

selves of our opportunities, we must succeed, we must advance. Finally I say, let us rise to our opportunities, and let us value our privileges. Difficulties there must always be, and we must meet them and conquer them like men. We have a great country which has many wants. It will be impossible during this year, or indeed for many years to come, to meet all the absolutely urgent wants of this State. Notwithstanding the increase in revenue, which I think will be very great indeed—the present estimate is over half-a-million more than for the revenue of last year—notwithstanding the increase in revenue, the absolute necessities of this State are so large that the greatest economy will have to be exercised. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] We shall gain, by care and economy, sufficient for our necessities; but we shall have nothing left for luxuries. The voice that speaks to us to-day is the voice that spoke in olden time: "Go forward; go in and possess the land." [General applause.] I beg to move the first item in the Estimates.

On motion by HON. F. H. PIESSE, progress reported and leave given to sit again this day week.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (MARRIED WOMEN) BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and, on motion by the PREMIER, read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9:43 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 10th October, 1901.

PETITIONS (2): Coupon Trading, to Prohibit—Papers Presented—Question: Travelling Representative, as to Appointment—Question: Geraldton Harbour Works, Expenditure—Question: Public-houses (tied) and Breweries, to Legislate—Carnarvon Babbage Island Tramway Bill, first reading—Motion: Railway Administration, Inquiry (J. Davies), to be open to Press—Return: Railway Water Requirements, Geraldton—Papers: Stock Importation—Motion: Justices of the Peace, to attend Court (withdrawn)—Workers' Compensation Bill: Reinstatement, in Committee, progress—Motion: Asiatic Aliens, Sandalwood License, to Prohibit—Motion: Hospital (Kalgoorlie), to be Central—Trade Stamps Abolition and Discount Stamps Issue Bill, second reading—Totalisator Act Repeal Bill, second reading—Council's Resolution Midland Railway, Inquiry to be Joint—Coal Mines Regulation Bill, second reading; Select Committee Appointed—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PETITIONS (2)—COUPON TRADING, TO PROHIBIT.

MR. W. D. JOHNSON (Kalgoorlie) presented a petition from people on the Eastern goldfields, praying for the suppression of the coupon system.

HON. W. H. JAMES (East Perth) presented a similar petition, bearing 200 signatures.

Petitions received and read.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Return (moved for by Dr. O'Connor) showing (1) land selected by Government under Midland Railway Act, (2) moneys received by Midland Railway Company from sale of land referred to in agreement of 1893.

By the COLONIAL TREASURER: 1, Return showing revenue derived from and expenditure incurred by departments for year ending 30th June, 1901; 2, Report of Metropolitan Waterworks Board, 1900; 3, Report of Government Photo-Lithographer, 1900.

By the MINISTER FOR WORKS: Plan of proposed Tramway from Carnarvon to Babbage Island.

Ordered to lie on the table.

QUESTION—TRAVELLING REPRESENTATIVE, APPOINTMENT.

MR. C. H. RASON asked the Colonial Treasurer: 1, Whether it is a fact that

the Agent General for Western Australia has appointed Mr. E. T. Scammel as Travelling Representative of this State, or in any other capacity. 2, If so, what are Mr. Scammel's duties, and what remuneration is he to receive in salary and travelling expenses. 3, What is the total amount that has been paid to Mr. Scammel for previous services rendered this State, the nature of such services, and the practical result thereof.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER replied: 1, Yes; for three months. 2, To make public the requirements and resources of this State, but more particularly in regard to the timber industry. Remuneration £41 13s. 4d. per month, and such travelling expenses as the Agent General may approve. 3, To total amount paid is *£567 0s. 2d., and the practical results are those usually obtained by advertising. I may add this was an appointment made by the Agent General without consultation with the Government.

QUESTION—GERALDTON HARBOUR WORKS, EXPENDITURE.

MR. R. D. HUTCHINSON asked the Colonial Treasurer: What is the amount of the unexpended balance of loan item for Geraldton Harbour Works.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER replied: The balance available on 30th September, 1901, was £3,929 0s. 1d.

QUESTION—PUBLIC-HOUSES (TIED) AND BREWERIES, TO LEGISLATE.

MR. F. CONNOR asked the Premier: Whether it is the intention of the Government to institute legislation similar to that suggested in New South Wales, dealing with the question of tied houses and breweries.

THE PREMIER replied: The question will be considered during the recess. I thank the hon. member for drawing attention to it.

CARNARVON-BABBAGE ISLAND TRAMWAY BILL.

Introduced by the MINISTER FOR WORKS, and read a first time.

* Salary £434 2s. 10d.; Allowances, £132 17s. 4d.—£567 0s. 2d.

MOTION—RAILWAY ADMINISTRATION, INQUIRY (J. DAVIES) TO BE OPEN TO PRESS.

MR. H. J. YELVERTON (Sussex) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the proceedings before the board appointed to inquire into the suspension of the General Manager of Railways should be open to the Press.

He said: In introducing this motion to the House, I do not purpose devoting any great length of time to it, and I feel it unnecessary to do so; in the first place because it must commend itself to the members of the House, and secondly because the matter with which it deals, the inquiry into the conduct of the General Manager of Railways, is at present *sub judice*. Both the onerous position the General Manager held and the manner in which he carried out the duties are at present under review. There was, however, evidence in the debate which took place yesterday evening, as to the papers placed on the table of the House with regard to the George Williams Davies inquiry, that it would have been better had the proceedings been open to the public, or at least to the Press, so that the public might from day to day have become possessed of knowledge of all that was taking place. We require no mystification in these matters; we want nothing kept back, but everything must be done fairly and squarely, in an equitable and judicial manner. Everything must be probed to the bottom; and I think the welfare of the State and the public policy—I will leave the hon. member for East Perth to explain what that is—require that the fullest and utmost scrutiny shall be made into everything connected with this matter. Nothing must be withheld from the public. It has been said there is no justification for the action of the Commissioner of Railways in regard to the charges made against Mr. John Davies. I am bound to say, from what I knew beforehand—and the Commissioner must have known considerably more—there was every justification for the charges made, and it is now in the interests as much of Mr. John Davies as of the Commissioner and the public that everything should be brought to the light of day and made clear to the public. Yesterday afternoon the member for the Murray (Mr. W. J. George), with regard

to the papers in the George Williams Davies matter, which were laid upon the table, cavilled somewhat at the fact that the Commissioner appointed Mr. George Williams Davies as his secretary; but I am bound to say that Mr. Holmes, having no information from the files of his department with regard to the moral character of Mr. George Williams Davies—

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member is travelling beyond the terms of his motion. We have nothing to do now with Mr. George Williams Davies.

MR. H. J. YELVERTON: I am trying to lead up to this, that in the matter of Mr. George Williams Davies it would have been better had the proceedings been open; and therefore it is better that they shall be open in the matter of Mr. John Davies. I will not trench too much on that question. What I desired to say was that the Commissioner of Railways, from the knowledge he must have had of the qualifications of Mr. George Williams Davies as an expert railway man, and therefore able to deal with all questions appertaining to railway matters, was in my opinion, seeing that he had no knowledge of Mr. George Williams Davies' moral character beforehand, justified in appointing that gentleman as his private secretary; and feeling as he did when matters came to be proven that Mr. George Williams Davies, from his moral character, was not a worthy person, the Commissioner then did only what was right and proper. He had certain charges laid against him, and those charges have been proved; the consequence being that Mr. George Williams Davies will no longer be employed by the Government of this country, I hope. The fact that this inquiry was not disclosed to the public daily was I think entirely a mistake; and in moving this motion I desire to express my opinion, and I trust the House will be with me, that the inquiry into the charges against Mr. John Davies should be fully open to the Press of this country, so that the public may hear day by day what is taking place. I commend the motion to the consideration of the House.

MR. W. J. BUTCHER (Gascoyne): I second the motion.

Question put and passed.

RETURN—RAILWAY WATER REQUIREMENTS, GERALDTON.

On motion by Mr. R. D. HUTCHINSON ordered: That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the cost of providing water for railway purposes at Geraldton during the year 1900.

PAPERS—STOCK IMPORTED OVER NORTHERN BORDER.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kalgoorlie) moved:

That the papers be laid upon the table relating to the importation of stock from South Australia to the Northern portion of this State.

This was one of the questions we all had been speaking on now and again for a considerable time, and it was as well for the papers to be laid on the table so that we might be able to judge of the facts of the case.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—JUSTICES OF THE PEACE, TO ATTEND COURT.

MR. H. J. YELVERTON (Sussex) moved:

That this House considers that all justices of the peace residing within ten miles of the court of the district to which they are appointed should sit upon the bench at least six times in the year, and requests the Government to make the necessary provision to enforce their doing so.

He said: It must be within the knowledge of the members of this House that many of those gentlemen who hold the commission of the peace, and have taken the necessary oath, consider that their duties to the public end there, and in many cases they seldom afterwards enter the precincts of the court or do anything in connection with their office. They simply hold the position for the sake of the honours which it carries with it, and nothing more. That is against the interests of the public service of the State, and therefore I submit this motion to the House.

MR. T. HAYWARD (Bunbury): I second the motion, and I quite endorse the remarks of the previous speaker.

MR. F. WILSON (Perth): I am an unfortunate justice of the peace who has never sat upon the bench; and I venture to say that the duties of a justice do not begin and end with sitting on the bench. I believe I have done just as good work in my own office, attending to people who

required documents witnessed and so forth, as I might possibly have done had I sat on the bench. I do not think this motion is advisable. Of course if it be proved that a justice neglects his duties in other respects, then the remedy lies in the hands of the Government to recommend that his commission be cancelled. Evidently the mover has not thought very deeply on this subject, or he would not have tabled his motion. At any rate, I take exception to members of Parliament who are justices of the peace being dealt with if they do not sit upon the bench. How are members of Parliament to find time to sit upon the bench during the six months in which Parliament is in session?

MR. GEORGE: They should have no other business?

MR. WILSON: Oh, of course, they should have no other business! We are here employed from half-past 4 p.m. till eleven or twelve o'clock at night, and perhaps sit on select committees for many hours during the daytime; and farther than that, we have in our spare time to attend to the requirements of our electors. If the motion be carried at all, members of Parliament who fill the dual offices of members and justices of the peace should be exempt from its operation. I hope the hon. member, having called attention to the matter, will leave it alone; thus showing that the eyes of those hon. members who take an interest in this subject are upon honorary justices; and that if such justices fail to do their duty in the future, some steps will be taken to make a regulation such as that contemplated in the motion.

MR. W. J. GEORGE (Murray): I am in accord with the member for Perth (Mr. Wilson); and I am one of the justices of Perth who never sit on the magisterial bench.

MR. G. TAYLOR: I think it would be rather awkward for you at times if you did.

MR. GEORGE: I can assure the hon. member that if he were unfortunate enough to be brought before me, I should give him absolute justice. I am sure he would deserve it, and that he would be perfectly satisfied with it when he got it. But that is not what I rose to speak about. The dignity, as I suppose I may call it, was thrust on me without any

solicitation on my part. I never knew why it was conferred on me until the next morning; and I shall tell the House exactly why it was. The newspapers of this country, fulfilling their duty to convey intelligence to the public, published a paragraph that I was about to be made a justice of the peace; and exactly at five minutes past nine that morning, in my private office, there came in a friend to congratulate me, and his statement was: "I congratulate you. You are the stamp of man we want as justice of the peace. It is no use having a friend unless you make use of him. Will you kindly witness this transfer?" A few minutes afterwards came two persons from the railway station, opposite to which my premises are situated. They had lost their luggage tickets, and required the signature of a justice of the peace to enable them to get their luggage.

MR. OATS: Had you been sworn in at the time?

MR. GEORGE: I did not know at the time that I should have to be sworn in. I had been sworn "at," many a time. If I had only known that I had to be sworn "in," I should have had an easy morning.

MR. TAYLOR: That is a fair specimen of a justice of the peace who does not know his duty.

MR. GEORGE: Exactly. No one would be likely to appoint the hon. member to a position he knows anything of. I propose to move an amendment. Personally, I do not care whether I occupy the position of a justice of the peace two seconds longer. The next business with which a justice of the peace comes in contact is that of the pawnbroker. People lose their pawn tickets; and the bulk of such people find their way to my private office. [MR. TAYLOR: I should think so.] And from the time I was appointed a justice of the peace I have had people of that sort coming in, half-a-dozen or a dozen every morning; and I was actually stopped in the street by the railway detective to sign warrants and summonses, and goodness knows what besides. If, in addition to that, the hon. member (Mr. Yelverton) expects that a member of Parliament is to be a justice of the peace, and have his time taken up in the manner I have described, and must sit

upon the bench six times in the year, here is one member of Parliament, at any rate, who will not be a justice of the peace any longer. [MR. TAYLOR: Resign.] I can resign without your dictating to me. There is no necessity for you to do that. I do not require to be taught my duty by you or anybody else. I am quite aware that, with respect to Perth, there is frequently a difficulty in finding magistrates to sit on the bench.

MR. OATS: That is the fault of the authorities.

MR. GEORGE: But we have two paid stipendiary magistrates, Mr. Roe and Mr. Cowan, who could do the work; and if Mr. Roe's time were not taken up by a lot of extra work, they would be able to do it, and do it a jolly sight better than the honorary justices.

MR. HOPKINS: We want a few more of them.

MR. GEORGE: Then let us have a few more; and let us abandon the idea of thinking that appointing a man a justice of the peace is conferring an honour upon him. During last session I read out a list of honorary justices. I was not called to order, but narrowly escaped that fate, and began to deal with each of them, as to his special qualifications; and I can assure the hon. member (Mr. Hopkins) that if he will do that he will find there are men on that list who do not know how to sign their own names, and whom my confiding friend, the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor), would not trust with one little bit of his property.

MR. TAYLOR: I am rather credulous, you know.

MR. GEORGE: You are a bit credulous when you like. I beg to move as an amendment:

That after "justice of the peace," the words "other than members of Parliament" be inserted.

MR. F. CONNOR: What about doctors?

MR. C. H. RASON (Guildford): I am much inclined to agree with the motion, but there is a difficulty to my mind in the way of hon. members who unfortunately, like myself, are justices of the peace for the whole State. I am afraid to think how many times per annum we should have to sit on the bench if the proposed regulation were enforced. But I must confess I wholly disagree with the argu-

ment of the member for the Murray (Mr. George). I should be sorry indeed if it were not recognised that the appointment as an honorary justice is an honour—[MEMBERS: Hear, hear.]—and should be sorry if the obligations implied in the appointment were not honourably carried out. I am afraid there are in this State many justices of the peace who, while recognising the honour conferred upon them, fail to recognise the duties carried with that honour, and do not sit upon the Bench when they might reasonably be expected to do so.

MR. GEORGE: Sit in my office an hour a day, and you will have some experience of my duties.

MR. RASON: If the member for the Murray makes a personal allusion, I think I can compare my experience on the bench with his.

MR. GEORGE: I was not referring to experience on the bench.

MR. RASON: Because I can tell him that in the early days of Coolgardie I relieved the warden of the whole of his police court business, and of the whole of his other business outside the warden's court. For many months I conducted the whole of the police court business in Coolgardie. The personal element has been introduced, otherwise I should not have mentioned that fact. I regard the office of justice as involving obligations on my part; and I am sure it is so regarded by the majority of justices. They regard their appointment to the bench as an honour, carrying with it certain obligations. Those who do not fulfil those obligations should be dealt with; and therefore I am prepared to support the motion.

MR. W. J. BUTCHER (Gascoyne): I rise with a very strong desire to oppose this motion entirely.

MR. TAYLOR: Are you a justice of the peace?

MR. BUTCHER: I do not see what good there can be in compelling an honorary justice to sit on the bench five or six times a year, or at all. I am under the impression that those appointments are honorary; and I take it no honorary justice would refuse to sit if there were occasion for him to do so, nor do I see how the proposed regulation could be carried out. It appears to me that if an honorary justice happened to be appointed

for a certain district, and left the district for a period of twelve months, during that time he would be struck off simply on account of his absence from the district and his non-compliance with the regulation which will be *gazetted* if this motion be carried. It is my intention to oppose it. I do not think any justice would refuse to sit in case of necessity; and I think it ought to be optional whether he sits or does not sit, seeing that his appointment is honorary.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret): I rise to support the motion. I do not think it right that the Government should select special people on whom to confer honorary positions. I think that if such positions carry any obligations, these should be fulfilled; and if the holders wish to be mere ornaments to the State as justices of the peace, I do not know that any one of them will be of great service. I know that in Queensland the appointments of justices were made on lines somewhat similar to those in this State; and I am sure they were a great failure. As an instance, there was one very respectable person well known personally in that country, and known by name in this. He was appointed as a justice in the ordinary way, and some little time after his appointment had a disagreement with some men who were erecting a fence for him; and the men sued him for wages. This justice, unlike the member for the Murray, had been sworn in, and thought he could sit on his own case; but when the case came before the court, he had naturally to stand down. Although there was a lot of corruption in Queensland, his sitting on the bench would have been too glaring. The case was decided in favour of the workmen and against the justice. The gentleman's name was Durack. When he returned home his wife said to him, "Well, Patsey, did you win the case?" "No," he says, "I did not. I had to pay £40." She said, "Then what the devil are you doin' as a jay pay?" If men of that sort are appointed justices of the peace, I say the system is a failure. And I suppose the member for the Murray is speaking with some authority. He is mixed up with those gentlemen; and the sooner we exercise more caution in the selection of justices, the better it will be for the State.

There were a number of persons who were supposed to have done wrong brought before justices, who had the power either of putting a man in prison for a period, or running him into the heavy expense of taking his case to a higher court, to prove his innocence. I would rather the motion provide that a justice should sit twelve times a year at least. Hon. members have said that a lot of work is done in their offices; but in outlying places justices of the peace are wanted more on the bench than in their private offices. Justices should sit more regularly than they have done in the past. I cannot understand the argument why members of Parliament should be excluded. Members are paid to legislate, but — and I say it with sorrow — I have seen a great want of attendance here. This House has had to be counted out since I have been here, from the lack of attendance on the part of members who are paid to do their duty. I do not fear contradiction when I say I have sat in this House when it has been very thin. Hon. members go to the country and offer their services, and the people are willing to pay them. I agree that the payment is not very large, and having been an advocate of high wages all my life I am not going back on it now. I am different from some hon. members in that respect: I have always had to advocate my own wages. Some hon. members have been in favour of cutting down wages in the past, and I do not know whether they would stand by me now if I asked for higher wages here. There should be greater judgment in the selection of justices of the peace; positions of honour should not be considered. It is very hard that men should be appointed through political influence, and that a Government should chastise members who do not sit on the Government side of the House because as justices they do not sit on the bench. But such a thing is only to be expected. I think something should be done to compel justices to fulfil their obligations, and if they are not willing to do so, then they should not accept the positions.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS (Boulder): I am pleased that the motion has been brought forward, not because I am desirous of forcing every justice to sit on the bench, but because I believe there are

many justices who have never sat on the bench at all. The best thing to do is to introduce an amending Bill by which all appointments to the bench should be cancelled, and if it be necessary to make farther appointments, let the justices be chosen by the people of the district in which they live. On the Eastern gold-fields, many mine managers who have been appointed justices have never sat on the bench. In Boulder, where there is a population in and surrounding the town of 20,000, the Government have not seen fit to appoint a resident magistrate. It seems that the public policy is to have the work done by honorary justices, whereas it should be done by qualified men, and, to my mind, men of legal training. After the Boulder court was established some twelve or eighteen months elapsed before even a set of Statutes was provided for the court. Several young justices were appointed, myself amongst the number, and we asked for some guide on summary jurisdiction—I think we specified Dr. Black's book. We were told that it was not available for the court or for justices, and we were informed that if we wanted the book we could buy it; I did buy it. If a man be appointed to a seat on the bench to mete out justice, surely the Government could give him some assistance by instructing him in the proper procedure.

MR. R. HASTIE: How did you deal with those brought before you?

MR. HOPKINS: They were all dealt with under the Police Act, and if they did not come under that Act they were "passed in." That is the situation we were placed in at Boulder. For my part, I think it would be preferable if we were to have some enactment by which clerks of courts, clerks of municipalities, clerks of roads boards, postmasters, and people of that description, officers in charge of railway stations and station-masters, could witness documents; it would be a good thing if that were done.

HON. F. H. PRESSE: Most of them can.

MR. HOPKINS: Only some of them. The whole of such officers should be enabled to do this. It would be far preferable for persons to go to a civil servant to have their documents witnessed than that they should have to go to people, perhaps to whom they are opposed politi-

cally or otherwise. For that reason it would be preferable to effect some remedy in this matter. Where there has been no resident magistrate I have known cases to be postponed day after day and week after week because no one could be got to sit on the bench, while there were justices in the district who had never sat on the bench.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kanowna): This is a very useful motion, and if the Attorney General takes notice of many suggestions that are made it will be better for the country. I have tried hard to see if I could vote for the motion, in its present form, but unfortunately I see some strong objections. There are many justices of the peace in this country who would not have an opportunity of sitting in court six times a year if they wished. It is all very well to say that in congested populations such as Perth, Boulder, and other places, that many opportunities are given for justices to sit on the bench, but in many portions of the country justices of the peace cannot sit on the bench six times during the entire year. Therefore it would be a hardship on these people: probably it would be putting off the bench some very desirable occupants of it. It has been said that no justice of the peace will refuse to sit in court if asked. I have known many cases in which justices have refused to undertake the duty. Even in busy places the police experience difficulty in getting justices to hear cases, and many suitors have to wait two or three days, sometimes a week or two before they can get their cases tried. To my mind, if we are to go in for honorary justices, and I know no other way in which to get the cases tried on the spot where the dispute takes place, it is, to my mind, necessary not to limit the number of justices but to increase the number. In nearly every case there is a difficulty in getting justices to put in an appearance, and this prevents cases that ought to be heard from coming on. There are a great many people who do not fulfil any duty. It has been suggested by the member for Boulder (Mr. Hopkins) that station-masters and other responsible persons should be allowed to witness signatures; I think that would be a great convenience. I hope the amendment will not be pressed. It means that members of Parliament might

claim special privileges in this direction. They already have many privileges; but surely if a member of Parliament is justified in taking the position of a justice, he must take his turn on the bench. If members of Parliament have a lot of exemptions, that is no reason why we should add to the number. I hope the House will consider the matter seriously, and that the Attorney General will see a sufficient number of justices are appointed in the different districts of the State in order to undertake these duties.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. G. Leake): There seems to me a practical difficulty in the way of enforcing the motion if carried. I do not know if members realise that we would have to define what is the court of the district. To begin with, a magistrate can carry the court with him: he is not obliged to sit in any particular place. Justices of the peace can make a court of any building when they are travelling about. Then again, in outlying districts, it has been pointed out, sometimes the court does not sit in the usually recognised place much more than six times in a year; therefore, you may be calling on the magistrates to do an almost impossible thing. I have no doubt that what the member for Sussex (Mr. H. J. Yelverton) has in his mind is, that a magistrate should discharge the duties of his office when called upon to do so, or to show a reasonable desire to assist in the administration of justice. If that is what the hon. member means, I am entirely with him. Instances have been reported to me, even since I have been Attorney General, of justices who have declined to sit when called on. That is the sort of thing one wants to stop. If a magistrate does not think it of sufficient importance to act as a justice when required, he should resign his commission of the peace. It would be very difficult to frame a provision to enforce that sort of thing. I do not know that it would be necessary to legislate on the subject: there is sufficient control and influence in the hands of the Ministry to keep justices up to their work if they refuse to act. It is a rather invidious thing to dismiss a justice from the commission, or strike him off the commission of the peace; and one would not care to do that unless on very good grounds. If any magistrate

repeatedly refused to act as a justice when required, I certainly would feel disposed to ask that gentleman to resign; and if he would not resign and still persisted, I should feel disposed to say: "We have no farther need for your services: you do not seem to appreciate the honour conferred on you: you need not hold the position." I do not know that there is any necessity for the hon. member to force the motion to a division. The discussion has been a healthy and, I think, a useful one. In this connection I would ask members to be careful before they make recommendations for the appointment of justices of the peace. I can assure the House that I get a number of applications now relative to gentlemen anxious to be made justices of the peace; and occasionally hon. members who, perhaps, do not think it an honour to be a justice, make recommendations which are hardly deserving of much attention. [General laughter.] However, that is by the way. I trust the hon. member, in the circumstances, will not think it incumbent on him to press the motion farther, but will rest satisfied that, the subject having been thoroughly ventilated, I shall pay closer attention to it than otherwise I might have done.

MR. YELVERTON (in reply): As the matter has now been thoroughly ventilated, and as I have the assurance of the Premier that he will give regular attention to the conduct of justices in future, and that on evidence being brought to his notice showing justices have flagrantly evaded the carrying out of the duties of their position he will deal with them, I am satisfied to withdraw the motion.

THE SPEAKER: Does the member for the Murray withdraw his amendment?

MR. GEORGE: Yes.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BILL.

REINSTATEMENT AFTER COUNT-OUT.

HON. W. H. JAMES (Minister in charge of the Bill) moved:

That the House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the whole, to farther consider the Workers' Compensation Bill.

Owing to the count-out of the House on Tuesday evening, this motion was necessary, by virtue of the Standing Orders,

to replace the Bill on the Notice Paper. He felt certain that the intention, at the time the count-out took place, was not to block the Bill, but simply to defer its consideration.

Question put and passed.

IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from 8th October, on amendment in Schedule 1 moved by Mr. W. J. George, that the word "granddaughter" be struck out.

MR. W. J. GEORGE: When the schedule was under consideration the other evening, he had moved that the word "granddaughter" be struck out. It might be argued that the Committee having passed the word "grandson," should necessarily pass the word "granddaughter." However, his object was to confine the extent of compensation within reasonable limits. Clause 15 carried the liability of an employer to a ridiculous extent. The schedule as it stood would have the effect of restricting the opportunities of employment for elderly men. On railway works, for instance, it was the practice to find employment for men who were getting on a little in years. These men were given side-cutting, and from that they went into the repairing gangs, where they were considered to have a job for life; since the Government, on taking over the railway, generally took over the line-repairers as well. There were many other instances in which employment was similarly given to elderly men; but the effect of Clause 15 and of this schedule would be to make it very risky to employ men in advanced years, who would therefore find it very difficult to obtain work. If the schedule comprised husband, wife, brother, sister, son, and daughter, then we should have gone quite as far as we ought to go in tentative legislation. A measure of this kind was in force in South Australia, but not in Victoria or New South Wales, with the industries of which States our manufacturers would come into competition now more than ever. Legislation should not tend to restrict employment, nor should it tend to drive people out of the country. The tendency of this Bill, if passed as it stood, would be to lessen opportunities for the investment of capital, and therefore the opportunities for employment, by throwing on the industries of this

State farther burdens. Thus employers, and employed as well would suffer; and the lot of both had already been made quite hard enough by the advent of Federation. Whatever else might be said of the federal tariff, it had certainly robbed the workers of all hope of cheap living. He wished to strike out the word "granddaughter." It was his intention, if this schedule were passed, to move the addition of every possible length of consanguinity that a fertile imagination could bring about. It used to be considered that the privileges of an employer were to use such experience and such money as he possessed in establishing a business, and to do that it was necessary that he should have men to work with him. One placed too much reliance on the common sense of the working man to believe that half of these trumped-up grievances which had cropped up would have been brought before the House or the country if it had not been for gentlemen of irresponsibility and exuberant imaginative qualities that led them quite away from the facts which concerned commercial business. If any man caused wilful injury to another, it was his duty to put that right, but in this Bill we went absolutely beyond that. If we went on in this strain, we should be taking away absolutely all personal responsibility with regard to men employed. Where personal supervision could be given to one or two men that was all right, and the employer could do it, if he thought the game worth the candle; but where one had 50, 100, or 1,500 men, or where one was like his friend the member for Wellington (Mr. Teesdale Smith) who practically bossed some thousands of men, the proposal made would be most unfair. He moved that the word "granddaughter" be struck out.

MR. F. W. SAYER: We should not go beyond the Act as it existed in South Australia, and he imagined we could recommit the schedule with a view of striking out one or two words that had already been passed. The words "brother" and "sister" should be struck out, as in South Australia, also "step-father" and "step-mother." We were dealing at present with the term "granddaughter," and if we were going to bring this schedule into some more reasonable form, we ought to support the amendment to

strike out the word "granddaughter" with a view of also striking out the word "grandson," on recommitment. If we passed this measure, at least we ought to have the satisfaction of knowing we were not going beyond South Australia. In following South Australia we were going a long way beyond what the other States had done, or were likely to do.

HON. W. H. JAMES: Previously the member for Claremont (Mr. Sayer), in dealing with the question of conciliation, wanted to know why the House could not extend the provisions of the Bill; but the hon. member wound up by saying he did not think we ought to do more than was done in the Eastern States. He said we must not take this Bill farther than the Act in South Australia. Why? Could members conceive a reason? Was there to be complete stagnation, and was no State to legislate unless some other State had done it? If no State were to move in advance of the other, which State was to move first? He wanted the member for Claremont to answer that question. We had to consider what was fair, and we should be guided as far as possible by the experience in the East or elsewhere, but we should not bind ourselves down by empty platitudes. What was the position now? Let us deal with the schedule. We provided in the body of the Bill that compensation should be awarded in certain cases; and the only question we had to consider now was to whom that compensation should be paid. The Bill said most distinctly that compensation should be paid only to those who were wholly or in part dependent upon the man who was injured or killed. And there was the farther limitation that it should not be sufficient for a claimant to be dependent or partly dependent, but the claimant must come within the qualification of the first schedule. So that an individual entirely dependent upon the earnings of the worker would have no claim to compensation under this Bill unless he was one of the worker's family, as set out in the schedule. If a granddaughter were entirely or partly dependent upon her grandfather, why should she not have the compensation, in whole or in part, provided by the Bill? There was no need to consider the long rigmarole delivered by the member for the Murray every time he

spoke on this schedule, for such speeches dealt not with the matter before the Committee, but with the whole Bill. The question was whether a granddaughter wholly or partly dependent upon the worker should have a claim to compensation.

MR. GEORGE: It was very easy to prove dependence.

HON. W. H. JAMES: The hon. member posed as a friend of the workers, and then suggested that their relatives would make bogus claims.

MR. GEORGE: No. The claims were made by unscrupulous lawyers, who touted for such business.

HON. W. H. JAMES: If the interjection meant anything, it meant that relatives of workers would come forward with bogus claims. The question was whether a granddaughter wholly or partly dependent on a grandfather who was killed, should have the compensation given by the Bill.

MR. C. H. RASON: Even the last speaker seemed to lose sight of the point that the schedule described those relatives of the worker who should have claims to compensation in the event of his death only. In the event of accident, the compensation went to the worker himself. Therefore, if 599 people were described in the schedule, that would not increase the employer's liability in case of mere accident. To increase the number in the schedule ten times would not increase that liability, but would merely describe those who had claims in the event of the employee's death to the amount for which the employer was liable.

HON. W. H. JAMES: The member for the Murray took the case of a man whose only relative might be a granddaughter.

MR. RASON: To increase the number of relatives would not increase the amount of compensation; so by striking out "granddaughter," the liability of the employer would not be decreased, but merely the number of claimants. If the number of relatives to be benefited were limited, the employer would employ none but orphans with no known relatives; though it would be hard to find an employee who had not some relative mentioned in the schedule, which relative would take the whole amount of compensation.

HON. W. H. JAMES: The last speaker did not correctly interpret the arguments of the member for the Murray. True, if all the scheduled relatives were living, it did not matter to the employer whom he paid; but the hon. member, when moving the amendment, had evidently considered the case of a man with no relative save a granddaughter; and therefore, if "granddaughter" were struck out, there could be no claim in the event of such a man's death, and the employer would thereby be benefited.

MR. GEORGE: The Minister did not know what had been the object of the amendment.

HON. W. H. JAMES: If that were not the hon. member's meaning, then the arguments of the member for Guildford (Mr. Rason) were conclusive.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	16
Noes	...	...	...	19

Majority against ... 3

Ayes.
 Mr. Butcher
 Mr. Ewing
 Mr. George
 Mr. Hayward
 Mr. Hicks
 Mr. Higham
 Mr. Jacoby
 Mr. Monger
 Mr. Phillips
 Mr. Piesse
 Mr. Pigott
 Mr. Sayer
 Mr. Smith
 Sir J. G. Lee Steere
 Mr. Stone
 Mr. Yelverton (Teller).

Noes.
 Mr. Daglish
 Mr. Gardiner
 Mr. Gregory
 Mr. Hastie
 Mr. Hopkins
 Mr. Hutchinson
 Mr. Illingworth
 Mr. Johnson
 Mr. Kingsmill
 Mr. Leake
 Mr. McDonald
 Mr. Nanson
 Mr. Rason
 Mr. Reid
 Mr. Reside
 Mr. Taylor
 Mr. Wallace
 Mr. James (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

MR. GEORGE moved that the word "stepson" be struck out. So as to save discussion, would the Minister give some reason why "stepson" should be retained? There was no reason why a man should be responsible for another's undertakings. If a man had a child of his own he should be responsible for it, but why should he be responsible for a step-son?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: Because he had married the mother.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. GEORGE moved: That the word "step-daughter" be struck out.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. GEORGE: It was not proposed to strike out the father or the mother.

LABOUR MEMBERS: Just try.

MR. GEORGE: Because it was a matter of right that the father and mother and the grandfather and grandmother should be left in the schedule, but there was no reason why the step-father and step-mother should be left in. He moved that "step-father" be struck out.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. GEORGE moved: That the word "step-mother" be struck out.

MR. SAYER: If this Bill were to be passed we should not, and need not, go beyond what was the law in South Australia. The idea of the Bill was suggested by legislation elsewhere: the Bill did not originate in the mind of the member who introduced it. It was suggested to him, and if the Minister had followed the example of South Australia he should not go beyond the law of South Australia. The Parliament there had refused to extend the provisions of the Bill to the step-father and step-mother. New Zealand had extended it, but not South Australia. We should not carry the Bill to a ridiculous extent. If the measure was to pass it should be the means of compensating, in the case of the death of the worker, the parent, the child, or the grandchild, who had all the world before them and should receive a helping hand; but when the Bill was extended to the step-father, it went to an absurd length.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. GEORGE: It was desired to extend the schedule. There should be no difference between the children born in wedlock and those born out of it. Those not blest with the rites of the church should not be prevented from the benefits of this Bill. If a man was killed, there was no reason why the woman who had been living with him, but who was not married to him, should not benefit. Therefore, he would propose to add the words, "Or any person who is living with a man and enjoying the position of wife, but unblest by the rites of the church."

HON. W. H. JAMES: If the hon. member were serious, would it not be advisable that the following words be added, "Husband or wife should mean reputed husband or wife."

MR. GEORGE: It did not matter whether the husband or wife was reputed

or not. All that was necessary for his amendment was to prove cohabitation. However, he would move as suggested by the Minister.

MR. W. J. BUTCHER moved that progress be reported.

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

Ayes	20
Noes	13

Majority for ... 7

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Daglish
Mr. Connor	Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Ewing	Mr. Gregory
Mr. George	Mr. Hastie
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Hingworth
Mr. Hicks	Mr. James
Mr. Higham	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Kingsmill
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Monger	Mr. Reid
Mr. Morgans	Mr. Beside
Mr. Phillips	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Piesse	Mr. Wallace (Teller).
Mr. Pigott	
Mr. Reason	
Mr. Sayer	
Mr. Smith	
Mr. Stone	
Mr. Yelverton	
Mr. Wilson (Teller).	

Motion thus passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

At 6:35, the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

MOTION—ASIATIC ALIENS, SANDALWOOD LICENSE, TO PROHIBIT.

MR. W. D. JOHNSON (Kalgoorlie) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, sandalwood licenses should not be issued to Asiatic aliens.

I bring this motion forward because, seeing that Asiatic aliens are not allowed to compete with the miners on the gold-fields, and are not allowed to take out business licenses, I do not think it just that they should be allowed to compete with the old settlers of this State in the business of cutting sandalwood. I understand that in several portions of this country there are aliens who hold sandalwood licenses, and thus compete with the old settlers in the sandalwood industry. [MR. MONGER: Hear, hear.] I do not think it necessary to go into the matter at any great length. There are hon. members in whose districts a number of

these Asiatic aliens are working, and those members should therefore be more in touch with the subject than myself. No doubt they will give their experiences to the House. I simply move the motion.

MR. F. WALLACE (Mt. Magnet): I have pleasure in supporting the motion, the proposer of which looked rather hard at me. I thought, when he said certain members present could give their experience of licenses held by Asiatics. I think I divide the honour of possessing that experience with the member for Greenough (Mr. Stone), because it is about the borders of our respective districts that Chinamen and Malays are cutting sandalwood. I think certain of these aliens do hold licenses in their own names, but I am not quite sure of it. However, the motion will reach the object intended, to bring before the House the fact that if these Asiatics do not immediately hold licenses, they are aided by unprincipled men of our own nationality. Those men we can reach by this motion; even if we cannot reach the aliens directly. The sandalwood industry is one that is availed of by every farmer in the northern part of the State, and particularly the Greenough, Mt. Magnet, and Geraldton districts. That industry affords their only source of income to a great many farmers during the slack season of the year. Sandalwood is at present bringing a very fair price, and those same farmers might make a fair income from the industry. The coloured aliens, however, are employed by certain people; and thus the farmers are subjected to unfair competition. I hope every hon. member will support the motion, and thus affirm the principle that our people should be protected, not only in this particular industry but in every industry over which we have a similar power under our Statutes, against the competition of the coloured alien. There is in Queensland an Act prohibiting Malays and Chinamen from going on to a goldfield for a certain number of years after its discovery. We need a similar Act in this State; because the coloured aliens are encouraged by certain people to come on the gold-fields in such capacities as cooks, waiters, laundrymen, and so forth. These aliens, unfortunately, cannot be reached; because

they do not hold licenses. I have made inquiries without discovering a single instance in which these Asiatics hold business or even hawking licenses; although hawking by aliens is, as we know, a great evil in the outlying districts. Ministers might very well take a lesson or a hint from this motion, and recognise that the time has arrived when they should consider, in the interests of our own people, the necessity for introducing some law which will give the white man a better chance of competing with the coloured alien. We have heard a great deal about coloured competition in the carrying trade; and therefore I am pleased to hear that there is a probability of the House having before it a Bill which will prohibit these aliens from carrying on the roads. Except in the respects I have indicated, however, the House has no power to restrict their employment. As I have said before, I trust that Ministers will take a hint, and endeavour to place the white man above the Asiatic; for I have to admit that at present on the outlying goldfields, and on the Murchison field in particular, the alien appears occasionally to predominate.

MR. F. C. MONGER (York): I am pleased at last to be able to support a motion emanating from the member for Kalgoorlie. [LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] As one who was very considerably interested in the sandalwood industry at one time, I express the opinion that the motion should be worded somewhat differently. In my opinion it should ask for the amendment of the Act now in existence. That Act permits any person, any Malay or Chinaman or coloured alien, to take out a sandalwood license and cut sandalwood. Until that law is altered—perhaps now that we have only one lawyer in the House, we may be able to get a proper explanation of what the law actually is—a motion of this kind can have very little effect. Whilst in entire accord with its spirit, I still think the motion will avail nothing in the absence of a positive assurance from the Government that they will bring in an amending Bill, with the object of excluding aliens from the sandalwood business.

MR. W. J. BUTCHER (Gascoyne): It is my intention to support this motion, for the simple reason that the Asiatics are getting the entire monopoly of the sandal-

wood business in many places in this State. It will be well known that the sandalwood industry throughout the State of Western Australia had been a thriving industry indeed until late years. I think in some parts of the State legislation has the effect of limiting the cutting of this wood to a certain extent, but this Act does not apply, as far as I know, to the portion of the country to which I refer. In that part a very large number of Asiatic aliens are employed in cutting sandalwood, and those men are in a position under the present Act to take up a license, which they do in preference to going in for legitimate work—I call it legitimate work in this instance. They will not work for wages. They will not undertake any work of that description. They refuse 25s. or 30s. and I have known them refuse £2, because they can take out a license, and camp in the bush and indulge in smoking opium, getting their living by cutting sandalwood. I think that if the Government were to move in the matter and introduce some legislation, if possible, to overcome this difficulty, it would be a great advantage. There is a particular class of working man which derives the most benefit from this particular industry, that being the man who has a wife and family to support. Men of that description are most directly affected by these Asiatics who work in this industry, and I certainly hope the Government will take some steps in the matter, to promulgate some Act or adopt some means to put a stop to what is complained of. For that reason I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

MR. P. STONE (Greenough): I have much pleasure in supporting the motion, for I think it would be of use in the country districts where all these Chinamen and others are monopolising the sandalwood trade. At one time sandalwood cutting was a useful occupation for the small farmer. After he had done his harvest or got in his crop he and his sons could cut sandalwood for a month or two to help keep down the store account, but now the Chinaman has run them out of that line, and it seems very unfair that the Chinese should be allowed to compete against the sandalwood cutters in the coastal districts, while they are not allowed to compete against the miners in the mining districts.

MR. F. CONNOR (East Kimberley): I shall in a very few words give my support to this motion, and it is a pleasure to be able to agree with my hon. friend (Mr. Johnson) who introduced this proposition. We want this country to be kept as nearly a white country as possible. When it comes to a distinction between what is white and what is coloured, we want to take a firm stand, notwithstanding what has been done concerning this matter in the Federal Parliament. It is our duty here to keep this country for Europeans.

MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco): I rise to support this motion, but at the same time I recognise there is need for all-round legislation on this question; and there is need also for the enforcement of the legislation we already have. It was recently admitted in this House by the Colonial Treasurer (Hon. F. Illingworth) that there are about 300 Asiatics in this State who were imported under the Labour Registry Act and whose engagements have expired but who remain in this State, and as far as I can gather no attempt is being made by the Government to find out who is responsible for the breach of the Act which has been committed, and no steps have been taken to get rid of these persons. I consider that if we administered, and administered efficiently, the laws already on the statute book, it would not be necessary very frequently to bring forward motions like this, because I am quite satisfied that the number of aliens could be considerably diminished, if all those who were illegally at large were removed from the State. I hope the Colonial Treasurer will give his attention to this matter to see if it is not possible to apply the law so that the number of aliens in this State shall be considerably diminished.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): I can inform the hon. member (Mr. Johnson) that I strongly support the motion he has brought forward; but I think he might have gone a little farther than he has done in regard to it. In all our legislation we have done all we possibly can to prevent the Asiatic or African from obtaining any license or right to do business on the goldfields; and I think we may go just as far in this industry. Under our Gold Mines Act we insist that no miner's right or busi-

ness license shall be granted to any Asiatic or African alien; and I think a condition might be added to this motion, so that an African or Asiatic who claims to be a British subject should not be able to get a license without the authority of the Minister. This is necessary if the motion is to be of any effect. Under the old *régime*, I found these people with licenses wholesale. One of the very first decisions we came to at the first Cabinet meeting was to issue no miners' rights or business licenses to any of these people, even if they did claim to be British subjects, without the authority of the Minister being first obtained.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kanowna): I shall be glad to move that after "House," the words "miners' rights or" be inserted, and that at the finish the following words be added: "nor to any Asiatic claiming to be a British subject, without the consent of the Minister first being obtained." The idea of this amendment is to include in the first place a proviso that miners' rights shall not be granted to Asiatic aliens.

HON. F. H. PRIESE: There is a law against that now.

MR. HASTIE: I beg pardon. There are a large number of Asiatics in this State who claim that they are British subjects. It is very easy for men of any Asiatic nationalities almost, to say they are British subjects. Very few of them can prove they are so, but on the other hand it is the most difficult thing in the world to prove that they are not British subjects. My general observation is that one Asiatic is very much like another Asiatic, and it is very difficult to say what they are, but in a case of this kind the onus of proof ought to be placed on them. Besides, most English-speaking countries have taken measures to protect themselves against being swamped by Asiatics, whether they are British subjects or not, and therefore it is our duty, as has been pointed out before, to protect the industries we have in this country. There are one or two other reasons which have not been touched upon during the debate by other members. The first one is that the sandalwood industry is an industry which has been engaged in by a lot of people who have no capital and who have no regular work to do. It has always been used as a stand-by, and, as

we know, the sandalwood in all the easily reached ground has already been cleared out. Settlement is progressing very quickly in this country, and, as those gentlemen who come from the North have pointed out, that branch of the trade is falling into the hands of Asiatic aliens. The consequence will be that, in dull times when we have those slumps which always follow booms, in many parts of the country there will be nothing left for the white man to do. As far as the goldfields are concerned, we have already been able to keep the Asiatic away from mining and away from such industries as dry-blowing. When you get outside the goldfields there is, I understand, almost nothing left except sandalwood, and so it devolves upon us to see that in the interests of our people this industry is preserved. I believe the House will be willing not only to pass the motion, but the amendment, which is really an addendum, and I will leave it in their hands.

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

**MOTION—HOSPITAL (KALGOORLIE).
TO BE CENTRAL.**

MR. J. M. HOPKINS (Boulder)
moved:

1, That to obviate the necessity of erecting separate hospitals on the Eastern goldfields, it is deemed advisable by this House that a suitable site shall be chosen whereon to erect a central institution on the latest scientific principles. 2, That its location shall be determined on the basis of population, that is to say that the locality chosen shall, as far as possible, be decided upon the merits of public requirements, apart from vested interests. 3, That meanwhile no permanent additions shall be added to the Kalgoorlie Hospital.

This is one question which I have been requested to bring before this House, and a question which I hope will receive every reasonable consideration from members on both sides, entirely apart from any parochial aspect or from any party feeling whatever. It is most unfortunate that the present institution in Kalgoorlie has been erected almost in the centre of the town, where it gets the full benefit of every dust-storm that blows. In addition, it is unfortunately situated in close proximity to the railway yards, where the screeching of whistles and the bumping of trucks, which cannot be separated from shunting operations, are continually

audible. It is only those who have had opportunity of seeing patients in the worst stages of pneumonia or of fever who can realise the disabilities these patients are under when being nursed in canvas or iron buildings on such a site. On the goldfields we have already had one hospital burnt down, a private institution; and probably it was a good thing there were not more than half-a-dozen patients in it at the time, all of whom were rescued. That is one great danger which always confronts the Kalgoorlie Hospital. With regard to its present situation, the land is of such value that if a central institution were erected in a place that would suit the public requirements better and be in the interests of the patients, we should be able to sell the land on which the present hospital stands, and sell the temporary buildings. I believe it is a 10-acre reserve; and if it were cut up and sold it would probably realise anything from £100 to £150 a quarter-acre lot; and I am not sure that Maritana street frontages would not realise more. Anyhow, it is worth anything between £6,000 and £9,000; and such amount would go a long way towards building such an institution as that to which my proposition refers. The bulk of the people who have interests on the goldfields have during the last two or three years been doing away with iron buildings and substituting structures of stone and brick. I think the time has arrived when the Government may well consider the question of erecting one central institution in that locality. I may say that my own constituents have repeatedly made appeals to have a hospital built in Boulder; and when I was before the electors I opposed that; and I believe a similar application was made by the constituents of the member for Hannans (Mr. Reside). They also wanted a hospital; and their request has been opposed. I believe from the quotations to be given to-night the necessity of falling into line with the motion I have tabled will be recognised. We have a large population, principally situated in Kalgoorlie and Boulder. I think it is estimated according to the last census at, approximately, 27,000 or 28,000. Moreover, one large central hospital could be controlled, not as it is now, by a resident medical officer, who by virtue of his

position probably does not always stand as the exponent of the interests of the public, but as the servant and representative of the Government; and it is felt that the system which is adopted in Perth, and which is adopted in all big cities the whole world over, should be adopted with a central hospital on these goldfields; that is, there should be an advisory board, and there should be specialists of every class. For small hospitals which might be erected in other centres here and there, we should not be able to command the services of specialists; but in one large central institution we could have obstetric and ophthalmic physicians and surgeons, just as we have in Perth. We should be able to have a laboratory and bacteriologist; and all these are indispensable for the wellbeing of the people for whom such institutions are originally established. For the information of the House I will quote some opinions. I received a wire from the fields to the effect that the doctors had agreed to the proposition. These are newspaper extracts, the doctors having been interviewed on the subject. Dr. Sawtell said:—

The reasonable solution was for the Government to build and subsidise a hospital in some quiet place, midway between the two towns, so that it would serve both. It should be under Government supervision—that was only reasonable where a subsidy was given—but direct control should be vested in a board of managers, on which the medical visiting staff should be represented. A resident medical officer should be appointed by the board, and all the local doctors empowered to send in patients and attend to them themselves. Specialists should also be appointed, a course which would uphold the prestige of the State. At the present time specialists in the other States were consulted by persons with—say, eye disease—but there were local men quite able to deal with the cases. Briefly, he would say the system should be: an efficient visiting staff, with a resident medical officer and a board of management. From the latter a house committee should be selected, which would administer the details of work ordered by the board of management. The site would have to be well chosen—a sanitary one, central, away from noise and disturbance, and accessible from both Kalgoorlie and the Boulder. It was quite time some such building were available for the goldfields public.

Then Dr. Bridgeford was consulted; and he said:—

The better idea was to have one central hospital, very much, as far as he remembered,

on the lines of the present Fremantle hospital. Such a one could be fitted with the most modern appliances, which were necessary for the modern treatment of disease. The larger number of cases to be treated would, he believed, come from the Boulder, because the mines were mostly there; but a position somewhere west of the railway line between Kallaroo and Golden Gate would be suitable for a site. The site would seem to be healthy and fairly quiet. A board of management would be in direct control of the institution; but of course the Government, when subsidising it, would need to have some say in the matter.

Then Dr. Richardson, a councillor of the municipality of Kalgoorlie, was consulted; and he said:—

He was a Kalgoorlie man, and had no interests or object to serve in advocating a central hospital, other than the general welfare of humanity. He had attended many cases out on the Golden Mile, and had always deplored the necessity of having to remove bad accidents into the Kalgoorlie Hospital. The idea of one well-equipped central hospital was much better than having a small one at each place. The present one might be used as a cottage hospital, as its site was good and convenient for fever and other cases where a short distance of travel was of little or no consequence. The new central hospital should be equipped with the most modern appliances and be under the control of an elective board of management, with a visiting staff. Specialists should have charge of the various classes of disease treated. He thought a site somewhere near the Golden Gate station would be most convenient.

Then the question was referred to Dr. Cuthbert, a Kalgoorlie doctor; and he said:—

Personally, it did not affect him; but a well-found and up-to-date central hospital was no doubt necessary.

MR. MONGER: What did Dr. O'Meehan say?

MR. HOPKINS: Dr. O'Meehan, being resident medical officer of the present Government institution in Kalgoorlie, I presume was not consulted. For my own part, I did not think it wise to consult a Government servant in this instance. I thought it better to take the outside and independent opinions of other doctors. Personally, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I do not want the hospital erected in my own constituency; because I do not consider there is a suitable site for it there. But a site should be chosen similar to that of the racecourse. The member for York (Mr. Monger) is familiar with our racecourse.

MR. MONGER: I have had the pleasure of seeing it.

MR. HOPKINS: I thought so. Those racecourses are now beautiful parks; and so a site could be chosen which now belongs to the Government, which would cost them nothing, which could be laid out and this institution built in the centre of it, where there would be a good airy space, and no such thing as a duststorm. And it is only those people who have seen the fever and pneumonia patients at their worst upon a dusty day in Kalgoorlie or Boulder, when the windows of the hospital have to be closed up and the patients are gasping for breath, who can truly feel the necessity for such a hospital site as I have described. And during this summer I had intended to bring before the House the necessity for the erection of punkahs in those institutions, so that patients might get a breath of air. But if a site such as I have spoken of were chosen, we should obviate all these difficulties. I allowed my first notice of motion to lapse, so that the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Johnson) might refer the matter to some doctors in this town. I have not asked him what he will do, but I believe both he and the member for Hannans (Mr. Reside) will support my proposition. I wish it to be distinctly understood that, in making this recommendation, I am doing it apart from all parochial sentiment and personal interests; and simply because I believe it is the best thing that can be done in the interests of humanity and of the sick and afflicted for whose special benefit these institutions should be erected.

On motion by Dr. O'CONNOR, debate adjourned.

TRADE STAMPS ABOLITION AND DISCOUNT STAMPS ISSUE BILL.

SECOND READING.

MR. F. McDONALD (Cockburn Sound): In moving the second reading, I shall as briefly as possible explain the several clauses. The Bill is a copy of the Act passed last year by the New Zealand Parliament; and it follows that Act word for word. We have copied several Acts of New Zealand; and I trust the House will pass the Bill during the present session, and will follow the lead of New Zealand in this matter also. The Bill is to prevent any company from

trading in stamps known as coupons. These stamps, which are usually issued by a company, are of the value of about three-eighths of a penny. To properly understand how the companies conduct their business, I will explain the system as briefly as possible. The idea at first was a good one; it was that of the trader giving discount on cash purchases. Every trader admits that it is a good thing to try and induce customers to pay cash for goods instead of opening credit accounts. A coupon company takes a shop and stocks it with fancy goods, very cheap articles, electroplate-ware, ornaments, glassware, and such like goods. Then we find, after the shop is stocked, the agent goes out and interviews certain tradespeople. The agent shows the trader that if he will take the coupons or stamps, the issuing of the stamps must increase his cash trade. He farther states that the trader whose business premises are opposite will not be given the same privilege of issuing these stamps. Take Hay street, Perth: probably one ironmonger is given an opportunity of issuing coupons to the public, in the same way a grocer gets the privilege of issuing coupons. There may be a trader next door who is not given the same privilege. Take, for instance, a firm like Sandover and Co.: they take these stamps and the coupon company guarantee that Stubbs and Co. shall not issue coupons. Of course, Sandover and Co. think this is a good method of increasing their cash turnover, and they take the coupons. They purchase a thousand coupons, for which they pay 25s., on the distinct understanding, as I have previously said, that a trader in the same street or block, in the same line of business, does not get the same privilege. In the first place, this means setting trader against trader. The agent goes on from trader to trader right through the town, and places the advantages of the coupons before the business people, inducing them if possible to take the stamps, so that those traders who do not take the coupons in the first instance, even if they are willing to do so after a certain time, find it impossible to obtain the coupons. The trader who has the coupons gives one stamp away for every sixpence spent by a cash customer. We find, from the experience of Victoria and New Zealand, where these companies started, that there

is an increase in the trader's cash turnover at first, but it is only a temporary increase, because the tradespeople who have not the coupons generally cut the prices to meet the other traders who have them. This causes fierce competition. Prices have been cut so fine since these coupon companies have existed in Victoria that there have been more bankruptcies amongst grocers during that period than there has been during any time except when the land boom burst in Victoria. The trader who has taken the coupons soon requires more, and that is the time the coupon company begin to get a profit on their transaction. After the agents for the company have canvassed a district and got as many traders to take their coupons as possible, the money rolls in. The customer of the trader, having saved 200 tickets, valued at 5s., takes the stamps to the shop which the coupon company have in any centre, and the customer is allowed to select any article marked up to the value of 5s. There is no option: the customer must take the article marked 5s., or go without. The company will not pay cash: they will not give goods in kind. The person who has saved the coupons must take some article from the shop, and these articles can be proved, at the present moment, to be marked 100 per cent. more value than the price of a similar article in any retail shop in Perth or Fremantle. There is a very objectionable phase in this question. The company receive 25s. from the trader for the thousand tickets which he has sold; and it has been proved that these thousand tickets are never redeemed. I will give an illustration of how the company make their profit. The result of a transaction of say a thousand tickets sold to a trader by the coupon company for 25s., when based on the average returns of the coupon companies elsewhere—and I have returns from Victoria for the Co-operative Company and the Bendigo Cash Coupon Company—is that the coupon companies do not redeem 36 per cent. of the coupons issued to the traders. Sixty-four per cent. of the tickets paid for by the trader in cash are either lost, destroyed, or not presented. That is a clear gain to the company on the thousand tickets of 16s. It has been proved in New Zealand and in Victoria by the Bendigo company, that

there are not more than 36 per cent. of the coupons presented. The trader who has not the coupons to give away looks elsewhere to try and get them from other companies, and thus other companies are formed. The Bendigo company was formed to counteract the effects of the Co-operative company of Victoria. It has been proved that this coupon system has disturbed trade in the towns where these companies exist: one trader is placed at the disadvantage of another. It may be asked, who benefits after all? The traders have had the coupons and have distributed them to their customers. Does the trader, the district, or the coupon company benefit? I think hon. members will see that it is the coupon company who reap the advantage, for the trader having taken these coupons into his business finds that his expenses are increased by about 5 per cent.

HON. F. H. PRESSE: It is a strange thing that they continue.

MR. McDONALD: I can show from reports that I have that it is really impossible, without legislation, for the traders to help themselves. The trader cannot afford to lose five per cent. Presently I will show—and I understand there are a number of business men in this House—that the gross profit of any storekeeper, say in the metropolitan area, is not more than $12\frac{1}{2}$ to 15 per cent. If we take the average at $12\frac{1}{2}$ to 15 per cent. as gross profit, the ordinary expenses amount to between 8 and 9 per cent., and the net profit from $3\frac{1}{2}$ of 6 per cent. In Victoria it is considered that the net profit is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. As I said previously, the trader finds his expenses increased by about five per cent., and he naturally looks to see how he can make up that five per cent. loss. There are only three ways open to him. One is to reduce his staff; another is to reduce the wages of his staff; and the third is to increase the price of goods to the public. The trader may adopt any of these three courses; but the last is the method most generally adopted, I think. The trader increases the price of his goods to the general public, in order to make up the loss; and the general public thus in fact pay for the coupons, although a great many people are under the impression that they receive them as a free gift from the trader. Having described the system

adopted by the coupon companies, I say it is necessary that this State should, as the other States are doing or have done, devise some measure whereby the purchaser shall receive the benefit of his cash purchase. The means which I suggest is, that the cash purchaser should receive something in the way of a bonus or discount. I am in a position to affirm that the traders of this State have given, and do at the present time give, discounts to their cash customers. It has been stated by the representatives of the coupon company that such is not the case; but, as a trader, I can state that discounts are given to cash customers. The coupon company are nothing more nor less than middlemen: they take more than three-fourths of the profits of the trader. The action of the New Zealand Government and the Tasmanian Government is, in my opinion, to be commended. Last month a Bill was introduced into the Tasmanian Parliament to repeal an Act (passed last year) making the issue of coupons illegal; and the repeal Bill was rejected by 17 votes to 7. If the Government issue discount stamps, as proposed by Clause 3 of this Bill, a way out of the difficulty would be found; and I think all traders in this State would be satisfied with the provision, because under it they would all be on the same footing. The Government, I take it, would issue stamps in the same way as the New Zealand Government, at the face value of one farthing, and these stamps would be redeemable at any post office in amounts of not less than 1s. Since the New Zealand Government issued these discount stamps, the people there get the benefit of any stamps not redeemed; and this means a profit of 64 per cent. on the total amount of stamps issued. I am glad that the goldfields members are with me in this matter, since they object to middlemen; and the coupon company are nothing but middlemen.

MR. GEORGE: A very bad type of middlemen, too.

Several MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. McDONALD: Yes; a very bad type. The middleman is practically a man who does nothing; and the coupon company do nothing after they have started their business, the work of a month or two.

MR. GEORGE: Yes; they "do" the public.

MR. McDONALD: I think we are all agreed on that point. There is another aspect in which a trader may look at the question. These companies may fairly be termed sleeping partners in any business which distributes their coupons. There is in this State at the present time a trader who, when in Broken Hill, paid the Co-operative Coupon Company as much as £108 per month. I think that any partner would be very glad to take a share in a business, and draw such a monthly dividend in return for doing practically nothing. I am pleased to note that in all the States of Australia this matter has received or is receiving attention at the hands of the Legislatures. In New South Wales and Queensland Bills have been introduced; in South Australia a measure has passed its second reading; and in Victoria a Bill, practically the same as I am introducing, has passed into law. I trust that Western Australia will not fall behind, but will keep in line with the other States in this respect. Another aspect of the question is that these coupon companies, in issuing coupons, practically act as bankers. They, in fact, issue notes supposed to be redeemable on presentation at their office; but there is no security to the Government that the companies are in a position to redeem the coupons when presented. In Victoria a poll of all the traders throughout the State was taken on this coupon question; and from sworn evidence we know that 1900 traders voted for the abolition of the system. Even of those traders who distributed coupons, 779 voted for the immediate abolition of the system. This Parliament has decided that such things as sweeps and lotteries shall not be permitted. I claim that the coupon company comes within that prohibition, the coupon system being nothing less than a system of gambling. During this week and last week, petitions totalling over 20,000 signatures, in favour of the Bill which I have the honour to introduce, have been presented to the House. I will quote portions of the evidence brought before the Royal Commission which sat in Victoria last year to inquire into the coupon system. The report states:

The discount given by the issue of coupons is not confined to cash purchases, but has also

been given to an increasing extent on goods sold upon credit.

Now, the coupon companies say that they make an agreement with every trader whom they supply not to issue coupons to credit customers. The report farther says:

It is evident that neither the total volume of trade, nor the aggregate amount of cash received by traders, can be increased by the issue of coupons; the only result being to divert a certain portion of the cash trade from the trader who cannot give coupons to the trader who does. . . . Witnesses acknowledge that the issue of the coupons being restricted to certain traders, creates a monopoly in favour of such traders. . . . Such monopoly is highly detrimental to the interests of other traders, and, if continued, must be ruinous to them.

It is claimed by those of us who oppose the coupon system that its effect is to create a monopoly for certain traders, and that this monopoly is highly detrimental to other traders, and particularly to the smaller traders. We have at the present time in this State a class of traders second to none in Australia; and I think it would be a great shame to set one section of them against the other by allowing this pernicious system to come into operation. The report farther states that one coupon company had, between August, 1898, and October, 1899, issued 19,516,516 coupons, and had redeemed—this is where the coupon companies make their profit—during the same time only 3,183,850 coupons, leaving an unredeemed balance of over 11½ million coupons. This unredeemed balance represents a cash value of £14,165 19s. 1d. The coupon company thus had in their hands, as the result of about one year's transactions, an amount of over £14,000, belonging to the public of Victoria. Surely the House does not desire to see the large number of small traders in business at the present time done away with? Instead of having practically two or three firms doing all the business of the State, we can have 50 or 60 or 100 smaller traders, doing fairly well; and that is decidedly beneficial to the community in consequence of the competition resulting. The trader, no doubt, is a servant of the public. I will not weary the House by reading the report of the States that have passed Bills, but I understand that a great number of the United States have passed

measures more drastic than this Bill, which I hope to see passed into law in this State. We find that measures were passed in Maryland, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Virginia, and a number of States in America, and also New Zealand and Tasmania, and a number in Australia. I would like to read the report of the Bendigo Cash Coupon Company, Limited, which we can go upon for reliable information, because the Co-operative Company and the Federal Company in Victoria have suppressed certain information which Mr. Peacock, the Premier of Victoria, wanted to get at. Some of the evidence here goes to prove that all the information which was desired could not be obtained. This is the sworn balance-sheet of the Bendigo Cash Coupon Company, and it states:—

The total number of coupons issued amount to 2,447,320, and the total redeemed to date 879,665, being not quite 36 per cent. of the issue. As the experience of the redemptions has now extended over a period of nearly seven months, it is quite evident that a very large profit is accumulating in the coupon redemption account, which now stands in the society's books at £1,567 15s. 10d. [that is for the half-year], and while this cannot be drawn against, the possession of a large interest-bearing cash reserve augurs well for future distributions. The balance at credit of profit and loss account amounts to £215 8s.

I do not think it necessary for me to say much more. Members will feel that the system existing is a wrong one, that it is pernicious, and that it annoys the traders and the public. I have a mass of information here, and could speak at length on the subject, but I will simply move that this Bill be now read a second time.

MR. QUINLAN (Toodvay): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate. May I be permitted to say a number of members are absent. There is a petition on this question. [Several interjections.] I am quite prepared to go on if the House wish, but I was asked to move the adjournment.

MR. W. D. JOHNSON (Kalgoorlie): I shall not take up much time in supporting the second reading of this Bill, but I feel that a little more should be said about this coupon system. The member for Cockburn Sound (Mr. McDonald) has given us the opposition side as it were from the traders' point of view. I attended one of the first meetings held in Western Australia in opposition to

this coupon system ; at any rate, one of first held on the goldfields. We went into it there, and going on the experience we had in the other States we decided to oppose the introduction of the coupon system. We were supported very fortunately by the rivalry of two companies. We had the Federal Coupon Company established in Kalgoorlie at that time ; but, recognising the great profits that could be made out of the system, a small syndicate decided to start a company of their own and ran coupons themselves. While these two companies were having a little competition, the one with the other, the people rose up and decided they would have nothing to do with either ; with the result that public meetings were held, and in every case the people were unanimous in denouncing the coupon system. Again, to-night I had the honour of presenting a petition from the people of the eastern goldfields, signed by close on 12,000 people. However, I do not think it necessary to go into detail and point out the evil effects this coupon system has on the country, considering the people are unanimous that they do not want it. But I would just like to point out the arguments used by those running the coupons as to why they should be allowed to use them. They say it increases the cash trade. It does to a certain extent, but why I object to their issuing coupons to increase the cash trade is this : Take the goldfields for instance. The great portion of our trade is a cash trade. Take the case of a trader who has a turnover of £100 in cash ; that is, before the issue of the coupons. If he issues coupons they increase his trade by another £50, and the coupon company get their 5 per cent. on the £150, and not only on the £50 increase they have brought to the trader. Then, again, they say the system encourages thrift to the workers. We all think the workers could be a little more thrifty ; but it is hard that the workers in studying thrift should have to practically keep a company such as the coupon company. The coupon company get all the profits, and the people get none. They sell these coupons to the traders at so much per 100, and get the cash immediately the coupons are issued, and when they get the cash they immediately stock their shop. The only cash

they put into the system is for the printing of the tickets. There are several other points I could refer to, but I do not think it necessary to do so. I think the House are unanimous in their desire to put down this system, therefore I shall simply support the second reading, and I intend, when the Bill goes into Committee, to oppose the nationalisation of this system. If it is a bad system for the people, it is a bad system for the Government to take up, and I do not think the member for Cockburn Sound was right in adding these clauses to the Bill, to make it legal for the Government to issue coupons. When the Bill gets into Committee, I shall move that these clauses be struck out.

Mr. W. F. SAYER (Claremont) : It seems to me this is a Bill which should be supported ; but with regard to what I may call the second part of the Bill (Clause 5), dealing with discount stamps, I scarcely follow the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Johnson) in calling the discount stamps a bad system. It seems to me to be a convenient method of granting discount. The measure enacts that, in order to provide a simple means for granting discount for cash purchases, the Colonial Treasurer may issue stamps, to be called discount stamps, and when the purchasers of goods have received a certain number of discount stamps they can cash them at a post office. I believe that when they have collected stamps to the amount of 1s. they can cash them ; so the effect is that these discount stamps are turned again into cash, and the cash can find its way back again to the tradesman for the purchase of other necessities the consumers are able to buy through their thrift in paying cash for their original purchases. I see no harm in that. It is to my mind a good thing to encourage the payment of cash for the necessities of life, and if by establishing this system of discount stamps you can take a step towards the encouragement of cash payments, then I think it is an advantageous thing to bring about. It is a convenient method to enable the consumer to receive his discount, and when he has an amount in hand sufficient to make further purchases he turns his coupons into cash and buys again from the tradesman. If coupons are not cashed by the purchasers, the State will have the

benefit of those coupons that are thrown on one side, and lost by those who have received them. Therefore, I am not altogether in agreement, in fact I am inclined to hold a contrary view, with the member for Kalgoorlie as to the second part, which appears to me in the words of the Bill to provide a simple means of granting discount for cash purchases. With regard to the early part of the Bill, which relates to what is termed, I believe, the trading stamp system, it seems to me that system is objectionable, because these coupon companies apparently come between the trader and the consumer and collect the discount themselves. That seems to be the object of these discount companies. No doubt in exchange for this discount they give a consumer some article—a necklace or nicknack which probably the consumer has little need of, and the consumer seems to imagine he has got something for nothing—but by the system proposed to be introduced he will get coin of the realm representing the amount of his discount, if he chooses to collect it. The coupon company, on the other hand, seem to me to be formed to trade upon the thrift of the people. They seem to be somewhat in the position of birds of prey. They profess to encourage thrift and persuade persons to pay discount, but they themselves collect the discount and pay dividends to their shareholders out of this discount, which clearly does not find its way into the hands of the consumer.

MR. JOHNSON: There are no shareholders.

MR. SAYER: There is no reason why these coupon companies should not be limited liability companies.

MR. HOPKINS: They are only private firms. They are not incorporated.

MR. SAYER: It seems to me that there is a large profit to be derived from these discounts, and I think if we allow the idea to be encouraged it may be widely extended. For that reason, I think in the interests of the community we should be well advised if we put a stop to the system before it becomes more extensive. I am therefore inclined to support the Bill, because the system against which we are contending is opposed to a very great virtue, the thrift of the consumer who is prepared to pay cash for his commodities.

MR. T. F. QUINLAN (Toodyay): I had intended to move the adjournment of this debate at the request of some hon. members who have had occasion to go away to a ceremony which takes place this evening; and at their request only, because I am so confident of the unanimity of the House in respect to this Bill, that their presence is scarcely necessary. Suffice it to say, however, in the absence of one member in particular, the member for Perth (Mr. Wilson), that he has petitions both for and against the Bill; but I am open to say that I think he also is entirely with us in favour of the measure; and therefore, so as not to delay the business of the House, I shall offer my support to the Bill as introduced.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

TOTALISATOR ACT REPEAL BILL.

SECOND READING.

MR. F. C. MONGER (York): In moving that this Bill be read a second time, I wish in the first place to say I have no desire to show any ill-feeling towards those who opposed me on a somewhat similar measure; but I am desirous of asking hon. members to show their consistency, and refuse to tolerate the continuance in the statute book in West Australia of any laws which have for their object the regulation of gambling. The Act which I propose to repeal is a very short one—the Totalisator Act of 1883; and I wish hon. members would consider its wording, so as to judge whether such privileges and advantages should be given to one particular institution as are thereby conferred. The Act reads:—

That from and after the passing of this Act it shall be lawful for any *bona fide* club established for the purpose of promoting horse-racing, and for any person or persons duly authorised by any such club, to have, use, and play with on the racecourse of such club, during the days of any race meeting, the instrument known as the totalisator.

There was later a farther amendment of that Act, which is now in operation, reading:

It shall be lawful for the Colonial Treasurer—

I am sorry that Minister is always away when those particular questions are dis-

cussed in which he has more interest than any other member—

It shall be lawful for the Colonial Treasurer to authorise any club or company incorporated or otherwise registered by the Western Australian Turf Club, to have, use and play with on the racecourse of such club or company the instrument known as the totalisator, and such authority shall constitute such club or company a *bona fide* club within the meaning of the Totalisator Act of 1883.

Those are the Acts which at the present moment I am desirous of seeing repealed; and I shall simply ask the representatives of the Government who are present this evening to fall in with the views expressed by their leader only a few evenings ago, when he distinctly stated it was the desire of the Government to see nothing in the statutes of Western Australia which, in any shape or form, would legalise gambling. I say it is as much gambling to put your money on a tote as it is to put it on one of Adams's or Charles's sweeps. We are not allowed to run sweeps or consultations; but we are allowed to run totalisators. I should like to bring under the notice of hon. members that in the two greatest States of Australasia, this law does not exist. I refer to Victoria and New South Wales. And I contend—and I think with a certain amount of justice—that if our two most prominent States refuse to recognise the use of the totalisator, it is only fair that we in the smaller States, which are passing legislation of a most peculiar description—legislation based on the very highest moral ideas, no doubt—should follow the example of our bigger sister States, and refuse to legalise that which is not recognised by them. I beg to move the second reading of a Bill to repeal the Totalisator Act of 1883.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS (Boulder): I move that the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

Question—that the Bill be read a second time—put, and a division taken.

POINT OF ORDER.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS: When an hon. member votes No, is he not obliged to sit with the Noes on a division?

THE SPEAKER: Yes; when he has called out "No."

MR. HOPKINS: Perhaps such hon. members will cross the floor before it is necessary to name them.

MR. W. J. GEORGE: I do not know whether the hon. member refers to me. I sang out "No" against the motion for adjournment; but I freely confess that I do not know how I am voting now. I am only "sticking to the crowd."

THE SPEAKER: The question is that the Bill be read a second time.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	...	...	...	18
Noes	...	...	...	10

Majority for ... 8

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Daglish
Mr. Ewing	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Hastie
Mr. George	Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Hicks	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Kingsmill
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Monger	Mr. Reid
Mr. O'Connor	Mr. Sayer
Mr. Phillips	Mr. Wallace (Teller).
Mr. Pigott	
Mr. Quinlan	
Mr. Rason	
Mr. Smith	
Mr. Stone	
Mr. Taylor	
Mr. Yelverton	
Mr. Higham (Teller).	

MR. J. M. HOPKINS: Do I understand the Colonial Treasurer has voted?

THE SPEAKER: No; he has not.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION — MIDLAND RAILWAY, INQUIRY TO BE JOINT.

Message from the Legislative Council considered, requesting concurrence in the following resolution:—

That a joint select committee of both Houses of Parliament be appointed to inquire into and report upon—1. The nature of existing agreements between the Midland Railway Company and the Government. 2. The present position of the Company. 3. The manner in which the traffic over the line is conducted. 4. The method of inspection and upkeep of the permanent way. 5. Generally.

DR. O'CONNOR (Moore): The motion I have to propose is one that I think will meet, excepting one or two, with the unanimous approval of the House. The Premier informed us the other night that negotiations were pending with the Midland Railway Company, but I understand that negotiations have been pending for the last ten years in regard to this railway company and we never seem to get any

arther. This is a matter of very great urgency. A select committee has been appointed by the Legislative Council, and we are asked to appoint a select committee to confer with them. Session after session this Midland Railway difficulty has been brought up in the House, and we never seem to get any nearer to a conclusion. Questions are asked and motions moved, but we get no farther. My reason for proposing that a select committee be appointed to act with members of another place is that we may inquire into the agreements. There are many reasons I could give for the appointment of this committee, but there are other urgent matters on the Notice Paper to-night, therefore, I do not intend to detain members more than a few minutes. This railway line runs through an enormous extent of country between Midland Junction and Geraldton, and 300,000 acres of land held by the Midland Company are locked up. The land is not only not used by them, but they will not sell it at a reasonable price, nor will they lease it at a reasonable price. While the Government lease land at £1 per thousand acres, the Midland Company charge £3 per thousand acres, and people who have spent money in improvements have no remedy against the company; they are turned out at a month's notice. Farmers and settlers along the line who rent land from the company are compelled to sell under a forced sale, therefore at a great loss. This line connects the Northern portion of this State with the South, and it will open up a large tract of land. There is one clause in the original agreement with this company that says that the Company are put to introduce 5,000 immigrants, and put them on the soil. They have not done anything of the kind, but have blocked the opening up of the land. Constant complaints are received in connection with railway facilities. Only last week complaints were sent in by Mr. Phillips and Mr. Stone, members of this House, and by members of another place. The passenger compartments are packed with whites, blacks, and half-castes, and this is a constant occurrence. The speed of the trains is not kept up. Sometimes the trains travel at a very fast rate, but generally speaking they travel at 10 or 12 miles an hour, although they are supposed to

travel 20 miles an hour. Sometimes the passengers are lucky to get to their destination at all. The Premier, I believe, intends to oppose the appointment of this joint select committee; but at the same time the opposition will be rather useless, because if the motion be not carried here to-night, the Legislative Council will appoint a select committee and go into the matter, and defeat the Premier's plan. Mr. Dartnall has sent in a report on this line, and I would like to give one or two of his statements. He says that the line from Midland Junction, especially through the swampy country, is safe for trains travelling at the ordinary rate of speed, and if they go at anything above the ordinary speed it is not safe. Sleepers along the line are eaten in many places by the white ants. In some places twenty sleepers to the mile should be replaced. The bridges, the cattle-pits, the culverts, and especially the Irwin bridge, are unsafe. The station buildings are in a bad state. The line has been built for light traffic, and it is not fit for the type of engines in use; especially are the bridges unfit for such locomotives. Mr. Rotheram says that the horse-boxes are not safe. The line has only been built for light traffic; the wheels are small, and the journals are only No. 6. I think it is unnecessary for me to make any further remarks, as a majority of the members of the House are in favour of the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the agreements with this company and find out exactly how we stand. I move that a committee be appointed to act with the committee appointed by the Legislative Council.

MR. M. H. JACOBY (Swan): I beg to second the motion. I do not think it is necessary for us to debate the matter at any great length, because the opinion of the House is pretty well settled that both the equipment and the whole of the affairs connected with the Midland Company are in an unsatisfactory condition. Those who have business to do with the company, as traders, who have goods to send over that line and those who have to travel over it, find that they are exceedingly badly treated. I have had complaints from the farmers at Chittering that they find it difficult to get their goods away. It

is almost impossible to get trucks, and it is difficult, when they have got the trucks to get them loaded. The settlers are considering whether it would not be better to revert to the system in vogue in the old days and cart their stuff to Perth. Complaints are frequently received from passengers who have to travel over the line. The accommodation is ancient, and I am sure members will appoint a select committee which, instead of hampering the negotiations, will be of considerable assistance to the Government.

MR. P. STONE (Greenough): I have much pleasure in supporting the motion. This is a matter that has given the public a lot of worry and trouble for years past. The company have not treated the public fairly in any way, which is well known by those who have to use the line and travel over it. The land is locked up so that it cannot be sold, and in this way the North is separated from the South to a great extent. I have pleasure in supporting the appointment of a joint select committee to inquire into the particulars of the agreements and the relations of the company to the public, so that we may try and have the agreements carried out in a proper manner.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Kingsmill): Before the motion is put, I just want to utter one word of protest. It has been pointed out by members before in this House that the negotiations are likely to be hampered—

MR. STONE: They have been going on for years.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: By the appointment of a select committee. That statement has been made—

MR. STONE: Many times.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: By the hon. gentleman who is carrying on the negotiations; but on the other hand we have been informed by the member for the Swan (Mr. Jacoby), who no doubt has good grounds for saying what he did, that these negotiations will not be hampered, but rather be aided by the course which the House is evidently in a mood to take. I suppose all hon. members know which of the two authorities should be in the better position to inform them correctly as to the probable effect of the passing of the motion—the member for the Swan or the

Premier. For my own part, I believe the appointment of this joint select committee will have a distinctly prejudicial effect on the course of negotiations; and for that reason I am not prepared to support the motion. But, even if the effect were not likely to be prejudicial, I should still have to point out that the motion is practically an absurd one. Let hon. members look at paragraph 2 of it, and ask themselves by what law this House arrogates to itself the right to inquire into the position of the Midland Company. What has this House to do with the position of the company?

MR. JACOBY: Strike that out. I do not agree with that.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not propose to move any amendment, as this would only hamper the mover of the motion more; because I presume that if an amendment were made, a Message would have to be sent back to the Legislative Council and their concurrence desired in such amendment. This would involve the necessity of re-electing a committee, and thus lead to a great deal of trouble. Suffice it to say that I wish—as no doubt the Premier if present would have wished—to enter a protest against the course which the House is evidently desirous of adopting. Having done so, I have performed my duty and can content myself with simply opposing the motion.

MR. STONE: We want to help the Government.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH (Wellington): It was not my intention to speak on this matter at all; but in view of the remarks of the Minister for Works I desire to say a few words. I consider that the country has a very considerable interest in the operations of the Midland Company, since the State is guarantor for more than £500,000 owing by that company. If, therefore, the rolling-stock and the rails and sleepers on the Midland line are being allowed to run down, it is a matter for inquiry. In view of the evidence of Mr. Dartnall and the Locomotive Engineer, quoted by the member for the Moore (Dr. O'Connor), I say it is very necessary that the House should take an early opportunity of seeing how matters actually do stand.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Is not that rather under paragraph 3?

MR. R. D. HUTCHINSON (Geraldton): Notwithstanding the protest of the Minister for Works, I shall support the motion before the House.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Oh; I expected you would!

MR. HUTCHINSON: When the Minister rose I expected we should hear something different from what we did hear. I thought we should have had some reasonable grounds for not adopting the motion; but all we got was a statement that the House had no right to interfere with the affairs of the company in view of the negotiations pending. An hon. member has interjected that negotiations have been pending for years past; and I say that if we let slip this opportunity of inquiring as to whether the company are adhering to their agreement or not, negotiations of the same kind may be pending for years and years to come. Everyone who travels over the Midland line or has business in connection with the line, knows that for a very considerable time past the company have not been carrying out the conditions of their agreement with the Government. Clause 10 of the agreement provides that the condition of the line and rolling-stock is to be at least equal to that obtaining on the Eastern railway. Any man who, after travelling over the Midland line, says that the Midland rolling-stock is equal to that on the Eastern railway or any other Government railway of this State, is either a very poor judge of railway matters, or else a better friend of the Midland Company than he is of his country. It has been said, and truly, in another place, that on more than one occasion the Midland Company has actually attached an explosives van to a passenger train. All the trains now running over the Midland line, except those which happen to convey the Governor or members of the Ministry, are mixed trains; that is to say, they convey both passengers and goods. Now it is against the regulations of the Government railways to carry explosives on passenger or mixed trains. Notwithstanding the regulations, the Midland Company do as I have said. If it be necessary, for the safety of passengers, to prohibit the carrying of explosives on Government passenger trains, then it is equally necessary to prohibit the carriage of explosives on the Midland

Company's passenger trains, which are, moreover, subject to the same conditions and regulations as the Government trains. However, this sort of thing does go on. Not 12 months ago I was travelling over the line, and from Watheroo to Dongarra one of the boxes of the explosives van was on fire all the way. It was not until I strongly protested to the guard that he would consent to unhitch the explosives van and leave it at Dongarra until the next day. That kind of thing takes place on the Midland line. Of course, it would not be tolerated on the Government line. Then there is the question of the accommodation of passengers. On almost every train from the Murchison we see women and children crowded together, frequently over-crowded, and having to put up with accommodation that would not be tolerated on a Government line for a single week. No lavatory cars are provided; although they ought to be provided, and are provided on the Eastern railway. The only occasions when lavatory cars run over the Midland line are those when the Government take pity on the people at the other end, and allow the Government lavatory cars to go on. Under such circumstances the Midland people consider passengers under an obligation because the cars are run, notwithstanding that the fares charged over the Midland line for very poor accommodation are the same as those charged by the Government for infinitely better accommodation. I intend to support the appointment of the select committee, and I hope that the committee will proceed with its work and prove to the House and to the country that the Midland Company are not carrying out their obligations.

MR. F. WALLACE (Mt. Magnet): I intend to support the motion as it appears on the Notice Paper. I regret that the conditions obtaining on the Midland line should warrant such action being taken. I have learned more this evening from the member for Geraldton (Mr. Hutchinson) as to the condition of affairs on the Midland line than I have previously learned, notwithstanding the fact that I have travelled over the line for the last five years. It is sufficient for anyone, I should think, to hear that explosives are carried on a passenger train. We know that hot boxes occur

on every line; but the risk of a hot box on an ordinary carriage is not so great, I contend, as in connection with an explosives van. The instances given by the member for Geraldton actually show that the lives of thousands have been in jeopardy, unknown to themselves, for years past. Had I been seised of the facts which the hon. member has brought to the attention of the House this evening, I would not for one moment have been the friend of the Midland Company. I have always contended that I have received equally bad treatment on the Government railway line from Geraldton to Cue, as on the Midland line. I have never defended the Midland Company except as a railway company: I have always condemned them because of their policy of locking up their lands. I find now, however, from the statement of the member for Geraldton, the risks which we have been running. I also gather a great deal of information from the statements of the member for the Moore (Dr. O'Connor), which information, strangely enough, has not been given to this House before, though we were informed that an inspector had been sent along the line and had tested it so many hundred times between Midland Junction and Walk-away. At any rate, I have no recollection of the presentation of that inspector's report.

MEMBER: It was presented to the Upper House.

MR. WALLACE: It will be recognised at once that there must be many members quite in the dark as to the actual state of affairs on the Midland line. As regards the accommodation provided by the company, it is a fact that until very recently there was no better accommodation on the Government line between Geraldton and Cue. The member for Geraldton has pointed out that it is only on the occasions when the Government lend to this company lavatory cars, that the accommodation on the Midland line is good. This explains to me how it has come about that in travelling from here to Cue, I did not experience the inconvenience the member for Geraldton has referred to. I have not been in the same position to ascertain the actual state of affairs on the Midland line, as other members who have spoken previously. I agree with the Minister

for Works that it does seem a little hard on the Government to have to sanction Clause 2 of the Message from the Upper House; but it is not a matter that we should quibble over. The main intention is to investigate the whole of the company's affairs, in their relation to the Government of this State, with a view, not of crushing the company, but of seeing that the people get some consideration in return for the rights and concessions given by the Government many years ago to the company. The company have been spoon-fed by the past Administration, and now the country demands that the valuable agricultural lands locked up by the Midland Company shall be thrown open for selection. We have people wanting land; and it is the duty of the Government to assist in every way to get those people the right to go on the Midland Company's land under better conditions than those on which the company are prepared to sell.

MR. HUTCHINSON: The company should carry out their agreement.

MR. WALLACE: I shall certainly support the motion.

MR. F. CONNOR (East Kimberley): I have pleasure in supporting the motion. It came to me as a surprise to hear the Minister for Works say that he would oppose it. He gave us no reason for his opposition; but I will give my reason for my support. My reason is that the administration of this company has been a sore in connection with the affairs of the State for the last ten years. The facilities and rights granted to the Midland Company are such as should not have been granted by any Government. I am ready to admit that; although I supported the Government which granted these rights and facilities. I say they had no right to grant them. [MINISTERIAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] I go so far. But I ask, where is the consistency of the hon. gentleman who now sits opposite me as Minister for Works, controlling the affairs of the country? Where does his consistency come in? Does he mean to say that he intends to support a land-grant system, or, as I may say, a land-grab system?

LABOUR MEMBERS: Not if we know it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I gave an explanation; but I am afraid the hon. member does not understand it.

MR. CONNOR: I do not understand it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is not my fault.

MR. CONNOR: It is not my fault either. It may be my misfortune; but it is not my fault. I cannot understand why any member of the Government should oppose the motion; because when the members of the present Government sat on this side of the House, the Midland railway afforded them a stock argument against the late Government, and they made every possible use of it. Now, however, when they are in a position of responsibility, they take another stand, and say they will vote against this motion for an inquiry. The only motive of the inquiry is to ascertain what are the rights and wrongs of the case, and whether the Midland Company shall continue to enjoy privileges which, in my opinion, they enjoy unjustly at the present time. The matter is as clear to my mind as it can be. Of course the Minister for Works is very sorry that I cannot grasp his explanation. I will not be so rude as to say that he does not understand the position, because I think he does understand it. By the first paragraph of the Message we are asked to inquire into the nature of existing agreements between the Midland Company and the State. I do not see why anyone should object to that. The agreements, in my opinion, have been bad; and the results of them certainly have been very bad for this country. [MR. STONE: Worse!] A member says, "Worse." Why should we object to inquire into those facts?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: Because you will find them worse still after you inquire.

MR. JACOBY: Let us know the worst!

MR. CONNOR: I say let us inquire.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: Oh, inquire by all means!

MR. CONNOR: I am sorry to detain the House by pausing; but hon. members opposite seem inclined to block the debate. I say, inquire; and I say to those members who now occupy the Treasury benches—though they are looking more contented than they were when they sat here [laughter]: I am inclined to think that even in respect of avoirdupois they are now much more important—
[Interjections and laughter.] Of course,

really they are getting fatter. Why should they object to an inquiry such as this?

MEMBER: He (the Minister for Works) does not object to an inquiry.

MR. F. CONNOR: I think he said he would oppose the motion. (To the Minister for Works): You said you would oppose this, did you not?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did.

MR. CONNOR: I do not want an explanation.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I know you do not want an explanation.

MR. CONNOR: Explanations are nasty. They come back sometimes. As to the position of the company it has stood at this for a very considerable time. They have, as per agreement with the Government of this State, some enormous extent of land which they will not sell at a fair price and which the people who want to go on this land to settle it require. The people say, "We cannot afford to pay the price you ask," and the company say, "We will not sell it." To keep the company in the position they hold, the Government of this State are responsible, I believe, for £500,000. Why put them in a position to say to the people of this State, "We have this land; we own it; and we will not give it to you except at a price which suits us." Are the Government of this State, in the person of the Minister for Works, to say, "We will oppose a motion such as this, to ventilate this question, and to see whether or not this company should continue to own and hold that land unfairly and unjustly?" Now as to the method of inspection and upkeep of the permanent way. I wish to take this opportunity of saying the gentleman in charge of the Midland Railway Company in Western Australia at present is a most capable man. I think he is a credit to the company he is in charge of, and that he is an example to the people whom we have in charge of our Government railways. I wish those people would take that example and work their business as he works the business he is in charge of. If they did that it would be of great advantage to this country. I do not want to dilate at any great extent upon this question, and I do not want to be personal, but I think it unfortunate that the Government have been placed in this position by the Minister

for Works saying he would object to this proposal. In my opinion that was ill-judged. I am perfectly certain that when it comes to a division—and I hope it will come to a division, if any hon. member thinks the present state of affairs is not right—an overwhelming majority will prove to the House it is time something was done to remove this incubus which rests on the State—the Midland Railway.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Kingsmill): I would like to explain, if such a thing be possible, to the member for East Kimberley (Mr. F. Connor) exactly the position I took up when I spoke, and I hope that hon. member, and other hon. members, too, will admit I do not wish to shift my position one inch. What I said was not that I object to the objects of this inquiry, but I object to the inquiry because I think at this time it is most inopportune. That is the reason I objected; and, to return the compliment, I say "I will not accuse the hon. member of not knowing, because I think he did know, and that is the worst phase of it." But I regret to say the hon. member has shown lately that he is liable and willing to misunderstand a subject for the purpose of making some political point.

MR. M. H. JACOBY (Swan): The hon. member is introducing fresh matter.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member is right in making an explanation, but I do not think he should go beyond that.

MR. F. CONNOR: This is an attack upon me personally. [General laughter.]

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: As I say—I would like to impress this upon the hon. member and upon this House—my object in opposing this motion or my reason for opposing it is not because I do not think this question should be inquired into, but simply because, as I stated at first, I consider the inquiry taking place at the present time would be most inopportune, and would be likely to be prejudicial to the negotiations which are being carried on.

MR. JACOBY: We think it would help you.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Exactly. That is a difference of opinion, and of course every man has a right to his opinion, although even some members of this House think he has not. Having made that explanation, I hope now the

member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) understands it, though I am afraid I cannot get an admission from him.

MR. CONNOR: No. I admit I am in a fog, but the explanation seems to make it worse.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: That being the case, I feel I am wasting the time of the House and my own time in endeavouring to explain to the hon. member; but I hope other members understand the position I have taken up.

MR. CONNOR: You vote upon it and you will see; you will find by the vote.

MR. T. F. QUINLAN (Toodyay): I have much pleasure in supporting the motion, although I have one in my name at a later stage which I think is more precipitate than this proposal. I thought the motion dealt with on a former occasion would have terminated the whole trouble between the Midland Railway and the Government. However, there seems to be a desire on the part of another place to have a select committee. In their wisdom they have thought fit to appoint one, and it is the wish of some members here that the same course should be adopted, and we should be wise in joining with them in appointing such committee. I have no reason to believe for a moment that the Minister for Works (Hon. W. Kingsmill) is acting on his own responsibility; but I believe he is acting on behalf of the Premier (Hon. G. Leake), who is absent.

MR. CONNOR: No; the Colonial Treasurer.

MR. QUINLAN: It has been argued that the passing of the motion would interfere with negotiations going on at the present time. I hold a contrary view to that, and I venture to say that there is no man who has had any business training at all who will not agree with me that the inquiry will in no way interfere with negotiations. We have the thick end of the stick. We know the manner in which we have been treated by this company. We know we saved them from bankruptcy twice, and when I read a few lines from Clause 10, that will, I think, be sufficient to terminate the contract once and for all. If I had the power to-day, I am confident as to what step I should take, and it would be to put an

end to this trouble which we have had so long and so many years before us.

MR. CONNOR: It is stopping the development of the country.

MR. QUINLAN: I need only read Clause 10, which in my opinion is sufficient to terminate the contract:—

The contractor will lay out, construct, and equip the railway upon the same gauge as the Eastern Railway, with sufficient plant and rolling-stock for the efficient working of the same. And the whole of the permanent way plant and rolling-stock used in the construction, equipment, maintenance and working of the railway shall be at least equal to that in use by the Government and be subject to the approval of the Commissioner.

I am not going to lay blame on the present Commissioner or the present Government, because the trouble has been going on for a very long time. Still, that does not make the case any better. We have suffered long enough. We have given the company every opportunity, but they have screwed everyone they could along that line. They have increased their rent from last year from £1 to £2, and they are going to increase it to £3 per 1,000 acres. This is the gratitude we are receiving for saving them from the Bankruptcy Court. They have unquestionably treated us with harshness in every possible manner. I believe this committee will consist of men who can be relied on to give a just verdict. One knows the treatment received from the company by such hon. members as have given evidence in this House, such as the member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Wallace), the member for Cue (The Colonial Treasurer), the member for Geraldton (Mr. R. D. Hutchinson), the member for Northampton (Mr. Nanson), the member for Greenough (Mr. P. Stone). In fact I may say almost any person who has had to travel on that line knows the treatment experienced. The company provide second, or you might call them third rate carriages, and there is no accommodation. They have no accommodation at all for women; they have no lavatories for women. The whole thing is disgraceful, and I hope the Committee will investigate this thing and sift it to the bottom. As far as the negotiations between the Government and the company are concerned, I have said over and over again, and I have stated on the public platform, that I am prepared to give the company £100,000

more than the thing is actually worth, or even £200,000, and get rid of them. They are like bad tenants; the sooner they are got rid of the better. I hope the House will support the motion, and I can only attribute the position of the Minister for Works to instructions from the Premier, who has not had that knowledge of business which would direct him.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken, and committee elected, comprising Mr. Hastie, Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Stone, and the mover, with power to call for persons and papers, and to sit during any adjournment of the House.

Message accordingly transmitted to the Legislative Council.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

MR. J. EWING (South-West Mining District): In rising to move the second reading, I desire to say that after consulting with the Minister for Mines, and this being a Bill of very great importance to the community, and one which does not perhaps come within the ken of every hon. member, it has been represented to me that, even if I endeavour to explain the measure here to-night, I cannot do so satisfactorily to the House. It is therefore my intention formally to move the second reading of this Bill; and I have the assurance of the Minister for Mines that he will agree to this procedure with a view of moving for a select committee, which select committee I desire should, if the House will permit, proceed to Collie and take evidence there, for the reason that their so doing would afford a practical demonstration of the provisions of the Bill; they would be able to bring in a good report; and then the Bill could be discussed much more advantageously than would now be possible. I think this would be a better plan than to waste the time of the House at the present juncture. I formally move the second reading.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): The Bill is one which greatly affects a new industry. It provides for a great many regulations and restrictions respecting that industry; it deals with the method of paying wages

and of checking weights, and with shafts, tunnels, and all matters connected with coal-mining. This industry is in its young stages, and I think a Bill of this sort requires great and careful attention before it is passed by the House. Therefore, I think it wise that we should agree to the appointment of a select committee to go into the merits of the Bill. Any debate can then take place when the report of the select committee is submitted to the House. I think that a wise course to pursue. We must take great care in regard to this matter, because there are one or two novel clauses in the Bill which will require careful consideration. In the appointment of that committee, I would like to mention one or two members whom I should like to see placed on that committee. There is the member for Mount Burges (Mr. Reid), who is an old coal miner, and who would represent one section of the House. It would be wise if members could see their way to place that member on that committee. Then there might be one member representing the owners or shareholders of the mines, so that evidence which is brought forward will be that of the conflicting interests and of all parties. I hope members will take what I have said into consideration when appointing the committee. I have very much pleasure in assisting the hon. member in having the Bill passed.

MR. F. CONNOR: Do I understand that the Minister for Mines moves that a select committee be appointed?

THE SPEAKER: No; he suggests that it would be wise to do so.

MR. F. CONNOR: Should I be in order in moving.

THE SPEAKER: The question before the House now is the second reading.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I suggest that the debate take place when the report of the select committee comes before the House.

MR. GEORGE: Is the debate on the second reading to be adjourned until the report comes up?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: No; we cannot do that. When the report of the committee comes forward the debate can then take place.

MR. F. CONNOR: Is it necessary that the committee be appointed after the second reading?

THE SPEAKER: According to our Standing Orders the select committee must be appointed after the second reading is passed.

MR. F. CONNOR: I am glad to find the Minister for Mines will support the appointment of a select committee, because this Bill is of vast importance to the country. We are legislating for what will be in years to come not second to the gold-mining industry of the country, and we want to put legislation in reference to it on a sound basis. We must take the greatest possible care in what we are doing now, and have the pick of the members of the House and those who have the best knowledge of the question on the select committee. If necessary afterwards we can get experts to give their opinions. I presume the select committee will have power to call experts. I commend the action of the Minister for Mines in supporting the second reading, and I commend him for saying he will support the appointment of a select committee when the Bill has passed its second reading.

MR. J. EWING (in reply): I desire to thank the Minister for Mines for having extended this courtesy to me; and I may say that when the Bill has been sifted from end to end, and all expert evidence has been brought to bear upon it, we shall find it to be one of the most efficient Bills on the question in Australia. I say that advisedly, because I have been exceedingly careful in drafting the Bill, and I have had opinions upon it. I shall be pleased to give the greatest possible inquiry on the subject, because I am satisfied the Bill will stand the light of day.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

SELECT COMMITTEE APPOINTED.

MR. EWING farther moved that a select committee be appointed. His desire was that the committee should adjourn from place to place to take evidence.

Motion put and passed.

THE SPEAKER: I do not know whether any member is interested in coal mines: if so, he cannot be placed on this committee.

MR. EWING: I am not personally interested in these mines.

THE SPEAKER: I did not say the hon. member was. I say I did not know who was interested.

MR. EWING: I am interested in certain properties at Collie, but the mines are not on those properties.

MR. HASTIE: I believe Mr. Wilson is a shareholder in some mines at Collie, but I would like to see Mr. Wilson a member of the committee.

THE SPEAKER: Our Standing Orders say that no member who is interested can be placed on a select committee. This Bill does not refer only to the coal mines at Collie, but all the coal mines in the country.

MR. JACOBY: Would an attorney be interested in a coal mine?

THE SPEAKER: I do not understand what the hon. member means by an attorney.

MR. JACOBY: An attorney representing the owners.

THE SPEAKER: I do not think that would preclude a member from being placed on the committee.

MR. YELVERTON: Mr. Wilson is not interested in any mines: he is only an attorney.

THE SPEAKER: I do not see why the hon. member should not be placed on the committee, then.

MR. HOPKINS: If Mr. Wilson is an attorney for a coal mine, he must naturally be interested.

MR. YELVERTON: He is not a shareholder.

MR. HOPKINS: The hon. member cannot be an attorney unless he is interested. Although this may be an innocent matter, we must see that in every instance committees are formed from those who are not interested.

MR. JACOBY: The Speaker has ruled.

MR. GARDINER: What will be the result, when the report of the committee comes up, if one of the members of that committee was an interested party?

THE SPEAKER: If I was satisfied, in my mind, that a member was interested, I should disallow his name. I should have to see that the Standing Orders were obeyed.

Ballot taken and committee elected, comprising Mr. Butcher, Mr. Connor, Mr. Rason and Mr. Reid, also Mr. Ewing as mover; with power to call for persons and papers, to adjourn from place to place,

and to sit during any adjournment of the House; to report on the 24th October.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10:36 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 15th October, 1901.

Papers presented—*Personal Explanation*—Question: Pilots at Rottmest—Question: Dividend Tax Received by Wardens—Motion: Pastoral and Agricultural Industries, to Legislate (adjourned)—Motion: Railway Administration, Board of Inquiry, no Confidence; a tie (negative)—Land Act Amendment Bill, Recommittal, reported—Excess Bill (1899-1900), third reading—Roads Act Amendment Bill, Recommittal, reported—Insect Pests Act Amendment Bill, second reading; Amendment passed, Bill arrested—Noxious Weeds Bill, withdrawn—Sales by Mortgagees Bill, second reading, in Committee, reported—Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Bill, in Committee, reported—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS, in laying on the table a return showing particulars in reference to form J. (as ordered), said the return showed that £19,000 had been authorised under this form. The Colonial Treasurer desired him to state that only one item of £6 odd had been incurred by the present Government.

Ordered to lie on the table.

By the MINISTER FOR LANDS: 2, Return showing cost of tugs used by mail steamers. 3, Report of Metropolitan Waterworks Board.

Ordered to lie on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Before business was proceeded with, he would like to make an explanation. Last week a