburg.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It would be advisable to get that permission before any expenditure on surveying.

The PREMIER: Yes; he had written in connection with this. The hon. member had referred to an important matter that had engaged the attention of the co-operative hewers. It was a rather difficult matter because the hon. member

must realise it was only recently that he was one of the deputation that impressed the necessity for the Government's making reserves for railway purposes in close proximity to railway lines. One realised that where a large number of men had been steadily engaged, and apparently successfully, in an industry, it would not be to the advantage of the State to discourage them in either operations ; but the reserve they were interested in was one set apart in the early days, known as the Flora and Fauna reserve, the only portion of which had been alienated being 20,000 acres leased some three or four years ago. The chief forest ranger had been asked to make a recommendation in connection with the matter, to see whether we could make an area available for these timber workers, because it would be a serious matter to interfere with them. If it was possible to secure an area in close proximity to a railway he was prepared to do what he could to assist in this direction. One could not agree with the hon. member that there was need for a State sawmill at present. Providing we were able to secure ourselves from competition so far as sleepers were concerned—and we did that by making reserves—the matter of a State sawmill did not seem very urgent at present. If the need arose, if there was any combination or agreement between the millers, then as long as we had the reserve we would be in a position to start our own sawmills ; but until that need arose there was no great necessity for adopting the hon. member's suggestion. In regard to the matter mentioned by the member for Coolgardie he must trust to his memory. The area beyond the 28-mile post from Coolgardie was and had been used mostly by private wood contractors ; but at the time of the timber strike a certain portion of the area had been excluded from the Coolgardie reserve to give an opportunity for private contractors to carry on if necessary. There was absolutely no timber South of the 28-mile post. There was any amount of timber between 25-mile and Coolgardie, all that would be required by the mines in that district for many years. The timber was particu-

larly fine, and the people of Coolgardie need have no fears that there would be a shortage of firewood for a considerable time to come. Possibly he would be able to give the member for the district additional information privately on the matter. He realised thoroughly the great asset we had in our timber ; yet, while he hoped the industry would keep on flourishing, he was not desirous of seeing it extend, so far as foreign trade was concerned. We did not want to be faced with the position existing in New South Wales, where practically all the sleeper country was cut out. Provided we could secure employment for all the men engaged in the industry at the present time, that was all we need do.

Item, Forest Rangers, £2,670 :

Mr. COLLIER : There was a wood-cutter's licence of one shilling per month, and the practice in the past had been for the companies to inform the forest ranger of the number of men they had cutting for them and to pay the amount in. Of his own knowledge the forest ranger had no idea of the number of men employed, but he had to take the word of the companies. He (Mr. Collier) had received very reliable information to the effect that the sum of one shilling per man per month had not been paid by the companies, and that the returns issued were much short of the actual number. It would be almost impossible for the ranger to scour the bush in order to ascertain exactly how many men were employed, but the fact remained that the Kurrawang Company employed from 600 to 700, and the other two companies from 200 to 300 each. He had been informed that the payments were much less than they should be, and it behoved the department to see whether steps could not be taken to have a better check upon the companies, and so make sure that one shilling per month for the licence was paid for every man engaged in the work.

The PREMIER : The department might take the powers they possessed under the regulations to inspect the books of the mills ; if that were done a check would be provided. He would make a

note of the matter and cause inquiries to be made.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.37 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 7th January, 1909.

	Page
Questions: Sewerage Filter Beds, Claisebrook	1296
Government Markets, Perth	1296
Dairy Herds, Control	1296
Loan Authorisations, Correspondence	1296
Police Constable O'Loughlin's Dismissal	1296
Mines Prosecution, Malcolm	1297
Paper presented	1297
Obituary, Mr. J. P. McLarty	1297
Railway Industrial Agreements, Papers not complete	1297
Annual Estimates, Votes and Items discussed	1298

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

QUESTION — SEWERAGE FILTER BEDS, CLAISEBROOK.

Mr. SWAN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has Mr. Davis certified that the filter beds at Claisebrook will act? 2, If not, is the Minister personally satisfied on this point? 3, If so, on whose judgment does he base his opinion?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No, Mr. Davis only acted as adviser to the Government in the preparation of the scheme when he approved the general design and site of the filter beds. 2 and 3, The Engineer-in-Chief is of the opinion that the filters will act satisfactorily. The reasons given, in my opinion, support this view.

QUESTION — GOVERNMENT MARKETS, PERTH.

Mr. GILL asked the Minister for Agriculture: Is it his intention to comply with the request of the market gar-

deners for the establishment of open markets in Perth?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: Representations in this connection have been made to the municipal authorities within whose province it should be to provide facilities of this nature. I am now awaiting their determination in the matter.

QUESTION—DAIRY HERDS, CONTROL.

Mr. GILL asked the Premier: Is it his intention to make the necessary provision this session for the transferring of the dairy herds from the Health to the Stock Department?

The PREMIER replied: The inspection of dairy herds is now being carried out by the Stock Department.

QUESTION — LOAN AUTHORISATIONS, CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. WALKER asked the Colonial Treasurer: Has he any objection to laying on the Table of the House all the correspondence between his department and the Auditor General relating to Loan Authorisations as referred to on page 123 of the Auditor General's last report?

The TREASURER replied: I have no objection.

QUESTION — POLICE CONSTABLE O'LOUGHLIN'S DISMISSAL.

Mr. HORAN asked the Premier: Has he any objection to laying upon the Table of the House all papers in connection with the appointment, punishment, and subsequent dismissal from the Police Force of E. O'Loughlin?

The PREMIER replied: No; but I shall be glad if the hon. member will move in the usual way for the papers; the motion will be treated as formal and can come on immediately. If he likes, the hon. member can see the papers at my office.

Mr. Horan: Very well.