

the Perth City Council to purchase the Gas Company's works.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: That was a going concern.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The same principle was involved. In that instance a special roll of ratepayers was provided for, and that Act provided that not only should occupiers and owners have a vote, but that each should have one vote only. This measure was in strict harmony with that.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	9
Noes	..	..	..	7

Majority for	..	..	2
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#### AYES.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. J. D. Connolly	Hon. T. H. Wilding
Hon. F. Connor	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. D. G. Gawler
Hon. A. G. Jenkins	(Teller)

#### NOES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. F. Davis	Hon. M. L. Moss
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. J. Cornell
Hon. J. M. Drew	(Teller).

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH moved an amendment—

*That Subclause 2 be struck out.*

It was now necessary to have a definition of "owner," and he proposed to take the definition from the Municipalities Act.

Amendment passed.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH moved a further amendment—

*That the following be inserted as Subclause 2—"For the purposes of this section the term 'owner' means any person entitled to a legal or equitable estate or interest in ratable land in fee simple or for a term of years having at least seven years unexpired."*

As the previous alteration would necessitate an alteration to a number of clauses, the Minister should agree to report progress.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 5.47 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 30th October, 1913.*

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Lands: 1, Reports and returns in accordance with Clauses 54 and 83 of the Government Railways Act for the quarter ended 30th September, 1913. 2, Return of receipts and expenditure of the Government Tramways for the quarter ended 30th September, 1913. 3, Police Benefit Fund, amended by-laws. 4, Return of work done for private firms at Government Printing Office (ordered on motion by Mr. B. J. Stubbs).

### QUESTION—EIGHT HOURS DAY, GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES' LEAVE.

Mr. LANDER (for Mr. E. B. Johnston) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it true that the workers employed on the construction of the Yillimining-Kondinin, Wickiepin-Merredin, Wongan Hills-Mullewa, Brookton-Kunjinn, and other railways were refused a holiday on full pay for Eight Hours' Day? If so, why? 2, Is it true that holiday on full pay was granted on the said date to all persons employed by the Government in the Metropolitan area, including the workers on the Perth sewerage works, and other public works near the City? 3, If so, why was the discrimination exercised against the workers on public works in the country? 4, Will the Government now see that all workers on railway construction works are granted a paid holiday, or double pay for last Eight Hours Day? 5, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. The holiday was given in the Metropolitan area to permit the men to attend the Eight Hours' Day celebrations. The time allowed did not permit of men on the above-mentioned railways coming to Perth and returning to work. 2, Yes, to all those who had completed six months of continuous service. 3, Answered by No. 1. 4, No. 5, Answered by No. 1.

#### QUESTION—SCHOOL AT JARRAHDALE LANDING.

Mr. McDOWALL (for Mr. O'Loughlen) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that for some months the school at Jarrahdale Landing has been closed owing to the non-erection of the building? 2, Was an offer or tender accepted on the 6th of the present month? 3, Who made the offer and what was the amount? 4, Who is to blame for the delay in building? 5, As a large number of children have no school will he see that the building is erected at once?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. 2, Yes. 3, Millars' Timber and Trading Company; £140. 4, The Department had no reason to believe that the company were not proceeding with the erection in accordance with the acceptance of 6th October. 5, The company has been urged to complete the buildings without delay.

#### MOTION—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS PRECEDENCE.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. T. H. Bath) for the Premier, moved—

*That on Wednesday, 5th November, and every alternate Wednesday thereafter, Government business take precedence of all other Notices and Orders of the Day as well as on Tuesdays and Thursdays.*

Mr. A. N. PIESSE (Toodyay): Would the Government agree to the consideration of the motion standing in his name and also that in the name of the member

for Katanning (Mr. A. E. Piesse) on Wednesday next?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The fact that next Wednesday would be cut out as private members' day would not preclude the bringing forward of this motion on the following Wednesday, which would be private members' day.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The motions referred to were important and had been on the Notice Paper for some time. It would give satisfaction to the people concerned if the Minister for Lands would agree to have those matters discussed on Wednesday next. The Notice Paper would be so arranged that they could be discussed, and the Minister would agree that they should be discussed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There was a good number of motions on the Notice Paper, and the two referred to would be on the same plane as other private members' business. It would be hardly possible to put those motions up and keep back others. On the other hand, they were well ahead on the Notice Paper and would duly come on for consideration on Wednesday week. He had arranged to forego his trip to Katanning in the hope that the discussion on these two motions would come on last night, not anticipating that the discussion on the motion by the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) would take so long. He was sorry that the opportunity to deal with them had not occurred. He would point out to the hon. members concerned that they would have the satisfaction of knowing that the motions would be well up on the Notice Paper of Wednesday week.

Question put and passed.

#### BILL—ESPERANCE NORTHWARD RAILWAY.

Introduced by the Minister for Works and read a first time.

#### BILL—LAND VALUATION.

Report of Committee, after recommitment, adopted.

## BILL—FACTORIES AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker), in moving the second reading, said: In taking charge of this Bill I am not anxious to speak at any great length. The matters dealt with in the measure are more particularly Committee matters and can be dealt with on each successive clause. For good reasons the form of introducing this amending Bill is altered from the original form of amending legislation, but I wish the House to be sure that there are very good and substantial reasons for taking the form adopted. Very much of the machinery of the Bill is taken out of the old Act and is, in an amended form, put into this amending measure. Ultimately the two measures will be consolidated and stand as one Act. There need be no apology for introducing amending legislation on this subject. If I were so anxious, I could inform the Chamber at very considerable length upon the history of factory legislation from the time in 1802 when the first legislative measure dealing with factory employees was introduced into the British Chamber, up till 1907 when the last factory Bill there was passed; or I could take hon. members through the various States in the East and New Zealand and show that they have been improving their factory legislation up to 1912 in Victoria, when the last amending Bill was passed. The measure is needed to check the growing evils of competition, where employers in the past have sought to make their profits not out of the excellence of the articles manufactured or the prices they could obtain, so much as by competition seeking to lower the price and obtain profits by the reduction of wages. It has been the tendency of modern legislation for the State to regulate all kinds of employments. It is for that reason that we have such Acts as the Employers' Liability Act, the Workers' Compensation Act, and more particularly that Act which has recently left this Chamber, and this Parliament—the Industrial Arbitration Act. That Act, as we know, glances at every form of employment and sees to the healthy regulation of those employments. It casts the

regis of State protection over those who are engaged in industry. That Act, however, does not cover all who are engaged in wage-earning. There is a certain section of the community which, by lack of facilities of organisation and the means of combining together in the form of unions, has no standing under the Arbitration Act, and cannot possibly avail itself of the great blessings that Act provides, and therefore it is necessary to have legislation taking in all those who are debarred by any circumstances whatsoever from taking advantage of that measure. This Bill does that. In one sense it will be said that this is only another evidence in modern legislation of interfering with the liberties of the subject. It has often been the cry, and was the cry upon the passing of the various Factories Acts, that matters of this kind should be left to regulate themselves, and for the State to step in and tell employers and employees what shall be the conditions of employment is only an interference with our natural rights. But experience has proved beyond a doubt that healthy, sane interference with either unscrupulous workmen or unscrupulous employers, or ignorant workmen or ignorant employers, is justifiable by the beneficial results. This measure therefore makes some sweeping alterations in the present conditions that prevail in factories. It widens the definition of "factory" in the first place, and a factory is no longer to be a place simply where there are six employees or where there is machinery used, but we have lessened the number of employees necessary to constitute a factory. That may be taken as our starting point. The old Act provides that where six persons are employed there shall be a factory. The measure I am submitting to the House provides that there need be only two persons. Whenever two persons are occupied in any industry, there they will come under the Factories Act.

Mr. George: That is two employees, not a master man and one employee?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: We have altered the definition of owner and occupier so that there shall be no excuse,

as in the case of laundries, say, for two men to be working there and saying, "We are partners," and "We are both owners," and "There are no employees." Where there are people working it shall be taken as *prima facie* evidence that they are working as employees, and their establishments shall be considered as a factory. That is the first drastic change, if we can call it drastic.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Even if there are partners?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Even if they are partners. What is aimed at in this measure is to have access to every place where work is going on, in which the public are interested, and to see that sanitary conditions, hygienic conditions, and other conditions affecting industrialism are faithfully carried out, that they exist, in short. We go further than that. We have brought under the scope of the operation of the measure institutions that are up to now excluded. We have, for instance, brought within the meaning of the word "factory" a baker's establishment. Bakeries up to date have been exempt from the operation of the Factories Act. This will bring in every bakery, whether it be merely for the baking of bread, or for sweetmeats, or confectionery, or any form of the provision of food usually issuing from bakeries; and I ought to say here perhaps, as fitting to the subject of bakeries, that we have provided in this measure a change which has been tried in Sydney, which they are agitating for very earnestly in Victoria, and which is recognised, not only by the workmen but by all who take an intelligent interest in the matter as a wise provision, namely, the baking of all bread in the daytime. There is to be no night work in the bakeries if this Bill is passed. We provide for entering into these establishments and seeing that they are cleanly, that they are white-washed, and in every way looked after for the protection, not only of the health of the workers, but the health of the consumers of the articles which issue from these bakeries. I want hon. members to reflect that in this measure nothing distinctively new is introduced. There is scarcely a feature of all its provisions but

has been tried and found to be successful, either in New Zealand or in the Eastern States, consequently there is nothing to apologise for in the changes that are made. The fact is one of the objects of the measure is to bring the existing Act into line with similar legislation in other portions of the Commonwealth. We have made no changes in regard to the provisions existing in other parts of the dominions in the southern hemisphere, perhaps with one exception. The measure regulates the hours of employment. It states that women, girls, and boys shall not work over 44 hours a week. At the present time they can be worked much longer than that, as hon. members know, but under the Bill they would not work for longer than 44 hours. In New Zealand the limitation is to 45 hours—one hour longer, but that difference is not strictly objectionable. In other words, we have put ourselves into line with progress and have put the limitation which we think safe and healthy, more particularly as this country is a hotter country than New Zealand. If 45 hours is a just limitation in that Dominion, then in this State 44 hours brings the matter to a parallel. I want to mention one feature of the amendment of the old Act which may appear striking to some in this Chamber. The Act makes no provision whatsoever for the protection of women working in the neighbourhood of machinery. This Bill provides that where dangerous machinery is used in any factory the girl or women workers in that place shall be compelled to adjust their hair and clothing in such a way as to minimise the risk of accident.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What is proposed to be done?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Whatever is necessary, and it is a matter for the inspectors to deal with. We know that many accidents have occurred from girls having worn loose or flowing hair in the presence of revolving wheels and other machinery, and we are anxious to avoid the risk of accident. In like manner we have provided that those working in aerated bottle manufactories shall

wear masks and gloves, and be protected from danger in that avocation. Straight away I may say that the main feature of the Bill is taking into the care of the State all employees from the moment they become employees up to the time of the termination of their services, whether they enter as children or whether they enter in a succeeding period of their lives. We have provided, for instance, that before any youth is admitted into any of our factories he shall obtain a certificate of his fitness, or, in the case of a girl, of her fitness for the work that is being done. This certificate of fitness, guaranteed by the inspector, covers an educational and a physical test. The wisdom of that, I think, will not be doubted. The parent desires to put his child into a factory, and we must be first sure that the child is of the age to undertake that work. We must be sure that the educational facilities afforded by this generous nation have not been ignored, that the child has reached a certain standard of education. We do not permit children whose education has been neglected to enter into the service of an employer under cover of the Factories Act. There must be that proof, therefore, of educational fitness, and there must be the further proof that the child is physically fit for that kind of work that that special factory provides, and we have not only done that but we have provided that for the youngest employee, as well as for all others, there shall be a minimum wage. We provide for instance, that girls starting in dress-making shall not, as now exists, be permitted to work for nothing for six months or longer and subsequently for a long period for the small sum of 2s. 6d. a week. We say that from the commencement of the employment there shall be paid at least to the youngest of them 5s. a week, and it is provided that that pay shall be strictly considered as the minimum. Not one penny less is to be paid, and the Bill seeks furthermore to remove another anomaly. At the present time the practice prevails of taking a boy or a girl from school to engage in some industry, beginning at a

minimum wage and working for the one master at that wage for twelve months or longer; then for some cause or other the boy or girl loses his or her employment and seeks work elsewhere, and the rule is when going elsewhere they are put back to the old pay as a beginner; beginner, true, in that establishment, but not a beginner in that particular kind of work. The Bill provides that every year the wages shall be added to at least by 5s. per week up to the time that the worker is entitled under the Bill to the minimum of 25s., and if at any period during the service, that service be terminated, then the employer has to give a certificate of employment showing the time worked. Therefore, when that person is again employed in a similar institution under another master or masters, the master or masters must give the wage that the certificate shows the holder is entitled to. That in itself I think is a wise regulation. We are not only providing for this, but we have provided in the measure that every employee shall be properly entered upon the books of the establishment, whether the establishment be small or large.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Will this apply to saw-mills?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Undoubtedly, if they come within the definition of factory. If the hon. member looks at the definition, he will see whether we can bring sawmills within the scope of the measure. There is no doubt about it also, that if the measure becomes law, we shall be compelled to employ a larger number of inspectors than we now possess. It is proposed that books of service shall be kept. Every boy, girl, man, or woman shall have his or her name entered upon the books, and a correct record shall be kept of all hours worked. More particularly does the Bill aim at preventing what may be termed surreptitious overtime. There is only a certain amount of overtime that can be worked, and employers will be compelled to give notice of their desire to have that overtime worked, to make proper application for permission, and then during

those overtime periods increased wages are to be offered, and not only that, but tea money will have to be provided. I think hon. members will see that this is a change in the direction of the humane treatment of those who are so little able to help themselves, and although the Bill does not absolutely prohibit piece work being given to those whose physical infirmities or other misfortunes do not permit them to attend at the factory, the provisions under the measure will amply protect not only those who are forced by circumstances to seek this kind of employment, but will protect those who are engaged in the same trade and also protect the public. Every bit of work so given out must be properly recorded, the name and address of the person taking the work must be properly entered in the books, and a penalty is provided for incorrect statements regarding any of these matters. These are innovations in the direction of the humane treatment of those who are employed in our various industries within the metropolis and elsewhere. The measure does more than that: it provides that every factory shall be properly supervised as to the conditions of health. There is no question about it that in the past, weak men and still weaker women, have been compelled to work the livelong day under unhealthy conditions. The old Factories Act, it is true, provided for open spaces, enough for the crowded employees to breathe in, but this Bill goes further and insists upon absolute cleanliness, upon conditions that are not ruinous or inimical to the health of the workers. And it goes still further by providing, or insisting upon the provision of those sanitary arrangements which hitherto have been so much neglected, and not only for every arrangement for comfort and necessity, but for the sake of decency as well. It will be no longer possible when this measure becomes law, as I have great hope it will, for men and women in their employment to be thrown promiscuously together, using the same necessities of life, as is the case under the existing Act. Still further in the same direction it is provided that where

there are six women employed in any of our factories, they shall be provided with a dressing room, not necessarily an elaborate stone or brick or wooden building, but a room where they can change their dresses with decency. These provisions are absolutely neglected under the old Act. I want to remind hon. members that we are not making innovations or playing upon our imaginations. We are simply again adopting laws which are in existence in the other States. We have provided that the rooms used for the purpose of working shall not be used for the purpose of taking meals. We are seeking to inspire a sentiment of regularity and a healthful environment for our workers. It might be said that this is unnecessary and that we might let those who go out to work look after themselves.

Mr. George: Not a bit of it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am glad to hear the hon. member say that. Fortunately for the world, humane ideals have entered into the legislation not only of this country, but of the Mother land and we have found the country progressing, and the nation becoming wealthy in proportion, as we lift its great toiling multitudes, especially the most helpless of them, from slavery and degradation right up to the standard of human comfort and pure and healthy life. I may just pause for one moment here and draw the attention of hon. members to a few lines in the "Evolution of Industry" by Henry Dyer—

It has been said that the early years of the industrial revolution are the darkest in our nation's history, and that the industrial position we attained was bought with the price of blood. A study of the Parliamentary Reports shows that this is no exaggeration. We must, however, refer to these and other records for details on such points. The following sketch of the social conditions of the workers fifty years ago, by the secretary of the late Royal Commission on Labour, may be taken as a very moderate account of the state of affairs at that time:—"Fifty years ago—

Now 60 years.

—according to all competent observers, England seemed to stand on the brink of a social revolution. The views that are expressed in the memoirs of the day are placed in a far more lurid light by foreign visitors like Engels, who came to study the conditions of labour here. Their works leave no room for doubt. Did any doubt remain, the numerous parliamentary papers and inquiries of the time would bring conviction home to the most stubborn mind. Wages were low and paid in kind, under what is known as the truck system. In other words, the employer supplied inferior goods instead of money, and the workman could not deal at any but the employer's shops on pain of dismissal, which meant the workhouse or starvation; the hours were long beyond belief, accidents were common, no regard was paid to human life, the dwellings were hovels unfit for human habitation. If the men were treated badly, women and children were treated worse. Cases are reported in which women, with only a blanket round them, were harnessed like beasts to trucks of coal underground: children were let out in groups under overseers who brutally and shamefully illtreated them.

Hon. J. Mitchell: How long ago was that?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Sixty years ago. And this is on the testimony, not of a champion of labour, but the secretary of the Royal Commission on Labour.

There is no infamy, no misery that is now related of the unskilled sweated industries, that cannot be paralleled and outdone by the condition of the skilled labourer half a century or so ago. My learned and distinguished friend Dr. Baernreither, looking back at these times, impartially declares that the history of the West records perhaps no greater plundering of man by man than of the employed by the employers of that time."

Mr. George: What is the date of that report?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This report was published in 1895.

Mr. George: But the legislation you refer to?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was in 1904, I think, that an amending Bill was passed on the recommendation of that Commission.\*

Mr. George: It is over 80 years ago since women ceased to drag coal in the pits.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Well, even take 80 years ago. In the life of a long-lived man we have had this marked change. These things are now no longer possible. And what was the advocacy at the time against the introduction of the innovation? That if we removed those evils, that were not looked upon as evils, we should break the backs of every industry in the United Kingdom. No one can read without astonishment the history of the great struggle for the Factories Act, especially in the time of Robert Peel, no one can read unmoved the biography of Robert Owen, who, by self-sacrifice, not only travelled through England, Scotland, and Wales and every part of the United Kingdom, but by voice, pen, and example and the expenditure of a fortune on starting factories of his own, wanted to demonstrate, and did demonstrate to the world, that industry could live and better results be obtained by the abolition of the cruel conditions then obtaining. The answer of the employers to the employees then is the answer of the employers to the employees now—"You are interfering with individual liberty and checking enterprise."

Hon. J. Mitchell: The conditions are totally different now.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: They are totally different now, and why? Because the State has taken the poor toilers under its protection.

Mr. George: Who is grumbling at that?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am not saying anyone is grumbling, except, perhaps, the member for Northam, who is now objecting to the recital of a little history. What is my purpose in quoting this history? Only to show that we are on the right track, that this Bill is a

move in the direction of that marked improvement, which has been in progress ever since 1802.

Hon. J. Mitchell: The employees are not in the same position to-day.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: They are, in a minor degree. The innovations which have been made, the interference of the State in the conditions of employment, are protested against now as they were protested against then, although the interference is not so drastic now because it is not so drastically necessary as it was then. I do not want to labour this phase of my speech, and I only introduced it casually, but there is in my hands now a report published by the authority of both Houses of Parliament, and by command of Her Majesty the late Queen in 1842, and if hon. members desire to glance at it, the publication will not only show that women and children were employed under most degraded and humiliating conditions—

Mr. George: It was so, then.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Undoubtedly. And this report deals with the coal mines and other industries, but particularly mining. This is only one phase of the degradation of the employees at that period. I am not going to labour this matter by any lengthy quotations on the subject. It will be admitted that we have made marvellous changes, and the point I am making is that the marvellous changes are due to what? To the State stepping in and treating all employed workers as if they were its children.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Is it not also due to the greater intelligence of the people?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes. It is due to that, but the State includes all the population.

Mr. George: If it were not for the large hearted men there were then, we would not have had the reforms we have to-day.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I admit that there were those large hearted men. It is one feature of the British race that I am proud to acknowledge, that its heart has always been large and warm, but its understanding and its appreciation of its own interest have not

always been very clear. I only introduce these matters as a justification for the apparent interference we have made with the conditions that are now in existence, in the provision for making the industries of the State, the factories of this metropolis and other towns, part and parcel, as it were, of the business concern of the State as a whole. We are providing now that every factory shall make itself known to us as a factory, and that, however irksome it may be, every employer of labour in any of these institutions shall communicate to the State all particulars regarding that institution, and, moreover, shall pay a certain sum towards the maintenance of that supervising department, which comprises the inspectors. The necessity for this, not going back so far, is shown by another author whom I just wish to draw hon. members' attention to. In "Sweated Industry," by Clementina Black, there is this paragraph, which I think I should quote—

For, in the long run, the process of competition generally succeeds in filching from the employer that unfair profit which he had originally filched from the worker. It is now the public at large which, by paying for safety pins a fraction less than they really cost, pockets the balance of the workers' living wage. For the manufacturer who desires to pay his workers better there are now two courses open; he must either, if he can, find out some improved method, which, by diminishing his other expenses, will allow him to pay higher for labour, or must combine with his fellow manufacturers to raise the selling price. In practice, he generally does neither of these things, but continues to take advantage of his workers and to say—not without some show of justification—that he cannot help it, and that they would be worse off if he gave up business. The public at large, meanwhile, though it automatically pockets the unfair profits, does not, in the long run, gain by the transaction. For the underpaid worker who fails to be wholly supported by the proceeds of his own labour is inevitably supported in part out of the pocket of some other



person or persons. Moreover, both the health and the work of the underpaid worker presently deteriorates. He contributes less than he might and ought to the general wealth, and, by and by, when his health fails sufficiently, he becomes a charge upon the public. Finally, he dies before his natural time, so that his country fails to receive the full natural return for those costly and unproductive years of childhood during which he was supported. Furthermore, his working life is one of continued hardship, fatigue, and suffering. His existence is not an addition to, but a deduction from, the total general happiness, the rather that underpayment is a burden not only to its victim but also to the onlooker. No person of ordinary sensibilities can fail to be depressed by the knowledge that large numbers of his fellow citizens are struggling, to their physical, moral, and mental detriment, in hopeless poverty. Yet this state of things arises inevitably if labour is left, like any other commodity, at the mercy of unrestricted competition.

Believing in the absolute veracity of those words, the Government say this employment of workers throughout the State shall not be left to unrestricted competition, but shall be regulated by wise and humane supervision.

Mr. George: You have to go further to be just. You will have to regulate so that what they produce shall return wages and something for the employers.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is all a matter of regulation. Whoever obtained the price of a thing without giving that thing, whoever passes off an inferior article as one of a certain standard, commits a fraud, and there are laws dealing with that man. As a matter of fact, the quotation I have read shows, and experience also shows, that the better we treat our workers, whether in factories or elsewhere, the more in the long run, we get out of them.

Mr. Harper: How would you manage to regulate the price of wheat?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: What has that to do with our factories?

Mr. Harper: You cannot regulate the price of wheat.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is regulated absolutely by the labour of the worker, the cost of production, and the demand.

Mr. Wisdom: Yes, the demand.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Of course that element enters in. But this is the point I am trying to emphasise: The better we treat our human machinery in the production of wealth, the better the result and the more the wealth that is created.

Mr. George: We have to compete with countries where this law will not be operative.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not care what we have to compete against. That is my point: We can compete against those nations better when we have a law of this kind than we can without it. When humanity is on its feet, when it is no longer in the chains of slavery, when there is the spirit of independence, and manhood feels itself to be possessed of manhood, where wages are better, where homes are more comfortable and lives are more rational and healthy, there you create wealth speediest: and it is where there is ignorance, slavery, abject cringing mortals with no sense of their own dignity and honourable and noble relations to their fellows, that we have poor insignificant and costly produced material.

Mr. George: We agree on that.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Well, that is all I am asking for. All the Bill proposes is to make better the conditions under which the work of the factories is done. It not only proposes to give young girls a proper place in which to eat their meals and change their dresses, but provided also that in some industries they shall no longer to be compelled to stand upon their feet all day, but that the employers shall find seating accommodation for them.

Mr. George: Quite right.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No doubt the hon. member in his heart is with me, and there can only be misunderstanding as to the application of principles.

Mr. Harper: How do you account for the fact that 60 years ago Ireland had 8,000,000 people and now has only 4,000,000?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If Ireland had had these conditions it would have had 16,000,000 people instead of what it has. I do not wish to be drawn aside by referring to the history of Ireland, but the hon. member has, I believe, Irish blood tingling through his veins. He is proud of that marvellous country, marvellous at all events before the rise of industrialism in its selfish aspect which deprived Ireland of her manufactories, and all those means of the support, expansion, and development of a nation, and left Ireland prostrate. Ireland was great and equal with the nations before this. She was crushed by a policy given to her by the British Parliament in ignorance, and the hon. member knows that.

Mr. Price: Where does the Factories Act come in?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am pointing out that the object of this Factories Bill is to provide certain conditions, and if the hon. member is not able to follow me that is another source of sorrow to me.

Mr. Price: Let us have something about the Bill.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not know whether the hon. member thinks such vulgar interruption clever or humorous. I should not take any notice of him, he is erratic I know, and therefore perhaps I ought not to be interrupted by him. I was only pointing out, prior to this interruption, that the Bill aims at following the labour of all employees from the time they enter upon work until the time they leave, and follows workers if they take work away with them. If work is to be taken away it follows them into their homes. The names are recorded. It makes this provision, too, that everyone employing two or more persons in the manufacture or production of any article shall register, that their institution shall be known to the Factories Department, and that it shall be open to inspection. It puts the responsibility on those who are

employers to keep a strict account and to have printed cards published or exhibited showing the nature of the institution. **Hitherto there has been a sort of compulsory registration when a factory was found out.** If an inspector discovered one upon his or her rambles, then the factory was reported and registration was called for, but now the duty is placed upon those running these institutions to register. There is a difference in the fact that formerly these institutions were registered by one registration, that is to say Europeans particularly should register once and for all, and Asiatics had an annual license. The Bill equalises conditions and compels all institutions of the nature of factories to pay an annual license, and provides too that the annual period may be divided into portions, so that where one commences after six months are over it may register and pay the fee for half a year, or, as the case may be, for a quarter of a year or three-quarters of a year. The annual period will terminate always on the 31st December, so that every employer, either owner or occupier of a factory, knows the time when the fee becomes due, and there can be no excuse for neglect to pay. There are other collateral matters upon which I do not want to deal at any length at the present stage. One particular feature is in relation to furniture shops. The Bill provides that all furniture shall be stamped, and stamped at an early stage in the manufacture, in legible letters; there shall be placed upon every article of furniture manufactured in this State the words "European Labour" or "Non-European Labour," as the case may be. There is not to be a special burden upon any particular section. All manufacturers of furniture shall be compelled to register. I do not think I need labour further other points of the Bill that are more or less uninteresting given in detail. We shall have to discuss such detail in Committee, and I think I ought to leave until then what further explanations may be necessary. Having thus given the general scope of the measure, and I trust a clear understanding of its purposes, I have spoken at more length than I intended

when I commenced, and I will leave other points for discussion when they arise in Committee. I beg to move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

On motion by Hon. J. Mitchell, debate adjourned.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1913-14.

### *In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the 28th October, Mr. McDowall in the Chair.

Vote—*Executive Council*, £45—agreed to.

Vote—*Legislative Council*, £1,019—agreed to.

Vote—*Legislative Assembly*, £1,880:

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Some alterations appeared to have been made in this division and he thought the matter required explanation.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The alterations were for the purpose of more accurately keeping the accounts of the various committees. It had been decided that for the future the House Committee should keep its accounts, and that the Printing Committee should also keep its accounts. These accounts were to be properly audited and submitted to the committees, so that we might know what had been done. The Library Committee would also keep its accounts, and the votes at least of the Library Committee should be accountable for by that committee. The hon. member would find that under the heading of Joint Houses of Parliament votes were arranged which had been transferred to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: In speaking on this division or the next he wanted to say that he was opposed to the alteration which had taken place, although he strongly favoured an alteration of the existing system. Possibly it would be better for him to make his remarks upon the next division. The point was that there had been excessive divided control in regard to the management of this House in the past, and the present Estimates foreshadowed further division in the control of matters in connection with the

general management. For instance, in the past it had been the practice that the librarian and the sub-librarian had come under the division of Legislative Assembly. The Printing Committee's payments had been under the House Committee. It appeared that the librarian had been struck out of the Assembly and also that two new sub-departments were foreshadowed in the Printing Committee and the Library Committee, which meant a very great extension, in his opinion, in the cost of the general management, and also weakened the control of any particular committee, because there were so many things that seemed to overlap. For instance, in the Legislative Assembly estimates we would retain contingencies for grant for library, but if we had a Library Committee it appeared to him that it should be over there. The point he wanted to make was that there should be one committee to control the affairs of this House. The Library Committee did not control the newspaper room. As a matter of fact it was very hard to find what committee did control that room, but in the past it had been usual for any bill for expenditure for that room to be sent to the House Committee. It was desirable that members should seriously consider the management of the House, and the defects that there were in connection with joint control.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Joint Houses of Parliament*, £10,603:

Mr. UNDERWOOD: As a member of the House Committee he had found by experience that there were three or four different divisions in the House over which different officers had control, and when it came to the question of something being wrong, and one thought that one was on to the right committee which dealt with the matter, one was told that the matter was controlled by some other committee. It would appear reasonable to any well organised mind that there should be some committee that could answer for everything in Parliament. The messenger boys at the Council end of the building, although nominally under the House Committee, really were not. Some

messengers on the Assembly side were under the House Committee and some were not. The newspaper room seemed to be a division in itself; it was a no-man's land. If we desired to work the House economically there should be a committee, he did not care whether it was called the Printing Committee, the House Committee, or the Library Committee, that would take control of the lot and see that the money voted was spent to the best advantage of members and the country. In many cases the House Committee simply had to foot the bill. For instance, some time ago there was sent from the Library Committee a bill for £27 or £37 for some shelves which any ordinary bush carpenter with a tomahawk could have constructed in two days. That bill was sent on to the House Committee and that committee simply had to write the cheque. Then again, in connection with the Printing Committee, the House Committee simply had to foot the bill for so many typewriters, so many lead pencils for the reporters, and so many other things. There was no control by the House Committee over the expenditure. There was a proposition to alter this state of affairs and have a Joint Printing Committee, a Library Committee and a House Committee. Each of these committees, he presumed, would have a secretary or a head of the sub-department. This meant running into expense and at the same time it was the worst possible system of management.

Mr. George: These officers are not provided for on the Estimates.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There was to be a Joint Printing Committee vote, and if that committee had to pay out certain moneys the Treasurer would have to find that money and pay it into an account for them, and once a paying officer was appointed, practically that was the head of a sub-department. The same thing would occur in connection with the Library Committee. Just imagine opening an account in the bank for buying books for the library! It meant appointing an officer with a new set of books and everything for running a sub-department.

Mr. George: You cannot find those things provided on the Estimates?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: If these amounts did not appear on the present Estimates there was no doubt they would be found there next year, as soon as the heads of the departments began working the divisions. There were one or two other points of view in regard to this matter. For instance, the *Hansard* subdivision had a very considerable amount for contingencies and in those contingencies would be found many things that previously were in the House Committee contingencies, and next year it would be found there was a considerable excess of this vote and a considerable duplication. It would be advisable in the interests of economy and in the interests of good management to abolish two or three committees that we had at present. He did not care whether the Printing Committee, the Library Committee, or the House Committee was abolished, so long as the management was given to one committee only. It was absolutely necessary that one committee should control the affairs of the Joint Houses. The idea of having one committee for printing, another for the Library, and another for the Joint Houses, seemed to be a very bad system indeed. Now it was suggested to extend the proposal by forming new subdivisions and the cost would be considerably greater than in the past, and the management would be worse.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The remarks of the member for Pilbara, who was a member of the Joint House Committee, showed that he had evidently realised the truth of the statement that when it was a question of being an administrator instead of a critic, difficulties arose in connection with the administration of affairs, even of the Joint Houses of Parliament. Personally he did not know that at any time when these Estimates had been discussed members of the Chamber, who were more particularly charged with the control of the finances, had ever at any time clearly expressed the opinion, or clearly expressed their view as to whether the financial control of the Joint Houses of

Parliament should be in the hands of the officers of the House and the committees appointed, or should in the ultimate resort be controlled by the Treasurer, who had to deal with the finances of all the departments of State and also find the ways and means for providing the money which was asked for by the officers of the Houses in submitting their estimates. It was about time members did express their opinion in some way as to who they desired to have the control so far as the ordering of the finances was concerned. He agreed with the member for Pilbara that if this was to be a small republic, as it were, so far as its own finances were concerned—the domestic economy—it was unwise to have the administration split up amongst a number of committees each acting independently, and each putting forward their requisitions and desires for the money necessary to provide the items placed under the control of the particular committee and no one responsible.

Hon. J. Mitchell: The Premier should have conferred with the authorities of the Houses.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was understood that the matter had been represented to the authorities of the House, who had taken up the stand that the House had vested the authority in those committees to control the finances so far as the domestic economy of Parliament was concerned. He held the opinion that that was never intended, and that while representations made by the officers of the House and sent forward by the committees should have due consideration, yet ultimately the Treasurer should make what in his discretion was proper provision for the House. However, that was apart from the point raised. In the circumstances hon. members should take the opportunity of expressing their opinions on the question of whether the domestic economy of Parliament should be made independent of the Treasurer or whether it should be under the control of the Treasurer just as in the case of every other department of State.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Without desiring to criticise the management of the various committees he wished to draw attention to the reading room, which, as one hon. member had pointed out, was practically a no-man's land. He desired to protest against the number of magazines and periodicals which disappeared from that room. It was seldom indeed that a magazine containing any specially interesting article could be found in the reading room two days after its arrival. Presumably some members imagined they had the right to take these periodicals away as their own exclusive property. As a matter of fact these publications should not be removed from the reading room.

Mr. A. A. Wilson: Have you ever taken any of them away?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: No, he had not. However, they disappeared, and it was impossible to trace them. Steps should be taken to put an end to this state of affairs, for it was most unfair to other members who wished to go through those magazines.

Hon. W. F. TROY: The member for Pilbara had not been sure of his ground when making the charge that new committees were being appointed as new sub-departments. From times past it had been the practice to appoint different committees having separate functions insofar as the government of the House was concerned. There were the House Committee, the Printing Committee, the Library Committee, and the Standing Orders Committee, each acting in conjunction with similar committees appointed by another place. All these committees existed to-day and had existed since the inception of Responsible Government. Each had its separate functions, and it was not intended to depart from the condition already existing. What was desired was that, instead of the confusion and overlapping which had been so unsatisfactory in the past, each committee should be held directly responsible for the expenditure within its own domain, and that some record should be kept of such expenditure. He had not been satisfied with the happy-go-lucky way in which money had been

expended by the various committees. If he was to have a hand in the government of any part of the House he required to know what was being done with the money expended, and so he had suggested to the Treasurer that in order that each committee might have independence in its own jurisdiction, separate amounts should be provided for the upkeep of the various committees. There should be no overlapping, and at the end of each financial year a balance sheet should be furnished showing the operations of each committee.

Mr. A. A. Wilson: Will any three per cents. be allowed?

Hon. M. F. TROY: No. For the future the House Committee would have its own particular vote, and the overlapping which had been complained of would be prevented. Owing to the fact that some of its vote had been mixed up with that of the House Committee, the Library Committee had been compelled to ask the House Committee to make certain improvements in the library. The endeavour now was that the Library Committee, like each other committee, should be responsible for the expenditure in its particular domain. In respect to the Printing Committee, unfortunately there had been considerable overlapping. Under the old system it was impossible to hold each of these committees responsible for its own expenditure, seeing that frequently one committee was called upon to come to the assistance of another, in consequence of which considerable dissatisfaction had arisen. Since the Printing Committee was supposed to conduct all the business of the Printing Committee, that committee should have a separate vote, and for the future should have control over its own operations, and the secretary of that committee should submit a balance sheet showing the expenditure each year.

Mr. Underwood: That is the point, the secretary of the Printing Committee.

Hon. M. F. TROY: There was a secretary to-day. That officer was not in receipt of any salary as secretary, nor did he expect it.

Mr. Underwood: He has nothing to do.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The secretary of the Library Committee was not a paid

servant either, nor did he expect to be paid for his duties.

Mr. Foley: Who is he?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Mr. Grant was secretary of the Library Committee, and had been secretary for many years past. As a matter of fact that officer conducted the business on behalf of the Library Committee. The only paid official on any of these committees was the secretary of the House Committee. Last year the House Committee, in its wisdom, had suggested that that officer should receive £100 salary and the suggestion was adopted by the House.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It was a mistake.

Hon. M. F. TROY: However, the House had approved of it, and that gentleman was the only salaried officer in connection with any of these committees.

Mr. Underwood: What about the librarian?

Hon. M. F. TROY: The librarian was not a salaried secretary. The librarian received £100 as librarian, but every member of the House recognised that actually the officer was not a salaried librarian. It was merely a subterfuge which had been resorted to by the House in order that the Chief Clerk of the House should receive a salary adequate to his responsibilities and work in the House. Since the Constitution provided that the Clerk of the other House should receive a salary equal to the Clerk of this House, the Assembly had resorted to this subterfuge in order to give the Clerk of the Assembly a certain salary which could not be adopted in respect to the Clerk of another place. The present Clerk of the Assembly did not receive the salary which his predecessor had received. For the first year the present Clerk had not received within £150 of the salary which Mr. Lee Steere had received. Even to-day he was not receiving within £50 of his predecessor, although his work was in every way just as responsible as that which had been carried out by Mr. Lee Steere. The charge of overlapping could not be denied. It was with a view of doing away with that overlapping that he had endeavoured to arrange the votes as they appeared in the Estimates. The charge that this arrangement would not make for economical ad-

ministration was not true, at least it was not correct.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That is better.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The endeavour was to secure more economical administration. Above all things he wished to be able to lay his finger on every item of expenditure, so that if he had responsibilities he would know what they were. So far he was not really aware of what was happening in respect of the current expenditure. The President of the Legislative Council, he was sure, desired, as he (Hon. M. F. Troy) desired, to be able to check the expenditure of the different committees over which he had control.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. M. F. TROY: It was surprising that the member for Pilbara should make a statement that the cost of providing shelves in the library had been excessive, because the hon. member had been partly responsible for authorising that expenditure. It had been authorised by the House Committee because the Library Committee had no vote from which to arrange the purchase of adequate shelves. In the first place the Public Works Department were asked to provide the shelves and a tender of £70 16s. was submitted. Later on a tender of £47 4s. 6d. was submitted by Messrs. Robertson & Moffat.

Mr. Lander: For the same class of work?

Hon. M. F. TROY: That was so.

Mr. Lander: It is a standing disgrace.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Naturally the House Committee had decided to accept the lower tender, and whether the work performed was good value for the money paid he was not in a position to say. He was not a carpenter and he could not estimate the cost of such work, but he knew that the committee had endeavoured to keep down the cost. When the tender of the Public Works Department was found to be excessive it was decided to accept the considerably lower tender of the private firm. Although statements had been made as to the cost of repairs and other provisions made in connection with the House, the various committees had not been able to get from the de-

partments anything nearly as reasonable as from outside tenderers. It was regrettable to have to make that statement. Whether the Works Department charged a higher price for work of this character he was not in a position to say, but the experience was that although the committees endeavoured to have all this work done by the department, the price charged was always excessive. If the committee had to protect the people's money they were obliged to have the work done by private people. In regard to the disappearance of magazines and periodicals, there was hardly a club or library in the State in which that did not occur. The only way in which that could be stopped was to pay somebody to be on the spot and see that the magazines were not taken away; but that would mean further expenditure of money. The alterations in the votes as submitted to the Committee had been arranged by the Premier after discussion with him (Hon. M. F. Troy), and the Premier would admit that the alteration had been made with a view to bringing about proper administration under the various committees. He had submitted to the Premier certain facts.

Mr. Underwood: You did not submit them to the House Committee.

The Premier: You do not control the Joint Houses; you only control the House Committee vote.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The House Committee controlled only certain portions of the House. The Library Committee and the Printing Committee each had independent functions and none of those committees was in any way subordinate to the others. That being so, each committee was entirely responsible for everything that came under their control.

Mr. Underwood: Did you put in our estimates for the House Committee vote? These are not our estimates.

Hon. M. F. TROY: For his own part he had no recollection of the House Committee ever submitting estimates to anybody but the Premier, nor did he think the member for Pilbara had had an opportunity of discussing the estimates before they were submitted to the Premier.

Mr. Underwood: Yes, I had.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Strange to say at least one member of the committee had not. The matters which he had discussed with the Premier were the votes for the Library and Printing Committees, and he had assured the Premier that if they were able to make the committees responsible for their own expenditure and for the work which Parliament had authorised them to do, they should set out the votes in the manner shown in the Estimates. The Premier was satisfied that should be done. As Parliament had vested the committees with various functions Parliament might reasonably expect that the gentlemen on those committees would know what work was done by the committees and what became of the money voted by Parliament; and as there had been overlapping, and as the Library Committee had in the past no vote and were obliged to go to the House Committee, and as the Printing Committee had no control over the salaries of their officers, it was most desirable that Parliament should provide money for each committee, who would then be responsible for the money so voted. He was not satisfied that the committees had that control over the expenditure which was most desirable. He did not say that the expenditure had not been carried on to the best advantage—in some cases it had been—but it would be much better if each committee had a separate vote and were responsible for the expenditure of it. There was no intention of building up extra cost. The committees were given the same votes as they had had for years past.

The Minister for Works: There is an increase of a few thousands over last year in connection with the Joint Houses.

Hon. M. F. TROY: If the Joint Houses had submitted an estimate in excess of that for last year there must be some reason for it. He was discussing the arrangement of the vote, but the intention was to give every committee a due appreciation of their own functions, and enable them to submit a return to the House showing how their votes had been expended. The Printing Committee, although they controlled *Hansard*, had

never had a voice in the payment of *Hansard* salaries. They had authorised the purchase of certain typewriters and looked to another committee to pay for them. He did not know what the machines were costing; but if the Printing Committee controlled their own vote they would know those particulars. That was all that was desired. There was no wish to either retrench or overlap the work of another committee. The desire was to have the administration as complete and simple as possible so that every committee would know where their money went.

The PREMIER: Not having been present at the commencement of this discussion he was unable to give any information on any matter which had been discussed before tea. He would like hon. members to give some consideration to this division of the Estimates. It would be noted that in comparison with previous years, there was to some extent an increase in the total vote but he did not want members to level any charge against him of not having controlled the expenditure in past years or of not having given consideration to the Estimates now presented. It had been held that Parliament controlled the Treasury. Parliament did as a matter of fact control every vote on the Estimates, and if it controlled the Treasury as it controlled other departments, it certainly must control its own expenditure. On the last occasion when he had presented the Estimates, the committees had particularly requested that he should present them as submitted, not so much in regard to their arrangement as in regard to placing the votes submitted by the committees before Parliament. Amongst those votes was one which he had taken exception to, viz., the payment of £100 per annum to the secretary of the Joint Houses Committee. He had desired to delete that item, but the committee stated that it was a matter for Parliament to decide as the committee were appointed by Parliament and not by him. The matter had been allowed by him to go to Parliament, and a great deal was said by various members in regard to it, but when the Estimates came before the Chamber



it was passed without discussion. He was still of opinion that this amount should not have been paid, and would join with others in deleting it from the Estimates, if necessary. He took no responsibility for the Estimates of the Joint Houses except for their arrangement. He held the opinion that in the final analysis the Treasurer was expected by Parliament, once it had passed an estimate of expenditure, to control it, notwithstanding the appointment of a committee by Parliament, and it would be noticed that last year £8,956 was voted and £10,520 was actually expended. If the position was that he had no control over and above the amount passed by Parliament, then we would lose complete control of the finances so far as Parliament was concerned. That was a condition of affairs which should not exist, and he held strenuously that he should be able to veto any expenditure in excess of that voted by Parliament. Salaries were voted by Parliament, but after Parliament had gone into recess or had passed the Estimates a committee might decide to increase a certain officer's salary. It was not so much the actual increase as the effect of the increase on the rest of the public service. Parliamentary officers were outside of the service, but any difference in the conditions of employment or rates of salary was always used by those inside or outside the service to urge further consideration of their particular claims. Parliament expected something further from him than to merely say, "Parliament voted £100 for the salary of this particular individual and you decided to give him £150; very well." He desired Parliament to say whether that was the position or not. Personally he saw no reason why he should be consulted unless he was expected to give a decision. He objected to being a rubber-stamp Minister. If he was expected to authorise any payment he should have the right to say whether it was right or wrong, and if not, he was prepared to drop the rubber stamp and let someone else do it. He thought Parliament would lose confidence in him if he adopted such a principle. The Estimates as far as the total amount was concerned were exactly as submitted by the

committee. He had not questioned any vote on this occasion, but after consultation with the Hon. the Speaker had decided to submit the votes in a different manner for very good reasons, some of which he was not in a position to state, though he could give hon. members his assurance that it had been done after very careful consideration, and after satisfying himself that it was essential to adopt this course. He would like to tell the hon. member for Pilbara that when we appointed committees we appointed them for the purpose of controlling certain matters in the interests of the House. We deputed the powers of Parliament to the committees and did not want the committees at sixes and sevens on matters which affected only one of them. The House Committee had certain duties to perform.

Member: What are they?

The PREMIER: Control of the kitchen, dining-room, garden, and engagement of the persons employed therein; the Printing Committee had control of *Hansard*, and the Library Committee had control of the library and the purchasing of books.

Mr. Underwood: Why do they not control *Hansard*?

The PREMIER: If the House Committee usurped the powers of the Printing Committee the Printing Committee should take action and not him. Once Parliament had decided to constitute these committees he did not propose to give any further consideration to their actions except from the point of view of the finances. He did not think he had any right to do so without first having the matter considered by Parliament who appointed the committee. The trouble that had arisen was that since the appointment and payment of a salary to the secretary of the Joint House Committee it had been read as meaning secretary of the Joint Houses.

Mr. Underwood: No.

The PREMIER: The hon. member could be assured it was so.

Mr. Underwood: It is not.

The PREMIER: It was, and he had had communications from public servants

signed by the secretary of the Joint Houses, instructing and giving decisions affecting other committees which those other committees had never seen. The hon. member might shake his head, but such was the case. Naturally a protest was made by the Hon. the Speaker and another committee against the action of the Joint House Committee in usurping the functions of other committees.

Mr. Underwood: You are wrong.

The PREMIER: If necessary he could produce the correspondence. There should be no overlapping, and each should be responsible for the administration of affairs deputed to them by the House. Evidently the hon. member for Pilbara imagined that the Estimates should be submitted to him (the Premier).

Mr. Underwood: I do not imagine at all. You should be absolutely the boss but the committee over-ruled me.

The PREMIER: The hon. member was quite correct in that attitude. Once the Estimates were framed they did not read, "Joint Houses of Parliament," but "Joint House Committee," which gave them control of the whole of that vote. That could not be right as it was never intended when the Printing Committee were appointed that they would merely advise the House Committee in regard to *Hansard*. We wanted the Printing Committee to be responsible direct to the House for *Hansard*, and we wanted the Printing Committee to say that they authorised or did not authorise expenditure in different directions. If we removed that we also removed the responsibility. The only alteration in the Estimates submitted was in the cutting up of the incidental vote. On last year's Estimates we had an incidental vote, including telephone rent, firewood, water, furniture, renewals, and other expenditure authorised by the House Committee, £1,500. This year the amount submitted was £2,000. The House Committee had absolute control of the vote and the Library Committee could not spend a shilling without the approval of the House Committee, although dealing with matters which did not in the slightest degree affect the House Committee. If the House Committee

thought they required the greater portion of the vote they could deny any portion to be expended by another committee, or, as they did last year, exceed the vote. Last year he had to find £2,010 in lieu of the £1,500 voted by Parliament. That was intolerable from the point of view of the House, himself as Treasurer, and the other committees. He had allowed the House Committee to retain £1,700 of the £2,000 submitted, which was £200 more than was voted last year, though certainly less than they expended. That would be absolutely under the control of the House Committee to be expended in the directions required by them, without reference to anyone. He had taken from the £2,000 a sum of £250 to be expended by the Printing Committee without reference to anyone else, and he had provided £50 to be expended by the Library Committee without reference to anyone else, and if any of those votes was exceeded he, as Treasurer, could go to the committees direct, and ascertain the reason, instead of having one committee putting the responsibility on to another. Each committee would be held responsible by Parliament for the expenditure. That was a much better method that had prevailed in the past. The difficulty had arisen through the Joint House Committee or their secretary attempting to usurp the functions of the Joint Houses of Parliament.

Mr. Underwood: You are absolutely wrong.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. Underwood: I have been there six years.

The PREMIER: The hon. member might be on the House Committee and have no knowledge of the correspondence between the secretary of the House Committee and himself. If the hon. member said he was wrong he (Mr. Underwood) could have no knowledge of it.

Mr. Monger: The correspondence is always handed to the committee.

The PREMIER: If that was so the committee were usurping the functions of other committees.

Mr. Monger: The whole of the correspondence which the secretary has is placed before the House Committee at each meeting.

The PREMIER: If the House Committee endorsed the correspondence between the secretary and himself on the appointment of officers over whom the House Committee had no control then the House Committee, as well as the secretary, were usurping the functions of other committees.

Mr. Monger: I have no recollection of such an incident.

The PREMIER: Then the hon. member's statement that all the correspondence came before the committee was not correct. He was not concerned in the matter in the slightest except as Treasurer and as the Minister called upon to explain this section of the Estimates. If these committees required incidental expenditure each should have a definite amount provided, and should be held responsible for their expenditure without reference to any other committee, and we were now providing that each committee should have its own functions and responsibilities.

Mr. LANDER: The assertion made by the Hon. the Speaker in regard to the matter of shelves for the library certainly called for an explanation from the Minister for Works. A sum of approximately £70 was quoted by the Works Department and the work was completed by an outside contractor for £40. Either there was a mistake or something must be seriously wrong. It was merely for some plain shelves in the library.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: As far as the Estimates supplied by the Works Department were concerned, every officer including the Supervisor of Public Works was likely to make mistakes. It was possible a mistake had been made in the estimates. He knew nothing of the particular item referred to. He had heard many complaints of a similar nature from various departments, and every case investigated had shown that the Works Department were right and the others wrong. More par-

ticularly did this apply when departments approached the Works Department for a quote for some work or repairs; the quote perhaps seemed too high and the work was let outside. No detailed explanation of what was required was given, but with simply a wave of the hand it might be indicated that some shelves were required. The Works Department undertook to do the work in a proper and workmanlike manner and with good timber. An outside contractor would make it as cheap as he could to get a leg in, and possibly in this particular case a sprat was given to catch a mackerel. He would investigate the matter. It interested him to look into cases of this kind because it gave him a better opportunity to criticise his department and the officers. He ventured to say that the department would have a satisfactory reply. This was a sort of free lance vote, and he proposed at the risk of wearying members just to go into the matter a little bit deeper than possibly it had been touched upon up to date. He wanted members to realise that each one individual was responsible so far as this vote was concerned. No Minister was responsible and no particular Minister was more responsible than another. It was well known that the order of the day at present was economy, for the interests of the State demanded that the most careful scrutiny should be levelled against all expenditure. Members of Parliament were loud in their desires to see economy effected, and while they preached this to Ministers of the Crown and very often criticised them, in regard to their expenditure, they seemed to take little or no interest in the vote for which they were directly responsible. He would draw attention to this particular vote. Last year Parliament instructed those in control of Parliament House, etcetera, to spend £8,900 odd, and they went straight away and spent some £10,500 odd. What did Parliament think of economies of that description? It was no use members criticising Ministers in regard to administration if, right at their own door, they neglected to practice that which they were constantly preaching.

Mr. Male: How do you know they have?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They had not done it up to date. Last year they had allowed the vote to pass without criticism although it was in excess of the previous year. During the life of the present Parliament the cost of the administration of Parliament House had gone up exceedingly. The Colonial Treasurer had pointed out that there was an increase of over £3,000, or just on 50 per cent., during the life of this Parliament. Surely to goodness there was something wrong somewhere. If we looked at the items we saw in practically every item where administration came in it had been exceeded. Wages in regard to the gardeners had been exceeded, wages in regard to the cleaners had been exceeded. There was surely no justification for excess in regard to those items. There might be some excuse in departments of State for an excess vote. Unforeseen difficulties arose, difficulties were constantly arising in every department of State, but so far as Parliament House was concerned it was the same year in and year out. It was the same garden, and there should be no excess over the anticipated expenditure. The Joint Houses of Parliament estimates should be and were absolutely the easiest estimates to prepare. Yet while the thing was so simple—

Mr. Harper: They are always piling up.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That was so. When these estimates were framed for last year there was proper data to go upon. There were no unforeseen difficulties to arise, and none had arisen, and nevertheless, although there had been complete data to go on, and the Estimates were arrived at, they had been exceeded by £2,000. It appeared to him that by this vote we simply proved what was often urged, that everybody's business was nobody's business, and one member of Parliament was leaving it to another member. We appointed committees which, from what we had heard to-night, wrangled between one another, and while the committees were wrangling the officers of Parliament were

spending money and spending money beyond what the authorisation of Parliament provided.

Mr. George: They cannot spend it, surely, without the authorisation of the committees.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It did not appear, from the discussion to-night, that the committees had had that check over expenditure which they should have had. The hon. member for York (Mr. Monger) said he had not seen correspondence which the Premier had perused, and he stated that that correspondence should have gone before the House Committee. From the remarks of the Speaker we found that there was a difference of opinion between various committees, and while they had been differing the expenditure had been going on. What he wanted to draw particular attention to was the general administration of Parliament House. Members were protesting, and would he hoped protest effectively, against this increased cost of administration, as the country could not stand it, and there was no necessity for it or justification whatever. Coming to details, it would be seen in the first place that the cost of *Hansard* had gone up enormously, and it was stated that *Hansard* was larger than it used to be; but there could be only one speaker at one time, and although we might talk longer, still, while one was talking another was silent, and it only took one reporter to take one man. It might be said that members in another place were talking more than they used to do, but he contended that there was not sufficient in that argument to justify the increased expenditure we were called upon to provide in these Estimates. Then again, we had in Parliament two separate staffs of messengers, one staff for the Legislative Council, sometimes doing nothing, and another staff in the Legislative Assembly, overworked, or *vice versa*. There was absolutely no justification in a building of this description, to have two separate staffs and two separate chief messengers. As a matter of fact since this Parliament had been elected we had had an opportunity

of putting that right. One of the chief messengers, having, unfortunately, had to resign his position, there had been a vacancy, but instead of the two positions being combined and put under one head messenger, another appointment had been made. But what sort of an appointment? Instead of getting a man who should be appointed if there was a position of this sort going, some old servant of the State, who could do the work effectively here yet who could not compete any longer in the outside world, we found that there was a shorthand writer and typist appointed as messenger, a comparatively young man. If the latter was capable of doing shorthand work and typing no doubt he could compete in the outside world, and surely an old servant of the State could have had such an appointment. Apart from that, this was only one phase of the question. The point he wanted to make was that there was no justification for the appointment at all. We did not want one chief messenger in the Assembly and another chief messenger in another place. There should be one for both Houses, and one man in charge of the messengers in both Houses. We had the secretary of the Joint House Committee getting from Parliament an increased salary of £100 per annum, and if we probed that and got right down to the justification or otherwise of the vote we found that the gentleman drawing that was undoubtedly the hard worked man of Parliament. He was a man who was constantly doing more work than he should be called upon to do, but what did it mean? That another man was being paid by Parliament and was shirking his responsibilities. It was a standing disgrace to Parliament to let things go on that were going on in another place in regard to officers of Parliament. It was wrong that we should have a man paid by the State spending his time outside of Parliament House and neglecting his duties, boasting and gloating over the fact that he could come and go as he liked, and practically that he was the boss of Parliament. And simply because that paid servant of the State shirked

his responsibilities we had to pay another man another £100 a year. Another place should remedy that state of affairs; it should have been remedied ten years ago. If the officer referred to, with his loudspoken methods, could not reflect some credit on Parliament then somebody else should be appointed to the position who could. There was no justification for having a hall porter simply attending to callers. The messengers already appointed should be ample to attend to callers. But if we were going to have a hall porter why not let the duty be fulfilled by some old servant of the State, instead of having a comparatively young man for the position. We had men constantly coming to us appealing for light employment where they could use their limited abilities in some measure so that they could earn honest livings. And we could not find anything for them to do because such positions, which were practically sinecures were held by young men, comparatively speaking, who could go outside and compete elsewhere.

Mr. George: Have not they succeeded to or climbed up to that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No—This appointment was made outside so far as Parliament House was concerned. Hon. members would agree that if we were to combine the messenger staff there would be absolutely no need for that appointment at all. One could go right through and by probing into different matters find that many economies could be effected at Parliament House, and we could reduce the expenditure. Two years ago we spent some £7,000, and to-day we were called upon to spend some £10,000. Instead of increasing the vote, we would reduce the vote if we did our duty and saw Parliament administered as every State department was expected to be administered. The increased expenditure was a reflection upon members of Parliament and an evidence that members were indifferent to the administration of Parliament House, and while they insisted on the closest economy on the part of Ministers, they were neglecting their duty to see

that Parliament House, their own home, as it were, was effectively administered.

Mr. MALE: It was refreshing to hear the Minister for Works get up and criticise the finances in the way he had been doing. The hon. member for Pilbara was to be congratulated upon having brought forward this question of the vote of the Joint Houses of Parliament. Anyone would think, when listening to the Minister who had just sat down, that the House Committee or the committees generally had scamped their work and allowed expenditure to go on without care or consideration, and that things altogether were in a bad way.

The Minister for Works: You have exceeded the authorisation by £2,000.

Mr. MALE: The Minister for Works was responsible for some of that excessive expenditure. The Minister's neglect of repairs and renovations of this House had necessitated some of that over-expenditure, some of that excess. We had been called upon to do work out of our Estimates which had always previously been done by the Minister's department, and it would have been well for the Minister to have made some inquiries into the expenditure which had been incurred before he entered upon such drastic criticism.

The Minister for Works: You have asked me to do work which I have absolutely refused to do, and if I had agreed to your requisition this amount would have been exceeded far more.

Mr. MALE: Probably he could show in some way how that excessive expenditure had been incurred. The House Committee had not had the control of that expenditure entirely. There had been, as had been pointed out by the hon. member for Pilbara, an overlapping of these committees.

The Minister for Works: And for spending too.

Mr. MALE: The Speaker, with the assistance of the Premier, had done quite right in trying to adjust the vote so that each committee should be responsible for what they spent. Under the old system the money certainly was granted to the House Committee but that committee had no control whatever

over what was spent by the Printing or the Library Committees. Those committees spent money and sent in their little bills to the House Committee, and if the latter refused to pay, the Treasurer would have had to pay, so it was just as easy for the House Committee to agree to pay. The House Committee, however, were not able to check the expenditure as to its accuracy. Perhaps he should not say accuracy, because there was no doubt about that, but there were no means of controlling it. Take, for instance, the purchase of a typewriter by the Printing Committee; that committee would send in the bill to pay, and the House Committee were not in a position to find out anything about the necessity for the new typewriter, nor what had become of the old one. Again, with regard to the shelves for the library, that work was done and it had to be paid for. In the estimates for that work, that of the Public Works department was considerably higher than the estimates submitted by private contractors, and in nearly every other work the House Committee had met with a similar experience. There was a desire on the part of the Works department to either submit a prohibitive price, because it may not have suited them to do the work, or else they were not in the position to do that class of work as cheaply as other people. The fact remained, that almost without exception the House Committee had been obliged to go outside to get the work done, and it had been done at a price below that at which the Works department could have done it. It had been pointed out that the House Committee had exceeded its estimate during the year by £2,800. This excess was caused, first, by the very long period during which Parliament sat last session, and members had to bear in mind that the length of the session must, to a great extent, influence the expenditure. For many days, also, the House sat four days a week and sat very long hours at that. This resulted in an increase of £876, in two items, *Hansard* and Parliamentary printing, items over which the Joint

House Committee had absolutely no control, and he would not be surprised to learn that the Minister for Works had been to a great extent responsible for a good deal of that excess. To the same cause was attributable the increase of £360, and a further sum of £255 was spent out of incidentals for repairs and alterations to the building, whereas, formerly, this work was carried out by the Works department at their own expense. Thus the Minister for Works was responsible for some of the excess inasmuch as he neglected to do absolutely necessary work which the Committee were themselves compelled to carry out. It was a crying disgrace to-day that the building was in the condition members found it. The outside of the building required the expenditure of £500 or £600, but this had been neglected, and it would cost considerably more if the work was not soon tackled. Both the Minister for Works and the Treasurer had been asked to provide the necessary money for the maintenance and upkeep of the building, but they had neglected to do so.

The Minister for Works: If we were to give you all the money you wanted—

Mr. MALE: The Minister for Works was expected to do his duty, and it was his duty to provide this money. Every 12 months neglect would mean that considerably more money would have to be found.

The Premier: That is what we say but the House Committee does not say it.

Mr. MALE: The House Committee did not say that, and the correspondence would prove it. If we took the total expenditure of the Council, the Assembly, and the Joint Houses for the year 1912-13, and compared it with the expenditure of a great many years past, it would be found that it was no greater to-day than it had been in the past. He could read out figures for several years past but it would be sufficient to point out that the expenditure in 1910-11 on the Council, Assembly and Joint

Houses was £13,446 in excess of what was spent last year. Therefore, the reflection which had been cast on the committee was justifiable. It had also to be remembered that in the past year the *Hansard* vote was transferred from the Assembly to the Joint House Committee, and that made the amount appear more than it would otherwise have been. It was quite time that the duties devolving upon the Joint House Committee were put on a proper basis. The system which had been initiated on the present Estimates, of giving the Printing Committee and the Library Committee their special amounts, should considerably ease the difficulty but the Joint Committee wanted to know their position. Were they responsible for the maintenance, alterations and renewals that took place in the building, or would the Library Committee take charge of the library, or would the Works Department do their duty and maintain the building as it should be maintained. If the Committee were to be asked to attend to everything then the vote would not be sufficient. It should be laid down by the Treasurer, or by Cabinet, what were the duties and the responsibilities of the House Committee. If Cabinet declared that the House Committee should look after the renovations, that Committee would be quite willing to do so. If it was set out that the Works Department must continue to attend to the matter, then the House Committee would take no responsibility. There should, however, be some definite line laid down, and if the House Committee had to do it, money should be provided for the purpose. No amount had been provided for workers' compensation. We found in nearly every other department that a sum was set down and it was expected that the Treasurer would make the necessary provision so that the responsibility would fall on the House Committee. He understood that the Government had initiated an insurance fund for that purpose and steps ought to be taken to see that the officers of the House were covered, as well as those of other departments.

The Premier: Under incidentals we have given you £200 more than last year.

Mr. MALE: But in the other departments the amounts were specifically mentioned.

Mr. TAYLOR: Having listened very carefully to the remarks of hon. members he could not help forming the conclusion that there were some differences of opinion between the different committees. Listening to the Minister for Works one would think that there had been differences of opinion, because the Minister stated that, whilst those committees were wrangling, the expenditure was climbing up. As a member of the House Committee for eight or nine years, he had not known of any instances of wrangling or quarrelling; all he knew was that these committees had had no money to spend. Certain things were required to carry on, and these would be ordered and the accounts forwarded to the House Committee to be paid. As the Estimates were put forward now, each of these committees had its own vote, which the committees would be responsible for. Since he had been on the House Committee the salaries and wages of those who were controlled by that committee had increased considerably, especially in the past three or four years, and they were still increasing. Last year scarcely a meeting was held without an application being received for an advance in wages. If it was not a direct application from one of the employees it was an application from the secretary of the union to which that employee belonged, and the House Committee managing the affairs of Parliament had tried to carry out the duties which Parliament imposed on it. Though the Minister for Works might be inclined to dispute the fact, it was, nevertheless, true that up to the last year or two any renewals or any work which had to be done by the Works Department, and which was requisitioned by the House Committee, was put in hand and charged to the vote which Parliament passed for the upkeep of public buildings. But the House Committee had since been called upon to pay for that work out

of its own vote, which was never intended or had never been done previously. The Minister for Works declared that if the House Committee requisitioned for certain work to be done, it would have to be done; but it had been done in the past and paid for out of the vote for the Public Works Department. This was not the only committee for which the Government found the money. The Public Works Department was making the committee pay for renovations which had previously been paid for out of the Public Works vote. The Estimates presented to the House were not those which had been submitted by the House Committee through the secretary. No doubt the amounts were the same, but they had not been itemised as they now appeared. The new arrangement had been arrived at between the Premier and Mr. Speaker and in his (Mr. Taylor's) opinion it was a good arrangement. As for the proposal to have one chief messenger, it was to be remembered that the Speaker was responsible for the officers of the Assembly just as the President was responsible for the officers of the Council. All these officers were actually controlled by the House Committee, although of course Mr. Speaker's word was law with the officers of the Assembly just as was the President's word with the officers of the Council.

The Premier: [The] *Hansard* staff works in both Houses, yet it is under one chief.

Mr. TAYLOR: That was so. The Chief *Hansard* Reporter was wholly in charge of the *Hansard* staff, the payments for whom were provided in these Estimates. On account of the long session last year, the Parliamentary vote of £1,500 for *Hansard* had been exceeded by over £500. No extra hands had been required, except extra typists who had been put on when sitting late in order to keep up the work. The Premier knew that although we might not adjourn until to-morrow morning or even Saturday morning, *Hansard* must be placed on the Table of the House next Tuesday, and to admit of



this the staff must have their matter in the hands of the printer not later than Friday or Saturday. It was the long session that had cost the additional expense on *Hansard* of £500 odd. The Minister for Works would find in his department correspondence authorised by the House Committee drawing attention to the dilapidated condition of the exterior of Parliament House, which had not had a coat of paint for six years. It was a matter of common knowledge that the only way to preserve wood exposed to the weather was to keep it painted. The necessity for this had been emphasised to the Minister, who indeed had been told by the committee that they would no longer accept any responsibility in this respect. The expenditure was going up, indeed it had been going up for the last eight or nine years. When the committee wanted certain work done, the secretary was instructed to call for quotations from the Works Department and in eight out of ten cases it was found that the prices submitted by the Works Department were considerably higher than those put in by private firms. The House Committee had tried to do their best. The difference in the rates of wages paid to-day as against those obtaining three or five years ago accounted for some of the increase. It had been pointed out that no provision was made for insuring the officers under the Workmen's Compensation Act. That would be provided out of a vote similar to "Salaries." The Government had made arrangements for insuring their employees, and the Perth hospital, which was a semi-Government institution, had arranged, in respect to the officers of that institution, to join with the Government in their scheme. This year, some arrangement of the sort would be made for the officers of Parliament House.

Mr. TURVEY: As a member of the Library Committee, he could say in regard to the increased shelving accommodation referred to by Mr. Speaker, that it had been found quite necessary. He scarcely thought the figures quoted by Mr. Speaker were correct. When

the Library Committee found it incumbent upon them to provide increased accommodation for the books, they had requested the Joint Houses Committee to enlarge the library in accordance with the original plan, on which no billiard room had been provided. As a matter of fact, the billiard room had been formed by partitioning off a portion of the original library. The Library Committee had requested the Joint Houses Committee to take out the dividing wall, do away with the billiard room and allow the library to assume its originally designed proportions. When discussing the University question one hon. member had declared that if the students required recreation they could go elsewhere for it. By the same line of reasoning, he (Mr. Turvey) held that if hon. members required recreation in the shape of billiards, they also could go elsewhere for it.

Mr. George: What about the bowling green?

Mr. TURVEY: In all probability some of the increased expenditure shown was due to the upkeep of the bowling green, another institution attached to the House which might well be dispensed with if it was desired to economise in connection with this vote. The bar also might be done away with, very much to the betterment of some hon. members. The furnishing of the Chairman of Committee's room also would account for some of the extra cost. There was plenty of room for economy in directions other than those which had been discussed, and particularly in connection with institutions which might well be dispensed with.

Mr. GEORGE: Though the various committees worked in an honorary capacity, they had received more abuse this evening than members of the committees would have stood for a single moment had they been working in their private capacity. Whatever might be the true facts, Parliament should not be unmindful that members on the committees were doing this work for the comfort of all members voluntarily, and so far as they could, well. In regard to the remarks made by the member for Kimberley con-

cerning the condition of the Houses of Parliament, there could be no question that the vote for the upkeep of public buildings comprised all public buildings in the State. For the last 20 years it had been recognised that the Works Department was the department to be applied to when special works were required, and it was the duty of the department to maintain a close supervision of the property of the State so that it was not neglected and did not fall into disrepair. If the Minister for Works had adopted a new policy that this was not to be the work of his department, it would be for Parliament to express a very strong opinion on the point. To whom but the Works Department should this responsible work be given? What department was more qualified to look after it than the department which was responsible for the design and the erection of these buildings? In the old days there had been a staff in the Works Department whose business it was to do all repairs and fittings in connection with public buildings and furniture. If for any reason that duty was taken from the Works Department it would be necessary to appoint an officer to look after the buildings, and to suppose that any officer connected with the Houses of Parliament was competent to adjudicate on a matter of this sort was arrant nonsense that should not be tolerated for a moment. A perusal of the estimates showed that much of the increased cost could be attached to one particular item—Printing and Distribution of *Hansard* £665, Parliamentary and General Printing £211, or nearly £900 out of a total of £1,600. What was the use of wasting time over the wages? Wages had gone up throughout the State during recent months, and surely members would not expect that the wages of the men engaged in connection with Parliament House should stand still during an all-round rise elsewhere. It would be found that the expenses in connection with the Joint Houses increased or decreased according to the length of the session. In 1903 there had been 76 sittings, in 1906, 77, in 1910/11, 76, and in 1912, 77, and during that period from 1903 to 1912

the expenditure had ranged from £12,400 to £13,300 last year. From those figures a fair conclusion could be drawn, that when the session of Parliament was prolonged and there was a large number of sittings, the expenditure must necessarily go up. The whole of the staff, messengers, and dining room attendants, were detained beyond their ordinary hours and they had to be paid overtime.

Mr. Underwood: And the printing bill goes up.

Mr. GEORGE: For an ordinary session of about 50 sittings the expenditure had generally been about £11,000, and every year when the sittings had exceeded 70 the expenditure had risen to about £13,000. The man who paid the piper could call the tune, but it was wrong when the tune was to be paid for, that the man who had called it should begin to quibble as hon. members were doing. He believed that at the bottom of the discussion there was something more than had been disclosed. The point he would emphasise was that Parliament House had cost about £100,000, yet according to the Minister for Works it was to be left for an inexperienced and untrained person to say what should be the state of repair. The repair of these buildings should never be neglected for a single moment. The committee had been talked to this evening as if they were a set of self-interested fools who, believing they were managing, were really wasting the money of the country. If Ministers believed that, it was up to them to take the action necessary to deal with the matter; but if he were a member of the committee he would resign straight away and let somebody else be appointed to do the work.

Mr. Taylor: Parliament is responsible, not the Government.

Mr. GEORGE: Then let Parliament appoint the member for Pilbara to take charge of this work. The hon. member had spoken for half an hour without telling the committee what he wanted, except that he had his knife into some particular official.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must keep to the vote.

Mr. GEORGE: Members should see that these buildings were properly looked after and kept in repair, and if the department was to take up the attitude that when requisitions for repairs were sent in they could be delayed, then this building which had been made with the taxpayers' money was being shamefully neglected. Whoever was to blame in connection with the expenditure, Parliament must not allow anybody to shirk his responsibility to keep this building in repair.

Mr. GARDINER: In some directions money had been expended without the authority of the Treasurer, but there were directions in which too great economy had been practiced, notably in the payment of the workmen and officials. Those conducting Parliament House should be the first to recognise the principle that all the employees should receive an adequate rate of wages; but that had not been the case so far as the servants of the Joint Houses were concerned. He referred more particularly to the stewards engaged at Parliament House. The chief steward was receiving the miserable pittance of £2 14s. per week, and had to work all hours of the day and night. He was in charge of almost the whole staff and conducted the business of the dining and other rooms.

Mr. Taylor: Nine shillings a day and two meals.

The Premier: And outside work.

Mr. GARDINER: No officer should accept outside work. His position should occupy the whole of his time and he should receive commensurate wages. The chief steward here received lower wages than any other similar officer in Australasia, and the same applied to almost every steward employed. The House Committee, rather than increase expenditure in other directions as they had done, should insist that those employed received sufficient wages. Most of these men had families and had to pay house rent. Members on the Government side who were repeatedly advocating adequate wages for skilled labour, should see that the stewards were better paid because their work was skilled labour.

Mr. Underwood: We are paying the wages award.

Mr. GARDINER: Eight shillings a day was altogether insufficient in view of the cost of living. In other States the chief steward was paid £200 a year. The Minister for Works advocated that old men in the service should be employed in the various positions. He did not agree with the Minister. Many positions were held by young men and it was necessary that able and energetic young men should be employed. If the Minister had his way he would make Parliament House a veritable old men's depot. He hoped the House Committee would not adopt the Minister's recommendation in that respect, and even at the expense of a little criticism would see that those receiving low wages were treated fairly in future.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The hon. member for Roebourne had spoken without knowledge of the true facts. The waiters' salaries had been raised by the House Committee within the last few years by a shilling a day.

Mr. Gardiner: Is eight shillings a day sufficient?

Hon. M. F. TROY: This increase had been granted in accordance with the principle of raising the lowest paid in the service. He was surprised at the Minister for Works complaining at this principle because it meant a little more expenditure so far as Parliament was concerned. The salary sheet for October showed that the head waiter received £14 19s. 6d., which was considerably over £3 a week. The next waiter (Uff) received £12 7s., Geary, £12 19s. and Murray, £12 7s. 3d., and there were others who attended for only several meals and received £6 10s. 6d. These officers enjoyed other privileges. They were given all the meals they wanted in the House, and a shilling an hour overtime.

The Premier: And the right to do outside work.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Of that he was not aware.

The Premier : They can be seen at Government House functions.

Hon. M. F. TROY : That principle had never been admitted by him, but the salary sheet showed that they had little to complain of. If hon. members would only inquire from the proper quarters they would never make such statements. The waiters, who he admitted did their work well, had a pretty decent job. There was little to do during recess and even those who were put off during recess and could work elsewhere, received a retaining fee of £1 a week from the House Committee. He did not think these officers were treated so handsomely anywhere else in Australia. Personally he would like to give them more, but the money belonged to the people. If he thought they were being sweated—

Mr. Gardiner : They are the lowest paid in Australia, you know.

Hon. M. F. TROY : That was open to question, but even if it was true it had to be remembered that every official of the House received a lower salary than was paid in other parts of the Commonwealth—the clerks and the *Hansard* staff.

Mr. Gardiner : Two wrongs do not make a right.

Hon. M. F. TROY : That could only be rectified by voting a larger amount, but the House Committee were doing their best with the amount voted. The committee would see that no man was sweated, and that everyone was paid a decent wage in accordance with the work he did.

*As to procedure.*

Mr. George and Mr. Underwood rose.

The Chairman : The hon. the Speaker has replied.

Mr. George : In Committee it was competent for any hon. member to speak.

The Chairman : In this instance he was following custom and the ruling given on Tuesday night. The ruling was that if the Minister or the person in charge had replied no further discussion could take place.

Mr. George : That was on the general discussion.

The Chairman : That was the ruling of Mr. Daglish in 1909. The hon. member would find it in *Hansard* of that year, page 1517.

Mr. George : The hon. member for Pilbara started the debate, and surely he had a right to close it. Assuming that a Minister was in charge and was asked a question and did not give a satisfactory reply, any hon. member under the Standing Orders and according to custom had a right to ask for further information.

The Premier : No.

Mr. George : It was useless for the Premier to say otherwise. If the Premier was right we would be stifling free discussion and the rights of the representatives of the people.

The Chairman : There was no intention to stifle discussion. He had taken the ruling which hon. members had agreed to in the past and was simply sticking to that. If hon. members did not want the total vote put they could speak on any item as often as they liked.

Mr. George : Then he would dissent from the Chairman's ruling.

The Premier : Put it in writing.

Mr. George : The Premier need not tell him what he was to do, but should mind his own business.

The Chairman : If the hon. the Speaker was in charge of this division he had replied and in accordance with that ruling no other course could be adopted.

Mr. George : The ruling of the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Male) on Tuesday evening had never been dissented from. The Standing Orders provided that in Committee on the Estimates a member could speak as often as he liked. If we gave away that privilege we would be stifling discussion, and putting in the hands of an arrogant Government the right to prevent the people's representatives from being heard.

The Premier : Might he explain that the point at issue was not in connection with closing a debate but how often an hon. member could speak on a particular division of the Estimates.

Mr. George : This is not the general discussion.

The Premier: It was the general discussion on Division VI. of the Estimates. Ever since he had been in the House it had been the custom that a member could speak only once on a general division.

Mr. Male: On a point of order, had the hon. member for Murray-Wellington dissented from the Chairman's ruling?

The Chairman: Not yet.

Mr. George: It was his belief that he had done it most effectually.

Mr. Male: If he had done so, the Premier was not in order in speaking.

The Chairman: When the hon. member for Murray-Wellington handed in his dissent in proper form, he would vacate the Chair.

#### *Dissent from Chairman's Ruling.*

Mr. George: I formally dissent from your ruling, and I will hand in my dissent in writing.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

The Chairman having stated the dissent,

Mr. George: Standing Order No. 372 states that in Committee members may speak more than once to the same question. When Mr. McDowall left the Chair we were in Committee of the whole House, and a very interesting discussion was taking place upon items in connection with the vote for the Joint Houses of Parliament. I contend that the Standing Orders have all their full force until they are rescinded by the power that has the power to rescind them, and they have not been rescinded yet. Whatever may have taken place in debates in years gone by, or whatever may have been considered to have arisen through custom, so long as the Standing Orders remain as they are in this book, they are the rules by which we must be governed, and I wish to point out, too, with the object of supporting the view I take, that it would be a most serious thing in the case of discussing any of these particular items that a Minister in charge of a department should be able at any time to close the debate. We were in Committee, and the object of Committee is that the fullest information upon every item shall be

available for every member of this House, so that he may be able to satisfy himself on any particular point. So long, therefore, as any member of this House requires information in connection with these items—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We are not dealing with items at all now.

Mr. George: When in Committee we are under control of the Chairman, and these, our Standing Orders, have to deal with that Committee and that Chairman. So long, therefore, as any member here desires to bring before the House, as the hon. member for Pilbara has done to-night, items in which the public are interested, and upon which there should be full discussion and a full disclosure made, in case a Minister in replying gives a reply which is unsatisfactory to members I say that, if the fact of the Minister, having given his reply is to be taken as the closing of the debate, then it is defeating the very object for which Committees have been formed. Committees have been formed for the purpose of throwing the fullest light upon the expenditure of the funds of this State, and to render it possible for any Minister in charge of a department to jump a decision and close a debate before the House is satisfied, is subversive of the whole of the privileges of this honourable Chamber. I want the House to thoroughly understand the position we are in, that unless a member is absolutely satisfied to allow the reply of a Minister to end the discussion, we are not going to get the light we should have upon the finances of this State, and it would throw the way open, I do not care what Minister is in power, to political trickery which we all should seek to avoid. Until the Standing Orders are repealed I consider that my point must be upheld. If it is desired by the House, and considered a correct and just thing to do, then the proper action must be taken, but until that action is taken the Standing Orders must hold good.

Mr. Male: It appears to me, Mr. Speaker, whatever your ruling on this particular question may be, that a mistake has

occurred in the closing of this debate, inasmuch as the hon. member for Pilbara opened the discussion, and I think members generally were under the impression that, if there was to be a last speaker with a right of reply, he would be that person. You yourself, Mr. Speaker, had already spoken on this general item, and when you spoke a second time I think it was in reply to certain questions raised by another hon. member, but I do not think any member of this Chamber realised for a moment that you were in any way closing the debate, and although it may be ruled on an actual technical point that it should be taken that you closed the debate, inasmuch as you spoke last, I think in the circumstances that consideration should be given to the fact that there was some misunderstanding in the matter.

The Premier: I am not quite certain as to the object of having this matter submitted for your consideration, Mr. Speaker. I think it is generally recognised that it was not intended to close the discussion. But the hon. member raised the point that he may speak as often as he likes in Committee, notwithstanding the fact that we are not discussing any particular item. The custom has been to permit a general discussion on each division before any item is touched. Although the question is put from the Chair, the only question put from the Chair is the division and not the item. If we are going to stick to the Standing Orders strictly, as the hon. member for Murray-Wellington suggested, then we cannot discuss the items, we can only discuss the question put from the Chair, and the question put from the Chair is—Joint Houses of Parliament, £10,603. The custom has been to allow a general discussion first of all and then, before the question is eventually put, to allow a discussion on the items, and that is for the purpose of facilitating discussion, and not for the purpose of burking it. If the hon. member desires the Standing Orders to apply, it would suit me very well in the circumstances, as once the general discussion is closed the question must be put, but I do not think that is desired. Standing Order No. 361 provides that matters affecting finance shall be discussed only in a Committee of

the whole House, and No. 118 provides that no member may speak twice to a question before the House except in explanation or reply, or in Committee of the whole House. In those circumstances seeing that finance is something which it is particularly stated shall be discussed only in Committee of the whole House, one would think that the same proceeding shall be adopted in a Committee of the whole House as in the House itself. In any case, if another interpretation can be placed on Standing Order No. 118, I still hold that there are no grounds at this stage to alter the custom which has been adopted in the past. That is, I think general discussion shall be permitted on a division, where a member may speak once, and once only, except the Minister or whoever is in charge of the division—and it must be taken that Mr. Speaker is always in charge of this particular division, the Joint Houses of Parliament—and that his reply closes the discussion. The only question submitted from the Chair on which members should, according to the Standing Orders, direct their remarks, is the division itself and not the items, and in those circumstances it seems to me it is better to adhere to the existing custom, although I do not think, on this particular occasion, it was intended to close the discussion. It seems to me that the question is a matter of whether we are going to adhere strictly to the Standing Orders and set aside what has been the custom of this House ever since I have been a member, and introduce something different which I do not think is desirable at this stage. If it is desirable that the matter should be further gone into, it should be submitted to the Standing Orders Committee.

Hon. J. Mitchell: I agree with the Premier that the Standing Orders in this connection should be made perfectly clear in view of the decision given the other night by the Deputy Speaker, Mr. Male. I think it would be wise to follow the usual custom. If we are to discuss these divisions as we would in Committee in the ordinary way, and as we shall be able to discuss the items, we shall never get through the Estimates at all. The

hon. member for Murray-Wellington contends that the Standing Orders justify him in demanding to be allowed to speak more than once on the division. I believe the Standing Orders do, but custom is against it, and it would be right to follow custom. I think it would be wise in the circumstances for the Standing Orders Committee to look into this matter.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): If you get on to an item you start a general discussion.

Hon. J. Mitchell: I have no wish to prolong this discussion. I think a mistake has arisen, because hon. members imagined that the member for Pilbara, as a member of the House Committee, took charge of the division. As a matter of fact I agree with the Chairman of Committees that you, Mr. Speaker, are the person in charge, and that when you replied the debate closed. It is, perhaps, unfortunate that this mistake occurred because several other members desired to speak.

Mr. Taylor: There is no doubt that some confusion has occurred over the discussion of the Estimates this year. In the past different members have spoken on the Estimates generally, and when the debate was closed a start was made on the division, as we have done to-night, and then a general discussion has been allowed on those divisions, whether they happened to be big or small divisions. Then that general discussion has only closed either by the division being put from the Chair and carried by the Committee, or by some member moving to deal with a certain item, and as soon as that member started to deal with the item and made his remarks apply to it, that closed the general discussion. When I was on the Opposition side of the House I remember that members were often watchful, in order to prevent a free discussion, that the items were not called too readily. Once, however, an item was mentioned and discussed a member could not go back. In Committee on items, members can, according to our Standing Orders, speak as often as they like, but the custom has grown up that there is to be a general discussion on

each division and then a start is made to deal with the items.

Mr. Speaker: If no other member wishes to speak, I desire to say that what has happened to-night has arisen through a misunderstanding. The contention of the Chairman that the Speaker closed the debate on the vote of the Joint Houses Committee is not correct. The Speaker does not control the Joint Houses Estimates. He certainly is expected to defend that portion of the Estimates because of his knowledge of the conditions under which those Estimates are voted and expended, but the Speaker does not introduce them and he has no right whatever of reply. In fact, had the Speaker spoken first on those Estimates he would not have had the right to reply even then, because he is in the same position as any other hon. member. In this case the Speaker did not stop the discussion, which was opened by the member for Pilbara, and the contention that the mover, or the person who opens the discussion, closes the debate when he replies is not correct. I have to rule that the debate in this connection has not been closed. I have also been asked to express my opinion in respect to the ruling which was given in this Chamber by Mr. Daglish when Chairman of Committees. Whilst I desire to follow precedents in this House, which in my opinion are sound, I can find nothing in the Standing Orders, or anywhere else, to justify the decision Mr. Daglish gave on that occasion. This is not the first time I have gone into that matter, but until the point was raised I had no intention to refer to it myself. I am of the opinion that when the discussion generally has taken place on the Estimates the item, "His Excellency the Governor" is put and the whole of the Estimates are open for discussion, and that discussion centres not only on the Estimates but on matters outside the Estimates. In this regard I am of opinion that the Premier, who introduces the Budget, would close the general discussion with his reply. If I had been here the other night I should have had to rule in that direction, as I feel that the Premier in replying to the general discussion closed the general debate. When we come to the discussion of

items Standing Order 386 applies. It provides—

When a motion is made in Committee of Supply to omit or reduce any item of a vote, a question shall be proposed from the Chair for omitting or reducing such item accordingly; and the members shall speak to such question only, until it has been disposed of.

There is nothing in the Standing Order to support the ruling laid down by Mr. Daglish. That Standing Order provides that when an item is being discussed hon. members have the power of discussing that item as long as they like. I have to rule that there has been a misunderstanding in connection with the dispute which has been submitted to me. The Speaker generally introduces the Joint Houses Estimates but he has no right to reply to them, and though he may reply, that reply does not close the debate.

The Premier: In order that the matter may be cleared up, we might know whether a general discussion will be allowed on a division. A general discussion on a division covers all the items; the Standing Order you quoted merely mentions an item. Is a division an item?

Mr. Speaker: Every section of the Estimates is an item; every vote on the Estimates is an item. I can find no Standing Order whatever in support of Mr. Daglish's contention, that when a Minister introduces a vote his reply closes the general discussion on that vote. I can find no other similar ruling in any other Parliament. I prefer to be guided by our own Standing Orders.

The Premier: Under what Standing Order do we permit a general discussion on a division which is not an item?

Mr. Taylor: I think the division is put from the Chair; then that is open for discussion because it is a motion made from the Chair. The Chairman of Committees puts say "Division 6, Joint Houses of Parliament," and at the end of the debate he will say "The question is that the division stand as printed." Then if some member desires to discuss it he has the right to do so.

Hon. H. B. Lefroy: It has been customary in the past, when a question is put from the Chair, say "Division 6: Joint Houses of Parliament" for an hon. member to rise in his place and explain that he wished to speak generally. If he did not do this the hon. member would have to submit an item. I have known it to occur that when a member has got up a second time to speak on the division he has been asked whether he wished to speak generally or to speak to an item, and he has replied that he wished to speak to an item. Then another hon. member has declared that he wished to speak generally, and so the discussion has gone on until an item has been referred to. What the House desires to know is, when a division is put by the Chair, whether hon. members are allowed to speak twice on the general discussion or not. That is what the House wants to be clear about.

The Premier: That is the point.

Hon. H. B. Lefroy: The custom has grown up in the past that hon. members should not speak more than once, but when we get on to the items hon. members can speak as often as they like.

Mr. Speaker: I have already stated that Mr. Daglish gave a ruling that when the Minister who introduced a vote replied, the general discussion on that vote was closed, and I have stated that I can find nothing in the Standing Orders to justify that ruling.

Mr. Taylor: There is nothing in the Standing Orders to support it.

Mr. Speaker: I can find nothing in the Standing Orders to support it, and as to how members are to discuss this vote, there is nothing in the Standing Orders to direct me. I would recommend to the House that the House itself direct the Speaker what course shall be taken in a discussion on a matter of that kind. I think that since this question has been raised it is for the House itself to arrive at a decision. I will recommend, therefore, that my decision in respect to the minor matter submitted to me by the Chairman be adopted, namely, that since the Speaker does not introduce the Estimates or control the Estimates of the



Joint Houses of Parliament, his speaking does not close the debate.

Mr. McDowall: We are now in a very awkward position indeed. Your ruling is simply that your speaking does not close the debate, because you were not in charge of those particular Estimates. The trouble was that the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) desired to speak twice on the general discussion. On the assumption that you were in charge of that division of the Estimates, from the fact that you were the defender of and practically the one responsible for the Estimates, I ruled that you were in the position of a Minister and that, therefore, the debate had been closed so far as the general discussion was concerned. Now your ruling simply says, in effect, that I was incorrect, because you were not in charge of the Estimates, and therefore your speech did not close the debate. Now, if I go back into the Chair under that ruling I have nothing to guide me as to whether I should allow the member for Murray-Wellington or any other member to speak a dozen times on the general discussion of the division. I would therefore respectfully ask you to give me a direction, to let me know whether a member can speak more than once on a particular division. Let me say in passing that the Standing Orders referring to Committee of Supply have nothing whatever to do with this question at all; they have only to do with the question of supply when a motion is made that the Standing Orders be suspended to put through a Supply Bill.

The Premier: No, this is the Committee of Supply.

Mr. McDowall: Yes, but we have no Standing Orders dealing with the conduct of the debate on the Estimates. Mr. Daglish knew that perfectly well, and in his famous decision he distinctly and emphatically states that, being unable to find anything in the Standing Orders dealing with the Estimates, he had consulted British parliamentary practice, and the practice of Parliament in other parts of the world, and in the absence of Standing Orders of our own, had arrived at that particular decision. However, what I am troubled about is as to whether I am to

allow hon. members to speak as often as they like.

Mr. Speaker: This discussion is entirely irregular. I do not think it is worth while, unless some hon. member desires to take exception to my decision. So far as this vote is concerned it is a Parliamentary vote, and nobody here is in charge of it. I certainly am not in charge of the whole vote. I have a good deal to do with the expenditure of some of it, and so far as I am personally responsible. I endeavour to justify my actions in respect to that expenditure; but I am not in the position of a Minister who controls that vote. Therefore I want to say that so far as that particular vote is concerned, nobody in this Chamber closes the discussion on it, and the Chair must be guided by that direction.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Can members speak twice?

Mr. Speaker: Undoubtedly they can speak twice.

#### *Committee resumed.*

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The discussion was most interesting. Hon. members were asked by three Ministers to see that they were very careful in the expenditure of money, and it had been pointed out that members were responsible for the expenditure in this division. He agreed that there should be economy in public expenditure, but the suggestion came strangely from Ministers who proposed to spend £700,000 more this year than last. He believed the House was fairly well managed, and that the best possible had been done for hon. members. The vote was not excessive, and members themselves were responsible for what increase there was. The expenditure on *Hansard* was heavy, largely in consequence of the decision that each member should have the right to send out six additional copies to his friends. This had meant a considerable addition to the expenditure. Why had Ministers raised the discussion? Had they put up the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood), a member of the House Committee, to raise some objection?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Do not talk twaddle.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The remarks of the Minister for Lands, following on those of the member for Pilbara, had led one to suppose that Ministers were dissatisfied. He was perfectly satisfied that these committees were doing the best possible, and that their management of the funds was just as good as that of the funds at the disposal of Ministers. The Minister for Works was entirely wrong in suggesting that one chief messenger could serve both Houses. The chief messenger was of necessity a walking encyclopaedia and no untrained man could perform his duties. It was impracticable to talk of one chief messenger for both Houses. Again, the Minister had objected to the post of hall porter. But it was to be remembered that if it were not for the hall porter the place would be overrun by interlopers. Considerable time had been wasted over the discussion, and it was surprising that Ministers had no definite proposal to make. It was necessary to provide reasonable comfort for members, to see that the staff was adequately paid and that the necessary printing was done in order that the work of Parliament could be carried on satisfactorily. He had never heard a complaint until to-night. He hoped the display of fireworks to which we had been subjected would now end and would not be repeated on the other divisions of the Estimates.

Mr. MONGER: The attitude taken up by the Minister for Works was altogether surprising. Did the Minister really think that with the constantly enlarging area of ornamental grounds to be attended to, and with wages ever on the increase, the gardening staff could be maintained at the same figure which had appeared on the Estimates five or six years ago? Such a belief was altogether out of reason. In searching for economy the Minister for Works might well look nearer home, might inquire in that department which he himself controlled. It would be found that that department was largely responsible for the increase in this division of the Estimates. The

Public Works Department, instead of being congratulated on its care of such of the affairs of Parliament House as were entrusted to it, was deserving of considerable censure. From the time the dining room lift was ordered until the date of its completion over two years elapsed. That was under the able management or manipulation of the Minister for Works, and it would take a Select Committee to arrive at what had been the actual cost of the lift. Yet the Minister for Works had the audacity to censure the various committees for mismanaging the affairs of the House. He denied the statement of the Premier that the Secretary of the House Committee had taken upon himself duties he had no right to perform, and had usurped the rights of other officials. The Premier remarked that it had been his intention last year to have the item of £100 for the Secretary of the House Committee expunged from the Estimates; but why had not the Premier called attention to the item last year instead of allowing it to pass without any protest? The splendid work which that officer did entitled him to the little remuneration he received. The member for Roebourne had made reference to the wages paid to the staff, particularly those in the dining-room; but if the hon. member would refer any complaint of that kind to the Speaker, or to the Secretary of the House Committee, every satisfaction would be given. The members of the House Committee had only one object, and that was to do the best they could, with the funds at their disposal, for the comfort of members and their friends.

Item, Secretary Joint House Committee, £100:

Mr. FOLEY: As the Secretary of the Joint House Committee received a salary of £100 for that particular work he should be made secretary of all the committees of Parliament. That officer received a salary sufficient to warrant his services being called upon for all functions held in the House. At a function held in these buildings a little time ago that officer had been running about the building, certainly doing something to

facilitate the entertainment of the visitors, while another gentleman, the secretary to the Premier, was facilitating the entertainment to a greater extent. The secretary of the House Committee had really nothing to do with the function, although he should have had everything to do with it. The House Committee should make a recommendation that whenever a function was held in Parliament House the services of this official should be utilised, so that he might be put in the position of earning the £100 he received as secretary of the House Committee.

The PREMIER: The function held in Parliament House recently had been organised by the Government, and some Government official had to be responsible.

Mr. Underwood: What about that dinner?

The PREMIER: There had been an oversight on the part of the caterer. When the Government arranged a function at Parliament House, Ministers could not be expected to stand at the side of the caterer to see that he made the ordinary provision for members to get their meals.

Mr. Foley: I was not speaking of any one specific function.

The PREMIER: Past experience showed that Parliament House was the last place in the world where these functions should be held.

Mr. Gardiner: If you leave them in charge of your secretary it is the last place.

The PREMIER: Hon. members had no doubt some little feeling in the matter; but there was a lot to be said both ways, and he did not think it desirable that a matter of this sort should be discussed publicly. So far as he knew, Mr. Kessell did all that was required, and more than should have been asked of him, in arranging that function.

Mr. Underwood: We could have done without him.

The PREMIER: One would not like to have been without him on that occasion. After recent experiences he had had he was convinced that Parliament House was not a desirable place at which to hold

these functions, and in future when the Government proposed to entertain distinguished visitors, they would find some other place so as not to have the complaints which had been made previously. In regard to the luncheon, the Automobile Club had kindly undertaken to relieve the taxpayers of a very heavy expense by providing all the cars necessary to take the visitors to Mundaring, and it would have been nothing short of meanness had the Government not provided them with luncheon. As the general taxpayer provided the salary of the kitchen men and the waiters at Parliament House, he had thought it well to utilise their services for the luncheon in order to keep down the cost; but he had never dreamt that members would be inconvenienced. It was difficult to organise these affairs without someone finding something to complain about.

Mr. Gardiner: That is not the occasion the hon. member for Leonora complains of.

The PREMIER: A lot of light could be thrown on the subject if it were wise to do so; but the matter was too trivial and the discussion would be too much like washing the family linen in public.

Mr. FOLEY: It was regrettable that the Premier had alluded to the function held recently, because it would go forth that the secretary of the House Committee had not made provision for the members who ordinarily came to the House for luncheon. He had no wish for a moment to saddle the officer he had referred to with any responsibility for the lack of accommodation on that date and the miserable mistake that had been made. That gentleman had done all that was possible to supply the requirements of members.

Item, Wages (garden), £300:

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It had been pointed out that the vote had been exceeded. Last year an old employee had been ill for a considerable number of weeks, and the House Committee were generous enough to pay his wages in full while employing another man to do his work.

The Premier: It is done regularly in the service.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: An old servant on 9s. a day was entitled to some consideration. Employees were being paid the rates awarded by the arbitration court, and Government employees should be under those awards just as well as people who were not fortunate enough to have Government billets. The committee could be relied upon to exercise generosity wherever it was excusable. He made this explanation for the benefit of the member for Roebourne who seemed to think that the committee had acted meanly or unfairly towards employees.

Item, Wages (kitchen and dining-room), £950:

Mr. GARDINER There was a slight misapprehension on his part that stewards did not receive overtime. He understood they received 1s. an hour, but he adhered to his opinion that 9s. a day for the chief steward and 8s. a day for the others was not sufficient. The Hon. the Speaker had been hardly fair in quoting this month's earnings inasmuch as the overtime shown represented the overtime for two or three months previously. Members had a right to say whether 8s. a day was sufficient, and the House Committee should consider the matter and see that employees received adequate wages. Before increasing the wages of any member of the staff or incurring other expense they should insist that those receiving miserable wages should be paid a reasonable amount.

Mr. TAYLOR: Since he had been on the House Committee, a matter of eight or nine years, two or three increases in pay had been granted to the employees. The committee were anxious to pay them all they could, but it was the people's money, and the committee had done what they thought was fair and reasonable. The member for Roebourne had not indicated what he considered a fair and reasonable living wage, and he would like hon. members to express their opinion.

Mr. Gardiner: Two shillings a day increase.

Mr. TAYLOR: That would mean that the chief steward would receive 11s. and two meals a day. The high cost of living

could not affect a man much when he had to find only one meal a day.

Hon. J. Mitchell: He has a family.

Mr. TAYLOR: The House Committee had done more for their employees than most employers in the State. For three or four years the waiters had been paid £1 a week retaining fee during the recess, and they were at liberty to take other employment.

Mr. Gardiner: Why do you do it? Because they are conquered men.

Mr. TAYLOR: In fairness to his colleagues he was the only man at the time who was supposed to have any feelings towards the workers. Sir Edward Wittenoom, the ex-Speaker (Mr. Quinlan), the President of the Legislative Council, and three other members of the Upper House were members of the committee, and when he brought the matter before them the waiters were receiving 6s. a day. If the men earned £3 or £4 outside during the recess they would still receive the £1 a week.

Mr. McDonald: If they were earning £5 a week outside they would be fools to come back.

Mr. TAYLOR: That was so. They were decent men who had been here for some time, and whenever they were called on they responded. No man recognised their ability more than he did. If members thought the employees were not receiving fair wages they should say what they considered a fair thing and vote an increase. The committee had been accused of being extravagant, and of not keeping a watchful eye on the expenditure, but they could not be accused of sweating their employees. They paid the arbitration rates of wages. The committee received requests now and then for increases, but in the opinion of the committee the men were being paid all that the country could afford. The hon. member for Roebourne should have moved for an increase.

Mr. Gardiner: I cannot move to increase the item.

Mr. TAYLOR: The hon. member could have moved a substantive motion.

Mr. Gardiner: The member for Leonora tried to do so and was ruled out of order.

**Mr. TAYLOR:** It was all very well for the hon. member to talk about sweating employees, but in view of the facts he resented the statement. There was a certain limit beyond which one could not go. The committee had decided upon certain rights, privileges, and conditions. The wages were based upon the arbitration award, with certain privileges which other employers did not give.

Item. Incidental, including telephone rent, firewood, water, furniture, renewals, and other expenditure authorised by the House Committee, £1,700:

**Mr. GEORGE** moved an amendment—

*That the words "but exclusive of repairs to the main building" be added after "Committee."*

His object was so that the question might be settled once and for all as to who was to look after the repairs to this building. Someone had to be responsible for the repairs, and the proper person was the gentleman at the head of the Public Works Department, and the money required should come out of the item for public buildings. There was a specific entry later on the Estimates for the upkeep of public buildings.

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** If the words proposed were added we would still have the same amount of vote and yet would have struck out one of the objects for which the vote was created, and for which a portion of the money was devoted. That being so, it would mean an indirect increase of the vote in connection with this item.

**Mr. GEORGE:** A reduction could be moved subsequently. So far as the upkeep of a building like this was concerned it should be recognised that if painting and other work were neglected year after year the whole of the votes would in the end prove insufficient to do the work, and such neglect would lead to the expenditure of a tremendous lot of money. The object he had in view was to let hon. members fix the responsibility, either upon the House Committee or upon the property branch of the Public Works Department.

**The MINISTER FOR WORKS:** So far as the Minister for Works was concerned he had nothing, so far as his own

experience went, to do with the repairs to Parliament House. There was a vote on the Public Works Estimates for public buildings. If the Minister for Education desired any repairs to school buildings a requisition had to be made and he, as Minister for Works, had control of that vote, and expert officers of the Works Department decided whether it was necessary to do the work. So far as Parliament House was concerned, it did not work in the same way. He had arrived at the conclusion that the House Committee, or the Joint House Committee, had control of the vote, and they simply saw that certain things were wanted and said, "We have the money to pay and the Public Works Department can do it." If the Public Works Department had got to pay, he (the Minister for Works) was going to decide what work should be done. The department attended to all repairs on buildings outside Parliament House, and so far as he knew he had no control over Parliament House.

**Mr. George:** You ought to.

**The MINISTER FOR WORKS:** If the Works Department could look after every other public building they ought to look after Parliament House as well. The Joint House Committee controlled Parliament House, and if they simply requisitioned for the work to be done, and agreed to pay for it, it would be done.

**Mr. GEORGE:** The desire of hon. members should be to see that this building did not fall into disrepair. We should find someone upon whom we could place the responsibility of judging whether it required to be repaired or not. He was certain, however, that if something was not done it would be necessary for the House Committee to call in an outside expert to inspect the whole place. There were officers in the Works Department of whom the Minister was proud, and if they were asked to look after the building, this would be done thoroughly. Reference had been made to the fact that in the Works Department's Estimates there was a special item dealing with additions, but it was not additions that he was concerned about, it was repairs and maintenance. On page 88 of the Estimates there was an

item, "Buildings not otherwise provided for above, £3,500." We could say that Parliament House was one of those buildings. The Minister should give an assurance that he would say before his Estimates were reached, that he would provide for repairs being effected.

The Minister for Works: If you pass an item of £1,700, it should provide for repairs to this building.

Mr. Underwood: But it does not.

Mr. GEORGE: The House Committee, no doubt, would be willing to consent to a big reduction of that £1,700 so as to get the responsibility taken off their shoulders. It would be criminal for Parliament to go on as they had been doing in regard to the building; it had cost an enormous sum of money and it should be properly maintained.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There was a considerable amount of logic in what the hon. member had stated. Before the present Minister for Works assumed office all the repairs to this building were done by the Works Department.

The Minister for Works: At the dictates of the House Committee.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: At the dictates of no one; the dictates that the work required to be done. The Minister seemed to have laid it down that he would do nothing to the building unless it was paid for out of the Joint House vote. If that was to be the course followed Parliament would have to provide a bigger vote. It would take, say, £500 to paint the House, and it required painting so that the timber in it might be preserved. The House Committee could not possibly agree to that expenditure out of its vote. The reason for some of the increases shown on the Estimates was that the House Committee had had to do the work which the department had refused to carry out and had had to pay for it. But the House Committee had no right to do that because Parliament never authorised it. We wanted to understand what the position was. If the House Committee out of their vote had to provide for the maintenance of the building, Parliament would have to supply the Committee with more money. Either the Works Department should at-

tend to this out of their building maintenance vote, or the House would be allowed to go to decay.

Mr. MALE: The remarks of the Minister for Works, in which he made a reflection on the House Committee by saying it was the worst managed department, were resented.

The Minister for Works: I believe so, too; I am perfectly honest in my opinion.

Mr. MALE: It was by no means the worst managed department. If the Minister exercised the same economy in his department the country would be considerably better off.

The Minister for Works: A £2,000 excess in an £8,000 vote!

Mr. MALE: The manner in which that excess had been brought about had already been explained. What was the position at the present time? There were matters in connection with the building which required attention at once. At least £500 was needed for exterior painting and interior cleaning and decorating. An application had been made to the Treasurer but he had not provided the money. Was the place to go to rack and ruin? Someone would have to take the responsibility. The House Committee could not do without the money, but with the money they could do it more cheaply than could the Minister for Works. The House Committee was not qualified to say what was necessary.

The Minister for Works: But you have done so.

Mr. MALE: The committee had suggested what was required and the Works Department had estimated that it would cost £500. The committee had merely asked that the work be done, and the Minister had refused to do it. The committee was in no way responsible.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the Works Department was to repair and maintain the building, it would be done, but in such event the Works Department would call the tune. Under existing conditions, the House Committee wanted to decide what was to be done, and in consequence he, as Minister, said "All right, you will pay for it." On the requisition of the House Committee a man had been

sent up to get out an estimate and report. On the reports of such officers the Minister, guided by his experts, decided what should be done, and in respect to every other department that decision was final; but in regard to Parliament House, if the decision was adverse, the House Committee said, "All right, we will get it done outside." The department agreed that the exterior painting was necessary, but said that it was unnecessary to do the inside painting, while on the other hand, the House Committee declared that both inside and outside required doing. In these circumstances he, as Minister, said, "Then, if you think it necessary, you must pay for it."

Mr. Allen : The Government have to find the money.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : That was so, but, if, as Minister, he had to take the responsibility of keeping inside the vote, he desired to control it.

Mr. Male : Give it to us and we will do it better than you can.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : That was the cry of every department. but they got a class of work which would not stand investigation. If we altered the wording of the vote we would not know whether any provision was made in this £1,700 for repairs which the House Committee had done and paid for. Were the House Committee going to repeat those repairs? If so, the vote could stand as it was, and the committee could use the money, but if, as Minister, he had to do all the work, he required to know what portion of the £1,700 was to be available for the purpose. By the re-organisation of the method of furnishing the Government offices hundreds of pounds had been saved to the State. Why should not the furnishing of Parliament House be included? The expert furnishing officer of the department would know the requirements of Parliament House and would effect a check on the extravagance that obtained. As it was, the House Committee bought what furniture they required, and there was no check on the price.

Mr. Allen : Who is your expert ?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : Mr. Cribb, a highly skilled man. It would be well to go right into the matter and determine who was to control the affairs of Parliament House. If it was left to the Minister for Works and he failed, he would have to take the responsibility. Certainly the House Committee were not qualified, because they had not an expert officer.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE : Clearly it was the duty of the Minister for Works to take charge of this building. At the same time it was also clear that the House Committee had exceeded their authority in spending money in the renovation of the premises. The committee had no right whatever to spend even 6d. in renovations or in furnishing. That was purely a matter for the Public Works Department. In the Law Department with which he had been connected, requisitions were sent along to the Works Department for any furniture that was needed. The House Committee had no right to have incurred this expenditure, and his reading of the vote was that it did not include provision for spending money on this building. Therefore, it was the sole duty and province of the Works Department to keep the building in good order. If there was any truth in the statement that the buildings were being neglected it was to the shame and discredit of the Minister controlling the department. If he were Minister he would not hesitate to forbid the House Committee to interfere with this building, which was a public building and should be looked after by the Minister for Works.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS : Hon. members seemed to be agreed in regard to dividing the responsibility in a way that would be understandable by the House Committee, the Works Department, and hon. members, and if the amendment were carried, although it would represent only an alteration of the wording, it would signify the opinion of the Committee and would be a direction to the House Committee that in regard to the maintenance of the building no money should be expended or author-

ised unless approved by the Works Department. He would like to see that restriction apply to furniture also. The custom had been for the Public departments and offices to requisition any furniture, but it placed a difficulty in the way of a permanent head or Minister knowing whether furniture was required, and if so whether there was any surplus furniture in other departments which could be made available. Therefore, an officer had been appointed in the Public Works Department to control the furniture vote, and when a request was submitted to an individual Minister, that officer was called upon to report and to decide whether it was necessary to buy new furniture or to meet the requisition from the surplus in other offices. The resultant saving had been immense. Therefore, if members agreed that it was desirable that repairs in this building should be vested in the Works Department, the elimination suggested by the member for Murray-Wellington should extend to the word "furniture." That would convey clearly the desire of hon. members and would clear up the position.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Mr. GEORGE moved an amendment—

*That in item 11 the word "furniture" be struck out.*

Hon. M. F. TROY: Was it understood that the Minister proposed to take over this work, and, on a recommendation being made by the House Committee, see that any required work was put in hand?

The Minister for Works: It will be for the expert officers to report as to the necessity for the work.

Hon. M. F. TROY: That being so, he could not support the amendment. A comparison of the expenditure on the House during the last eight or nine years would show that it was not any greater to-day than it had been in 1903-4. This year's expenditure was £13,300, and, even allowing for the increased wages of the staff, was only £1,000 in excess of the expenditure for 1903-4. In those earlier years all the work of main-

tenance in connection with the building had been performed by the Works Department, but last year that work had to be paid for by the House Committee. It was of little use for a Minister to talk about extravagance unless he could justify his statement by facts, but the facts went to show that the expenditure on Parliament House had not increased during the last nine years.

The Minister for Works: Last year you exceeded your authorisation by £2,000.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Every department exceeded its authorisation. If the Works Department did not pay for the maintenance of the building, and if the *Hansard* and printing votes were higher than in previous years the Joint House Committee must exceed their authorisation. The Works Department might be competent to buy furniture at a cheaper rate than it could be bought by the House Committee, but the Works Department had no concern about Parliament House as to whether the furniture was good, bad, or indifferent, or whether or not it was here for the convenience of members. Their concern would be to keep down the vote of the department, which would mean starving the House, and that the committees appointed by the House would be subordinate not to Parliament but to the Works Department. In other words, the Works Department would control a committee appointed by Parliament and that was a very bad principle. Parliament appointed the Joint House Committee, and it was subordinate to Parliament only and not to the Works Department. He entirely disagreed with the principle that Ministers controlled this House. They did not; the House was controlled by members of Parliament. The Ministers controlled their own departments, but they had no business to interfere with committees appointed by Parliament. Parliament controlled the Ministry and when Parliament appointed its committees they should be subordinate, not to any Minister or department, but to Parliament. On those grounds he opposed the suggestion.



*Point of Order.*

Mr. Male: On a point of order, I submit that the amendment for the deletion of the word "furniture" is out of order, because I consider it would alter the destination of the vote.

The Minister for Lands: The member for Murray-Wellington has given notice of his intention to move to reduce the vote.

Mr. Male: We cannot say how much will be expended in furniture or otherwise.

The Chairman: An hon. member can move to reduce the vote.

Mr. Male: We would not be reducing the vote, but altering the destination of the vote.

The Minister for Works: The member for Murray-Wellington intended to move for the deletion of the word "furniture" with the object of eventually reducing the item.

The Minister for Lands: The destination of the vote would not be altered by striking out the word, because the vote, irrespective of whether the amount stands or is reduced, will still apply to the items which remain.

Mr. Male: Yes, in a greater degree.

Mr. Nanson: The effect of the amendment is to limit the destination.

The Chairman: The member for Murray-Wellington's amendment would alter the destination of the vote, but if the Minister for Works or a member of the Ministry moved it, it could be altered.

Mr. Male: I would like a ruling on my point of order.

Mr. George: I intend to move for a reduction of the vote.

The Chairman: If that is so, and on that assurance, I rule that the amendment is in order.

Mr. Male: I must take exception to the ruling, inasmuch as the hon. member who moved it does not know what proportion of the vote is being allotted to furniture.

The Chairman: I am not going to rule the amendment out of order.

Mr. Price: Would the amendment not be tantamount to increasing this vote?

The Chairman: The hon. member has given his assurance that he is going to move to reduce it.

Mr. Price: Could not the item be reduced first? If the word is struck out and the Committee refuse to reduce the item, we would be increasing the vote. It ought to be known whether we are to be guided by rules or by any little conversation that takes place across the Chamber.

The Chairman: Order! I have ruled that this is in order. My ruling is that in view of the assurance of the hon. member for Murray-Wellington that he will move for a reduction of the amount, the amendment to strike out the word "furniture" is admissible.

*Dissent from Chairman's Ruling.*

Mr. Male: I beg to dissent from your ruling.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

The Chairman having stated the dissent,

Mr. Male: An amendment has been moved to strike out the word "furniture" in an item under Joint Houses of Parliament, but the striking out as proposed would be altering the destination of the vote. And, although the hon. member moving that amendment has stated that it is his intention to move for the reduction of the vote, I still contend that, as he does not know what amount of that item is allotted to furniture, the destination of that item is still altered. On those grounds I disagree with the Chairman's ruling. The point has also been raised that the hon. member may fail in his attempt to carry the reduction. The reduction that he contemplates might not be carried.

Mr. Speaker: I rule that the Chairman is perfectly in order in allowing the amendment, because the hon. member could not move for the reduction of any vote unless he signified the item, and in signifying the item the hon. member gives his assurance that he will move for a subsequent reduction. I rule, therefore, that the Chairman is perfectly in order in accepting the amendment.

*Committee resumed.*

Amendment (to strike out "furniture") put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS moved an amendment—

*That the words "but exclusive of repairs to the building" be inserted after "committee."*

Amendment passed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS moved a further amendment—

*That the item be reduced by £200.*

Amendment passed.

Item, Reporters: 1 (chief) at £500; 5 at £350, £2,250:

Mr. FOLEY: An increase of £65 was shown in this item. As one who always believed in a fair rate of wage being paid, he thought he was still within his rights in saying a fair remuneration was at present given for the labour performed. He moved an amendment—

*That the item be reduced by £50.*

Since he first became a member of this Chamber more assistance had been gained for *Hansard*. It had been stated to-night that last session was very heavy, but there was an extra reporter to do the work, compared with what had been the case previously. He did not say that these gentlemen did anything but the best possible work, but he contended that the amount of money previously placed on the Estimates for this class of work paid amply for it. Taking all things into consideration, including the fact that the staff had been increased, he did not think at the present time any increase in the amount voted was justified. There were several members of this Chamber who devoted the whole of their time to their duties; there were several who represented constituencies in which, if it were possible for them to live there, they might do some little to supplement their salaries, but when they had to live in Perth, away from their constituencies, they did not get the opportunity of doing much other than their duty, and if one attended to his Parliamentary duties thoroughly, he would have little time to do anything else. That was another reason why he would like to see the Committee carry the reduction by £50. Perhaps other members had different opinions but he hoped the

Committee would see with him on this occasion, and it had to be remembered, too, that the country was suffering from financial trouble. It was the duty of the Chamber to retrench in every manner possible, and when the argument was used that the remuneration an officer was receiving was sufficient and good, that argument should carry weight in times of stress when it was proposed to give increases.

Mr. GARDINER: It was his intention to support the amendment for the reduction, not that he was one who was prepared to at any time refuse to assist in granting increases to officers who were capable and deserving of a higher rate of payment, but on this occasion he opposed the increase as a protest against what he might term a case—and it had happened frequently—of greasing the fat pig. Whilst he realised that the officers of the *Hansard* staff were competent men, and had the right to receive adequate remuneration, it was found that hon. members advocated that certain other employees in the House were insufficiently paid, so that, if there was any intention to grant increases, a commencement should be made at the bottom rung of the ladder. In passing, he desired to mention that he wondered recently whether there was to be a new appointment to the *Hansard* staff. He had had in his possession for some time a copy of the *Civil Service Journal*, which set out that Mr. S. V. Barwood had received a more lucrative appointment at Parliament House. He (Mr. Gardiner) would like to know what that appointment was, and he had wondered whether it was to be on the *Hansard* staff, or whether the chief messenger was to be removed and Mr. Barwood was to take his place. Though he had waited patiently since the publication of the journal he had referred to, he had not noticed the advent of Mr. Barwood and neither had he been able to learn who had appointed him to this lucrative position in Parliament. The most lucrative positions were those of the Clerk of the House and the *Hansard* reporters, and he was wondering what position Mr. Barwood was going to take up.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: What has all this to do with the Chief *Hansard* Reporter?

Mr. GARDINER: Nothing, only he thought that Mr. Barwood might have been appointed to that position, because he had credentials which the hon. member did not possess. Although different committees controlled the *Hansard* staff and the other employees of the House, as a protest against the inadequate remuneration paid to the latter, he would oppose an increase being given to those who were already in receipt of a fair rate of pay.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 11.36 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 4th November, 1913.*

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

### QUESTION—LOCAL COURT, SHARK BAY.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Whether the Commissioner of Police caused a public inquiry to be held in Shark Bay on the conduct of cases in the local court of petty sessions, as a result of a petition received by him, and the result of such inquiries. 2, Does the Colonial Secre-

tary consider—(a) That it is desirable that the Commissioner of Police should receive and take notice of petitions criticising justices; or (b) That an inspector of police should hold a public inquiry in the local police court on the conduct of such court, especially when the matter was raised by the local constable in that court, and the petition apparently inspired by the constable's remarks in court? 3, Whether in spite of the fact that the inspector reports he could find no cause of complaint by either the constable or the petitioners, the only notice that has been taken of the matter has been the appointment to the honorary bench of a personal friend of the constable? 4, Will the Colonial Secretary lay all papers in connection with this matter on the Table of the House?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, No. An inquiry was held by the chief inspector into certain allegations against the local constable. 2 (a), The Commissioner of Police does not take notice of such petitions; if received by him they are passed to the proper quarter. (b), The Chief Inspector of Police inquired into certain charges against the local constable, but did not inquire into the conduct of the local police court. 3, The constable made no complaint. 4, Yes. I am placing the papers on the Table of the House.

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Department—Metropolitan Sewerage—Return asked for by the Hon. A. G. Jenkins, showing the total amount expended on the sewerage works, the amount expended in excess of the estimated cost, and the amount expended for private connection which is debited to private individuals.

### BILL—ROADS ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Hon. J. F. Cullen and read a first time.