

the four years 1919 to 1922. According to these statistics there were 25 fatal accidents, and 68 accidents to men who were incapacitated for fourteen days. This is an average of six fatal accidents and 16 other accidents for each of the four years. The total number of persons killed in all occupations was 513, and injured 9,526, from which it will be seen that the proportion in the case of building and scaffolding is very small. Hon. members will see that the percentage of fatal or other accidents experienced on buildings was fairly light. I do not draw attention to that fact to justify the rejection of the Bill, but mention it because, judging by the frantic appeal made by the Minister in favour of the measure, one would think he would have to go to a scaffold himself if the Bill were not passed. I shall not vote for the amendment moved by Mr. Lovekin. The Government, however, might give some undertaking as to what they are prepared to do, either by way of an amendment or by bringing forward some other Bill that will meet with the desire of hon. members—

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Next year.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move—

That progress be reported and leave asked to sit again at the next sitting of the House.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

The Minister for Education: There can be no amendment to that motion!

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can vote against the motion.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The Minister moved to report progress and for leave to sit again at the next sitting of the House. Is it competent to move to amend the motion by striking out "the next sitting of the House" and inserting some other words. The motion to report progress is not one of those that must be put from the Chair without debate. Standing Order 123 says—

A question having been proposed may be amended—1, By leaving out certain words only. 2, By inserting or adding certain words. 3, By leaving out certain words in order to insert or add other words.

So far as I know the only motions to be put without amendment or debate are those relating to the previous question and the Chairman leaving the Chair. It is competent to amend any other motion.

The CHAIRMAN: What is your amendment?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I want to strike out "the next sitting of the House" and insert "the 5th March."

Hon. V. Hamersley: No, don't do that.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: No, let it go.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I will withdraw the amendment.

Motion put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [9.5]: 1 move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till the 30th October.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Before adjourning, will the Minister tell us whether he will give members an opportunity to place amendments they desire to move to the Inspection of Machinery Act Amendment Bill on the Notice Paper, so that other members may know what we propose to do.

The Minister for Education: The matter is entirely in the hands of the President.

The PRESIDENT: I am in accord with the suggestion by Mr. Lovekin. Any amendments he desires to have placed on the Notice Paper will be so inserted.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.7 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 16th October, 1923.

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

QUESTION—EMPIRE EXHIBITION, PERSONNEL.

Mr. TEESDALE asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Is it a fact that all the officials for the Australian section of the Empire Exhibition are to be appointed by the Melbourne executive? 2, Have the local executive no authority to appoint their own officials to give information regarding our raw products and industries?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, No. 2, The State executive with the approval of the State Government have authority to appoint officers to represent the exhibitors from the State and supply information with regard to our raw products and industries generally.

QUESTION—FRUIT SALES ON RAILWAYS.

Rate on trucks.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is it a fact that the rate on trucks for sale of fruit on the railway system has been raised from £1 to £2 per diem? 2, If so, why?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, An increase was necessary in order to cover the cost of the service rendered.

MOTION—SANDALWOOD TENDERS.

Debate resumed from the 11th October on the following motion by Hon. P. Collier:—

That in the opinion of this House no tender conferring the sole right to pull and remove sandalwood from Crown lands or to deal with sandalwood under the grant of a monopoly should be accepted by the Government until Parliament has had an opportunity to approve or otherwise of the tender or tenders; and, in the meantime, to enable members to inform themselves of the nature of all tenders submitted, all such tenders and all papers relating thereto be laid on the Table of the House—

and on the following amendment by Hon. T. Walker:—

That all the words after "Government," in line 5, be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany—on amendment) [4.37]: I am afraid a good deal of misunderstanding exists regarding the attitude of the Government on this question. Let me emphasise that we are concerned about obtaining for the State and for those engaged in the industry the last possible penny that can be extracted from the people who utilise our raw product for their benefit. We may perhaps have erred in the direction of mixing up the interests of the State with those of the sandalwood getters, inasmuch as we have not only called for tenders for a permit, as is the practice with regard to forest products, but have also imposed as a condition of tender a minimum payment to the getters for the service rendered in obtaining the wood. We might have avoided all that trouble by merely calling tenders for royalty. By that means we would probably have secured a very large sum, but the getters would have been left entirely at the mercy of the successful tenderer. To my way of thinking, and I believe the opponents of the present proposal will agree with me, it would be most dangerous in connection with a commodity like sandalwood to allow any one person, firm, or company to have the right to take sandalwood for sale in the absence of adequate protection for those who actually obtain the wood. In trying to save the getter, we have got into difficulties as regards the other part of our proposal. Although the word "monopoly" is

used in connection with the Government's proposal, and although admittedly, for the purpose of attaining the object the Government have in view, it is proposed to create a condition of things which will bring advantage to the State as a whole and also to the getters, the particular term, "monopoly," does not apply. In real fact, nothing in the nature of a monopoly will be created. The sandalwood cannot be taken by the successful tenderer. He, in fact, will have no power at all, under the permit, to go into the bush and take a single piece of sandalwood. He will have to obtain all his sandalwood from the getters who are licensed by the Forests Department. Further, the Government have provided that while the successful tenderer may take only a certain maximum, yet he must take a minimum. That minimum was originally fixed at 3,000 tons per annum, but a reading of the conditions of tender shows that the minimum quantity may be varied from time to time, at the discretion of the Conservator of Forests. When it was discovered that amongst the tenderers there were some willing to take the maximum quantity of sandalwood even for the first year or two, the Government decided, in order to avoid a complete derangement of work in the sandalwood forests, to fix the minimum at 5,000 tons. During the last five or six months the Government have refrained from accepting a tender, notwithstanding the fact that they had a recommendation on the subject by the Conservator of Forests, backed by the opinion of the Solicitor General, who went into the question with the Conservator. We refrained because of the fact that members of this House had asked the Government not to deal with the tenders finally until the House had had an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the general policy of the Government's proposal. The House is certainly entitled to express an opinion on a question of policy. If the House should take the view that the Government's policy is a wrong one, then hon. members will bear the responsibility of whatever may follow, just as the Government must bear the responsibility of whatever may follow the adoption of their proposal. I hold the view that if the Government do not proceed on the basis they have outlined, there will be chaos in the obtaining of sandalwood. A limited number of men are to-day engaged in obtaining sandalwood, but that limited number are in excess of the actual quantity required for supplying the market for some year or two. There is at the moment a boom in sandalwood, and that boom has resulted from the knowledge of the traders that the prices quoted in the various tenders put in by them are sufficient to allow of their purchasing sandalwood for the time being with the certainty of being able to unload at a handsome profit later. It is rather curious to note that our friend Mr. John Stewart, chairman of directors of the so-called Sandalwood Products Company, has in various pamphlets he has published, and

in various advertisements which he has inserted in the Press, made a statement which, if the getters were to attend to it, would probably make them feel somewhat annoyed. If the statement is correct, it shows that the getters are being "diddled" out of what is, after all, their fair interest in the obtaining of sandalwood. Mr. Stewart stated the other day that if the Government accepted his own particular tender, under which the State and the sandalwood getters would share half the profits, the tender price would be £26 1s. 10d. If that is the case, then Mr. Stewart's firm must have been making a profit of about £18 per ton. I do not think they are doing that. I want to be fair in the matter, and therefore I say that I believe Mr. Stewart has not quoted quite correctly from his own figures. In my opinion it is not possible to obtain a profit of anything like £18 per ton from sandalwood.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I rise to a point of order. Is the Minister dealing with the question before the Chair? I think he is opening up a question on which every member of the House will be able to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister is trying to show reasons why the amendment should not be agreed to. It is very difficult for me to keep members strictly to the amendment. I have been watching the Minister. We want to get the facts, of course.

Hon. P. Collier: The amendment deals with the question of laying the papers on the Table.

Mr. SPEAKER: And with the question of the approval of Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am quite in your hands in this matter, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The words which the amendment proposes to strike out are as follows:—

until Parliament has had an opportunity to approve or otherwise of the tender or tenders. And, in the meantime, to enable members to inform themselves of the nature of all tenders submitted, all such tenders and all papers relating thereto be laid on the Table of the House.

The Minister is dealing with that part of the motion which relates to the approval of the House, and he is giving reasons. I am watching him closely. The Minister may proceed.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I knew there would be some difficulty in discussing the amendment, but I tried to keep my remarks as nearly as possible within the scope of the words proposed to be struck out. I am endeavouring to explain what I conceive to be the position as affected by the tenders. That position really boils itself down to the question whether a tender should be accepted or all the tenders rejected. Whether the House accepts the amendment or rejects it, the matter will still be in the same position. If the amendment is carried, and then the motion as amended is carried, it will amount

to an expression of opinion by the House that no tender should be accepted by the Government.

Mr. Underwood: But suppose the amendment is carried and then the motion as amended is defeated?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am trying to deal with that aspect as well. That would be practically an approval by the House of the Government proceeding on the lines they have already proposed.

Mr. Underwood: It would be quite possible for a member to vote for the amendment, and, if that were carried, to vote against the motion as amended.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Quite so. If the amendment is carried, the motion will read as it appears on the Notice Paper down to the word "Government" in the fifth line. Then it will be a direction to the Government not to accept a tender. If, on the other hand, the amendment be defeated, the Government must take responsibility for any course of action they adopt. If, as Mr. John Stewart states, the merchants are making such handsome profits, it is evidence that he himself did not know the value of sandalwood under the conditions proposed by the Government; else he would not have allowed another to put in a higher tender than his. I want to be clearly understood on this point: I am definitely of opinion that in the event of no tender being accepted at this stage, those who have been handling sandalwood during the last three or four months will reap a profit of anything up to £8 per ton, but the getter will not get a penny more than he has been getting in the past—indeed, while the merchants are disposing of their holdings on a basis returning them a profit up to £8 per ton, the getter will be starved. I hold that definite opinion after very careful consideration of the position and consultation with my officers.

Hon. P. Collier: The same position will obtain if a monopoly be granted.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, the difference is that whoever gets the so-called monopoly must take a minimum of 5,000 tons per annum on a monthly basis.

Hon. P. Collier: How can he possibly do it?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is his business.

Hon. P. Collier: He would require a quarter of a million pounds.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is his business entirely. He must subscribe to the permit, which provides for his taking a minimum of 5,000 tons per annum on a monthly basis.

Hon. P. Collier: Although he has four years' supply in hand?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is not my business. A company does not necessarily operate on its capital alone.

Hon. P. Collier: In this case it would require a good bank behind it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: John Stewart is prepared to go on if he gets the tender. It would be only honesty on the part

of the Government, before accepting a tender, to assure themselves that the tenderer distinctly understands the new conditions. It would not be fair to forfeit his deposit because of the changed conditions. But it is not my business to say to him, "Give me proof that you can find the necessary money." That is his business. If he signs the permit and does not take the minimum of 5,000 tons per annum on a monthly basis, his permit can be cancelled and fresh tenders called. He must either stand to his contractual conditions, or because of the changed conditions be given an opportunity to withdraw without being penalised by the forfeiture of his deposit. I do not wish to pursue the matter further. The House has been asked to take responsibility. The method the Government propose is in the best interests of the Treasury, of the getter and of the State as a whole. In the event of tenders not being accepted, so difficult will the position become in relation to the getter that it will not be long before the Government are faced with a clamour for an advance against the stocks of the getters until the market again becomes normal. Otherwise the getters must sell at a sacrifice; for John Stewart will be able to declare what price he likes, and certainly will not continue to buy if the royalty, as has been suggested, be fixed at £10 a ton with a minimum of £20 to the getter for the next 12 or 18 months or two years. What is to happen to the getters in the meantime? Under our proposal the getter is assured of a definite market at an enhanced price without any possible loss of capital, indeed, without any capital provided by the State. If the industry be not carried on, the State will lose the £2 per ton royalty and we shall have to wait at least two years until the market improves. If, as has happened, we had a clamour for a reduction of the royalty, how much greater will be the clamour if the getter cannot dispose of his stocks? I take full responsibility for the assertion that if our proposal be not accepted, I know of no other that will not bring about immediate chaos.

Hon. P. Collier: If one company can find a market, half a dozen can.

Mr. Underwood: Half a million can. Why touch it at all?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If the motion be carried, half a dozen will be there, and they are not going to buy while they have stocks on hand and want to unload at a profit.

Hon. P. Collier; Neither will one.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: But one must. We cannot make the conditions apply to six. There is nothing in the Forests Act to permit us to impose conditions on a person buying a commodity out of our forests.

Mr. Underwood: Why have a change at all?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Is the hon. member prepared to say the existing conditions are satisfactory?

Mr. Underwood: I say that Stewart should not have a monopoly.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That, of course, is another view. All along I have taken the view that a monopoly created in order to raise the overseas price of a commodity we do not use ourselves is a beneficial monopoly.

Hon. P. Collier: Beneficial to the man who gets it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: And to the State.

Hon. P. Collier: Not necessarily.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I agree that, generally speaking, monopolies are dangerous. If there were a monopoly of all our own meat supplies, it would be extremely dangerous; but a monopoly that will result in raising the price paid by John Chinaman for our sandalwood is to be beneficial.

Mr. Underwood: Nature has given us the monopoly.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: And the Chinaman is getting the benefit of the monopoly.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am allowing the hon. member a lot of latitude.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And we will want the same latitude in replying. That is why I raised the point earlier.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister is covering the whole ground. We shall have the debate all over again.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am trying to explain the position. If the amendment be carried, it will leave for consideration the motion whether or not proposals of the Government are to be proceeded with. If the House does not accept the Government's proposal, I am certain we shall have chaos in the sandalwood industry. Therefore it will not be a fair thing to lay the blame at the door of the Government, nor even fair to ask the Government to find cash to enable the industry to be carried on, since under the Government's proposal the industry could be carried on without Government assistance and at a profit to everybody concerned.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.57]: Despite whatever the Minister may say, the Government will be directly responsible for any degree of chaos that might be brought about. It is true that at present buyers are piling up large quantities of sandalwood. Hon. members, if engaged in the industry, would do precisely the same thing.

The Minister for Mines: I do not deny that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Every hon. member would take the same line of action. It is known that the royalty will be increased and that the getter will have to be paid more than he has received in the past. Consequently it is profitable for the merchants to buy up all they can get to-day under the low royalty and at the low rate to the getter. It is clear profit to the merchants to buy now and stack. If any chaos is brought about, it will have been brought about by the Government, not in delaying acceptance of the tender, but in neglecting to raise the royalty and provide the higher remuneration for the

getter. I reause that what the Minister has said is correct. He has told us there are large stocks of sandalwood in China and that there are big stocks also at Fremantle, stocks which have been cut at a cheap rate, and on which a low royalty has been paid. The people interested will not keep on buying until they have got rid of some of the stocks they have on hand. At the same time we must not forget that by acting in the way the Government are doing, the whole of the sale of the sandalwood is put into the hands of one firm. Every member in this Chamber will admit that he is against giving a monopoly to any single person or company.

Mr. Underwood interjected.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I will not take any notice of the hon. member, because, by way of interjection a little while ago he said that if the motion is not defeated, the Government will have to resign.

Hon. P. Collier: He is not satisfied with one vacancy; he wants the whole lot.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I was interested in the remarks of the Minister this afternoon. He said that the cutter would take the timber under a permit and that the contractor could only buy and sell. The other day I asked the Minister some questions as to whether there had been any regulations made to compel permit holders to sell to one buyer or more the timber which they got under their permits. The Minister replied in the negative. The permit is issued under a regulation and before the contractor, whoever he is, can carry on under the tender, both Houses of Parliament must first pass the regulation to compel the getter to sell to the one person. I think it is Section 34 of the Forests Act that provides for the calling of tenders or the selling by auction and the issuing of permits under regulations. The reason for the amendment is this: Certain hon. members have availed themselves of the opportunity to look through the files. Those who have tendered have made fairly long statements to the Press. The tenders are fairly well known and therefore hon. members feel, seeing that the conditions are already known, that there is no need for the placing of the papers on the Table. But we say it is necessary whether or not Parliament agrees to hand over one of the State's products to a monopoly to sell. This is not done anywhere that I know of.

Mr. Underwood: And no one else has sandalwood.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: India has a little, but the position remains that while we hear a good deal said about State trading concerns, this sandalwood business is a thousand times worse.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot allow the hon. member to discuss State trading concerns.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: My only desire was to point out that State trading was done in the open market, and every person had an opportunity to follow in a similar line of business as that in which the State was engaged. The sandalwood business, however, is

beyond my comprehension. Where are the Government who advocate and preach liberty of the subject?

Mr. Underwood: As preached by the Stewarts.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Never mind about the Stewarts. I have not spoken to Stewart.

Mr. Underwood: I meant Stuart the King.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member would take a far livelier action than even Mr. John Stewart has done if he were placed in a similar position. I do not blame any of these people working to their utmost for the purpose of keeping for themselves a business which they have built up. Every person would do that. I am surprised to find in this 20th century a National Government submitting anything which has a tendency to bring about a monopoly. Have we not had referenda in this State for the Commonwealth to prevent monopolies? We know the effect of monopolies in America.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is now dealing with the motion more than the amendment.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I admit that. That is why I raised the point of order. I was afraid that what the Minister was saying would result in a re-opening of the whole question. The Government have made a mistake and the bad feature of the whole thing is that they are prepared to stand by it. They are endeavouring to hand over this business to a monopoly, thus throwing out others from the business, and in that way doing an injury to the community at large.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [5.10]: This is a difficult motion to speak to.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Well, why speak to it?

Hon. P. Collier: He is following the usual practice.

Mr. PICKERING: You, Mr. Speaker, said that you were carefully watching the debate to see that members did not depart from the narrow path prescribed by the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have been watching the debate closely, because I admit it is difficult to keep within its four corners. On that account I have allowed some latitude.

Mr. PICKERING: It is not my desire to trespass unduly beyond the ring fence which encircles the motion. We must not lose sight of the fact that the elimination of certain words, suggested by the member for Kanowna, was done with the object of gathering into the folds of the motion certain members who had expressed views that were opposed to the granting of a monopoly.

Hon. T. Walker: You are not right.

Mr. PICKERING: I am near the mark.

Hon. T. Walker: You are not.

Mr. PICKERING: I am satisfied that any tactics which could be honourably adopted to defeat a measure of this nature would be availed of by the hon. member. The hon. member proposes to strike out certain words. That is a decided change of front on the part of the Opposition. Why is it desired to take out these words which I should imagine the

Leader of the Opposition would regard as being most pertinent to the motion? Why is it desired that the papers in connection with the calling of the tenders should be laid on the Table? So that members might secure information as to the nature of the tenders submitted. It is evident that the Leader of the Opposition must think there is something on the file that should be made available to members, and it is implied also that there is something on the file which the Government are anxious to hide.

Hon. P. Collier: Rubbish; that is a most ridiculous statement. We always call for papers when we require information.

Mr. PICKERING: I am glad of the hon. member's assurance.

Hon. P. Collier: There is no need to give any assurance.

Mr. PICKERING: It is just a matter of opinion. It is seldom that papers are called for unless it is for some object.

Hon. P. Collier: To secure information.

Mr. PICKERING: It is often not advisable to place files on the Table because the information may be more or less of a confidential nature. But that is not what actuated the mover of the amendment. He said, in effect, that the file would disclose facts that would then become available to the members of this Chamber. A good deal of matter has been published by interested persons such as John Stewart, John Hector and others. I do not know whether we should accept the statements made by irresponsible gentlemen as being accurate. If the Leader of the Opposition was in earnest in his desire that members should become cognisant of the facts of this position, he should not be satisfied with the ex parte statement I refer to. I should like to protect him against himself.

Mr. McCallum: He badly needs it.

Mr. PICKERING: Evidently the hon. member agrees with me, or else he would not have made that interjection. Whether or not chaos would ensue from the carrying of the amendment is a question of considerable difficulty. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) made some comment on the question of the chaos that would result if the motion were carried.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Minister said that.

Mr. PICKERING: But the hon. member repeated it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I did.

Mr. PICKERING: I am opposed not only to the amendment but to the motion. Stress has been laid upon the use of the word "monopoly," and it has been referred to as an insidious evil. I think it is the wrong word to use.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not in the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not want to prevent the hon. member from going on, but I wish to confine the debate to the amendment. I have already allowed a good deal of latitude to hon. members because of the importance of the matter.

Mr. PICKERING: This has created considerable interest not only in the Chamber but throughout the State amongst those connected with the sandalwood industry.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will be in order in debating that on the motion after the amendment is disposed of.

Mr. PICKERING: The member for North-East Fremantle drew attention to Section 33 of the Forests Act. He said that certain regulations had to be passed as a result of the granting of a concession, or monopoly, or permit, or whatever members liked to call it, to those connected with the industry. I have looked through the section, and cannot agree with him when he says that certain regulations should be passed. I can find nothing in the Act about that.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: A permit is granted under the regulations.

Mr. PICKERING: It may not be necessary to have regulations. Anything that is done is subject to the Act, and any regulations that may follow in its train. It does not follow that regulations must be framed. If the Act provides for the calling of tenders and the granting of permits—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is only in the case of royalties.

Mr. PICKERING: The Act does not say that regulations must be framed to fix the price.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I did not say so.

Mr. PICKERING: That is the only remaining feature to be dealt with now. The Act provides for the contingencies that have arisen in connection with the sandalwood industry. I hope members will consider the result if the amendment is carried. It will eliminate all possibility of members becoming fully seized as to the amount of the tenders, the conditions, the price to the sandalwood getter, and the royalty to the Government. I have always held the Leader of the Opposition in high esteem. I have never underestimated his capabilities, and have never attributed anything to him that had not some good foundation underlying it. Something serious must have happened to cause him to agree to the amendment.

Hon. P. Collier: I cannot prevent a member from moving an amendment.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not think a prominent member of his party would have moved such an amendment without consulting him.

Hon. P. Collier: He is very independent.

Mr. PICKERING: The member for Kanoona (Hon. T. Walker) is a loyal ex-Attorney General of the party to which the Leader of the Opposition belongs. He would never take such a vital step without first consulting his honoured chief. I am opposed to the motion, but, if it be carried, I should prefer it to be carried in its entirety. Before submitting it I am sure the Leader of the Opposition gave it the most careful consideration.

Hon. P. Collier: It was rather hurriedly drawn up.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not necessary to debate that phase of the question.

Mr. PICKERING: I am confined to rather a narrow margin. The importance of the motion must have been fully considered before it was submitted. My object is to prevent it from being carried. I, with other members, would like to peruse the file. I have heard it stated that the Leader of the Opposition has already had that opportunity. If that is so, he is perhaps satisfied that everything in the garden is lovely, though we have not yet had his assurance to that effect.

Hon. P. Collier: You would like to see the file yourself?

Mr. PICKERING: Yes, and I believe other members would also like to do so. Several tenders were submitted. If we are not prepared to accept the assurance of the Government that these have been faithfully and truly considered, and that justice has been done to all, we shall want to see the papers ourselves. A great deal has been published in the Press about these tenders, and about the motives that have actuated the Government in calling them, and about wire-pulling and other things. Firms interested have published huge advertisements. None of us has been able to escape from the persistent haunting of this sandalwood question. When we see one of the principal sheets of the "Daily News" monopolised by glaring advertisements as to the iniquities of the Government, it makes us feel that where there is so much smoke there must be fire.

Mr. Underwood: Someone must be getting hurt.

Mr. PICKERING: If I were losing my business through any unjust action I should feel hurt, but in this case each of the tenderers had the same opportunity as the others.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is dealing with the whole question. He must keep to the amendment.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I was stopped, and you must expect the same treatment.

Mr. PICKERING: I am not dealing with the matter as the hon. member did.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must confine himself to the amendment.

Mr. PICKERING: I am endeavouring to do so, but I am not allowed to discuss the question of a monopoly. The amendment strikes out the words that are pertinent to my argument, for it will prevent me from seeing the papers. I have not had the same opportunity the Leader of the Opposition has had. A lot has been said about the motion not only in the daily Press, but in the "Sunday Times" and the "Primary Producer."

Hon. P. Collier: There is quite a lot in the "Primary Producer." Have you read the article?

Mr. PICKERING: I have read some of it.

Hon. P. Collier: I must read it here. It is worth getting into "Hansard."

The Premier: Take it as read.

Mr. PICKERING: We should see the papers before arriving at a decision. The "Primary Producer" is in a measure connected with the party to which I belong.

Hon. P. Collier: A full measure.

Mr. Underwood: It is a paper of bad repute.

Mr. PICKERING: The paper seeks to impose upon me an obligation to support a portion of a motion which the member for Kanowna seeks to strike out.

Hon. P. Collier: The paper is against that portion.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not think so.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Never mind about the "Primary Producer." The hon. member must keep to the amendment.

Mr. PICKERING: I have the same rights and privileges as any other member of the Chamber!

Mr. SPEAKER: I have given the honourable member considerable latitude, and that is because of the importance of the question.

Mr. PICKERING: May I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to be good enough to tell me which part of the question I can deal with?

Mr. SPEAKER: You can deal with the amendment; that is the only part before the Chair. I want the hon. member to keep, as far as is reasonably possible, to the amendment. I do not wish to curb him.

Mr. PICKERING: The amendment in the first part says—

... until Parliament has had an opportunity to approve or otherwise of the tender or tenders.

I suppose I can discuss the effect of the cutting out of those words from the motion. If I cannot do so, what can I discuss? I must have some ground for basing my arguments upon. How can we know whether we should approve or disapprove of a tender or tenders, unless we have an opportunity of seeing those tenders placed on the Table of the House? This was considered by the mover of the motion as an important part of that motion. The question of the tenders has been considered of great importance, judging by the letters and advertisements appearing in the newspapers. According to certain sections of the Press, the country is crying out for knowledge regarding these tenders. I am not prepared to admit that assertion, but if we strike out this part of the motion, that information, which is apparently desired, will not be available to the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member should be able to give reasons why the amendment should not be agreed to, without discussing the motion.

Mr. PICKERING: I want the motion, if it is to be carried, to be agreed to in its entirety. I wish to see the tenders, so that I may be in a position to give the Government the advantage of my knowledge of the sandalwood industry. That is the attitude taken up by most hon. members. They are actuated by a desire to do the best possible for the State and for the people generally. One of the things Parliament is asked to decide is which of the tenders should be accepted. That was the point of view the Leader of the Opposition had in mind when he sub-

mitted the motion. In effect, he said: "I have no confidence in the Government, who are not fit to, nor are they capable of deciding which of the tenders should be accepted. Therefore they should not accept any of them. The tenders should be placed on the Table of the House so that we may have an opportunity of deciding on the merits of the respective tenders and of deciding which should be accepted or, alternatively, to put them all aside." We should see the tenders, and decide which should be accepted! That is the intention of the motion, because it says: "Approve or otherwise of the tender or tenders." To approve means to accept. If the House decide to approve of a certain tender, it will have to be accepted. The Leader of the Opposition sought by his motion to have the matter left to Parliament to decide. If the motion is to be agreed to along those lines, the amendment should be rejected because the concluding part states—

And in the meantime, to enable members to inform themselves of the nature of all tenders submitted, all such tenders and all papers relating thereto be laid on the Table of the House.

I suppose that the reference to "all papers relating thereto" means all papers relating to the transaction as between the various interests concerned, and the various departments, such as communications between the Premier and the Minister for Forests. By this means the whole ramifications of the sandalwood business will be disclosed, so that hon. members may decide which, if any, of the tenders shall be accepted. If we cut out the words covered by the amendment, the motion will then read—

That in the opinion of this House no tender conferring the sole right to pull and remove sandalwood from Crown lands, or to deal with sandalwood under the grant of a monopoly, should be accepted by the Government.

I am prepared to state there is a certain disagreement between the first part and the second part.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must keep to the amendment. I am afraid the hon. member will have to be pulled up for tedious repetition.

Mr. PICKERING: I am sorry to hear you say that.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has read the amendment and the motion five or six times since he has been endeavouring to speak on this question.

Hon. P. Collier: It has been appalling!

Mr. Hughes: Who are you waiting for?

Mr. PICKERING: I admit you have been exceedingly generous, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. McCallum: What about us?

Mr. PICKERING: The only thing I regret, Mr. Speaker, is that you accuse me of tedious repetition.

Mr. SPEAKER: I said I was afraid I would have to pull you up if you proceeded with tedious repetition.

Mr. PICKERING: I wish the House to believe that the motives actuating me are just as honourable and as much in the interests of the State, as those actuating any other hon. member. I give way to no other member of this House on that point. I have sought by the few remarks I have been permitted to make, to influence members to hesitate before agreeing to the amendment. It is difficult to press that point too strongly upon members. If we are to agree to the motion at all, we should agree to it in its entirety. Personally I am not in accord with the motion, nor yet with the amendment. This is one of the most important questions which have come before the Chamber for some time past, and you, Mr. Speaker, have allowed considerable latitude. You have done that because you realise the importance of the matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is repeating himself. That is the third time he has said that. I cannot allow the hon. member to proceed on those lines.

Mr. PICKERING: I will not delay the House any longer—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will resume his seat if he does not intend to delay the House any longer.

Mr. PICKERING: —beyond to say that I trust that the importance of the sandalwood question will lead members to seriously consider whether or not they should agree to the amendment, as moved by the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker). It is important that we should retain the amendment as part of the motion if we are to carry it, because, if we have not sufficient confidence in the Government—

Hon. P. Collier: You have found confidence in them since you got the group settlements.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No, it is because of the general election.

Mr. PICKERING: The Speaker will not allow me to discuss the question of group settlements.

Hon. P. Collier: That will save you.

Mr. PICKERING: I ask hon. members to be careful before they agree to the elimination of the most important part of the motion we have under consideration.

Amendment put, and a division called for.

Mr. SPEAKER: As there is only one hon. member voting against the amendment I declare the division off, and the amendment agreed to.

Amendment thus passed.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [5.45]: I oppose the motion. As regards my electorate, I am not so interested in the question as are some members, but it is our duty to deal with questions of State even though they do not affect our particular electorates. I am pleased there is no sandalwood in my elector-

ate because of the trouble other members seem to have had with the various pullers, dealers, storekeepers, and others that have handled it. It is the duty of the Government to endeavour to get more revenue from sandalwood and to obtain a better return for the men employed in bringing the wood from the bush to the ports of shipment. If supporters of the motion could put up a better proposition than that of the Government, I would support them, but no other proposition has been suggested. Much has been said about the literature that has been distributed and the advertisements that have appeared in the various newspapers. Those things have no influence with me; I have not read them and I have no intention of reading them. One member interjected that the traders had complained before they knew the successful tenderer. That is quite a natural thing to do. We have heard the legend of the boy that cried "wolf" when there was no wolf, and of his fate when one day the wolf did come. The principle nowadays is to holler before you get into the wood, and that is what the sandalwood traders are doing. Another maxim I learnt as a boy was, "Don't cry before you are hurt." That was wrong; you want to cry before you are hurt; it is of no use crying afterwards. It is of no use John Stewart crying, though he thinks he may be hurt. This disposes of all the argument that can be made of the fact that the traders protested before they knew the successful tenderer. Anyone doing reasonably well will protest against a change. Nature has given Western Australia a monopoly of the world's supply of sandalwood and pearl shell, two commodities of which we use very little. When dealing with something out of the ordinary, we do not always employ ordinary methods. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) said the establishment of a monopoly would be a violation of principles as old as the age of the Stuarts. The Stuarts he referred to have nothing to do with John Stewart.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How do you know?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Because John Stewart is not opposed to a monopoly. The hon. member also went back to King John, but the Stuarts, King John, the Plantagenets, Rob Roy MacGregor, and Brian Boru never had similar conditions to deal with. If we wish to go back to the time of the Stuarts and Brian Boru, we should do so to discuss only those things that are similar. When dealing with different things, we should have sufficient intelligence to handle them in our own way. Under the laws of the Stuarts and King John, trades unionism was not regarded favourably and there was no Arbitration Court. Nature has given us a monopoly of sandalwood, and shall we throw away nature's gift and allow a monopoly of our product to exist in China? The biggest monopoly in sandalwood heretofore has been in China and if, under the proposals of the Government, we create a monopoly by having one buyer and seller, we shall have the satisfaction of knowing it is here and can be dealt with.

Those who support the motion want a monopoly in China; they want to go on as we have been doing for the last 70 years, practically throwing away this valuable asset.

Mr. Harrison: And one that is diminishing rapidly.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am coming to that. I read in the "Sunday Times" a statement that the Government should not think of giving over the buying and selling of sandalwood to one man, and that if any Government dared to act similarly with regard to wheat, it would be hounded out of office and Parliament as well.

Mr. Richardson: It was done last year.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There is no analogy between our wheat production and our sandalwood production. We produce but a fraction of one per cent. of the world's wheat, but of sandalwood we produce 75 per cent. of the total. Further, the more wheat we sell, the more we can grow, but the more sandalwood we sell, the less we have. Now look at another phase of the question: the sandalwood pullers are getting about £8 per ton; under the Government proposal they will get £14. They do not like a monopoly. Wheat is worth about 4s. 6d. a bushel. Apply the same rule by handing over the buying to one man and offer the farmers 8s. a bushel for five years. Would they agree to it? Can a duck swim? Recently it has been agreed that the Government should not allow this asset of the State to be disposed of at the lowest possible price, which involves the lowest payment per ton the sandalwood puller can live on, and the lowest payment per ton for which our Railway Department will convey the wood. A result of such conditions would be to denude the whole State as speedily as possible, of sandalwood. What alternative proposals have we? So far as I know, there is only one alternative proposal, which amounts to State enterprise, and which suggests that the State itself should handle the whole sandalwood trade. For the time being, I consider, Western Australia has sufficient State enterprises, and it is our duty to consolidate those existing State enterprises and make them successful. To that end we should apply our best intelligence. Several of the present State enterprises exercise an influence on our economic conditions. Regarding sandalwood, we are not worried at all, except for the consideration that the wood grows in our country and that we should secure the best possible price for it. We know that many mistakes have been made in connection with State enterprises handled here. This suggests that when we attempt to handle a State enterprise in China, we shall undoubtedly be liable to slip. After all, steamships and sawmills and implement works are things we know something about. But when it comes to trading in China, which involves the question of exchange, of converting the coinage of foreign countries into pounds sterling, we have very few men who can handle such business. We feel that in this respect we would be liable to make

heavy losses. What is the matter with allowing the trade to go on as proposed by the Government? We shall control the sandalwood business by letting it on contract to one man or firm. The result will be that the State will receive about £30,000 directly in annual royalties, and that those of our citizens who pull the wood will also receive something like £30,000 a year. These are very valuable considerations to the Western Australian people as a whole. Suppose the man or firm to whom we grant a monopoly should make huge profits. In the first place, the State will have had its cut. In the second place, the sandalwood getter will have made his chop. Finally, if the contractor does make huge profits, the State will get another rake-off by way of income tax. If any member can put up a better proposition, I will vote for it; but until he does, I shall support the Government's proposal. The member for Menzies (Mr. Mul-lany) made a remarkably good and well thought-out speech, based on knowledge gained by personal observation. There was only one point on which the hon. member did not convince me. He did not explain how we can have unlimited competition in buying sandalwood, and yet restrict the output. The high price we are going to get depends, in essence, upon a restriction of output. I would ask the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker), who agrees with the catch-as-catch-can system, how the output can be restricted unless it is controlled.

Hon. T. Angwin: The market will restrict it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is catch-as-catch-can. The market has restricted the output. Leaving the question of output to the market and to the free run of all buyers means that we shall not shift one iota from the position in which we have been for the last 70 years.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Prices would be regulated.

The Premier: Who would regulate them? The Chinaman?

Mr. Munsie: No; the Government.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Hon. members first say that they are absolutely opposed to monopoly, and then say, "We are going to control this business by regulation." Are they not getting pretty close to monopoly by that means?

Mr. Chesson: No; not if we give the business to half-a-dozen buyers.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is the point. The issue does not seem to be whether there shall be one buyer or six buyers. The trade is still to be a monopoly, and the same price is still to be paid. All this debate, and all this heated feeling, are in regard to five dealers.

Mr. Munsie: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: What is the matter, then?

Mr. Munsie: The point is to give the men in the bush six buyers instead of one buyer, if you want it put that way.

The Premier: Give the men in the bush their £9 a ton.

Mr. Munsie: You will still be able to give them the £14 per ton.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Does it matter in the slightest degree to the sandalwood getter whether he has six men to sell the wood to, or only one man, so long as the price is the same?

Mr. Chesson: What about wood being condemned? With one buyer the puller will get about a third of the wood he pulls accepted, and the balance condemned.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The price is fixed, whether the buyer be Stewart, Paterson, Thomson, or Underwood. In passing let me say that if the Government had done as I think I would have done, and put this proposal into effect two years ago, the whole thing would have been settled by now.

The Premier: It would have been settled long ago.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, and everybody would have been satisfied, and the State would have been receiving large royalties.

Mr. Hughes: Why don't you suggest the same with regard to gold?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The hon. member can have all the gold I am going to get out of my mine. He can put up one buyer for that, if he likes. There has been some exaggeration with regard to the bearing of this sandalwood question on the prospector. It is true that some prospectors get sandalwood.

Mr. Munsie: A lot of them do.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The great bulk of the sandalwood is got by men who are not prospectors, and is got in country which it would be useless to prospect except for a bit of wheat land. There has been some complaint as to the restriction on the number of men permitted to get sandalwood. Some years ago the Government—I think with the approval of Parliament—promulgated regulations in regard to sleeper-cutting. It was then decided that no more men should be granted licenses to cut sleepers on Crown lands. There was complaint on that score. However, the regulations have been in force for years now, and nobody has starved as a result, and nothing serious has followed.

Mr. Davies: By what Government was that done?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not remember; it is so long ago. Has there been any riot in regard to sleeper-cutting? No. And the same position will arise in regard to sandalwood getting. If those who engage in that occupation can get reasonably big wages, they will be satisfied. Those who are not employed in getting sandalwood will engage in some other occupation, in which I hope they too will receive big wages. What is all the complaint about? By restricting the output we shall get nearly double the present price for the enter. If we do not restrict the output, it means that everybody can have a rush at the business and live on practically starvation wages. Is it not infinitely better to have a fixed number of men doing well than to have

an unlimited number right down on what is called the broad line? Considerable exaggeration has been indulged in as regards the distance over which sandalwood is pulled. We have had it stated that when the price of sandalwood was high, so-called week-enders—men working on wages all the week and going out on Saturday afternoon and Sunday to get a load of sandalwood—did a good deal in that way. It has also been stated here that sandalwood has been pulled 80 or 90 miles. How could a week-end pull sandalwood 80 or 90 miles?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Before tea I had dealt with some of the exaggerations about people who get sandalwood, and pointed out the impossibility of those week-enders, on Saturday and Sunday, going out 80 or 90 miles and bringing in a load of sandalwood. If they did it they must have travelled by aeroplane. Another statement has been made that the sandalwood getter often cuts a track of from 60 to 80 miles through timber. As Cousin Jack would say, he does and he does not. The getter may start getting sandalwood eight, 10 or 20 miles out. He then goes further until, ultimately, he is out 80 or 90 miles. But no man has ever started and cut a track for 80 miles continuously. The member for Leonora (Mr. Heron) informed the House that he had interviewed a considerable number of getters in his electorate, and that they were unanimous in their opposition to the Government's proposal. Possibly his statement was correct. It would depend entirely on the manner in which the question was put to the getters. If the hon. member put the case from his particular angle, they would say they were opposed to the proposal. On the other hand, if the Minister for Mines went to the same men and explained it from his particular angle, they would say they were in favour of the proposal. I know something about manufactured public opinion, having had experience of it over the amending Health Bill. On that occasion, I saw it reported that a certain road board had unanimously decided to vigorously oppose the Bill. On making inquiries I found there were present at the meeting two members and the chairman.

Mr. Teesdale: Was that at Walla?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No, a lot closer. The people at Walla have a little more sense than have the members of some road boards quite near to Perth. The member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) said the Government's proposal was very suspicious. I have often heard such statements. The Premier said the person who accuses another of being a blackguard is usually a blackguard himself. To a certain extent that is right, outside of politics, but inside of politics it is quite untrue. It is the correct thing, apparently, for one side of the House to accuse the other of being corrupt, of accepting bribes. The ability to do that does not belong to any individual member or any party. This session we have heard a good deal of suspicion de-

clared against the Government over the redistribution of seats, over the sandalwood, over almost everything that has been before us. I can remember other Governments. I would not for a moment say that members of Parliament who make insinuations about others are themselves crook. Although I was not in Parliament at the time, I remember the proposal to purchase the Midland Railway. For some years after that proposal had been foolishly allowed to fizzle out, there was everywhere an assurance that the late Mr. Daglish was on at least £10,000 if the purchase had been brought off, while each of his Ministers was on £1,000. Later than that I remember when the present Minister for Mines was Labour Premier. He was reputed to have netted £40,000—the sum was definitely stated at £40,000—over the purchase of the tramways and the construction of the power house and of the Wyndham Meat Works. Further than that, Mrs. Scaddan was said to be a German. Incidentally Mrs. Scaddan turned out to be either a Cousin Jack or a Welsh woman, I forget which. Anyhow, it was found that she could pass as a direct descendant of the aborigines of Britain. Then we had a select committee of which the present Minister for Works was chairman. Before that select committee the £40,000 dwindled down to the presentation of a pianola. The present Minister for Works turned the full searchlight of his intelligence on the witnesses, cleaned off all the dirt and, when he got it right down, he found a clean receipt for a corresponding amount on the butt of the hon. member's cheque book. We have not heard the pianola since. Before I get off the subject of the Minister—

The Minister for Mines: You are on half when I get it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The half of what you are to get out of this will not be worth much. The first man I stopped to speak to in the Terrace on Saturday morning said to me, "I see that Scaddan is retiring." I said, "Yes, I believe so." "Oh, well," he said, "I suppose he has made enough out of the sandalwood." Although I have very little time for the Minister, I did feel inclined to spit in that citizen's eye. Still that, of course, is against the law and, besides, he was younger and bigger than I. Another member who made a lot of money when Minister was Mr. W. D. Johnson. He made quite a lot of money out of that agreement with the jewellising company. Furthermore, when Minister for Works he made a considerable sum out of the battle of the routes of two or three railways. I believed a good deal of all that until one day—I do not think the ex-hon. member will object to my saying it—he came to me and asked me to exchange cheques for a few pounds with him for a week or two.

Mr. Clydesdale: He took a risk.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I have even heard Mr. J. M. Drew accused of accepting bribes. This because he approved of a whaling concession to some people, notwithstanding that there were other applicants for it. My ex-

perience is that whenever a Minister makes a deal on behalf of the State, or whenever there comes a clash between two sections or two people, and the Minister must decide for one, he is accused of taking a bribe. The public accept the statements of members of Parliament as being correct. Nothing is more untrue than to say that the Parliamentarians of Australia are dishonest. We have 700 or 800 members of Parliament in Australia, yet how many times has bribery ever been proved against any of them? If there be one thing of which Australia can be proud, it is the integrity and honesty of her Parliamentarians. Before accepting accusations against public men, we should think of the many big men we have had in Australia, men who started with considerable wealth, devoted their lives to the service of the State and died poor men. There were Parkes, Berry, Kingston, Deakin, Lyne—how many of them died worth two bob? If they had applied their great abilities to accumulating wealth they would have died just as rich as any of our big traders, linen drapers or sandalwood contractors. This debate serves to recall that question of the Midland Railway. There is no doubt in the minds of hon. members that the proposition to buy the railway was good. The mistake made by the late Mr. Daglish was that he did not buy it and tell Parliament afterwards. Had he done so, Parliament might have put him out of office. Still, he would have accomplished something. As it was, he came to Parliament and Parliament put him out just the same, and if any aspiring member wants advice I would tell him that once he is satisfied that a thing is good for the country, and he has satisfied himself that he has adopted the best methods, then let him go on with it. He will be complained against. But he will be complained against anyhow, and he will be put out of office. He will be put out anyhow. It all comes back to the same thing. Mr. Daglish failed to purchase the Midland Railway, and he fizzled out. In my opinion the present Government should have put this regulation into force. As it is, they are now up against what, in my opinion, is a no-confidence motion, and they are likely to fizzle out in just the same way as did Mr. Daglish. The worst of it is they will fizzle out without having accomplished their object. They could come back in three years saying, "That is what I went on; see the result of it!" If the motion is carried the matter will be dropped just as the Midland Railway purchase was dropped. No Minister will again touch this question, not even with a 40-foot pole, and the result will be that the cutting and pulling of sandalwood will be dealt with, as in the past—the cutters will get what the buyers are prepared to give them. There will be a monopoly in sandalwood, but that monopoly will be in China, not here. I trust, therefore, that the motion will not be carried, and I trust the Government, possibly after giving the matter further consideration, will put some such proposal as that we have before us into operation.

Mr. MANN (Perth) [7.55]: I have listened to the speeches from both sides of the House for and against the proposal, and I am still convinced that the only effective way of dealing with our sandalwood in China is through one selling agent. What is the position of the sandalwood trade, and what has been the position of it since the last boom? I have gone to some trouble to ascertain the cause of that boom, and I find that it was due to the rise in the price of the Hong Kong dollar. The boom did not last very long, and it was followed by a long slump in the sandalwood trade. At the time of the boom there were something like a dozen firms operating in the purchase of sandalwood. The majority of them have gone out of the business. It would be interesting to see who they were, and the nationality to which they belonged. These are some of them:—Wing Hung & Co., J. H. Cheong, the Eastern Agency Co., represented by Sam Wah & Co., Chung Joseph, Chen See, and Ying Lee & Co., represented by John Hector. We have heard a great deal from John Hector who, with another gentleman, has been making himself conspicuous in opposition to the Government's proposal. The other gentleman has resorted to abuse through the Press and has gone so far as to suggest that something was wrong. Let us see who John Hector represents.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: When did John Hector write to the Press?

Mr. MANN: The hon. member cannot have been following the matter in the Press. Here is the extract. It is headed "Sandalwood tenders, John Hector, sandalwood merchant."

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Who signed it?

Mr. MANN: John Hector. This would lead the Government and the people to believe that John Hector was dealing on his own behalf, that John Hector was the real tenderer for the concession, and so far as the House knows up to the present time, that is the position. But it is not really the position. John Hector is not acting on his own behalf. Neither is he a trader in his own behalf. I have here a copy of a balance sheet issued by Ying Lee & Co. on the 21st May, 1921, translated into English.

Mr. Lambert: Will you tell the House who supplied you with it?

Mr. MANN: The hon. member could have got it just as easily as I did.

Mr. Lambert: Where?

Mr. MANN: It does not matter. I am going to read it for the information of the House.

Mr. Lambert: Is the title "The Romance of a Chinese balance sheet"?

Mr. Teesdale: No. It is "The Exposure of John Hector."

Mr. MANN: It reads:—

Notice is hereby given that the fourth annual general meeting of the company will be held at the company's office, No. 82 Des Voeux-road West, on Sunday, 22nd May, 1921, at 2.30 p.m., for the purpose of (1) receiving the report of the directors together with balance sheets for year ended 14th February, 1921, (2) electing direc-

tors for year, (3) electing auditor for the year, (4) discussing the general affairs of the company. By order of the board, Wong Mow Lam, Managing Director.

Managing Director's Report.

It is unfortunate that the balance sheets show a loss of 24,679.67 dollars on the business during the year, and after deducting 1,039.09, the profit of the year before last, the nett loss of 23,640.58 is carried down to the account of the present year. Messrs. A., B., and C., directors, have sent in their resignation, but in accordance with the company's regulation No. 134 they may be re-elected directors again for the present year if they agree to be re-elected.

Ying Lee & Co. Profit and Loss A/c.

Office and godown rent	...	...	4,118-50
Boarding	...	...	1,168-52
Sundry expenses	...	...	669-45
Electric lamps, telephone, stationery, etc.	...	...	689-24
Boat and coolie hire for landing and shipping cargo	...	...	3,076-69
Telegrams	...	...	571-44
Insurance	...	...	4,990-76
Fees for auditor, solicitor and interpreter	...	...	278-20
Charter of steamer	...	...	94,629-97
Gratuity to officers of steamers	...	...	60-00
Expenses for shipping wood at Australia	...	...	7,165-63
Cost of wood	...	...	192,212-38
Cost of railway sleepers	...	...	1,804-48
* Mr. Hector's salary	...	...	5,000-00
Staff salary	...	...	5,116-40
Directors' fees	...	...	2,200-00
Cost of wood	...	...	100,566-78
Cost of railway sleepers	...	...	3,409-92
			\$427,628-36

Capital 2,000 shares at \$100 each	\$200,000
* Less 100 shares given to Mr. Hector	10,000
	190,000-00
Accrued profit	110,000-00
Loans—Wei Tak Bank	33,000-00
Tai Hing	3,000-00
Hun Bar Ku	500-00
Current account with Mr. Hector	7,150-10
	\$343,650-10

Sales of woods	...	152,872-82
Interest	...	6,995-37
Rent	...	550-30
Stocks of wood	...	166,655-00
Stocks of wood at Australia	...	71,999-20
Stocks of railway sleepers	...	3,966-00
Profit brought down from previous year	...	1,039-09
Loss	...	23,640-58
		\$427,628-36

Balance Sheet.

Stocks on hand at Hong Kong	...	166,655-00
Stocks on hand at Australia	...	71,999-20
Railway sleepers	...	3,066-00
Cash with various banks	...	583-90
Account with various dealers	...	23,692-96
Interest	...	2,098-24
Over remittance to Mr. Hector	...	17,102-81
Overdrawn by captain of steamer	...	196-80
Valuation of office furniture	...	2,413-14
Expenses for building a light railway at Australia, from godown to wharf	...	2,354-49
Mr. Taylor's deposit money	...	210-38
Account with Mr. Grimble	...	75-00
Valuation of godown	...	28,022-68
Cash in safe	...	633-92
Profit and Loss	...	23,640-58
		\$343,650-10

Wong Mow Lam, the managing director, was in Western Australia a few months ago, and a reference to his passport will show the busi-

ness on which he was engaged. If members are at all interested in his movements and in the operations of his company, they can quickly ascertain what he was doing here. But the position is that though this company did intend to go into liquidation, they decided not to do so, and all their energy is now directed towards securing the selling agency of the sandalwood in Western Australia.

Mr. Munsie: That is what we are opposing. I do not know why you are looking over this way.

Mr. MANN: You are putting up a case for the Chinese firms.

Mr. Munsie: Do not be absurd!

Hon. P. Collier: That is a miserable and a contemptible assertion.

Mr. Munsie: A very contemptible assertion.

Mr. MANN: Let John Hector still trade for Ying Lee & Co. In effect that is what you are saying. The position is that the great majority of these firms have their business in China; their profits are made in China, and they are not distributable or taxable in Western Australia.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not true. If you read Paterson's list of shareholders of three years ago, you will see how many Chinese were in that monopoly company. Be fair.

Mr. MANN: I will be fair. I am putting forward indisputable facts.

Hon. P. Collier: I am justified in getting annoyed when you say we are fighting for a Chinese firm. It is contemptible.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition is not in order in using that word.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member knows that John Hector is representing a Chinese firm.

Mr. Munsie: Has Hector the sole selling right?

Mr. MANN: Yes.

Mr. Munsie: How do you know?

Hon. P. Collier: He may be the successful tenderer.

Mr. Corboy: The Government may be going to give the tender to a Chinese firm.

Hon. P. Collier: He was the highest tenderer.

Mr. MANN: The Leader of the Opposition has more information than I.

Hon. P. Collier: You know very well.

Mr. MANN: If he knows that, he has more inside information than I have.

Hon. P. Collier: I didn't get it in Unmack's office.

Mr. Corboy: The Government are proposing to give this to a Chinese firm.

Hon. P. Collier: Hector is the highest tenderer.

Mr. MANN: John Stewart is also making statements regarding the actions of the Government. He said he had a communication from Bradley & Co. of Hong Kong. These are foreign traders. Stewart, however, did not say he was the buying agent for Bradley & Co. and was handling their letters of credit.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: In order to sell their goods these people must deal with Chinese firms.

Mr. MANN: We know that, but it is a different thing being a Chinese firm.

Mr. Angelo: Bradley & Co. are an English firm.

Mr. MANN: If we are going to give the selling agency to anyone, let us give it to a British firm, one whose profits can be taxed by the State and the Commonwealth. Let us not give it to a firm in China that has only Chinese interests, and all of whose profits are kept in China.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You cannot tax profits made in China.

Mr. MANN: We can tax the profits in Western Australia. A lot has been said about the dishonesty of purpose behind the actions of the Government. The "Worker" has taken rather a view different from that taken by many members opposite. It says—

Matters are moving slowly in the sandalwood industry, so far as the proposed new conditions that are to operate if a tender is accepted, and a monopoly granted to one firm, is concerned. That the Government will carry out their declared intention to accept a suitable tender seems to be the general belief here, notwithstanding the opposition that has been raised against the proposal, though definite information on the subject is very meagre. It is understood that they are determined to allow only those to whom permits have been granted to pull sandalwood, and if the proposed tender is accepted unauthorised pullers will be in danger of immediate prosecution and the confiscation of their wood. At present an effort is being made to discover the "delivery of sandalwood" capacity of the various getters engaged in the industry, and for this purpose forms have been printed and are available and being circulated in which getters are asked to solemnly and sincerely declare quantities of sandalwood they have obtained both from private property and Crown lands each month since July, 1921; the siding at which it was loaded, where it was consigned, and the price obtained on trucks, Fremantle, including royalty. Also, they are required to state the number of their last sandalwood license, where and by whom it was issued, and for what period; the number of persons employed by them in obtaining, removing, cleaning and loading sandalwood; in what capacity, and their nationality; together with whether such persons were licensed or not. In addition getters are required to supply information in connection with their plant, such as vehicles and stock, the amount of sandalwood in their possession at the present time, both cleaned and uncleared; and, furthermore, are asked to give an estimate of the orders they will require in tons of sandalwood to maintain their present employees and existing plant for the next 12

months; where they will undertake to make delivery, and how many tons each month, and to indicate the site of their operations. The requirements of those particulars would seem to suggest that a tender will be accepted. There is no gain-saying the fact that there is some argument in favour of the acceptance of a tender, though we believe that the weight of argument is undoubtedly against it. In view of what can be said against it, and the opposition to the proposal that has been plainly manifested, it will behove the Government to see that the tender accepted will possess such virtue as will justify their action in accepting it. The effort of the department to get an estimate of the orders in tons of sandalwood required to keep getters going in full for the next 12 months seems to be an earnest of their desire to keep those now in the industry fully employed for that period at any rate. It also appears to indicate that so far as the getting of the wood is concerned the Government will contrive to prevent the evils usually associated with monopolistic enterprises from manifesting themselves.

Mr. Teesdale: A very reasonable statement.

Mr. MANN: It is dated the 28th September last.

Mr. Munsie: They usually write reasonable stuff.

Mr. MANN: The "Worker" was satisfied that the Government were doing the right thing.

Mr. Munsie: Not at all.

Mr. Hughes: Who contributed that to the "Worker"?

Mr. Teesdale: There is only one man who could write like that; the editor.

Mr. Corboy: It must have come from our Claremont shareholder.

Mr. MANN: The only effective method of control against a combined buying agent is a combined selling agent, and the only way to meet the position and to control buyers in China is to control the sales there. After making all inquiries I am satisfied that if we do not control the selling we shall remain in the same state of chaos as we are in to-day. For that reason I oppose the motion and support the Government.

Mr. HUGHES (East Perth) [8.7]: I would not have risen but for the statement of the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) that we on this side of the House are trying to place this business in the hands of Chinese merchants. That insinuation should have been withdrawn. He said we were trying to sacrifice the sandalwood industry for the benefit of Chinese speculators and financiers.

Hon. P. Collier: A monstrous statement.

Mr. Mann: That is what it means.

Hon. P. Collier: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member is evidently more in the confidence of the Chinese commercial world than we are on this side

of the House. We would not be able to get a balance sheet or a profit and loss account of the illustrious firm he speaks of. He seems to know what is going on there. If the Government go on with the contract and accept the highest tenderer, Hector will be the successful man.

Mr. Mann: Would you approve of his getting it when you know now who he is?

Mr. HUGHES: If I had to choose between John Hector and Paterson, I would have to consider which Chinaman I would support.

Mr. Mann: You are not justified in saying that.

Mr. Corboy: Were you justified in your remarks?

Mr. McCallum: He is as fully justified as you were.

Mr. Mann: Look at the list of shareholders.

Mr. SPEAKER: Members must keep order.

Mr. HUGHES: We know that three years ago Paterson had a lot of Chinese shareholders in his company.

Hon. P. Collier: Hear, hear!

Mr. HUGHES: The subsidiary company, with a capital of £3,000 is only an off-shoot of the original Paterson Company, formed with a view to getting the contract. If I have anything to do with it neither Paterson nor Hector will get this contract.

Mr. Corboy: Hear, hear!

Mr. HUGHES: I am opposed to giving a monopoly to anyone. The member for Perth slings at the Opposition the statement that they are representing the claims of a Chinese firm. We can hurl the insinuation back in his teeth. The very people he wants to give the contract to have a lot of Chinese on their list of shareholders. If he votes against the motion he will be giving a monopoly to Chinese merchants. It remains to be seen whether they are represented by Paterson or Hector. I gather from the balance sheet he read that the firm in question has only one year's supply of sandalwood. That is a reply to the statement made that there is a three years' supply in China.

Mr. Mann: The balance sheet was for 1921.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member now wants to withdraw it.

Mr. Mann: You want the truth.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes, but why did not the hon. member produce the latest balance sheet? Hector may have been like Paterson. He may have dissociated himself with his Chinese confederates during the last two years. Three years ago Paterson had Chinamen as members of his company.

Mr. Harrison: But not now.

Mr. McCallum: How do you know?

Mr. HUGHES: We do not know. This off-shoot of Paterson & Co. is supposed to handle a quarter of a million pounds worth of wood with a capital of £3,000. I wonder if there is anything in their Articles of Association prohibiting Chinese from contributing funds to the company. The member for Perth says that Hector represents Chinese. The balance sheet he produced was 2½ years old. He should have tried to find out who Hector is

representing to-day. He happened, however, to get a balance sheet from a Chinese club, into which he has the entree, and to get that interpreted. Whom does Hector represent now?

Mr. Pickering: Perhaps you will tell us.

Mr. HUGHES: I neither know nor care. I do not know who is financing Paterson & Co., neither do I care. Two years ago Mr. Hector represented Chinese; three years ago, we know, the firm of Paterson & Co. consisted of a lot of Chinese shareholders. On that ground alone, it is fifty-fifty as between these two gentlemen. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) said that he did not want the sandalwood monopoly to go to China for the benefit of the Chinese. It was unfair of the hon. member to produce a statement that was two years old. The House does not want information as old as that. If we want information about a gentleman in Fremantle, it is the duty of the hon. member who sets out to supply that information to give details that are right up to date. The man in question may have dissociated himself altogether from the Chinese since that date. The member for Perth desired the balance sheet to be taken in good faith when it was in his favour, but when it was at variance with a statement made by the Minister, he drew attention very promptly to the age of the document.

The Minister to Mines: It makes no reference to that statement.

Mr. HUGHES: The Minister said there were three years' stocks in China. Here is some information showing that one firm had only one year's stocks on hand.

The Minister for Mines: One swallow does not make a summer!

Mr. HUGHES: It shows that, to that extent, the statement by the Minister was wrong. Of course, I do not say that the Minister's statement was incorrect, because the balance sheet containing the statement I referred to was two years old.

Mr. Harrison: That is no proof at all. One firm did not control the stocks of other firms.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member knows that no business can afford to overstock. If a firm carries stocks sufficient for three or four years, tying up so much dead money, the result will be the Bankruptcy Court.

Mr. Pickering: It all depends on what the stocks are.

Mr. Harrison: In any case, the statement does not carry any proof at all.

Mr. HUGHES: One firm lost 23,000 dollars.

Mr. Harrison: That proves nothing.

Mr. HUGHES: It demonstrates that business men work along well-defined lines, and endeavour to avoid carrying heavy stocks. This particular firm handled only a certain amount of sandalwood per annum.

Mr. Pickering: If they have made a profit out of it, what is there to complain about?

Mr. HUGHES: But this firm lost 23,000 dollars, according to the statement of the member for Perth—I hope he has translated

the Chinese document correctly—despite the fact that they had only one year's supplies on hand. It would show that the firm were turning over a similar quantity each year, and that demonstrates that that particular firm, at any rate, were not carrying unreasonable stocks. As to the sandalwood monopoly question, it seems to me a most extraordinary proposition. We have the statement of the Minister that there are three years' supplies in China.

Mr. Harrison: That statement was made in 1922 and referred to stocks in 1921.

Mr. HUGHES: The Minister made the statement again to-day. I spoke about the statement made by the member for Perth, and when it was shown to conflict with the assertion by the Minister, the member for Perth quickly pointed out that the statement was two years old.

Mr. Harrison: That is too thin.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member is right. The member for Perth did not stress the fact that the report was two years old when he spoke first.

Mr. Mann: I read the date out at once.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member did not bring it forcibly under the notice of the House. It was only when it was turned against him that he emphasised the fact that the balance sheet was two years old. Owing to the supplies of sandalwood on hand in China, we were told that there would be no sales for three years. The firm securing the monopoly, we were told, would have to buy 5,000 tons of sandalwood for three years before they could sell a stick.

The Minister for Mines: No one said anything of the sort.

Mr. HUGHES: How many times has the Minister stated there were three years' supplies in China, and if we did not grant the monopoly there would be no sandalwood paid for?

The Minister for Mines: I did not say three years.

Mr. HUGHES: What did you say?

The Minister for Mines: I said anything from one to two years.

Mr. HUGHES: I recollect the Minister saying distinctly three years.

The Minister for Mines: I did not. I said anything from one to two years.

Mr. HUGHES: I remember the Minister saying this afternoon four years.

The Minister for Mines: You are wrong.

Mr. HUGHES: You did say that. You said that there were three years' supplies held in China and that unless the monopoly were granted, there would be no purchases from the sandalwood getters owing to the three years' supplies being held in China. I listened carefully to the points made by the Minister and that was the basis of his argument in favour of the monopoly. He said that it was necessary to give the monopoly so that the firm could purchase 5,000 tons of sandalwood per annum, but because of the stocks in China they would not sell stocks for five years.

The Minister for Mines: No one said that.

Mr. HUGHES: And if they are to buy 5,000 tons per annum the firm securing the monopoly will require a capital of £210,000.

The Minister for Mines: No one suggested that.

Mr. HUGHES: You said that definitely.

The Minister for Mines: I did not.

Mr. HUGHES: Well, I will take two years.

Mr. Teesdale: You will take anything.

Mr. HUGHES: If the transaction covers the period of two years, the firm will require £140,000 to buy sandalwood, at the rate of £14 per ton.

The Minister for Mines: No one said they would not be able to sell for two years.

Mr. HUGHES: If the Chinaman can purchase sandalwood within one or two years, what is the necessity for granting a monopoly for a period of five years?

The Minister for Mines: I explained that, but you do not understand.

Mr. HUGHES: If the firm will have to buy sandalwood for two years without selling any of it to China, they will require to have a capital of £140,000. The company must invest that amount, and have it tied up on the Fremantle wharf in the interim. The company that can afford to do that have subscribed capital amounting to £3,000 only. In other words, the company that will get the contract involving the £140,000 of dead money have only £3,000 to safeguard the contract. Where will the firm get the balance from? Can the member for Perth give the House an assurance that the extra money will not come from Chinese merchants?

Mr. Pickering: There is plenty of money available for that without going to China.

Mr. HUGHES: Can the hon. member give an assurance that there will be no Chinese money invested?

Mr. Pickering: There will be plenty of trade for it.

Mr. HUGHES: Now we hear that there will be plenty of trade! We were given to understand that the reason for the monopoly was that there would be no trade for three years. Now the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) tells us that! As soon as one company, having secured the monopoly, gain complete control of the buying and selling of sandalwood, all the other companies will scrap their machinery for buying and selling this commodity. It is possible that within 12 months after the contract has been granted and other firms have gone out of existence, the firm securing the monopoly may fail to carry out their obligations. In those circumstances what security will the Government have? Only the deposit of £1,000 to cover a contract involving nearly £250,000! If after 12 months, the company cannot fulfil their obligations, the whole thing will break down and the only satisfaction the Government will have will be the deposit of £1,000. The whole thing is absurd. God knows what will happen regarding the contract once the other firms are out of business. Once that opposition is withdrawn, the getters will be in the hands of one firm, who can fail for the small sum of £1,000! It

would almost pay the firm securing the monopoly to run for five or six months and then fail to complete the contract and pay the thousand pounds as forfeit. The sandalwood getters would then be entirely at the firm's mercy. We are told by the Minister that the Chinese should be compelled to pay a fair price for the sandalwood.

The Minister for Mines: I did not say that.

Mr. HUGHES: I took a note of it.

The Minister for Mines: I said that the highest possible price to the last penny would be extracted.

Mr. HUGHES: Then what is the difference?

The Minister for Mines: That is what I said.

Mr. HUGHES: And for whom is that highest possible price?

The Minister for Mines: For the State.

Mr. HUGHES: You did not say that.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, I did.

Mr. HUGHES: There is a little paragraph in a book I have that strikes me as applicable to the Minister. I refer to what Queen Elizabeth said.

The Minister for Mines: You have a long memory.

Mr. HUGHES: She used the same argument that the Minister presented to the House.

The Minister for Mines: Who found that extract for you?

Mr. HUGHES: Under similar circumstances Queen Elizabeth—

The Minister for Mines: What, did she sell sandalwood, too?

Mr. HUGHES: When challenged regarding her monopolies, Queen Elizabeth said—

Never since I was a Queen, did I put my pen to any grant but upon pretext and semblance made to me that it was both good and beneficial to the subjects in general, though a private profit to some of my ancient servants who have deserved well. Never thought was cherished in my heart that tended not to my people's good.

The historian 20 years hence will be able to write that paragraph of the Minister.

The Minister for Mines: He will never write one of you.

Mr. HUGHES: There would not be the spicy incidents in my career, I hope, that there have been in the Minister's. The Minister, like Queen Elizabeth, never wants to get a monopoly save for the good of the people.

The Minister for Mines: I cannot stand flattery like that.

Mr. HUGHES: I admit that Queen Elizabeth was quite a lot of things that the Minister can never be.

The Minister for Mines: I am glad to have that admission.

Mr. HUGHES: When the Minister's proposed monopoly was challenged, he said it was for the benefit of the worn-out miner. He did not go so far as did Queen Elizabeth;

he did not admit that some of the faithful servants might get a little profit.

The Minister for Mines: If you are not careful, she will hear you and make me a privy councillor.

Mr. HUGHES: I wonder if next session there will be a proposal to give one person a monopoly to buy and sell motor cars in Western Australia.

The Minister for Mines: Or to run sweeps.

Mr. HUGHES: That would be a sensible proposition. The Government are protecting the sandalwood getter to the extent of £1,000 on a contract of £250,000. That is the only obligation to be imposed upon the firm to fulfil their contract. If the Government wish to get the last possible penny out of the industry, why hand over the business to a private firm? No one is so foolish as to think that they are not going to make a handsome profit. It has not been contended that they are actuated by philanthropic motives. No one suggests that Paterson & Co. are going to expend £250,000 merely to give the sandalwood getter a high price.

Mr. Pickering: That will be one of the results.

Mr. HUGHES: While the getter will receive a higher price, the firm will make an enormous fortune. They are shrewd business men and know they will reap a handsome return.

Mr. Mann: Do you mind saying also that the State will get increased revenue?

Mr. HUGHES: That is so. The difference between the price received and the payment to the getter plus the royalty will go to Paterson & Co.

Mr. Mann: And to the State.

Mr. HUGHES: That interjection shows that the hon. member's Chinese investigations have not been carried very far. Paterson & Co. were so keen on giving the State some revenue that during the war period they transferred their business to China so that they would not have to pay war taxation. They arranged to show a small margin of profit here while enormous profits were shown as having been made in China, where they were not liable to taxation. Yet the hon. member says we are going to get revenue out of those people. Does he imagine that they will not have a selling agent in Hong Kong? They will do as they did in the past. In order not to pay more to our revenue than they can help, they will arrange to show their profits as having been made in China.

Mr. Pickering: Where did you get your information?

Mr. HUGHES: From a reliable source.

Mr. Pickering: What is the source?

Mr. HUGHES: A better one than that from which the hon. member gets most of his. Three years ago Paterson & Co. were big shareholders in Gillam & Co. of Hong Kong. In order to evade payment of income tax and super tax in this State, they transferred the bulk of their trade to China.

Mr. Pickering: Have you inside knowledge of the Taxation Department?

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member knows I have not; no one has.

Mr. Teesdale: You have a lot of inside knowledge of sandalwood.

Mr. HUGHES: If the Government wish to ensure a good price to the getter and obtain a good revenue for the State, why not make it a State monopoly?

Mr. Mann: Another State trading concern!

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member subscribes to State trading. He sits behind the Government who are carrying on a number of trading concerns.

Mr. Pickering: They did not start them.

Mr. HUGHES: They are carrying them on. The Minister for Mines: This is one I would not have anything to do with.

Mr. HUGHES: The successful tenderer expects to make a handsome profit.

The Minister for Mines: I suppose he does, but I am not clear that he will. We will make a fair profit.

Mr. HUGHES: We should get more.

The Minister for Mines: If we get half a million in five years, we shall not be doing badly.

Mr. HUGHES: Half a million! We should get a million. The State could have undertaken the whole of the business, paid the cutter a proper price and marketed the sandalwood in China.

Mr. Pickering: Does your experience of State trading lead you to that conviction?

Mr. HUGHES: When administered sympathetically, State trading concerns are all right. There are more paying than losing trading concerns in this State.

Mr. Pickering: Name them.

Mr. HUGHES: If the hon. member studies the financial statements of the losing concerns, he will find a very good reason for their losing.

Mr. Pickering: And the rest are making profits at the people's expense.

Mr. HUGHES: We have complete control of the sandalwood industry. Mr. Paterson is not going to do the marketing; he is going to employ someone else. Why could not the Government have done the same? If the Government were afraid to carry on the industry, they could appoint a selling agent on a commission in China. The better the price obtained, the more revenue the Government would get. Instead of giving one individual the benefit of this industry, the advantage would accrue to the State. It is monstrous for the Government to provide that only one firm shall trade in this commodity. They are going back to the sixteenth century, when the whole question of monopolies was fought out. The House of Commons fought the Stuarts, not the Stewart that reigns on the sandalwood throne at present, but the Stuarts who reigned on the British throne. The people had to fight the monopolies; the question affected the very basis of their liberties. When Parliament got it laid down definitely that no monopolies were to be given, it was regarded

as a signal victory for and a step towards the emancipation of the people. Yet the Government in Western Australia wish to hark back 223 years to that state of affairs. There is nothing in the Constitution empowering the Government to grant this monopoly, and where our Constitution is silent, the procedure of the House of Commons must be followed. We shall be exceeding our authority if we permit this monopoly, and I dare say the people interested will test the point in the High Court. The Government have no power to re-enact a prerogative that was abolished over 200 years ago. If we are to have a sandalwood monopoly, why not a gold monopoly and a wheat monopoly?

Mr. Pickering: Only one country will take sandalwood, but the world will take gold.

Mr. HUGHES: We produce a large percentage of the world's gold supply? Why not place that in the hands of one firm? It would be just as reasonable to do so. Why not extend the principle till we revert entirely to the conditions that prevailed in the time of the Stuarts, when all commodities were in the hands of monopolists? If Parliament does not pass the motion, we shall be taking a retrograde step. It will react detrimentally on the State generally. Though it may mean a temporary advantage to the cutters, still, if we are not careful they will ultimately be left high and dry. If the price of sandalwood becomes too high, the Chinaman may modify his religion, as Christians have done from time to time in order to meet changing circumstances. At one time a Christian could not accept interest.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss Christianity under this motion.

Mr. HUGHES: I submit, Sir, that the motion is inseparably bound up with religion, because the Chinaman cannot go to Heaven without sandalwood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion does not say anything about that.

Mr. HUGHES: If the price of sandalwood is fixed too high, the Chinaman may burn some other incense in his temple. If the trade should collapse owing to the monopoly, what will the Government have to fall back upon? Merely a guarantee of £1,000. The whole position is absurd. If a monopoly is to be tried, let it be tried by the State. Let the State find £200,000 for the purpose. If there is such a certain and such a handsome return, the State will have no difficulty in floating a loan towards that end, and thus secure the whole of the profit instead of its being divided between the State, the cutters, and the exporter. I hope the House will carry the motion.

Question, as amended, put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	20
Noes	..	..	..	21

Majority against .. 1

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Chesson	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Collier	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Gibson	Mr. Troy
Mr. Heron	Mr. Walker
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Wilcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Willson
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Corboy

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Money
Mr. Carter	Mr. Pickering
Mrs. Cowan	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Davies	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Denton	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Durack	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. C. C. Maley	Mr. J. Thomson
Mr. H. K. Maley	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Mann	Mr. Piesse
Sir James Mitchell	

(Teller.)

Question, as amended, thus negatived.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1923-24.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 9th October; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair.

Department of Mines, Forests, and Police (Hon. J. Scaddan, Minister).

Vote—Forests, £15,291:

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [8.54]: A reference to the report of the Forests Department for last year discloses a great deal of interesting matter. We may congratulate ourselves upon the progress that the department has made so far. The figures show that as regards departmental work in connection with the reforestation fund, the balance is in favour of departmental work. This is rather an important factor, because it is absolutely essential, if reafforestation is to be carried out, that funds should be available. As the years go by and the area of forests available for exploitation decreases, the amount of revenue accruing from the forests will be a diminishing factor. Therefore, unless immediate steps are taken for the permanent dedication of forest country, we shall find ourselves in the position of having to draw on Consolidated Revenue for funds to carry on forestry work. The department's report opens with the following paragraph on forest reservation:—

It is most disappointing to have to report that no further action has been taken by the Government towards the dedication of prime jarrah forest country as State forest. The recent Royal Commission on Forestry, referring to the dedication of State forests, stated in their report: "Evidence shows that there is no reason why this approval should be withheld." The

necessary plans covered by the joint recommendations of the Surveyor General and the Conservator of Forests for the dedication of some 2,000,000 acres of jarrah country as State forest, and 458,000 acres as timber reserves, were submitted to the hon. Premier in 1921.

I took an opportunity previously of referring to this matter, but it is my bounden duty to emphasise the absolute necessity for the early dedication of the area. The Minister (Hon. J. Scaddan), in dealing with the subject on another motion, said that the Premier was prepared to dedicate as soon as he was satisfied. It seems to me that the Premier should be satisfied, seeing that representatives of both the Lands and the Forests Departments have formally agreed upon a certain area, which could be immediately dedicated. I have been requested by the Forestry League of Western Australia to emphasise this point, and in behalf of an independent organisation, and also as a member of this Assembly, I consider that I am right in drawing attention to the absolute and pressing necessity for the dedication of a forest area. I hope the Premier will shortly satisfy himself as to the justice of the conclusion arrived at by the two departments. Another most interesting phase of the report deals with afforestation. On comparison with the costs of reforestation in the other States, it appears that our department are doing fairly well. It may be interesting to members to know the results of reforestation of *pinus insignis* in South Australia. There it was shown that the number of superficial feet produced per acre was in the neighbourhood of 100,000. That was after a period of from 30 to 35 years' growth. The timber was sold for 10s. 3d. per 100 super feet, standing. This price yields an approximate return of £250 per acre, on a growth of 30 to 35 years; and the net profit per acre to the State is something like £200. I have no reason at all to doubt the correctness of the figures. They were given by Mr. Gill, the South Australian Conservator of Forests, to the Forestry Conference held at Brisbane a little over 12 months ago, and they were closely investigated by the members of that conference, who ultimately were quite satisfied of their accuracy. Surely it would be a wise thing for this State to utilise as speedily as possible its suitable lands for this purpose. The New Zealand Conservator of Forests states that he hopes during the period of the first rotation, which means from 30 to 40 years, to get from the afforestation of pine a return equivalent to the amount of the national debt. If it is possible to do these things in New Zealand and South Australia, and, I may add, in Victoria, where profits of a like nature have already been won at Mt. Macedon and elsewhere, surely it is advisable for Western Australia to enter upon an active policy in this regard. As the result of inquiry from the Forests Department I find that the results of experiment with the planting of *pinus pinaster* on the poorer sand country of this State,

which at present is being utilised only for the production of banksia, are very good, though it is true that the results from afforestation with *pinus insignis* have not been so good. Experiments with *pinus pinaster* in France and other countries have shown the timber to be very valuable. Our local experiments have taken place, I understand, within about 15 miles of Perth. The advantage of utilising land in juxtaposition to the city for reforestation purposes is that in the course of the development of a pine forest it becomes necessary to thin out the trees, and by growing these forests close to the city all the timber thinned out can be utilised at a profit. In view of the experience of France and Germany, where these pines have been largely cultivated, it would be wise for our department to expend everything possible in demonstrating what can be done in this direction in Western Australia. It is known that we have had losses over reforestation, but the losses have been mainly due to the work being undertaken by men of no special training. Forestry needs training and experience. At present we have a pretty highly qualified staff, and the new plantations are undertaken with all the advantage of special knowledge. The experience the State gained by its mistakes in the past is a good guide for our future undertakings. I have frequently pointed out the scarcity of some of our valuable timbers, more particularly the sheoak and the river banksia. In only one instance to my knowledge does the sheoak grow under forestry conditions. As for river banksia, it grows only in forests along river courses. We cannot hope to conserve these particular timbers unless we go in for a definite fire protection scheme. Until we are able to extend our fire protection, the production of these timbers will be futile. I hope therefore that our fire protection system will be extended. I congratulate the department on their display in our Department of Industries during the past few weeks. Anyone who visits that exhibition must be satisfied that our timbers can be put to purposes much higher than those for which they are at present utilised. In that exhibition I was much struck with the wonderful exhibit of wandoo. Anyone who has seen that timber as treated and exhibited by the department will agree that in itself it warrants a special visit to the exhibition room. It is a wonderful timber, lending itself to the highest purposes. It is necessary that we should do what we can for the establishment of a forest products laboratory. That could be brought about by using the services of our University professors. In this they should act in co-operation with the Forestry Department. As the University is free, it has no funds to devote to this class of work, and so it will be necessary that the Government or the department allocate sufficient money to cover the cost of the laboratory. The Minister for Forests on a previous occasion stressed the value and importance of a forest products laboratory, and I trust the valuable services of our professors

in the University will be availed of to the end I have suggested. I draw attention to page 9, Section 6 "Sales of tuart," in the department's annual report. A good deal has been said in the House about the use of the mill at Woonerup for the treatment of tuart. I see in this report that a revenue of £3,076 was obtained from the mill's output of tuart and wandoo over a period of six months. It was thought this mill could not be made to pay, but I am satisfied the mill would be profitable if it had as an adjunct a turnery works for the treatment of timber at present unsaleable. Many of our timbers lend themselves well to turning purposes. I am sure, if a turnery were established in conjunction with our tuart mill, all the timber at present wasted would be profitably utilised. When we have a timber indigenous to Western Australia and limited in quantity, it behoves us to use it to the best and fullest extent. I impress on the House the urgency for an immediate dedication of our forests. I congratulate the "Western Mail" on its outlook on forestry. Last week's issue contained a page by Mr. Ben Strange illustrating the foolish manner in which the State is treating its forests. I hope that even by that form of advertisement it may be brought home to the people how necessary it is they should take this matter seriously. The department has done good work during the past year, showing that the new Conservator is carrying out his duties very efficiently. We ought to congratulate ourselves upon having so enthusiastic a young officer at the head of the department. I hope the new year entered upon will not reach its conclusion before the Premier decides to dedicate the area mutually recommended by the two departments that have true knowledge of the timber country suitable for forestry purposes. It is difficult to bring home to the people the vital necessity for conserving our forests. Our per capita consumption of timber is increasing, while the timber itself is decreasing. From all over the world we are getting nothing but warnings of the urgent necessity for conserving the forests, for reforesting vacant places, and for the care, not only of our own interests, but of the interests of posterity.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Police, £179,439:

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [9.10]: I have a little to say on this vote, chiefly in respect of traffic control and the attitude of certain members of the police force towards the recent trouble in North Perth. First of all I wish to confirm the report of the Commissioner upon the housing of the traffic staff. One has only to call upon the Chief Inspector of Traffic in his office to understand the remarks of the Commissioner. One cannot speak too strongly of the premises in which the traffic inspectors have to carry on their work. To reach the office one has to pass all the stables and urinals and other unseemly spots. The staff is housed in an old chaff or harness store, anything but sweet to the

nostrils. There is in the Estimates nothing to provide for the erection of a decent building in a more suitable spot. It is not fair to ask the traffic officers to work under such conditions, and I hope that in next year's Estimates suitable provision will be made, not only for the housing of the traffic staff, but for the putting into operation of the Weights and Measures Act. Although passed many years ago, that Act has not yet been brought into effect, the reason being that there is no suitable building in which officers administering that Act can be housed. The Police Department contributes to Consolidated Revenue some £5,000 annually, which in itself ought to ensure them suitable buildings. I would draw attention to the speed of motor cars and their rapid increase in the city. In 1921 there were registered in the metropolitan area 792 motor cycles and 1,900 cars. In 1923 there were 1,000 motor cycles and 2,380 cars. Motor lorries numbered 41 in 1921, 47 in 1922 and 45 in 1923. These figures give some idea of the increased work devolving upon the Traffic Department. As one who has paid the penalty for the right of motorists to drive so recklessly as to cause grief to other people, I maintain that more stringent regulations should be enforced. In 1922 one person was killed and 60 persons were injured by motor propelled machines in the metropolitan area, while in 1923 the casualties were 12 killed and 181 injured. These figures should impress members with the necessity for adopting more stringent laws. I do not blame the police for the prevalence of reckless driving by motorists. I blame the magistrates and the justices who inflict fines of only a few shillings for grave breaches of the regulations, as a result of which the police become disheartened. I had an interview with Chief Inspector Smith, who asserted that the existing law was satisfactory, but I do not see how any improvement can be effected until a speed limit is imposed. Varying speeds could be provided in accordance with distance from the town hall. I wish to read the report of a prosecution at Fremantle. It states—

Dangerous motor driving.—Details of the reckless manner in which a motorist drove a car and endangered the lives of pedestrians were told in the Fremantle Police Court yesterday when Frank Baden-Powell (23), a dentist of York, was proceeded against, in his absence, on a charge of having on September 27th driven past a stationary tram when persons were boarding the tram, and while proceeding in the same direction as the tram. Messrs. F. Instone, and Jas. Shepherd, J's.P., were on the bench. Prosecuting Sergeant Cassidy stated that defendant had endorsed the summons with the plea of guilty. The facts related in the court were that the defendant turned the intersection of High and Market-streets at a speed between 15 and 20 miles an hour. A number of persons were on the road and were preparing to board a stationary tram.

The CHAIRMAN: What has that to do with the Estimates?

Mr. MARSHALL: The police are administering the Traffic Act and, unless the regulations are made more stringent, it will be waste of money to continue to pay men to regulate the traffic.

The CHAIRMAN: The police, in prosecuting offenders, have done their duty.

Mr. MARSHALL: But a man guilty of such an offence should not be let off so lightly.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a matter affecting the magistrate and not the Police Department.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is hopeless to attempt to protect life when such ridiculous penalties are imposed. The report continues—

One woman was struck by portion of the motor, her hat being knocked on to the roadway, and another was brushed by the side of the motor. Tramway men and others called out to the defendant, who did not stop the car, and had not several bystanders noted the identification number of the car, the defendant would not have been traced to York.

The CHAIRMAN: An accident of that kind has nothing to do with these Estimates.

Mr. MARSHALL: As the police administer the Traffic Act, I think I am entitled to discuss the results of their activities. That man was fined a paltry £2.

The CHAIRMAN: The police have nothing to do with the fines.

Mr. MARSHALL: The number of accidents is increasing rapidly year by year and the police should be given greater powers.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The cost of prosecuting is included in these Estimates.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then I am entitled to continue my remarks.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not discuss what happens on the bench. The police do their duty in bringing offenders before the court, and I cannot connect their action with the point you are raising.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: On a point of order, the hon. member is showing the effect of the action of the police, for whom provision is made on these Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: He is pointing out the inadequacy of a fine imposed by a magistrate.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He is pointing out that we shall be wasting money if we pass these Estimates and get no better results.

The CHAIRMAN: Go on.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is one of many cases I could quote. It is time something was done. While many motorists are careful, many openly defy the police. This is apparent every day in Perth. Motorists can be seen driving quite recklessly at 45 to 60 miles an hour, and yet the police are powerless to take action under the existing law. Last year I suggested a speed limit of five or six miles within half a mile of the town hall, the speed to be increased according to distance from the town hall. I now wish to refer to

the trouble at Stone's box factory, North Perth. I asked questions, but received no answer.

The Minister for Mines: You will not get it from me, either.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know the facts of the case, and I know that Chief Inspector McKenna has no reason to be proud of himself. I do not wish to reflect upon members of the force generally, but Inspector McKenna proved to be, not a law administrator, but a law breaker. I shall prove it. He should no longer hold his present position.

The Minister for Mines: He has held it for 50 years.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is time he retired. The whole procedure in connection with the case was irregular. The police could have taken the name of the little girls, instead of dragging them away from their mother's breast, handcuffing them and sending them to gaol.

The Minister for Mines: Would not a rattle have induced them to follow the police?

Mr. MARSHALL: They were so young that a rattle would have served the purpose, but the police adopted a Hunnish method, in order to show their authority. Inspector McKenna instructed the police to arrest these little girls on certain premises. The lady, who lived in the house, said they could not enter the premises without a warrant, but the inspector said, "I am Inspector McKenna," and that his word was as good as a warrant. That was untrue and was unlawful. He used his uniform and position to break the law. The constables had to obey his orders, or they would have fallen foul of him. He knew that if they went in he would not be held responsible. I thought better of him.

Mr. Pickering: He has fallen from grace.

Mr. MARSHALL: Like the hon. member. I understand the police wanted a little black-headed girl who was supposed to be on the premises. After a good deal of persuasion, the lady said one of the police could look through the premises and see if she was there. He did so, and reported his failure to Inspector McKenna, who said, "Go back and get them; we must have them." He referred to seven little girls who had been putting up a fight to get a wage slightly in excess of 10s. a week from one of the worst sweaters in the State.

The Minister for Mines: What about the police going into the factory without a warrant?

Mr. MARSHALL: The inspector would probably not have allowed that. It was his duty to tell the constables that they could not go into the house without a warrant. He could have got the names of the girls in the ordinary way. This would have been the more manly course. Apparently, however, he desired to subject these little children to a great deal of unnecessary publicity, and also to show what he could do. The attitude of

the police in some directions was an insult to the laws of the land. To a little girl of 15 a constable, who said his name was McCallum, put a number of questions upon the answers to which he built up a statement.

Mr. Angelo: The third degree.

Mr. MARSHALL: It was worse than that, because he was examining a little girl who should have been at school, and not working as a wage slave in a factory. This constable did not warn the child that anything she said would be used in evidence against her, and the mother did not know enough to warn her. The constable said, amongst other things, "Were you inside the factory when the girls broke the machinery?" No one knows yet who broke it, but he wanted the child to answer the question.

The Minister for Mines: Where did this happen?

Mr. MARSHALL: Inside the girl's home.

The Minister for Mines: Did you take a shorthand note of it?

Mr. MARSHALL: I got this from the girl. The constable also asked her, "Were the men smashing the machinery while you were inside?" This was the class of incriminating evidence the constable was trying to get out of the child. Both she and her mother became hysterical while the examination was going on. It is unfair for a policeman to walk into a private dwelling, and, without giving the recognised warning, ask a child such questions. He read the statement over to the child and commanded her to sign it. She had no opportunity of reading it herself. Of course she signed it; she was bluffed into doing so. How courageous these men are when they are put to the test! Two girls, who were supposed to be ring-leaders in the strike, were to be arrested. I may mention that many of these girls were little creatures, probably torn from the breasts of their mothers. Let me show how courageous these men are when dealing with little girls. As regards the two girls who were to be arrested, the police eventually went to the secretary of the union and questioned him as to their whereabouts. They were told that the girls were to be got at Fremantle, where they were collecting on the wharf for the strikers. Were the police bold enough to take the train to Fremantle and arrest the girls in the neighbourhood of the lumps? No. They were too discreet to act where they thought they might dig up a little trouble for themselves. They waited until the girls returned to Perth. The tactics I have described are certainly not desirable. It does not speak well for Parliament if we tolerate such things. Had this been a case of adults, with a chance of a riot occurring, one would not have objected to the police using such means as were best calculated to avoid trouble and preserve peace and quiet. However, the police arrested seven little girls. Originally Chief Inspector McKenna wanted only one little girl with black hair.

Mr. Angelo: Did you say the girls were handcuffed?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes. It was Hunniah. The little girls could have been proceeded against by way of summons. From the treatment meted out to them, one would think these future mothers of Western Australia were wild beasts. Chief Inspector McKenna, instead of prosecuting in the ordinary way, thought fit to bring the girls in and lodge them in the lock-up, no doubt with a view to breaking their spirit. Such conduct does not speak well for a chief inspector of our forces. I do not know that the affair will end there. Immediately after certain questions were asked in this House, a police constable visited the premises where the girls were arrested. He sought to pave the way for the force in case of an inquiry being held. He said to the lady, "We are thankful for your sake that you let us in the other night, that you did not stop us from coming in." I may add that the old lady is still waiting for the promised warrant; it has not yet arrived. Had all this been done by, or at the instance of, an ordinary policeman, I might have passed the matter over; but that a chief inspector of 50 years' experience should act in this way is disgraceful. We should inquire to ascertain exactly what tactics the police adopt in order to secure conviction. This child, terrified by the presence of a policeman, might have said anything; she might have said a great deal to incriminate herself. I contemplate moving for an inquiry. Independent witnesses are ready to testify. The police should be the last to overstep the bounds set to their authority. There are competent officers and constables, and honest and just men, in the force; but the attitude of Chief Inspector McKenna and of two or three other officers was most discreditable.

Mr. HUGHES (East Perth) [9.53]: I am compelled to say a few words on this box factory trouble, but I do not intend to discuss the actual case, because certain charges are still sub judice. I do not propose, either, to touch on that little disturbance which has been miscalled a riot. I believe that the vast majority of the officers of our police force are men who do their duty conscientiously, and who would sooner put a petty offender on the right track than run him in. I believe that the majority of the members of the force would sooner, when finding a person committing some small breach of the law, draw his attention to the fact and let him go away, than endeavour to build up a case against him. Of members of the force whom I know personally, I can say that they do their duty impartially, and as well as it could be done by men obtainable in any part of Australia. But I must draw attention to one man in particular. I will not say of him that he is not a good officer, but I am bound to say of him that the moment he finds himself in charge of two men and a dog, and somebody shouts out "Hear,

hear," he loses his head. Some little time ago a by-law was promulgated obliging people to walk on either the right side of the footpath or the left, according to the direction in which they were going. There was in charge of pedestrian traffic in Perth one Sergeant Johnston, and he was always in trouble with the public. If a man happened to be on the wrong side of the street, Sergeant Johnston would shift him over in a manner that the Australian citizen resents. As a result of coming into conflict with the public by his harsh administration, Sergeant Johnston found himself noticed in the "Sunday Times," which attacked him roundly for the excessive manner in which he discharged his duty. I do not know whether that is the reason for his removal from traffic duty, but he was removed from it; and since he has been removed there has been in that connection no trouble in Barrack-street. Busy people are unconsciously apt to break the by-law as to walking on a particular side of the pavement. Again, people are apt to stand at a street corner, and thus obstruct the traffic. Then the ordinary member of the police force politely asks such people to move. Not so Sergeant Johnston. He had a very brusque and officious way of shifting people. If my memory serves me rightly, the matter culminated in the arrest of a man who was merely hurrying along the street to attend to his business. Sergeant Johnston rushed up to the man, and handled him. The man remonstrated, and the result was that he was charged before the police court. The "Sunday Times" took the matter up, and said that the town was "suffering from too much Johnston." That is not the only case in which the officer lost his head under very slight provocation.

The Colonial Secretary: When did that happen?

Mr. HUGHES: About 12 months ago. I do not remember the exact date.

The Colonial Secretary: It is rather old.

Mr. HUGHES: I could go back 20 years, when this officer was a constable, and show that he was castigated from the bench for roughly handling a prisoner.

The Colonial Secretary: If we all went back 20 years, I do not suppose many of us would come out too well.

Mr. HUGHES: I have a recollection of another incident, the Esplanade Hotel strike.

The Minister for Mines: How do you come to recollect those incidents so readily now?

Mr. HUGHES: Because I have had occasion to recollect them.

The Minister for Mines: You want to get even with the man.

Mr. HUGHES: Not at all.

The Minister for Mines: Why did you not write to me and ask for an inquiry into the man's conduct? Why did you wait until you could raise these matters here?

Mr. HUGHES: The Minister saw what I wrote to the Press.

The Minister for Mines: I do not read your tripe in the Press.

Mr. HUGHES: The Press cut out the second half of the letter. If the Minister wants the letter, he can have it.

The Minister for Mines: I do not administer the Press, but I happen to be administering the Police Department.

Mr. HUGHES: The Minister must have seen the report in the Press and the reply in which I definitely charged the sergeant with exceeding his duty. As head of the Police Department, what more does the Minister want? I have that much confidence in the Minister that I would not waste my time in writing to him.

The Minister for Mines: I am glad to hear you say that.

Mr. HUGHES: The Minister knows I do not write to him much. I have a recollection of the trouble on the Esplanade. There was a demonstration of armed force in Australia in 1921! There were fixed bayonets! There was a field ambulance! Fancy that in Australia!

The Minister for Mines: And you won't forget it for a long time.

Mr. HUGHES: I should think not.

The Minister for Mines: It kept you quiet.

Mr. HUGHES: Sergeant Johnston and other officers came down. The other police constables had no trouble with the public. Sergeant Johnston found it necessary to arrest a man named Axford.

The Colonial Secretary: He must be a very wicked man.

Mr. HUGHES: The Minister may be flippant, but I want to inform him and others as well, that the workers of this State are not going to be man-handled by men like Johnston. No other police officer got into trouble on that occasion, but Sergeant Johnston had to arrest a man. Then there was another incident when an illusionist named Nikola wanted to give a public exhibition by hanging himself in Hay-street. There should be no objection to a man hanging himself in that way. If the Minister for Mines wished to give a public exhibition by hanging himself, we should not object.

The Minister for Mines: I would not like to miss you.

Mr. HUGHES: I do not intend to try to hang myself in public, because I am afraid Johnston would not object.

The Minister for Mines: Why not state what is obvious? You know you would not hang yourself.

Mr. HUGHES: In the incident I refer to, there was just the ordinary crowd present who attend such performances.

The Minister for Mines: You would be amongst them, I warrant.

Mr. HUGHES: If it had been the Minister instead of Nikola, I would have been there, no matter how much trouble was caused.

The Minister for Mines: I have never seen your name on a jam tin yet!

Mr. HUGHES: I have so much confidence in the Minister that I know he would get out of the knot as easily as Nikola did.

The CHAIRMAN: Neither the Minister nor Nikola is on the Estimates.

Mr. HUGHES: A few people gathered to see the performance. Everything was all right until Sergeant Johnston arrived; then there was a riot. It seems to me that every time Sergeant Johnston comes into contact with two or three people, there is a riot. How is it there is no trouble with other police officers?

The Minister for Mines: It is the same with all these Johnstons! Look at Jack Johnson and the trouble he caused.

Mr. HUGHES: Another phase I wish to refer to is the man-handling of a cripple during the Police Court proceedings in connection with the boxmakers' strike. A number of people assembled in the back of the Police Court. Sergeant Johnston sat at the solicitors' table in the body of the court, facing the magistrate. He could not see what was going on behind him. I was sitting at the table facing the magistrate and opposite to Sergeant Johnston. Neither he nor I could see what was going on at the back of the court. During the cross-examination of one of the witnesses, a little squeaky voice from the back of the court said "hear, hear." The court orderly demanded silence and the court was silent instantly. The court orderly considered the incident so trivial that he did nothing; the cross-examining counsel went on with his questioning; the magistrate made no reference to it; the court proceedings were in no way disturbed. The incident was so trivial that the magistrate allowed it to pass without reference! In a second or two after the voice was heard, however, Sergeant Johnston rose excitedly from his seat at counsel's table and rushed to the back of the court. There was a scuffle immediately and three or four thuds as though someone had fallen downstairs. Knowing the tendency of Sergeant Johnston to lose his head and knowing that a lot of waterside workers were there, I went outside immediately. I ran down the passage and out into the lane and found the poor unfortunate cripple, with wooden legs and suffering from tuberculosis—he is so weak physically that after three months battling. I got him 7s. a week from the Charities Department to save him from starvation—deathly white and with the life frightened out of him. Obviously, he had been man-handled and the thuds were from this crippled man being forcibly slung out of the court. Sergeant Johnston, too, was white, but he was white from temper, not from fear. Quite apart from the manner in which Johnston exceeded his duty in man-handling a cripple, I want to register an emphatic protest regarding what the sergeant did when he got the cripple outside. His first demand was for the man's name and address. Without hesitation those particulars were supplied. The next request was most extraordinary. Sergeant Johnston asked,

"Have you anything on you to prove your identity?" Fortunately, the law does not make it necessary for us to carry identification discs. While a police constable has the power to demand the name and address of any individual, he has no power to demand proof of identity. Section 50 of the Police Act, 1892, says—

Any officer or constable of the police force may demand from and require of any individual with whose person he shall be unacquainted his name and address, and may apprehend without warrant any such person who shall neglect or refuse to give his name and address or either of them when required so to do as aforesaid; and every such person so neglecting, or refusing, or who shall give a false name or address when applied to as aforesaid, shall upon conviction forfeit and pay any sum not exceeding £5, or at the discretion of the convicting justice be committed to any gaol or lockup, there to be kept at hard labour for any term not exceeding three calendar months.

Nowhere in the Police Act is power given to the police to demand that a person shall prove his identity. If an individual refuses to give his name and address, the questioning constable can apprehend him.

Mr. Mann: You would not object to a constable making all reasonable inquiries?

Mr. HUGHES: I would. When a man gives his correct name and address, the authority of the policeman ceases.

Mr. Angelo: How does the constable know that the information is correct?

Mr. Mann: I am not defending the case the hon. member is referring to, but a constable has a right to ascertain if the information is correct.

Mr. Chesson: Where is the power for that?

Mr. Mann: It is common sense.

Mr. Chesson: You have a lot of it!

Mr. HUGHES: The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) knows that while a constable can ask for a person's name and address, he has no power to demand more than that. If he considers a wrong name and address is given, the constable can make subsequent inquiries.

Mr. Mann: That is the point.

Mr. HUGHES: And if the constable ascertains that the information is wrong, the law prescribes a penalty. When the sergeant demanded proof of the cripple's name and address, clearly he exceeded his duty. I took the opportunity to tell Sergeant Johnston that was so, and in doing so I exercised a right every citizen has. The police have no more right to exceed their duty with regard to the public and assault an individual than a member of the public has the right to assault a constable. The next request Sergeant Johnston made was more extraordinary still. Sergeant Johnston said: "What have you in your pockets? Turn out your pockets." Surely we are not faced with such a position that constables are to be permitted to exercise the right of search at first sight! There are cer-

tain offences and conditions referred to in the Police Act under which a constable may search without warrant. Section 49 sets out the circumstances in which constables are allowed to take individuals into custody without warrant and it reads:

Any person found committing any offence punishable in a summary manner may, be taken into custody without a warrant by any officer or constable of the police force, or may be apprehended by the owner of the property on or with respect to which the offence shall be committed, or by his servant, or any person authorised by him, and may be detained until he can be delivered into the custody of a constable, to be dealt with according to law; and every police officer or constable may also stop, search, and detain any cart, carriage or vehicle, in or upon which there shall be reason to suspect that anything stolen or unlawfully obtained may be found, and also any person who may be reasonably suspected of having or conveying in any manner anything stolen or unlawfully obtained; and any person to whom any property or liquor shall be offered to be sold, pawned, or delivered (if he shall have reasonable cause to suspect that any offence has been committed with respect to such property or liquor, or that the same, or any part thereof, has been stolen, or otherwise unlawfully obtained, or is intended to be used for an unlawful purpose), may apprehend and detain the person offering any such property or liquor as aforesaid, and as soon as may be deliver him into the custody of a constable, together with such property or liquor to be dealt with according to law

The section concludes by making provision for bail, and so on.

Mr. Mann: A constable can also arrest a person whom he suspects has committed or is about to commit a crime.

Mr. HUGHES: There are certain powers given, but certainly the shouting of "hear, hear" in a police court does not enable those powers to be exercised. It would be a very elastic interpretation of the Police Act and its provisions to say that because a man shouts "hear, hear" in the Police Court the police have the right to search him on sight. People get excited when industrial troubles are in progress. When a constable so far loses his head as to exceed his duty in the manner I have described, it is simply provoking trouble. When I saw Sergeant Johnston man-handling the cripple at the Police Court, I could understand what he must have been like at the box factory episode. If all police officers were to act like Sergeant Johnston, every little industrial trouble would develop into a riot. If, instead of getting hold of a cripple, Sergeant Johnston had got hold of a young fellow 12 or 13 stone in weight and man-handled him, the lad would have lost his head and retaliated. The police would then have come to the assistance of Johnston, while the young fellow's mates would have

lost their heads, and so there would have been another riot, this time in the police court. The Minister ought to remove Sergeant Johnston. I am not suggesting that the officer be disgraced, but he is temperamentally unfit for his present duties.

Mr. Mann: Probably he will be promoted.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member must have inside information. Sergeant Johnston ought to be removed to a position where he will not come into contact with the public.

Mr. Mann: Of what use would be a police officer who did not come into contact with the public?

Mr. HUGHES: There are in the department plenty of positions in which he could be employed away from the public. If further illustration of Sergeant Johnston's tendency to lose his head were necessary, it is furnished by an incident that occurred in a tramcar on the evening of the day on which he man-handled the cripple. Sergeant Johnston, in plain clothes, boarded a tramcar. In execution of his duty, the conductor asked him for his pass. Sergeant Johnston refused to show it, saying, "You know I have a pass. You have seen it often enough." The conductor said, "I do not know you have one, but if you have I want to see it." It resulted in an altercation between the two. The conductor stuck to his guns, and the sergeant had to produce his pass, whereupon he said to the conductor, "I will fix you later for this."

The Minister for Mines: He must have picked that up from you. That is what you told him.

Mr. HUGHES: I said he would hear more of it.

The Minister for Mines: The trouble is, it is we who are hearing more of it.

Mr. HUGHES: I do not suppose it will make much impression on the Minister. Probably Sergeant Johnston will be promoted, as the member for Perth suggests.

The Minister for Mines: I have nothing to do with promotions. The tram conductor should have reported the incident to his officer, and through him to me. I have heard nothing of it.

Mr. HUGHES: He did not bother to report.

The Minister for Mines: Then why did he report to you?

Mr. HUGHES: Because he had read in the newspaper that I had a row with Sergeant Johnston. It is damnable the number of people who have come to me with complaints against Sergeant Johnston. It proves that the man is temperamentally unfit to handle the public. The tram conductor had a perfect right to ask Sergeant Johnston for his pass.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They ask for mine every day.

Mr. HUGHES: They are free to ask anybody but Sergeant Johnston who, when he is asked to produce his pass, threatens to fix the conductor later. It is a nice state of affairs when police officers provoke disturbances in that way. I have no grievance against Sergeant Johnston.

The Minister for Mines: Then it takes you a long time to say nothing.

Mr. HUGHES: I have no personal grievance against him, but when the workers of this State are man-handled by men employed to preserve the peace. I must enter a protest against it here. We shall have no end of riots if police officers are to act as Sergeant Johnston does. If the Government wish to preserve the peace they will transfer Sergeant Johnston to a position in which he will not be called upon to handle large crowds. I understand Sergeant Johnston did distinguished work in the Fremantle strike of 1917. I did not then know him. I saw him for the first time at the Esplanade, and did not recognise him again until seeing him in court. Last session I asked the House was it the intention of the Government to appoint an additional inspector, and if so, which sergeants were qualified by examination for promotion. Sergeant Johnston's name was not on the list of sergeants supplied in answer to the question. I am informed that since then Sergeant Johnston has qualified by examination. I am told that one of the sergeants who had previously passed the examination was carrying out the duties of inspector, but recently was sent back to his old position as sergeant, and that Sergeant Johnston has been acting in the senior capacity. When a junior officer acts in a senior capacity it gives him first call on the position. Why is Sergeant Johnston given preference over a man senior by examination? It seems to me an injustice has been done to the other sergeants and special consideration shown to Sergeant Johnston. Perhaps there is some foundation for the interjection of the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) that Sergeant Johnston is to be promoted as a result of the box factory fracas.

Mr. Mann: I said he might be promoted.

Mr. HUGHES: Apparently he has some influence that will enable him to get preference over his seniors. If there is to be discrimination amongst the members of the force, we shall soon destroy its efficiency. I am not looking for anybody's scalp, but I want to see the police act in such a way that in any industrial trouble the peace will be preserved. I might have complained to the Minister, demanding an inquiry, but I did not do so. I wrote to the newspaper only because the paper had associated my name with the incident. The Minister probably saw the reference in the paper. If he had wanted to interfere, it was his prerogative to do so. I suggest that he transfer Sergeant Johnston to a position in which he will be less likely to get into trouble through his unfortunate temperament.

Mr. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [10.26]: I should like to know from the Minister whether the "West Australian's" report of proceedings before the police court, concerning the box factory strike was correct? That report stated that two union officials were admitted to the court only on the condition that they kept quiet. I want

to know why trades union officials should be singled out for special treatment; why special conditions should be imposed upon them.

The Minister for Mines: I do not know whether or not the report was correct.

Mr. McCALLUM: Then I think the Minister should make inquiries.

The Minister for Mines: You could have asked a question, and I would have found out for you.

Mr. McCALLUM: The magistrate had no information about it, and it was only when the lawyer drew his attention to it that the union officials were admitted. It is repugnant to the whole of British jurisprudence that the police should restrict to those of whom they approve admission to the court. We boast that the courts of the British Empire are conducted in full public view; yet it is reported that two union officials were admitted only on certain conditions. If it be true, the police exceeded their duty, and should be told that their function is not to frame laws, but to administer them. I hope the Minister will make inquiries and, if the report be correct, bring to book whoever was responsible for the irregularity.

Mrs. COWAN (West Perth) [10.28]: I want the Minister to make a special note of what the Commissioner says in regard to wife and child desertion. The Commissioner suggests that money earned by a delinquent husband sent to prison should be available for his wife and children. The present law does not seem to bring home to such men their responsibility to the State or to their wives and families. I should like to see the law amended in that respect. I congratulate the women police on the splendid record they have put up. We have every reason to be proud that we have women doing such excellent work. Anyone who reads Appendix "F" must realise how fine that work has been, and of what assistance it may be in reducing the amount of crime and lessening the temptations to young girls and boys. The Minister as well as Parliament must appreciate their work.

Mr. MANN (Perth) [10.31]: Does the Minister intend to bring down a Bill this session to provide a pension scheme for the police? If there is any branch of the Government service for which pensions should be provided it is the police.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Was not a motion carried agreeing to some scheme?

Mr. MANN: Yes; I understand the police were unanimous and are prepared to do a great deal towards financing it. I believe a Bill has already been drafted.

Hon. M. F. Troy: But it cannot operate without Act of Parliament.

Mr. MANN: That is so. Will the Bill be brought down this session?

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany—in reply) [10.32]: I have listened to the airing of grievances and, while I must accept members' statements, I

believe a declaration from the police that have been accused of doing all sorts of things would place an entirely different complexion on the accusations. Chief Inspector McKenna has had approximately 50 years' service and, during the 20 years I have been in Parliament, I have not heard a single complaint against him until to-night. No officer of the force has rendered such magnificent service without causing friction amongst either the police or the general public. If he behaved as suggested by the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall), I am extremely surprised. He may have done things in a way that the member for Murchison considered incorrect, but I do not hesitate to pay a tribute to him as an efficient officer. Inspector McKenna is about 70 years of age and, when he retires, he will do so with honours probably second to none of any officer in Australia. I shall not pay any further attention to the matter beyond saying I am certain Inspector McKenna could give a satisfactory answer to the statements of the member for Murchison. I have heard that Sergeant Johnston is slightly inclined to lose his temper.

Hon. M. F. Troy: He is untactful.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not know that I would say that. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) said he was inclined to lose his head.

Mr. Chesson: He has had that reputation for 20 years.

Mr. J. H. Smith: He is one of the whitest men in the force.

Hon. M. F. Troy: We do not say he is not.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The member for East Perth says Sergeant Johnston is inclined to fly into a temper, sometimes under provocation, at other times, the hon. member would have us believe, without provocation. I would not give much for a man who could not lose his temper occasionally.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We do not.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I should have said outside a Cornishman. A policeman cannot be superhuman. He has to put up with a great deal in the way of insults and gibes that requires extraordinary self-control.

Hon. M. F. Troy: They get a pretty good deal.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: And the public get a pretty good deal from the police, too.

Hon. M. F. Troy: They expect it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I take exception to the member for East Perth who, having had a slight altercation, took the opportunity to voice his protest here and give special publicity to the matter. He was not satisfied with mentioning his particular complaint, but gathered from all the street corners for 20 years back—

Mr. Hughes: No, I did not.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member said he could go back 20 years and drag up something against Sergeant Johnston to bolster up his own particular complaint.

There is nothing to boast about in an attitude of that kind. The hon. member knew I was Minister for Police. If he had a complaint he should have written to me, and, if an inquiry was warranted, I would have ordered it. If it had been a matter of man-handling or treating someone as a beast instead of a human being, it would be a question for an inquiry. I have not heard that Sergeant Johnston lost his temper to that extent. At times he has assumed an attitude that may have led people to believe he was in a temper, but it has been assumed to obtain adherence to the correct demeanour on the part of those inclined to flout the law. If he had said, "Please, Mr. member for East Perth, will you kindly walk past me without brushing me," the hon. member would probably have concluded he was a soft sort and have given him a push. If he had said, "Kindly keep your hands off," the hon. member would have done it without further question.

Mr. Hughes: Do not rely upon that too much.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Because a man assumes an attitude of dignity, he should not be accused of exceeding his duty. I have not heard that Sergeant Johnston committed any crime in the way of man-handling people that would call for a reprimand. I have heard he has many fine qualities.

Mr. Richardson: He is a good officer.

Mr. Hughes: I did not impeach his other qualities; I charged him with losing his head.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I anticipated the hon. member would air his grievance here, so I asked for an explanation of the court incident. Had I known the hon. member was going to try to bolster up this incident by bringing all the charges he could collect over a period of 20 years, I would have asked for Sergeant Johnston's personal file so that I could have answered every one of the charges. Sergeant Johnston's statement is as follows:—

I have to report that the remand cases in connection with Stone's box factory were commenced at the police court on Thursday, the 4th inst. Mr. Lane, solicitor, appeared for all the accused, and asked the police magistrate to order all witnesses in the case to leave the court, which was done. Seated at the solicitor's table in the court by the side of Mr. Lane was Mr. Hughes, M.L.A., who was taking notes of the evidence. During the day I noticed Mr. Hughes frequently leave the court with papers in his hand, and go into the room where the witnesses now being called by the defence were. He would go into the room and speak to those inside, and then return to the court. I am not in a position to say what he was talking about, but this is a gross breach of court procedure for any person connected with the case to act in such a manner. On Tuesday, the 9th instant, Mr. Hughes left the court whilst

the case was proceeding, and went into the witnesses' room. The court orderly, Constable McKenzie, followed him in and spoke to him about being in conversation with the witnesses. He said that he was not talking about the case. The witnesses for the prosecution (several women and girls) complained that they were being called scabs at the court by some of the witnesses for the defence, and Miss Shelly, so I took them to the sergeant's room at the police station to avoid friction. In cross-examining the witnesses Mr. Lane took every opportunity to belittle the police, which caused those in the gallery to laugh and pass remarks, and disturb the court. I placed two police recruits in the gallery to pick out those offending. When Sergeant Anderson was being cross-examined, Mr. Lane said, "If the crowd were as bad as you say, do you think any arrests would have been made? There would not have been a policeman left alive." A voice called out in a loud tone, "Hear, hear." I went to the back of the court, and a man was pointed out to me by the recruits. I asked this man if it was he that called out. He made no answer. I asked him to leave the court. He refused. I caught him by the arm and led him downstairs out into the lane. When we arrived in the lane I asked this man his name and address, which he gave very unwillingly. I was writing in my book when Mr. Hughes rushed up and said, "Do not give him your name. Don't tell him anything." I told Mr. Hughes not to interfere. He said, "I am appearing for this man." I said, "You are not." I then asked the man if he had any letters or papers to show me with his name on, and he took a letter from his pocket with his name and address on. Mr. Hughes said, "You are exceeding your duty; you will hear more of this." I said, "You should mind your own business. You ought to know better than to interfere with the police in the execution of their duty." He then returned to the court. There were several witnesses present to prove my statements if required.

This is the sergeant's statement, and we have had that of the member for East Perth. I am sure we all regret the incident.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Whose statement do you believe?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I can please myself.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Which do you believe?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is my business.

Hon. M. F. Troy: It is our business.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is not the hon. member's business.

Hon. M. F. Troy: These papers must be laid on the Table of the House. Whom did you believe a few years ago?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is not the hon. member's business. I do not

think the incident is so serious as to warrant our putting the sergeant in a cloakroom; he is too valuable an officer for that. I propose to draw the attention of the Commissioner to the remarks of the member for East Perth. Even in trying circumstances such as these, members should endeavour to act courteously to the police force. We have as good a force as there is in Australia. The position of our police is not on all-fours with that of other police forces. Our men perform a number of extraneous duties that are not performed by police elsewhere. They are not ordinary arresting machines. They are civil servants, in many cases, performing such duties as collecting statistics, inquiring into matters affecting different departments, issuing licenses, collecting revenue, and carrying out a number of other duties which do them the utmost credit.

Mr. Mann: They also collect money for hospitals.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They perform a number of duties in a very meritorious way. It is a force to be proud of. I have had few complaints concerning them; indeed there are many instances to show that they are to be commended for the work they do. They also handle the traffic in the metropolitan area. It is estimated that there were 500 more motor cars at the show last Wednesday than on the same day last year, but I did not hear of a single accident.

Mr. Clydesdale: The police did remarkably well.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. Many people have told me it stands greatly to their credit that they were able to handle, within a cramped area, such a large traffic without difficulty or accident. From the officers to the constabulary we are improving the calibre of our police. We are encouraging men who join to understand that they are not to be merely arresters of law-breakers. We are getting together men with a knowledge that is very necessary, seeing that they have to carry out so many other duties. Our police must, therefore, be placed on a different basis, and I propose to recommend that a change should be effected in their conditions. At present they receive certain consideration for length of service and good service, in the form of a gratuity after a certain period. I propose to recommend that after a certain number of years they should be entitled to a pension in the event of their remaining in the service. They are anxious for this, and I do not think the cost would be very much greater than the present system. This would be the means of inducing men to remain in the service, after they have acquired the necessary experience and at a time when we may well expect to get the best out of their services. At present they draw a lump sum when they leave. This gratuity they frequently put into some form of business and lose it altogether. We ought to encourage the men who take up police work to remain with us, and if they remain they ought

to be rewarded in the same way as other branches of the Public Service are, by a pension. They have at present a gratuity fund, to which the Government contribute, and which to all intents and purposes is not solvent. I believe we could change to a pension fund without much additional cost to the State, and thus greater satisfaction would result to the members of the force, and they would remain permanently in the service.

Hon. M. F. Troy: When do you propose to make that change?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not know that it can be done this session.

Hon. M. F. Troy: It will have to be done by statute.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. The matter was only brought to my attention some time since, and I am inquiring into every phase of it. With regard to the point raised by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum), I was not aware of it until he mentioned it. However, I will have inquiries made, and if necessary will furnish the non-member with information.

Mr. Hughes: I would like to reply to the statement read by the Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: We are on items now. The general discussion has closed.

Hon. M. F. Troy: We are in Committee, and anything can be discussed.

Mr. Hughes: I will take an item.

Item, *Inspectors, £4,815*:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I see there is an additional inspector. We have 391 constables with 12 inspectors and 14 sergeants. That means an inspector for every 33 men. The population is not increasing as fast, relatively, as the number of inspectors.

The Minister for Mines: We have made an inspector under the Traffic Act.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That Act has been in force since 1919.

The Minister for Mines: But the officer in charge of the administration of the Traffic Act was made an inspector only last year.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Why was it necessary to create him an inspector? Such an appointment makes a great difference in connection with the gratuity fund. Once a man is made an inspector, he ceases to be a policeman and becomes a member of the Public Service. That affects the State funds considerably, and therefore it is unwise to appoint too many inspectors. Moreover, it is not only the inspector himself: he must have an office and a staff. The tendency to build up offices should be resisted.

The Minister for Mines: But we have given the police additional work in inspection of traffic and liquor.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They were doing a lot of that work previously.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will inquire regarding the need for the additional inspector, but I believe the appointment was owing to the additional work put on the police. A branch must have an inspector in charge, to carry the responsibility.

Item, Constabulary, 10s. 6d. per day to 19s. per day, £118,400:

Mr. HUGHES: In reply to certain parts of the statement read by the Minister I wish to say that I attended the police court in my capacity as law clerk to Mr. Lane. I had a perfect right to be there. The sergeant states that one is not allowed to talk to witnesses. Let me point out that the police had a witness in court listening to the proceedings, and that that witness was later put in the box to give evidence for the prosecution. I went out of court whenever it was necessary for me in the execution of my duty to do so. The incident referred to occurred towards the end of the trial. Many girls merely interested in the case assembled about the court. I was going along the passage and stopped to speak to these little girls. Then an officer came along and told me I had no right to do that. He did not, however, want to manhandle me: he simply came along like a sensible man in the execution of his duty. I said, "All right," and went away, in order to avoid any argument. To say that I was consulting with the witnesses is a deliberate misstatement. If counsel for the defence wanted to talk to the witnesses, he could do it after the court adjourned at 4 p.m.

The Minister for Mines: I don't think there is much in that point.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I do not think it comes with very good taste from the Minister that he should read to the Chamber a statement from Sergeant Johnston. It is quite competent for the Minister to say, "I have inquired fully into this matter, in anticipation of what is happening here, and I have received an explanation which satisfies me that such and such is the case." But to bring and read here letters from police officers justifying their attitude on a mere bald statement is not doing a fair thing by the Chamber. I am not prepared to take any and every police officer's statement, because of personal experience I have had. A policeman bailed me up in the street, and treated me roughly, and then swore on his oath that he had never handled me. At the same time, he appealed to me in the court not to push the matter. In a mining town I saw a policeman assault a man outside a hotel and then arrest him. When the man appeared at the court, I appeared too. If I had been a justice of the peace, I would have taken my place on the bench. I do not say that always the police do not tell the truth. I know that there is a code of honour among them under which this business becomes second nature. I do not say it in hostility to the Minister's administration of the Police Department, but it is not wise to encourage police officers who possess such powers. As a body of men they exercise great powers, and, to a considerable extent, they exercise them very sensibly. If the Minister, however, is prepared to come forward and place before the House a policeman's statement as to the real explanation of what happened, he will be encouraging the police officers to do things they would not

otherwise do, if they did not think they would have the Minister behind them on all occasions. I have no quarrel with any police officer, but I have mentioned the personal experience I had. In that case, the man swore that he had not laid hands upon me, although he had done so violently. I know a number of instances in which police constables have not acted in the best interests of the department. The Minister has known of his department sacking men.

The Minister for Mines: We are continually dealing with them.

Hon. M. F. TROY: You will have to sack them again.

The Minister for Mines: They have their board.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I have known constables do extraordinary things and yet get off. I know a policeman in town who did his best to ravish a woman, and yet he got off. I know dozens of instances of these things happening from time to time. I do not say the police constables are always the guilty parties, but I am not prepared to take the statement of any policeman merely because it is read in the House. It is not proper to encourage the men in that direction. To read a policeman's letter here as the explanation of an incident is merely to give these men an importance that they should not receive. The Minister should give his statement, and not read a constable's letter.

The Minister for Mines: This man is concerned in the incident. The member for East Perth made his statement in person and why should not the sergeant be heard as well?

Hon. M. F. TROY: This is not the place where it should be done. The Minister can make a statement on behalf of the sergeant and tell us he is satisfied the sergeant did his duty. All that the police can reasonably expect is that the Minister will see that justice is done to them.

The Minister for Mines: I will not defend them if they are in the wrong.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I know that.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.5 p.m.