

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, 10th January, 1929.

The Council met pursuant to adjournment, His EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, BRIGADIER-GENERAL SIR GORDON GUGGISBERG, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. The Colonial Secretary, Mr. C. Douglas-Jones, C.M.G.

The Hon. The Attorney-General, Mr. Hector Josephs, K.C., B.A., LL.M., (Cantab.), LL.B. (Lond.)

The Hon. A. P. G. Austin (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. T. T. Smellie (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. F. Dias (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. T. Millard, Colonial Treasurer.

Major The Hon. W. Bain Gray, M.A., Ph.D. (Edin.), B.Litt. (Oxon.), Director of Education.

The Hon. J. S. Dash, B.S.A., Director of Agriculture.

The Hon. R. E. Brassington, (Senior Member for North-West Essequibo).

The Hon. R. V. Evan Wong, B.Sc. (Senior Member for South-East Essequibo).

Colonel The Hon. W. E. H. Bradburn, Inspector-General of Police.

Major The Hon. J. C. Craig, D.S.O., Director of Public Works.

The Hon. B. R. Wood, M.A., Dip. For. (Cantab.) Conservator of Forests.

The Hon. S. H. Bayley, Managing Director, Colonial Transport Department.

The Hon. J. Mullin, A.I.M.M., F.S.I., Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

The Hon. N. Cannon, (Senior Member for Georgetown).

The Hon. H. C. Humphrys (Member for East Demerara).

The Hon. A. V. Craue, LL.B., (Lond.), (Member for West Demerara).

The Hon. Percy C. Wight, (Junior Member for Georgetown).

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Junior Member for New Amsterdam).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves (Member for Georgetown).

The Hon. E. F. Fredericks, LL.B., (Junior Member for South-East Essequibo).

The Hon. A. E. Seeram, (Member for Demerara).

The Hon. S. McD. De Freitas, M.A. (Junior Member for North-West Essequibo).

The Hon. J. Smith (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. S. H. Seymour, A.M.I. Mech. E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the 9th January, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture): I am the bearer of the following Message from the Governor:—

MESSAGE No. 23 of 1928.

Honourable Members of the
Legislative Council:

I have the honour to invite the Council to authorise the payment of a compassionate allowance at the rate of \$96 per annum to Numkak, until recently employed as a gardener at the Botanic Gardens, with effect from 1st April, 1928.

Numkak, who is 73 years of age, has faithfully served the Government with uniformly good character for a period of 31 years, and on account of age is no longer physically fit to perform his duties. He was employed as a daily labourer at the rate of 72 cents a day.

I therefore recommend that a compassionate allowance at the rate mentioned be approved.

F. G. GUGGISBERG,
Governor.

Government House,
Georgetown,
9th January, 1929.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS.

Notice was given that at the next meeting of the Council leave would be asked to introduce and have read the first time the following Bills:—

A Bill to make provision for raising a Loan of three million one hundred and three thousand five hundred pounds sterling for certain public purposes.

A Bill to provide that no further Loans shall be raised under the Public Loan Ordinance, 1916.—(*Colonial Secretary.*)

Notice was given that the following Government Motion would be moved at the next meeting of the Council:—

That with reference to the Governor's Message No. 23 of 1928, this Council authorises the payment of a compassionate allowance at the rate of \$96 per annum to Numkak, until recently employed as a gardener at the Botanic Gardens, with effect from 1st April, 1928. (*Professor Dash.*)

PETITION.

Mr. Sceram laid on the table a petition from Besessar for the refund of licence duty paid in 1928 in respect of a motor car.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

The Council resumed consideration in Committee of the draft estimates of expenditure for the year 1929 under the head "Hospitals, Asylums and Dispensaries."

Mr. WONG: I would like to call the attention of the Committee to the suggestion thrown out yesterday by Mr. Dias in regard to item 23 (Medical Officer No. 1 Dispensary and Alms House \$1,560 to \$1,800 by \$48—\$1,800), and if necessary to move the formal amendment for the deletion of the item. I cannot add anything to the reasons which have been given by the hon. member, nor, indeed, do I think it is necessary that I should. It seems to me this is undoubtedly a case where we can save \$1,800 from the expenditure of this year. As the hon. member has pointed out, the conditions that existed at the time when this item was brought into the Government Budget no longer obtains, and for that, if for no other reason, the time is ripe to my mind that it should be taken off. I do not know what Government's attitude in this matter will be, but I feel sure, sir, as far as the unofficial side of the House is concerned, this amendment will find favour with everyone.

Mr. CRANE: I am bound to add my quota to the appeal to Government to save some money where it is possible to do so. I think the service which is rendered for this \$1,800 can very well be rendered without the addition of a single penny if medical officers from the hospital are detailed to do this work. I understand that this is not the only emolument which goes to that officer. There are other fees collected half of which he draws, and I am certain in the very laudable attempt which is now being made to spend no more money than is necessary this sum can be saved. This item has outlived the necessity for its appearance on the Estimates. In those days in the war-time when persons had gone to the Front we could not get medical men for the Service, but now-a-days we have a full service of medical officers. I happen to know personally that a good many of these officers take duty in turn and therefore time can be made to give the very limited service which is given to these dispensaries, if no outsider be engaged but a Government officer do

the work. The work at the Alms House is Government work and should be done by a Government officer, and the No. 1 Dispensary can very well be done by him also. I do not know if the Colonial Secretary will be good enough to inform this House whether or not the dispensary at the Public Hospital is being run by an outsider too.

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to dispensaries we might leave that for the re-organisation which will come on and which I have purposely not attempted in the absence of the Surgeon General. I do not think it would be fair. I would like to point out with regard to this item 23 that Government is very much in favour of what three of the hon. members have brought to its notice. They are undoubtedly right. But I would like to make a point here and that is that two of these hon. members are members of the Executive Council and it would have been only fair when this estimate of expenditure was examined by that Council that they should have drawn attention to this item as they have done at present. If they had done so one would have been able to make enquiry into the necessity and possibility of a Government Medical Officer doing the work. As this was not done, I would like, if hon. members would agree to do so, to leave this item in here and to make an immediate enquiry into the possibility of it, and if it is possible to issue instructions that this money should not be spent. If hon. members would leave it in that way I shall be prepared to do that. I am very much obliged to hon. members for drawing attention to this subject.

Mr. WONG: To a point of explanation. I would like to point out that I was on leave when most of these items on the Estimates were being considered by the Executive Council.

Mr. WIGHT: I think, personally, it would be a very retrograde step to take. I have had complaints from patients in

hospital that they cannot get proper attention from the doctors there because the place is much too full.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: What operated in my mind is this: Is the hospital so over-staffed that they can spare an officer to take on the duties of the Alms House and No. 1 Dispensary without neglecting the large number of patients they have to deal with there? There is a large number of patients in the Alms House,—whether sufficient time is given to them or not it ought to be—and to my mind it would appear this is a question, as Your Excellency says, that can only be decided on after you have had the expert opinion of the Surgeon General himself. I, personally, do not know whether the Alms House is efficiently served or whether there is any need for a change there, but there certainly is, and there can be no mistake about it, a large number of people there, and it ought to take up a good deal of time for any officer to look after them. Those unfortunate people are entitled to the very best medical advice and comfort they can get.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I thought everybody was in agreement that this is unnecessary expenditure, because it was an emergency measure. Does the emergency still exist? I say it does not, and no member can say it does. At the time this arrangement was entered into there were many officers on leave—a state of affairs which does not exist to-day.

The CHAIRMAN: I quite agree with the hon. members who have spoken. Nothing can prove their case better than a personal enquiry into the matter, and that I have promised to do at the earliest possible moment.

Item 33—Travelling Allowances.

Mr. SEERAM: I would like to bring to the attention of Government the absolute necessity for a dispensary in certain river districts. The Mahaicony

and Mahaica Creeks are two of those districts which are badly in need of some medical aid. Unfortunately, the public road attached to these two districts does not extend into the creeks and as a result it is very difficult for people to obtain medical attention and death has in some cases resulted thereby. The Demerara River district I desire also to submit to Government. Between Coverden and Christianburg a large number of people reside on both banks of the river and there is only one dispensary and that at Christianburg. A few days ago I laid on the table a petition appealing to Government to extend the road from Coverden to Hyde Park so as to bring people in the case of emergency to Georgetown quickly.

Mr. CRANE: I am bound to support the appeal which has been made by the hon. Member for Demerara because a portion of my constituency falls within the area referred to by him. But at the same time I must definitely point out in answer to him that you have a population there that is so scattered that it is difficult to tell where to locate this dispensary if a decision is arrived at to erect it. One point he made—a good point, I submit—and that is the extension of the road from Coverden to Hyde Park, a distance of four miles. At Hyde Park there is a fairly large population cut off from town and they have to journey by boat from Hyde Park to Coverden and then to the City by road. I quite agree that if the road is extended by four miles it will be very easy to get sick people from the district to the City. Hyde Park is the last district in the Demerara River which may be regarded as being populated to any great extent. That portion of the hon. member's appeal I heartily support.

Mr. FREDERICKS: I desire to join in the appeal in so far as the road is concerned. I think there can be no great difficulty in making the extension vehicular.

The CHAIRMAN: This question of road does come up in connexion with dispensaries, but the hon. Member for

West Demerara rather struck the right nail on the head when he alluded to the scattered nature of the population. I do not see why we should not have—and it is a matter I should consult the Surgeon General about—some such system as a floating dispensary for river population, something that will be able to float up to the various settlements once a week or once a fortnight and in fact to act on the water as a travelling motor dispensary does on the land. Recently under the same circumstances mentioned by the hon. member, in the northern territory of the Gold Coast where the population is greatly scattered they have introduced a travelling motor dispensary with a doctor in attendance, and the motor covers one or two thousand miles every month around the outlying villages. I do not see why some such principle with all the resources, improvements and invention of medical science should not be applied to the water in this country.

Item 34.—Dietary.

Mr. GONSALVES: I see, sir, that this item has been reduced to \$98,500 and I happen to be in this position today of not knowing the views of Government with regard to the reduction. I was wondering whether, in view of the suggestion made a little while ago that item 23 be deleted, in order to ensure sufficient dietary for the patients at the hospital, if Government see fit to agree with the suggestion for its deletion, that the amount of item 23 be added to this item. It would not mean an increase because the figures would remain the same, but it would ensure patients getting sufficient dietary to at any rate keep them alive.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I desire to endorse the remarks of the last speaker. I fear the patients at the hospital have never been over-fed. The complaint has always been that they are under-fed. I therefore hope Government will pay attention to what the hon. member has said.

The CHAIRMAN: There is a footnote to the item. I think foot-notes

should not be considered as mere printing. It says: "Considered sufficient." That means that in the expert opinion of the Medical Department they will be able to feed those patients without reducing the quality of their food for the sum of \$98,500 instead of \$101,000. I hope they will be able to do so, and if they do not one will hear of the complaints hon. members speak about. A man is prone to speak about his food.

I should also like to draw attention to another point in connexion with this. If hon. members will look at the abstract of the actual expenditure for the last five years, they will find that pages 42 to 47 of the Estimates added up give \$572,000. Well, hon. members, we cannot afford to do that. Next year that sum has got to come down unless we are going to have something to entirely change our anticipation of what the revenue is going to produce. We have to make up our minds that we have to reduce in all Departments and as regards the Medical Department we have to reduce those things which least affect the efficiency of the attendance and the quality of the accommodation given to the inmates of the hospital. I would like to draw hon. members' attention to that, because the claims of humanity on the one side are very insistent and naturally receive all of Government's attention and sympathy, but on the other side we have to foot the bill. That total of \$572,000 is quite separate from the Government Public Health Department on page 54, which is nearly \$59,000, and quite apart from this are questions of water-supply, sanitation, construction of hospitals and dispensaries which during the year 1929 will certainly bring the expenditure on public health in all directions to well over a million dollars.

I only point this out to show that Government has very great difficulties about reduction on the one hand and about doing the very best for the sick of the country on the other. I quite agree with hon. members that it is no good feeding patients unless you are going to feed them well, and if \$88,000 is not sufficient then we shall have to in-

crease it at the cost of some other item. I hope hon. members will not consider I am dismissing their views on these Estimates lightly. One wants to hear what hon. members have to say as it gives an opportunity to tell them how far Government can go. All these questions tend to improve the understanding between Government and hon. members.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

Mr. ELEAZAR: There is nothing carried out with respect to the item "Sanitary Improvements, New Amsterdam, Berbice," but there are items "Approved Sanitary Works, \$3,500" and "Government Lands—Sanitary Improvements, \$4,000." I am not aware whether it is Government's intention to merge the whole into the two items and New Amsterdam will get a small share in the usual way. I am going to plead that New Amsterdam should get its small portion out of what is passing around. Since 1907 Government has been contributing to sanitary improvements of the Local Authorities, including Georgetown, with the exception of New Amsterdam. In 1927 New Amsterdam got a vote of \$1,500 which was spent under the supervision of the Local Government Board. Last year, through some misunderstanding, we got only \$1,000. Since receiving the grant we have embarked on a certain campaign by direction of the Medical Officer of Health and if nothing is voted this year the work will be neglected. The Town Council have expended certain monies already in the hope that we were going to get the \$1,000.

Mr. CRANE: The Surgeon General happens not to be here and I might not readily obtain information as to what is intended to be done this year with items 18 and 19. The item for New Amsterdam against which no sum appears is a new item. It has only appeared for two years. An endeavour was being made as regards Georgetown to have its environs looked after and

mosquito work carried out. It was then that the hon. Junior Member for New Amsterdam asked that New Amsterdam should be treated in the same way and Government contribute something to the work there. If item 18 can be so used as to give something out of it to New Amsterdam no one would be more pleased than I, and it may be possible to give them something out of that item for work to be done under the supervision of the Sanitary Officer of the district.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I should like to ask Government for some information in regard to reports received with respect to the villages from Anna Regina. I do not know if it is the intention of Government to allocate any portion of these sums to Essequibo. It is no stretch of the imagination when I tell Your Excellency that conditions in some of the villages are nothing short of appalling. Appalling is the only word I can use. The water is up to the parapets of the public road—black, stinking water with mosquitoes in myriads. I have already pointed out that it is due to the absence of pumping plants. There is no pumping plant there and no way of getting the water off the land. I appeal to Government, as I have been doing for years, to do something for the people in regard to health conditions. In the past the Administration have shamefully neglected their duty.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure Government has the utmost sympathy with what the hon. member has said. I do not know that I am called upon to take up the cudgels of the old Court, but if the old Court did not have the necessary amount of money I do not see how they could have possibly tackled such an appalling condition of things as the hon. member thinks. The expenditure allowed to the Government Public Health Department is one of those jokes which I have discovered in this Colony. It is totally and absolutely inadequate. On the one hand we are

spending more money than we can afford on things like hospitals and so on. I do not say that there is no necessity for them, but prevention is always better than cure. If we are going to spend all our available funds—and members must remember that they are limited—on such things as hospitals, we shall have no funds for this campaign of prevention. I can assure the hon. member who has just spoken that the inquiry into the general re-organisation of the Departments of Public Health will go exhaustively into this matter, and I prophesy that there will be a considerable amount of criticism when this Council meets in twelve months' time to consider the Estimates for 1930. The hon. member can rely on Government's entire sympathy on this question of sanitation of the districts on the coastal belt.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I am only asking Government to do for Essequibo what it has done for the people on the East Coast, and that is the erection of pumping plants.

The CHAIRMAN: As the hon. the Surgeon General is absent from the Council, I think the best time to decide how much of the vote for approved sanitary works will be spent in New Amsterdam will be when he returns to the Colony.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

The CHAIRMAN: I intended when I came here this morning just to say a few words on the question of the Education Department, which may obviate the necessity of certain questions. The first point is with regard to the appointment of a Deputy Director of Education. I think there is no officer in this Colony who has a greater opportunity as an optimist on the principle which I described in my speech yesterday than the Director of Education. If the optimist is the man who sees the opportunity in difficulties,

I think the Director of Education is that man. I have had a good deal of experience in education—if hon. members would excuse a personal note—as I have had in my time to re-organise education in a previous Colony. I have learnt a good deal of sense from that; at least I hope it is sense. At any rate I have learnt enough to know that the Director of Education has got one of the biggest jobs in the Colony. The job has not been made easier but rather more complicated by the fact that a Commission on Education was held in this Colony some two or three years ago. Now, if the Director of Education is going to re-organise the education system of this Colony properly,—the expenses of another Committee of if we are going to avoid having to bear experts to arrive in this Colony, experts who have no previous practical experience of the conditions here,—if he is to do that, and if he is to carry on with justice to those bodies who are running assisted schools, he must have a Deputy Director of Education to assist him. The amount of work before him is such that he could not possibly carry it out. In the first place, the Director of Education is lamentably short of an Inspectorate staff; he has only got two Inspectors of Schools and a third officer called the Assistant Inspector and Educational District Officer. With that staff I have no hopes whatever that the Director of Education would be able to re-organise the system of education on satisfactory lines. He may be able to re-organise on lines of a sort, but not on lines which Government and hon. members want the education of the Colony re-organised. Hon. members now have the choice. They can choose between having a Deputy Director of Education,—a skilled and experienced officer who will be the “right-hand man” of the Director of Education. I may say at once that we have no officer in the Colony who is fit for promotion to that office. On the other hand, if they do not want Education re-organised, they can vote against this item. With these preliminary remarks on

the Education Department, I will be very glad now if hon. members would criticise any of the items to which they want to call attention.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Your Excellency, I take a great deal of interest in this Department and I regret to hear from Your Excellency that there is no officer in the Colony who could be Deputy Director. If that is so the Department was very much behind hand when the Director of Education acted as Colonial Secretary a few months ago. Anyhow I observe that the onus which is being cast upon the Director of Education to-day was asked for by himself. He sought the position at Queen's College and after it was rejected he—

The CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member referring to the appointment of the Director of Education in charge of Queen's College?

Mr. ELEAZAR: Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, just to a point of order. The Director of Education was placed in charge of Queen's College after my first visit to that scandalous institution. I was absolutely amazed at the bad spirit which was evident in the atmosphere of the whole of Queen's College when I visited it about a week or two after my arrival here. I have inspected a good many colleges and schools during the last ten or fifteen years—and I have got in the habit of telling what is the spirit of a regiment, or school, or any other collection of people by their attitude and the look in their faces and the way they deport themselves—and I have seldom seen anything more lamentable than Queen's College. The question of appointing a Principal to remedy this state of affairs immediately came up, and then had to be considered the question who was the most valuable man to have—a Principal for Queen's College now, or a Deputy Director of Education with whom we can re-organise the whole system of education, Queen's College included. I decided, rightly or wrongly,

that we should do without the Principal for the moment and allow the acting Principal to carry on, but that the Director of Education must have direct control, not of details, but his words must carry in everything that appertains to Queen's College. This was misrepresented as meaning that the Director of Education had been appointed Principal of Queen's College. That is not so. I quite agree that the Director of Education was taken away from his duties to act as Colonial Secretary, and I am afraid it will have to happen again for two or three weeks when the Hon. Douglas-Jones is away at the conference, but I do not think there will be any harm in his being away from his post temporarily at the moment because I am afraid the position is so hopeless that the Director of Education cannot but struggle along.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I said on a previous occasion that where Your Excellency was satisfied that a thing was necessary I would abide by the result. You have investigated this matter and found the course you have indicated necessary. By all means let it be carried on.

Mr. CRANE: I must confess, sir, that I intended prior to your remarks to oppose this new office. Your remarks have resulted in a closer inspection of these estimates and in appreciation of the position as it stands. The ground of my complaint was that this very valuable officer, who is a specialist in his particular department, is taken off specialist work to do a number of petty administrative acts. He has been engaged on a number of Committees and I intended to ask a question on the number of hours he sat on them in order to restrict his services in these directions. I am no longer going to do it. I observe that we are passing the salary of the Deputy Director of Education for six months and during that time we will be saving the salary of the Principal of Queen's College. On this item I shall have to convert opposition into active support.

Mr. SEERAM: Like other members I intended to oppose this vote but from

Your Excellency's remarks my opposition turns into support. I see there has been all-round reduction of the grants to secondary schools. Several of these schools will suffer greatly, and I refer particularly to the Berbice High School for boys. It is the only institution in Berbice which provides secondary education for boys whose parents can afford to give them secondary education. I cannot ask that the amounts taken off the grants to these schools should be restored at this stage, but I ask Your Excellency to consider their claims after you have visited the County and seen things for yourself. The Berbice High School for boys caters particularly for boys from the Corentyne as well as for boys who win scholarships and reside in Berbice. An increased grant was given to this school last year and as a result a new Master was brought out to augment the staff. I am sure you have been impressed, sir, with the work of the Bishop's High School, and for this school I also urge that Government should do something. I should also like to make an appeal on behalf of the Indian population with respect to vernacular education. Your Excellency's pronouncement is that every opportunity will be afforded boys and girls of Indian nationality to get education in their own language if they are to maintain their national customs and to compete with children of other races, and on that point I have no doubt that the Indian community are very gratified and hopeful. There are two schools now in existence: one at Albuoystown and the other at Windsor Forest. These schools have been doing practical work, especially the Albuoystown school which is not only teaching children of the East Indian race but children of other races. Government gave me an assurance last year that the matter was being looked into and I ask Government specially to consider this school in the re-organisation scheme.

Item 43.—Training Centre, Georgetown, \$12,000.

Mr. CRANE: The Director of Education promised the Legislature that certain officers of the Education Depart-

ment would be employed at this institution and I should like to hear now whether reasonable tenure has been given to those officers. It has been rumoured very widely that one of the officers whom the Director promised would be given a certain amount of permanency is there on a month's notice. That is the kind of thing one finds himself forced to refer to here. I do not like the scattered nature of the work done under this head. I believe there is a house in Main Street, one in Murray Street, another in Charlestown and one somewhere else. I think this branch of the work can stand a lot of Your Excellency's investigation. Let us concentrate for the benefit of training and discipline.

The CHAIRMAN: I have been very closely into that question—which is probably the most important—the training of teachers, and I do not see what the Director of Education could have done with regard to buildings beyond what he has done. He has not been able to raise them from the ground. Of course the thing is absurd, but it is the best we can do. The hon. member will find that there is quite a substantial sum now allowed for the erection of a building, which will include the Training College for Teachers, but the whole of the plans are held up until we can conduct a closer examination and then show the details of what is really required. I quite agree that the present arrangement is a poor one, and I do not think the Director of Education is pleased about it himself, but as far as I can see it is the best at the moment. As regards the question of the staff I am sure that the Director of Education will answer that satisfactorily if the hon. member will have an interview with him.

Item 44.—Refresher Courses for Teachers, \$1,500.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The men have been in this institution under six months, and, sir, you are going to give them a refresher course before they have anything to refresh. (Laughter.) I want

some details as to how this money is being spent.

The CHAIRMAN: This is not for the teachers who are being trained now but to bring teachers in. I hope it will have some beneficial effect.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I understand that the Training Centre is being run by a Principal who is 24 years of age. As is the teacher so is the pupil. It seems to me that in these days of precocity a man of 24 years has hardly formed his own character yet and it would be difficult for him to form the character of boys. I hear that there are very grave forebodings as the students are themselves about 24 years of age and are not likely to be influenced by a Principal who is very little removed from them in the matter of age. That is the complaint I have heard and I am inclined to endorse it.

Major GRAY (Director of Education): I suppose the hon. member is referring to the Second Inspector of Schools. It is a typical example of staff and organisation. We could not afford last year to appoint a special officer to supervise this institution and we were also badly in need of a Second Inspector of Schools. We had this officer appointed and with the supervision of the Inspector of Schools, and to a certain extent such supervision as I have given myself, we have started the Training Centre. We had been waiting two years and, as you suggested sir, we did the very best we could under the circumstances. It is quite premature for the hon. member, or anybody else, to form an opinion of the officer's work because ten days after his arrival in the Colony he went to hospital with typhoid fever. There is a good deal in favour of placing the training of young men under young men, and I suggest that the hon. member should wait until he is in a position to form an opinion.

Item 62.—Equipment, Colonial School, Anna Regina, \$3,000.

Major GRAY: I move the deletion of this item. It is not intended to 'abandon the equipment of the school but to postpone it.

Question put, and agreed to.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

Mr. CRANE: When the votes under this head were before the Legislature a year or two ago the hon. Colonial Secretary, who was then administering the Government, was considering the question of whether provision could not be made by the use of this money for both boys and girls under the charge of the Salvation Army. I do not know how far his investigation has gone with regard to the matter. It is very well to provide for the male sex. I am not able to say whether the female species is not worse than the male; but very great need exists for provision to be made for girls. Girls of 13 and 14 years of age commit crimes, and the Magistrates throw up their hands not knowing what to do. I believe that at one time they were sent to the Alms House but the atmosphere there was just as bad and it had to be abandoned. Although a lot has been said about the good work done in the field and in industrial training at Onderneeming, very little can be said of reform of the boys sent there. It is a recruiting ground for the larger penitentiary. That is the experience of most people. I had hoped that some enquiry had been made to see what could be done for the reformation of juvenile criminals, both male and female.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I wish to call attention to item 21 (Arable Farm—Upkeep, \$800). Things seem all right at Onderneeming but there is a mysterious something lacking in the essential results of the reformation which the boys who are sent there are expected to show after leaving the institution. Your Excellency will find on investigation that although the boys are trained in agriculture they never pursue it when they leave the institution. As a matter

of fact the boys are supposed to be trained in agriculture more than in anything else. I am reminded of the words of Ruskin: "Art without industry is guilt, and industry without art is brutality." I think that applies to this institution. You have a schoolmaster there to look after the literary side but you have no agricultural instructor to teach them agriculture. I visited the institution and the Superintendent told me that the boys would not take to agriculture. The reason is that there is industry without art. The result is that when the boys leave the institution they graduate to the Penal Settlement. I think the remedy can be forthcoming by the Director of Education directing some of his energies to the institution and placing there one of the Agricultural Instructors who have been dismissed and are only too glad to have something to do, so that the boys may acquire an intelligent knowledge of agriculture.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I am afraid that the hon. member is speaking without facts. My experience of Onderneeming during the last two years is that there has been improvement on the right lines. The boys are trained to handle carpenters' tools, which they did not know before, and I have seen some of the work done by them. The lines now adopted are entirely different to what they were before. The boys are happy. I think it would be a mistake to drop Onderneeming for any other lines. We are training there good tailors, bakers and carpenters, and I hope to see plumbers and others and on a small scale the agricultural side. I have seen the best onions grown at Onderneeming and competing with onions grown at Pn. Cecilia. That is something done.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I distinctly said that I visited the institution and was told by the Superintendent that the boys would not take to agriculture. I don't know what the hon. member is talking about.

Mr. De FREITAS: This institution happens to be in my constituency. Some little time ago I asked that certain

statistics should be afforded members as to what became of the boys after they left Onderneeming and it was found that about 50 per cent. were placed in various trades in Georgetown. Very few became farmers. It was felt at the time that although they were placed to the extent of 50 per cent. in Georgetown they never kept their position and sooner or later became wasters again. My anxiety is that these boys after they leave the institution, where perhaps they had done well as carpenters, tailors and plumbers, seem never to establish themselves in those callings. It is my feeling that all is not well with the institution and that something should be done. I paid a visit to the institution and everything seemed rosy. We heard the band and saw the boys at work, but we do not meet these boys in later life as we meet the boys from Dr. Barnado's Home. I am sorry that I have to agree with the view that the institution is the recruiting ground for the penitentiary.

Mr. FREDERICKS: I have been to Onderneeming and can say that the present Superintendent has done things to help the boys. But that is not the point. The point is: Can the boys be treated less criminally than they are treated to-day? A little urchin of 12 or 13 commits a breach of the law, he is taken to Brickdam Station and to the Police Court and is clucked into the same lock up as a criminal, and he is handled in every manner as a criminal. It seems to me that if there is anything to help Onderneeming it is to remove from this unfortunate boy the criminal methods in the Colony. The great wrong in the whole thing is that from first to last the boy is treated as a criminal, and I cannot conceive that we shall be able to get real benefit from the expenditure on Onderneeming until we devise means by which this erring child will be treated as a child from the moment of his arrest to the date of his release. Further points for consideration are whether there should not be some continuation period after the release of the boys and a sort of

Colony where they can work for the good of themselves and the State.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: As a member of the division I have visited the institution and was always struck with the excellent way it was conducted. I cannot say that the boys had an air of ill-treatment about them nor can I say that they looked particularly happy. The problem is a very difficult one: a problem of what we are going to do with the waifs and strays of Georgetown. We hear that they are taken before the Magistrate in the ordinary Police gang and put in the lock-up like any ordinary criminal. It might be possible not to bring them before a Magistrate. If you are going to hand over the institution to the Salvation Army, as has been remarked, they ought to do better because they will handle these boys in a different manner to the way they are handled at Onderneeming. It is said that the boys are treated as criminals. I do not think that is fair to the Superintendent or to the institution. I can hardly believe that there has not been some machinery as to the after career of these boys. The Managing Director of the Colonial Transport Department was Superintendent of the institution for a number of years and administered it successfully. I personally would be interested to hear his views, which would be first-hand and should be accepted with confidence. I hope Your Excellency will allow him to do that.

The CHAIRMAN: I would be glad to do that: But is it worth while? We propose to hand over the reformation of both boys and girls to the Salvation Army. Is it worth while to go into the question of whether the system at Onderneeming at present is a success or not when we are going to disestablish the institution? It does not seem on the whole to matter whether Onderneeming is very good or very bad, but it seems to me like the proverbial Curate's egg. In the circumstances it seems a waste of time. Perhaps the

hon. Colonial Secretary will tell the Council what progress has been made.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. Douglas-Jones): It was either the hon. Member for West Demerara or the hon. Junior Member for Berbice who made a suggestion last year that the institution should be handed over to the Salvation Army, and I undertook that the matter would be investigated. That has been done. I also met certain members of the then Combined Court, of which the hon. Junior Member for North-West Essequibo was a member. We took the matter up and on my way to England I had a long conversation with Colonel Barr, who has since been transferred. In England I also conferred with the heads of the Salvation Army there. They were entirely in favour of the idea and suggested that when I came back I should consult the new Commissioner, Colonel Twilley, whose headquarters were in Trinidad. After consultation with the Colonel and Major Hackett it was decided that they should go to Onderneeming and the Penal Settlement to see if there was any possibility of arranging at either of those places to combine a girls' reformatory with the boys' reformatory. They were also to consider whether they preferred to call them Boys' and Girls' Industrial Schools. They went and from their point of view Onderneeming was quite impossible; they could not have the dual institution there. They then proceeded to the Penal Settlement and were very much attracted by the place. They said they felt certain that they could launch two institutions there, one for boys and one for girls, and would willingly undertake it but they had to submit the matter to headquarters in England. So far no reply has been received but I am sure from conversations I had in London that headquarters will view the matter with favour.

Briefly, Government will make a subvention of \$25,000, which is practically the cost of Onderneeming School, and for that sum they will undertake to

launch and operate an institution for boys, and we hope for the same amount that Onderneeming has cost to get an Industrial School for girls as well. If we can do that I think we will be doing very good business. The establishment of a Girls' Industrial School has been under the consideration of Government for a long time, but the difficulty has been to find a convenient site and the money to establish it. I think we are now well on the way to establish both, sir, subject to your visiting both Onderneeming and the Penal Settlement, acquainting yourself with both places, and deciding whether in your opinion the Penal Settlement is a suitable place to establish both institutions under the auspices and control of the Salvation Army. Of course, it would be impossible to establish an institution of this sort at the Penal Settlement until the present buildings have been altered, and that is one of the first things in the re-organisation programme which will have to be done. There is one other point which has been raised by the hon. Junior Member for South-East Essequibo with regard to boys and girls being brought before the Magistrates. Of course, the corollary of an institution such as has been suggested would be Juvenile Courts. Such Courts are very badly needed and the matter has not been overlooked. One of the first things to be done is the establishment of Juvenile Courts, and it is hoped that at these Juvenile Courts the Salvation Army will be able to intercept boys and girls before the taint of criminality takes any form. From what I have said it will be evident that we have done a considerable amount of work in this connexion arising out of the suggestion made last year.

Mr. CANNON: In view of the remarks of the hon. Colonial Secretary it seems to me that the difficulty will not be overcome if the Penal Settlement or Onderneeming is used for the institution. If they are going to have boys and girls together the Colonisation Board might take it up.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am astounded. I did not know it was the intention of

Government to remove the prisoners from the Penal Settlement to Georgetown. I should have thought that the community at large would have had some voice in such an important change as that: the removal of prisoners from the Penal Settlement to the seat of Government.

The CHAIRMAN: I will remind the hon. member that we passed that item on the Estimates yesterday.

POST OFFICE.

Item 18—47 Postmasters, \$36,500.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am going to crave Your Excellency's indulgence on this item to make a few remarks which, if I do not make them here, would hardly come within your knowledge at all. In a district in Berbice somebody living near a certain Post Office is supposed to have ordered two books from a firm either in England or America. One of these books arrived and was delivered and the addressee reported to the Postmaster General that he had ordered two books and only received one. The Postmaster General immediately communicated with the Police and obtained a warrant and ransacked the whole house of the Postmaster. Nothing was found and by next mail the book arrived in the Colony. I think that when anything of the like happens affecting responsible officers like Postmasters the authorities should not resort to the Police in the first instance but proper enquiries should be made. The man was scandalised and ashamed and he concealed the incident but everybody knew of it. I mention the matter because a case of that kind would not come to Your Excellency's knowledge at all.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. member has made one mistake. This is not the only place where these things can be brought to my notice. I am always glad to receive hon. members

at my office and hear any case that occurs of gross injustice of that nature. If the question is brought up as the hon. member has done this morning it is obvious that we can only hear one side of the question. It seems rather unfair, as there might have been very good reasons for doing it, to accuse the Postmaster General of doing something entirely wrong without giving him an opportunity to say whether he was wrong or not. I think the best way to bring these things to the notice of Government is to see the Heads of Departments, and hon. members are always justified in seeing the Head of the Department concerned. If a member does not get satisfaction he should then see the Colonial Secretary, and finally, if he fails with the Colonial Secretary, he always has the opportunity to come and see me on any subject of that kind.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I should like to make reference to the postal service in Essequibo. At the present time it is very unsatisfactory. I will give an illustration. If a letter is posted to me on Monday afternoon I can only get a reply to Georgetown on the following Monday. Would it not be possible for Government to enable us to have a special rate for telegrams?

The CHAIRMAN: I think that is another case in which the hon. member could have had a conference with the Postmaster General.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I was not sure whether he had power to alter the rates.

The CHAIRMAN: Government would always be guided by his advice. If he saw your point he would put it up.

Mr. SEYMOUR: Very good, sir.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I might suggest that the best course would be for hon. members to address a letter to the Colonial Secretary. The letter would then be referred to the Head of the Department concerned and the hon.

member would receive a reply when the matter has been dealt with by Government. Government receives a number of communications from the public and it would facilitate matters if Government has previous notice.

The CHAIRMAN: That is undoubtedly the best procedure. I should not like it to be inferred, however, that hon. members of this Council cannot get into direct touch with Heads of Departments. I think Heads of Departments would like it. If a member then has to put his case up before the Colonial Secretary a lot of work would have been done beforehand and the case perhaps dealt with in a more complete form.

TELEPHONES AND TELEGRAPHS.

Mr. CRANE: You have complained, sir, about our multiplying our means of communication. Here I respectfully submit the means are also duplicated. It happens that almost all over the country you have the telegraph and telephone systems side by side. I think the inhabitants prefer the telephone system where they can speak for some time over the 'phone. The telegraph system is restricted to a number of words for a number of cents. Even telegrams may be sent by telephone. The expenditure on both systems is duplication and it would bear some investigation of how far the systems need exist side by side.

The CHAIRMAN: That question will have Government's attention.

Item 39.—New Lines.—Telephone Services, \$3,000.

Mr. FREDERICKS: I wish to draw attention to the fact that the doctor's house at Wakenaam is not served by telephone, which is very unfortunate. I also call attention to Fort Island. It is very difficult to have communication with that island. If it is possible I should like Government to do something in the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps that is another case where the hon. member might have a talk with the Postmaster General or make representations to the Colonial Secretary.

Mr. FREDERICKS: I thank Your Excellency for the suggestion and I shall profit by it.

The Council adjourned for lunch.

The CHAIRMAN: Before we start on Head XXXVIII. I thought it would be of interest to hon. members to hear the report of ex-Onderneeming boys who have been convicted of offences during the year 1928. 21 have been convicted of offences in Georgetown and New Amsterdam alone and received sentences—2 or 3 of one month, 2 or 3 of two months, but the majority of six months running up to 8, 10 and 12 years. 21 in one year (in two towns alone rather points to the fact that the Onderneeming system is scarcely that of a reformatory).

MILITIA.

Colonel BRADBURN (Inspector General of Police): It is proposed to discontinue the firing of the 5 and 8 o'clock gun. This will result in a saving. It is felt that the time is passed when this gun should be fired.

Mr. CANNON: I am certainly very sorry and surprised to hear such a suggestion. It has been attempted from time to time, sir, by your predecessors to discontinue that very old custom, and as a member representing Georgetown I would be wanting in my duty were I not to oppose such a suggestion. There is no consideration whatever, as far as I can see, for the poorer class of people who are not in a position to have their alarm clocks or time pieces so as to enable them to get to their work. Although I have clocks in my house the discontinuance of the firing of the gun would be of great inconvenience to me. I feel that it would be a very re-

trograde step. Heads of other branches of the Service can easily be tapped instead of ceasing the firing of the gun and I hope Your Excellency will not permit it.

Mr. FREDERICKS: Economy is necessary but there are certain economies that are not worth while. I see that only \$100 is the amount put down. If we are to blot out this institution which is so well established in this country because of \$100 for myself I do not think it is the best economy that can be brought about. If there are other reasons for the abolition of this custom then they may be weightier, but if it is for economy pure and simple I ask Your Excellency not to strike it out. The 8 o'clock gun is as natural to the people of this country as anything I can think of. Why it should not continue to fire I see no very good reason, especially when it comes to economy. There are some things which are trifles in themselves but they are so intimately bound up with the lives of those among whom they exist that to take them away is to deny them. There is nothing to terrorise or discordant in the firing of the 8 o'clock gun and there can be no objection to it.

Mr. CRANE: I am glad that I am here to lend my support to the suggestion that the firing of this gun should not be discontinued. We have just performed the abolition of a very honourable and ancient institution, the Constitution of the Colony, to ensure progress; but a harmless institution, especially one which does not mean very great expenditure, should not be abolished. We regard the 8 o'clock gun as an indication that it is time to retire and the 5 o'clock gun as the time to rise. It symbolises in this community rest and labour and nothing ought to receive greater encouragement than early going to bed and rising. The saving is only \$100.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a saving of \$650. Perhaps the Inspector-General will explain what the \$100 is for.

Colonel BRADBURN: The \$100 is for firing salutes.

Mr. CRANE: I admit that \$600 is quite a large sum of money, but as an old custom it is hard to break away from, and all Guianese like to hear the gun at daybreak and eventide. Salutes are military salutes in accordance with military customs but there are other customs which are equally hard to part with.

Mr. WIGHT: I rise, sir, to support the opposition. Although I do not like to oppose Government, in this instance I must say that if you had been here long enough to hear the excuses of servants that they did not hear the 5 o'clock gun you would realise that it is a very serious matter. These servants and the poorer class are not in a position to purchase a watch or clock and if they do it would be a cheap one which would not keep time. If there must be economy give us the 5 o'clock gun if you cannot give us both.

Mr. FREDERICKS: I rise to a point of explanation. I did not mean to misrepresent the fact. I read hurriedly when I said the vote was \$100.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I do not live in Georgetown but whenever I come to Georgetown I expect to hear the 8 o'clock gun to know where I am whether it is time for bed or otherwise, and in the morning I expect to hear the 5 o'clock gun. The discontinuance of the firing of the gun would be very much felt. This is one of the little things, sir, that the people would be thankful for, if we decide to retain it.

The CHAIRMAN: There seems to be a great deal of value attached to the firing of the gun from the historical point of view and from the sentimental point of view. One does not like to upset these things. How would it be if Government met hon. members' contention by having the 5 o'clock gun and not the 8 o'clock gun? The 8 o'clock gun is not very important after all. The 5 o'clock gun apparently serves a useful purpose.

Mr. CANNON : I think it would be very inadvisable to disturb it at all.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : May I ask whether some other form of salute substituted for this gun would have the same object? I went into the matter not only last year but the year before, when it was raised. As a matter of fact the gun is not heard at 5 o'clock in the morning where the larger part of the population live. It is heard on the other side of the river but I doubt whether it is heard at Government House.

The CHAIRMAN : I heard it once.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Beyond the limit of Government House the gun is not heard in the other parts of the town at all except when the wind is blowing in a certain direction. The gun is a relic of slavery to send people to bed in the evening and to rise in the morning. Instead of the 5 o'clock gun in the morning the Managing Director of the Colonial Transport Department could sound the "Queriman's" siren, which would be heard to better effect than the 5 o'clock gun. Another method could be introduced in the evening by a signal by the Electric Company. Instead of the 8 o'clock gun we can adopt the practice in many towns of flicking the electric light in the houses and on the streets at that hour.

Mr. CANNON : I think the Colonial Secretary is misinformed when he says that the gun is not heard. I can only appeal to Your Excellency not to disturb the custom.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. Hector Josephs) : I think the firing of the gun is of advantage to a very small number of the population of Georgetown. I lived in Bourda for nearly two years and I never heard the 5 o'clock gun and seldom ever heard the 8 o'clock gun; it is never heard there except the wind is blowing in a certain direction. At the present time

I hear the 8 o'clock gun because sometimes I am in close proximity thereto, and at other times I have been in closer proximity in the company of the Director of Education when I thought the world was coming to an end. Where I now live in Camp Street I am awake before 5 o'clock and I have not heard the 5 o'clock gun more than once in five months. It does not benefit the majority of people in Georgetown by any means and it is more a matter of sentiment.

The CHAIRMAN : I think we will have to adopt the hon. Colonial Secretary's suggestion. We will try and see what the "Queriman" and Electric Company can do and item 8 will have to give its contribution towards the campaign of economy. If we find that the "Queriman's" siren is not sufficient to rouse hardworking men in the early morning we will have to try something else or restore the gun. I regret very much to remove an old institution like this but I really cannot agree to Government replacing it.

Mr. FREDERICKS : I hope Government will not adopt any other kind of time signals. If necessity compels it let us do without them altogether.

Mr. BRASSINGTON : I see there is a reduction of \$100 on item 28 (Band attendance outside Georgetown). I hope it is not intended to curtail the Band's visits to Essequibo and Berbice. It is a privilege very much enjoyed by the people of Essequibo and elsewhere.

Colonel BRADBURN : It will not be necessary to curtail the programme of the Band during the year.

PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES.

Mr. ELEAZAR : I wish to make a few remarks with respect to our pensions commitments. We are paying a very large sum of money in pensions

and Your Excellency will be surprised to learn that some of these items have been added to by a war bonus on account of the increased cost of living during the war. I am wondering whether the time has not come for Government to take off all the amounts that were put on as a war measure. Some official should go into the question and reduce the amounts to what they were before the war. Everything has gone down in price and still the bonus on pensions is going on.

Mr. CRANE : The hon. Junior Member for New Amsterdam forestalled me on this question of increased pensions. Whether pensions increased during the war should be reduced to the original figures I admit is difficult to determine right away. But one cannot help saying that the Public Service of the Colony is costing too much. The whole Estimates team with remuneration for services actually being rendered. \$209,443 is for services rendered in the past and when you go into the details you find large sums of money are being received by persons who are not actually working but no doubt must have given the Colony satisfactory service, otherwise pensions would not have been awarded. The time has come when some scheme for giving superannuation allowances to officers must be made and also when you must cease to charge pensions to current revenue. Something like the Superannuation Act in England can be initiated here, officers making contributions thereto and the system worked under the supervision of Government. One-eleventh of the public revenue is paid in pensions. It is monstrous. The amount paid out in lump sums during the two-and-a-half years that the scheme has been operating is over \$300,000. The Colony cannot afford it and I hope I will be given an opportunity to move a motion that that Ordinance be repealed and the old system be reverted to. If it is possible for Government to give an undertaking to set up as soon as possible a Committee to study this question I need not worry to move a motion.

Mr. ELEAZAR : I think that on the present Estimates we have \$124,000 for lump sums.

The CHAIRMAN : I am very much in sympathy with what the hon. members have said. Of course, anything we do cannot alter the past, unfortunately. We have commitments under the existing pension laws and those are commitments that we cannot get rid of. It is no good blaming the past, but it is all proof of what I said in my Annual Message : that the Colony is overstaffed, not for the work to be done, because I believe there is work for everyone on the staff, but it is overstaffed for the funds available for that work. The question of pensions is one of the reasons why instructions have been issued, as hon. members know, that no appointment is to be filled even although provided in the Estimates until re-organisation investigations have been completed. In that way we will stop adding to our commitments. It does not get rid of the commitments which we already have and only applies to appointments to the permanent staff. The Colony has saddled itself without any foresight whatever with this enormous bill, especially with items 5 and 7, and if what I fear is going to be the case and that we have to get rid of a lot of officers in 1929, I doubt very much whether the Treasurer has provided enough. We are between the devil and the deep sea. I think I can give you a guarantee that Government will, during 1929, take such steps as are possible to enquire into the working of the Pensions Ordinance and see what we can do to lessen this steadily growing bill. I do not know whether the Treasurer can tell us how much it goes up a year.

Mr. MILLARD (Colonial Treasurer) : It is difficult to estimate exactly.

The CHAIRMAN : It is difficult, as the Treasurer says, to estimate exactly how much pensions go up every year, but I think he will probably agree that

they will increase by between \$20,000 and \$25,000. Of course, there should be a peak in this expenditure, beyond which no great increases take place. I do not know whether our peak has been reached, or whether the Treasurer would be able to say when it would be reached. If we do not increase our staff the peak should be reached soon, when pensions would settle down at a more or less steady rate. Government is considering the matter and I can assure hon. members that all steps possible to avoid increasing the Pensions Bill will be taken.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: The approved estimate of item 7 for 1928 was \$50,000 as against \$100,517 for 1927. It seems rather strange that in 1928 these lump sums should have been reduced by 50 per cent. May I ask what is the actual figure?

The CHAIRMAN: Is the Treasurer in a position to say?

Mr. MILLARD: I have not the figures by me, but I think the average would be about \$100,000.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member wants more accurate information he would perhaps address a question on the subject and get an answer fully.

SUBVENTIONS, ETC., OTHER THAN MUNICIPAL.

Major GRAY: I beg to move the re-insertion of the item "Grant to Soup Kitchen, \$360." This small sum enables the Education Department to give a meal of one cent to school children and also to grown up people. With a similar grant we gave 20,000 meals.

Question put, and agreed to.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Hon. members will also find that there has

been struck out of the draft Estimates an item of \$760 for a grant to the Prisoners' Aid Society. Owing to an oversight the Salvation Army was not informed that it was intended to strike out this item. I have had representations made by them that they have been calculating on this sum of money because they rent a house and run a Home for prisoners who are discharged from the jail. I did not quite appreciate when this matter was presented to the Council the value of the work the Salvation Army are doing in this direction. They are informed by the Inspector of Prisons when a man or woman is being discharged from jail and they make it their business to look after them, giving them a night's lodging or perhaps longer, and also providing them with tools, such as entlasses or shovels, which are paid for from this vote. I ask that the item be replaced and the sum of \$760 re-inserted.

Mr. CRANE: A good many of us did not know that a Prisoners' Aid Society exists and we would like to know who compose it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Perhaps the Inspector General of Police, who I understand visits the Home, will be able to say more of it than I can.

Colonel BRADBURN: I happen to be President of this Society. When the item was cut out I knew nothing about it. The sum of \$720 is given direct to the Salvation Army for the upkeep of the Home and the remaining \$40 is spent in the purchase of tools for discharged prisoners. Prisoners get meals at the Home at very little cost and the Army also try to get them work.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps hon. members might visit that Home sometimes. They may also do so with regard to meals to indigent children. It would do a great deal to encourage them. It is a most deserving cause and I am

sure that the Director of Education will be pleased to arrange a demonstration.

Major GRAY: And collect a subscription afterwards, sir. (Laughter).

MISCELLANEOUS.

Mr. MILLARD: I ask that the provision of item 33 (Interest on advances made to the Colony by the Crown Agents, \$75,000) may be increased to \$85,000. The preparation of the Estimates in so far as they relate to the advances received from the Crown Agents and the probable extent of their repayment during 1929 by means of the impending loan issue and from other sources has presented peculiar perplexities. The terms, amount and date of the loan issue are at present unknown. The various estimates under Public Debt, this sub-head and the revenue estimates of interest to be received on balances in hand must, in the circumstances, be subject individually to considerable modification. More than one attempt has been made at the calculation of these estimates. With the present item placed at \$85,000 I think it is more likely that the net amount of these several provisions will meet requirements.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item 21.—Launch Service—Wakenaam-Leguan, \$300.

Mr. CRANE: This vote is a subsidy to a service between the two islands. Two years ago Government voted a sum for the purpose of extending the stelling to a point at which the launch could moor at all stages of the tide. At the Wakenaam end of the ferry no provision has been made for a convenient landing and one has to get ashore by walking along a narrow plank, and one of these days we will have someone falling into the river. I ask Government to place a reasonable sum on the

Estimates to enable this urgent work to be done. At the Leguan end the road should be widened to permit a car to go over it.

Item 32—Subsidy to Canadian National Steamship Service, \$40,800.

Mr. CANNON: I see \$40,800 under item 32. Does this form part of that notorious agreement we have with Canada, sir?

The CHAIRMAN: I don't understand the hon. member's question.

Mr. CANNON: I am sorry, sir. It is the only way I can put it.

TRADE COMMISSIONER.

Mr. Crane: If the office of Trade Commissioner in London is abolished what is the need for the vote of \$1,200?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The office has been abolished since the 31st December but there is a liability to the Royal Colonial Institute until June. I think we have heard, however, that there will be no obligation with respect to this liability. There might be some small expenditure for storage of furniture, which will be paid out of this vote, but I do not think the expenditure will be anything like this amount.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS AND SEA DEFENCES.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I see that item 29 is "New Appointments, \$9,990." That is very bald. One cannot tell what are the new appointments. The Department has all kinds of persons employed there and the item needs some explanation.

Major CRAIG (Director of Public Works): The term "Existing Appointments" refers to those overseers who have been in the Service for some time at the old rate of \$936 rising by increments of \$72 to \$1,416. Any new

appointment as overseer is at the new rate of \$936 by increments of \$60 to \$1,236, a reduction of \$180 on the maximum.

Mr. SEERAM: Has any new appointment been made?

Major CRAIG: One or two new appointments have been made and any new appointments will be made at the new rate. One vacancy for an overseer has been filled by the appointment of a resident carpenter in the Mazaruni District at a lower rate than the overseer rate, and there is a saving there. I had great difficulty in maintaining the buildings in the Mazaruni owing to the difficulty in getting carpenters to go up there, and I have adopted the system of putting a resident carpenter there for six months, supplying him with the necessary lumber and other materials to put the buildings in a state of repair, and I have found it so far satisfactory. The remaining portion of the time he works in the Public Works Yard.

PUBLIC WORKS—ANNUALLY
RECURRENT.

Mr. CRANE: Item 13 (Token Vote—Transport (including punts, etc., etc., \$15,000) was \$5 for 1928 and it is now \$15,000. May we have some explanation?

Major CRAIG: The amount represents the total sum that has been used for some years and it is now being simply put on the Estimates. Any savings on the vote at the end of the year was paid into revenue. This year there is to be an advance account to draw on. It is estimated that revenue of \$16,000 will be received, which will go direct to revenue and not go into the Accountant's books as has been previously done.

The CHAIRMAN: The fact is that in previous years the Director of Public Works was allowed to pay expenditure under this item out of revenue. The

Treasurer has interfered and said his earnings must be paid into the general revenue.

Item 10—Historic Sites, Ancient Buildings and Landmarks, \$100.

Mr. ELEAZAR: There is somebody who is very anxious to destroy the ancient landmarks of this country. The vote for their preservation has been reduced from \$200 to \$100 for this year. I think these landmarks should be preserved and while we are preserving them let us do it whole-heartedly. I think we ought to carry the vote out at \$200.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the hon. Colonial Secretary will tell us if there is any Committee that looks after ancient landmarks.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is no Committee, sir. I think this vote was reduced because work was done last year which will not be required this year. One of the best relics is in the Essequibo River and last year I arranged for a gang of prisoners to go there and clean the place up. It has been thoroughly cleaned and I hope from the instructions given that attention will be paid to it and all undergrowth kept down.

Mr. CRANE: You hit the nail on the head, sir, when you asked if it is the business of anybody to look after these ancient landmarks. At Zealandia, Wakenaam, there is a chimney which is a landmark and a beautiful piece of work, and it has a lightning conductor which needs attention. Nobody can be found who has any connexion with it.

The CHAIRMAN: I think hon. members will be doing their share of service if they form a small society for looking after these things. Government will be able to place at their disposal the money for the preservation of these relics.

Major CRAIG: With reference to the chimney referred to by the hon. Member for West Demerara, I should

not like to be responsible for sending any man up that chimney to make repairs to it. My feeling as an engineer is that I might be hauled up for manslaughter.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the members of the society will take the risk.

Mr. ELEAZAR: If the money is forthcoming, sir, it will be done.

ROADS, RIVERS, CREEKS AND
PORTAGES.

Mr. FREDERICKS: I ask your indulgence, sir, to join in the appeal of the hon. Member for West Demerara for a landing at Wakenaam. There is an old Dutch stelling there, the middle portion of which requires some repairs. I wonder that someone has not yet gone with the tide and become food for the fishes. The road itself is also badly in need of reconstruction.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the hon. Director of Public Works will tell us if it is included in item 11.

Major CRAIG: Included in that item is a landing stage at Fredericksburg, Wakenaam, which will be carried out this year. All extraordinary work on the roads has been cut out but it may be possible to include the section of the road referred to in expenditure to be incurred out of the loan to be floated.

The CHAIRMAN: Can it be included in item 11?

Major CRAIG: I am afraid, sir, that if I take it out of the \$4,000 other sections of the road will suffer.

The CHAIRMAN: You will see what can be done any way.

Mr. SEERAM: May I ask whether the Director of Public Works has included in his estimates the extension of the roads to Coverden and to Blairmont? I can give no better reason for

the extension of these roads than the petitions of the people themselves. The road to Coverden is already laid out to Hyde Park and it is only a question of putting metal on it.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the extension to Hyde Park included?

Major CRAIG: There is no extension included, sir. The vote is \$350 a mile for maintenance and it takes ten times that sum to resheet the road. Everything will be done to allow foot traffic to get along the road.

The CHAIRMAN: This road is beyond the reach of the railway. You might make a special note of it for next year.

Mr. SEERAM: The roads in the Canals districts, sir, are also in need of attention. The only means of communication with these districts is by roadway, and on one of the roads the car of your predecessor stuck and he had to walk most of the way.

Mr. WOOD (Conservator of Forests): Excuse me rising to a point of order. I was in the car with His Excellency, sir, and the car did not stick but His Excellency went as far as he wanted to get.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The vote for the Kaburi-Taboki road is \$100. For the upkeep of a road 76 miles in length \$100 is a joke. This road was built by prison labour more or less when Captain Baker was Inspector of Prisons. Another 7 miles will land any person beyond the falls, so that there will be no need for the river traffic which has cost the lives of so many persons. The extension of the road will provide traffic in that direction and also in the direction of the Potaro district. I think it is worth Government's while to investigate these roads.

The CHAIRMAN: I have great sympathy with the hon. member but I am afraid that I will be very hard-hearted in my advice to him, and that is to

bring up the subject again in six months' time and then there might be a change in Government policy. I am afraid that communication by road is at present beyond our capacity in view of trade in the interior. As a matter of fact this \$100 is a joke as the hon. member says. I do not know what the joke is for, but probably the Director of Public Works knows how he is going to use it. To make that road would cost \$18,000 to \$20,000 at the very least.

Major CRAIG: These roads are simply trails. I do not think that if the hon. member tried to walk that 76 miles he would appreciate it. It is not a road by any means.

Mr. BAYLEY (Managing Director, Colonial Transport Department): I ask that the amount of item 67 (Clearing Creeks—Canje, \$1,800) be extended to \$2,280. The position is that the Colonial Transport Department have been required to take over the charge of the creek and to keep it clear from the beginning of the year. We sent up a Mechanical Engineer to examine the creek and he reported that \$2,280 is the minimum sum for which the creek can be kept clear.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have great pleasure in seconding the amendment. The creek is impassable now.

Major CRAIG: The clearing of all these creeks depends very much on supervision. The reason for transferring the clearing of the creek to the Transport Department is that they have a launch service and it appears to me that they are in a better position to supervise any work done than my Department. I agree with the Managing Director of the Transport Department that the sum is not sufficient to clear the creek.

Amendment agreed to.

PUBLIC WORKS—EXTRAORDINARY.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: Last year a sum of \$1,500 was voted for the erection of a stelling at Morawhanna. During

the whole of the year I received numerous letters from my constituents asking that the promise of Government with regard to the erection of the stelling should be fulfilled.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope to be visiting Morawhanna in about six weeks' time in order to come to a decision whether Government is going to do anything more or not. The locality is extremely unhealthy and a great deal of expenditure will be necessary on drainage and general sanitation, so that until I have seen it I do not feel justified in putting the sum down again.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: If you are going down, sir, I am quite satisfied.

Major CRAIG: I have to move in the item "Completion of the reconstruction of Vergenoegen sluice, \$4,950." This sluice has been the bone of contention all the time I have been in the Colony. The estimated cost was \$11,000 and \$4,950 is a re-vote, the work not having been completed at the end of the year.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member make it clear whether the sluice will be finished within the estimated cost?

Major CRAIG: The sluice will be finished within the estimated cost.

The CHAIRMAN: With any saving?

Major CRAIG: I hope so, sir.

Question put, and agreed to.

Major CRAIG: Another item to be inserted is "Repairs and alterations to stelling at Seba Quarry, \$1,500." I may say for the information of hon. members that the working of the quarry was discontinued in June, 1927, on account of the accumulation of stone in the Public Works yard, at that time there being no pressing need for stone and no further storing accommodation available. At the time heavy repairs were necessary to the stelling, also to the tug "Seba," but owing to the financial position only such repairs were done as

were absolutely necessary. The quarry was re-opened in January, 1928, in order to meet the demands of the Resident Engineer of the sewerage works. Previous to this re-opening it was decided that the quarry should be let on terms of lease. This was advertised and a tender was accepted, but owing to the requirements of the Resident Engineer it was impossible to stop work of the quarry in order to put the stelling and the tug in that state of repair which was essential in handing over the outfit in a reasonably good condition to any contractor, and it was only at Christmas that we have been able to stop work at the quarry, having accumulated sufficient stone at the yard to carry us over the holidays, and to make an estimate of the work necessary to be done. The estimated cost of the repairs to the tug, which includes overhauling the engine, is \$1,876, apportioned \$1,500 payable by Government and \$376 payable by the contractor. The repairs to the stelling are estimated to cost \$1,830, of which Government's liability is \$1,500 and the contractor's \$330. In addition to the alterations and repairs to the stelling the contractor has to construct a low level stelling at a cost of \$410, which will be of great help in expediting delivery of stone from the quarry to Georgetown. I ask for the items "Repairs and alterations to stelling at Seba Quarry, \$1,500" and "Repairs to tug 'Seba', \$1,500." I may add that as an offset against this expenditure there will be accruing to the revenue of the Colony a sum of at least \$5,000 from the royalties from the quarry, which I understand has not been included in the estimate of revenue now before us.

Mr. CRANE: The only thing that occurs to me is that Government without the knowledge of members of the Council leased this quarry, and it is a little difficult for members to be asked to take part in this transaction when we have no information of Government's liability under the lease. We ought to be told the terms on which Government leased the quarry and that is only carrying out our part of the transaction.

The CHAIRMAN: I believe that is what the Director of Public Works' statement amounted to in order to get the lease carried out.

Major CRAIG: The position is that when the contractor took over the quarry it was impossible to stop work, and only temporary repairs could be done to keep the stelling in a satisfactory condition and to the "Seba" until such time as the work could be stopped. From now on the whole of the expense for maintenance of the quarry and all plant is with the contractor. This expenditure would have had to be incurred in any case had there been no contract.

Mr. CRANE: I am quite satisfied.

Question put, and items agreed to.

THE GREAT WAR.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am taking the opportunity under this head to mention something which I had forgotten. I observe that some pensioners get very decent amounts from Government and are still in active competition with private individuals for Government employment and are given preference. It does not seem to me to be fair. Complaint has been made outside and I mention it here.

The CHAIRMAN: I feel almost that I should retire from the Chair when this subject is discussed because I happen to be a pensioner myself in the employ of Government, but in the case of the British Guiana Government paying pension to anyone on his coming on the pay list his emoluments would not be greater than he received before going on pension. I am afraid we cannot stop that.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am very sorry, sir. Whatever cannot be cured must be endured.

REVISION OF THE LAWS OF THE COLONY.

Mr. CRANE: Has Government any information of how far the work of re-

vision of the laws has gone, and how much longer it will be necessary to provide these sums on the Estimates?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. Hector Josephs): As far as I am aware I think the work will be concluded when the laws of the present session have been enacted. Most of the work has been finished and preparations are being made with regard to the printing and indexing of it. As hon. members know several important Ordinances have been enacted at this session and it would have been a serious omission from the revision if they were not included, and steps have been taken to have them included down to the end of the present session.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. member anticipate that these estimates will be the final charge?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No, sir. There is the printing to be done, which is an important item, and estimates are being asked for printing.

PRISONS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Having completed the Estimates I ask leave to revert to item 13 (Allowances) under the head of Prisons. Owing to the decrease of the prison population at the Penal Settlement it is necessary to transfer two or more Warders from Mazaruni to Georgetown, where the Warders receive a house allowance of \$5 per month. I ask that this item be increased by \$120 to \$1,260 to make provision for two Warders who are at

present being transferred to Georgetown.

The CHAIRMAN: That raises an important point which may be of interest to hon. members. I have called for a return of the table of expenditure by Government on house rent and allowances of that nature due to the absence of official quarters. Very probably the total will be found to be such a sum per annum that we shall be justified in building quarters for officers as the interest on any loan less the rent which the officers will have to pay Government will probably be less than Government's actual expenditure every year. That will be another piece of work to be done in 1929 from loan expenditure.

Question put, and agreed to.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Before the adjournment I should just like to announce with your permission, sir, that I have been in correspondence with the Managing Director of the Colonial Transport Service and he says that the "Queriman" will sound her siren to-morrow morning. I suggested two minutes, but he said two minutes would wake every man, woman and child in Georgetown. We will try one minute.

As regards the work of the Council there is not much work for to-morrow, and I think it will not be necessary for hon. members outside of Georgetown to be present. When the adjournment is taken to-morrow it is proposed that we adjourn to some date to be announced later—about the 26th February. I move now that the Council adjourn until 11 o'clock to-morrow.

The Council adjourned accordingly.