

been made to him by the Hon. Mr. Stone and the Hon. Mr. Parker. If the hon. gentleman wishes a direct Opposition to arise in this House he is going the right way to force it. We are asking for nothing unreasonable; we are not proposing to throw the Bill out, or to block it, but we desire to obtain further information. When I agreed to the second reading of the Bill I did so on the assurance that the hon. the Minister would never offer any objection to giving us a little time in which to consider the details.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I think hon. members will give me credit for being reasonable and courteous, and for respecting their wishes. I feel certain that the Hon. Mr. Parker will admit that on no occasion has he had cause to complain of the way in which I have treated him. On this occasion I have felt that he has not been acting from his own point of view in requesting an adjournment. There are some members who persistently block everything, and I do not see why the majority should be coerced by a small minority. It has been asked that the Estimates should be laid on the table. They have been before the colony for some time, and have been dealt with most comprehensively by the Press. I have no desire, however, to run counter to the wishes of hon. members, and if it is their wish to adjourn I shall offer no further objection.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I might say that the hon. the Minister is correct when he states that I am not following exactly my own views in the present instance. My views are even stronger than those I have expressed. I think this Bill should be referred to a select committee, and evidence taken on all the items; but, in deference to the wishes of other hon. members, I have adopted the more modified course. When I spoke on the second reading of the Bill, I mentioned that we could not properly consider it without the Estimates of revenue and expenditure; and there is no reason why they should not be laid upon the table. Indeed, under Section 16 of the Audit Act, a statutory duty is imposed upon the Government to lay those Estimates before both Houses. I do not suggest that the Government have

purposely neglected to lay them on the table, but it is certainly open to remark that there may be some object for keeping them back. The hon. gentleman says these Estimates have been dealt with in the Press. I do not say that everything is untrue which appears in the papers, but I expect, when I am asked to discuss matters, that all the information shall be furnished to me here. I understand the hon. gentleman has now no further objection to postponing the consideration of the Bill, and I therefore move that progress be reported.

Motion put and passed.

Progress reported.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House, at 9:30 o'clock, p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, October 14th, 1896, at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 13th October, 1896.

Great Southern Railway Purchase Bill: first reading—Message: Assent to Bills—Loans Consolidation Bill: in committee; third reading—Annual Estimates: Public Works, further considered, and Estimates concluded—Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Bastardy Laws Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Bridges over Railway: Report of Joint Select Committee—Cue-Nannine Railway Bill: in committee; third reading—Perth Race-course Railway Bill: in committee—Industrial Statistics Bill: second reading—Jury Act Amendment Bill: second reading—Public Health Act Amendment Bill: second reading—Motions: Leave of Absence—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

GREAT SOUTHERN RAILWAY PURCHASE BILL.

Introduced by the **PREMIER**, without notice (the Standing Orders being suspended). He said the Bill was merely for carrying out the intention which had

been already approved by the House. It gave authority to purchase the Great Southern Railway, and the lands of the Company; and it particularly gave authority to issue inscribed stock in payment for the property, and provided for other important matters. He moved the first reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a first time.

MESSAGE—ASSENT TO BILLS.

The following Message from His Excellency the Governor was read:—

"GERARD SMITH,

"Governor.

"The Governor has the honour to inform the honourable the Legislative Assembly that he has this day assented, in Her Majesty's name, to the under-mentioned Bills:—

"1. '*An Act for the Purchase, Extension, and Management of the Metropolitan Water Works.*'

"2. '*An Act to apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and from moneys to credit of Loan Accounts, the sum of Three Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pounds to the service of the Year ending 30th June, 1897.*'

"3. '*An Act to further amend the Constitution Act, 1889, and to amend the Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1893.*'

"Government House, Perth,

"8th October, 1896."

LOANS CONSOLIDATION BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses agreed to without debate.

First Schedule—agreed to.

Second Schedule:

MR. ILLINGWORTH, referring to the item "Railway from Mullewa to Murchison Goldfield," asked how it was that a large surplus remained unexpended, as shown in this schedule.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said this was the amount to the credit of that railway account on the 30th June last, as rendered from the London office of the Agent General. Accounts of loan expenditure kept at the London office, and forwarded to this colony, would

bring the expenditure for the year probably only to the end of May, and it could not be brought up to the close of the financial year without using the cable for the purpose, and that had not been the practice hitherto. As several months had now elapsed since June, there would be other charges debited to this account, and these would alter the balance considerably. The hon. member might rest assured that the amount shown in the schedule was the balance to the credit of the account, so far as it was made up in the London office, about a month prior to the close of the financial year.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he had asked the question only for the purpose of clearing up a doubt, and for the information of his constituents, who were interested in this railway. He had thought there must be some explanation of this kind, and that was why he had asked the question.

Schedule put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Report adopted.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

The Estimates of this department were further considered.

Public Works, £486,240 5s. 8d.:

MR. R. F. SHOLL, referring to item 262, "Railway, York to Greenhills (exclusive of rolling stock), probable cost £30,000," asked whether the Government had obtained any statistics to show that this railway was likely to pay, directly or indirectly; also showing the amount of land under cultivation to be served by the railway, the amount of agricultural land in the vicinity, the estimated cost of working this railway, and the amount of traffic likely to be carried. It was generally acknowledged that agricultural railways, as a rule, did not pay. He was informed that, as a rule, the produce put on an agricultural railway in the course of a year could be brought to market in about three weeks; therefore, in the case of this railway he

did not think it would take even three weeks to bring down all the produce that was likely to be available.

MR. A. FORREST said there was a large population out there.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he believed the hon. member had a large area of land out there.

MR. A. FORREST said he had some land about 30 miles further.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the House should be warned by the experience of Victoria as to the dangerous results of building agricultural railways, for in that colony there was a deficit of nearly half a million of money annually in the working of the railways, and the agricultural railways there had been blamed for that deficit. [MR. GEORGE: No; it was log-rolling.] Victoria was saddled with an annual deficit of something like half a million, through the making of agricultural railways. In West Australia, where the Government seemed to be going mad, they had brought in loans and revenue expenditure for public works amounting to 7½ millions, this session.

THE PREMIER: Why not put on another half million, instead of saying 7½?

MR. R. F. SHOLL said what was half a million of money, in these times? The Estimates showed that the Government were simply going mad—they were carried away with the exuberance of their own prosperity.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS: Why not say, "with the exuberance of their own verbosity?"

MR. R. F. SHOLL said there was an item in the Estimates of £20,000 for a ball-room.

THE PREMIER: We have not come to that, yet.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it was in the Estimates, and it was another instance of the lunacy of the Government.

MR. GEORGE: Loan-acy.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked whether the Government could give any information as to the prospects of this railway, when made?

THE PREMIER said he would be glad to give the hon. member any information he could. He was not prepared with the statistics asked for with regard to the amount of traffic, but he could state the cost. He might say, generally, that the information now asked for had not been

collected, because this was only a short line of some 15 miles, and the country through which it was to run was well known to most members of this House. The land was occupied and improved, and there was a considerable population at Greenhills. The land was excellent in quality, and produced large crops. He was not prepared to subscribe to the doctrine that agricultural railways would not pay. His idea was that, if they were built economically and worked economically, they would be the greatest blessing to the agricultural population in various districts of the colony. It was all very well for the hon. member, who seemed to be enamoured now with the gold-fields and gold production; to say agricultural railways would not pay, and to altogether ignore the agricultural interests of the colony; but he (the Premier) would like to ask what had induced the Parliament of this country, many years ago, to build a railway to York, at a time when the Great Southern Railway had not been thought of, and the Beverley district was not settled? It was to encourage the agricultural population, and to develop the interests of the colony. In various parts of this colony where railways had been built, and it was so all over the world where railways existed, these railways were undertaken simply to encourage the agricultural population, and to develop the lands of the country. If the hon. member's doctrine was to have any force in this colony, the only railways to be built would be those connecting two towns, so that people there might use the lines for pleasure or business, and there was to be no effort to make the country productive, nor to supply facilities for bringing agricultural products to market. The hon. member had said the Greenhills people had only a little produce to put on the railway once a year, and that it could be brought down in a few days; but he (the Premier) would say this was not a proper description of an agricultural district. Had the people in an agricultural district no need to travel from one place to another, and was the bringing down of produce for a few days in the year to be the only use made of an agricultural railway? Had people in an agricultural district nothing to send to market but corn—had they no hay; had

they no stock? [MR. R. F. SHOLL: No corn.] His (the Premier's) idea was that the farmers had to send various kinds of produce to market all the year round, just the same as a gold mine would have something to send, and farmers had probably a great deal more to send. The member for the Gascoyne talked about a fit of lunacy having come over the Government; but what would the hon. member do? Would he sit down and do nothing? That was about it; but that was not the idea of the Government, even if the hon. member described their railway proposals as "fits of lunacy." The Government wanted to go ahead; they wanted to try to do justice to every part of the colony, and to the agricultural interest as well as to every other interest; and they could not make a better beginning than in building railways through agricultural districts. The Greenhills district had a large farming population and plenty of good land, which had produced and would produce an immense quantity of hay and corn. The proposed line was only a short one, and no agricultural districts were better entitled to railways than the districts from York to Greenhills and Northam to Quelquelling, the survey for the latter line being also provided for on the Estimates. He hoped the committee would pass the Greenhills line, which would not cost more than £30,000, exclusive of rolling stock. They ought not to come to the conclusion that lines running through fertile agricultural districts would not pay; but if such railways would not pay, then, when that was proved, there would be a good reason why railways should not be made through inferior land.

MR. A. FORREST said very few people knew the Greenhills district better than he did, as he was formerly stationed there many years as a surveyor; and he knew the proposed line would be the means of opening up a large tract of rich land, and of serving the interests of a large number of people who were tilling the soil, and who comprised some of the best farmers in the colony. This line should have been undertaken years ago, when the York railway was built. He hoped the line would be continued until it joined the Southern Cross to Coolgardie railway. Without this line, the Greenhills district could not compete with other districts

which had means of easy access to market, because the growers had to cart their produce 15 to 25 miles to the nearest railway station. There was also a large quantity of land open for selection in the district. The line had his support, and so would every branch line that would be a feeder to the main lines.

MR. MONGER said he believed that if the Government never showed greater signs of lunacy than in proposing to make a railway to Greenhills, they would always have a strong majority in that House.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: They have that, anyhow.

MR. MONGER said several hundreds of settlers were living in the Greenhills district, and there were thousands of acres of good agricultural land. When it was remembered how many thousands of pounds were annually sent out of Western Australia for foodstuffs now imported, the cost of this railway would be only a trifle compared with the good it would do in enabling the farmers of Greenhills to help the colony in providing for its own requirements. The hon. member's remark that the harvests of the district could be carried to market in three weeks showed he was talking about a portion of the colony he had never seen; but if the hon. member would accept an invitation to go and see the crops of the district, even in the present adverse season, the worst experienced since 1880, he would have evidence which would entirely counteract his present opinion. The fact was that the district of which Greenhills formed a part did probably send more stock to market than the big area of Northern country which the member for the Gascoyne had the honour to represent in this House, which suffered at times from droughts, and which in a dry season produced nothing at all. No matter how bad the season might be, the Greenhills district always had some produce to send to market; and its people, who had done so much for the colony in its time of adversity, should not be denied a railway in this period of prosperity, especially as the Premier had pointed out that the work would not cost more than £30,000. He (Mr. Monger) would be the last to disparage the goldfields, but if the mines should not always prove to be as pros-

perous as they were to-day, it would be the resident agricultural class in the colony who would have to meet the taxation upon the loans of the colony.

MR. LOTON: They would be smothered.

MR. MONGER hoped that, while so much attention was being given to the development of the goldfields, at the same time it would be recognised that the producers in the farming districts were given at least some small consideration, and that they would be given railway communication to a market. It was well for the cultivators that every member in this House was not like the member for the Gascoyne, who had never risked anything in farming, and probably never would. [THE PREMIER: He was farming once.] He was surprised, that being the case, that the hon. member did not show some consideration for the farmers; but he (Mr. Monger) hoped the Government would carry the Greenhills line, in spite of the hon. member's opposition.

MR. CLARKSON said that while lines to agricultural districts could not be expected to pay directly, they would do so indirectly by the good they did to the colony. No class was more deserving of encouragement than the agricultural class, and no country could prosper unless those who were living upon the land were prospering. It was highly important to give facilities of transit to those who were raising foodstuffs.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: When is the Newcastle line going to pay?

MR. CLARKSON said he did not know, but he could say the member for the Gascoyne was wrong in stating that the harvest of an agricultural district would give employment to a railway for only three weeks in a year. He would be glad to get trucks for that period on his own account.

MR. RANDELL said he would have given a more hearty support to this line if it had been proposed to connect it with the Southern Cross to Coolgardie line; but, at the same time, he would not be an advocate for trying to make a railway to every farmer's door. It was interesting to compare the evidence that was given before the Commission appointed to inquire into the settlement of the lands of the colony, and of which the member for Wellington was chairman, with the statements of witnesses before the select com-

mittee which sat at a later period to consider the best starting point for the railway to Southern Cross. Mr. H. Penny deposed, before the Agricultural Commission, that he did not know, within a circle of 20 miles, of a place where more than 100 acres in one block of good land could be got in the Greenhills district, although there was plenty of second-class grazing country. He had also said it would be of far greater benefit to the farmers of Greenhills if they were given access to the market of the goldfields for their produce, by carrying the proposed line on to the Southern Cross Railway, rather than by stopping a branch line after it had gone a few miles, and thus compelling the local producers to send their stuff to Perth or Fremantle.

THE PREMIER: It is a better market than Yilgarn.

MR. RANDELL knew there was evidence before the Railway Committee, of which he was a member, that there was a considerable area of good land beyond Greenhills in the direction of the Greenhills line; but, for reasons other than those affecting the opening up of agricultural areas, the committee recommended the Northam route for the railway to Southern Cross, and that route was adopted. He was in favour of developing the producing resources of the colony by making lines to agricultural centres, but would like to have further accurate and detailed information as to the extent and resources of the Greenhills district. He would, however, support this item.

MR. GEORGE said the item should state that the line to which it referred should connect with the Yilgarn Railway. The Premier was in error in saying the metropolitan market was a better one for the growers at Greenhills than that of the goldfields. The farmers, in sending their crops to Perth, had to compete with imported produce without the incidental protection which the railway freight between Perth and Greenhills would give to Eastern farmers if the line to Greenhills connected with the Yilgarn Railway. He was speaking particularly of the chaff required to feed horses on goldfields. [THE PREMIER: What about wheat?] There could be no doubt as to which was the better market. He was better informed on this matter than

the Premier. While the House was in a complacent humour, he would suggest that the Premier should alter the item so as to provide for carrying on this branch line to connect with the Southern Cross Railway. He hoped that provision would be made for rolling stock.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he was glad to have raised a discussion on this matter, and now that he had "woke up," as the Premier said, perhaps it would be found he was not in favour of making all the goldfields lines that were proposed, although he had been told he was solicitous only for the interests of the goldfields. He was in favour of railways only where they would pay, and were demanded in the interests of the colony as a whole. Here was a line proposed, and the Premier was not prepared to supply any information that would justify the committee in voting the cost of its construction. They were only playing at legislation. Before the committee were asked to pass the item, the Government should have been prepared to show that the line was justified, and would not be a burden on the colony. At the present prices of agricultural produce, the farmers of Greenhills ought to be able to profitably cart their crops into York, a distance of only 14 or 15 miles. In the early days of the colony, the York farmers used to cart their harvests 70 or 80 miles to Perth, and were able to respectably rear and educate their families. The proposed line was only a sop to York, because the Government felt that an injustice had been done to York in not starting the Southern Cross line from that town. If it were determined to make the line, he hoped the quality of the land beyond Greenhills would justify the Government in extending the line further than the committee were now asked to do, because it was bad policy to make short branch lines. The member for Toodyay was unfortunate in intervening in this debate, because the only agricultural railway in the colony was the branch to Newcastle; and it was a fact that although Newcastle was one of the oldest towns in the colony, and had a right to be connected by railway with the goldfields, yet the Newcastle branch had never paid the working expenses. The district had been in existence thirty or forty years before the railway was built, and was fairly well settled, yet the

Clackline branch did not pay working expenses. The fact was that short agricultural branches would not pay. It might pay to extend the York-to-Greenhills line by connecting with the Southern Cross railway; and even if this branch line did not pay when so connected, it would still be a great advantage to the colony, by offering an alternative route. The member for York had spoken about the number of stock sent to market from Greenhills, but he (Mr. Sholl) questioned whether such a great number of stock was reared there. He doubted whether many sheep were produced at Greenhills, because it was not a sheep country. The population of the district did not, he supposed, number more than 120 breadwinners, and such a small number of people could not send many sheep to market. It would not take many engines to bring down all the live stock from that neighbourhood, and it was ridiculous to compare the Greenhills from a pastoral point of view, with the Gascoyne district.

MR. MONGER: The Greenhills people are prosperous, anyhow.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the Gascoyne people were very isolated, and had to drive their stock hundreds of miles to port, and then had to take whatever price it would fetch in Perth. He was glad, however, to learn that the Greenhills people were prosperous, for it showed they could do very well without a railway. He would like to have some statistics, some exact information, from the Government in justification of the item; and if all members of the House were of his way of thinking, they would refuse to pass any item without full information. As to the remark of the Premier that he (Mr. Sholl) was in favour of building railways to the goldfields, the Premier would find, before the session was over, that he was not in favour of every goldfields line that was proposed.

MR. A. FORREST said he would like to inform hon. members, and especially the member for Perth, that when the Agricultural Commission was sitting it was the general impression throughout the Eastern Districts that only a certain class of land was fit for agriculture, and that the salmon-gum country was not suitable for agriculture; but now this salmon-gum country was reckoned the best land,

and it had consequently been brought under cultivation. If Mr. Penny, who was an expert farmer, were asked about the matter now, he would explain that there was a great deal more of good land in the Greenhills district than the old settlers had supposed. That was the view of everyone who knew the country between Beverley and Newcastle. At the time that he (Mr. Forrest) was located in the Greenhills district, no one applied for the salmon-gum land, as it was considered useless; but now it was fenced and ring-barked, and was being cultivated.

MR. MORAN said that in 1893 he passed through the Greenhills district on his way to the goldfields, and he formed the opinion then that it was, without exception, the best he had seen in Western Australia. He then saw two large farms under wheat, and he took the trouble to pull some and send it to the Eastern colonies, to newspapers for which he was then a correspondent, as a sample of what could be grown in Western Australia. It was a good season, no doubt, but it looked splendid, and all the people who passed it considered it amongst the finest agricultural land in Australia. He wished to say, as a goldfields member, that there ought to be no distinction made between the goldfields districts and the agricultural districts. He represented the largest number of goldfields people, and he had fearlessly, on every public occasion, declared he would support any measure of utility to the agricultural districts. He represented 30,000 people on the goldfields, and on their behalf he would say it was to their advantage that the agricultural districts should have every facility, and should be enabled to develop rapidly. He was inclined to agree with what the member for Perth had said about the line being continued through Greenhills to the Southern Cross Railway. The Premier had said the goldfields were not as good a market as Perth and Fremantle; but he (Mr. Moran) was inclined to think they provided a better market than Perth and Fremantle, and, at any rate, there was more ready cash on the goldfields than in these towns. The Premier had referred to producing corn in the Greenhills district; but the corn could come to York, and the chaff could go straight to

the goldfields. The country was able to produce plenty of corn and plenty of timber, and there were hundreds of thousands of acres of land that would grow all the cereals required by the people. He believed the average return of wheat in Western Australia was higher than in South Australia, the so-called granary of Australia. [MR. SIMPSON: The yield is double.] He did not know whether the yield per acre here was double the average yield in South Australia, but he was safe in saying it was a bigger yield. He had much pleasure in supporting the item for building a railway to a district which he considered the best for agriculture in Western Australia, and he hoped soon to see this line linked to the Yilgarn line.

Item passed.

MR. R. F. SHOLL, referring to item 263, "Miscellaneous surveys, £1,000," asked for information as to how this sum was made up. What was the object in bringing the item in at all, since the Government spent thousands of pounds every year on surveys without any authority from Parliament.

THE PREMIER said the Government did not like to spend money without authority, if they could help it. The amount for the surveys of railways was provided in the Loan Bill, and this item of £1,000 was meant to cover various surveys that might arise.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he supposed they would get particulars of surveys made in the past year, without authority, 18 months hence, when the Excess Bill was introduced.

MR. GEORGE supported the objection that the House should not be asked to consider items, unless information was supplied with regard to them. He supposed they would discover that this item of £1,000 would be made the justification for spending £15,000 or £20,000.

THE PREMIER said the hon. member could find out where the various surveys were provided for, if he looked at the Estimates. On the Estimates there were set out items for the cost of the surveys on several of the important works proposed by the Government. In addition to those special items, the Government had thought it well to have £1,000 on the Estimates for miscellaneous surveys.

THE CHAIRMAN said a good deal of discussion had taken place with regard to Items 262 and 263, and yet with regard to neither had any amendment been proposed. He had been wrong in allowing these discussions to take place. Members should recollect that they should not do more, with regard to any item, than ask a question, unless they wished to propose the striking of it out or the reduction of the amount. There could be no more discussion on the item mentioned by the member for the Gascoyne, without some proposition being before the House.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the ruling of the Chairman was most extraordinary, but he did not question it. He had only asked for information.

THE CHAIRMAN said it was proper to ask for information, but the hon. member had gone beyond that by discussing the propriety of passing the item. There must be some proposition, before the discussion could proceed.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he did not object to the item, "Miscellaneous Surveys;" but, to place himself in order, he would move that the item be reduced by one penny.

THE PREMIER: You cannot do it.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said if he could not reduce it by one penny, he would move to reduce it by one hundred pounds. He therefore moved that the amount of the item, "Miscellaneous Surveys, £1,000," be reduced by £100; and did so in order to call attention to the following item, "Additional improvements to opened railways," which showed an excess of £53,194. There should be some explanation of that unauthorised expenditure. He also noticed that the Government had spent, without authority, £1,813 on building a branch line to the Canning racecourse, which was private property.

THE CHAIRMAN said the member for the Gascoyne was not in order in moving the reduction of the amount for miscellaneous services, in order to discuss the past expenditure on "Additional improvements to opened railways," that being a different item. A motion to reduce must not be made a cloak for talking about something else. The matter referred to by the member for the Gascoyne could be dealt with when the

Excess Bill was introduced, or he could give notice of a motion.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he did not wish to dispute the ruling of the Chairman in the slightest degree, but would like hon. members to look at the item to which he had referred.

THE PREMIER said that the House had been told all about these matters on a previous occasion.

Amendment put and negatived, and the item passed.

MR. GEORGE said the sum of £2,300, opposite the item "Tramway, Perth to Sewage Farm," had been omitted for this year; and why had this been done?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS said this money had been provided for in another part of the Estimates.

MR. GEORGE, on behalf of the member for West Perth, asked why the amounts of past expenditure had not been put opposite the items under "Goldfields Water Supply Branch, £59,000."

THE CHAIRMAN said the member would find the information on page 79.

MR. GEORGE said the information should be supplied in its proper place, under this heading.

MR. MORAN said he scarcely cared to criticise these items, for the reason that the Director of Works was so ready on all occasions to do what he could in regard to the water supply on the goldfields. He asked whether the Director was aware that in many of the centres where trial bores were going down, it would be necessary to put down shafts to supply salt water. The House had passed a vote of two and a half millions for supplying water to the goldfields, but that water supply would not affect the outside districts. The Director of Works had never refused a request for helping the outside districts to get water; and he (Mr. Moran) now called attention to the fact that water shafts were required at the 25-Mile, at Clement's, at Bala-gundi, and at other outlying centres. All that the people wanted was salt water, and they would condense it themselves. These water shafts were required to be put down 150 or 200 feet. The shaft sunk at Coolgardie in the early days, which supplied 9,000 gallons of water daily to the people of Coolgardie, and kept them going through a dry season, was an object

lesson of which advantage should be taken. While mentioning this matter, and he knew it would receive the attention of the Director of Public Works, he thought this £30,000 on the Estimates, if judiciously expended, would meet the case of these outlying districts.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: There is also £200,000 on the Loan Estimates, for water supply on the goldfields.

MR. MORAN said some of the proposed big dams had not been carried out, particularly the one at Kurnalpi. A great deal of satisfaction had been expressed on the fields at the way the Water Department attended to the requirements of the people as regards water, and he felt sure the outlying districts would receive attention during the summer months. The House would remember that when the Coolgardie Water Supply Loan Bill was being considered, the Premier promised that the minor schemes should also receive attention. The big scheme would supply the chief centres, but the outside districts would still have to depend on the old methods for obtaining water.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said the hon. member would recollect that in any instance where he had brought a want of this kind under notice, the Government had done all they could in the circumstances. The question of water supply for outside places on the goldfields was receiving attention, and in any instance where a suitable place for putting down a water shaft could be shown, that work would be attended to at once. A sum of £30,000 was on the Estimates for that purpose, and £200,000 was on the Loan Estimates for the development of goldfields, which would include water supply.

MR. MORAN acknowledged that what the Minister had stated as to complying with requests promptly was true; and when he had made such a request, even by telegraph, it had been promptly attended to.

Item passed.

MR. R. F. SHOLL, referring to items 272 to 275, inclusive, relating to the supply of water to towns, said that in the Loan Bill which had been passed for this purpose there was an item of £100,000 for supplying water to towns. Therefore where was the necessity for this item on

the Estimates? Was it proposed to repay some of the loan expenditure with this money?

THE PREMIER said these items were intended to carry out works that were contemplated or in progress. With reference to this item of £100,000, it was particularly designed for the operation of that Bill. It was proposed that, in the event of any locality wishing to have waterworks constructed and applying to the Government for the purpose, the Government would first satisfy themselves that there was a likelihood of the particular service being a payable one; and, that being so, they would carry out the works, although this House would have an opportunity of approving or not of the proposed expenditure in every such case. The items in these Estimates were for carrying out works that were in existence, such as the Fremantle water supply, for which the Government were getting rates, which made the service pay very well, and there were other places, such as the water supply at Carnarvon, which required further expenditure.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the water supply at Carnarvon was not good, that the pipes were old and unsuitable, and that the water was useful only for such purposes as washing.

Item passed.

MR. HIGHAM, referring to item 274, "Reservoir on Monument Hill, Fremantle, £5,000," protested against the employment of convict labour outside the walls of the prison, because the prisoners would be better kept inside the walls, and there was little or no economy in employing them outside. This work might have been done more economically and to better purpose by contract, or even by day labour. He objected generally to the employment of prisoners about the town of Fremantle, and hoped the Government would see fit to keep them within the prison.

MR. SOLOMON, in support of the objection, said this was not the only instance in which prison labour was employed in Fremantle. He believed prisoners were also employed in building cottages.

THE PREMIER said the cottage referred to was, he believed, a prison warder's cottage.

Vote put and passed.

Public Buildings—Architectural Division, £488,924 :

MR. SIMPSON, referring to item 1, "Government Architect, £700," asked whether the Director of Public Works could give further information as to the reorganisation which he had promised to carry out in this branch. An assurance given in this House might allay agitation in the minds of the public, and satisfy hon. members.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said he had understood, on a previous evening, that the House had accepted his assurance that the Government intended to reorganise this branch of the service. As to the increase in salary from £600 to £700 a year for the Government Architect, it did not follow that the increase would be paid to the gentleman hitherto filling the position. The reason why £700 was provided on the Estimates for this year was that it was uncertain what would yet be done with reference to the present holder of the office; but, if hon. members would allow matters to rest for a time, that course would best strengthen his (the Director's) hands. He did intend to reorganise this branch, but was not able to say at present exactly what would be done, and he could not go further into detail on this occasion.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said the House would be quite ready to accept the assurance of the Minister, but the House wanted to have a distinct understanding that, by allowing the matter to rest, it should not mean that it would drift on for a year or two. If the question was to be shirked and shelved, this House and the country would not be prepared to accept a continuance of that state of things. But if the House, by allowing the matter to rest now, would thereby assist the Minister in what he intended to do, the House would feel every sympathy with the Minister in the circumstances. Still, there should be a distinct assurance that something would be done in the matter. The grievance in reference to this office had come to the last stage for the public mind to endure.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said he had made a promise the other evening that this branch should be reorganised, and he hoped the House would give him sufficient credit to believe

he meant what he said, and that when he gave a promise he would carry it out. He could not take up the matter just yet, as there were other affairs engaging his attention; but he had called for all the papers in regard to this branch of the department, and would deal with them immediately after the close of the session. Hon. members might be assured that, before many weeks were over, the matter would be finally dealt with.

MR. GEORGE said he must certainly move, as an amendment, that this item be reduced by £100.

THE PREMIER asked the hon. member not to do that, as the full amount might be wanted.

MR. GEORGE said his reason for moving this amendment was not with any intention to embarrass the Government, or interfere with the discretion of the Director of Public Works, but it was time that this House, by reducing the salary, should mark definitely in the "Hansard" record of its proceedings that it would not permit the trade-union principle to come in, in connection with the heads of departments; for it was no argument to say that because the salary of the head of one department had been raised to a certain amount, therefore the salary of this gentleman, as the head of the architectural branch, should also be raised to the same amount.

MR. SIMPSON said the principle was also incorrect.

MR. GEORGE said that after the facts brought forward the other evening by the member for Geraldton in reference to public buildings in various parts of the colony, and the manner in which public money had been wasted on them, the least that the House could do now was to say they would not permit this increase in the salary, because if they did so it would give a refutation to the charges that were made, and would practically stultify the House. The Minister's hands would be strengthened rather than otherwise by the reduction now proposed, on the ground that the gentleman holding the office was not fit to continue in it. He (Mr. George) could not permit this item to pass without entering a very strong protest; and for that reason he had moved the reduction of the salary. It might be argued that it was not intended to give this gentleman this

increase of salary ; but if the House once passed the salary at £700 for the year, that amount of salary would have to be paid to the holder of the office, so long as the Government kept him in that position. The House having fixed the salary for the year, that amount would have to be paid. If it was intended to place some other person in the position of Government Architect, he might be worth more, and it would be easy to pay him more by exercising that discretion which the Government did when necessary, by putting the difference in the Excess Bill. He was sorry the Government did not exercise that discretion as often as they might do, for there were men in the same department, and even in the architectural branch, who were worth more than they were receiving.

MR. VENN pointed out that there was no separate salary voted in last year's Estimates for the Government Architect, the salary being voted to the Assistant Engineer-in-Chief, who, of course, was the same person in this case. It did not follow that if the Government appointed another Government Architect, he would have to be paid the full amount of £700 if voted by the House for the year. They might get one for less, or they might have to pay more in making a fresh appointment.

THE PREMIER said there appeared to be a little error in reference to this item. The salary voted last year was for the Assistant Engineer-in-Chief; but knowing it was the same person, the framers of the Estimates had placed the salary of £700 opposite the official title of Government Architect. In regard to the amount of salary voted by the House, and the absolute necessity for paying that amount, there was no rule which entitled a servant to receive the full amount of the vote. The rule was that the passing of the Estimates did not give any servant a right to be paid the salary which had been voted by the House, unless that amount of salary was approved by the Governor. It sometimes happened that an officer was paid less than the full amount voted. That was particularly the case in a new appointment. If a new Government Architect were appointed, he could not claim the full amount of £700 merely because it had been voted on the Esti-

mates. He believed it had been laid down that the Estimates were no authority for the expenditure of money, except under the Governor's warrant; and the Governor was authorised to appropriate, by warrants, the amounts voted in the Estimates; but if he did not approve of any amount so voted, it was not appropriated and was not paid. When these Estimates were framed, the intention was to give to the Government Architect this increase of £100, making the salary £700 for the year; and if he remained in that position, the intention was to pay him that salary. The amount was not high for the duties and responsibilities of that immense branch, but was a very small sum for the duties. There seemed to be a feeling in the House that some reorganisation was necessary in this branch, and on that point he had said all he meant to say on a previous evening. It was not necessary to strike out this amount for the purpose of expressing the feeling of the House, because that feeling was sufficiently evident.

MR. GEORGE said some feeling had been expressed last year, but the Government did not take notice of it.

THE PREMIER said the expression last year was not so strong as on the present occasion. He thought that a salary higher than £700 would have to be paid for an efficient architect, if a new appointment had to be made. There were difficulties in the way of reorganising this branch; and an officer who had a freehold in the service, after being in it many years, had to be dealt with in an equitable and proper way. He asked the House to leave the matter as it was, for there was no good reason for reducing the amount of salary. As to doing it by way of protest, the Government did not want that, as they had heard sufficient to realise the feeling of hon. members.

MR. SIMPSON said he had no wish to hinder the Minister in his efforts to reorganise his department; but the Government had admitted all that had been said by way of complaint against this officer on a previous evening, and yet the House was now asked to vote an increase of salary to the Government Architect—an absolutely ridiculous position to take up. He knew, and challenged contradiction of the statement,

that to-day thousands of pounds were being wasted in this branch of the service, and yet this House was asked to confirm the position of the Government Architect by granting an increase of salary. It was no pleasure, but a public duty, to speak of this officer, whom they all knew. The House wanted an absolute assurance from the Government that this increase in the salary should not be endorsed. The state of things that had been going on for years made the country very angry. There had been statements made in the House from time to time, even by Government supporters as well as by members on the other side, of a very damaging nature, and yet these statements had been treated in a perfunctory way. There ought to be a distinct and positive assurance given to the House. He believed a conclusion had been come to by the Government, and if so, why not state it, and satisfy members in the House and the people in the country that this failure in administration was to be remedied? From information given to him, he believed a determination had been come to; and why not say so?

THE PREMIER: You will not take an assurance.

MR. SIMPSON: Give us an assurance that has something in it.

MR. MORAN said he knew more about this matter than any member of the House, and his knowledge was of such a kind that, if any other hon. member had it, that member would not care to run the risk of coming back to this House after the general election, without taking some decisive step in this matter before the close of the present session. He felt he would be cowardly and failing in his duty if, for any personal or private consideration he remained silent, and allowed this state of things to go on. He sympathised with the Minister in charge of the department, for it was an unpleasant duty which had been thrust upon him soon after his appointment, and when he had other duties to perform that were equal to more than those of the other departments altogether. Two members of the Government had admitted that this gentleman was incompetent to do the work. He (Mr. Moran) had had twelve months of close and unpleasant experience of the manner in which this

gentleman administered affairs in connection with the contract for a building erected not twenty yards from this Chamber; and that building was a disgrace to the designer, and was to-day a monument of unsafety. The contractor who put up that building had been irretrievably ruined by that architect and his satellites, and the contractor could get no satisfaction. The public buildings of this colony were a disgrace from an architectural point of view. He (Mr. Moran) had not wearied hon. members by stating what he knew about this branch of the service, but the time had arrived when some definite steps should be taken for effecting a change, and the House ought not to be asked for another hundred a year to increase the salary of the Government Architect. It was at his (Mr. Moran's) suggestion, he believed, that an assistant architect having Australian experience should be obtained; but whether that had been done, and whether he had been obtained and was a success, he (Mr. Moran) did not know. It was not reasonable to ask the House to vote an increase of salary for a gentleman who, in his opinion, was not competent to fill the position, and his buildings showed it. That gentleman had lately been connected with a public scandal, the particulars of which he (Mr. Moran) knew; and it was an iniquitous transaction, in which money had passed. The contractor in that case had no option left but to give money, and he (Mr. Moran) drew the cheques for him; but he must say he thought the contractor was a fool to pay the money. If the Minister had his way, he (Mr. Moran) believed that a definite course would be taken.

MR. SOLOMON said it did seem to be an anomaly that the House should be asked to vote an increase of a hundred pounds, in the circumstances. A post office built at Beaconsfield, Fremantle, was a small building, which had scarcely been up before the chimney fell down.

MR. CLARKSON said serious complaints had been made against this officer, and he could mention one or two himself, if necessary—[**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** So could everybody else]—but the House might be content with the assurance of the Director of Public Works, that this state of things was not to last. After that assurance, he was satisfied the present

occupant of the office would not fill it long.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said he wanted the House to understand the members were pressing for what he was not able to give at present. They should either believe what he had stated in promising to reorganise this branch of the service, or they should believe he did not intend to reorganise it. He hoped the salary would be left as it stood on the Estimates, and not be reduced, because to reduce it might cause difficulties. Whether the gentleman who now filled the position would continue to do so or not, the House should trust him (the Minister) to deal with the matter. It would strengthen his hands afterwards in getting someone else, if necessary, by leaving the item as it stood; and if someone else were put in the position, it might be necessary to ask for a larger sum. Whether the present occupant of the office would continue in the position remained to be seen. A man who had been in the service 13 years, and had done good work at different times—although he might at other times have got into difficulties and relaxed his attention to the duties—was still an old servant who, as business men would understand, should be treated in a reasonable manner, and should not be abruptly told that he was no longer required. There were ways of letting a man down, as hon. members would know; and that was what he was working for. He thought hon. members would be satisfied with the way in which he intended to reorganise this branch of the service. If he were to speak out to-night, he might give more information as to what was intended to be done; but there were reasons why he did not wish to do so at present. If members would leave the matter to him, he would deal with the facts fairly.

At 6:30 p.m. the CHAIRMAN left the chair.

At 7:30 p.m. the CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

MR. GEORGE said he was sure the Director of Public Works would reform the Architect's branch of the department; but it was incumbent on the committee

to enter an unmistakable protest against any further dilly-dallying. Last year, when it was stated that the cost of the Architect's branch amounted to 9 per cent. of the value of the works executed, there was such a feeling of indignation in the House that the statement was altered a night or two afterwards, and it was then said the cost was not more than $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., though he (Mr. George) did not suppose anyone believed that statement. Although the member for Toodyay had said the item under discussion was a paltry one, no item was paltry that represented money improperly spent, nor should the position of any public officer be a freehold in the civil service. There was no doubt that if the Government Architect was not removed during the recess, a very strong effort would be made to remove him next session.

MR. CLARKSON said that the committee had heard enough of the item. It was not British fair-play to strike a man when he was down, and the Government Architect was very much down at present. The committee might rest content with the promise of the Director of Public Works that an investigation would be made, and such measures taken as the case might require.

MR. A. FORREST said that, no matter who might occupy the position of Government Architect, he would require a salary of at least £700 per annum, and therefore the item might stand.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that while it was proposed to give the Government Architect £700 per annum, the Under Treasurer received only £650 per annum. The Government ought to consider the old officers of the colony. The Government Architect had been almost hounded down, and he (Mr. Sholl) was not prepared to vote for the reduction of the item.

Motion for reduction put and negatived.

Item passed.

MR. GEORGE moved that the item, "Government Electrician, £350," be struck out. He would be glad to hear what that officer had done for his £7 a week during the last twelve months. Last year a lame explanation was given in answer to this question. As far as he (Mr. George) knew, the only thing the Electrician had done was to invent an extra hole in a piece of iron, which no

doubt was a very useful thing, but hardly sufficient to entitle the officer to this salary. Had any useful work been found for him to do?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said the question now raised had been before the Legislative Assembly year after year, and it had been the subject of an enquiry made by himself shortly after he took office. It had been intended that Mr. W. J. Hancock, the officer in question, should take a position under the Postmaster General in connection with the telegraph instruction branch; but the installation of the electric light having been required in a number of public buildings, including the Observatory and Government House, it had been decided to retain Mr. Hancock's services in connection with the Works Department. Some exception might be taken to Mr. Hancock's method of conducting business, but there could be no doubt of his professional qualifications, although these had been questioned in some quarters. There was sufficient evidence as to Mr. Hancock's ability in a letter which had been received from Mr. W. H. Preece, Consulting Engineer to the Government, dated from London on the 18th April, 1896, as follows:—

Sir,—Having had my attention drawn, by Australian papers and by a private letter from Mr. W. J. Hancock, to the fact that he is or has been the object of attack in the press on account of certain action in regard to the supply of telegraph material, I think that it may help to prevent the West Australian Government from forming an unjust opinion of that officer if, as your consulting engineer in England, I submit a short communication upon the matters referred to. The complaint appears to be principally based upon the fact that Mr. Hancock recommended the use of pole brackets of his own design, in which he had a pecuniary interest. This latter fact, of which I was not aware, will doubtless not weigh prejudicially, inasmuch as Mr. Hancock appears to have made it quite clear to the Government before any orders were placed. As regards the value of the device, it really considerably simplifies stock and construction transactions, by combining two parts, brackets and stalk, in one, and by its use I find that so far about £100 has been saved the Government. It is really a very good thing, and it is apparently appreciated by the department, inasmuch as, in spite of Mr. Hancock's transfer to other duties, it is still being used. It surprises me to learn that exception is also taken to other items of construction material provided for by Mr. Hancock. On his visit to this country, he went carefully into

all details of construction practice, both here and in the other colonies, so far as I could advise him. He also explained to me fully the West Australian conditions; and I must say that his grasp of the subject and his discrimination so much impressed me that I cannot but feel that the Australian Government can scarcely hope to get a more efficient officer. I hope that, if you are good enough to forward this communication, the Hon. the Premier will give it his favourable consideration.—I am, etc. (Signed) W. H. PREECE.

As the electrician connected with the Railway Department would have as much as he could do in installing the electric light and the erection of telephones, Mr. Hancock was wanted in the Public Works Department.

MR. SIMPSON said Mr. Hancock was one of those officers who had been much improved by the valuable criticism of the Legislative Assembly, and it was to be hoped the member for the Murray would withdraw his motion. Would the Director of Public Works lay upon the table of the House the papers prepared by this officer upon the Wheatstone telegraphic instrument, which was capable of enabling an operator to send 400 instead of 30 words per minute, and which would therefore greatly add to the resources of the Telegraph Department? The instrument had proved of great value elsewhere, and it would save the duplication of many of the lines of the colony.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said he had not seen the papers referred to by the member for Geraldton, but would make enquiry and lay them on the table of the House. There was no doubt that when the time came to introduce the Wheatstone instrument into this colony, it would be found very useful; but there were some objections to its use, which accounted for its not having been introduced earlier.

MR. GEORGE said Mr. Hancock had prepared an indent of the plant required for the lighting of the Perth Station, which the electrician of the Railway Department had had to alter from top to bottom. He would, however, withdraw the motion to strike out the item.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said he was glad the member for the Murray had referred to this matter, because it showed how a man might be blamed for a matter for which he was not responsible, and thereby suffer

great injustice. The fact was that, with a view to saving money, he (the Minister) had hoped that the one plant would be sufficient to light the station and the observatory; but, on investigation, it appeared that the Observatory could be more cheaply illuminated by the Electric Lighting Company of Perth, and therefore the indents had been altered to comply with this change in the arrangements. For this alteration Mr. Hancock was in no way responsible.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he was surprised to find there were two electricians in the service of the Government, connected with the Railway and the Public Works Departments; but no one could say that Mr. Hancock was not a qualified electrician.

Motion, to strike out the item, withdrawn, and the item passed.

MR. GEORGE said he did not wish to refer to any particular item, but only to point out that the Government were employing educated and professional gentlemen at salaries no higher than the wages paid to labourers in Perth. For instance, fifth-class draftsmen received £156 10s. per annum, which was equivalent to about 10s. per day; and fourth-class draftsmen got £180. A salary such as that was a beggarly pittance for a man in such a position, especially in Perth, where a four-roomed house would cost 30s. or 35s. a week, a loaf of bread cost 4½d., and other things in proportion. Perhaps some of the mistakes and instances of waste in the Architectural branch came from employing men who were underpaid. If a man were paid a miserable salary, he was not going to give his best services in return.

MR. MORAN, referring to the item, "Chief Assistant Architect, £500," said that a year ago it was decided a principal assistant should be got to assist the Government Architect, as it was understood the Architect had so many other duties to attend to he could not attend properly to the Architectural branch. It was decided to employ someone with Australian experience, and it appeared that a gentleman had been appointed to the position, yet the salary for the office appeared on the provisional salary list. It appeared to him (Mr. Moran) that this salary should be on the permanent list, as this ought to be a permanent

billet, seeing that so large a salary as £500 was attached to it.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said a gentleman had been appointed temporarily to fill the position of Principal Assistant Architect, and had taken up the position some months ago. As the reorganisation of the Architect's branch was a matter he had asked the House to leave in his hands, he had also to ask the House to leave this item to be dealt with by him. He was willing to answer any question on the subject.

MR. MORAN said the salary ought not to be on the provisional list, but on the permanent one.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said he did not intend to make any alteration at present in this appointment. When he dealt with the reorganisation of this branch, it would be time enough to determine the position this officer should occupy, whether on the provisional or the permanent list.

MR. RANDELL said officers were generally appointed on the provisional list at first, in order that they might prove their capabilities. The member for the Murray had referred to the small salaries the members of the staff in this department received, and he believed that many members of the Architectural branch were qualified to discharge the duties of an architect. Some of them, in the colonies and elsewhere, had had considerable experience in their profession. When, therefore, the Director of Works was re-organising the department, it was to be hoped the salaries would receive consideration.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he agreed that appointments, at first, should be to the provisional list, in order that an officer should prove his ability before being permanently employed. With regard to these officers being underpaid as architects, many of them were very young, and they were not worked hard. If they were not satisfied with the salary, they could get plenty of employment outside the Government service. The time had come when the pension system should be done away with, and no one entering the service in future should be entitled to a pension. The only advantage to an officer in being on the permanent list was that, after five years' service, he would receive a pension if his services were

dispensed with. As time went on and all the loan money was spent, and when the colony could borrow no more and retrenchment became necessary, all the officers whose services were dispensed with would be entitled to pensions for life.

MR. A. FORREST said he was entirely at variance with the member for the Gascoyne on the question of pensions. If a man served his country well, he should be entitled to a pension after being in the service a certain number of years. As to the references to the small salaries paid to the officers in the drafting department, he might point out that the fourth and fifth class draftsmen were young men learning their profession, and they would have opportunities, if they remained in the service, of rising to the higher grades. Members might fairly leave this question to the Director of Works, and next year they would be able to criticise what he had done.

MR. MORAN said the member for the Gascoyne had been barking up the wrong tree. All that he (Mr. Moran) had referred to was the absurdity of having a salary of £500 on the provisional list. This salary ought to be on the permanent list, and the appointment of the person to fill the position might be temporary.

Item passed.

MR. SOLOMON, referring to the item, "Fremantle public mortuary, £1,000," asked where this building was to be erected.

THE DIRECTOR said the site for the mortuary had not yet been chosen.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it seemed to him a very elaborate building was to be erected, as it was to cost £1,000.

Item passed.

MR. GEORGE, referring to the item, "Lunatic Asylum, £5,000," said this amount was the first instalment for a building that was to cost £55,000, and it was desirable they should have some information regarding it. He would like to know where the building was to be erected, and whether the plans were to be prepared by some person having had experience of that class of work. It was too much to ask any Government Architect to prepare plans for a lunatic asylum, without the assistance of architects who had had experience in designing such buildings. In the old country it

was found that lunatic asylums required to be specially designed; and, at any rate, such a building should not be put in the hands of architects who could build a school without providing accommodation for the children, or a post office without letter boxes, and who had prepared remarkable sets of plans for the Mint.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he had last year asked the Government to consider whether the Asylum should be erected on the barrack or the cottage system. He now asked whether the Government had come to any decision on that point. After considerable investigation, he had come to the conclusion that the cottage system was infinitely superior to the barrack system. He would like to have an assurance that the Government had made the necessary enquiries, and that they had come to a decision on this point.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said a committee had been appointed to select the site, and was now engaged on that work.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Who are the committee?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said the members of the committee were well qualified to select a site for the asylum. The Government favoured the cottage system, and it would probably be adopted.

MR. GEORGE asked if the Government had collected information as to which was the best system, and had obtained advice as to the style of building.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said the Government had obtained information both as to the style of building and the system to be adopted.

Item passed.

MR. HIGHAM, referring to the item, "Fremantle water-side police barracks, additions £1,200," said it seemed a mistake to make additions to such a pre-Adamite building, instead of erecting a new building.

THE DIRECTOR said that the question of erecting a new building instead of adding to the old one would be considered.

Item passed.

MR. GEORGE, referring to the item, "Perth central police station, £5,000," asked where the building was to be put.

THE DIRECTOR said the new police barracks were to be placed on the north side of Beaufort Street bridge, between James Street and Roe Street.

Item passed.

MR. ILLINGWORTH, referring to the item, "Government House ball-room and additions, £5,000," said the total cost of this ball-room was to be £20,000, and he thought it wasteful and extravagant expenditure. This Assembly had been accustomed to a good deal of expenditure of late, but neither the Assembly nor the country was prepared to expend £20,000 on the erection of a ball-room, which at the most could be used only about four evenings in the year. Whatever might be said, this ball-room was simply for the convenience of a few persons, a very limited number indeed; and for all the purposes for which such a room was required, there were public buildings enough in Perth which could be secured for these few special occasions. There was any quantity of work needing to be done in the country, of a necessary character, without spending £20,000 in building a ball-room. Another objection was that to build a ball-room at a cost of £20,000 would so completely shame Government House as to involve the expenditure of £100,000 more in building a new house in keeping with the ball-room. The utility of this kind of expenditure was a moot question, and the country was not justified in going to the expense of £20,000 in present circumstances for this purpose, when so many other public works were in hand or were needed throughout the country. Such an expenditure would not be wise, and he therefore moved that the item be struck out.

THE PREMIER said he hoped the committee would not agree to the striking out of the item. Last year this Assembly voted £3,000 for additions to Government House, and the vote now before the Assembly included that £3,000, which had not been expended. He recognised that the sum of £20,000 seemed large; but Government House should be improved so as to be in keeping with the circumstances of the colony. The ball-room at Government House should be in proportion to the main building. It had been admitted by this Assembly, in a previous session, that something should

be done in the direction of improving Government House and adding to its accommodation; but, with the amount placed at the disposal of the Treasury last year, it was considered not possible to do anything that would be a credit to the colony. It was not only a ball-room that was necessary, but a reception room and additional bedrooms were required. Anyone who had been in Government House must recognise that the place was altogether too small for the present condition of the colony. That House was not even suitable in its present condition for a large family, and there were no spare rooms. The Governor could not ask more than two persons at one time to stay with him, as there was only one spare bedroom in the House. The accommodation for servants also was inadequate, and the Government were bound at once to give increased accommodation to the domestics. The present accommodation for domestics was not only inadequate, but it was not suitable. Government House was built thirty years ago, on a good plan. It was an imposing building, externally, and would suffice for many years as the Governor's residence. Indeed, the style of it was so good that he did not think any additions would shame the main portion of the building. From an outside view, Government House was an imposing structure, and looked much larger and better than it really was inside. Within, all the rooms were small, and only the hall was spacious. If Parliament expected a Governor to come to this colony, hon. members must be prepared to give sufficient accommodation at Government House. The present Governor had not a large family, but if he had a party equal to that belonging to the Governor of Victoria or the Governor of New South Wales, the residence here would not afford nearly enough accommodation. He thought that, in the interests of the colony as a whole, Government House as the principal house of the colony, the residence of the representative of the Queen, should be a credit to the country. If he had to regard only his own private views, it was quite possible those views would be very much in accord with those of the member for Nannine; but having to consider this question as a public man, he

could not allow such restricted ideas to govern his public action. Speaking as a public man, he must say they should have a Government House that would be a credit to the colony, and sufficient to accommodate the Governor for the time being, whether he had a large or small retinue. Plans had been prepared, and they could be put on the table of this House, showing what was proposed to be done; but he could not promise at present that those plans would be carried out exactly. He had been very much urged, by necessity, to give instructions for the erection of additional bedrooms for the domestics; but he had refrained, because he preferred that the necessary expenditure should be first approved by this Assembly. The expenditure now proposed was quite justified, and as the colony could well afford it, he hoped this House would pass the item. His idea was that if they were to have a Government House and a Governor, they should have such a residence for the Governor as would be properly representative of the colony. It should be suitable to accommodate the Governor, his family, and his suite, so that the Governor might not only be able to live in comfort, but also be enabled to entertain the people of the colony, when he desired to do so. This item was necessary, or it would not have found a place in the Estimates. He could assure hon. members that additions to Government House were absolutely necessary; that there were not enough rooms for the present occupants, their staff, and their servants; therefore, in the present flourishing circumstances of the colony the Government felt justified in asking this Assembly to pass the item, so that Government House might be made fit not only for the present, but for the future. To strike out the item would not be to the interest of the colony, and he hoped hon. members would not do so.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he agreed that there was a necessity to improve Government House, and to expend money in making additions, and in providing a ball-room; but when they were told these additions were to cost £20,000, it was another matter entirely.

THE PREMIER said Government House was an expensive building to add to.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it would be better to pull down the present house and build another, rather than expend this amount of money in making additions. In fact, it would be better to convert the present house into a lunatic asylum. His opinion was that £5,000 for additions ought to be ample.

THE PREMIER: Not enough, I assure you.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said £20,000 appeared an enormous sum to expend in making additions and building a ball-room. He would rather pull down the old house and build another, suitable for all requirements. Public buildings generally were costing more than they ought to cost, and he asked how much money had been expended on Government House and grounds since last session? He would support the striking out of the item, rather than vote for £20,000 to be spent on this work.

MR. CLARKSON said he was not surprised at hon. members taking exception to an expenditure of £20,000 for a ball-room, and it did seem an enormous sum; but the Premier had explained that this amount included necessary additions to Government House, and he believed some additions were absolutely necessary. This expenditure of £20,000 ought to make a magnificent palace.

MR. GEORGE said he must support the striking out of the item, because it was an iniquitous and wicked expenditure, and he did not care whether the Premier agreed with him or not. The words "and additions" had been added to the item "ball-room" to make it look better, and he did not believe the item had anything to do with providing accommodation for domestics. It was simply arranged in this form so as to pass criticism easily. This expenditure would be robbing the earnings of the people to the extent of £20,000. It was a profligate expenditure; for why should not the Governor use the Town Hall as a ball-room when he wanted a ball occasionally, as it was quite a suitable hall for the purpose.

MR. A. FORREST: What do they spend in Victoria on Government House?

MR. GEORGE said it was time this Assembly was dissolved, when they heard remarks like that. In a few years time, when this country became more enlight-

ued, they would be able to do without a Governor, and he hoped to see the present Premier occupying the position of Governor, and a very suitable and sensible Governor he would make, and not be likely to want flunkers riding about in carriages. This £20,000 would be robbed from the earnings of the people, and he must protest against the item.

MR. MORAN said that, at the present time, a building like Government House could be erected for £10,000. [THE PREMIER: No, no.] Why, the new wing of the Government offices, known as the Public Works Offices, had cost only about £10,000, including all that magnificent front and its tremendous amount of wasteful ornamentation. Surely it was not intended to put a building on to Government House as large as that new wing of the Public Offices? The Hotel Metropole, in Hay Street, for instance, with its several storeys and large accommodation, did not cost anything like £10,000 to construct.

MR. A. FORREST: £30,000.

MR. MORAN: What?

MR. A. FORREST: I mean for the hotel and theatre together.

MR. MORAN said he was not speaking of the theatre adjoining, but only of the hotel, and that did not cost £10,000. Therefore he failed to see where £20,000 could be judiciously expended in making additions to Government House, without filling up some of the hollows in the ground. If £10,000 were proposed, he would go for it.

Amendment for striking out the item put, and division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	5
Noes	...	...	...	12
Majority against				
				7

AYES.
Mr. George
Mr. Illingworth
Mr. R. F. Sholl
Mr. Solomon
Mr. Simpson (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Burt
Mr. Clarkson
Sir John Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Higham
Mr. Loton
Mr. Mowler
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Randell
Mr. Venn
Mr. Moran (Teller).

Amendment negatived.

THE PREMIER, referring again to the item, said the Government were willing, after the expressions of opinion made by hon. members, to make the total amount for this work £15,000 instead of £20,000. If the instalment for this year were passed at £5,000, as in the item, the total outlay would be reduced to £15,000.

MR. ILLINGWORTH asked the Government to make the total amount £10,000. There was no possible necessity for expending £20,000, or even £15,000, on this work; and a case could not be made out for spending more than £10,000 in any righteous way upon this item. Even allowing that additions were required, the expenditure of £15,000 would be an outrage on common sense and justice and right.

THE PREMIER: Not righteous, you say?

MR. ILLINGWORTH said a thing that was not right must be wrong, and this was absolutely wrong. It was a waste of public money, to say the least of it, and he hoped the Government would give way.

MR. MORAN said he was disposed to accept the compromise offered by the Government, and vote for a total of £15,000.

MR. RANDELL said everyone who had experience in building at the present time would know that it was exceedingly expensive. The fact appeared to be conclusive that there was not sufficient accommodation for the present occupants of Government House; and, knowing the building as he did, he could quite understand that no additions commensurate with the needs of Government House could be made for a less sum than £15,000. Even in building a cottage, £1,000 or £1,500 had to be spent under present conditions, and members could well understand that no large improvement could be made to a building like Government House without the expenditure of a considerable sum of money. He believed the building was originally erected by prison labour, and a great deal of the original expenditure went upon outside show, for the interior was not equal to the expectation raised by a view of the exterior. There was a great lack of internal accommodation, and even the dining-room was insufficient to

accommodate many persons, while the present ball-room was not a commodious structure, and was unsuitable for the purpose. The present circumstances of the colony were now entirely different from those existing when Government House was built.

MR. SIMPSON proposed, as an amendment, to mark his dissent, that the amount of the item be reduced by £100. He agreed with the member for the Gascoyne, that there was an extravagant spirit in this Assembly; for, considering the circumstances of the country, they were inclined to imitate the style of the "Jubilee Juggins," by pitching thousands about. In his experience of the colony, he remembered the time when the sum of £20,000 was looked upon as a big amount, and if the public voice of this country were taken now, by referendum or otherwise, the idea of spending £20,000 on a ball-room and additions to Government House would be scouted. Seeing how much the colony was in need of the expenditure of money for the absolute requirements of people in various districts—those people who, as the Premier was fond of saying, had borne the burden and heat of the day—it did seem a waste of money to spend £20,000, or even £15,000, in making additions to the accommodation of Government House. Just when the country was beginning to be opened up, they were talking about spending all this money on a ball-room for Government House. He believed that if he could talk to the Premier quietly, and were to propose to him to spend £20,000 on a ball-room, the Premier would say, "You have gone silly; you are getting dotty." Why not spend this money in reducing the taxation on the necessities of life? More good would be done to the country by that than if they spent £15,000 or £20,000 on a ball-room. If the circumstances of the colony were becoming so affluent that they must have a new ball-room for Government House, with other additions, they could provide these by spending say £5,000 this year, a further sum next year, and so on. He had been informed there had been considerable extravagance this year in connection with Government House, for he was told that some members of the architectural staff had been drawing salaries for years while trying to make

plans to improve the building; and yet the Premier had told this Assembly that these plans had got only to the sketch stage. It was an unfair trespass on the good sense of members of this Assembly, as trustees of the colony, to ask them to spend even £15,000 on a luxury like a new ball-room for Government House. He therefore moved, as an amendment, that the amount of the item be reduced by £100, in order to indicate that this House was not willing to pledge itself to a large expenditure for this purpose.

THE PREMIER said that, from the remarks made by the member for Geraldton, it might be supposed that he (the Premier) was anxious, for some private reason and not for a public one, to have this expenditure undertaken. He could not see why anyone should suppose he would try to embark on an extravagant policy of building houses that were not wanted. His object in submitting this item was to try to do what was right in the interests of the colony, in providing not only for the present occupants of Government House, for whom there was not sufficient convenience at the present time, and certainly there were no adequate rooms for entertaining guests; but he wished also to provide adequately for the future. If the member for Geraldton, for instance, wished to build a house for himself, it would cost him probably £5,000, without providing reception rooms or rooms for entertainments. Looking at the style of architecture of Government House, it would be an expensive thing to add to that building. Speaking personally, he would not mind reducing the total amount, but he knew that less than £15,000 would not do justice to the necessities of the case.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the supporters of the Government would pass the item if it were for £150,000. He was astonished at some hon. members supporting the expenditure of this money.

THE PREMIER: We are surprised at you.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it really was time this Assembly was dead, when the country would have a say in the expenditure of large sums of money. This item was not for building a new Government House, but only for a ball-room. The Government had expended £3,000

or £4,000 during the last twelve months on additions and repairs to Government House; also £2,600 on furniture, although this sum for furniture had not been authorised by Parliament.

THE PREMIER : We could not help it.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said as long as members of Parliament were returned who would allow the Government to greatly exceed the authorised expenditure, the Government would do as they liked with the finances of the colony.

MR. GEORGE quite agreed with the view of the member for the Gascoyne. It was time this Assembly was dissolved, for members were only playing at legislation.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS : Well, pass the Estimates *en bloc*, and let us get away.

MR. GEORGE said the Government would like the Estimates passed *en bloc*, when they had spent £3,785 14s. 7d. on additions and repairs to Government House, only £1,000 of which had been voted, and had spent £2,602 16s. 11d. on furniture, of which only £200 had been authorised, for that old barracks called "Government House." It was an iniquitous, extravagant, and profligate expenditure.

THE PREMIER : You are out of order; but never mind.

MR. GEORGE : I will appeal to the Chairman to say whether I am out of order.

THE PREMIER : Certainly you are out of order in talking of "profligate expenditure."

MR. A. FORREST : I ask for the Chairman's ruling as to whether the member for the Murray was in order in calling members names, as he has done.

MR. GEORGE : What were the words?

MR. A. FORREST : The words were not proper ones to use. The members of this Assembly are just as independent as the member for the Murray. His language was not fair to use towards hon. members.

THE CHAIRMAN : I did not understand the member for the Murray to say hon. members were profligate and extravagant.

MR. A. FORREST : The member for the Murray asserted that members were returned to this Assembly who were

profligate and extravagant. I have asked for the Chairman's ruling whether the member was in order in using those words.

THE CHAIRMAN : I did not understand the member for the Murray to use those words with respect to members' characters. I understood him to apply those words to the character of the expenditure. I may say now that I do think such words should not be used, and I hope they will not be used again.

MR. GEORGE said he had not the slightest intention of calling any member of the committee "extravagant" or "profligate." He knew nothing of their private characters. He had simply entered his protest against what he considered to be a profligate and extravagant expenditure of public money, and he would add that it was also iniquitous and wicked. He hoped he would always oppose such expenditure, and that it would be recorded in "Hansard," so that the record might be read by future generations that the members for Geraldton and Nannine supported the member for the Murray in making this protest.

MR. RANDELL asked whether there had been any expenditure upon another vice-regal residence.

THE PREMIER : Yes; Rottnest.

MR. RANDELL said there was another vice-regal residence at Fremantle as well as at Rottnest.

THE PREMIER : They are very small places.

MR. SIMPSON said Victoria and New South Wales, with a revenue of about £7,000,000 and £9,000,000 respectively, had only two vice-regal residences, while Western Australia had three. It would be well for the Premier to yield the point of allowing his amendment for a reduction by £100 to pass as a protest against the expenditure of the item.

MR. SOLOMON regarded the item as going a little too far, and hoped the amount would be reduced.

THE PREMIER : It won't do what is necessary.

MR. JAMES said if a ball-room were to be built at a cost of £15,000, it would then be necessary to build a Government House, at a cost of £50,000 or £100,000, to be in keeping with the ball-room. While it was intended to spend £5,000 this year on a ball-room at Government

House, only £4,000 was to be expended during the same period on the new Supreme Court.

THE PREMIER: There can be no comparison whatever.

MR. A. FORREST: There are very good courts now.

THE PREMIER: They are a different class of building.

MR. JAMES said £10,000 would build a very good ball-room.

THE PREMIER said it would require a great deal of ingenuity for the member for East Perth to draw any comparison between a ball-room at Government House and the erection of a new Supreme Court. If the item were reduced to £10,000, that sum would not do the work. The ball-room would have to be built in keeping with the plan of Government House, and he was sure it could not be done for less than £15,000, while the work would take about 18 months to carry out. In this matter hon. members were trying to do things in too small a way, instead of desiring to have a Government House that would be in accordance with the position of the colony. There was no use in spoiling the ship for the sake of a bucket of tar. It seemed to him to be much better to complete the building upon a scale that would be suitable for the colony for many years to come, just as when the present Government House was built thirty years ago, there was kept in view the growing requirements of the colony; and although he did not know how the building was paid for at the former period, he did not think the money came out of revenue. It would be better to have, in the first instance, a ball-room that would last for all time, instead of one that would require to be altered, and which would therefore be more expensive as time went on, than if the present plan were carried out.

Amendment (Mr. Simpson's), for reducing the amount for this year by £100, put and division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	6
Noes	...	...	...	12
—				
Majority against	...	...	...	6

AYES.
Mr. Illingworth
Mr. James
Mr. R. F. Sholl
Mr. Simpson
Mr. Solomon
Mr. George (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Burt
Mr. Clarkson
Sir John Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Higham
Mr. Lotou
Mr. Monger
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Randell
Mr. Venn
Mr. Moran (Teller).

Amendment negatived.

MR. ILLINGWORTH moved that progress be reported, and leave asked to sit again.

Motion to report progress put, and division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	4
Noes	...	...	...	14
—				
Majority against	...	...	...	10

AYES.
Mr. George
Mr. Illingworth
Mr. Simpson
Mr. R. F. Sholl (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Burt
Mr. Clarkson
Sir John Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Higham
Mr. Lotou
Mr. Monger
Mr. Moran
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Randell
Mr. Solomon
Mr. Venn
Mr. James (Teller).

Motion negatived.

MR. GEORGE moved, as an amendment, that the item for this year be reduced by £50.

THE PREMIER: You can't do that now. It is too little.

MR. GEORGE said he preferred to take the ruling of the Chairman as to whether his motion was in order.

THE CHAIRMAN said the motion was the last one he would take on the item.

MR. GEORGE protested against the item as a luxury, for which the money should not be voted with the light heart which had been exhibited in dealing with the finances that evening, notwithstanding that, as they had grown so accustomed to deal with millions in a session during which £7,100,000 had been voted, the sum of £15,000 for a ball-room seemed a mere trifle. Of course the supporters of the Government would pass it. When they came into this Chamber to a division, they looked to see where the Premier, who stood like a beacon light, was going to vote, and then went over to him in a body.

MR. A. FORREST: It is a pity you do not follow him, too.

MR. GEORGE said he had read in the Bible that it was not wise to hide one's light under a bushel, and he was not going to hide himself behind the personality of Sir John Forrest. The reduction by the Government of the total from £20,000 to £15,000 was merely trifling with the committee, because they were not going to try to do the work for £15,000. He could not see why the Perth Town Hall would not serve as a ball-room. The Government would not give £60,000 to the City Council for the Town Hall, but they were willing to spend £15,000 on a ball-room. If the vote were passed without protest, he could understand the stones of Perth crying out in shame. £5,000 had been knocked off the amount, reducing it to £15,000, but he would like to know what assurance the House had that the full scheme of the Government would not be carried out. Next session there might be a change in the occupants of the Treasury benches. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: Never.] The member for Nannine was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, when he said there would never be a change on the Treasury benches. What he wanted to know was, how were they going to bind the successors of the Premier to the reduced amount of the item?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: He will have no successor.

MR. GEORGE said the member for Nannine was mistaken, for the Premier would have successors who would endeavour to carry on his great work; but he (Mr. George) wanted to know how those successors were to be pledged not to exceed the £15,000. If this Assembly knocked £50 more off the item it would show, at any rate, that the present Assembly had a strong opinion on the subject. That £50 would still be spent, and would appear in the Excess Bill; but at any rate the reducing of the item by that amount would show the feeling of this Assembly on the subject.

Amendment (Mr. George's), for reducing the amount by £50, put and negatived.

Item passed at £5,000 for this year, upon the Premier's promise that the total cost of the work should be reduced to £15,000.

MR. GEORGE, referring to the item, "Perth Branch of Royal Mint, £10,000," asked whether the amount of £23,000, set down as the probable cost of the work when completed, would be sufficient to carry out the new plans and make provision for all the alterations.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said the new plans provided for a less expensive building than the old ones. There might be extras; but, as far as he could judge, the £23,000 would complete the building.

Item passed.

MR. GEORGE asked whether the following item, "Perth Branch Royal Mint, machinery, £4,500," had been arrived at, as to the amount, on skilled advice, or whether these were fanciful figures of the Architectural branch.

THE DIRECTOR said the figures had been arrived at after consultation with the Mint authorities in England.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked who would have the appointing of the chief officer of the Mint.

THE DIRECTOR said the chief officer was appointed by the authorities in England.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he believed the officer appointed to take charge of the Perth branch of the Royal Mint had never been inside a Mint until within the last six months, and knew nothing whatever about the business. The appointment was simply a piece of patronage; and if the Government were going to pay the salary, they should be able to see that a competent man was appointed. It might not be necessary to have a very able man, but he should know something about the business. The officer appointed was now gaining his experience at the Royal Mint in England. He believed the officer appointed to the Royal Mint in Sydney had to learn his business after arriving in the colonies. The gentleman appointed to take charge of the Perth branch had been a captain in the army.

THE PREMIER said the appointment of a gentleman to take charge of the Mint was not in the hands of the Government. The sum of £10,000 was set aside on the Civil List to provide for the expenses of the Mint, and any balance left would be repaid to the Consolidated Fund. The authorities of the Royal Mint in England had desired to make

the appointment some time ago, but he (the Premier) then objected that it was not necessary to make it so soon. Eventually, he gave way, because it was represented to him that it was necessary to appoint a deputy master to superintend the erection of the machinery and see it put together, and be able to understand it. The Government, however, were consulted as to the salary to be paid, and when the Mint authorities suggested £1,000 a year and a house, he replied that in this colony £700 and a house would be more suitable. The Mint authorities adopted this suggestion, and the deputy master would be paid £700 a year and be provided with a house.

MR. GEORGE asked if any guarantee had been given as to increasing the salary of the deputy master.

THE PREMIER said the authorities of the Royal Mint in England would no doubt consider that matter in due course.

Item passed.

MR. GEORGE, referring to the item, "Bulong post office, £700," said this sum seemed very large for a temporary building.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said he had understood that this House, some time ago, desired that buildings of a temporary character should be erected in the outlying districts of the goldfields. Having seen some of the buildings already erected, he had been surprised to discover that buildings of two or three rooms had cost from £500 to £600. Buildings of a permanent character would probably have cost four times that amount. The building referred to at Bulong was already constructed.

MR. GEORGE asked what the sum of £50 3s. 2d. had been expended on, in connection with this item.

THE DIRECTOR said it had probably been expended on preparing plans and making other preparations for the erection of a temporary building at Bulong.

Item passed.

MR. GEORGE, referring to the item, "Newcastle Post Office, £1,300," said the Estimates showed that £1 17s. 6d. had been expended. It seemed ridiculous to put this amount before the House.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it would be noticed that £1,300 had been voted for the post office, in the previous session, and had not been expended. It seemed

the Government preferred to expend hundreds of thousands of pounds without authority, rather than spend the amounts authorised by Parliament for the smaller works.

THE DIRECTOR said the member for the Gascoyne was labouring under a mistake. The plans had been prepared for a post office at Newcastle, tenders were called for, and the lowest tender was found to be £1,700 more than the amount of the vote. He then declined to accept any of the tenders, and he ordered the preparation of new plans and the calling of tenders for a building that was estimated to cost £1,500 instead of £3,000.

Item passed.

MR. GEORGE, referring to item 343, "Additions and repairs to existing buildings, £3,000" (Education Department), said proper accommodation should be provided at the schools, that teachers' houses should be built, and wells and tanks be provided.

MR. RANDELL said he considered it was necessary, in some cases, to provide quarters for teachers, and he asked whether there was any intention to provide quarters where these were necessary. Teachers' quarters were in some cases necessary for the protection of school property, and for other reasons.

THE DIRECTOR said he had no information on the subject from the Education Department. The subject had been considered in the past, and it was decided that it would not be wise to provide teachers' quarters at a few of the schools, as there would then be requests for the same provision at all other schools. It had also been desired that the department should be able to see whether a school was going to be permanent, before erecting a residence for the teacher. It would cost a great deal to build residences for teachers—in fact more than the school buildings themselves. He believed the matter was now under the consideration of the Education Department.

MR. RANDELL said the accommodation to be given to the teachers should not be expensive. It should be useful and not ornamental. At Claremont school, for instance, it was necessary that quarters should be provided for the teacher. As to the permanency of certain schools, many of the schools had grown enormously of late in the number

of attendances. For instance, East Perth school started with 20 scholars, and had now 200; Highgate school started with 16, and had now about 200; and otherschools had grown to a similar extent.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked whether there was sufficient inspection of the schools, from a sanitary point of view. There should be care taken that the public schools were not overcrowded, and the same inspection should be applied to private schools. He believed that both public and private schools were overcrowded. That might not be a serious matter in the winter, but it was a very serious matter in the summer.

MR. RANDELL said it was the duty of members of district boards to inspect the schools; and besides that, the inspectors had to report constantly as to the adequacy of the buildings, and as to the superficial area provided for each child; also both the compulsory officers and the teachers reported as to the sanitary conditions, and as to overcrowding.

MR. SOLOMON said that Beaconsfield school, Fremantle, was started two years ago with 100 scholars, and it had now about 340. In the course of a year or two, the number of scholars attending that school would be double.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said inspectors should be appointed to examine the schools with regard to overcrowding and sanitation. It was necessary this should be done, for the health and welfare of the rising generation. The inspectors should have power to examine private schools as well as Government schools; for when members heard of Government schools being overcrowded, they might take it for granted the private schools were in the same condition.

MR. RANDELL said no doubt the Education Department was desirous of having something of this sort introduced by legislation. There should be a certain amount of control over the private and semi-public schools, and the Education Department desired to get returns from them as to the number of attendances and other particulars.

MR. HIGHAM emphasised the remarks made by Mr. Solomon as to the Beaconsfield school. The amount provided for additions to that school this year was £275, but it was not equal to the amount of unauthorised expenditure which had

been found necessary last year in order to meet the requirements of this school. The case of this school would emphasise the argument as to the insanitary condition of some schools through overcrowding, and this condition was likely to get worse through the rapid increase of scholars.

Item passed.

MR. R. F. SHOLL, referring to item 361, "Miscellaneous schools, £1,700," said £5,000 had been voted last year and £6,388 2s. expended. Could the Premier give any information as to the reason for the excess?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said various schools had been asked for, in addition to those provided for in the vote of the past year, and the necessity for these additional schools had arisen particularly on the goldfields, as well as in some other parts of the country.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said this statement only showed the necessity for the Excess Bill being brought down before the Estimates were passed.

Item passed.

MR. R. F. SHOLL, referring to item 374, "Legislative Assembly, ladies' new gallery, &c., £60," said £332 19s. had been expended on this beautiful structure, and such an amount should be enough to build an ordinary house. It also appeared the Government required £60 more to finish the work.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said the additional £60 included the cost of erecting a staircase and approach from the street, also for the upholstery of the seats. Taking into consideration the desire of the House that this work should be carried out quickly, the department had had to pay more for work done under those conditions. The £60 now asked for was the amount not paid on the 30th June, for completing the work.

Item passed.

MR. GEORGE, referring to Item 375, "New wing, Government Offices (Treasury, Audit, and Titles Departments), £19,000," asked where this new wing was going to be placed.

THE PREMIER said the new wing was going to cost £23,000 altogether, and was then in progress.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked what was going to be done with the money.

THE PREMIER said a contract had been let for that amount, to complete the new wing.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the ideas of the Government were growing very large. He really thought there must be something wrong in the specifications for new building, when contractors put in such large prices for building Government Offices.

MR. MORAN said it was an understood thing that there must be about 50 per cent. put on for alterations of plans, when a contractor was making out his estimate. Fresh plans for buildings, after contracts had been let, were coming out every few minutes.

THE PREMIER said contractors liked that.

MR. GEORGE said that, looking at the iron gratings which were put in the lower window spaces in the part of the new wing then going up—to stop people from getting in, he supposed—the plan was ridiculous.

THE PREMIER said that part was for the strong-room of the Lands Titles Office.

MR. GEORGE said it did not matter what the iron gratings were for: they were an absurd waste of money—a most ridiculous, absolute, extravagant waste of money. It was about time this House “sacked” the whole lot connected with the Architectural branch. If this work was a specimen of what they were going to have for £23,000, it was time the Government cleared out a lot of useless encumbrances who were wasting the money of the country. There would be a fine reckoning day, before long.

Item passed.

MR. R. F. SHOLL, referring to item 411, “Furniture for Government House, £700,” said the Government had asked for £200 last session for furniture required for Government House. It now appeared they had spent £2,602 16s. 11d. last year for furniture, without the authority of Parliament. The Government were asking for £700 more, this year, for the furnishing of Government House, and they wanted this before the proposed additions were made. This was a scandalous waste of money. Had the old furniture been sold? Was it to be given away? Was it going to be sold? Or was it no good? [AN

HON. MEMBER: All sold.] Then, here was another reason why they should have the Excess Bill, with the Auditor General's remarks, before passing the Estimates. From what he knew of Government House, he could not see where £2,000 could be expended on furnishing; and he must protest against this item and the excess expenditure during the past year, as being a perfect scandal.

MR. SIMPSON said there was reasonable ground for inquiry into this item. If there was anything in public rumour, he was warranted in making the statement that the new occupant of Government House had ordered what he liked, and the country had to pay for it. That was current rumour, and pretty well authenticated. It was said there was so much furniture ordered that a great deal of it had to be returned to one of the large furnishing houses in the city; and he did not know that the Government were really aware that £2,602 16s. 11d. worth of furniture had been ordered. It was believed outside that anything the upholsterers chose to send in, they did send in; and he should like to know if that was the position which Parliament occupied with regard to the furnishing of Government House, or whether the Minister really exercised control over the matter. It was current talk that a great deal of the furniture was sent back to Robertson & Moffat's furniture warehouse, and that at last it came to the ears of the Government that terrible extravagance was going on. Perhaps the Government could give some information with regard to this matter.

THE PREMIER said he had to state, with regret, that a little more had been spent in furnishing Government House than they actually got value for. The facts were that the Administrator of the colony, who had been acting before the new Governor came here, did not go out of Government House until about a month before the new Governor was to arrive; and this was by arrangement with the Government Architect, who said it would be sufficient time for the Administrator to vacate Government House a month before the Governor arrived. The effect of that arrangement was that sufficient time was not available, after the Administrator

had left Government House, to furnish it and get it in readiness for the new Governor's arrival. As a result, there were hurry and trouble, and, of course, some things had to be done in great haste, so that there was not time to economise. In this way the Government had probably had to pay more for this work than it would have cost under ordinary circumstances. As far as the Government were concerned, they were not quite masters of the situation, because Government House had to be got ready, and the furniture had to be got in. The Government desired to make the house as comfortable as they could for the new Governor, and the result was that, in these hurried arrangements, they had to pay a good deal more than the furnishing would have cost in ordinary circumstances. He thought those engaged in the work charged as much as they could, and took advantage of the hurry in which the work had to be done. The fault lay in the fact that there was not sufficient interval for furnishing Government House and putting it into good order, between the time of the Administrator vacating it and the new Governor arriving. He might add that the Administrator had made arrangements for certain people coming to see him from other colonies, and had asked to be allowed to remain in Government House as long as was practicable. The Government Architect, to oblige the Administrator, allowed him to remain as long as possible. The amount which had had to be paid for all this seemed large, and he regretted it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You were "got at."

THE PREMIER: We could not help it.

MR. GEORGE said that, with all desire to bear with the Government in their evidently sore position at having been "got at," he would move that the item be reduced by £500.

AN HON. MEMBER: You cannot do that.

MR. GEORGE said he would take the Chairman's ruling on the point. The Premier had admitted too much in trying to justify this matter.

THE PREMIER: No; I have told the truth.

MR. GEORGE said £2,602 16s. 11d. had been spent, chiefly through the

Administrator being allowed by the Government Architect to remain longer in Government House than he ought to have done. He (Mr. George) thought this amount ought to be sufficient to furnish Government House from top to bottom.

Amendment—to reduce the amount by £500—put and negatived.

Vote put and passed.

This concluded the votes for the annual Estimates of all departments.

At the request of the COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS, a verbal amendment was made in item 5 of the vote for railways and tramways, by striking out the words "in charge" after the words "Assistant Locomotive Superintendent."

Resolutions of the committee reported to the House.

MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and, on the motion of the ATTORNEY GENERAL, read a first time.

BASTARDY LAWS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and, on the motion of the ATTORNEY GENERAL, read a first time.

BRIDGES OVER RAILWAY: REPORT OF JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) brought up the report of the Joint Select Committee which had enquired into the proposal to erect bridges over the railway crossings at Melbourne Road and William Street, in Perth. He said the report of the evidence was still in the hands of the Printer, but would be distributed in a day or two.

Committee's report received, and ordered to be printed.

CUE-NANNINE RAILWAY BILL.

The House went into committee to consider the Bill.

IN COMMITTEE.

Bill passed through committee without debate or amendment, and reported to the House.

Report adopted.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

PERTH RACECOURSE RAILWAY BILL.

The House went into committee to consider the Bill.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. VENN said that when the item for the Perth racecourse railway was passed in the annual Estimates, he understood this short branch line was to start from Burswood, on the east side of the river, instead of from Bayswater, on the west side, provided the land required for the route was made over to the Government free of cost. The owners of the land had been ready to fulfil the agreement, and he also understood the committee of the racing club were in favour of the Burswood route. If the line ran from Bayswater, it would necessitate another bridge being built over the Swan River, which would be a very expensive undertaking; while looking at the matter from the point of view of the public, it would be going a long way round to the racecourse to travel *via* Bayswater. He would like to hear why the route had been changed.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) said engineering considerations had chiefly determined the adoption of the Bayswater route, as it had been found there was a great deal of difficulty in dealing with the racecourse traffic on a single line. It would be very costly to duplicate the present line crossing the river (Bunbury line), as the river was much broader and the foundation was not nearly so good where the present bridge was placed as compared with the Bayswater route across the river. A minor reason for the change of route was that although the owners of land at Burswood promised to give the Government the land required for the railway, he had not been able to get a guarantee from them to that effect. The committee of the racing club were, he understood, satisfied with the Bayswater route, which would be a cheaper and easier work than if a branch line were made from Burswood.

MR. ILLINGWORTH urged upon the Government, in view of the growth of the population, to at once make arrange-

ments for constructing a railway from Burswood to Bayswater, and to have a circular suburban line instead of a duplicate main line across the river. A circular line would be infinitely better for dealing with the traffic than a duplication of the railway, besides being cheaper to construct.

MR. CLARKSON said he considered the Government had acted wisely in deciding to construct the railway to the racecourse from Bayswater. There was a branch line already existing part of the way, starting from Bayswater to the river ferry, and it simply had to be continued over the river on a bridge to the racecourse. To propose to run a line from Burswood to the racecourse was ridiculous, as private land would have to be crossed, and there would be difficulties in the way of constructing the line owing to the contour of the country. So far as racing men were concerned, he thought the Bayswater route was the better for them.

MR. LOTON said there had been a complete change of front on the part of the Government. Last session it had been agreed that a line should be constructed from Burswood to the racecourse, under certain conditions, and he thought the Burswood route would give a great deal more convenience to the public than the other. He could quite understand it would be easier to get to the racecourse across the river than *via* Burswood; but there was a good deal of settlement taking place in the direction of Burswood, on the east side of the river. The whole subject of the routes should be threshed out before a decision was arrived at. If the Burswood line were constructed, it would have the effect of creating a large amount of suburban settlement.

THE PREMIER said it had originally been the intention to build the line on the south side of the river; but there had been so much delay on the part of persons who had promised to give the land, that nothing had been done. The circumstances of the colony had greatly changed, and those landowners were not now so willing to give the land. Unless this House was prepared to go to the expense of widening the South-Western Railway bridge over the Swan River, the traffic to the racecourse *via* Burswood could not be dealt with. That was the opinion of

the General Traffic Manager. The Government did not care which way the line went; but they wanted the line by which the traffic could be best served. The Traffic Manager said the traffic could not be so satisfactorily dealt with on a single line as on two lines. It appeared that as soon as a branch line from Burswood was built to the racecourse, the Government would be asked to run suburban trains to Burswood, and such a service would not pay for many a day. The original idea was to build a line to serve the racecourse, but now the idea was to build a suburban line. The Government were not in a hurry about the matter, and the question could be deferred until the next sitting, if members desired it.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that by building the line *via* Burswood, it would keep the traffic off the main line. It was ridiculous for the Traffic Manager to say he could not run the traffic on a single line.

THE PREMIER: You know it cannot be done.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that at the present the Traffic Manager was running an enormous traffic on a single line between Perth and Fremantle.

THE PREMIER: But everybody wants to leave the racecourse at the same time.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it would be better to deviate from the main line, so as not to interfere with the traffic there, and the Burswood route would give an important suburban line. He moved the adjournment of the debate.

THE PREMIER: You are a lot of land-jobbers.

MR. MONGER: There are land-jobbers on the other side also.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said if the debate were adjourned it would be inconvenient, because arrangements had been made for the carrying out of the work in time for the new year race meeting. He had made a promise that the line should be ready about that time, and he was quite certain that, after all, the House would take the Bayswater route, as it was the best. That route had not been decided upon without consideration. As to the Burswood route, he had heard it remarked that, if the line went that way, the price of land there would be put up to £4,000. It was no benefit whatever to the racecourse

to run the line by way of Burswood. However, if the House desired it, the question could be deferred.

MR. SIMPSON said if the line were taken *via* Burswood, the Government would obtain a daily suburban traffic. The Premier had talked of land-jobbers, but there were land-jobbers everywhere, and if the owners of the Burswood land were prepared to give the land necessary for a railway, he thought their offer should be accepted.

THE DIRECTOR said the line should be built to the racecourse, and continued later on *via* Burswood.

MR. A. FORREST said the intention of the Bill was to provide a railway that would enable the people of Perth and the surrounding districts to get to the racecourse. The present racecourse line passed over Crown lands to the river, and when it was continued over the river by a bridge, the line would be on the racecourse. The desire of the Turf Club was to get the railway to the racecourse as soon as possible. The proposal for a suburban line was one he could agree with; but when they dealt with it, it should be on a larger scale than a proposal to build a line to a racecourse. If, next session, a proposal were brought forward to build a line on the east side of the river, he should be most happy to support it; but he thought there would be great difficulty in getting landowners to give the land required. He was not prepared to give his land to the Crown, because he had paid a large amount per acre for it. There would be difficulties in the way of getting the railway to the racecourse by branching from the heights of Barndon Hill, near the Guildford Road. In the interests of the Turf Club, with which he was connected, hon. members should take advantage of the offer of the Government to have the railway constructed at once.

MR. CLARKSON said if hon. members knew anything about the matter, they would not hesitate about passing the Bill. The people residing at Barndon Hill, and at Burswood, had, at the present time, a very good main road (Guildford Road).

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that, as he had moved the adjournment of the debate, he supposed he would be entitled to reply.

THE CHAIRMAN said the adjournment of a debate in committee could not be moved, and there was therefore nothing

before the House. The hon. member, however, could move to report progress.

MR. R. F. SHOLL moved that progress be reported.

Motion put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt), in moving the second reading, said: This Bill simply proposes to place on the statute book authority for what is done already. All the other colonies have Bills of this character. It provides for the collecting of statistics of produce and stock, the work to be in charge of the resident magistrates, who will be assisted by sub-collectors, who usually will be the officers in charge of the police stations. A policeman goes round and asks how many pigs and hens and cattle are kept. This work is done already, as I have said; but the Bill gives the Registrar General authority for demanding accurate information, and I hope the work will be more effectively done than it has been in the past. Clause 11 shows the returns that will be required to be made; and the next section provides that each owner of stock shall give particulars of the number of the animals he owns, their state of health, the system of management, and so on. It is necessary that the Registrar General should have the power given under this Bill. I beg to move the second reading.

MR. LOTON: I must admit that I am not conversant with the details of this Bill; but I understand it is intended to bring this particular legislation up to date, as it exists in other colonies. If the statistics are to be of any value, and I suppose it will be admitted they are of value, they should be reliable. The statistics collected at the present time are not reliable; in fact, they are very defective. To my mind, it is very important that we should establish a system such as is followed in the other colonies, where they are very much ahead of us in this matter, for there the stock returns are fairly reliable, and therefore of some value. I shall support the second reading of this Bill in order that we may go into committee upon it. We take great care

to obtain statistics of the gold yield of the colony, and we should do the same with regard to our agricultural products.

MR. GEORGE: I have the greatest pleasure in moving that this Bill be read this day six months. I do not think the Bill has been considered by members of the House, and it should not be rushed through at this time of night. I have never seen any provision such as that contained in Clause 13, where penalties are provided for failure to give full and accurate information. It would be very difficult in many cases to state the full working capacity of places of business, especially a factory like my own. There is also another very objectionable provision in the Bill, for men of business are required to state the amount of capital they employ, and thus we should not be called upon to expose our private concerns in an official paper. This Bill seems to be simply a fad of the Attorney General's, and I suppose he will next require that we should give, in official returns, the history of our families.

MR. CLARKSON: I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill. The member for the Murray opposes it because he does not understand it; but the majority of the members, I am sure, will agree that it is a very necessary Bill.

MR. MORAN: I do not think this Bill is half as strict as is the law on the same subject in other colonies. This is simply the ordinary pig, dog, and hen Act of the other Australian colonies. With reference to the provisions requiring persons to state the amount of capital invested in their businesses, we will allow a certain amount of latitude. This is a very mild Act as compared with the Factories Act in the other colonies. It seems to me a remarkable thing that an ultra-radical should oppose a most valuable measure.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: If a person is compelled to state what capital he has embarked in his business, he is not likely, especially if he wants to sell that business, to put down less capital than he has actually invested. The figures as to the capital invested in businesses are not, I think, likely to prove reliable.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I have no desire to rush this Bill through the House. Those members who have read the Bill will know that I have a complete

answer to the wild observations of the member for the Murray, and other members, regarding the provision as to business men stating the capital embarked in their businesses. Clause 18 states distinctly that the information obtained is to be used only for statistical purposes, and is to be regarded as secret and confidential. So far as the statistics published are concerned, the figures given in the returns will be lumped together, and the public will see only the totals.

MR. GEORGE: What do you want it for?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I cannot give the member for the Murray brains to see what statistical information is required for. The trend of the whole world is in the direction of collecting statistical information, and it cannot be a disadvantage to do what we find everybody else doing.

MR. VENN: It is desirable that we should collect these statistics in the most effectual manner. At the present time we labour under great disadvantages in carrying out this work, and we know the returns we get are very inaccurate. We desire, under this Bill, to give to those statistics that credibility and reliability which are so desirable. I have read the Bill through; but, perhaps, as other hon. members have not done so, it might be as well if we did not go on with the second reading to-night. I hope the member for the Murray will not press his motion.

THE SPEAKER: The motion of the member for the Murray was not seconded, and it is therefore not before the House.

Question, that the Bill be read a second time, put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

JURY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt), in moving the second reading, said: Some time ago I promised to deal with the fees paid to jurors, as there had been many complaints of the inadequacy of the present fees. This is a short Bill, which gives to jurors the amount of railway fare instead of a mileage fee, where they can travel by railway, and which also generally improves the position of jurors. I beg to move the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt), in moving the second reading, said: This is simply a Bill to allow the municipal councils to levy a health rate of 1s. in the pound instead of threepence in the pound. It has been asked for by the Perth City Council and by other councils, to enable them to raise, for health purposes, a rate higher than threepence, but not exceeding one shilling. I beg to move the second reading.

MR. GEORGE: I have had some conversation with the chairman of the Sanitary Committee of the Perth City Council, and he informs me that a rate of one shilling will not be sufficient for health purposes.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: That matter can be dealt with in committee.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

MOTIONS—LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On the motion of the PREMIER, further leave of absence for one fortnight was granted to the member for the Murchison (Mr. Hooley).

On the motion of MR. ILLINGWORTH, further leave of absence for one fortnight was granted to the members for Albany (Mr. Leake), Pilbarra (Mr. Keep), and Roebourne (Mr. H. W. Sholl).

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11-28, p.m., until next day.