

was not agreed to they would ask to go to arbitration. The arbitrators would certainly not award them less than £2,000 a mile, for none of our Government lines have been completed for less than that. It may be, that considering the low price that railways have been recently let at, they may be now built and equipped for that sum; but bearing in mind that this Company's contract was £3,600 per mile, and that the contractor has been paid at that rate, I do not think the arbitrators would award anything less than £2,000. At that rate the proposal of the hon. gentleman would give the Company £300,000.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: £450,000.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I am taking it at the lesser sum of £2,000 per mile. Then, to complete the remainder, another £300,000 will be necessary; so that the hon. gentleman wishes us to pay £600,000, while the proposition that we are asked to agree to is that in the event of the Company failing to fulfil the conditions imposed by the resolutions we shall get the very same thing for £520,000.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: That is if the Government exercise the right of foreclosure.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): My hon. friend will see that an Act is to be passed, and this will provide that in the event of the Government having to take possession, under clause 5, the whole line shall become the absolute property of the Government, without any right of redemption. In other words, if ever the Government has to pay £20,000 on these bonds, the whole railway will become the absolute property of the Government, with the liability of the £500,000. I shall be glad to see the Company continue on and never ask the Government to pay, and we know that they never will, if they can, allow the line to fall into the hands of the Government. It seems to me, if the colony progresses, as we hope it will, the Company will be in a position to pay the interest without calling on the Government. Although I hope this will be so, I am not prepared to say, bearing in mind the *personnel* of the directors and the Company, that it will not be in the best interests of the colony if we have to pay the £500,000, and thus get rid of them altogether.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: There is no doubt that if ever stringent regulations were made to lend or borrow these are they, but I do not think the Company will accept them, and what I say is that we have no money to lend to bolster up a private enterprise. The Colonial Secretary says we shall get the line for £520,000. If that be so let us have it, but when the time comes the Government will be afraid of a law suit, which the Company is sure to threaten. I want to see the country clear of this Company altogether, and the only way to do it is to buy the concern right out.

Amendment—put and negatived.

Question—That the resolutions be agreed to—put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 9-55 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Thursday, 12th January, at 8 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 11th January, 1893.

The Claims of William Harris—Officers of Parliament Bill: second and third readings—West Australian Trustee, Executor, and Agency Company, Limited (Private) Bill: in committee—Scab Act, 1891, Amendment Bill: in committee—Transfer of Land Bill: in committee—The Estimates, 1893: further considered in committee—Defence Forces Bill: second reading; in committee: third reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4 p.m.

PRAYERS.

THE CLAIMS OF WILLIAM HARRIS.

MR. DEHAMEL asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands whether he received a letter dated the 16th December, 1892 (referring to a previous letter of the

25th October), written by Messrs. Horgan & Moorhead, in respect to certain claims of William Harris, a pastoral lessee in the Williams District, for compensation for improvements on lands resumed; and, if so, when it was the intention of the Commissioner to answer such letter?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) replied that he had received the letter mentioned, and, as it related to a troublesome subject, it required to be referred to others, necessitating delay before being replied to. An answer to this letter had now been sent.

OFFICERS OF PARLIAMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I have to move the second reading of this Bill, which has for its object the continuance in office of the President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in certain cases. The first section of the Bill deals with the case in which the President of the Council shall continue to hold his office, notwithstanding the coming into operation of Part 3 of the Constitution Act, and in that case he would continue in office until the next meeting of Parliament. It has been found, in other colonies, inconvenient that the offices of Speaker and President respectively should cease with the dissolution of Parliament; and these offices have been continued elsewhere during the interval between the dissolution and a fresh election of Parliament. In two or three of the colonies this provision has been made by a special Act, and in other places by resolution. The Bill provides that the President shall also continue in office, in case of his periodical retirement coming round when Parliament is not sitting, at the end of six years, under the Constitution Act, after the Council becomes an elective body, and that he shall continue to be the President until the next meeting of Parliament, unless he shall not be re-elected a member of the Council. With regard to the Speaker, he would go out of office, in ordinary course, only in the event of Parliament being dissolved; but this Bill provides that he shall continue to be the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly until the first meeting of the new Parlia-

ment. In both the cases of President and Speaker the continuance in office is limited only after the period of re-election; therefore each one would continue in office until the next meeting of Parliament, except in the case of his not being re-elected to the particular House.

Question—put and passed, and Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1.—In certain cases President of Council to hold office till meeting of Parliament:

MR. A. FORREST asked whether, in the event of Parliament being dissolved, say in March, the election taking place in the following May, and the new Parliament meeting in July, the President and the Speaker would receive their pay for the interval that they were not in office, if not re-elected to their respective Houses. He failed to see why they should be paid if not re-elected.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the object of the Bill was to enable the Speaker or the President to do certain things in connection with the issue and return of writs for elections. After a dissolution of Parliament the fresh elections would take place immediately. With reference to the Constitutional provision for the Legislative Council becoming elective, the Parliament would not necessarily be dissolved on the population of the colony reaching 60,000 in number, but the Council itself would be dissolved, and the elections to that Chamber would be over within a month. So that the time during which the President or Speaker would draw the salary, in the event of either not being re-elected a member of the particular House, would be so short as to be immaterial.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it was customary for all new Parliaments to elect their own Speaker, and he supposed this Bill did not interfere with that.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the Bill would certainly not interfere with the election of the President or Speaker by the newly-elected House.

Clause—put and passed.

The remaining clauses, and the title and preamble, were agreed to, and the Bill was reported without amendment.

THIRD READING.

The Standing Orders were suspended, and the Bill was read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

WEST AUSTRALIAN TRUSTEE, EXECUTOR, AND AGENCY COMPANY, LIMITED (PRIVATE) BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

The amendments proposed by the Legislative Council in this Bill (*vide* p. 630, *ante*) were read and agreed to, and the Bill was reported, as amended, and returned to the Legislative Council.

SCAB ACT, 1891, AMENDMENT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

The amendment proposed by the Legislative Council in this Bill was read. (*Vide* p. 631, *ante*.)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the amendment was only the alteration of the name of the "Scab District of Victoria," by substituting the words "Central Scab District." The reason was that there was now no such district as the "Victoria Scab District," as the name had been altered in the Scab Act of 1891 to the "Central Scab District"; and the name in this Bill was therefore made to correspond. He moved that the amendment be agreed to.

MR. A. FORREST said the district was known as the Victoria District, and this House had shown its wisdom, in passing this amending Bill, by calling that district the "Victoria Scab District." He would have preferred this name as a more correct one than the name now proposed.

Amendment agreed to, and the Bill reported, as amended, and returned to the Legislative Council.

TRANSFER OF LAND BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

The amendments proposed by the Legislative Council in this Bill (*vide* p. 631, *ante*) were agreed to without comment, and the Bill was reported, as amended, and returned to the Legislative Council.

THE ESTIMATES, 1893.

IN COMMITTEE.

The consideration of the Estimates for the first six months of 1893 was resumed.

Mining, £3,040:

Item put and passed.

Geological, £775:

MR. R. F. SHOLL noticed that the salary of Mr. B. H. Woodward as Curator of the Geological Museum was increased from £100 to £150 per annum, and that the same gentleman also received various sums for assaying samples of liquors on behalf of the Police, besides receiving fees from private persons for making assays. This gentleman was doing very well out of the Government, and there was no apparent necessity for this increase.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest), replying in the absence of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, said that the Government thought that £100 a year was too little to pay any gentleman of attainments, as Curator of the Geological Museum; and as Mr. B. H. Woodward was a very suitable officer to have charge of this Museum, because he manifested great interest in it, the proposed increase was only reasonable. If allowed a fair chance, Mr. Woodward would in a short time make this Museum a most important and useful institution, and one worthy of the name. He hoped that in the coming year a suitable room would be provided, where geological and other specimens might be suitably arranged; and when the Museum was thus made more accessible to the public, he believed it would be the resort not only of persons resident in the place but of many visitors, who would make good use of it. Hon. members could not expect to have such a Museum, and a suitable Curator in charge of it, without providing the money; and it would be ridiculous to expect a gentleman of attainments to give much of his time to a Museum for £100 a year. If the hon. member thought that a Museum and a Curator were not required, his argument would be intelligible.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked whether Mr. Woodward, in his capacity as Government Analyst, supplied his own materials, or whether the Government supplied them, because the charges for assays were very heavy? Also, was the Curator to give the whole of his time to the Museum, and was the Museum to be open to the public every day in the week, as it ought to be?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) believed the Analyst did not supply his own materials, except to the extent that

he might have some appliances of his own. There was an item of £200 on the Estimates for Museum expenses, fittings, etc., during the half-year, and the Government were going to obtain some additional laboratory appliances, although Mr. Woodward had many of his own. As soon as a proper room could be provided for the Museum, it ought to be open to the public every day in the week.

MR. TRAYLEN said the value of a public museum must depend to a great extent on its being readily accessible to the public; and having secured a good man as Curator, it should be their policy to keep him. The present Curator had received a scientific training which probably excelled that of most other persons in the same line, and it would be greatly to the advantage of the colony to have such a Curator, who was both able and willing to classify the geological specimens that might be expected in a Museum.

MR. R. F. SHOLL still thought the charges made by the Analyst for assays were excessive, when the Government provided the necessary materials.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that in the analyses of liquors referred to there were a great many samples.

MR. SIMPSON said there was a difference between analysis and assay.

MR. A. FORREST said that Mr. Woodward assayed for the general public and did many other things, and was very well paid with the salary he received before this increase.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the Museum was closed on three days a week at present.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said he would endeavor to arrange for the Museum to be open during certain hours in every day, and some person could be in charge during the Curator's absence, though a caretaker could not be expected to give explanations to visitors. Until such an arrangement could be made this increase of the salary would not take effect.

MR. A. FORREST said the room now used as a Museum in the old gaol was a most inconvenient place, and there was a general objection to enter the old prison, with its disused cells and its association with executions in the old time. Personally he felt a great objection to enter the place.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he found that Mr. Woodward also received £125 out of the Medical vote, besides all these fees for assays, and he could not see why any such fees should be charged to the Government, after the materials were supplied. He moved to reduce the salary of the Curator to the same amount as before, but withdrew the motion on the promise that the Museum should be open daily.

Vote—put and passed.

Railways and Tramways: £54,671 13s. 4d.:

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn): In entering upon the estimates for railways and tramways, and as this is the only opportunity I shall have of making a general statement, it may be well for me to give the committee a few figures showing the position of our railways. Last year, when bringing forward the railway estimates for 1892, I stated that they were based on the expectation that the expenditure would be 92·50 per cent. of the earnings; and I may now say the result of the year's working will be an actual expenditure of 93·91 per cent. of the earnings. The estimated earnings for the year 1892 were £91,000, and the actual earnings will be about £93,500; so that the earnings have exceeded the estimate by £2,500. The estimated expenditure for 1892 was £84,300, and the actual expenditure will be £87,800; so that the expenditure has exceeded the estimate by £3,500. As to this excess of expenditure over the estimate, I may say that the whole of the excess except about £200 is accounted for by the Department having had to take over the jetties at Fremantle, Bunbury, and Geraldton. These jetties have cost £3,500 more to work than was expected; and, in connection with this matter, hon. gentlemen will understand that as 1892 was the first year in which the Department worked these jetties, it consequently had no reliable data on which to base its estimate. Leaving this extra expenditure on the jetties out of consideration, it will be seen that the estimate I formed last year as to the probable earnings and requirements for 1892 was a very close anticipation of the actual result, and for this the Department may justly claim credit; the actual revenue earned being 2¼ per cent. more than the estimate, and

the actual expenditure being within about one-quarter per cent. of the estimate. And when I say that the two estimates dealt with a sum of no less than £175,000, I think it will be granted that the estimates could hardly have been more successfully framed, especially when it is borne in mind that the organisation and branches of a working railway are both complicated and numerous, and in our case comprise three distinct lines not at present connected with each other, and employing a staff of about 400 men. I have devoted a great deal of time to the working of our railways, and the figures I am about to quote will, I hope, satisfy hon. members that the present Government are doing all in their power to place the railways of the colony on a substantial commercial basis. In going back five years to 1889, I find the working expenses bear the following relation to the earnings of our railways:—In 1889 the expenses were 118·60 per cent. of the earnings, in 1890 they were 114·47 per cent.; in 1891, which was the first year of working our railways under the new form of Government, the working expenses were 99·22 per cent. of the earnings; in 1892 they have been 93·91 per cent.; and for 1893 I anticipate, by the estimates now before hon. members, that the expenditure will be about 93·80 per cent. of the earnings. In other words, the actual profits made on our railways, over and above the working expenses, since the present Government have been in office, are these:—In 1891, the profits were £1,582; in 1892, about £5,700; and for 1893, I estimate a profit of £6,968, or in round figures, £7,000.

MR. A. FORREST: Does that include interest on capital?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn): No; we have this amount of money to go against the interest payable on capital.

MR. A. FORREST: How much do you write off?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn): That is coming very soon. The figures for 1892 show the actual profits realised, and I hope the hon. member for the Swan and others will be satisfied that our railway system is not working at a loss, as was stated by him a few evenings ago. If, however, it is contended that the purchase of all rolling-stock should be a charge upon the

revenues of the railways, and not upon the capital account, those hon. members who hold that view will not be satisfied; but I take it that all rolling stock, stations, and improvements are not a charge upon the revenues, but are properly a charge to capital account, as they become an available asset, and are the stock-in-trade upon which the revenues have to provide interest. They become an asset for all time, and the purchase of rolling-stock is never made a charge on the receipts by any railway company. Whether a railway starts with a full equipment or not, the purchase of that equipment is never made a charge upon the receipts. Renewals of boilers, repairs in workshops, maintenance of locomotives, upkeep of lines, traffic expenses, and permanent-way expenses, all become a charge upon the revenues, but certainly nothing else. I can assure hon. members that I watch this carefully, and never allow any sum whatever to be charged to capital account which should properly be paid out of revenue. The Government have no desire to mislead the House by any misstatement of figures; and, in quoting the figures I have done, I wish hon. members to understand from me that these are the actual profits up to date, and that they are the legitimate profits over and above the legitimate expenditure. In the working of our railways, I must say the net results do not compare favorably with those of other colonies; but I look forward to a time when the railways of Western Australia will tell a different tale, and when our expenditure will be more like 60 per cent. of the earnings than 90. That time will come when our steepest grade is reduced to 1 in 50. A few evenings ago, one hon. member said he would like to know what the railway earnings were outside of Government work. I did not quite catch the meaning of the hon. member in that remark. Our present earnings show the amounts to be received for work done, and represent money that is or will be paid into the Treasury as railway earnings; but these earnings do not represent a very considerable amount of departmental work, which would have to be paid for if the railways were worked as a private concern, and which does not now enter into our accounts. The carriage of contractors' plant, rails, and materials for new railways is paid for by

the contractors, as a matter of course, and this traffic, while it lasts, is a legitimate freight, and shows in our railway accounts. I will now say a few words about the Estimates of 1893, which I shall speak of in two parts, keeping the South-Western Railway distinct from the others, so that the figures I quote may be available for comparison with those I have given in connection with 1892. The very satisfactory contract which has been entered into for the supply of coal through Messrs. McIlwraith, McEachern, & Co., will result—directly the old supply of coal in stock is worked out—in a direct saving of 60 per cent. to the department on this item, the new price being £1 per ton, as against £1 12s. 6d. paid formerly; and as the average consumption of coal amounts to about 6,000 tons per annum, the lower price will mean a saving to the department of £3,750 per annum as compared with the old price, and the saving will be more as the new railways get into work. The saving will not make itself felt very materially for the first few months of 1893, as we will be still using the 1892 stock; but when that stock is exhausted, the price payable for coal under the new contract will become an important factor in reducing the expenditure in the locomotive branch by £3,000 to £4,000 a year. On the Eastern, Northern, and Bunbury Railways, the estimated earnings for 1893 will be £108,269, and the estimated expenditure £101,300, showing an estimated profit of £6,969 for the year. As I have said before, the percentage of expenditure, I hope, will be reduced to 93·80 of the earnings; and I may here say, with regard to the percentage of expenditure still being high, that it is altogether a question of grades. Hon. members will see in this an object-lesson of very serious moment, for directly we anticipate an increased amount of traffic on our Eastern Railway, we have to discount the receipts by allowing for more than a fair increase of expenditure in the cost of haulage over steep grades. On a line of easy grades, the haulage power of an engine would not be sensibly affected by, say, 30 to 40 per cent.; but on our Eastern grades it means something very serious in extra mileage, which carries with it fuel, labor, wear and tear. I have no hesitation in saying that, as long as our Eastern Railway system

has its present grades, I can offer no hope whatever of any reduction being made in the percentage which the expenditure bears to revenue. Last year I thought it possible we could get the expenditure down to 90 per cent., but after a year's worry, pinching, and starving in the different branches of the railway service, I have found it impossible; and experience teaches me that, as the traffic increases, there is more than a fair proportion of increased expenditure in the locomotive branch, showing that wear and tear, renewals, and repairs crowd hopelessly upon us; and this is entirely the result of our having to deal with grades like 1 in 25. I have a table before me showing the saving that would be effected by a 1-in-50 grade as against a 1-in-25 grade. I thought I should have the pleasure of laying copies of this table before hon. members to-day; but, unfortunately, they are not yet printed, but may be ready before the House rises. This table has been prepared most carefully, and by estimating the increases of traffic for 1895 and '96 upon the basis of the known increases for 1890, '91, and '92, hon. members will understand that the calculated results are by no means flights of imagination, but hard figures, borne out by well ascertained traffic facts. The table will show what a different result would be attained under an easy grade; and had this easy grade been in existence in 1892, the profits on our railways for that year would have been £15,288, instead of £5,700. Coming now to the South-Western Railway, it is expected that this new line will be worked for nine months during 1893; and the expenditure for that period is estimated at £8,900, and the revenue at £7,750, showing an excess of expenditure over revenue estimated at £1,150. If we do no worse than this for the first nine months of working this new railway, the colony will save the present available subsidy, amounting to £1,200, and this, deducted from the amount of £1,150, will make an anticipated loss of nothing for the first nine months. If we compare these figures with the yearly loss that took place on our Eastern Railway for many years, amounting to many thousands of pounds, the House can congratulate itself upon having constructed a line of railway that has such a hopeful commencement. I think, however,

it is highly probable this line may show a credit balance on its first year's working, and not a loss; but this is mere conjecture, as we have no data whatever at present to go upon. Up to this point I have dealt entirely with the railway system, and I will now say a few words on the Roebourne and Cossack tramway. Hon. members will see from the comparative figures I am about to quote, how much the recent drought has affected the traffic in that district. The expenditure for 1881 was £2,384 and the revenue £2,340, showing a loss in that year of only £44. In 1890 the expenditure was £2,026 and the revenue £2,819, showing a profit of £793; in 1891 the expenditure was £2,108 and the revenue £2,603, showing a profit of £495 in that year; but in 1892 the expenditure has been £2,190, and the revenue only £1,112, showing a loss of £1,088. The great falling off in the traffic receipts is primarily due to the deficiency in the wool clip. Fodder has been very dear, and I shall be glad to be shown any means of running this tramway more cheaply at the present time.

MR. A. FORREST: The revenue is going down and the expenditure going up.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn): No, the expenses have been gradually going down since 1891. At present they are 93 per cent. of the revenue; and, instead of this colony losing £14,000 or £15,000 a year by the railways, as it was doing a few years ago, we have now £5,700 of profit on the year's working. I do not anticipate that next year's receipts from this tramway will more than cover the expenditure. For the information of the hon. member who said he did not know why the expenditure is gradually going up —

MR. A. FORREST: I referred to salaries.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn): I have here a table showing the expenditure as compared with the revenue on the Eastern Railway. Taking the traffic department for 1891, without the jetties, the working expenses were 19·60 per cent. of the revenue; in 1892, without the jetties, 19·30 per cent.; and in 1893, without the jetties, we expect it to be about 24 per cent. of the revenue. How does this

compare with the railways in the other colonies? In South Australia, for 1892, the working expenses were 15 per cent. of the revenue; in Tasmania, they were 23 per cent. for 1891 (the latest returns to hand); and in Victoria they were 28·31 per cent. of the revenue for 1891. Here is another aspect of the question which may astonish hon. members: I have taken the trouble to get out the locomotive charges for the Eastern Railway, showing the cost of haulage as compared with the cost in other colonies. In this colony the cost of haulage for 1891 was 55·68 per cent. of the revenue; for 1892, after very considerable worry, it was brought down to 47·54 per cent.; and for 1893 we cannot make it less than 49·66 or 50 per cent. of revenue. In South Australia, for 1892, the locomotive charges were 23·86 per cent. of the revenue; in Tasmania, for 1891, they were 32 per cent.; and in Victoria, for 1891, they were 28·74 per cent. Hon. members will see that, so long as we have to deal with steep grades, there must be an immense expenditure of haulage power; and so long as we have to draw a load two miles in order to earn what we ought to earn in one mile, so long will our locomotive expenses bear the high percentage that they now do. Hon. members should congratulate themselves that the railways of the colony are doing so well as they are doing, and it is satisfactory for me to know that the expenditure, in proportion to the revenue, is gradually being reduced; but I cannot hold out any hope that it will be much reduced until we improve the steep grades on the Eastern Railway.

The House adjourned at 5.25 p.m., and at 7.30 the consideration of the Estimates in committee was resumed.

MR. MOLLOY said that, in reference to the proposed increase of £50 a year in the salary of the Locomotive Superintendent, he wished to bring under the notice of the committee the peculiarities of this gentleman, in order to show that he was not deserving of this increase. It was a fact that the Superintendent had a son who was a notorious drunkard, and that the son was continually being dismissed from the Public Service and as continuously being reinstated. He had been informed that the son had been seen even that morning rolling about the streets of Fremantle in a drunken state; and if the

Superintendent tolerated this kind of conduct in any person employed in his department, the Superintendent was not fitted for his position, and instead of his salary being increased he deserved a severe censure. Another case had come under his (Mr. Molloy's) notice, and concerning which he had made representations to the Commissioner of Railways. A man had been in the employ of the Locomotive branch at Fremantle during seven years, without any complaint being made against him until lately. He (Mr. Molloy) had moved in that House, a short time ago, in regard to certain regulations as to the number of holidays allowed in the year to workmen in the Locomotive branch; and since making that motion—whether the authorities suspected this workman of having supplied him with information in the matter he could not say—this particular man was dismissed from the service. The complaint alleged against the man was that he refused to obey the directions of a new foreman as to the making of smoke-boxes after a certain fashion. The workman had been in the habit of making these smoke-boxes during many years, and his work then had given satisfaction; but the new foreman wanted to have them made in a different manner, and because the workman remonstrated, saying that if he altered the particular smoke-box his work would be thrown away, and because he did not at once agree to do as he was directed, the new foreman reported him. The workman was then called upon to show cause why he should not be required to pay a certain amount for defective work, and he did show cause, explaining that he had no previous instruction to make the things differently. The only answer he got was a letter received some six weeks later, informing him that at the end of the year his services would be dispensed with. This was an unreasonable way of dealing with an old servant, who up to that time had had no complaint made against him. The case being communicated to him (Mr. Molloy) he made representations to the Commissioner, who promised to reconsider the case. Presumably it was reconsidered, but the result had not yet been made known to himself. Under these circumstances, the Superintendent was not deserving of the increase of salary which had been entered

in the Estimates, and if such conduct was continued, the sooner the Superintendent was got rid of the better.

MR. TRAYLEN said that similar complaints, though not this identical one, had been made to him as to the highly arbitrary manner in which this Superintendent acted towards his subordinates. In fact, on one occasion, the complaint said to have been made was that a workman looked at him, and was dismissed in consequence. It required a great stretch for one to believe anything of this kind, but he had heard it asserted in such a manner that he thought there must be some degree of truth in it. At any rate, he believed that after some remarks made by himself in this House on one occasion, that gentleman tried to abstain, and, he hoped, did abstain to that day; but if not, then he could well believe him guilty of the erratic conduct ascribed to him by the hon. member (Mr. Molloy). It did appear to be a downright shame that this Superintendent should be allowed to stand between what appeared to be good men and the Minister at the head of the department. Lest he should be thought to cast any reflection upon the Commissioner of Railways, the hon. member desired to say it would be a long time before the colony would have as good a Commissioner of Railways as the present one, and that the colony owed a debt of gratitude to him for the assiduity and ability with which he performed his duties. The hon. member believed there were numerous cases in which this man (Mr. Mather) had wrongfully, improperly, most unjustly, and unkindly dismissed subordinates of his department.

MR. A. FORREST said it had been pointed out to him that a great deal of the loss and mismanagement in the Railway Department were owing to the head of this department. Some time ago the hon. member received certain information from a gentleman, pointing out grave errors in the Locomotive Department; but he declined then to do more than refer his informant to the Commissioner. Still, he considered that the management of the Locomotive Department was no credit to the colony.

MR. TRAYLEN said he was informed that work had been done so badly in this department that many hundredweights, if not tons, of material had been buried

out of sight, either owing to intemperance or to incompetent work.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that if the Superintendent was so bad as had been represented, he should be removed as soon as possible. However, the charges as yet appeared to be made only on hearsay. Referring to the Estimates generally, he said all the large salaries were being further increased to an alarming extent. It was too bad that gentlemen drawing salaries that were already large should have them increased to the extent shown on these Estimates.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) had listened to the remarks of several hon. members, and it appeared to him somewhat hard on men in the Public Service that they should be picked out, individually, and charges made against them within this Chamber which hon. members would hardly dare to make outside. It was easy for hon. members to make charges upon the simple statements of other persons; but he asked whether it was just or fair, either to individuals or to this House, that simple hearsay statements should be repeated within this Chamber for the sake of damaging, in the eyes of the head of a department, or in the eyes of the public, the reputation of an officer of the Government? The hon. member for the Greenough had made grave charges against the Locomotive Superintendent. While not speaking as a member for Fremantle, or as a member of the Government, in defence of that officer's acts, he considered it was not fair or just that such charges should be made within that House. Why did not the aggrieved workmen confide their grievances to the head of the department?

MR. A. FORREST said they did not do so because they would be dismissed.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said if that was the reason, it was equivalent to saying there was no justice to be obtained by the persons employed in the Public Service of this colony. What had been stated in that Chamber might or might not be true; but it was a curious fact that he had been residing in Fremantle a great many years, knowing the Locomotive Superintendent, and knowing many of the workmen under him, and having frequent opportunities of meeting them, and he

could assure hon. members he had never heard anything of the charges which had been made so readily in that Chamber, more particularly the charge made by the hon. member for the Greenough as to waste material being buried out of sight. If that charge had been made to the head of the department, he had no doubt it would have been investigated.

MR. TRAYLEN asked how.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said it would have been investigated by the same means as in the cases of all other officers of the department. Instead of hon. members repeating these hearsay statements and doing damage thereby to the reputation of any officer, it would be more proper to request the head of the department to investigate the charges, and to bring forth the witnesses on whose authority the statements were made. He believed the Superintendent was generally attentive to his duties, and thoroughly capable in his position. It was a difficult matter with a Superintendent in that position to keep on good terms with all his workmen. Speaking as a member for Fremantle, no charge or grievance had ever been made to him by any of those workmen.

MR. MOLLOY said it was very much like a threat to be told that hon. members who made certain charges in that House dared not make them outside. Speaking for himself, he said that whatever words he had uttered in the House that night he would be ready to utter outside, and he had already made representations to the proper authority. As to the Superintendent's son, whose drunkenness was a matter of notoriety, what was there to justify the son's being so often reinstated? Had the son such wonderful ability or ingenuity that he was indispensable, and that all his evil deeds must be tolerated?

MR. TRAYLEN claimed to be just as guiltless as the hon. member for Perth, for he had made these charges straight to the Minister, and he had on previous occasions mentioned that there were insuperable difficulties in the way of the Minister getting to know the facts. It was not a question as to whether the Minister was willing to investigate, for no one said the Minister was not willing. The only question was whether the investigation

could be carried on in such a way as would ascertain the truth. It would be well if two or three persons were appointed as a Commission, with sufficient power to make inquiries into the conduct of the Locomotive Superintendent at Fremantle. Having been twitted with making statements in the House which were privileged, he said of course he had. What were members sent there for? How many things did not the Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands introduce into that House on hearsay, giving each statement for what it was worth? As to the Superintendent, must he (Mr. Traylen) again say that the Superintendent had gone out on expeditions into the bay under the pretence of seeing something loaded or unloaded? Must he say a number of these things over again? He did not want to repeat them. He resented the proposal to increase the Superintendent's salary. It had been said that a member residing in Fremantle did not hear of these charges, but was that hon. member likely to hear these charges against a gentleman who worked on the hon. member's election committee to put him into the House? Once more, supposing some hon. member did give to the Commissioner of Railways a statement that Mr. Mather had done something or other, and mentioned the name of some workman as the informant, the giving of the name would be enough to cause that man's exclusion from the workshop. The Commission he had suggested would get at the truth much better.

MR. DEHAMEL was glad that one of the proposed increases of salary was objected to. During the present year there had been a tremendous increase in the expense of two departments—the Lands and Surveys, and the Railways and Public Works.

THE CHAIRMAN reminded the hon. member that the Lands and Surveys Estimates had been passed.

MR. DEHAMEL said he was quite entitled to refer to the general question. For the Lands and Surveys and for the Railways and Works there had been an increase of 132 men during the past twelve months. For Lands and Surveys the increase was 25, and for Railways and Works 107. The total increase of servants in the whole of the departments during the past eleven months had been

no less than 235; and the total increase of cost in all the departments during the last eleven months was £33,000 as compared with the previous twelve months. The Government were running up the cost of these employes to a most frightful extent. The total amount payable only to employes, calculated up to this year, was £236,000—a tremendously heavy sum to pay—and when they considered that £33,000 of that amount was for increases in the present year as compared with the past, it was quite time to put a stop to such a tremendous increase in the payment of permanent or temporary employes in the Government service. He would vote against any increase in the salary of Mr. Mather, as he would also vote against any increase of salaries in other departments, because when he found 107 extra employes—

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): On the harbor works, perhaps.

MR. DEHAMEL: No, no; the increase was in the number of professional employes—in the Railways 3, in the Works 78, total 81; and in the clerical branch the increases were—Railways 2, Works 24. These brought the total increases up to 107 for the past eleven months.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) asked if the hon. member called mechanics professional men?

MR. DEHAMEL said the amount paid to employes had risen from £4,500 to over £17,000 during the past eleven months. If any department ever required the careful criticism of the House it was the Railways and Works Department, and he hoped hon. members would join with him in striking off every single item that had been allowed to grow up in such a thoroughly improper manner in the Railways and Works Department. He would vote against every increase in any salary.

MR. SOLOMON said that, in reference to the dismissal of a workman from the Locomotive Department at Fremantle, a workman had come to him—presumably the same—and he told the workman plainly to send his complaint to the head of his department. He believed the workman did so, but he (the hon. member) heard nothing further of the matter. It was awkward for anyone to interfere with the discretion of officers holding responsible positions. He had not heard anything to discredit the Locomo-

tive Superintendent; on the contrary, very many of the employés gave him a very good name, though of course there must be dissatisfied individuals where 247 men were employed. If any injustice had been done, it ought to be rectified. Mr. Mather was justly entitled to an increase. There had been changes lately in the working of the Fremantle jetty, as shown by a notice posted up regarding the collection of dues from vessels using the jetty; and, presuming that the notice was issued by the authority of the Commissioner of Railways, it abolished to a certain extent a department in Fremantle, and by doing so the Government were incurring a risk of not being paid the dues in some cases.

MR. SIMPSON said that, after much effort on the part of the House, and after much delay, certain returns had been obtained, at the tail-end of the session, at the last moment, showing the number of persons employed in the Railways and Works Department. Looking at those particulars as commercial men, and at the proportion of working expenses in connection with the capital invested, no more astounding return was ever laid before a Legislature in Australia. The particulars of that return had been either forced from the Ministry or dragged out of the department; and, though he was no croaker, they distinctly pointed to disaster in the future, unless the House checked them. The return showed a system of unlimited advances to anybody; but as to whether a profit would accrue to the country for the expenditure on the particular individual, that must be a mere detail. Some man put in a claim for a rise, and he got it; but as to whether he was doing good service for the money, no one could ascertain from the published return or from the Estimates. It was either neglectful or intentional that this return was not furnished earlier; and it pointed to a system which would establish disaster, and place the Civil Service of the colony in charge of the revenue of the colony. Advances were granted without any regard to the service that the particular servant might perform. While not wishing to refer to an individual case, he might refer to one instance which perhaps might point a moral or adorn a tale. There appeared on the Estimates an increase of salary for the Accountant in the

Works Department, and the gentleman who had been lately appointed to fill this position was formerly the private secretary of a Minister who had succeeded, with the aid of the Press, in girdling the continent in 57 days. The result was that this private secretary stepped into this permanent position in the Works Department; and the hon. member said he had been complained to by men who had been in the service for years, who went into it with the idea that honesty of purpose, and integrity, and strict attention to duties would secure their advance step by step to the highest position in the Department—men who, when they entered the Service, purposed to grow grey in it and to give satisfaction to the community—men who purposed to establish the Civil Service before the world as consisting of accomplished, able, and upright servants of the public. These men had informed him that, after years of struggle to secure higher positions, some Mr. Nobody from Nowhere stepped in above them, because he could tell a good yarn and was a very pleasant companion. If this rule was to operate in the public departments, there would be no hope of advancement for the honest, able, upright servant. He must say that the sooner they established the Civil Service on a cleaner and sounder basis the better for the taxpayers. If a person was to claim an appointment in the Service, and be preferred over the heads of older men, merely because he was a boon companion or a clever Press writer, the result of such a preference must be most disheartening to those who were already in the Service. Perhaps it would be a wiser plan to qualify for promotion by cultivating a nice judgment in whiskies, or by collecting racy yarns; but, looking at the question practically, there ought to be in the Civil Service reward for merit, and every man in the Service should have an opportunity of promotion from the lowest to the highest grade, as the reward of hard work and a careful performance of the duties allotted to him. As to the Locomotive Superintendent, that officer had done very well in the country and could do without an increase of salary. He would like to see the question of these increases decided by the House, one way or the other.

MR. MONGER moved that the salary of the Railway Accountant be reduced by £12 10s. for the half-year. He said this would leave the salary at the same amount as previously.

MR. QUINLAN said he knew this officer to be a worthy one, and he hoped the increase would not be disallowed.

MR. LOTON said it was difficult for hon. members to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to whether an increase of salary to any particular officer was desirable. Looking at the return which showed the number of Government servants, and totting up the total of salaries paid, hon. members must be astonished to find that £27,000 was to be paid this year to professional men in the Works Department. It must be admitted that a lot of preparatory work had been done in readiness for the letting of contracts, but the total amount of salaries required for this kind of work was still very large. He did not say that any of these men were overpaid, but there were too many of them, and the work should be done with a less number. He had no hesitation in saying there was a sufficient staff of officers, clerks, and others, to do the whole clerical work of the colony; and no mercantile establishment could carry on for a year with such a monstrous system as this. In the item of £8,172 10s. for wages of clerks, guards, porters, &c., for the Eastern Railway, with overtime and extra labor during six months, there was a proposed increase of £4,500; and as this railway had been open for some years, and presumably was sufficiently supplied with officers and clerks, he could not see why there should be this large increase either in wages or in extra labor and overtime. The items for Railways and Works were put before hon. members in a most unsatisfactory manner, there being nothing in the Estimates to show how many men were employed, beyond a lump sum put down for wages, whereas for the Police Department the number of men was shown as well as the total amount of salaries. The receipts from railways were said to somewhat exceed the expenditure; but he very much doubted whether this was so in reality, seeing that the House was asked from time to time to vote a sum out of loan for increasing the rolling stock, and surely the railway could not be paying

working expenses unless the rolling stock and permanent way were maintained out of the railway revenue. If £20,000 were invested in a mercantile business or in a Northern pastoral property, and the pastoralist lost half his live stock during the last year, how could that property be said to pay the working expenses if the manager had to apply to the owner for an extra £10,000, and ask him to capitalise it? Would not that property be working at a loss? Nearly all the plans and surveys for the authorised new railways had been practically completed, and hon. members could not have expected that so large a number of professional men would still be required, but rather that they would be largely dispensed with. Yet the whole of the staff was being kept on. They might all be good men, and now was the time to select the best of them, casting away the weeds after reasonable notice.

MR. DEHAMEL said that, without looking at names or persons, he found everything in the Public Works Department mismanaged, everything overgrown salaries running up, and public moneys wasted through the mismanagement of the department. It was time that the House should emphasise its opinion of this and other departments of the Public Service, at every advance. As to the salary of the Railway Accountant, he objected to it as one instance of the general extravagance. Whilst there was this large, overwhelming, and useless number of men employed, he would not consent to the increase of a single salary. He hoped every increase would be challenged, and he would vote against every one.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said he had waited till hon. members had blown off steam. The House, as a rule, did not take much notice of what the member for Albany said. That hon. member spoke so wildly, and used language in that House which he did not use elsewhere. The Railway Accountant whose salary had been under discussion was Mr. Carl Fuchs, who had been in the service about ten years, and was one of the best officers in the colony. The increase now asked for was well deserved, and if some hon. members were trying to make a scapegoat of Mr. Fuchs, on the plea that the cost of the whole service had been increased, they

would be doing an act of serious injustice. In these increases of the salaries of permanent officers, hon. members should consider the services of the particular officer, and not object to an increase of his salary because there had been a large increase in the number of temporary officers. There was hardly a single increase in the permanent staff of the Railway Department. In the return of the number of servants employed by the Government, every man engaged on the harbor works, down to the laborers, was included, and the total number seemed to be large, because no such return had been previously presented to the House. But, as to the remarks of the hon. member for Geraldton, there had been no such thing as "dragging" this return out of the Government. The return was prepared just before the House closed last year, and there was no reason for keeping it back. As to the number of men employed, no ordinary member of the House was competent to say whether the staff was too great or too small; but as to the Works and Railways Department, he challenged scrutiny, and invited any hon. member to point out a single servant who was not absolutely required. He could say this, with the greatest possible confidence. If hon. members thought the departments were not properly managed, they should turn the Government out of office. This would be the right course, and, instead of cavilling at the Estimates, hon. members should cavil at the administration. In that case, the sooner they changed sides in that House the better it would be. [MR. DEHAMEL: Hear, hear.] To meddle with details, into which hon. members could have no insight, was highly improper. Some years ago, when he was on the other side of the House, he did not think it well to criticise the details of the Estimates of the Government, but he did all he could to get the Government out of office, because he disagreed with their general administration. The hon. member for the Swan (Mr. Loton) said, rather wildly, because he started on a wrong basis, that having a properly equipped railway, all subsequent charges should be charged to revenue. As a matter of fact, the Government never had a properly equipped railway in this colony. The Eastern Railway up to the present moment had not been equipped; there-

fore the rolling stock had to be obtained from time to time, and had to be charged to capital account. In saying that the hon. member talked wildly, he meant that the hon. member started on a wrong basis, by assuming that the Eastern Railway was formerly equipped, whereas it never was properly equipped. In answer to the general remarks about the railways, he had quoted figures that afternoon showing that the present Government were working the railways at a considerable profit, whereas before they came into power the railways were being worked at a considerable loss. He hoped hon. members would not oppose the increase of salary to the Railway Accountant, because it would be doing an injustice to that officer. For himself, he could say that, having been at the head of the department two years before proposing any increase of salaries, he had waited until he knew the officers and their ability to do the work before recommending any increases.

MR. A. FORREST said he regarded the Railway Department as the most extravagantly conducted department in the colony. £300 a year was a fairly good salary for an accountant, as the hours in a Government office were short and the work was not severe. In a business house, £300 a year was considered a good salary for an accountant. That was the salary he paid to the accountant in his business office. These continual increases were characteristic of the Public Service.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said the difference in the position of an accountant in the Railway Department, and one in a business office, was that the Railway Accountant had some hundreds of thousands of pounds passing through his hands in a year, whereas an accountant in a commercial office had not the same responsibility as to amount of funds, and the difference was certainly worth the small increase which was here proposed.

MR. DEHAMEL said there was an increased expenditure of £33,000 in the Railway and Public Works Department; and in objecting to increases of salary he did not regard Mr. Fuchs, but he regarded the money as being tossed away in a manner which called for the strongest expostulation.

THE CHAIRMAN called the hon. member to order, saying he had already spoken on this motion, and his remarks were simply a repetition.

MR. DEHAMEL claimed that he had a right to speak again on the Estimates, and was quite in order.

THE CHAIRMAN said that if the hon. member was to get up a dozen times in an evening, and go over the same ground, the committee might be kept sitting there the next three months. It was time to remind the hon. member that he must confine his remarks to the item under discussion. It was also usual, when the Chairman of Committees rose, for the hon. member who had been speaking to resume his seat.

MR. DEHAMEL said he would remind the hon. the Chairman that he (Mr. DeHamel) had sat in this House longer than the Chairman, and that any hon. member was entitled to jump up and reply to any remarks that might be made; therefore he was not going to be set down by the Chairman or anybody else, when he had a duty to perform. If the Chairman was dissatisfied, he (Mr. DeHamel) would appeal to the Speaker himself as to whether he was in order or not.

THE CHAIRMAN then ruled that the hon. member was out of order, his remarks being a needless repetition.

MR. SIMPSON said he had listened to one of the most remarkable speeches that ever fell from a Chairman of Committees in any part of Australia. The Chairman said the hon. member (Mr. DeHamel) had spoken a dozen times.

THE CHAIRMAN said his words were, that it would not be conducive to the progress of business if an hon. member spoke a dozen times in an evening.

MR. SIMPSON said the hon. member (Mr. DeHamel) was criticising the public expenditure, and he agreed with that hon. member in saying it was an absolutely gross expenditure of public money.

THE CHAIRMAN said he must call the hon. member to order also, and must ask him to confine his remarks to item 3, the salary of the Railway Accountant. The hon. member had already spoken on the Railway Vote generally.

MR. SIMPSON said there had been an increase in the amount of the vote, and this item was indicative of the general procedure of the department. There was

a gross increase of 25 per cent. in the expenditure, although not an additional mile of railway had been opened.

MR. DEHAMEL said the reason why the House went into committee on the Estimates was to enable members to speak freely and openly, and not be bound to speak only once; therefore it was clear that the Chairman was entirely out of order in objecting to any member speaking on the public expenditure. The main reason why hon. members were there was to superintend and curtail the expenditure, and to prevent the waste of public moneys in the Estimates; and —

THE CHAIRMAN said he had not stated or implied that hon. members were to speak only once on the Estimates.

MR. DE HAMEL said he did not rise to waste the time of the committee, but to perform his duty to his constituents and to the colony. It was his intention to exercise the privilege which he was sent to that House to exercise. The Chairman himself had been wasting the time of the committee.

THE CHAIRMAN said the hon. member must treat the Chair courteously, and not make such remarks with regard to the Chair.

MR. DEHAMEL said the Chairman was also bound to treat hon. members with the same respect as they had to show to him. For himself, he would always treat the Chairman of Committees in the same way as he would treat the Speaker of the House; but when he found the Chairman of Committees jumping up on every possible occasion, and —

THE CHAIRMAN directed the hon. member to discontinue his present line of remark. It was gross disrespect to the Chair to say he had pursued such a course.

MR. DEHAMEL said the best thing he could do was to move the adjournment of the sitting, if they were to play "Tommy-Dod" in that way.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) called the attention of the hon. member to Rule 142 of the Standing Orders. If the hon. member was dissatisfied with the Chairman's ruling in committee, the point of order could be referred to the Speaker of the House.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) hoped the hon. member (Mr. DeHamel)

would now proceed with the business, and deal with the particular item, without these references to the general expenditure.

MR. DEHAMEL said he had made a note of certain remarks made by the Commissioner of Railways, and he intended to refer to those remarks. As he was saying when the Chairman first interrupted him—

THE CHAIRMAN directed the hon. member to resume his seat. He put the question—That the salary of the Railway Accountant be reduced by £12 10s.

MR. TRAYLEN said that if the committee refused every increase at this stage of the Estimates, after having granted some increases of salary in other departments, they would be doing that which could hardly be defended.

MR. DEHAMEL said the Commissioner of Railways had named Mr. Fuchs; but the committee were not dealing with the name of any public servant, but dealing with the office of Railway Accountant. He denied that the committee would be making a scapegoat of this officer by refusing the increase; but when hon. members found there was an increase of 33 per cent. in the Railways and Public Works Department, they intended to set their faces against any such increases, and, without making a scapegoat of the Railway Accountant, they objected to the increase in his case because he was the first in the list. The Commissioner had also said it was highly improper for hon. members to enter into the details of such matters; but, on the contrary, he (Mr. DeHamel) said that was the very reason why hon. members were there. In stating that the railways had produced a profit, the Commissioner forgot to say that the Government railways had carried a large amount of contractors' plant and materials required in the construction of other railways in progress; and it was owing to this increase from a floating and superficial traffic that this profit had been made. When this temporary traffic ceased, the railways would be working at a loss.

MR. LEFROY felt that it was difficult for any hon. member to form a thorough and independent opinion on a subject of this kind, unless acquainted with all the intricacies of the department; but he must take exception to the remarks of the hon. member for the Swan being de-

scribed by the Commissioner as "wild." The expenditure of the Railway Department did appear large, and one reason was that men in a Government department did not perform the same amount of work as they would have to do in private employment, and very likely a less number of officers could do the same amount of work as was done now, if they worked a little longer each day. To cleanse this Augean stable would be such a Herculean task that he did not think hon. members on that side of the House would be equal to it. Deserving servants should be paid well, and he could not conscientiously vote against the increase in this case when told officially that the Accountant was a deserving officer.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said this officer got an increase of £50 in 1890, and £300 a year was a good salary for an accountant in his position.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Government did not take any exception to the criticisms of hon. members. He quite admitted that it was the duty of hon. members to criticise the Estimates closely, and if they thought the Government were paying too much, they had a perfect right to speak and vote against the expenditure. He had said last year that he often wondered that the salaries were not very much higher, because, so far as his experience as Treasurer had gone, he had been very much worried every year to increase the salaries; and he thought it said something for the moderation of the present heads of departments that the salaries had not been made higher. No doubt, during the last two years, the salaries of officers had increased, and he took the reason to be that the colony had progressed and the people were living differently now as compared with the old state of things. Expenses of living were now greater; and he remembered that a few years ago a salary of £500 or £600 a year was considered a capital salary, and persons receiving such a sum were expected to reside in a good house and give dinner parties. Now a man with £600 a year had to live quietly, and such a thing as entertaining his friends was not heard of. So hon. members could well understand that the scale of living must have changed. Persons who received such salaries formerly were able to keep horses and have good

houses, which they could not do now out of such salaries. As to the Railway Accountant, he did not think this officer was highly paid, for the Accountant held a responsible position, having to receive and bank the whole of the revenue from the railways. Hon. members might possibly find in the Estimates some salaries that were larger than they might care to vote; but this was not such a case, and he was informed by the Under Treasurer that this was a really good officer. The small increases which were contained in these Estimates did not amount to much in the bulk; and it was not in such increases that the great expenditure took place. The big figures would be found in such items as "Wages for clerks, guards, porters, &c., £8,173;" "Wages for drivers, stokers, mechanics, &c., £14,500;" "Materials for repairs, fuel, stores, &c., £9,000;" and again, "Wages for gangers and platelayers, £5,750." It was in such items that the large sums were spent, and not in the small items. It seemed to him almost like a farce to knock off £25 a year from this officer and £25 from the salary of some other officer, and then for hon. members to go home thinking they had done a good work and had reduced the Estimates. If all these small amounts were added together, they would not exceed £2,000 or £3,000. His own opinion was that to make these small reductions was not the way to save money. He did not believe in the old maxim, "Take care of the pennies, and the pounds will take care of themselves." His idea of economy was to look after the pounds; the loss of pennies would not ruin a man or a Government. He asked hon. members not to cut down these small items, because they had very little effect on the general estimates.

MR. MONGER's amendment negatived, and the item (Salary of Railway Accountant) put and passed.

Item.—"Salary of Paymaster, £112 10s.:

MR. MONGER moved to reduce the item, "Paymaster, £112 10s.," to the same amount as before, namely, £100 for six months.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said some reason should be given for the amendment. This gentleman had been 5½ years

in the service since he had any increase of salary, and some years ago he occupied the position of chief clerk to the Traffic Manager.

MR. MONGER's amendment negatived, and the item put and passed.

MR. MONGER moved to reduce the salary of the "Railway Storekeeper, £137 10s.," to the same amount as before, namely, £125 for six months.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said this officer had been nearly four years without any increase in his salary; he had been 15 years in the service; and the whole of the stores, plant, and indents passed through his hands, the value of the indents last year being about £200,000.

MR. LOTON said the remarks and excuses of the Commissioner applied, apparently, to all the increases of salaries. Every officer was a very good officer, and so on. But instead of raising the salaries for these several duties, the good officers should be promoted to some positions which would justify higher salaries, as would be done in a mercantile office. It was true that all the advances put together did not amount to much, but the objection was that these extra amounts were to be paid for the same duties, and not for extra work.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said his objection was not so much to the amount of these increases as to the fact that hundreds of other officers, equally if not more deserving, were neglected.

MR. SIMPSON entirely agreed with the objections, and said no commercial employer would give more than £200 a year for the services performed in these cases. The "Government stroke" had become a proverb. Men in these positions did little work and expected large pay, and he believed that Parliament was not doing justice to the taxpayers by paying these large salaries. The kindly nature and genial good-temper of the Commissioner—unless one went to him to ask something for an intelligent Northern constituency—was the cause of his giving way to applications for these increases; and they were getting beyond the Commissioner's control. The increases were little put-up jobs. A division should be taken on this as a test case.

MR. PIESSE said there was too much time wasted over these small items, and

many members who objected to them were not acquainted with the working of the department. A more decisive way would be to challenge the over-manning of the Railway Department. Hon. members should place more reliance on the Ministerial heads of the departments.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said there was nothing to prevent the hon. member from going home if he desired to get away.

MR. SIMPSON said the hon. member's attitude reminded him of a conjurer at a circus who swallowed a sword, and the spectators could not tell how much sword was swallowed. He did not know how many increases the hon. member was prepared to swallow, but he did object to the hon. member's censorious remarks.

MR. DEHAMEL had listened with amusement to the wonderful speech of the hon. member for the Williams. If Ministers were to be allowed to make such increases as they thought proper, what were the hon. members there for?

MR. CLARKSON was surprised at the amount which the Railway Estimates had risen to in the last twelve months; but hon. members should place sufficient confidence in the Commissioner to believe that he would not recommend any increase of salary unless it were well deserved. He would like to see the number of employes reduced, and would not object to pay good salaries to good servants.

MR. MONGER's amendment put and passed, and the item reduced accordingly.

Eastern Railway and Fremantle Jetties,
£42,067 10s:

MR. LOTON, referring to the item "Wages of clerks, guards, porters, etc.; overtime and extra labor, £8,172 10s.," said this was a large item, and the proposed increase for six months was over £1,000, and he supposed it was for work in connection with the Fremantle jetties. He moved that the amount be reduced by £1,172 10s., leaving it at £7,000.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said the estimate showed an increase of £4,494 for the whole of the current twelve months, because the actual cost of working the jetties last year was £2,800 over the estimate, the reason for that difference being that the department was working the jetties under its control for the first time in that year, and had at first no data on which to base its estimate.

But, leaving out the jetties, the other expenditure was within the estimate. The balance of the increase required in the present estimate was calculated on the basis of having to earn £11,269 of additional anticipated revenue. This item was controlled entirely by the amount of traffic and the amount of labor which would have to be put on for handling it at the jetties. If the anticipated extra traffic was not received and dealt with, this expenditure would not be incurred. Hon. members might now perceive how unjust were some of their remarks on the increased expenditure anticipated in the Estimates. The percentage of expenses to revenue in working the jetties was as low as in Tasmania, and 5 per cent. lower than in Victoria. As to the wages of railway clerks, guards, and porters, one of his first acts on taking charge of the department was to make regulations, under the power of an Act of Council, as to the pay of the various grades of the workmen. He ventured to say that no other department had a fixed ratio in the pay of its servants. There was no such thing as favoritism in the Railway Department, in this respect, because the regulations provided that a person might join as a probationer, and each grade had its fixed rate of pay, and that rate was not exceeded. Therefore there was no such thing as over-paying, the amount being fixed by the regulations. If the amount of this item for wages were reduced, as proposed by the hon. member, the department would be crippled in dealing with the increased amount of traffic which it anticipated.

MR. TRAYLEN recognised the reasonableness of the Commissioner's explanation, and would support the item. The Premier had suggested that if hon. members wanted to make reductions they should attack the large items.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said his remark was that the large items caused the large increase in the Estimates, and not the small additions to a few salaries. He did not think the hon. member for the Swan could be in earnest in proposing the reduction of this item, because the railway service had to be carried on, and if the money required was not voted, the service would still have to be carried on without the vote, as the railway service could not be allowed to

stop as soon as the money required to pay the necessary men's wages was exhausted. Railway trains must not stop running because the House had not voted sufficient money for wages.

MR. A. FORREST asked if the Government expected that this increased amount would be required in the half-year for increased traffic. He could not see how £2,500 more could be required for labor in the half-year.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said there would be the Yilgarn traffic.

MR. A. FORREST said there was to be a saving of 50 per cent. in the cost of fuel, and yet the amount for fuel in the estimates was increased. He did not see where the increased traffic was to come from, except in conveying material required for the Yilgarn Railway construction. The timber in the Darling Range was failing, and the timber traffic over the railway must decrease. He agreed that this item should be cut down to the amount of the previous six months. No other department was paying such large salaries as were paid in the Public Works Department. Some ordinary men were paid £2 a day.

MR. DEHAMEL would support the reduction.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said he had estimated the Eastern Railway revenue for last year at £91,000, and he based the estimate of expenditure upon that anticipated revenue. Some hon. members then said his estimate of revenue was extravagant, and not likely to be realised; yet that estimate of revenue had been exceeded in fact by £3,500.

MR. SIMPSON said the extra expenses were also £3,500.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said that hon. members had before them the anticipated revenue for 1893, and he had exercised the greatest possible care in framing this estimate. He did not do anything haphazard, and if he had not fulfilled the promise of last year's estimate, the committee might now take exception to his estimate of the revenue for the next six months; but, as last year's estimate was more than realised, hon. members should be good enough to accept his estimate for 1893. If this item was to be reduced, it would mean a

less train service than had been provided under this estimate. If the revenue did not reach the amount anticipated, the whole expenditure would not have to be incurred.

MR. LOTON said that if the item were reduced as he proposed, the amount voted would be about the same as was expended in the latter half of last year. The tendency of the traffic now was to decrease rather than increase, because importers had not got the money to pay for larger quantities of goods.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) hoped the hon. member's amendment would not be supported. The Estimates had been prepared carefully by the Traffic Manager, and it was not reasonable that hon. members should cut them down, as hon. members could not have as much information on the subject as the officer who prepared them. The General Traffic Manager's ambition was to make the railways pay, and he was trying his best to do so. The Commissioner had accepted the Traffic Manager's estimate of revenue and expenditure, after discussing it with him, and a large increase of railway revenue was expected in the coming year, namely, nearly £57,000 in the first six months, which would be an increase of nearly £15,000; and as there must be a percentage of expenditure for earning an increased revenue, this increase had to be provided in the vote. If the estimate were reduced by the House, he did not know that the Government would be justified in exceeding the amount provided in the vote, but in that case the train service would have to be curtailed. The people of the colony would of course blame the Government again. Unless the Estimates of the Government were accepted by the House, the Ministers ought not to remain in office, for when a Government could not carry its Estimates it had lost the confidence of the House. When the administration of a great department was attacked, the case was more serious than an objection to small increases of salary. He appealed to hon. members to consider whether it was worth while to interfere with this vote. If the House did interfere with it, he would accept it as a deliberate opinion, and the department would have to conform to it; and if the train service could not be carried on as was intended, the Govern-

ment would have something to say when Parliament met again.

MR. DEHAMEL said the objection was not to the vote but to the large increase, and hon. members did not desire to reduce the train service.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the hon. member did not know anything about it.

MR. DEHAMEL said the Government asked hon. members to pass the vote, and told them that hon. members did not know anything about it. The Government did not supply information by which hon. members might judge, and then twitted them with not knowing anything about it.

MR. LOTON asked what was the amount reserved for extra labor and overtime?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said he had not the details at hand, but would obtain them for the hon. member if desired.

MR. TRAYLEN said this item was for "Contingencies," and he apprehended that the money would not be spent unless there was the expected extra traffic on which to spend it. He supported the estimate.

MR. SOLOMON said this discussion was brought about by the Premier's previous remark as to large items in the Estimates absorbing the money.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he meant the £230,000, and not items like this.

MR. LOTON's amendment negatived, and the item put and passed.

MR. MOLLOY proposed that the salary of the Locomotive Superintendent, £225 for six months, be reduced to £200, the same as before.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said the hon. member, in his previous remarks on this officer, directed attention to the conduct of the officer's son. A great many sons were not a credit to their fathers, and in this case it was not a kind thing to refer to an infirmity of mind which this officer might be laboring under at times, through the conduct of this son. It was commonly known that the son was intemperate, and it had been his (the Commissioner's) painful duty on one occasion to dismiss him from the service. But the father being at the head of the Locomotive workshops,

and having power to put on temporary hands, could not be blamed if, upon the pleas of the mother and the son, with promises of amendment, he employed the son again as a temporary hand. He (the Commissioner) did not know whether the son was so employed at that time. If any man, after being a drunkard, could show him a clean certificate for twelve months, he would be inclined to assist that man; and he would do the same in the case of young Mather. If, however, the son was employed in the Department at that time, the son was not there with official approbation. While he would severely reprimand the father for engaging the son again, he would feel that it was only human and fatherly to do so under the circumstances. As to the proposed increase of £50 a year in the salary of the Locomotive Superintendent, the salaries paid to men in similar positions in other colonies were—in New South Wales, £1,200 per annum; in Victoria, £1,200; and in South Australia, £900, as compared with £400 paid in the past in this colony. Whether Mr. Mather was to be retained as Superintendent or not, it was highly desirable that a reasonably sufficient salary should be paid for a competent Superintendent. The salary had been stationary for a considerable number of years, and the increase of £50 a year now asked for was a small advance. The services rendered to the colony by Mr. Mather entitled him to this increase. Reference had been made to a locomotive foreman, but no officer was at present drawing the pay for that position, although there was a new item on the Estimates for a salary of £350 per annum for a foreman whom it was proposed to engage as a competent assistant to the Superintendent, whose increase of duties rendered this additional appointment necessary. If the foreman was to be paid £350 a year, it was desirable to make a sufficient difference by raising the Superintendent's salary to £450. He explained the circumstances under which an insubordinate workman, referred to by Mr. Molloy, had been discharged, and he (the Commissioner) found he must either concur in that dismissal or set aside Mr. Mather's authority, which he was not prepared to do. As to the charge of material being wasted and buried out of sight, such a waste and hiding away could

not have taken place under the present system of checking and accounting for the material received into use.

MR. TRAYLEN said he understood the waste took place some years ago.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said that, surrounded as the Superintendent was by hundreds of critical eyes, such a waste of material could not have occurred under Mr. Mather's management without the fact being reported in some form. He regretted to say that the Superintendent had great infirmity of temper. The fact was that he had severe attacks of rheumatism, and these might at times lead him astray in his judgment; but Mr. Mather's kindness of heart often led him to reconsider his decisions, and to remedy any rash judgment he might have made. The increase of salary now proposed was a small one, and had been repeatedly asked for by this officer, as being due after his long period of service. The Locomotive Superintendent was, comparatively, very much underpaid in this colony.

MR. DEHAMEL said that as the foreman was going to do a lot of the Superintendent's work, there could be no necessity for increasing Mr. Mather's salary. It was now proposed to pay £800 to two men for doing work which had been done last year by one man for £400. It would be better to appoint one first-rate man to perform the duties of these two offices, and get rid of Mr. Mather on account of his infirmities.

MR. TRAYLEN said the report as to waste material being buried after being spoilt by incompetent workmen related to some years back, before any Storekeeper was appointed, and occurred at times when it was well known that Mr. Mather used frequently to be at the public-house instead of attending to his duty. He agreed that if a drunken workman could show a clean sheet for six or twelve months, that workman should be given another chance; but it was another matter for the House to increase the Superintendent's salary, knowing that it was hardly deserved. The Superintendent had sent out a carriage after its repair, and the carriage was found not to have been bolted to the wheels, an accident being narrowly averted. The Superintendent's infirmity of temper was

not improved by the drink he took, and the increase of salary was not deserved.

MR. MOLLOY's amendment negatived, and the item put and passed.

MR. MOLLOY, referring to the item "Locomotive Foreman, £175," moved that this item be struck out. There being a foreman employed at present, another one at a large salary could not be wanted; and if the present foreman was not competent, Mr. Mather was to blame for keeping him.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said this appointment was recommended for the purpose of reorganising the department, as recommended by the Engineer-in-Chief. There was enough for Mr. Mather to attend to, without acting as the working foreman, and a better organisation would result in a closer control of the large expenditure in this department. The efficient working of the locomotive workshops would depend on the officer whom it was proposed to appoint, and in this matter he asked the House to support the Government.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said it must appear strange that only two persons were employed in the supervision of the workmen in this large establishment. In a private workshop of this magnitude there would surely be several foremen to supervise the more detailed sections of the work. A large increase had been made in the amount of machinery employed, and as an enlargement or a transfer of the site was contemplated, it was truly wise to have more supervision.

MR. A. FORREST would vote against this appointment.

MR. DEHAMEL was in favor of having the site changed, and the workshops increased, but he objected to appoint a foreman for assisting a superintendent because the latter happened to be afflicted with rheumatism.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) could not understand the views of some hon. members. Apparently, hon. members would vote for an expenditure on new workshops, but there had been complaints for a long time that these workshops were costing too much, and that closer supervision was necessary. Now that the Government proposed to provide closer super-

vision, in order to see that there was no waste of material or of money, some hon. members objected to provide the necessary salary for a competent and experienced foreman. The Engineer-in-Chief was of opinion that closer supervision of the working details was necessary; and the Government, in adopting his recommendation, desired to obtain better results than in the past. The Public Service would be injured if this item were struck out.

MR. LOTON said a practical working foreman was wanted, and he asked if there was one now in addition to the Superintendent. Either the salary of the assistant would be too high, or that of the Superintendent was too low. In the expenditure of about £50,000 a year and the supervision of about 250 workmen, there should be a practical working foreman; and, if there was no such foreman at present, there ought to be one, and he should not be an ornamental one. For such a man £300 a year would be sufficient.

MR. MOLLOY said there was a foreman employed now, and a second foreman could not be required.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said the House was asked to take the statement of the hon. member (Mr. Molloy), in opposition to his own official statement that there was no person occupying the position or drawing the salary of a Foreman at present. He was advised by Mr. Allison Smith, who lately reported on the workshops, and by the Engineer-in-Chief, that a man capable of acting as Foreman could hardly be got for £350 a year. If the House struck out this item, hon. members would be doing a serious injury to the locomotive service of the colony.

MR. QUINLAN said the salary set down for a Foreman, in comparison with the amounts paid to stationmasters, was high, and he moved, as an amendment, that it be reduced by £50 a year.

MR. R. F. SHOLL was in favor of dispensing with the present Superintendent, and getting someone capable of doing all that was required. It would be well for the committee to pass this item, as it was a wise thing to have proper supervision.

MR. TRAYLEN said that if the Superintendent gave his whole time to the

duties, the question of appointing a foreman could be considered in the next session.

MR. SIMPSON objected to appoint a foreman, who was to be a sort of crutch for propping up the Superintendent. The infirmities of an officer should not be allowed to interfere with the Public Service. As to advertising for an expert at a high salary, a man who had a wide experience in coffin-making might be able to do all that was required on the Eastern Railway.

The committee divided on Mr. MOLLOY's amendment, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	10
Noes	...	...	14

Majority against 4

AYES.
Mr. Clarkson
Mr. Darlôt
Mr. DeHamel
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Hassell
Mr. Monger
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Simpson
Mr. Traylen
Mr. Molloy (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Burt
Sir John Forrest
Mr. Lefroy
Mr. Loton
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Pearce
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Quinlan
Mr. H. W. Sholl
Mr. R. F. Sholl
Mr. Solomon
Mr. Throssell
Mr. Venn
Mr. Paterson (Teller).

Amendment—negatived.

MR. QUINLAN then moved that the item be reduced by £25 for the half-year.

Amendment—put and passed.

MR. LOTON, referring to the item, "Contingencies—wages for drivers, stokers, mechanics, etc., overtime and extra labor, £14,500," said this item showed an increase at the rate of £4,000 for twelve months. If there was to be an increased earning it did not follow that there must be an increased expenditure, because the same trains had to run in any case. He moved that the item be reduced by £2,000. The reduced amount would leave a margin of £1,000.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said this estimate was not based on the passenger traffic at all, but on the tonnage of goods to be carried on the Eastern Railway. His previous estimates during two years had worked out within one-quarter of a unit per cent. of the figures, and if the administration could not be trusted in this estimate, the sooner the Government left office the better. If the amount of estimated goods traffic was not reached,

the total expenditure would not have to be incurred.

MR. LOTON said that if there were not to be more trains, there could not be more expense in running over the same mileage. If his motion would embarrass the department, he would not press it.

The committee divided on Mr. LOTON'S amendment, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	8
Noes	...	...	...	12

Majority against ... 4

AYES.
Mr. DeHamel
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Hassell
Mr. Lefroy
Mr. Molloy
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Simpson
Mr. Loton (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Burt
Mr. Darlôt
Sir John Forrest
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Paterson
Mr. Pearse
Mr. Piesse
Mr. H. W. Sholl
Mr. Solomon
Mr. Traylen
Mr. Venn
Mr. Monger (Teller).

Amendment — negatived, and item passed.

MR. DEHAMEL, referring to the item "Way and Works Branch, contingencies — wages for gangers and platelayers; overtime and extra labor, £5,750," said this item showed an increase of £750 for the half-year. He could not see why there should be any increase in the wages of gangers and platelayers.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said this expenditure was necessary for the safety of the public, and if the committee reduced the item, it must take the responsibility. The increase was accounted for by some minor alterations which were to be made in the half-year. So long as the heavy grades had to be worked, so long would this expenditure be out of proportion to the revenue.

Item passed, and the Vote, as amended, agreed to.

Progress was then reported, and leave given to sit again.

DEFENCE FORCES BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt), in moving the second reading of this Bill, said: This Bill is necessary in order to make provision for the contingent that is about to man the forts at Albany, and to enable the Government to raise a small militia force to assist in the

working of those forts, and to render assistance as defenders in time of need. The Bill is short. The first part applies to the forces generally which we propose to raise, to the permanent force, and to the existing volunteer force; and it applies to the rank that will be taken by the permanent officers in those forces. The permanent force will garrison the forts, and the militia will be a force to second the garrison at Albany, and will be called up for training during a limited period of the year. As to the existing volunteer force, we all know what it is, and it will remain as at present; so that this Bill will not disturb in any way the volunteer force. The main portion of the Bill is Part II., which enables the Government to "raise, maintain, organise, arm, equip, drill, train, and exercise such permanent force and militia force as may be considered necessary for the time being for the proper defence of the colony, and as Parliament shall from time to time provide for." Therefore it will be seen that, as to the payment of these forces, Parliament will have complete control, because power is given to the Government simply to raise the forces necessary, and Parliament will be asked from time to time to provide the money. If the Government ask for a vote for a larger force than appears necessary, Parliament can refuse to vote the money required for their payment. The forces will be under regulations framed by the Governor in Council, and these will be laid on the tables of both Houses of Parliament. The second part of the Bill also provides for the discipline of the forces. It will be seen that the permanent force always, and the militia when called out for service, are to be subject to the provisions of the Army Act and the Queen's Regulations and Orders for the Army, as far as is consistent with this Bill. The third part of the Bill relates to offences, and one or two miscellaneous matters. Those hon. members who are interested in this Bill, and have looked through it, will see that nothing is asked for but what this House will readily grant. The objects of the Bill are to provide for the discipline and maintenance of the garrison of the forts at Albany, and to raise a small militia at Albany for the purpose of seconding the

garrison in the event of any scare occurring, such as happened a few years ago. I do not think the expenses will be large, and although we cannot say at present what the sum is likely to be, Parliament will have full control of it. The proposed regulations and scale of payments will be laid on the table of the House before a vote is asked for. It is necessary to have this Bill in order that the men who are about to arrive from South Australia to garrison the forts at Albany shall come under this Act, and be subject to the jurisdiction of the Commandant of Western Australia.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: It is to be regretted that a Bill like this should be brought down at the end of the session, and it would serve the Government right if some one moved that the Bill be read this day six months. To expect members to deal with a Bill of this description after twelve o'clock at night is unreasonable.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The main object the Government have in view is altogether in the interests of the colony: in order that the Federal force that is coming to this colony shall not be under some other jurisdiction while here, but shall be under the control of this colony. That is the only object we have in desiring to pass the Bill at this moment.

MR. DEHAMEL: I can find only one mistake in this Bill, and that is a clerical error in clause 27, where a word that is necessary to the sense has been left out.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

The Bill passed through committee without amendment; and, the Standing Orders having been suspended, it was read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 12-20, midnight.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 12th January, 1893.

Lunatic Asylum: Report for 1891—Gateways at Railway Crossings—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. G. Shenton) took the chair at 8 o'clock.

PRAYERS.

LUNATIC ASYLUM—REPORT FOR 1891.

THE HON. R. W. HARDEY asked whether any Official Report had been made on the Lunatic Asylum for the year 1891; and, if so, whether it is the intention of the Government to lay such Report before Parliament?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): Yes, a report for 1891 was made, and I now lay it on the table. I may add that through some inadvertence the report had not been printed. It will now, however, be placed in the hands of the Government Printer, and be bound up with the Votes and Proceedings.

GATEWAYS AT RAILWAY CROSSINGS.

THE HON. R. W. HARDEY moved: "That in the opinion of this House it is advisable that all permanent gateways crossing over railways shall not be less than eleven feet in width; and shall always be provided with swing gates instead of slip rails." He said: This matter has been brought to my notice by the Government fencing on the Eastern railway, and leaving openings of only 10ft. wide, and to my mind that is not a sufficient width. The timber whims which go over these crossings are 9ft. in width, and this leaves only a space of 6in. on either side. If they were 11ft. wide there would be 1ft. on either side. I do not know whether the Government has power to fence across a surveyed road, as they have done, with a permanent wire fence. Another matter that wants attention is that there should be swing gates instead of slip rails, which, at one particular crossing I refer to, are very heavy. Every time a person goes there with a horse and cart he has to pull them down and put them up again. The Government have plenty of gates which have been taken down between Perth and Fremantle, and these could easily be used for