

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. George	Mr. Darlôt
Mr. Gregory	Sir John Forrest
Mr. Illingworth	Mr. D. Forrest
Mr. Kingsmill	Mr. Higham
Mr. Oats	Mr. Hubble
Mr. Vosper	Mr. Lefroy
Mr. Wallace	Mr. Locke
Mr. Wilson	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. J. F. T. Hassell	Mr. Monger
(Teller).	Mr. Morgans
	Mr. Pennefather
	Mr. Phillips
	Mr. Piesse
	Mr. Quinlan
	Mr. Rason
	Mr. Throssell
	Mr. A. Forrest (Teller).

Question thus negatived.

### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11 o'clock until the next day.

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 12th September, 1900.

Question: Treasurer's Balance, how made—Roads Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Customs Duties Repeal Bill, first reading—Distillation Laws Consolidation Bill, first reading—Police Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Return ordered: Salaries and Wages, Loan and Revenue—Motion: Cattle Restrictions, to Remove; Amendment, Select Committee (passed), Division—Motion: Railway Workshops at Midland Junction, to Construct forthwith (adjourned), Division—Motion: Transcontinental Railway, a Survey—Motion: Railway Associations, to Recognise (adjourned), Division—Motion: Railways, to be controlled by Commissioners (adjourned)—Motion: Ore Smelting, Geraldton, to Assist—Motion: Telegraph Operators at Kalgoorlie (withdrawn)—Motion: Dredging at Albany—Adjournment.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

### PRAYERS.

### QUESTION—TREASURER'S BALANCE, HOW MADE.

MR. HOLMES asked the Premier: 1, Whether the amounts due as salaries and wages to public servants for the month ended 30th June, 1900, and the amounts due to sundry persons for the year ended 30th June, 1900, were shown as liabilities in the Colonial Treasurer's

balance-sheet, published in the *Government Gazette* of 30th July, 1900. 2, On what day in July the Colonial Treasurer closed his accounts for the financial year ended 30th June, 1900.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (for the Premier) replied:—1, Yes. 2, On the 10th July, in accordance with the provisions of the 15th Section of the Audit Act, 1891.

### ROADS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by Mr. QUINLAN, and read a first time.

### CUSTOMS DUTIES REPEAL BILL.

Introduced by the MINISTER OF MINES (for the Premier), and read a first time.

### DISTILLATION LAWS CONSOLIDATION BILL.

Introduced by the ATTORNEY GENERAL, and read a first time.

### POLICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the ATTORNEY GENERAL, and read a first time.

### RETURN—SALARIES AND WAGES, LOAN AND REVENUE.

On motion by MR. HOLMES, ordered that there be laid on the table of the House a return showing,—

1, The total amount of salaries and wages due to public servants payable out of Loan and Revenue respectively, for the month ended 30th June, 1900. 2, The total amount due to sundry persons payable out of Loan and Revenue respectively, for the year ended 30th June, 1900.

### MOTION—CATTLE RESTRICTIONS, TO REMOVE.

MR. MONGER (York) moved:

That, in view of the shortage of stock in the settled portions of this colony, the restrictions at the Port of Fremantle, with reference to the introduction of cattle shipped from Wyndham and the Northern Territory of South Australia, be removed.

He said: It is gratifying to me to see, earlier in the list of notices, a motion standing in the name of the Premier, whereby he proposes to introduce a Bill to repeal duties on live stock for slaughter and on frozen meat. For many months past there has been a great outcry from the people of this colony on

the question of cheap meat, and I think I am safe in saying the motion in my name has that object in view equally as much as has the motion standing in the name of the right hon. gentleman. Some two years ago, when this question was first brought forward in this House, very lengthy debates ensued, and it must be gratifying to members to know that the prognostications of such gentlemen as the leader of the Opposition and others who took a very adverse view of the motion then introduced have not been fulfilled. In fact, the strong opposition two years ago to the introduction of East Kimberley cattle emanated from gentlemen who never owned a hoof and are never likely to own one. These gentlemen foretold great disasters in the shape of diseases to dairy herds in the vicinity of Fremantle. I have the authority of the Chief Inspector of Stock, a gentleman known from one end of Western Australia to the other, to use his name in the few remarks I make in introducing the present motion, and to say that, in his opinion, no harm will ensue from this motion. His identical words are that "at Fremantle there is no shelter for the tick, and the sand drift prevents the tick from hatching its eggs." I am authorised by that gentleman to say that statement has emanated from him. He has also further empowered me to say he would have no objection to take any of these cattle from Kimberley, after they have remained in the quarantine yards at Fremantle for 11 or 12 days, and to place them on the farm which he owns, near Beverley. I think that should be almost a sufficient assurance to members that the risk I am now asking them to accept is a mere bagatelle. The Chief Inspector of Stock also gave me the authority of Mr. Pound, the great Queensland expert upon this matter. Mr. Pound, in the course of his statements to the Queensland Government, said that the life of the tick was 21 days; and as it takes, as a rule, 10 days for a vessel to come down from Kimberley, if these cattle are quarantined in the sand drifts at Fremantle for a further period of 12 days no harm can possibly ensue to those persons who may purchase store cattle. As I said in my early remarks, the one great desire of the people of Western Australia is to get meat at a cheaper price than is now ruling. I understand from those who

are in the habit of importing cattle from East Kimberley that a very large percentage of these animals arrive at Fremantle in what is termed "store condition," and, according to the regulations now in existence, which I am desirous of seeing removed, these cattle can never be taken out of those yards when once they get inside, unless they are forwarded direct to the goldfields or slaughtered on the spot. The result is that a large percentage of these cattle which arrive here in store condition have to be killed, practically for the "fifth quarter." It is to avoid this that I have brought forward the motion standing in my name. I may mention that this notice of motion has appeared before the public ever since the opening of Parliament, and I do not think there has been one comment against it either in the Press or to any individual member of Parliament. I am certain that had the farmers and the residents of Perth and Fremantle and other stock-raising places had any objection, numbers of members of Parliament would have been written to and asked to put a veto on such a motion. I do not think anyone has written to a member, neither do I think any letters have appeared in the public Press of this colony; consequently I take it that the people of Western Australia or those in these parts of Western Australia are desirous of being able to secure these store cattle and to take them up to their farms and ultimately send them to the principal markets of these parts of Western Australia. I beg formally to move the motion standing in my name.

MR. LOCKE (Sussex): I second the motion.

MR. HUBBLE (Gascoyne): I should like to see a dividing line, so that all cattle should be allowed in south of the 29th parallel. That would save the northern parts of the colony, where the tick might grow. I think we ought to protect the northern settlers, and I hope that if the motion be carried, the dividing line I suggest will be adopted.

MR. DARLOT (DeGrey): Two great authorities on this subject of tick, Mr. Pound and Dr. Hunt, have for many years been employed by the Government of Queensland in looking into the matter. Ticks have been well known in Queensland for over 20 years, in the Gulf country,

which is the tropical part of Queensland. The member for the Gascoyne (Mr. Hubble) spoke of allowing these cattle from the tick-infested parts into the country south of the 29th parallel. That would include Geraldton. From what was written by the naturalist sent out by the *Australasian*, we learn that the islands just off Geraldton are the most southern locality known in the Southern Hemisphere where the tropical plant called the mangrove grows. That shows that tropical things may thrive about that parallel, and I would like to warn members who are not conversant with stock that they are taking on a great risk in allowing cattle that may possibly carry the tick to be distributed about the country, because once the country is infested with tick it is always infested with tick. It is ticked for ever. At the same time we have had a good experience now at Fremantle, by the experiments that have been carried on there, and if tick does live in Fremantle and its vicinity, I maintain that it lives all along the Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie railway line, more or less. There is no doubt that if tick live on the cattle, the cattle taken to the fields may have had some too. In the trucks they may have fallen off, and they may have fallen out of the trucks and bred in the country along the line. But as regards the districts into which the cattle may be admitted, I believe it would be a judicious thing for the House to adjourn the debate on the matter for a week, because we know that the pastoralists, as a rule, are a long-suffering class of people, and are very slow to move, and I feel that until they see that there has been some debate on the subject the members of this House will not be communicated with. I tried to find out the feelings of a few of our settlers living in the eastern districts, and they agreed with me that the subject wanted looking into very closely, but they would not state an opinion off-hand. We are about to deal with the motion without consulting the people whom it mostly concerns, because, as I said before, once the country is ticked it will always be ticked.

MR. MONGER: This notice of motion has been on the Notice Paper for a month.

MR. DARLOT: As to the district into which the cattle should go, in my opinion

cattle should be confined to that part of the country south of the 30th parallel, including the Irwin electoral district and the Victoria electoral district. That would allow the port of Geraldton and the grazing country on the Irwin to be used where there is plenty of sand, I believe, to cover up any young ticks that may fall off. Then, provided the stock go through a rigid quarantine term and further inspection, and that no cattle whatsoever are sold or allowed to be distributed about the country coming from any district unless carefully inspected by the stock inspector, they should be allowed to come down here. The House would do well to postpone this matter for a week.

MR. A. FORREST (West Kimberley): We have given a fair trial to the cattle tick question. Two years ago this subject was discussed in the House, and it was decided by a large majority that a trial should be made by allowing ticked cattle to come to Fremantle for sale and be disposed of; further, the cattle were to be allowed to go to the eastern goldfields. These cattle are now trucked as far as Menzies, and are sent by road further up, I think to Niagara, practically into the country in the northern division. That is what is done now. The importers of cattle from East Kimberley can send the cattle to these places if there is a fair amount of feed and water. During these two years a strict inspection has been made by the Chief Inspector of Stock and his officers, who no doubt would have found tick in these districts at the present time if the parasites had spread there. We know at Fremantle sheep are imported from the northern parts of this colony, also from the Eastern colonies, and these sheep are allowed to mix with our own cattle, and to carry away the tick if there are any on the animals. These cattle are sent to the Irwin Plains. Dogs, cattle, and other animals would carry the ticks about, but we have never heard of ticks being found about Fremantle or any other part of this colony where the cattle have been allowed to go. The herds in the East Kimberley district and the northern territory of South Australia are landed here at a small price and we can sell to the producers who will retail to the butchers, which must bring the price of meat down.

MR. HOLMES: Buy at a cheap price and sell at a larger one.

MR. A. FORREST: I would like the hon. member to have had some of our experience lately about selling at a dear price. If you import cattle from East Kimberley, these have to be driven some miles to the port of Wyndham, then they have to remain nine days on a sea voyage, and arrive at Fremantle. The number of stores are equal to 25 per cent. of the shipment, and in one shipment they were equal to 50 per cent. These cattle cannot be taken out of the yards at all. If the House does not agree to the motion the cattle will have to be killed and given to the pigs, and there are 500 cattle waiting at Fremantle at the present time. No ticks have been found on these cattle. The motion if passed will not be in the interests of the squatters in East Kimberley, but in the interests of getting cheap store stock down here. These cattle will be obtained cheaper than any stock ever brought to the country, and at the present time there is plenty of feed for stock, with the good season which we have had, because nothing has been put on to the grass. Speaking for myself, who has a large interest in cattle and sheep, I should be the last to attempt, for the sake of a few cattle coming from East Kimberley, to try and tick the country. It is the impression of everyone to whom I have spoken that there can be no objection to the cattle coming down, and the Chief Inspector of Stock told me yesterday that he would stake his reputation that there is no risk of tick being spread after 22 days from the port of shipment. Surely that is enough for the House to go upon. This matter was discussed fully two years ago, and there has been a good trial of sending the cattle down here, therefore the settlers in the back country should be allowed to distribute their stock down here after 22 days quarantine. At present the cattle have to be kept in quarantine and fed on hay.

MR. D. FORREST: That is good for the farmers.

MR. A. FORREST: But ruinous to the squatters. I have no objection to the motion being amended so as to allow cattle to come into the country below the 29th parallel of latitude.

MR. HOLMES (East Fremantle): I have much pleasure in supporting the motion of the member for York (Mr. Monger). I think I can claim that I was one of the strongest opponents to the introduction of cattle from East Kimberley. I opposed it at every possible opportunity, and I stuck to my opposition until it was decided to land cattle at Fremantle. I then had the evidence of the expert (Mr. Hancock) before me, that "once tick always tick," and I think we might just as well liberate the cattle and let them go through the Eastern districts. The House would not agree with me on that point, and it was decided that the cattle should remain in quarantine for a certain period.

MR. MOORHEAD: Tick has never been in the Southern districts.

MR. HOLMES: That is what the members from the Eastern districts argued when the matter was before the House on a previous occasion.

MR. MOORHEAD: There is not the moisture in the Southern districts.

MR. HOLMES: It was decided at the time to let the cattle come in, and there has been every opportunity for the tick to spread in the districts around Fremantle. Men go into the quarantine area every day on horses and they take dogs with them to round up the cattle. They drive the cattle out and the horses and the dogs carry the tick from place to place. The cattle have to remain in the quarantine area for a certain period, but the horses and dogs are allowed to come out. The milking cows around Fremantle are allowed to go up to the quarantine area and eat the hay from outside. We have had an exceptionally good season this year, and there is grass throughout the length and breadth of the Southern districts. There is grass in every paddock and every field, but unfortunately there are no stock to eat it. During the winter months there has been such a scarcity of stock that butchers have been compelled to buy everything available, fat or store. No doubt the only way to get cheap meat to market is to bring the supplies within reasonable distance of the demand, and as long as we have the supply and can bring fat cattle from the northern districts, then the question will arise in regard to price, because the shipper and the importer have to run a

risk of sending any of the cattle back from where they are brought, or sell them as pigs' meat, as the hon. member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) said just now. The only means of obtaining cheap store cattle for the southern districts is to obtain them from East or West Kimberley, and West Kimberley has not too many cattle to spare. But in East Kimberley and in the Northern Territory of South Australia there are any amount of stock available, and if these cattle are brought to Fremantle and are not fat, they can be fed there and prepared for market. I would urge on the House the necessity of preventing the stock from being brought overland. I think it is possible that during certain seasons to bring cattle from Kimberley overland right to the port of Fremantle and thence to the northern districts. If that is allowed it must have an effect on some of the herds through which these cattle pass.

MR. CONNOR: What harm have they done?

MR. A. FORREST: Very little harm can be done.

MR. HOLMES: In East Kimberley the conditions are suitable to tick, and I have it on good authority that in East Kimberley a number of cattle die there which we know nothing about. Some of the settlers in the immediate vicinity of Cossack have the ticked cattle driven through their herds, and the climatic conditions being suitable, the chances are the ticks spread into these districts, whereas the ticks will not thrive in or about Fremantle.

MR. CONNOR: That is done time after time.

MR. DOHERTY: After twenty-one days there can be no tick.

MR. CONNOR (East Kimberley): I did not intend to enter into this debate, but I cannot help adding a few words to explain some of the ideas of various members who have spoken. Referring to what the member for the DeGrey (Mr. Darlôt) has said, I must point out to him that 700 or 800 head of cattle were brought to his station on the Murchison right overland through East Kimberley from the Northern Territory of South Australia. The station was known as Darlôt Brothers' on which these cattle were put. The cattle were taken

there on the same conditions that they would be to-day. The cattle were on the station for some time and then brought down here, but no harm was done. I am absolutely certain that what I say is true. These cattle were brought from Wave Hill, the very same station that the cattle came from that this House decided should not be admitted, and which this House thought would be the means of introducing tick to this portion of Western Australia. The action at that time cost the country a very great deal of money, by preventing the people in East Kimberley sending their cattle down here. These cattle were brought down from East Kimberley and West Kimberley; they travelled overland, and eventually were placed on the particular station on the Murchison to which I have referred. I mention this only for the information of the House. Personally I do not care if the restriction be removed or not. I shall not be affected one way or the other. I am much pleased indeed to see the liberal attitude the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) has assumed in this matter. It is in marked contradistinction to the stand taken up by some hon. members a few years ago—

MR. A. FORREST: Not by me.

MR. CONNOR: When the tick question was discussed in this House and the question whether cattle should come from East to West Kimberley. On that occasion the hon. member (Mr. A. Forrest) voted that East Kimberley cattle should not come through West Kimberley.

MR. A. FORREST: I did not vote for that. I have *Hansard* before me.

MR. CONNOR: At all events the hon. member did vote that West Kimberley should not be subjected to the indignity of an inspector's going there to see whether it was or was not tick-infested. I merely mention these things in passing. I shall not oppose, but shall support this motion. It is so important to the Southern districts to have every facility for producing stock that it would be a calamity if such facilities were not afforded. The people of the South are hungering for the stock; the stock can be grown in East Kimberley, and can also be brought in through that district from the Northern Territory of South

Australia; and by that means we can reduce the price of meat. Of course, I have no particular reason for trying to reduce the price of meat. Stock raisers are of course desirous of getting a fair price for their product. It is not for the people in the North of the colony to try to reduce the price of stock so far that stock-owners cannot live. But the fact remains that stock can be produced in the North, and people in the Southern districts want that stock. We people of the North can supply it, my own constituents included; and, having now had two years' experience since the restrictions were removed and cattle were permitted to be brought from the North to Fremantle and distributed all over the goldfields, we know that no harm has occurred, though there are two or three dairy herds now at Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie absolutely mixing with the cattle from the North. I wish to suggest that, to reduce the price of beef here, it is necessary that store cattle, or fat cattle, if possible, should be brought here as cheaply as possible; and if the Northern Territory of South Australia and North Queensland were opened to this colony's markets by the establishment of a stock route between those places and East Kimberley, cattle could be brought overland to Perth and Fremantle, and the people in our southern districts could be supplied, not only with store cattle, but with breeding cattle.

MR. A. FORREST: The distance would be too great.

MR. CONNOR: Why too great? Because there would be too much competition at the finish; that is the reason. Surely we here are not afraid of competition. The member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) has asked a question in this House, with the result that a Bill has been put before us for the abolition of the duty on live stock and frozen meat. With what object is this done? Is it done because we have too much revenue and do not require the money derived from the meat duty? No; it is because the people here demand cheaper living; and I say we are perfectly right in abolishing that duty; but we should go further. We should give facilities whereby cattle can be brought to Fremantle by the cheapest possible means; and that is overland. The hon. member (Mr. A. Forrest) talked

about the risk of tick. That is ridiculous. It is said that in East Kimberley there is tick fever. I admit there are two or three sorts of tick in that district. I admit the cattle tick is there; but what is between East and West Kimberley?

MR. MITCHELL: An imaginary boundary.

MR. A. FORREST: The tick has not yet been found in West Kimberley.

MR. CONNOR: Now I think I am not outside my rights in saying in reply to that challenge that, from information I have received, the tick has been found there.

MR. A. FORREST: The inspector does not say so.

A MEMBER: But there is no inspector in West Kimberley.

MR. CONNOR: My information was received from a very good man. I know him personally, and I would take his word. He says he has killed cattle in Derby with tick on them. How can it be otherwise, when there is no artificial boundary between East and West Kimberley?

MR. A. FORREST: The herds in the respective districts are a long way apart.

MR. CONNOR: No; the stations are almost adjoining each other. Take the herds at the Margaret River, for instance: cattle are being reared all along the boundary line on each side, and moreover horses are constantly travelling from one district to the other. The mail goes from East to West Kimberley, and *vice versa*; and they tell me that the road between the two districts is absolutely flat, with only a little sand to retard progress. Does any hon. member mean to say that while there is tick in East Kimberley there is no tick in West Kimberley, though the stations are almost touching each other? I am not going to force this question; but I submit, for the consideration of this House, that if the reason put forward for the removal of these restrictions, namely, the cheapening of the price of cattle, and the consequent reduction of the cost of living, be good reasons, then these restrictions on the importation of cattle should be absolutely wiped out, and the cattle from the north-east allowed to come overland. The magnificent wet season we have recently had in the eastern goldfields districts, where we were

told we should never get rain or stock feed, is another argument in favour of my contention. I was there for over a month recently, and those districts are like wheat fields. It is a pity to see such a valuable asset in the shape of pasture going to waste and being blown away. We should not only breed and increase cattle there, and make a pastoral country of the district, but we should actually produce cattle in that district cheaper than they could be brought here by sea. I support the motion, and I hope it will be carried, though it may undergo some modification; but I cannot see why if we are going to bring the cattle to Fremantle and distribute them throughout the colony, we should not be allowed to bring them overland all the way to Fremantle, thereby solving the problem which has given rise to this debate.

**MR. HIGHAM (Fremantle):** While thoroughly sympathising with the object of this motion, I think it goes a little too far; and I move that it be amended by striking out all the words after "colony" and inserting—

That a select committee be appointed to consider the present stock regulations so far as they affect the destination of cattle from East Kimberley and the Northern Territory of South Australia.

**MR. MOOREHEAD:** Why not say a royal commission?

**MR. HIGHAM:** I say a select committee would answer the purpose. Such a committee could also get the evidence to which the member for the DeGrey (Mr. Parlôt) has just referred. As one of the members of the select committee which previously considered this subject, I feel pleased to think our action on that occasion has eventually resulted in so much good to the pastoralists in East Kimberley and to the community at large. We on that select committee were hounded down because we were said to be trying to decimate the herds in those Northern districts, trying to ruin small farmers in the Southern districts, and to ruin everyone interested in the industry in East Kimberley. We were told so, not only on the floor of this House, but by hundreds of correspondents through the Press. Now we have had two years' experience of the prohibition; and the result has been nothing but good for the community. If the

result of my present suggestion be no worse than that which followed the labours of the previous select committee, it may have the effect of providing cheaper meat for our consumers, and of providing stock for all those thousands of acres of grass which are now lying idle. I certainly think the question requires more consideration than it is likely to receive from the passing of this motion. The Select Committee may prevent the existing regulations from being too much altered, and may still restrict the bringing in of these cattle; and while the committee may open the quarantined areas very considerably, they may still protect many of the Southern cattle owners, where that is desirable.

**THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. H. B. Lefroy):** I second the amendment. The motion really means that the cattle from districts in the North supposed to be tick-infested should be allowed to be scattered throughout the length and breadth of the southern districts of the colony. Two years ago we had a very lengthy debate on this subject; a select committee was appointed, and expert evidence taken. I think it was generally considered that this colony would be running a considerable risk by allowing cattle from the infested district to be introduced to these southern districts to mix with the herds throughout the length and breadth of this part of the colony. Such a matter ought to have a little more ventilation than it has received.

**MR. DOHERTY:** Two years is a long time.

**THE MINISTER OF MINES:** We have had two years' experience of the introduction of cattle to Fremantle—[**MR. CONNOR:** Eight years]—and of sending them by rail to the eastern gold-fields; but as far as I am aware, we have had no experience of how the mixing of such cattle with the other cattle in the southern districts has affected the latter. The member for York (Mr. Monger) states this motion of his has been on the Notice Paper for some time, and that owners of stock throughout the colony have had an opportunity of reading his motion in the local papers. I admit they may have had such an opportunity, but still I am not fully satisfied that they have availed themselves of it in the southern districts of the colony.

MR. DOHERTY: Where is the stock in the southern districts?

THE MINISTER OF MINES: I maintain that if a man owns 20 or 50 head of cattle, his cattle are just as important to him as 500 or 5,000 head of cattle are to a wealthy pastoralist. There are numbers of people in these southern districts who, to a large extent, depend for their livelihood on dairying and on the raising of stock in small numbers. A farmer with 20 to 50 head of stock has just as much at stake as the owner of a large number of cattle on a big station, and the former should be protected. Members have urged that tick will not live in the southern districts beyond an imaginary line; but I am not satisfied such a line can be drawn, and a matter of this sort ought to be more fully considered than is possible on the floor of the House. Some hon. members are very fond of expressing the opinion that there are no cattle south of Kimberley.

MR. DOHERTY: And it is absolutely right.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: I maintain there are considerable numbers of cattle which are of just as much interest to their owners as the Kimberley cattle to owners there. In the district I represent there are some of the finest cattle ever sent to market in Western Australia.

MR. DOHERTY: They are not bred in the district.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: They are bred in the district to a very large extent; and I know one station where there are now from 100 to 150 calves.

MR. MONGER: The owner of the station would not object to the motion.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: There are numbers of other cases I could also mention, and the feelings of these people ought to be considered. I am not very well up in the question of tick, but I know the scourge has created tremendous havoc in Queensland; and I would like to be more satisfied than I am at present that tick will not live in the southern districts of this colony. The desire in this motion is to allow stock not now fit for slaughter to come from Kimberley, and as store stock to be fattened here; but it may be there are persons in Fremantle now who own cattle which they are anxious to dispose of, and it is very natural those people, in order not to

lose the value of their cattle entirely, should desire to place them where they can fatten.

MR. MONGER: Notice of the motion was given weeks ago.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: It is not necessary to remind me of that fact, and I am not inferring the motion was introduced to meet any particular case. The motion was evidently introduced for the purpose of allowing stock to come to Fremantle from Kimberley, and be pastured and fitted for the market in the southern districts. If it should happen that tick did get started in these southern districts, and I do not know anyone is able to state such is impossible—

MR. A. FORREST: Your own inspector says it is impossible.

MR. MONGER: I have the greatest authorities in Australia to show that tick could not live in the southern districts.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: I am not satisfied it is impossible for tick to live south of some imaginary line.

MR. MOORHEAD: A select committee would not convince you that it is.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: If we allow cattle to come here, and the tick does get established in the southern districts, we do not know where the pest will end. Cattle come from all parts of the colony to show at Guildford and elsewhere, and as these will come in contact with other cattle, the tick, if it exist, will be scattered broadcast. We must exercise considerable care, and not "rush" this question in the Assembly at the present moment, there being no necessity for undue haste in the matter. Pastoralist interests are not very largely represented in the House, but I am certain hon. members are anxious to do justice to those interests. Everybody in the colony desires that the price of meat should be lower, but that object will be defeated if, by the introduction of tick-infected cattle from Kimberley, the disease becomes established in the southern districts. An outbreak of tick would not mean the cheapening of meat, but rather the increasing of the price, and I am not satisfied that tick will not live in the southern districts of the colony.

MR. MOORHEAD: Would a select committee convince you?

THE MINISTER OF MINES: An important question of this sort ought to



be gone into most carefully, and some direct evidence should be obtained as to the tick, and the class of country in which it is likely to exist. We want direct evidence from persons who are supposed to have better knowledge than we have ourselves; at any rate, I am not satisfied I have sufficient knowledge to give even an intelligent vote on the question at the present time. I want, moreover, to allow owners of stock in the southern districts an opportunity of seeing that some consideration is being given to this matter, and of expressing their views; because the motion is of just as much importance to the owner of 50 head of stock, or of 20 dairy cows there, as to the owner of 5,000 or 10,000 head of cattle in the Kimberley district.

**MR. MOORHEAD:** The question is, of what importance is it to the consumers.

**THE MINISTER OF MINES:** As a question has been asked, I will say that the consumer would get no direct advantage from this motion at all.

**MR. A. FORREST:** Why?

**THE MINISTER OF MINES:** The stock would not go into the market straight away, but, as is the object of the motion, would be taken away to be fattened, possibly to some places where tick would find a habitat, and thence be scattered abroad. Hon. members have said this afternoon, "Once tick-infested, always tick-infested." That goes to the whole root of the question; and we ought to be most careful that the southern districts do not become tick-infested. I remember well the discussion which took place two years ago, and the interest members displayed in the matter, and it appears to me hon. members have changed their views.

**MR. DOHERTY:** We have had two years' experience.

**THE MINISTER OF MINES:** I have seen nothing since to satisfy me I would be wise in changing my opinions. It would be advisable to have the Chief Inspector of Stock examined before a select committee, and have the benefit of his experience and knowledge, and we would also be able to call any further evidence which would throw light on the subject. This question calls for the gravest consideration, and I trust that members who represent persons in

the colony owning even only ten dairy cows, will endeavour as far as possible to protect the interests of those small owners by preventing the possibility of tick becoming established in our midst. No doubt it is necessary to go more deeply into the question than we have up to the present, and while I have every sympathy with hon. members who support the original motion, this matter ought not to be decided with indecent haste, but fully considered so as to allow pastoralists and owners of cattle in the southern districts an opportunity of expressing their views.

**MR. DOHERTY (North Fremantle):** At the outset I may say I favour the motion and am against the amendment, because the experience of the past two years has shown no ill effects from the introduction of the Kimberley cattle. I need not confine myself to two years, because we have really had eight years' experience. There is no doubt tick cattle came down four or five years ago; and if Wyndham cattle came at that time they must have carried tick, because the pest was found in the particular herd. After those years' of experience no tick has been found in local herds, though I have yet to discover there is such a thing as "local herds" in this part of the colony. The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) will bear me out when I say there was great scarcity of cattle some months ago. The firm of Forrest, Emanuel and Company and my own firm sent men all over the colony, and with twenty men out on the search, we could not get fifty fat bullocks in a week. We had two men in the southern districts, where it is said there are cattle, but in a fortnight they managed to get only six head. It is said tick will destroy the herds in the southern districts, but I do not know where those herds are, or what respectable tick would travel from here to Bunbury to find one of those poleys which, if we had them in the North, we would shoot. The Minister of Mines spoke of local breeders, but there are really none; and if a man brands 150 head of cattle in the district of which the Minister spoke, it is regarded as an enormous number.

**THE MINISTER OF MINES:** Those are of just as much importance to the owner as would be 5,000 head of cattle.

MR. DOHERTY: Then the Minister would keep up the price of beef to starvation rates for the sake of a man with 150 head of cattle.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: There are hundreds of such men.

MR. DOHERTY: There are not. We sent out day by day, and one member on this side of the House went on his knees and begged us for five head of cattle, saying he could not get what he required. There are no cattle in this end of the colony, and the only way to cheapen beef is by introducing some stock from the Kimberleys. If the regulations are entirely removed, our firm will be prepared to-morrow to start four thousand head of breeders down from Kimberley, and it will not interfere with any herds of cattle here. They would come down by the Sturt, the head of the DeGrey, and Lake Way. We will start the place with 4,000 breeders, if you will let us. We will do our very best to get nearer to the market on the goldfields, and the method would be of advantage to the goldfields. Mr. C. J. Pound wants beasts to be quarantined for 21 days, and he says that if a tick falls off an animal there is no possibility of its getting on again. If you make a tick depôt at any portion of the Kimberleys, the animals will stay there 21 days, and we can then travel them overland and assist this market materially. Kimberley will more than supply this market, if properly handled, and I wish that to be thoroughly understood. If we get cattle overland, the people who have grass here and small holdings will be able to buy store stock cheap, and to get breeders to keep this market supplied, which is another consideration. During certain months of the year the stock from Kimberley and from the eastern colonies is very hard to get, the consequence being that the market becomes bare, and the consumers suffer. Speaking in the interests of the people who have to buy beef, I would urge that you allow the whole of the restrictions to come off, in this way; that you have a quarantine area in Kimberley and let the cattle come down by the route I have indicated, after they have been in quarantine for 21 days; then let them be put into quarantine at Fremantle for 21 days, and then go out to the southern districts. I

think that if that suggestion be carried out, it will be of advantage to the Kimberley people, and to the people in this end of the colony. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion of the member for York (Mr. Monger).

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell): I have referred this matter to the head of the Stock Department, whose opinion coincides with that expressed by various speakers in support of the motion. He wrote a report showing that last year a total of nearly eight thousand cattle was dealt with in the stock yards at Owen's Anchorage, and that no evil resulted. There has not been a report of a single tick. Whilst that is so, I cannot deny to myself that there are people in other parts of this country who have a great interest in this question. The last speaker asked satirically, where are the herds of cattle in this part of the colony? I would remind hon. members that whilst I am not opposed to the motion, a very large section of the people in the south-western and eastern parts have to be considered. There was a time when greater attention was paid to the breeding of cattle than at the present, and I am of opinion that those people who are engaged in that business have to be well considered before we rush such a motion through the House. I do not think that the motion as it reads conveys all that is intended. Personally I should not be inclined to oppose it. I take it that, if shippers are allowed to ship fat stock to this part of the colony to their utmost capacity, this part of Western Australia will benefit, but what advantage will the southern part of the colony derive from the motion as it now stands? I take it that it is intended to encourage the introduction of store cattle and cows from the northern parts of the country to enable farmers to stock up. If that be so, it conveys a better meaning to the motion. There can be no question that there is at the present time a very great dearth of stock in the southern parts of the country. There are great portions of grass going to waste and the holders are unable to stock up at reasonable prices. If this motion can be adapted so as to minimise any danger arising, I am not prepared at the present time to oppose it. But I approve of the amendment by the member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham) to put

the whole question into the hands of a select committee and let it be threshed out. I should be very sorry to be charged with allowing this motion to be rushed through the House, seeing that there are very large interests besides those of Kimberley and the goldfields to be considered. I desire to leave the impression that I am not opposed to the motion. I strongly indorse the words of the Stock Inspector, but seeing there are large sections of the community interested, let the whole matter be put into the hands of a select committee, which will give time to those people in the country districts to know what is going forward and to make representations. If those interested in the motion are honest in their intention, I am sure they will not object to the appointment of a select committee. If there is not any danger, and I do not think there is any, the motion will be carried, and effect given to it. Two years ago, when this question came up, we were all filled with fear. An expert was introduced from Queensland, who told us that dire disaster would follow. As you may imagine, the question has been very closely watched by the department, and the man whose duty it was to watch it, and up to date no evil has resulted. As I remarked, nearly 8,000 cattle have been dealt with. They have been trucked alive to the goldfields, and the inspector believes that less danger would attend the whole question if the quarantine regulations were done away with. Cattle go to the quarantine station, where they are examined by the expert, who vouches for their cleanliness before they leave the place. This is a motion which will affect the whole of the colony, and the question arises whether the country is prepared to take the risk. As I said before, as the matter now appears, I am not opposed to the motion. But it is my duty to put the other side of the question before the House, and I believe that the best results will be attained, if the whole question is threshed out by a select committee.

MR. LOCKE (Sussex) : I am sorry I cannot support this amendment. Two years ago we heard as much about ticks as any Parliament wanted to. The subject was before us for months, and we had all the evidence of all the experts in the country. We were assured then by the Government veterinary surgeon (Mr.

Edwards), together with the Chief Inspector, that there would be no danger in bringing these cattle down, and there has been do danger evidently. No later than this morning I had a long talk on the matter with the veterinary surgeon, and he says there is not the slightest danger in allowing these cattle to come down. The Chief Inspector says he will stake his reputation on it. They are men who think a lot of their reputation. I hope, at any rate, that the House will say it will be a good thing for the farmers to be able to get hold of stock. There are none available at the present time, and if the farmers can get them it will be to the advantage of the public generally. I have much pleasure in supporting the member for York (Mr. Monger).

MR. MITCHELL (Murchison) : At the present time cattle are put into trucks at Fremantle and taken away to the goldfields, and they should be well looked after there, so that they shall have no chance of straying away and getting mixed up with others. As I take it, if this motion be carried, cattle coming down will be distributed in the southern districts of the colony. My friend who sits on my right (Mr. Phillips) told me just now that he would not object to have some of these store cattle. If these people would take such cattle after they have been quarantined for 21 days, and would guarantee them after they have been in their possession for three or four months, there would be no objection, so far as I can see, to allowing the admission of the cattle. I represent a squatting and farming district, and I should be failing in my duty if I had not a few words to say in regard to this subject. I think the question may be met by the amendment of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham), although I do not admit that I have much confidence in a select committee. Still the appointment of a select committee would, no doubt, give us time to get some valuable information from those who will come and give it. What I want to know is this: supposing we have a select committee, are we to get all the people who are come-at-able to-day to give the information? If we are to have a select committee, we must have people from the far stations and hear what they say about the subject. We must not have counter-jumpers and others about

Perth: we must have real, practical squatters.

MR. DOHERTY: Where from? The Murray?

MR. MITCHELL: I say the Murchison. I cannot support the original motion of the member for York (Mr. Monger), yet I will support the amendment, for the sake of giving us a little time to try and get some valuable information.

MR. WALLACE (Yalgoo): In saying a few words on this subject, I suppose I shall be taunted with the old question, "What do you know about this matter?" Notwithstanding that, I am going to express my opinion independently of the good or evil that it will do to any particular member of the House. I believe, and I say it over again, that this motion is brought forward not for the benefit of the people of the colony, but of a few who are interested in cattle-dealing. In reading the motion one would be inclined to think that there is an honest intention to do good to the consuming population, because the first line reads thus—

MR. MONGER: That is the intention.

MR. WALLACE: "That in view of the shortage of stock in the settled portions of the colony." That would lead people to think there was a desire to provide these southern settlers with breeding stock. Anyone who has watched the progress of the squatters in the whole of Australia throughout the last three years, will agree that there is a big scarcity of stock throughout Australia; and those people in the North who are anxious to send their breeding cattle here to sell to selectors have enormous tracts of country which are not one-quarter stocked.

MR. DOHERTY: Oh, nonsense!

MR. WALLACE: One hon. member says the breeding cattle sent down here will be old cows. I ask, are old cows fit for consumption or fit for breeding purposes? I say they are not. We have also heard the admission from a gentleman who is interested in a station in the Kimberley district that if this motion is carried and the quarantine regulations are removed, his firm will travel 4,000 head of breeding cattle overland.

MR. MONGER: This motion does not refer to breeding cattle at all.

MR. WALLACE: The motion does not say so, but interested persons say that as soon as the quarantine regulations are removed they will travel 4,000 head of breeding cattle into this portion of the colony. That is sufficient to urge those members who are sent here to legislate for the country, and not to legislate for themselves, to keep their eyes open and watch those who are supporting the motion before the House. Amongst those hon. members I am sorry to say I find one who, the last time the matter was before the House, was dead against the removal of any part of the prohibition whatever.

MR. A. FORREST: Who?

MR. WALLACE: There is no necessity to ask. Those whom the cap fits let them wear it. There is a lot of legislation in this House commonly called "axe-grinding," and I am not going to be a party to that. These cattle which are to be brought from Kimberley will be taken amongst the herds of the South-West.

MR. DOHERTY: Where do you find them?

MR. WALLACE: I was prepared for that interjection. We have an instance of one unfortunate man in the vicinity of Perth who was ruined, not through the tick getting amongst his stock, but through the laxity of those responsible for the carrying out of the quarantine regulations, and his cattle got pleuro. That dairyman was ruined: hon. members will remember the case I refer to. We see no evil results from the tick, but we have no guarantee that the same trouble which the squatters in Queensland had will not be experienced here. We are told by the authorities on tick that after 21 days the ticks fall off and die. Allowing that in 21 days the tick does die, I want to ask this question: It takes stock ten or eleven days to come down here. They are quarantined at Fremantle, and then sent to Coolgardie. We have the report of the Chief Inspector of Stock before us containing a statement by the Inspector of Stock at Coolgardie, who says that stock arriving from Kimberley show evidence of suffering from the parasites, but he goes on to say that owing to the stringent regulations no infection is carried back to the southern districts. I do not believe that any regulations are sufficiently stringent to guard against the

tick disease. I know that a beast may not be diseased if it has tick on it, but disease generally follows the infestation. If, as the inspector at Coolgardie reports, tick has been discovered on the stock at Coolgardie, are we to believe that, or are we to believe Mr. Pound, the authority from Queensland, who says that the tick lives only 21 days? There is a certain latitude given to the butchers of Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie in respect to the herding of their cattle outside the slaughter-houses, still we have instances in which firms of butchers have been punished for going beyond that boundary, and I believe the butchers are taking up areas of land further out, which probably will be termed quarantine lands, and within these areas butchers are allowed to herd cattle. We are gradually extending the danger by extending the areas on the goldfields. I may be met with the retort that there are no cattle on the goldfields. That I admit, and perhaps there is not as much danger in extending the quarantine areas there. As far as I have any power I shall not allow the distribution of store stock around Perth.

MR. DOHERTY: They never go round Perth.

MR. WALLACE: Or in any part of the southern districts whatever. I shall not agree to any motion or report by a select committee that will suggest that these cattle shall be brought down from Kimberley as store cattle. In passing I should like to refer to the remarks of the member for Murchison (Mr. Mitchell), who asks why the squatters should send their cattle down here as stores. Any one who knows anything about stock might ask the same question. We find two or three year old cattle coming down here as fats and store cattle, and they are turned into the paddocks at Gingin and other places to fatten. This will simply bring in the ticks wholesale. We had the report of Mr. Hancock, of Queensland; the Commissioner of Crown Lands has referred to that report, and I take it from his remarks that he does not look on Mr. Hancock's report as very satisfactory, inasmuch as his prophecy has not been borne out by any dire disaster occurring; but that is because for a time we shut out the ticked cattle; it is also because the cattle were only allowed to come in here under conditions which so

far have been carefully carried out at Fremantle. The cattle are allowed to go into the quarantine yards and be distributed from there, and we find that every day the regulations are being broken through. Though disaster has not come about, is it likely that any reasonable people are going to throw open our doors and allow the cattle to stray about through the dairy herds of the South. We find certain members of this House, and certain persons outside who are interested in this particular industry, advancing many different reasons for the removal of the prohibition, and we have heard several reasons in the House, one of them being that there is a desire to give the consumer cheap meat. I ask any hon. member or any other person, do they believe that there is a possibility of a reduction being made in the price of beef or mutton within the next five years?

MR. DOHERTY: Yes.

MR. A. FORREST: There is a reduction now.

MR. CONNOR: Not tinned meat.

MR. A. FORREST: You can buy meat at 6d. a lb. now

MR. WALLACE: With all due respect to the cattle importers, I do not wonder that there is not a fall in meat: I wonder the cattle do not fall in one body when we see such poor animals as I saw at the cattle-yards last Thursday. The cattle dealers have sent such a class of cattle into the market that the butchers will not have it. The dealers thought the market was so bare that the butchers would have any class of cattle at any price. Now the dealers want an outlet for their cattle, and this motion is brought forward to allow them to run cattle down to our market.

MR. MONGER: This motion was tabled a month ago.

MR. WALLACE: The Chief Inspector of Stock in his report points out that the tick have fairly established themselves in the Kimberley districts. We have removed the embargo allowing cattle to go into Kimberley from South Australia. The same thing existed in Queensland, where there is an imaginary boundary: one day the cattle are grazing on the South Australian side, the next day they are grazing in Queensland. What is to prevent the Queensland squatters in the Gulf grazing their cattle in South Australia and sending them to the Victoria

River? Eventually these cattle will find their way into our markets.

MR. CONNOR: Why should they not?

MR. WALLACE: We prohibit the importation of cattle from Queensland, because that colony is ticked up.

MR. CONNOR: No.

MR. WALLACE: We are now allowing, or endeavouring to allow, those cattle to come in; and at the same time, we are trying to give one or two cattle-dealers here a sole monopoly of the meat supply. It is clearly the desire of these dealers to get a further monopoly; and that old cry of cheap meat for the people and cheap breeding cattle for the settlers in the South-West is one that I do not think any southern stock-owner would believe for a moment.

MR. A. FORREST: Well, what does it mean?

MR. WALLACE: I understand some amendment has been made that this question be referred to a select committee. Of the two evils I should certainly choose the select committee; but I have no faith in select committees. The dominant party in this House are in favour of this motion; and if we get a select committee, if I may be permitted to anticipate the result, I feel sure this motion will be given effect to. I have no stock of my own, but some of my constituents are stock-owners.

MR. DOHERTY: How many head of stock do they own?

MR. WALLACE: I do not care how many; even if they own only two milking cows. As the Minister of Mines said, 150 head of cattle mean as much to their proprietor as 5,000 head mean to a wealthy pastoralist; for those 150 cattle may be the whole of their owner's wealth, and why should not such a man's interests be considered by members of this House, seeing that we represent the poor as well as the rich? The Chief Inspector of Stock has been unable to get an account showing the mortality of stock in Kimberley, and I believe it is a perusal of this report of the inspector which makes the Minister of Lands have so little faith in the report of the Queensland expert, Mr. Hancock. The Minister of Lands sees in this report of our Chief Inspector that the mortality is very light; but the Chief Inspector goes on to say:

At the same time I do not wish it to be understood that this represents the heaviest mortality from tick fever, as owners are reluctant to give the inspector any information as to their actual losses.

We know that those people whose losses may have been very heavy are not foolish enough to report the fact, for they know what would be the result; and if we interpret the report of the Chief Inspector as I believe he intends it to be interpreted, it is clear that the mortality is great, because its extent is suppressed.

MR. DOHERTY: That is nonsense.

MR. WALLACE: That is my interpretation. If the mortality is not heavy, why do not stock-owners give the approximate return of the mortality?

MR. CONNOR: They have done so.

MR. WALLACE: The Chief Inspector of Stock says they have not done so. In my opinion, the mortality in this colony is not so heavy as it has been in Queensland; but I do believe it is heavy; and that our northern squatters have any breeding cattle to spare is more than I believe. I believe they are trying to send mixed cattle to the southern portion of the colony, where they probably have good grass paddocks handy to the market, and where they will fatten those cattle.

MR. DOHERTY: That would be to the advantage of the country.

MR. WALLACE: It would be to the great advantage of the country if every dairyman round Perth had his cows ticked up. On the question of the amendment, we have further evidence as to what would be its result. As soon as I mention a fact which I believe can be borne out, we hear a general murmur round the House. I cannot find now that the people who held the monopoly of cattle-breeding in West Kimberley last year do not hold that monopoly at present.

MR. CONNOR: You are speaking of East Kimberley.

MR. WALLACE: Yes.

MR. CONNOR: You said "West Kimberley."

MR. WALLACE: I beg your pardon, I meant East. These particular firms—

MR. DOHERTY: Robbers!

MR. VOSPER: That is a good name.

MR. WALLACE: Those firms have now united.

MR. A. FORREST: You should make sure of your facts before speaking.

MR. WALLACE: And we find them joining hand in hand to remove the prohibition on the importation of stock to the southern districts, and to get big prices for their cattle.

MR. MONGER: Some of them never knew this motion was to be brought forward.

MR. WALLACE: And no matter whether they bring down these cattle fat or poor, they can put them into paddocks at Gingin, or somewhere else, and have them fattened for the local market.

MR. A. FORREST: That would be a good thing for the country.

MR. WALLACE: I do not think it would be a good thing for the country. Those gentlemen who are so anxious to supply the settlers with breeders can find a market by shipping stock direct, and complying with the existing quarantine regulations.

MR. A. FORREST: Such stock could not be sold at all, for they would be shut up in quarantine for ever.

MR. WALLACE: When one rises in this House to speak in favour of any question which does not suit the majority, it is surprising to find how unbearable and intolerable one makes oneself to other hon. members. Here we have hon. members not far from me (Government cross benches) who are not just enough to let me put forward my views, which have no weight whatever in this House, because we know the result of this and similar motions before we discuss them. It is desired that this prohibition should be removed, but it shall not be removed with any consent of mine; and I shall always be opposed to taking any risk whatever after the experience we have had of the great losses caused to Queensland by the same desire to throw open her ports to ticked cattle. I will not express an opinion on the amendment, but I shall certainly oppose the motion.

MR. A. Y. HASSELL (Plantagenet): I do not know much about this tick. I have heard a great deal of it, but being one of those despised cattle-owners in the South-West, I shall vote for the amendment, which I believe will do a very great deal of good, and will, perhaps, have the effect of convincing me as to whether I am right or wrong.

MR. HARPER (Beverley): When this question came before the House two years ago, a great deal of information was collected with regard to it; and I am sorry to see a great many people seem to have entirely forgotten that information. We have heard many people say: "Oh, it is impossible for the tick to exist in this part of the colony: we have had two years' experience, and therefore know that it cannot live here." I say we have not had such experience; we are not justified by any experience in the world in saying the tick will not live here. The United States of America afford a very interesting evidence of what I say. That country has sustained enormous losses from tick fever; and after considerable experience it was ascertained that the tick would not live through the winter months in those parts of the continent north of a certain latitude. As a result, the Government fixed a line called "the Salmon Line," north of which cattle were not allowed to be taken, because it was found that there the frozen condition of the land in the winter months destroyed the eggs of the tick pest; and so the country north of that line was absolutely free. The cattle which had been imported from the south into that frozen country had conveyed the infection, and destroyed great numbers of stock year after year; and so it was found necessary to make the condition that no cattle should be taken north of that line; and that prohibition exists to-day. This matter was thoroughly threshed out before a former select committee; there is every evidence that tick can exist in any temperate climate, no matter where it is or what soil it has, so long as there is sufficient moisture in the atmosphere throughout a portion of the year. It was discovered that in inland places where there is a dry, arid climate, the tick, though introduced, will not spread, owing to the fact that such conditions are not suitable for the hatching of the eggs; and, therefore, it was found that although the tick might be taken into such districts it practically did no harm. That experience has been borne out in Australia as well as in America; but to say that tick can be introduced to the southern districts of this colony without damage resulting, is a denial of the experience of all the world; and if people start on that line of action,

I say there they are threatening the country with a very great danger unless means be taken to guard against it. The only protection so far found against tick is that cattle must be inoculated; and in doing that there is considerable risk. So the position is: if we remove the present restrictions, we run the imminent risk of doing considerable damage to the stock in the southern portions of the colony; and the probability of the general consumers benefiting by their removal is very doubtful indeed. I think it would perhaps be wise to try some experiments with regard to this pest; but to at once throw open the door, as is proposed in this motion, would be diametrically against the best interests of the country. I have no objection whatever to the amendment proposed, because we see therein suggested some means which might be taken to see how far it would be safe to relax those regulations; but to throw the door open at once I say would be shutting our eyes to the experience of all the world and courting disaster: and, therefore, I say I am opposed to the motion in that form, and will support the amendment of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham).

MR. MONGER (in reply): Before this question is put, I desire to reply to some of the remarks made, and also to refer to a statement made by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, as recently as yesterday.

At 6:30, the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

MR. MONGER (continuing): When the adjournment took place, I was about to refer to the inconsistency shown in some remarks that have fallen from hon. members this afternoon. It was only yesterday, when the Commissioner of Crown Lands was approached on this question, that he wrote a memo. to this effect:

This motion has been public for some time, and I have received no intimation of any objection from the country districts. Personally am in favour of it. We have had no evil results from the trade so far. The country is largely understocked, with a wealth of feed going to waste. Under proper conditions, let them come.

These remarks are somewhat different from the remarks which fell from the Commissioner of Crown Lands this afternoon; and if I were to deal *seriatim* with every objection made to the motion and to the amendment that the question be referred to a select committee, and referring more particularly to the remarks of the member for Beverley (Mr. Harper), I do not think I could do better than draw attention to some of the recommendations of the Select Committee, which was appointed two years ago and of which the member for Beverley was chairman. The recommendations of that Select Committee will be fresh in the minds of nearly every member, but for the benefit of those who may have forgotten, including the mover of the amendment who was one of the Committee, I will quote several of those suggestions. The recommendations of the Select Committee read as follows:

2. That, so far, human agency has been powerless to either exterminate or to prevent the spread of this parasite.

3. That those best qualified to judge state that vigorous quarantine laws will doubtless materially check the spread of the disease, although it will not prevent it from ultimately reaching all parts of Australia.

4. That all the coastal districts of Western Australia appear to offer suitable conditions for the life of the cattle tick, although its congener the camel tick, once numerous, seems to be disappearing.

5. That the evidence is conclusive that the ravages of tick fever have been more or less disastrous among cattle in the first year or two after a district has become infested.

6. That mortality has reached the maximum in the heat and humidity of a tropical coast, and the minimum or vanishing point in high, dry, open uplands.

Those were amongst recommendations made by a committee of which the member for Beverley was chairman; but he seems to have entirely lost sight of those recommendations when speaking this afternoon, and I am sorry he is not in his place now to have them recalled to his attention. Hon. members will admit that the contributor in the *Australasian*, who writes under the name of "Bruni," is perhaps an equal authority with Mr. Hancock or the member for Beverley.

A MEMBER: No.

MR. MONGER: Only a few months ago, writing on the subject of tick,



"Bruni" said it was only a question of time when the tick would infest the herds of Australia from the Gulf of Carpentaria to Bass's Straits. In the face of such authority, I cannot see how the member for Beverley can reconcile his statements this afternoon with the recommendations of the Select Committee of which he was the Chairman a year or two ago; indeed, his position on this question is almost a parallel with the somewhat faded ideas he holds on federation. The Minister of Mines gave us a lengthy speech this afternoon as to the large numbers of cattle depasturing in the district which he represents; but I believe I am safe in saying the gentleman who breeds the greatest number of cattle there is quite in accord with the object of the motion; at all events, he has had every opportunity of making his protest either to the Minister in charge of the Department, or to the member who represents the district in Parliament. I do not think the Minister of Mines can say that he has had one solitary protest from this big cattle breeder in the district; and taking all these matters into consideration, and knowing how little good select committees have been in the past—

A MEMBER: What about the previous select committee?

MR. MONGER: Knowing the information gathered by the last select committee appointed to consider this question, I fail to see the advisability of wasting the time of the House by agreeing to the amendment. With the information hon. members are possessed of, they will, I hope, be in accord with the motion as originally submitted; and that motion, I now maintain as I have always maintained, will be in the best interests of the farmer and the producer, and will be the means of providing cheaper meat for the people in the big centres of this portion of Western Australia. I intend to oppose the amendment, and if necessary go to a division.

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

Ayes ... ..	17
Noes ... ..	8
Majority for ...	9

## AYES.

Mr. Darlôt  
Mr. Ewing  
Mr. Harper  
Mr. A. Y. Hassell  
Mr. J. P. T. Hassell  
Mr. Higham  
Mr. Hubble  
Mr. Hutchinson  
Mr. Illingworth  
Mr. Lefroy  
Mr. Mitchell  
Mr. Phillips  
Mr. Quinlan  
Mr. Throssell  
Mr. Vosper  
Mr. Wallace  
Mr. Holmes (Teller).

## NOES.

Mr. Connor  
Mr. A. Forrest  
Mr. D. Forrest  
Mr. Gregory  
Mr. Locke  
Mr. Monger  
Mr. Rason  
Mr. Doherty (Teller).

Amendment thus passed, and the motion as amended agreed to.

MR. HIGHAM moved that the Select Committee consist of seven instead of five members.

Put and passed.

A ballot having been taken, the following members were elected: Messrs. Darlôt, Harper, Lefroy, Monger, Phillips, Wallace, with Mr. Higham as mover.

Ordered that the committee have power to sit during any adjournment of the House; also to report on the 26th September.

# MOTION—RAILWAY WORKSHOPS AT MIDLAND JUNCTION, TO CONSTRUCT FORTHWITH.

MR. EWING (Swan): It gives me great pleasure to move:

That, in the opinion of this House, the erection of the workshops at Midland Junction should be proceeded with forthwith.

I feel that, in bringing forward this motion, I am moving in a direction which has been in accord with the policy of the present Government and the policy as approved by this House for many years past. One who looks at the history of the railway workshops in Western Australia, and their proposed removal from their present site at Fremantle to Midland Junction, must come to the conclusion that the determination to remove these workshops has been the outcome of very mature consideration upon the part of the persons in control of the affairs of this country and of this House. There is no doubt, when the matter was first brought under the consideration of the Government, there were obstacles in the shape of the influence that certain members of that Government held at Fremantle. There was a gentleman in the Government of the day who was also a member for Fremantle, but notwithstanding

ing the influence that that Minister had, notwithstanding the power he exercised, the Government entered upon the consideration of this question, and the ultimate result was that it was found desirable that these workshops should be removed from Fremantle. The decision that was come to was not arrived at by this House, or the House as it then existed, merely on the statement of the Ministry, merely on the statement and the opinions formed by members from their individual consideration of the question, but it was the outcome of a report submitted to the House by a commission appointed for the purpose of ascertaining whether it was desirable to move these workshops at all, and secondly if it was desirable that the workshops should be removed in the interests of the community; for remember, at that time no rival interests of Fremantle and Midland Junction had sprung up. The local claims of Midland Junction at that time had not arisen, and it was purely a national question whether it was desirable in the interests of Western Australia that the workshops should any longer remain at Fremantle. The commission entered on their duties, and after a very exhaustive inquiry, after calling before them all the expert evidence they could, after taking evidence for and against the various sites suggested, hon. members will remember, it was decided that it was absolutely necessary in the interests of the Railway Department of this country, in the interests of the expenditure of the Government of the country, and in the interests of the community itself, that these workshops should, at the earliest practical date, be removed from Fremantle. That conclusion having been come to, it was then necessary that a good site should be decided on. The Fremantle people came, as the Fremantle people are not slow to do, with all the claims of their particular district. They pointed out that Fremantle was the proper place for the workshops, that Fremantle was the only place for the workshops in Western Australia, and that Fremantle was best suited to retain the railway workshops of this colony, as they think it is the proper place to retain them yet. But the commission, after considering the reports on the question, and hearing the evidence

available, came to the conclusion that the citizens of Fremantle and the persons interested in Fremantle had not sustained their case. They had not proved that they had in the vicinity of Fremantle a suitable place for the erection of these workshops. It might be said that workshops can be erected at Fremantle. No doubt if sufficient money is available, if the Government of the day are desirous of pleasing a locality at the expense of the community, anything can be done, provided the Government have sufficient funds at their back. At that time the Government came to the conclusion that they owed a duty to the community, and they were not drawn away by the interests of Fremantle or any district. The Government entered on their task with an open mind, and as far as I am able to judge, came to a very rational conclusion, in that Fremantle was not suitable, in that the commission had not put their hands on a suitable spot in or about Fremantle, in that the workshops should be removed to some other place, and the other place suggested to the commission as suitable was situated at Midland Junction. The site was not suggested then as the outcome of local support; the commission were not drawn to this locality as the outcome of vested interests, and we must remember that Midland Junction at that time was unoccupied and open as far as a town is concerned in Western Australia. Therefore none of these narrow interests, which so often cause public works to be erected in districts, were taken into consideration; therefore we must conclude, seeing all the local interests, all the interests of members, all the vested interests at that time, pointed to Fremantle; notwithstanding that fact, these vested interests were shaken off, and the commission came to the conclusion that that spot of land a few miles from Guildford was a suitable place for the workshops. It was an unbiassed and unprejudiced opinion, unsurrounded by any petty jealousies that so often draw public works in a wrong direction.

MR. HOLMES: Was it a unanimous opinion?

MR. EWING: I am not concerned whether it was a unanimous opinion. I am not concerned whether the gentlemen who voted in its favour and those

who voted against were intellectually superior to one another, or not. The members for Fremantle, and those who were interested in Fremantle, gave evidence before the commission and urged strongly that Fremantle was the proper place for the workshops. In any case the commission came to the conclusion, unsurrounded by local prejudices, with nothing but the national aspect of the question to urge the claims of the proposed site for the workshops—there was nothing to draw them improperly in that direction—they came to the conclusion by a majority that it was necessary and desirable that these workshops should be removed to Midland Junction. The next thing done was that the report came before the House, and in a very long and at times a very heated debate, we found the hon. member for Albany (Mr. Leake), a significant fact, the leader of the Opposition, strongly supporting the report of this commission. We found the leader of the Opposition and the members of the Opposition supporting the Ministry upon that occasion, showing again that members had sunk local considerations—they sunk party politics, anyhow for once, in the interests of the community, and in the interests of the community decided that it was desirable to remove the workshops to Midland Junction. Mr. Leake strongly advocated, and a number of other members strongly advocated, the removal of the workshops. The result was that by a considerable majority the report of the commission, come to after mature and deliberate consideration, was adopted. So far we have a locality without any local claims. Five years ago, we have this Parliament deciding on that locality as the place where these workshops should be erected. Later on, of course the question of voting the money to do this very necessary work arose, and we find that money was first voted and a portion of it actually spent; we find later, in 1899, during the time I have been member of this House, that a further sum of money was placed on the Loan Estimates, and was passed without a division, members evidently coming to the conclusion that the decision which had been arrived at after all the consideration given to it, after a majority of this House had approved of it, was not to

be interfered with. In the year 1898, also, a sum of money had been placed on the Loan Estimates for this work, and a debate at some length then took place upon the desirableness of removing these workshops to Midland Junction. The item was one of £30,000, and during the course of that debate the almost unanimously expressed opinion was in favour of the removal of the workshops to the Junction; that opinion including some very strong remarks by the member for the Williams (Mr. Piesse), who was at that time Director of Public Works; including some strong remarks by the Premier; including some strong remarks by the member for North Fremantle (Mr. Doherty), who said that long ago it had been settled that the workshops should be removed from Fremantle to Midland Junction. And I commend these remarks to hon. members, because everyone—no, I will not say everyone, because the member for North Fremantle generally rises above local considerations, and that hon. member urged and pointed out to the Committee on that occasion that Parliament had long since decided that the workshops should be removed to Midland Junction, and that it was evident there was great loss to the Railway Department as a consequence of their retention at Fremantle. The hon. member urged upon the Committee to put on one side all local and paltry considerations, and to vote in this instance on the national aspect of the question; and he did not hesitate on that occasion to say that the national importance of this question required that members of the Committee should cast their votes in favour of the item of £30,000 for the purpose of removing these workshops to Midland Junction. I quote these remarks because I say they do credit to the member for North Fremantle; they show he is a man who is above local considerations; they show he is a man who is able to shake off the trammels of local prejudice, and to deal with such a question from a national point of view; and he dealt with the question on that occasion from a high, national standpoint, and his vote was cast in favour of expending that sum of money on the erection of the workshops. He is, I am sorry to say, the only member for a Fremantle constituency who has taken this broad course. [Several

MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] I am not surprised at the "hear, hear" of my friend the member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham), because he has shown by his actions in this matter that he will not sink the local aspect of the question. He has shown, and I undertake to say he will again show, that with him it is "Fremantle first, Fremantle second, Fremantle for ever"; and the interests of the country seem to me to be absolutely overshadowed by the hon. member's desire to do that which is best in the interests of his constituents. So far, we have the difficulty settled; so far, we have the report of the Royal Commission strongly in favour of the proposed site at Midland Junction. Then we have the House divided upon the question; and the result of the division was, I think, 17 to 11. Then we have the House divided on the second occasion, when the member for North Fremantle was patriotic; and we find on that division, the House being no doubt stirred up by that hon. member's patriotism in the first instance, that the voting was 25 I think to 5 for the removal of the workshops to Midland Junction. There was no uncertain sound about the determination of this House, no shilly-shallying upon the question by hon. members. The House was a fairly large House, and by a majority such as is not often seen in this or in any other Chamber decided absolutely, and I say once and for all, on the removal of these workshops. It ought not to be necessary to move this motion, for once and for all the House decided that the previous decision of years past should be carried into effect, and the work that was then contemplated be carried out with all due despatch. We find that the determination arrived at by the Royal Commission was founded upon many grounds. [MR. MONGER: Many sites.] No doubt sites were mainly the question to be investigated: that was what the members of the Commission had before them, the question of selecting the most desirable site; and I think this House has since shown, by its votes and proceedings, that it has approved of the site chosen by the Commission on that occasion. The Commission came to the conclusion, and the particulars will be found in the report of that Commission and in the various other documents which have been placed before hon. members in

pamphlet form, and which I would commend to their very serious consideration, that the workshops must be removed to Midland Junction. Before I leave this aspect of the question, I may say we find on referring to the various reports to this House from branches of the Railway Department, that in almost every report it is urged that these workshops be removed to Midland Junction.

MR. HIGHAM: No; that they should be removed, but not to Midland Junction.

MR. EWING: Perhaps the hon. member will listen to what I read to him. The report placed upon the table for the year 1895, and signed by Mr. Campbell, under the heading of "Midland Junction Workshops," states:

Little progress has been made during the year in the matter of these workshops, and I hope from the steps now been taken that substantial progress may be made during the present year. The inadequacy of the accommodation of the Fremantle shops is being severely felt, and it seems unavoidable that we shall ere long be compelled to revert to the working of double shifts in some of our shops, in order to meet the demands of our works.

There Mr. Campbell specifies the Midland Junction workshops. Then we turn to Mr. Short's report, and we find he says:

The goods yard at Fremantle also requires extension, and to enable this to be done satisfactorily, I would strongly urge the early removal of the locomotive workshops to Midland Junction.

Therefore the reports of the responsible officers in control of these departments urge upon the Government the desirableness of carrying into effect the recommendations of that Commission and the directions of this House. I, therefore, think I need hardly labour the question of the general merits of the site, because hon. members here are pledged by their votes upon the last occasion to support the motion I have tabled. [MR. HIGHAM: Not quite.] Most hon. members will find their names in the division list, voting with the ayes on the division, in favour of the item "Midland Junction Workshops"; and it was not only a question of voting the money, but the division, as the debate shows, took place on the principle as to whether these workshops should or should not be removed. If it had been a division merely upon the question of voting a sum of money, I might not have attached much importance

to it; but we had all the eloquence of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham), we had all the eloquence of his friend here from East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes), and of the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Solomon), urging this House that it was undesirable to remove those shops; and we had our national friend upon the other side (Mr. Doherty) doing his duty to the country so manfully and so well; therefore, the question was decided upon the national aspect. It was not merely a voting of money, but a decision upon the principal question as to whether these shops should or should not be removed.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Your friend has since fallen from grace.

MR. EWING: Oh, I do not think so. I do not think such a great fall is possible. When I read the remarks of the hon. member (Mr. Doherty), I am drawn to the conclusion that his mind is cast in such a mould that no fall is possible except at the cost of an absolute shattering. I would deal to some little extent with the objections of the people of Fremantle to this removal. We have read in a very valuable newspaper published in this city, a leading article upon the proposed Midland Junction workshops, pointing to the fact that the local interests and demands of Fremantle require their retention in that city, pointing out that there are vested interests in Fremantle, and pointing out, therefore, that the House, in removing those workshops would be doing Fremantle an injustice. But surely that question was decided five years ago. [A MEMBER: Hear, hear.] It was decided those workshops should be removed.

MR. HIGHAM: The same conditions do not now obtain.

MR. EWING: Have not the people of Fremantle had five years' notice of the removal? Have they not had the value of the workshops out of the public purse ten times over? Where has the public money of this colony been poured? The great bulk of it into and about Fremantle. And I say, during the five years which has elapsed since the date of the determination to remove those workshops, Fremantle has had the worth of those workshops a dozen times over poured into her district. Then, when the thing was justified on local grounds alone, how

can it now be said that any injustice is being done to Fremantle? If Fremantle people have built up local interests during the last five years, as no doubt they have, they have built up and acquired those local interests with express notice that these workshops were to be removed. There was the unquestionable determination of Parliament that those workshops should be removed, and any man who bought land or acquired a home in Fremantle during the past five years, did so with the full knowledge that it was the intention of the Government and this Parliament that at a reasonably near date those workshops should be removed to the proposed locality.

MR. HIGHAM: What about those who invested before that period?

MR. EWING: Those who invested over five years ago have reaped very considerable benefits from their industry and foresight. [MR. HIGHAM: No.] I think they have not anything very serious to complain of. I think those who held land in this colony five or six years ago reaped a very considerable amount of advantage from their investments. But I do say that the people who for the past five years have acquired property in Fremantle have done so with express notice of the intended change. And are we to let the community stand still, are we to hamper an industry and hamper the Government and the railways of the community, for the sake of a handful of people? If that were the principle which actuated hon. members in legislation, if that were the principle which underlay our legislation, poor indeed would be the efforts of Parliament. It had been argued that this difficulty could be overcome by selecting a site near Fremantle, but the commission came to the conclusion that there was no suitable site in or about that city; anyhow no site so suitable as that already chosen. The commission came to that conclusion after considering the matter fully, and are the local surroundings of Fremantle different to-day to what they were five years ago?

MR. HIGHAM: Yes.

MR. EWING: The hon. member says "yes"; he says there are different localities and different sites about Fremantle as compared with five years ago.

MR. HIGHAM: There are different railway possibilities.

MR. EWING: In saying there are different railway possibilities, the hon. member is no doubt referring to the little line that has been built, that spur line out of Fremantle. Build the railway workshops on a spur line! One of the first things we have to do is to see that the workshops are built in a locality where the railway systems of the colony mostly converge. I believe that was one of the considerations the commission had in mind, and one of the considerations the present Government had in mind when they supported the Midland Junction scheme; and I believe that was one of the main considerations of hon. members when they supported the Government in the steps then taken. They were drawn to the conclusion that not only was there a site at Midland Junction, but an area large enough to accommodate the largest workshops ever likely to be required in Western Australia. In addition to that, the ground was suitable, because it was level and required little money spent on it compared with other places suggested.

MR. HIGHAM: Only some foundations were required.

MR. EWING: The commission came to the conclusion that the foundations and other conditions were satisfactory, and seeing it was the place at which the railway systems of the colony mostly converge, it was a highly desirable place for the erection of the workshops. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham) suggests that the railway workshops should be built at a place absolutely out of touch with the railway systems of the colony, on a spur line out of Fremantle.

MR. HIGHAM: I did not say on the spur line.

MR. EWING: Why is that suggested? In the interests of the community or the interests of Fremantle? No doubt in the interests of Fremantle.

MR. HIGHAM: No; in the interests of the colony.

MR. EWING: I am glad to hear the hon. member is going to argue this question, as I suppose he will, from that point of view, because it is the first time he has ever endeavoured to do so. The whole trend and refrain of his song has been, "Do not do anything to take out of the pockets of the Fremantle people that which they are not entitled to, and give it to those who are entitled to it."

MR. HIGHAM: You had better give your authority for that.

MR. EWING: The commission came to the conclusion that the Midland Junction was a desirable site because the railway systems of the colony there mostly converge; and we know that any future railway development in the colony must converge at Midland Junction. We know that all the branches of existing lines must come in there. Where do the railway extensions from the goldfields meet? Extensions from the Murchison goldfields, the Coolgardie goldfields, and indeed every other railway we are likely to construct for many years to come, must converge there. Where is the common centre? Surely it is Midland Junction; and if this was a desirable spot for the erection of the workshops at the time the Government decided to build them there, it is an infinitely more desirable spot at the present time. We are told there are a certain number of working men living at Fremantle who own their own houses. No doubt there are working men at Fremantle who own their own houses, but I undertake to say the great majority of the men employed in the railway workshops are living in rented premises.

MR. HIGHAM: You are wrong there.

MR. EWING: I think the trouble that has arisen is to a large extent a landlord's trouble.

MR. HIGHAM: No, it is not.

MR. EWING: And is not a small owner's trouble at all. There is no doubt in my mind, and from my own knowledge I can say that many of the workmen in the workshops travel even from Guildford and from Perth to their work, a large number of them going to Fremantle every day; and the member for Fremantle, if he has observed this matter at all, must know that what I now say is true.

MR. HIGHAM: It is not true.

MR. EWING: I say a large number of workmen now travel to work.

MR. HIGHAM: One or two.

MR. EWING: If the railway workshops were removed to the end of this wonderful spur line which runs out of Fremantle to nowhere —

MR. HIGHAM: I said nothing about the spur line.

MR. EWING: The hon. member spoke of a newly-constructed piece of railway, and I know no new piece of railway

except this spur line. If the workshops are to be at the end of this wonderful spur line, the men at Fremantle will have to get into trains all the same, in order to reach work, and once they are in a train they can as easily run to Midland Junction. There is a regular railway system to the Junction and infinitely more and suitable trains than could possibly be got on a line with the necessarily limited traffic of a railway running from Fremantle in the direction where the shops might be. We also find it stated in the *Morning Herald* that land at Midland Junction is in the hands of "land grabbers," and, to show how little the writer of the article knows about the condition of affairs, we are told it will be necessary for the Government to acquire about 200 acres there, and that as soon as Parliament decides definitely to remove the workshops, properties will jump in value, and consequently the Government will have to pay "through the nose" for all the land they resume. The writer does not seem to know that the Government have already resumed about 300 acres more than they can possibly require at Midland Junction. The main foundation for the remarks of the writer of the article, and one of the main contentions, I suppose, of those representing Fremantle interests, must, therefore, fall to the ground. Should the Government waste the money they have spent on land in the locality? Would the Government be justified in throwing away the £30,000 they have already spent in the locality, where they have levelled the ground and done numerous things for the purpose of preparing for the erection of these workshops?

MR. DOHERTY: Cut it up into suburban blocks.

MR. EWING: That is a very fine idea of the hon. member, but, unfortunately, Midland Junction has arisen on the assurance of the House and of the country that the railway workshops were to be erected there, and if this assurance be not carried out, there will be no Midland Junction. Looking at the local aspect of the question, I say the people of Fremantle have been given notice for the last five years of the removal of the workshops, and if the removal be carried out, they still have left more than any

reasonable people could expect. The man who has bought land and built his cottage, will still have a home with a value, not materially affected by the removal of the workshops. Midland Junction, on the other hand, has been built on the assurance of Parliament and the Government that those workshops will be erected there. Look at the rate-books at Midland Junction, and it will be found that almost the whole of the land is in the hands of small holders.

MR. HIGHAM: What is the rental value of the land?

MR. PIESSE: Less, if the workshops are not built there.

MR. MONGER: Much less.

THE SPEAKER: Order! Do not interrupt an hon. member when he is speaking.

MR. EWING: I was about to say that in Fremantle investors, whether working men or moneyed men, will still have property little affected in commercial value by the removal of the shops. Midland Junction has been built up on the assurance that those railway workshops will be built there, and you will find on investigation of the rate-books there that the land is almost exclusively in the hands of small holders, generally working men or people holding from one to four allotments. A vast number of houses in the locality have been built up out of the earnings of workers, anticipating that in the future Parliament would carry out its pledges, and that there would be no going back on the determination which had been come to. These people have built up their homes out of their labour at Midland Junction, and almost all the houses are owned by the occupants. What is to become of these? Is there no vested interest in Midland Junction? There is a vested interest, but it is unlike the visible interest at Fremantle, inasmuch as failure to remove the workshops to Midland Junction means absolute annihilation to the people there. On one hand we have the local claims of Fremantle, where the people say the removal of the workshops will affect the total value of property, and, on the other hand, we have the claims of Midland Junction, where the property owners are almost exclusively working-men, who have built up their homes by the sweat of their brow, and to whom failure to erect the workshops there

means absolute annihilation and ruin. The people at Fremantle built up their homes on the assurance that the railway workshops would be removed, but the homes at Midland Junction have been built up on the assurance of the House and the Government that the work which necessitated those homes would be carried into effect. If the Government at the present time desert Midland Junction, and determine to build the workshops either at Fremantle or some other place, they will throw away the whole of the money they have given for municipal purposes in Helena Vale, and will lose the whole of the money spent in a town where they have built a post office, schools, and other public buildings, which would be almost unnecessary without the workshops. All this expenditure will be so much wasted money, if the determination of the Government to erect the workshops at Midland Junction is not carried out. The Government have bought 300 acres of land, which will become almost worthless on their hands,

MR. PIESSE: Nearly 500 acres.

MR. EWING: And the Government have spent nearly £30,000 of public money preparing for the erection of those shops, and this would be so much squandered if they now go back on their determination. I therefore think that the local claims of Fremantle, placed side by side with those of Midland Junction, absolutely sink into insignificance. On the one hand, there is a people with all the advantages that a Government could shower on them, all the benefits that the Government could possibly pour on them—a hungry people who are never satisfied, but are always crying “More, more, more.” We have heard of some people who, very sinful in this world, will in the next be in a condition where they will get and yet want more—where they will never be satisfied, but always overcome with a burning hunger and a burning thirst; and I think some of the representatives and the citizens of Fremantle cannot but realise what that condition must be. To summarise the matter, I would like to say again that at Midland Junction we have an ideal site for the workshops; we have some public money spent; we have a suitable locality; we have pledged ourselves to the people; we are doing nothing new; we are making no

change; we are adhering to an old determination on the part of this House; we are simply being consistent; and can hon. members advance any substantial reason why this House should be inconsistent, why it should go back on its repeated determinations for the past five years? Can it for one moment be suggested that the conditions have altered in the slightest degree? Even the claims of Fremantle, for the retention of these sheds, were dealt with years ago. They have been weighed in the balance as against the national claims, and found wanting, and therefore Fremantle had its decision five years ago. That decision has been iterated and reiterated in this House. The determination come to as the outcome of that commission's report has been approved and reapproved by this Legislature, and we would be doing a grievous harm and injustice to the community if we were to go back upon that determination. The Government of this country will be placing a stigma upon itself which the people will not be ready to forget, if it fails to carry out its pledges to the people of the colony, and to the people of the locality which has been created by their policy. The Government policy has for five years past been the removal of these workshops to Midland Junction. Ministers have come and ministers have gone, and still we find their successors with the same views upon this question. The first Minister (Hon. Mr. Venn) was driven to the conclusion that Midland Junction was the proper place. His successor, the member for the Williams (Mr. Piesse), is I believe and always has been a staunch advocate of the removal of these workshops. We find therefore that all things have been done, and therefore why should this House not approve of the motion for these works to be proceeded with forthwith? It cannot be said I am urging the Government to do something it does not wish, in urging it to carry out these works at once—because when the member for the Williams was Director of Public Works, he gave us an assurance, with the approval of the Premier, that all the plans had been settled, and that all difficulties which for years past had stood in the way had been overcome: according to his assurance the work should have been under way at the present time.



All I am doing in moving this motion, is asking the House to support the determination of the commission arrived at five years ago, and the programme and policy of the Government on this question for all the years that have passed since. I ask the House to help the Government to carry out the pledges that they as individuals and they as a body have made. And I say that the country demands that this thing shall be done. Therefore, I feel that I am justified, as member for the district locally affected, and justified as a member of this Parliament, in moving a motion to the effect that the Midland workshops should be proceeded with forthwith by the Government of this country; because I believe that in doing so I am doing no injustice to any other portion of the community. I am only doing justice to the district I represent, and I am urging that which the community looks for at the hands of the Government.

MR. MONGER (York): It is very seldom I have the pleasure of seconding a motion which emanates from any member who sits on the Opposition side of the House, and I am pleased indeed to have this opportunity. It would not have been possible for any Opposition member to bring forward a motion which I could support with greater pleasure than I do this. Before speaking to the motion I must congratulate the member for the Swan (Mr. Ewing) upon the very able manner in which he has placed his case before the House. I feel confident that after the way in which he has expressed himself, not one single member from Fremantle can get up and give any reasonable line of argument why the decision arrived at by this House five years ago should not at once be carried into effect. When I look at the record of the division that took place on the occasion on which the then Commissioner of Railways (Mr. Venn) brought forward his motion in this House, and see the list of names of those who supported him, I think that if the Government are in any way sincere, and the Government supporters are in any way sincere, the motion which has emanated from the member for the Swan will be carried by a very big majority. When Mr. Venn brought forward his motion he naturally received the support of every member of the

Ministry from the Premier downwards. We have had very nearly every year since items placed upon the Estimates for the further development of the railway works at Midland Junction. We have had items placed upon the Estimates for the purchase of lands, and according to remarks which fell from the late Commissioner (Mr. Piesse) in the course of the speech by the member for the Swan, the area has increased from 200 acres, originally purchased, to nearly 500 acres. From the evidence submitted from time to time, it is clear that the land available in the vicinity of the present workshops is altogether inadequate for the works of a great railway system like ours, which is likely to grow bigger. Under these circumstances it seems absolutely necessary that the workshops should, without any unnecessary delay, be removed from the place where they are to the place where they ought to be. We have during the past few years heard of the wails of the people of Fremantle. We have heard of the many grievances which the members for Fremantle wish to thrust upon this House, but I think that if there is one section of Western Australia which under the régime of the Forrest Ministry has received more favours than any other part, it is the port of Fremantle.

MR. DOHERTY: Name one.

MR. EWING: Hundreds.

MR. MONGER: If the hon. member desires me to name any, I may keep the House till to-morrow morning in giving numerous instances where Fremantle has received practically unnecessary benefits over other parts of Western Australia.

MR. DOHERTY: Name one.

THE SPEAKER: Order!

MR. MONGER: Those hon. gentlemen who represent Fremantle and its suburbs will have an opportunity of showing to this House the few considerations which they have received at the hands of the Forrest Ministry. I feel confident that the member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) and the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Solomon), who have been such loyal supporters of the Forrest Ministry, will, when they address the House, say that, taking everything into consideration, Fremantle has received all to which she was fairly, or even unfairly, entitled. We have heard during the past

week or two of a deputation which came up from Fremantle, asking that these workshops shall still be retained in their midst. We saw very little in the Press of Perth showing any valid reasons why the decision of this House arrived at five years ago, and supported in every session that has been held in the meantime, should not be carried into effect. Those hon. members who represent Fremantle will no doubt have a pitiful tale to tell, and I am certain that we who have given to Fremantle in the past with a free hand, will listen with pleasure to the line of argument they will submit in extenuation of the ideas they hold in favour of the retention of the workshops at Fremantle. After the very able way in which the member for the Swan has submitted his case, there is really very little for me to say. I have the very greatest pleasure in seconding the motion submitted by him.

MR. HIGHAM (Fremantle): I have been desired by several members to ask that this debate be adjourned. I move that the debate be adjourned.

MR. EWING: What for?

MR. DOHERTY: Because we want to consider your speech.

Motion for adjournment put, and a division taken with the following result:

Ayes	...	...	...	16
Noes	...	...	...	11

Majority for ... 5

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Connor	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Darlot	Mr. D. Forrest
Mr. Doherty	Mr. Harper
Sir John Forrest	Mr. A. Y. Hassell
Mr. A. Forrest	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. George	Mr. Illingworth
Mr. Higham	Mr. Monger
Mr. Holmes	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Hubble	Mr. Vosper
Mr. Kingsmill	Mr. Wallace
Mr. Leffroy	Mr. J. F. T. Hassell
Mr. Pennefather	(Teller).
Mr. Phillips	
Mr. Rason	
Mr. Throssell	
Mr. Quinlan (Teller).	

Motion thus passed, and the debate adjourned until the next day.

#### MOTION—TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILWAY, A SURVEY.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie): I beg to move:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that a flying survey be undertaken of the country between Kanowna and the South Australian border, with a view to obtaining data for the Commonwealth Parlia-

ment in reference to the future construction of the Transcontinental Railway.

I think there is very little need for me to elaborate a series of arguments on a motion of this kind. Every member of the House, and the people of the country, will be agreed on the fact that it is essential that an integral portion of the policy of this country, one of the States of the Commonwealth, will be to secure the construction of the transcontinental railway at the earliest possible date. It is not a matter that admits of any argument whatever. A great deal has been done of late to place Western Australia on the highway of the world's commerce, in the direction of the calling of the mail steamers at Fremantle; now with the mail steamers calling at Fremantle our position after all is only that of being on the side of the highway, the halting place on the road, but in the time to come I am convinced that Fremantle must become the gateway to the whole of Australia.

THE PREMIER: "The Golden Gate."

MR. VOSPER: "The Golden Gate," very aptly put. That being so it is the duty of the Parliament of the country to do all it can to bring about that desirable consummation, and I hope the day is not far distant when not only shall we see the mails landed at Fremantle, but also forwarded from Fremantle, first of all to the goldfields, and from thence on to Adelaide, and then to Melbourne and Sydney. I believe the saving of time effected by that means will be enormous, and that saving of time means a considerable saving to the commercial interests, and a vast lessening of expenditure in various directions, which will have the effect of making that line indirectly pay, even if in itself the railway does not pay. Before we can reasonably go to the Commonwealth Parliament and ask them to construct a railway of this magnitude, we must be able to put our case as strongly as possible before them. From a commercial point of view, we have a strong case; so strong that it needs no recapitulation here. Besides that we should desire to be in a position to inform the members of the Commonwealth Parliament of the nature of the country over which the railway will pass; to let them know what manner of country it will traverse; to let them know not

only of the national value of the country, but the effect which the opening of this country will have, and the value which it will effect in creating new industries in the districts traversed; to let them know whether the districts are suitable for settlement; whether the country is fit for human habitation, or one vast, long desert. I look with interest to the remarks of the Premier on this subject, because the Premier has traversed this country years ago, and can speak with authority upon it; but we want something more to date than we can obtain even from the Premier. My own belief is, it is only conjecture; but, at the same time, I am justified to some extent by reports of prospectors and others, that the gold-bearing belt of Western Australia extends over a considerable distance to the east of Kurnalpi. The construction of the transcontinental railway will mean the opening up of a vast area of auriferous land which at present is locked up, being too far from the coast settlement. It is no light task to take up the work of prospecting in those remote areas: the work can only be properly done when we have that railway; and one of the first effects of that line will be to add a new province to our large and extending empire. From the accounts which have reached the civilised portions of this country from that part, we find that the land is probably of a geological formation which will add to the great wealth of Australia. Consequently considerably to the eastward we shall have, when the railway is constructed, an army of prospectors who will have a new base for their operations, where they can always fall back for provisions and water, and to re-equip themselves to face the desert once more. Obviously, as we extend into the unknown wealth of this colony greater facilities will be given to these men, and greater work will be accomplished. In addition to that we have the report of Mr. Mason, I believe, and the explorers who preceded him, of the country between Eucla and Kurnalpi, that there exists a large pastoral area. Whether it be of value or not is impossible to say; we have no knowledge on that point; but some of the reports are of a favourable character, and when we consider the difficulties in which we are placed at the present time with regard to getting food

supplies for the goldfields population, as soon as we have the railway line constructed and this large pastoral area is opened up there will be new sources of supply of meat and kindred products opened up to the eastward of the fields, that will tend to cheapen the commodities throughout Western Australia, and give a fresh impetus not only to gold-mining, but to the pastoral industry of the colony. A remarkable circumstance occurred a short time ago in a part of the country which will become the route of this railway, in the discovery of large subterranean lakes at Eucla. For hundreds of miles there exists limestone country, and this country in all directions is permeated by caves, and it appears that the rainfall in this region, instead of finding its way in its natural course to the sea, permeates into the rocks, and there is stored in these subterranean reservoirs against the time when civilisation shall come to claim it. There is no saying how vast these caverns may be. We may talk about making dams and sinking tanks, and doing work of that kind for the conservation of water; but if discoveries like those at Eucla are to be duplicated in other parts of the country, we shall find that nature has not only been doing the work for us, but has been doing it better than we can do it ourselves. Not only has nature constructed dams for us, but nature has also put a roof over these dams, which will prevent the evaporation of water, which is the cause of so much loss at the present time. We do not know the potentialities of this unknown country. This will not only be of value to this country, but to Australasia generally, I do not think it is intended by nature that the area of land between Port Augusta and Kurnalpi should be occupied by one or two telegraph operators, and possibly a squatter or two.

A MEMBER: And a few rabbits.

MR. VOSPER: And a few rabbits. I hope and believe the land there will be found to support a large population, I will not say a very large population, but much larger than at the present time. My firm conviction is that not only are these pastoral reserves awaiting development, but there are large mineral fields to be opened up in this direction. That being so, it is obvious that a motion of this kind

is self-commendatory. I propose that the Government should discover the nature of the country and obtain data that may be required by the Commonwealth Parliament, so that when the eleven members shortly to be elected by this State to represent us in the Commonwealth Parliament are returned they will be able to take with them some definite information on this point, so as to urge on the Commonwealth Parliament the necessity for immediate construction of the line. I need not at present go into the value of the line from a defence point of view, although I may state, and very justly, that no adequate defence of Australia can be made until the line is constructed, and until there is means for the internal transport of troops from one part of the Commonwealth to another. The keys of Australia, from a strategical point of view, are located at Albany and Fremantle, but these are useless as far as their commercial worth is concerned, and they will be useless until we are joined with the populations in the eastern colonies by a railway. I look forward with hope and confidence to the time when Western Australia will become a country engaged in the export of many products. We are rapidly arriving at that stage when we will supply our own needs, and as time goes on we shall be exporting our products. I do not believe the building of that railway will be the means of helping our farmers to send their products to the East: that will be impossible on account of the freights. The construction of a general channel of traffic in that direction will open a market for the producers, and will be of great assistance to Australia as a whole. It will open up trade relations with those great and neglected countries which lie to the north-west of this country: I refer to Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Singapore, and the Straits Settlements generally. In these regions there is a population of over a hundred million souls, and amongst them a large number of Europeans, and a large number of persons described as the native aristocracy, wealthy and living in luxury, and who make a demand for European products. To show what this means, I read an account of a shipment of some New Zealand mutton reaching Singapore, and it was shown in the Singapore newspaper at the time that this mutton was

sent to London and transhipped to Singapore. Trade of that kind will be far more profitably carried on from Australia direct than being sent through Europe. Therefore, I think the time has come when possibly we shall see, as far as Kimberley is concerned, freezing works established on the coast of those districts, and a direct export trade going to Singapore and other ports in that part of the world. I see a large market for timber, and a larger market for agricultural produce; while on the other side we shall receive in exchange, imports from that part of the world in the shape of spices and other products of those countries. From its geographical position, Australia is likely to play a large part in the world's production. Western Australia occupies probably the very best, the most superb position of all the Australian colonies: she is nearer to Asia, to Africa, and to Europe than any of them; and it appears to me to be natural and obvious that the greater portion of the trade of all the Australian States should come through the State which we inhabit. That being so, it demonstrates the necessity for the early construction of this line; and as a preliminary step towards that end, and in the hope of its being soon accomplished, I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

**THE PREMIER** (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I do not think anyone can take exception to the object the hon. member has in view, except that perhaps some may think the name of Kanowna need not have been inserted in the motion. But I suppose the hon. member, like the rest of us, has an eye to the wishes of his constituents, and desires that Kanowna should be the starting point of this line.

**MR. VOSPER**: It is the termination of our present railway system. That is why I mention it.

**THE PREMIER**: That may be, but I think when the starting point of the transcontinental railway is considered, it will have to be considered on its merits, with a view to distance and other considerations which come into play when a great trunk line is being projected. I think the hon. member might have left out Kanowna; but still I do not know that many of us would not have done as he has done. If Bunbury had been situated in that district I suppose I, in moving such a motion, would have inserted

"Bunbury." I do not think I need complain much of the hon. member, in doing a little electioneering by inserting "Kanowna."

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What would you insert?

THE PREMIER: I should perhaps have taken Kalgoorlie or Coolgardie. "Kalgoorlie," I should say, would have been a very good name to insert.

MR. VOSPER: That might be electioneering, too.

THE PREMIER: Or one might have said "between the Eastern goldfields and the South Australian border." This is a motion I am in sympathy with; but I do not know there is very much necessity for it, for all that. We know very well the character of the country between the Eastern goldfields and the South Australian border. That country has been traversed for long distances by the officers of the Survey Department, and for the whole distance by Mr. Giles, the explorer, a little further to the north of the route the railway will take. There is a great deal of misapprehension in the minds of ordinary people as to the geography of the eastern part of this colony. They seem to think that if we go east from Perth we go into the interior, but a glance at the map will show that if we go east from Perth we strike the sea before we can reach our border. The latitude of Perth is some distance south of the latitude of Eucla; and, therefore, any railway constructed from, say, Kalgoorlie or any place in that vicinity would have to take a direction a little to the south of east in order to strike the sea at Eucla; or if it were desired to avoid Eucla it would have to go a little further to the north and strike the head of the Bight, which is some distance north of Eucla. A course a little south of east would have to be adopted; and when we get to the head of the Bight—and we must go to the head of the Bight if we want to get to Port Augusta, because Port Augusta again is south of the head of the Bight—I think we would naturally go from the head of the Bight to somewhere along the settled country. We would not want to construct the line through uninhabited acacia thickets or uninhabited country at all. The line should go through the settled country to Fowler's Bay and along the area

of rich pastoral country that exists in that neighbourhood, through the Gawler Ranges to Port Augusta, where it would be built across the head of Spencer's Gulf either on a bridge or by going round it. The railway would have to take such a course; and I must say at once that the country between the Eastern goldfields and the South Australian border is fairly well known.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Can you give us a description of it.

THE PREMIER: Yes. We know well that Mr. Giles, in following a course a little to the north of the line this railway would take, crossed the Great Southern Plain which extends from Eucla northward. It is shown on the chart where he first came in contact with the Southern Plain, where he travelled across it, and where he emerged from it; so that the northern limit of that plain is pretty well known to us all. The plain is an immense plateau, two or three hundred feet above the sea: it is gently undulating or almost level. When one gets back from the coast there is not a tree to be seen upon it—nothing is visible save salt-bush and grass and limestone: it is all a limestone formation; and when the traveller gets on a little way from Kurnalpi or as far as the goldfields go, he will find himself in that limestone country, which will extend all the way to Eucla and all the way to the head of the Bight, all the way to Fowler's Bay and beyond it. That is well known. We know too that it is level country. We know there are no mountain ranges there; none have ever been seen by those who have visited that locality. I have had some personal experience of the country. I have been some distance north of Eucla, 50 or 60 miles, and I have been a longer distance north of what is known as Eyre's Sand Patch; and the further I went north the more level the country became and the less timber was there: in fact, in both cases when I turned back, north of Eyre's Sand Patch and north of Eucla, the country was uniform and perfectly level. It was fairly well grassed at the time, but the further I went north the less grass there was. Where I turned back there was not a single tree, and the fact of the country being destitute of trees makes it very dangerous to travel in unless travellers are pretty good bushmen; because

there are no trees or hills to serve as landmarks, and when a man goes away in the morning to look for his horses, if he is not a pretty careful person, he cannot find the camp he stopped at overnight. Such a catastrophe resulted fatally with regard to some men who I think were experienced too. They came with a team, left it to look for their horses, never found the team again, and lost their lives—perished for the want of water. It is a very dangerous country, because it is so level and there are no landmarks of any description. Personally I do not share the hopes of the hon. member (Mr. Vosper) that there is there any large auriferous area. Of course one may be mistaken. There may be some upheaval of a small area which may be auriferous; but I do not think there is. I think when one gets away from the auriferous country near Kurnalpi the limestone formation will be struck, and that will be found to continue all the way to Eucla. There are no ranges, no hills at all, and in my opinion the country will not be auriferous. The country at Eucla is very good for pasture; there is a large pastoral area which is well grassed in good seasons; but its great detriment is the small rainfall. It is astonishing the smallness of the rainfall all along the country from the Thomas River to Cape Arid and all the way to Fowler's Bay. If evidence be wanted of that, it will be found in the fact that not a single rivulet flows into the sea between the Thomas River and Cape Arid, which is only some 100 miles or so beyond Esperance Bay—there is not a rivulet which flows into the sea all the way, I think, even to Port Augusta. That shows clearly there is no rainfall there of any extent worth mentioning. There is a rainfall at Eucla of something like eight or nine inches, but that is restricted to a very narrow belt.

MR. VOSPER: Would not the absorbative character of the limestone to some extent account for that?

THE PREMIER: I think not. We know there is no rainfall there. At Eucla there is eight or nine inches; 30 miles back there is scarcely any. The rainfall does not extend into the country for any long distance: it is restricted to the coastal region. That being so, we should have a good deal of difficulty in

regard to the water supply of the railway between, say, Kalgoorlie and our eastern border. But these defects will be overcome. As we propose to overcome the difficulties in regard to water on the gold-fields, so we shall overcome that defect. At any rate, we shall have the water supply as far as Kalgoorlie from the great Coolgardie Water Scheme; and I hope my friends opposite will, at any rate, derive some consolation for the opposition they have always given to that scheme by the fact that it will supply water to the transcontinental railway.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Put a 6-inch pipe from Kalgoorlie along that line.

THE PREMIER: A very good thing to do, I think. I believe the time will come in that country when it will be necessary to take a pipe alongside the railway to supply water.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Hear, hear. That will be the best thing you can do with the water, too.

THE PREMIER: If there is one reason why I should like to remain in office a little while longer, it will be to prove to the hon. member that he is wrong about the Coolgardie Water Scheme.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: To do that, you will have to remain in office a long time.

THE PREMIER: However, we shall see him making eloquent speeches when the tap is turned on.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: No; we shall send for you.

THE PREMIER: I shall be very glad to go; but I expect someone else will monopolise it and will claim all the credit for it. I think if we can carry out what the hon. member (Mr. Vosper) desires, and can do so at a moderate expense, we shall do well to pass the motion. I take it he desires that some experienced railway surveyor shall, with a few camels and two or three men, make a trip across from, say, Kalgoorlie or Kanowna to Eucla, and make a report on the country he passes over. That should not cost more than a few hundred pounds; and seeing that we look forward to the construction of this railway as one of the things we want as soon as possible, I think even though we do know something of the country, it would be an advantage to us to know a good deal more.

MR. GEORGE: Do you propose to send a railway surveyor?

**THE PREMIER:** Certainly. We do not want anyone else.

**MR. GEORGE:** That will cost you more than a few hundred pounds.

**THE PREMIER:** Not at all.

**MR. GEORGE:** Yes; it will.

**THE PREMIER:** I do not think so.

**MR. GEORGE:** I know it.

**THE PREMIER:** Suppose it costs £1,000, that would be money well spent.

**MR. VOSPER:** It would not be too much for a scheme of this sort.

**THE PREMIER:** No; I think it will be of very great value when we are urging upon the Eastern colonies the desirableness of constructing this line.

**MR. GEORGE:** What is the distance?

**THE PREMIER:** I think it is about 400 miles from Kalgoorlie to our border. That will not prove much of an expedition, after all. With camels one could go the whole distance without any water.

**MR. GEORGE:** Then, for £2 10s. a mile you can get a survey that will be of use for making a railway? You are a most wonderful Commissioner of Railways! That is all I can say.

**THE PREMIER:** Certainly. I may say if the hon. member travelled over that country he would give an estimate for much less than that. It is all level country. The member for the Murray has had very little experience of railway construction.

**MR. GEORGE:** I have had more experience than perhaps you think.

**THE PREMIER:** No doubt the hon. member has built some railways, but he has not made surveys, and I do not think he is competent to express an opinion. A survey of this kind must be made by someone, and I see no reason why the motion should not be passed.

**MR. PIESSE (Williams):** I hardly see the necessity for a flying survey proposed by the member for North-East Coolgardie, considering the information given to the House by the Premier to-night. We all know the character of the country from the experience of explorers, and to obtain the data proposed at this stage seems to me quite unnecessary. There is necessity to obtain every data in regard to the construction of the railway and the route it shall take; and if the survey is to confer the great advantages on Fremantle and the colony generally, as pictured by the member for North-

East Coolgardie, information should be obtained as to the ultimate system of construction. We already know that the country is practically level, and one of the main difficulties to be overcome is that of water supply; the actual survey being a simple matter which could be undertaken without any difficulty, even on the present information before us. If we are going to have a railway to serve the colony and the Commonwealth of Australia, it must be a railway constructed entirely on different lines to those on which our railways are constructed to-day. We must have a gauge of 4ft. 8½in., which is now the standard gauge in most parts of the world, and we must have rails of not less than 80lbs. to the yard; and, further, there must be a service through what I may call a desert, of not less than 40 miles an hour, or probably 55 or 60 miles an hour; otherwise the transcontinental railway to which we look forward will not be of much advantage to Australia. I know railways have been constructed in South Africa, in one instance for quite 2,000 miles, on the same gauge as our railways are constructed; but it must be admitted that to have a successful service, the gauge must be different from that we now possess.

**MR. VOSPER:** What is the gauge of the Union Pacific Railway?

**MR. PIESSE:** I do not know the gauge of that railway, but we must reap benefit from the experience of the past. The information the hon. member desires has already been obtained, and affords sufficient data.

**MR. VOSPER:** We want it in an authoritative form.

**MR. PIESSE:** We know the country is inhospitable, and there is an absence of water supply necessary to enable the line to go from point to point. What is required more than anything else is information as to what should be done in regard to actual construction; and there is no necessity for such a survey as that proposed, seeing that we have already obtained information from those who have been engaged in exploration work. Then there is the necessity for boring, and we have already proved this in the coastal districts. We have first of all to obtain information in regard to where the railway shall start from, whether

from Fremantle direct to some other point in the Commonwealth, traversing proposed lines already laid down; and we must adopt the gauge which will answer best for the whole of Australia—it will be some time before that can be done; but no railway between any point in the other colonies and Fremantle will be of service to this or the other colonies if it be not on a broader gauge than that adopted in this colony at present. I see no necessity at the present stage for the survey which the member for North-East Coolgardie proposes.

MR. GEORGE (Murray): I shall support the motion, but I do not see why the House should support it if the Premier's estimate for doing the work is to be adhered to. The Premier, in his attempts to be witty, occasionally becomes rude, and has thrown a slur on my previous experience. I do not profess to be a surveyor, but I do profess to be a man who knows what is necessary for a railway survey. Such a survey does not mean casting your eye over a probable line, but to be of any use means the consideration of two, three, or even more routes. It is not the slightest use our following the example of the Czar of Russia and deciding on a line of railway by means of a straight rule, because we have to consider the physical difficulties presented by the country; and to attempt to construct a railway across what the Premier has described as a desert would be absurd, unless precaution be taken to see that the necessary supplies for construction are there. First of all there is the difficulty as to water. We may have the Coolgardie Water Scheme as a means of supply when the railway is made, but that supply will not be there for the purpose of the construction of the line, and it is absolutely impossible to construct a railway anywhere except at extreme cost, unless there be a proper water supply.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Take the water along the railway.

MR. GEORGE: I do not want to go into a lot of details, because if I enter on the question of railway construction, about which I do know something, I shall weary the House. Last evening we had the dictum by the Premier that in regard to motions passed here, he could on further reflection, please himself; and I

am quite certain that when the Premier's sober thoughts come, as they will tomorrow, he will see he made a most absurd statement when he said the 300 or 400 miles of this character of country could be surveyed for £1,000.

MR. PRESSE: It is only intended to be a flying survey.

MR. GEORGE: A flying survey to be of any use must embrace different routes, for the purpose of forming a plan of construction and drawing up the estimates. If this was simply to be a promenade across the desert, I agree it could be done for £1,000, but such a promenade would be of no use to this country, and in our present state of the finances it would be absurd to spend the money. So far as the Premier's experience of exploration is concerned, he does not seem to have known much about the matter years ago, because he never discovered any gold except perhaps the gold he drew from the Treasury, and I expect his other information is on a par. For a statesman to stand up and make such an absurd statement as that £1,000 would be sufficient to make a survey, is too ridiculous for sensible men. Although we have the Premier's statement that he is agreeable to spend the money, there is no guarantee that he will spend the money, because he may simply block the proposal in the same way as he did the Police Royal Commission decided upon last year; and it is idle to take up the time of the House in getting promises from the Premier which probably he will never carry into effect. Before the survey can be taken, it is necessary to know the intentions of the other colonies as to where they are likely to make their point of junction at our border; and we ought to know that, because our surveyors must have their directions before they start. The whole matter requires more serious attention than has yet been given to it; and although I vote for the motion, I frankly confess that if the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) feels any satisfaction in getting it carried, I am afraid he will be disappointed, because the survey cannot be made for £1,000. If the Premier thinks the survey can be done for that amount, his responsible officers, who know what surveying is, will undeceive him. The late Commissioner of Railways spoke of the 4 feet 8½ inches gauge, and that is a serious matter which



will have to be gone into by the Government. I believe that gauge will have to be adopted not only here, but right through Australasia, because it has been proved in the old country to be the most economical, carrying more tonnage and doing more work in proportion to cost than any other. We shall have to adopt that gauge in this colony unless we are content with an average speed of 28 to 30 miles an hour. But this matter bristles with a considerable number of difficulties; and the question to-night is as to whether we shall go on with the survey which the present Commissioner of Railways—as I suppose we may call the Premier until the new Commissioner has been re-elected—has gone to the absurd length of saying can be carried out for £1,000. I speak with all respect, but I am sorry to see a statesman lower himself in the way the Premier has done.

Question put and passed.

#### MOTION—RAILWAY ASSOCIATIONS, TO RECOGNISE.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the condition of dangerous discontent existing amongst the Government railway employees renders further delay in coming to a decision on the question of the recognition of associations of workmen by the department inexcusable and detrimental to the public interest; and that therefore this House is of opinion that the associations should be forthwith recognised by the department, and the regulations lately promulgated subjected to revision.

He said: This motion is somewhat of a more controversial character than the one which I had the pleasure of moving just now. I may say that when this notice of motion was given, a state of discontent did exist amongst railway employees; and the object I had at the time was to force the hands of the Government to come to some decision satisfactory to the men, and make for the promotion of public peace; and so far as appearances go, I think that object has been attained. At all events, the railway employees have been lulled into a fancied sense of security by a letter sent by the Premier to the member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham), though that letter contains nothing more than a vague, indefinite, hazy sort of promise. It is a sort of diplomatic utterance to which the Premier

is peculiarly prone, and he promises at some future time that the Government will investigate the matter and take it into consideration, and that the associations may possibly be recognised on the basis on which similar associations are recognised in some other places not specified. That is the sum and substance of the letter to the member for Fremantle, and so far as I can see, it does not commit the Government to anything in particular. Still it has had the desired effect; it has kept the Railway Associations from saying anything more, or from making too great a noise, and it has quietened what was likely to become a very dangerous agitation from the point of view of the Government, and the Railway Department in particular. I contend that the matter cannot be allowed to rest there. One of two things must be done; either the Government must have the courage of what I believe is its real convictions and refuse to recognise the associations altogether, or on the other hand they must come out boldly and straightforwardly and say they intend to keep this half pledge, and to recognise the associations from this time forward; and also state the nature of the recognition which they mean to give. At the present moment the public are wholly in the dark about it, and although this agitation has been smoothed over for the time being, it may break out afresh at any moment, and if it does so it may be all the more vigorous perhaps, because it has been repressed so long. Apart from the desirableness or otherwise of recognising trades unions generally, the fact is that the railway employees in this colony have formed themselves into two very strong bodies, which comprise practically every one in the railways. If those two bodies choose to exercise the power they possess, they are able at two hours' notice to paralyse the commerce of this colony. That is a grave and serious position. It seems to me that if the Government refuse to recognise these bodies, they will be subjecting the colony to a danger, the magnitude of which we can only estimate, besides which they will be entirely behind the times, and altogether at variance with the spirit of the age. Whatever opinions we may possess of trades unions or individual actions committed by trades unions, there can be no

doubt that the greatest social factor we have at the present, and have had for a century past, is the organisation of trades unions, and on the whole it is satisfactory to note that the uprising of this immense power in modern civilisation has been attended for the most part with excellent results. It has been found that a combination of workmen, so far from having the effect of undermining the discipline of persons employed, has a tendency to promote their discipline, and to render the men joining such associations more efficient than they otherwise would be, because the promoters who organise governing bodies and associations of this kind are wise enough and intelligent enough to see that unless they keep their members up to a high standard of efficiency, the result must be the ultimate break-up of the association. An association aims at placing men of all descriptions on an equality, and in order to satisfy the better men who form the nucleus of these associations it is necessary to have the standard a very high one. Therefore, the tendency of trades unions has been not alone to promote and improve the working man's social status, to raise his standard of comfort, and thereby incidentally raise the standard of civilisation, but also to raise his status as an efficient worker. These unions all lead to an improved system of education, a union being a kind of *imperium in imperio*. They act as an excellent factor in matters of government and sociology generally. That being the case, and I am only stating principles which have become axiomatic, it appears to me to be highly desirable that associations of this description should be recognised. As I understand, the aims of the two bodies most affected by this motion are twofold, or rather, perhaps, threefold. These bodies want to maintain the existing rate of wages; they want to protect themselves against undue encroachment; and they want to maintain the privileges which they possess as part of the civil service of the country. And it is a notable fact, and a fact which does them every credit, that they have repeatedly expressed their desire to establish reading rooms and technical classes.

MR. PIESSE: They can do that without recognition.

MR. VOSPER: That is purely a matter of opinion. The men themselves do not think so. At all events, they do not want to have their educational process subjected to the whims or caprice of any officer. I remember a case where buildings in Kalgoorlie were asked for, for the purpose of holding classes and obtaining a reading room, and that request was refused. I am not going into the merits or demerits of that particular case. All I say is that if an association of this kind is recognised and can make its opinions known to the department, a representation by that body will carry far greater weight than any isolated representations by one or two men. Besides that, another advantage is that an association of this kind acts as a very excellent safety valve. Men, instead of grumbling and spreading dissatisfaction among employees generally, go to their recognised officer, and through those channels they get to the proper authorities. They may debate these points, and the mere fact of the point being debated and a man's personal grievance being considered by those who are not personally affected by it, has a tendency to save the department a great amount of trouble. Many a man will go rushing to his superior officer with what he considers to be a great grievance, but if he has a chance of going to a body of his fellow men and submitting his case before he goes to the head of his particular department, it may happen that his grievance will be reduced to microscopical proportions; so that I think the system acts as much in favour of the department as it does in favour of the individual himself. There is this advantage also, that when the heads of a department receive a communication from this association, they may depend upon it that the grievance is a sufficiently urgent one to require looking into. Connected with the condition of discontent to which my motion refers is a copy of the rules and regulations which were issued, I believe, by the hon. gentleman who lately occupied the position of Commissioner of Railways (Mr. Piesse). I do not propose to deal with this at any length, but I may say that these regulations have already created a considerable amount of bitterness of feeling; and it is an important justification of this motion, that so far the

Government have given absolutely no assurance whatever, vague or otherwise, that these rules are to be rescinded or interfered with in any way. Before I go into that, though, I may point out that under the Railways Act of this colony it is imperatively ordered that copies of regulations such as these shall be laid upon the table of the House within fourteen days of the meeting of the House; but in this instance that has not been done. I am informed that the late Commissioner of Railways did give instructions of this nature to the officers of his department prior to resigning, consequently no blame can be attached to him; but here is a case in which the mandate of an Act of Parliament has been disobeyed by a Government department. These regulations should be on the table of the House, and available for the information of members generally, but they are not on the table of the House, and I have had to go to considerable trouble.

**THE PREMIER:** Immense trouble, I should think.

**MR. VOSPER:** I had to go to some trouble in order to obtain this copy of rules and regulations, and I should not have been able to obtain it without the courtesy of a member of this House who sent for it.

**THE PREMIER:** I would have sent for a copy for you at once, if you had asked me.

**MR. VOSPER:** Very likely, but that does not excuse the hon. gentleman, and the department he has been controlling, for disobeying the Act of Parliament. They disobey resolutions of this House, and the House condones the offence. This House apparently has so low a sense of its own privileges and responsibilities that it allows a decision to be flouted; but when it comes to disobeying an Act of Parliament, I think that the lowest Parliament that ever existed would insist upon the law being obeyed. The law has been disobeyed, and the Government deserve the censure of this House for not obeying the law.

**MR. GEORGE:** You do not expect anything from this Parliament, do you?

**MR. VOSPER:** No; but nevertheless a voice crying in the wilderness is perhaps better than no voice at all. A day will come when some of these protests will be

remembered and acted upon. At all events I say I can prove that the Railway Department in this instance has deliberately disobeyed the law made by Parliament, and I say that such things as that should be discouraged by protest; and if future Parliaments find themselves flouted in this way, they may reasonably take into consideration the advisableness of imposing a severe penalty upon the persons who commit breaches of law in this colony. As to the regulations themselves, I think that the two which are most objected to by the employees on the railways are the two sub-sections of Section 36. The first is as follows:

Employees addressing communications in connection with their public duties in the railway service other than through their superior officers, or using or obtaining outside influence either directly or indirectly, to represent their requirements, will be fined for the first offence, and for a repetition will be liable to dismissal from the service.

What does that mean? It means that these men are prohibited by these regulations from appealing to the very tribunal which is established under our constitution for the redress of any grievances they may have. In other words, under this regulation a man who is suffering from a grievance in the Railway Department from which possibly he can find no redress, will, if he goes to a member of Parliament and requests him to bring the matter before the House which is established for the special purpose of dealing with such a case, be liable to a fine for the first offence and dismissal for the second. This sub-section aims and actually strikes a blow at the constitutional privilege of the individual. It takes away from him the free citizenship he should have as a person belonging to this colony.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** He has no soul, if he is in the civil service.

**MR. VOSPER:** No soul, and no body from a political standpoint.

**THE PREMIER:** Is it different from what exists elsewhere?

**MR. VOSPER:** I am not aware that it exists elsewhere. If the right hon. gentleman could show me that this regulation was in force from pole to pole throughout the whole world, I should say that was all the more reason for protesting against it. Because this is the position of affairs: we have a Parlia-

ment, we have what is said by a polite fiction to be a free constitution, and here we have a regulation which destroys the very constitutional rights which should be possessed by these servants. If there is a single person, or if there are four hundred persons with a grievance, is there any reason why Parliament should not inquire into the matter? Is not the existence of such grievance a very excellent reason why there should be an investigation? Yet, here we find a regulation formed for the very purpose of preventing Parliament from exercising any supervision over the details of the most important department under its control.

**THE PREMIER:** Why did you not object last night, when we had before us the Civil Service Bill containing the same provision?

**MR. VOSPER:** I thank the Premier for reminding me of it; and I shall certainly do my best when the matter comes up on recommitment.

**THE PREMIER:** You may find out what is done elsewhere.

**MR. VOSPER:** I shall spend a delightful evening in dealing with the matter.

**THE PREMIER:** Why do you not learn something from the experience of other countries?

**MR. VOSPER:** I think the right hon. gentleman will give me credit for having done my best with the Public Service Bill. I spent a good deal of time over it, and succeeded in improving it.

**THE PREMIER:** Your experience is so great.

**MR. GEORGE:** That is a sneer.

**MR. VOSPER:** We are accustomed in this House to sneers and insults from the Treasury benches, instead of arguments. We are used to these examples of Chesterfieldian courtesy. From the experience the Premier has gained in other circles we know what courtesy means. He sets us a bright and shining example. [At this stage the Premier left the Chamber.] Now the right hon. gentleman has departed, I can proceed in peace. There is no necessity to descend to the level of personalities in his absence. As I have already said, the regulation absolutely destroys the rights of the individual. Clause B goes on a little further in the same direction; it states that:

Employees taking up positions in connection with politics, or on municipalities, roads boards, progress committees, or other like institutions, render themselves liable to dismissal from the service.

Here I shall be told that the Public Service Bill contains the same thing. I can quite understand that this may be a very salutary provision in certain conditions, and so far as it is salutary I am not going to combat it. If we take, for example, the case of persons connected with the Treasury or any of the great departments of the State, I can quite understand that there are some good and cogent reasons why these persons should not be allowed to interfere in political affairs. They might, for example, exercise undue interference; but when we come to persons like an engine driver or a lamp trimmer, or a signaller, men who have nothing to do with the civil service no more than a man who digs a drain in the street, why disfranchise them. This is one of the matters which perhaps the late Commissioner of Railways or the Premier can explain. I cannot see why anyone will be less useful because he happens to be a member of a town council, a roads board, or of some other body.

**A MEMBER:** He ought to be in the Opposition.

**MR. VOSPER:** There is a general objection on the part of the Government to any inclination to intelligence. As to the remark with reference to intelligence, if there had been any want of intelligence here, no doubt the hon. member who made the remark would have come over long ago, but unfortunately there has been no want in that direction. There seems to be something in the remark of the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) that there is a desire to choke all manifestations of intelligence, and that there is a desire to run our civil service on a Chinese principle. We are to have an examination in classics, and the man who shows himself proficient in the classics will be appointed. Another individual who shows any degree of intelligence, again on the Chinese principle, will be decapitated. We do not decapitate them here as they do in China, but the man will be turned out of the service. A man may have the modicum of intelligence to become a civil

servant, which is not great, but if he goes beyond that amount of intelligence he appears to be too wise for the service. The railway service, or any other department, has no right to deprive people of their civil rights. This practically makes people prisoners; they are placed on the level of the deserter from the army in some foreign countries. I do not see how that can redound to the benefit of the service. I cannot see what good it can accomplish. I protest vigorously against it, and the railway servants have my hearty sympathy in their protest, and they will always have my hearty support. Considering, in the first place, this question is only scotched and not killed, that the associations have no guarantee, except a misty letter addressed to a member; considering that this grievous state of discontent may break out at any time, and considering that these regulations deprive the railway servants of their civil rights, and have not been revised in any form, I move the motion standing in my name.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): I second the motion.

MR. PIESSE: I move the adjournment of the debate.

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

Ayes ...	...	17
Noes ...	...	11
		—
Majority ...	...	6

AYES.

Mr. Connor  
Mr. Darlôt  
Sir John Forrest  
Mr. A. Forrest  
Mr. D. Forrest  
Mr. George  
Mr. Harper  
Mr. Higham  
Mr. Hubble  
Mr. Lefroy  
Mr. Locke  
Mr. Mitchell  
Mr. Pennefather  
Mr. Piesse  
Mr. Quinlan  
Mr. Throssell  
Mr. Rason (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Doherty  
Mr. Ewing  
Mr. A. Y. Hassell  
Mr. Holmes  
Mr. Hutchinson  
Mr. Illingworth  
Mr. Kingsmill  
Mr. Monger  
Mr. Vosper  
Mr. Wallace  
Mr. Gregory (Teller).

Motion thus passed.

MOTION — GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS, CONTROL BY COMMISSIONERS.

MR. HARPER (Beverley): I beg to move:

That, in the opinion of this House, the time has arrived when it is desirable, in the interests of this colony, that the Government Railways should be placed under the control

of a Board of Commissioners, removed as far as possible from political influence.

This is a subject of very considerable importance to the country. It is a matter which has caused a great deal of political heart burning, and a good deal of consideration in the other colonies. Although when the original principle on which the railways were transferred from the Government to a Commissioner have been altered somewhat, it appears from the experience of our eastern neighbours that they have found it is desirable that this change should take place. I had the temerity several years ago to move in this direction, but Parliament was not then ripe for it, still I hope by the experience of later years hon. members have seen that sooner or later this change must be brought about, and the sooner the better. I am not going to labour the question, but I say that all experience tends to show that the political motives that operate in a service of this kind are detrimental to the public interests, therefore it is desirable that earnest steps should be taken to remove it from Ministerial control as far as possible. I hope the matter will be thoroughly debated and discussed, and all the experience that we have gained from the eastern colonies will be brought to bear, so that a wise and judicious verdict will be arrived at.

MR. PIESSE: I move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion put and passed.

MOTION—ORE SMELTING, GERALDTON, TO ASSIST.

MR. MITCHELL (Murchison): I beg to move:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the Government should consider the advisability of encouraging and assisting in the erection of a water-jacket smelter in the vicinity of Geraldton, to smelt ores containing gold, silver, lead, and copper.

In bringing this motion before the House I have three motives: first, that the great mineral resources in the Victoria district should be developed; secondly, to provide the means of treating sulphide ores on the Murchison goldfields; and thirdly, to help the colony generally by the employment of labour. It is not intended that we should follow some examples which have been set, and expend a large amount of money needlessly and go before the

work. It is not intended to put up works of great magnitude which would be too expensive to maintain for the work coming forward at present, therefore I only propose that one water-jacket furnace, or smelter, should be erected. It will cost something like £5,000, but it is better to start low down and climb up, instead of starting high up and climbing down. I do not intend to ask for any direct assistance in putting up this furnace, but as soon as it is erected and 200 tons of ore smelted, then I ask that the Government shall give the company or the individual working the smelter, and who has smelted the ore, the sum of £800.

MR. GEORGE: Four pounds a ton.

MR. MITCHELL: After that £150 for every 100 tons of ore smelted up to 1,000 tons all told. I may tell hon. members that from that district, from 1873 to 1883, something like 25,000 tons of ore were sent away. I think the gross value was something like £264,000; so this dispels the current idea that there are no minerals in that district.

MR. GEORGE: I suppose there is plenty left.

MR. MITCHELL: There is a little left. The question might reasonably be asked: Why do we not send the ore to the Fremantle Smelting Works? That question, I regret to say, is very easily answered. It is because of the enormous charges made at those works for smelting ore; and when I tell hon. members that those charges are, for smelting galena—that is, the sulphide ore—£5 2s. 6d. a ton, to which must be added 17s. 8d. a ton for carriage from Northampton to the Smelting Works, making a total of £6 0s. 2d. per ton, they will perceive the justice of my contention. And when I go on to compare those charges with the charges of other smelting works at Port Adelaide and Dry Creek, where the cost is only £2 per ton, the unreasonableness of the charges will be still more manifest. At Mount Lyell all the ore is smelted at a charge of something like 15s. 10d. per ton, and it is well known that a ton of Geraldton ore is more easily smelted than a ton of low-grade copper ore. It may be asked why we do not now work those mines. Well, the cost of transit is at the present time too large. We cannot send the ore to any place where it can be smelted at a fair charge. In the early

days, we were able to get our ore shipped to London or Swansea at nominal rates in the wool-ships which used to call at Geraldton. Now, if we send it there, we must do so by steamer at a cost of £2 10s. per ton. It is very rarely I ask for anything from the House; my request on this occasion is particularly modest; and I hope hon. members will support my motion, which is well worthy of consideration.

MR. GEORGE: It amounts to a bonus of about £1,600.

MR. HUTCHINSON (Geraldton): I have very much pleasure in seconding the motion, and I do so because I think the matter is one deserving the support of every member of this House. As the mover has told us, the great necessity for the mineral development of that district is a cheap method of smelting ore. For a number of years past, as most of us are aware, the mining industry in the Victoria districts has been at a standstill, mainly because it was impossible to melt the ore locally, or to send it to Swansea or one or two other places to be smelted at a profit. If by some means we can have smelting works erected in the district, in which to treat our minerals at a reasonable charge, there is no reason why the mines in and around Northampton and in the district towards the Lower Murchison should not employ hundreds, and I believe thousands of men, within a few years from now. There is another advantage to be gained by re-opening these mines: namely, that not only shall we be fostering the mining industry, but we shall be able to assist the farming and pastoral community by creating fresh markets for their produce. In and around that district of which the hon. member has spoken, there is a considerable quantity of fairly good land of which considerable areas are already in the hands of the farmers; and if these mines could be started again, we could hold out an inducement to a great number of men of other occupations to settle in that district and make their living by supplying the wants of those engaged in mining pursuits. During years gone by, these mines were worked mainly by people with little or no capital—parties of working miners; and that fact will doubtless account for most of the mines shutting down about 1880 or 1883, when lead

suddenly fell in price, and it was found necessary by those who had the mines to pick out the eyes of their properties and make the best of them at the time, and then abandon them. This was not done because the lodes had given out: numbers of them are almost as good now as in the early stages of their development; but owing to no capital being available, once the shafts had gone down to the water level they had to be abandoned; and they have remained abandoned ever since. It may be interesting to some hon. members to know that one mine which was worked there to a depth of about 180 feet turned out in a very few years 6,000 tons of lead ore, which yielded from about 70 to 84 per cent.; that the deepest shaft in the district has reached a depth of only 300 feet: so that those with a knowledge of mining will know that very little has been done there; and in almost every case where lead was mined, and in some cases where copper was mined, the lodes are still strong, and would return a handsome profit to people working them, if there were local facilities for smelting. Miners would then have the whole world for a market, instead of having to depend upon Swansea and one or two other places. As another advantage, small parties of miners could work their properties profitably, because, if they could send their ore to the local furnace they could get the cash for it in the course of a few weeks, whereas, under the old system, they would probably have to wait six or seven months before they could get any return; and there would be big interest to pay in the meantime, and lots of charges that would make it almost out of the question to show any profit. From 1873 to 1883 about 25,000 tons of lead ore was raised there, to the value of something like £250,000; and in one year, 1887, 4,000 tons was raised, returning £50,000; and most of this work was done by men who were not capitalists in any sense of the word. Hon. members will see that there are great possibilities in that district, which only needs fair encouragement for its development. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion; I do so because I sincerely believe the matter is worthy of general support; and I support it in the manner in which I would support anything that came before the House which I thought would

tend to the better development of the possibilities we have in this colony.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): It is not often that I have the very great pleasure of supporting the member for Murchison (Mr. Mitchell), but in this case I have. It seems to me he has struck a chord which will find a response all through the Murchison district, and certainly throughout the gold-mining part of that district. I am not acquainted with Northampton, not having had the pleasure of being born there, and not having visited it; but I know that smelting works at the port of Geraldton would be a very great advantage to the mining district which I have the honour to represent, and I am sure the member for South Murchison (Mr. Rason) will also see the value to his district of works of that character. We are now sending a large quantity of ore from the Mount Magnet district to Fremantle, which involves a good deal of unnecessary cost. In some cases we cannot tranship the ore; and this fact necessitates our sending it right along the line of railway. The country derives no special benefit from that, but the cost is very materially increased. I hope the Government will see their way to assent to this motion. I think it is quite in harmony with their past policy in regard to the gold-mining industry. There is, for instance, the public battery system, which has been of immense value. The batteries which have been erected in the Murchison district are doing splendid work, their only drawback, perhaps, being that here and there they require new boilers. The one at Lennonville is a case in point.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: A boiler has already been provided.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I am glad to hear it. Quite recently, it was not safe to go near that battery.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: The boiler is there now. We always attend to these matters promptly.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: However, the battery has been doing splendid work for that district. There is found at Mount Magnet certain ironstone ore which can be dealt with only by smelting; and it is really exceedingly valuable; but a good deal of the actual value does not reach the miner, because of the immense cost

involved in sending the ore to Fremantle, and sometimes in sending it to the other colonies. I hope the Government, and especially the Minister of Mines, in whose province this will come, will see their way to comply with the request of the member for Murchison.

MR. DARLOT (DeGrey): I should like to add that these works will develop the copper mines at Day Dawn, and also the iron lodes at Stake Well, between Nannine and Cue. For that reason, and for the sake of the copper and lead mines at Northampton and Newmarracarra, I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. H. B. Lefroy): The motion does not embody any immodest request. Lead mining has not been too active at Northampton for some years past. We have the railway system running east from Geraldton, and tapping great auriferous areas in that direction; and I think smelting works established at Geraldton would be a very great benefit, not only to the lead-mining industry at Northampton, but to the gold-mining industry further east. I agree with what the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) has said, that in the neighbourhood of Mount Magnet there is a class of ore which is decidedly of a very refractory character, and in order to get from it the best results it undoubtedly requires smelting. The hon. member (Mr. Mitchell) is not asking the Government to commit itself to his motion entirely, but asks us to take into consideration the advisableness of encouraging and assisting the erection of smelting works at Geraldton. I may tell the hon. member that the Government will be pleased to take this matter in hand, to go thoroughly into it, and to see whether they can formulate some scheme for encouraging smelting at Geraldton in order to stimulate the mining industry further east. I hope we may be able to formulate some scheme which will not mean a large expenditure for the country, and at the same time lend great assistance to the mining industry. I have much pleasure in informing the hon. member that the matter will be given every consideration, and I trust some good may come from it.

Question put and passed.

#### MOTION—TELEGRAPH OPERATORS AT KALGOORLIE.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie) moved:

That a Select Committee be appointed to investigate the circumstances attending the dismissal of certain telegraph operators at Kalgoorlie.

He said: It will be within the recollection of hon. members that during the last few days there have appeared reports in the public Press to the effect that four or five operators at the Kalgoorlie Post Office have been instantly dismissed, and four or five others are to be dismissed at the end of the month, for having, it is alleged, divulged secrets which came into their possession in the course of their business. In the first place, I do not want the House to be under the impression that I am acting under any mistaken idea of sympathy with the offenders, but I regard it as of the very first importance to have absolute secrecy, especially in a department of this kind. But at Kalgoorlie for some time it has been felt that no telegraphic message has been safe. I can go further, because I had a letter only to-day in which the writer expresses the opinion that even letters going through the post office are not entirely safe from being tampered with. If that be true, it indicates a very bad state of things at Kalgoorlie, and rigorous punishment should be meted out to everyone concerned in divulging secrets of that kind. During the time I was in Kalgoorlie in connection with the federal campaign, it was a matter of common talk that sporting, shareholding, financial, and political telegrams were all bruited about within a few hours of the time of being handed in for transmission. I myself was a victim of this want of secrecy on the part of officials of the Telegraph Department. Communications I sent were within twenty-four hours used by others for political purposes, and the state of things existing at the present time there, and for a long time past, has created general disgust and execration.

MR. MONGER: Not at the present time.

MR. VOSPER: Within a few weeks ago. It will be understood that I am not asking the House to sympathise with the men dismissed; far from it. I ask for a select committee because I feel that the means of investigation at the disposal



of the Postmaster General have been found inadequate, and I think that if Mr. Sholl were consulted, he would be the first to say so. Those engaged in the investigation have had a most difficult task, and have not been able to follow the conspiracy in all its ramifications; consequently I think it desirable further investigation should take place, and a select committee is perhaps the best method of dealing with an evil of the kind. Besides that, disaffection has been created owing to the dismissals in question, because it is urged that some, though not all, of the dismissed men are innocent. We want to punish the guilty very severely; in fact, a couple of years' imprisonment would not be too great for so grave an offence, and I would be in favour of some such severe penalty being meted out. At the same time, the country and the House do not wish to punish the innocent, but the guilty, and the guilty only, and complaint is made now that the dismissed men have not had a fair trial, but have, on the strength of *ex parte* statements, been dismissed, while others who are guilty, have been retained. It is a bad state of things to allow innocent men, or alleged innocent men, to be dismissed and guilty men retained, for it can only tend to general demoralisation. However, I do not offer an opinion on that point, but simply say it is desirable there should be an investigation. I know a scandalous state of things has existed for a long time past, and I am glad to see the Postmaster General and the department have awakened to the fact and taken drastic action to bring about a remedy. But we must be careful the remedy is not attended with any injustice. I am sure the Premier would be the very last man to sanction an injustice, and from his innate sense of right would rather the guilty should escape than that the innocent should suffer. The sooner we bring the accused to trial the better, and a Committee of this House could investigate the whole matter, punish the guilty, and acquit the innocent, and suggest some remedy. It is not surprising these things should occur in the Kalgoorlie office, because I know as a fact that one man who occupies a very important and responsible position in the department, and who has, so far as I have seen from the public

prints, escaped punishment, was formerly chief telegraph operator at Charters Towers, Queensland, during the time I was there, and he was dismissed by the Queensland Government and sentenced to, I think, six months imprisonment with hard labour for the offence of divulging secrets. Yet we find him in this colony in an important and responsible position; and when an inquiry was made we were told he had become insane. Whether he has recovered since I do not know.

**THE PREMIER:** Was he dismissed by the Queensland Government? What is his name?

**MR. VOSPER:** A. W. Frayne, chief operator. It is a fact he was dismissed from the Queensland service for a similar offence, and it is a curious coincidence the same sort of thing occurs here, and so far as I know he has not been dismissed or his case investigated. At all events, I think there is more in the background than has been made public, and it is highly desirable the affair should be sifted to the bottom, and a permanent remedy found by a select committee.

**THE PREMIER** (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I am sure there is no one in the House who will object to the desire of the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) that the telegraph department should be purged of any suspicion of bad conduct on the part of the officers. I hope, however, the hon. member will not press his motion; not that I would object to it in any degree if the investigation now going on were completed, but that investigation has not been altogether completed, the matter being now in the hands of the Law Department, who are considering the finding of the persons entrusted with the inquiry. On constitutional grounds, which my friends opposite are always so eager to quote, I think no inquiry should take place by this House until the Government come to a final conclusion in regard to the matter. I do not speak with much authority, because I do not know the facts exactly; but I know there has been an investigation by the Postal and Telegraph Department at Kalgoorlie, and that there has been something very scandalous, or apparently very scandalous, with regard to certain officers of the department. That inquiry has resulted in a report, and

certain officers have been suspended. Speaking from memory, I do not think anyone has been actually dismissed.

A MEMBER: Oh, yes.

THE PREMIER: Then my memory is at fault. I was not aware that one had been actually dismissed, but I know with regard to others that penalties have been imposed upon them, and that the Law Department have had the matter under consideration. Their report has not been received. It seems to me it is very unwise, and I think, if I may use a term so often used by the Opposition, unconstitutional for this House to appoint a select committee to investigate the circumstances attending a dismissal or suspension, before the Government themselves have come to a conclusion with regard to the matter. I think the correct course would be, as soon as the Government have decided in regard to this matter, to ask for the papers, and when the papers have been placed upon the table of the House, members could ask for a select committee if the papers are not altogether satisfactory. I think no one will doubt that the desire of the hon. member is that the Telegraph Department shall be absolutely pure, and that there shall not even be any suspicion that the telegraph service of the colony is corrupt. But his motion is double-barrelled. He not only wishes to inquire into the conduct of the guilty, but he has some suspicion in his mind that the innocent have been condemned. To tell the Administration that they have condemned innocent persons is about as bad a charge as you can make against them. I do not think the Government would condemn persons without careful consideration; therefore, in my opinion, the motion of the hon. member goes too far, at the present time at any rate. I would suggest that he should withdraw his motion and ask for the papers to be produced as soon as they are complete. I am not prepared to say they are complete now, because I do not know. I do not think they are quite complete, but they are very nearly so. Having perused the papers, the hon. member can propose any motion he likes. To ask this House to appoint a select committee to investigate the circumstances attending the dismissal of certain telegraph operators at Kalgoorlie, before the whole matter is con-

cluded; would be premature and undesirable.

MR. VOSPER: The only thing is that men may have been dismissed and may be suffering.

THE PREMIER: I do not think they have been dismissed. I believe there are some suspensions, but speaking from memory I do not think the men were dismissed.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: One man was dismissed.

THE PREMIER: That was a very bad case, where he insulted and abused everyone, and would not give evidence. I heard of that case, and I should be sorry to relate his conduct to this House. If an officer is called upon to make an explanation and he uses insults, and abusive, disgraceful, and abominable language towards the persons appointed to inquire into his conduct, the sooner he is dismissed the better. That may be the case. At any rate, I heard of one case where filthy language was used towards the person who was investigating the matter. I feel quite sure the hon. member's only object is that justice shall be done. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: Hear, hear.] If he will withdraw the motion, I will undertake to produce the papers as soon as I can, and it will not be very long—a very few days, I hope. Perhaps the hon. member might move for the papers, so as to put himself in order. The papers will be placed on the table, and then he will be able to look at them and frame a motion consonant with the circumstances revealed. If the hon. member will agree to that, I shall be very glad to undertake to produce the papers as soon as the Government have come to a decision with regard to this matter, which I regret to say is not at all satisfactory. I think it is the only unsatisfactory matter that has been brought under my notice with regard to the Telegraph Department during the whole time I have been connected with the Government.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): This is a grave question, and unfortunately it is not a very new one either. We had the very same difficulties in Victoria years ago, the state of things which existed bringing about a want of confidence. It has been said that on the leading goldfields, when there

was a good deal of important business being done, it was absolutely impossible to use the telegraph office, and it was not always very safe even to send letters unless they were registered. Of course this is a state of things that ought not to exist. I only express the hope that while the Government have this matter in hand they will sift the question to the very bottom, and will without hesitation punish to the utmost of their powers the men found guilty; but let us be sure about their being guilty. Really this is a matter of vast importance. A share transaction sometimes means the making or marring of a man; it may mean the ruin of a good man; and if the Telegraph Department can allow information to leak out which is injurious to the very customers of the Government, that is a state of things very unsatisfactory. I do not know whether the Attorney General will recall some of the very unpleasant things or unsatisfactory feelings which existed, at any rate, on a goldfield with which we were both identified. In the middle of the gold boom of 1873 there were some very unsatisfactory things indeed. This matter comes under the Attorney General's special purview, and I feel sure he will see the necessity of probing it to the very bottom, finding the guilty men and getting rid of them from the service. This suspension business is most unsatisfactory. We ought to get rid of these men altogether out of the service. Men who cannot be trusted in the Telegraph Department ought not to be in the service anywhere. I think perhaps the hon. member (Mr. Vosper) will accept the suggestion of the Premier on the promise of the right hon. gentleman to lay the papers on the table at the earliest possible date. He might safely accept that suggestion, and allow the matter to stand over. If the papers are not satisfactory, he will be quite in order in moving this motion at a later date.

MR. VOSPER (in reply): I am glad the Premier appreciates the object I have in view in bringing forward this motion, and I have no desire to interfere with the course of the inquiry now pending. My only desire was to prevent any possible injustice from being done, and to make sure of the guilty parties being punished, and, I hope, punished severely; because I cannot conceive of anything worse, or

more detrimental to the State generally than the position of affairs which has existed at Kalgoorlie for some time past. I am told by sporting men and share-brokers that a conspiracy exists to find out secrets and to make use of them. I know of one person who carried on share-broking transactions of most unusual magnitude, involving hundreds and hundreds of pounds, and in some cases thousands. This sort of thing has been done by men who could not do it under ordinary circumstances, owing to their not having sufficient means. I am sure the Government feel that as much as any private member of the House can possibly do. All I desired was to warn them that there was a suspicion abroad that injustice was being done, and to ask them to use special vigilance to see that no injustice was perpetrated. I accept the assurance of the Premier in regard to the papers, and as soon as I know the papers are nearly ready, I shall move that they be laid on the table of the House. In the meantime, I ask leave to withdraw my motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

#### MOTION—DREDGING AT ALBANY.

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL (Albany): I beg to move:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that a dredger should be forthwith sent to Albany for the purpose of dredging the harbour to a greater depth and providing accommodation for the White Star liners and other vessels of deep draft, which now pass Albany in consequence of not being able to come into Princess Royal Harbour.

My reason for bringing this matter before the House is that there is not sufficient water in Princess Royal Harbour to admit vessels of the class of the White Star liners.

THE PREMIER: How much do they draw?

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL: When loaded, 28ft. 6in. or 29ft.

THE PREMIER: Then they would not be able to come into the channel.

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL: Yes; there is 30ft. of water in the channel at mid-tide. It is not so much the channel as the inside part of the harbour, where the vessels anchor, that requires dredging. When a dredge was at Albany some years ago, a hole was scooped out called the

"Anchor Hole," and around this hole there is not sufficient space, when there are two ships at anchor, for another vessel to swing when leaving so as not to come in contact with the other vessels anchored. This matter was brought forward by the late member for Albany (Mr. Leake) some time ago, but then there was no discussion on the subject at all. Mr. Leake merely asked the Premier to let him know when it would be convenient to send a dredge to Albany, and the Premier replied that he would do so probably at the end of the year. "Probably at the end of the year" was not a sufficient answer to the question, and did not satisfy the people of Albany. What they want to know is when this dredge can be sent to Albany; they want the time fixed. Since I have been in Perth I have had several letters from Albany in connection with this business. Members are aware that the mail steamers do not now call at Albany. I do not altogether blame the Premier for that, but the Ministry as a whole.

THE PREMIER: What is one man's loss is another man's gain.

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL: Vessels of the draft of the White Star liners pass Albany now. There will be no damage to Fremantle if this dredging is carried out, because the vessels will not go to Fremantle to coal.

THE PREMIER: Cannot these vessels coal at the anchorage?

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL: No; because when there is a strong wind blowing from the eastward there is no shelter, and boats cannot lie at the anchorage like they can in the harbour, and if boats coal at the anchorage the companies have to pay stevedores an extra shilling a ton to do the work, which is objected to. Albany loses the trade of these boats. When the Medic called at Albany there was a strong wind blowing, and some difficulty was experienced in getting the coal aboard: the captain remarked that if that state of things continued he was not coming to Albany again. The boats of several companies would come into the harbour at Albany if there was sufficient water inside.

THE PREMIER: What companies are there whose vessels draw more than 27ft.?

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL: The coal companies, and other companies such as the White Star line.

THE PREMIER: What do they draw?

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL: Twenty-eight feet.

THE PREMIER: The P. & O. liners do not draw more than 26ft.

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL: I have seen the Rome come into Albany drawing 29ft., and I have seen the Arcadia drawing 28ft. 6in. The last time the China came out from England the vessel remained outside, because the captain did not think there was room enough for the vessel to swing when going out, as there were two other ships in the harbour.

THE PREMIER: Did the Rome come in drawing 28ft. 6in.?

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL: Twenty-nine feet. The harbour-master only allows 26ft., because when we telegraphed to the harbourmaster at Fremantle to try and force the boats to come inside he said that vessels were allowed to come in drawing 26ft. There is another thing: we have occasional visits from men-of-war. The last time the Europa was there she remained outside, and the captain said: "Why don't you people use a little energy and get a dredge down to deepen the harbour, because I cannot come in now?" Now that the Government have taken the mail steamers from Albany they should do something for us in the way of compensation, and we do not ask for anything out of the way. We are a law-abiding people, and we contribute about £70,000 a year to the revenue. What have the Government done for us? There is a considerable loss to the revenue by the White Star boats not being able to come in, because these boats pay port dues, and a considerable sum of money is spent while the vessels stay in the port. The White Star liners also bring passengers to the colony, and the railways thus lose to some extent. On the 30th June last, at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce at Fremantle, the Premier gave the public to understand, or gave the people of Albany to understand, according to the *Morning Herald*, that the Fremantle harbour was finished. If the Fremantle harbour is finished, then there are four dredges at Fremantle, one of which could be spared to go to Albany.

THE PREMIER: What about Bunbury? They want a dredge too.

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL: At Bunbury there is more dredging than they can do

for some time to come. I was at Bunbury the other day.

**THE SPEAKER ?** Will the hon. member please address the Chair ?

**MR. J. F. T. HASSELL :** I beg pardon, sir. I do not imagine I have any right to say anything against Bunbury, because I think Bunbury has as much right to have its requirements satisfied as Albany. If I knew there were anything required for Bunbury, I should use my best efforts to give Bunbury fair play, as well as any other part of the colony. I have not come to this House on any one-sided errand. I have lived in this colony all my life, and it is my interest to do all I can for the benefit of the country generally. If the Government bring forward a good measure, I shall support them. I am not one-sided, as I can assure hon. members. Those are my reasons for the motion, and I think they are very good reasons, considering the position of the people of Albany at the present moment who are trying to do something for the place. It is to our interest to keep those people there, and to provide some work to keep the port going. In Albany there are many people from Adelaide, Melbourne, and other places in the East, who have established themselves there in trade, and if nothing be done to keep those people in the colony they will go back to the countries whence they came and give us a very bad name. I hope the present Government will look into this matter, and send down the dredger as soon as possible; and if it be true, as the Premier said at Fremantle, that the harbour there is finished, the Government do not want four dredges at that port, and the sooner one is sent to Albany the better.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH** (Central Murchison) : I second the motion.

**MR. MORGANS** (Coolgardie) : I have much pleasure in giving my strongest support to the appeal of the member for Albany. We know that Albany has suffered severely from the transfer of the mail steamers to Fremantle; but I do not think that would be a good reason for asking the Government to spend a large sum of money at Albany. At the same time, I think Albany deserves a little consideration at the hands of the

Government, and that the Government should do anything in their power for the purpose of assisting that very important port, which has lost heavily by the transfer of the mail boats. What the member for Albany says is quite correct. There is no doubt the White Star steamers which call at Albany now have suffered and will continue to suffer considerable inconvenience through the want of deep water in the inner harbour; and the very important trade opened up by the White Star liners is worthy of the best consideration of the Government, and ought by every means in our power to be encouraged. The question of dredging out the Albany harbour presents no great difficulty. The Government, having several dredges at Fremantle, some of which, I believe, are not in use, might well take into favourable consideration the question of sending one of them to Albany. I have no figures before me showing what the cost of this work would be; but from some information I have received from Albany I take it that the dredger could, in a few months, do the work necessary to enable any steamer of the White Star line to enter the inner harbour and anchor there, and at the same time to accommodate other steamers which may call at the port. Albany is a very important port, though its importance has been seriously lessened by the transfer of the mail steamers to Fremantle. At the same time, it is surprising what a large number of sailing vessels and steamers do enter the harbour of Albany even now; and in view of the fact that the very important company who own the White Star line of steamers are sending their magnificent boats to Albany, and that a large trade is thus being opened up between this colony, South Africa, and England, the Government might take into consideration the pressing question of dredging the harbour. If the Government are not prepared to give any direct compensation to Albany for the loss of the mail steamers, the least the Government can do is to consider the proposal now made; and if the facts be investigated, the request of the member for Albany will be acceded to. The motion has my warmest support, and I hope the Government will consider the possibility of sending a dredge to Albany, and thus increase the facilities of a port

which must not be forgotten by this House.

On motion by Mr. DARLOT, debate adjourned until the next day.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11:8 o'clock until the next day.

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 13th September, 1900.

Papers presented—Personal Explanation (Mr. George)—Perth Ice Company Inquiry: Motion to permit representation by Counsel (negatived)—Public Service Bill, in Committee, new clauses, reported; division—Federal House of Representatives W.A. Electorates Bill, second reading; referred to Select Committee—Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Bill, second reading (postponed)—Railway Workshops: Motion (postponed)—Motion: Government Railways, Control by Commissioners; amendment, a Select Committee (adjourned)—Adjournment.

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

#### PRAYERS.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: 1, Federation of Australia, Papers presented to the Imperial Parliament; 2, Return (moved for by Mr. Ewing) showing cost of culverts between Wokalup and Mornington Stations.

By the COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS: Report of Lands Department, 1899.

Ordered to lie on the table.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. GEORGE (Murray): Before the House proceeds to business, I desire to make a personal explanation, claiming the privilege attached to the position of a private member in this connection.

THE SPEAKER: What is the explanation?

MR. GEORGE: Some words which fell from me last evening, in this House, have been misconstrued so as to convey a meaning not intended by me, and a meaning which is insulting to the Premier of the colony. So far as I remember, the words I used were, and I believe I have them accurately: "In his sober moments to-morrow, the Premier would regret he had made the statement." The statement which the Premier had made was then and is now absurd; and I considered the Premier was heated in his argument, not from anything except irascibility of a temper which, like my own, is not always under control; and I concluded that, when he was cooler on the following day, he would regret he had made the statement. I am sorry indeed to find the inference has been drawn that I had come to the conclusion the Premier was drunk. Had I come to that conclusion, and thought it desirable to say so, I would have said it in plain words. I simply rise for the purpose of saying I did not say the Premier was drunk, and had I thought he was drunk, I do not think I would have been cad enough to say so.

#### PERTH ICE COMPANY INQUIRY.

MOTION, TO PERMIT REPRESENTATION BY COUNSEL.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (for Mr. James) moved that leave be given to Mr. Hancock, manager of the Perth Ice Company, to be represented before the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the frauds of the Perth Ice Company upon the Railway Department, by counsel.

MR. EWING (Swan): As Chairman of the Select Committee inquiring into these frauds, I would like to say Mr. Hancock applied to the Committee, through his solicitors, to be heard by counsel in the inquiry; and the Committee, after consideration, came to the conclusion that as Mr. Hancock was not charged with any offence, and had merely to appear before the Committee as a witness, amongst other witnesses summoned, to tell what he knew of the circumstances in connection with the case, the application could not be complied with. If Mr. Hancock had been charged with an offence, the Committee might have granted his request; but