

These delays have been due partly to the long intervals between the hearing by the Arbitration Court of disputes, but mainly to the unnecessary and often vexatious appeals made from the Conciliation Board to the Court itself. The troubles that have arisen regarding the half-holiday in shops and factories will be removed. Bills to meet these points will be introduced.

#### INFANT LIFE.

Recent information which has reached me shows the need of further protecting infant life from the neglect so often found in connection with the treatment of children. Legislation will be brought down providing safeguards which experience has shown to be necessary.

#### CHINESE.

Neither here nor elsewhere has the poll-tax succeeded in preventing the immigration of Chinese. For reasons that need not be discussed, the money is always be found to pay the amount of the tax and so enable a certain number of the Chinese to come in. It is very necessary, in the best interests of the European inhabitants of this country, that further restrictions should be imposed. Experience has shown that the more effective and justifiable check is by means of a high educational test. This, it is hoped, with the present poll-tax continued, will have the effect of both reducing the number and raising the standard of this class of immigrants. Legislation on these lines will be introduced.

#### CIVIL SERVICE CLASSIFICATION AND SUPERANNUATION.

As honourable members know, two great Departments—the Railway and the Post and Telegraph—are already classified; and Superannuation Funds exist in connection with the Departments of Railways and Police.

The results have been advantageous both to the State and the officers concerned. The officers work with better spirit, and consequently more efficiently. The Government are satisfied that the same advantages will follow from an extension of the system to the Public Service generally, and Bills will be introduced for that purpose.

The classification scheme will in some cases involve a slight increase of salaries, and, moreover, it is intended to supplement the officers' contribution to the Superannuation Fund by a grant of public money. This year £30,000 will be asked for this purpose, and I am satisfied that Parliament will readily approve it. The country is prosperous, its finances are buoyant, and the Government proposals are a matter as much of justice as generosity to the public servants who labour so loyally and so well in the service of the State.

Classification by statute is necessarily inelastic, and this is accentuated by the steady expansion of the Departments concerned. In the case of the Post and Telegraph, various modifications have been made from time to time by Act, but further alterations are required.

Moreover, to meet future cases, it is proposed that statutory authority be given to the Governor to modify by Order in Council the statutory classification list of any Department, the Order being subject to the approval of both Houses by resolution. In this way, cases for alteration can be dealt with as they arise, and the authority of Parliament preserved. In addition to the classification of the Civil Service, amended classification for both the Railways and the Post and Telegraph Service will be submitted.

As promised last session, I am having prepared a return showing the names and salaries of the Civil servants of the colony, which I propose laying on the table of the House for the information of honourable members before the estimates are considered.

#### NATIONAL ANNUITIES.

Honourable members will recollect that last year the Government circulated a Bill to establish a system of annuities. The encouragement of thrift should be one of the main objects of every Government. It not only makes sure