

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: If we made the age 16 we would not prevent boys from going to work but only from coming under the operation of this measure. The Education Act allowed them to leave school and the Factories Act allowed to go to work at the age of 14; on the other hand every member realised that 14 was too low an age for boys to start work.

Amendment (to insert "not less than 14 years of") put and passed; the clause as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5—Penalties:

Mr. GEORGE: The penalties were numerous and he thought they were bringing people under this measure almost on a level with criminals.

The Attorney General: You must have something substantial.

Mr. GEORGE: If it were necessary, well and good.

Clause put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.50 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 15th August, 1912.

Question: Quairading Lock-up	1120
Bills: Methodist Church Property Trust, Report stage	1120
Tramways Purchase, 2r., Amendment, six months, defeated, select com.	1120
White Phosphorus Matches Prohibition, message	1152
Adjournment, one week	1152

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

QUESTION—QUAIRADING LOCK-UP.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (without notice) asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, If his attention has been called to the condition of affairs existing at Quairading,

where there are no police quarters, and where three men have been chained to a tree all night in bad weather. 2, If steps are being taken to remedy this state of affairs.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: I am quite willing to reply to the question. My attention has been called to this condition of affairs, and I propose to take steps to remedy it.

BILL—METHODIST CHURCH PROPERTY TRUST.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—TRAMWAYS PURCHASE.

Second Reading—Amendment, six months.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East): I do not think it is necessary for me to say very much, or to speak at any length in regard to this Bill, as a great deal has been said by previous speakers. One can only judge the merits of a Bill by the reasons put forward by its sponsors when introducing it to the House. If one were to judge this Bill solely by the utterances of the Government I say without hesitation members would have no other choice than to vote directly against the Bill. I have listened with considerable interest to the able and eloquent speech of Mr. Colebatch, and let me say that I thoroughly agree with every argument uttered by that hon. gentleman. Again I say, were we to judge the Bill by what has been said in its favour by the Government, and against it by Mr. Colebatch, we should have no choice but to vote directly against the measure. We are told that this is a Bill for the purchase of a certain property from the tramway company. It is a business proposition and naturally one looks, in the first place, to see if we are getting value for our money. Let us take the case as it is placed before Parliament by the Government. The Government stated that they did not enter into negotiations without having first got their expert officers to advise them in connection with the value of the property. They instructed

the Commissioner of Railways to make this valuation, and the Commissioner advised that, viewing the property from the point of view of whether the trams are to be purchased by the city council in 1935, and if we had to dispose of them in 1935, the value would be £375,000. This is exactly £100,000 less than the House is asked to agree to pay for the property, and it is based on the assumption that the profits are not going to increase or decrease, and that no extensions are to be made. That is really basing it on what exists to-day, which is what any business man would do. These officers reported that the annual net profit required for interest and sinking fund would be £25,000, and the annual sinking fund contribution would be £10,000, so that in 1925 we would get back our capital invested by disposing of the system to the Perth City Council for £200,000, the realisable value at that date. The Government go on to say, "After allowing for depreciation we anticipate that we can make a profit of £25,000, which will be sufficient to pay interest at 4 per cent. on £400,000, and provide a sinking fund of £9,000 per annum, which would, by 1939, cover the suggested price of £400,000." The Minister says this is viewing it with the idea of handing over the tramways in 1939, and having no increase in the meantime. He then adds, "If that were to be the position, that we were to hand over the system in 1939, it would not be advisable for us to consider the purchase at this stage." If, the Ministers say, we were to hand over the concession to the city council in 1939, then it would be unwise to consider the purchase. But they are considering the purchase: not on what they are advised by their expert officer is the value, namely, £400,000, but they are asking Parliament to consider it at £475,000. They themselves state that it would not be advisable to consider the purchase if we were not to retain possession of the system; but, in order that they may purchase the trams at this stage, they are prepared to allow the company £75,000 more than their expert officers say the property is worth. They are giving the company £75,000, and by Act of Parliament

doing away with the rights of the city council. The Commissioner of Railways values the property at £400,000, and the Government say "We will give £475,000 and do away with the reversionary rights of the city council." In other words, they value the reversionary rights at £75,000. But the strange part is that they are not going to give the £75,000 to the city council, whom they are depriving of the reversionary rights, but they are going to give it to the tramway company.

The Colonial Secretary: There are others concerned besides the city council.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I am simply judging it on your own case. You say your expert officers value it at £400,000, yet you ask Parliament to purchase at £475,000. That and that alone is sufficient reason why I should not support the purchase of those trams under the conditions and at the price suggested by the Government. That is why I agree entirely with the remarks made by Mr. Colebatch. Is there any urgent need for the purchase of these trams? We have heard from some of the previous speakers that the opposition to the purchase of the trams comes about because the proposal emanated from a Labour Government. Let me say that if a Liberal Government had introduced this proposal it would have been very strenuously opposed by these same members. Simply because it emanated from a Liberal Government we would have been told that this was part of our old policy of centralisation. I remember hearing of the Premier recently refusing a grant to repair the Perth-Fremantle road. This is in every sense a public road, and should be considered a Government road. The Premier said "No, we cannot spend the money in Perth and Fremantle. We want it to develop the country." Yet we are asked to expend almost half a million in Perth and, according to the Government's own showing, this amount is £75,000 more than the concern is worth. It has not been shown that there is any urgent need for the purchase of the trams at all, leaving out the question, to which I will come later, whether it is a right or wrong policy to nationalise the trams.

We know that at the present moment hundreds of miles of agricultural railway have been authorised and not constructed. We will have to go on the market for a tremendous amount of money to construct them all, and it is idle to say that the fact of borrowing half a million of money for this concern will not influence the price at which we will obtain money in future. Undoubtedly it will influence the price. We were told by some of the previous speakers that the lender in London takes into account solely how the money is to be spent. That is true to a certain extent, but it stands to reason that the lender must take into account also the total indebtedness of the State. This concern will add something like a couple of pounds per head of the population to the indebtedness of the State.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): Would not they take it into account if it were a municipal loan?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Certainly not. It could have very little influence in the case of a municipal loan. A national loan is a charge on the revenue of the State. A municipal loan has no lien over the revenue of the State, but it has over every bit of property contained within the bounds of the municipality concerned. In the Municipal Corporations Act provision is made not only for interest, but a sinking fund, and when a municipal loan is raised it is a charge on every bit of property in a municipality. The property owners are forced to guarantee it under the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act. I fail to see what possible influence a municipal loan could have on the flotation of a State loan. I say without fear of contradiction the influence would be infinitesimal. The £500,000 to be paid for the tramways would build at least 300 miles of agricultural railways. The 300 miles of agricultural railways would do a great deal for this State at present. But what is the expenditure of this money on the trams going to do. It will not employ a single additional man. It is simply to enable the Government to take the place of the Perth Tramway Company. It will not further develop the country, or even the city of

Perth, unless more money is expended to extend the tramway system. In that case it may be giving the citizens a slightly better service but that remains to be seen. After all, when we come to consider the amount to be raised, it is not idle to argue that we ought to borrow another £500,000 because the people living in and about Perth are somewhat inconvenienced. That is the whole of the argument for the Bill, and we have not been shown that we are getting the concern at a reasonable price. I surmise that I may be twitted later on with having been a member of the late Government who were in favour of the purchase of this system. It is true that the ex-Premier declared on behalf of the Government in his policy speech, preceding the last general elections on this particular matter, and this is what he said—

Recognising that the Perth tramway system does not fill the public requirements, and ought to be considerably extended for the convenience of the people the Government are prepared to nationalise the tramways, provided they can be purchased at a reasonable figure—

That is an important condition—

and provided also that the municipalities concerned concur. In such an event, the revenue now derived by each municipality would be conserved to it.

There are three important conditions attached to that. It did not bind myself or the members of the Government to purchase at any particular time, but the then Premier merely said he believed it would be in the interests of the country if the trams were nationalised, provided the municipalities concurred, and provided also that all the rights and privileges were conserved to the municipalities which this Bill entirely overlooks, at least not entirely, but it gives them three per cent. at the will of Parliament, and that is an invitation to the next Parliament to take off the three per cent.

The Colonial Secretary: Did your Government propose to compensate the municipalities?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The ex-Premier said in such an event the revenue now derived by each municipality would

be conserved to it, provided the municipalities concurred in the agreement to purchase.

The Colonial Secretary: But what about the reversionary rights?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I can only repeat the words of the Premier that we would not have purchased except on terms which were thought to be fair and just by the municipalities. They would have had to concur before we purchased. While a great deal may be said in favour of the nationalisation of certain public conveniences, I do not think the administrative actions of the present Government are such that would inspire confidence in the management of the trams if they are purchased. We were told by the previous speakers what has occurred in regard to the railway employees. We have had dozens and dozens of instances where the employees have only to apply the acid, as they say, and the Government respond very readily.

The Colonial Secretary: You ought to state facts and give instances.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I will give instances in a moment which will perhaps come home to the Minister. If the Government were sensible in regard to this Bill, they would at least have given some guarantee or some suggestion as to how they proposed to work these trams if they took them over. We are told they produce a certain revenue, and that revenue will cover interest and sinking fund, but we are not told whether the fares will be reduced, whether we are to have penny sections, or how the employees are to be treated. If the Government come down with a proposal and say the trams are to be placed under an independent board and run as other concerns of the Government, as soon as it becomes a Government concern, so soon will pressure be brought to bear on the Ministry for all the rights and concessions that can be imagined. We are told, and we have ample proof, that the Government is undoubtedly dictated to by the Labour federation.

The Colonial Secretary: It is untrue.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Let me give the Minister the words from his own organ, *The Worker*. The report appeared

on the 21st May, and is headed, "The A.L.F. The Power behind the Throne."

The Colonial Secretary: That is a heading of an article put there by the editor.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I will read Mr. McCallum's own words. The report reads as follows:—

In responding to the toast by the A.L.F. at the G.W.U. social at the Trades Hall, Perth, the other night, Mr. Alex. McCallum made some forcible remarks on the subject of the Labour Government and the power behind the throne.

Then he went on to say—

Each member of an affiliated organisation had equal rights with Mr. Scaddan or any Minister to have placed upon the party platform any matter he liked. The individual, through his union, and the union through the district council, and the district council, through the State executive, were the forces that made up the party strength.

That is the case in a nutshell.

The Colonial Secretary: There is nothing very objectionable in that.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It may not be to the Minister, but from the public point of view it is objectionable to see the acid put on the administration in that form by the trades hall.

The Colonial Secretary: You give instances.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: If the Colonial Secretary wants instances, I remember reading in the public Press the report of a deputation which waited upon him. It was a deputation of Government employees. I think they consisted of warders of the Fremantle gaol and some hospital attendants. According to the public Press one of these orderlies—I do not know whether he was a warder or an employee of the hospital—talked to the Minister in this way—

We put you here to give us eight hours. We are the men who put you here and you have to give us eight hours.

The Colonial Secretary: He never made such a statement.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I am saying what is in the public Press.

The Colonial Secretary: I do not care where it is.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I challenge the Minister, if a shorthand report of the proceedings was taken, as is generally done, to produce it. What I have quoted is stated in the Press, and as far as the report goes, the Minister should accept the position.

Point of order.

The Colonial Secretary: I rise to a point of order. What the hon. member has stated is not correct, and not true.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: I only stated what appeared in the public Press, and several members have seen it in the public Press.

The President: The hon. member will accept the statement of the Minister that it is incorrect, of course.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: I am stating, not what the Minister said, and not the utterance of the Minister. I am stating what appeared in the public Press as coming from a member of a deputation that waited on the Minister.

The President: On the assurance of the Minister that it is incorrect, the hon. member will accept that.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: If the Minister says it is incorrect.

The President: He has said so.

Debate resumed.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I am not disputing that; I am only stating it appeared in the Press.

The Colonial Secretary: State when it appeared and when it occurred.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: About six or seven weeks ago.

The Colonial Secretary: In what newspaper?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The evening paper and some other paper. It may have been in the *West Australian*; I do not know. I saw afterwards where these men had got the eight hours they claimed. When we see matters of this kind crop up it does not make us any more predisposed to nationalise the industries or public services of the State.

If we go on nationalising these services it will mean that we will have so many Government employees and they will be employed in such a way that whether the Government desire to accede to their requests or not, they will be forced to do so. There will be so many Government employees and they will constitute such a large percentage of electors that it will be more than the life of the Government is worth to refuse to do so. If the Government bring down a proposal, and show that they are prepared to give the system a fair chance, that is to say, place it under a Commissioner or a Board, apart altogether from political influence, I think the Bill will be more likely to receive the assent of this House. While I may be in favour of nationalising, under certain circumstances, I am not in favour of doing so under the conditions set forth in the Bill, and undoubtedly it cannot be overlooked that the municipality of Perth and the adjoining municipalities have very big rights in this matter, which have been almost entirely overlooked. A great deal has been said that it would be better to municipalise the tramway system if we had some other person filling the position of mayor of Perth. It has been stated these reversionary rights are worth half-a-million sterling, and when we come to consider that the Government have valued the concession at £375,000 or £400,000 for a 36 years tenure, and a good deal of ridicule has been thrown at this, I think the freehold of the property should be worth something in that vicinity, because, after all, all that the tramway company has to-day is a 36 years lease, and, so far as Perth is concerned, they would have to walk out in 27 years time. With regard to the suburban municipalities of course something must be paid to them. I venture to say that this matter ought to stand over for a little while, if for no other reason than because we have at the present time a Greater Perth scheme on the boards. If that greater Perth scheme is brought about, I venture to say that suburban municipalities will be just as strongly against the nationalising of the tramways as the Perth

City Council is to-day. A Board could then be formed from that Greater Perth Council exactly as it is formed to-day in Fremantle, and the system could be worked to the advantage of Perth. Undoubtedly the Perth ratepayers have claims which should be considered; these tramways run through their streets, the people gave the concession, and whatever profits accrue, they ought to be entitled to them. I do not know that I need say anything further except that I quite agree with the amendment moved by Mr. Colebatch, and I am prepared to support it because I see no justification for voting in favour of the Bill on the case put forward by the Government. On the other hand, if the amendment is not agreed to, I think the next best thing will be the suggestion made by Mr. Kingsmill, that it be referred to a select committee. If that select committee deals with the subject in the manner in which it ought to be dealt with, and it takes the rights of the people concerned into consideration, then I shall be prepared to give the Bill further consideration, but, if that is not done, I shall reserve to myself the right to vote against the Bill on the third reading.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER (Metropolitan-Suburban): I am in the position of being unable, I regret to say, for many reasons, to support the amendment moved by Mr. Colebatch, although it has my sympathy, and although it has been moved in such an exceedingly able and telling speech. Like the hon. member, I am against, at any rate to a large extent, the principle of nationalisation, and I am against nationalisation in this particular instance, and in most instances where we have the conditions of political matters as they are here at the present time. That is to say, and I am not speaking in any offensive way to my friends opposite, that we are unfortunate in having the industrial movement in such close relationship to the political movement. That, to my mind, is a great danger to politics in this State at the present time. I cannot help thinking with Mr. Colebatch and others that the creation of these various State monopolies are tending to build up a very

large body of interested votes which cannot fail to be brought to bear in favour of the Government, and the influence of which the Government will not fail to find exceedingly hard to stand against. The Government must not give way to this tremendous influence, built up by the various industries, or they will have to hand over the control of affairs to someone else. Which will win in the end, I cannot say at the present moment, but I venture to declare that the struggle is becoming more acute, and must end one way or the other shortly. I regret to say that for many reasons I am not able to support the amendment. One reason is similar to that already given by Mr. Sanderson, namely, that I have been asked by the various local authorities in the province I represent to support the nationalisation of the trams, and I have always recognised the fact that the policy of the Government in nationalising these industries has been approved by the people, and therefore the Government should have every opportunity of carrying out that policy. I have also been influenced by the fact that there has been very little opposition outside to this scheme of nationalisation. We have had no public meetings against it, and very little protest. Unfortunately we have had no referendum of the Perth ratepayers, and I cannot help saying that largely, if not unanimously, the Press appear to support the scheme. Further, I am influenced by the fact that this measure has passed the Lower House, and I recognise the Lower House as being the one chiefly concerned in dealing with the expenditure of public money. To my mind, the proper attitude to be taken by this House is the attitude of a checking nature, that is to say, in regard to this measure, we should see that no confiscation takes place. To my mind, this is the opportunity for the Legislative Council to carry out its proper constitutional duties, and as to my mind there is something in the nature of confiscation in this Bill. I shall do my utmost to prevent that taking place. The relationship between the Government and the local authorities has been the subject of some remarks by a competent learned authority within the last fortnight, and about those remarks I

would like to say a few words, because I feel that, to say the least of it, if they are not fantastic they are more than that, they are somewhat tragic in their consequences. If the view laid down by this authority is correct, I venture to say the confidence of the municipalities in their own institutions and their own powers and their confidence generally in the country and the confidence of the municipalities and the people in the country and the Government, will be severely shaken, because it is stated amongst other things that the councils are attempting to rob the people, and the Government are preventing that being done; that the State delegates certain powers to the municipality, and can withdraw them at its pleasure, and that the Government in making this purchase are only placing the people of the State in possession of their own. I should like to examine that position. First of all I would like to draw hon. members' attention to the principle embodied in the various statutes constituting those authorities. These statutes delegate certain functions to certain bodies which are incorporated for that purpose, and these bodies can hold property and deal with it through their mayors and councillors under a common seal. They have the power, amongst other matters, to sell property, to lease property and purchase it, to charge license fees for traffic through the municipalities. The way in which their funds are made up are set out in the Act, and I need not go into details as to those. In addition, they have extensive borrowing powers for permanent works, and they can borrow up to a certain portion of their revenue, and last and not least they have, of course, extensive powers for the construction of roads, streets and footpaths. Who pays for all these? Is it the people of the State? I submit it is the ratepayers of the municipality. They are taxed for that purpose, and they find the money, and, not only that, they take the risk if any loss occurs. In these undertakings surely it is the ratepayers who take the risk. In the event of any loss occurring, would we find the Government going to the rescue of the municipalities?

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: We find the Government subsidising them.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: Yes, but that is only by way of making up what is suggested by the various authorities that the Government should pay in rates. That I submit has nothing to do with the liabilities of municipalities for the expenditure of their funds. Examples have been given of disputes which have occurred between municipalities and the Government, and the present dispute with reference to the town hall has been particularly mentioned. To my knowledge, that has been going on for the last ten or twelve years. What is the dispute? It is whether the Government should buy the site or whether they should compensate the council and furnish them with another site. If the doctrine which has been set up by the competent authority I have referred to is correct, the Government should take the site without giving them compensation. I think there is an instance in our midst at the present time where the council are claiming compensation in connection with the site on which their stables are erected, I fancy at East Perth. Then, again, the council are now claiming compensation from the Commonwealth Government for the commonage on the sea shore which the Commonwealth are claiming for a rifle range. Are not those instances in which the council are claiming certain rights and the Government are not denying them? That being the position of the general relationship between the Government and the local authorities, what is the particular position of the city council in respect of these tramways under the various Acts and authorities under which they have been constructed? As hon. members are aware, the Tramways Act of 1885 gives power to construct tramways with the consent of the local authorities. The first step is to give the constructing party a provisional order by the Minister for Works, and the next step is to get that order confirmed by Act of Parliament. First of all an agreement was entered into in 1897 between the council and the Perth Tramways Company, represented by Mr. Dickenson, who applied for the provisional order, which

was embodied in the Statute of 1897. I would like to refer very briefly to the sections of the Tramways Act of 1885, which, I submit, clearly show that the local authority has certain rights. In Section 8 there are regulations with regard to the laying down of tramways within towns, the local authorities having the right to say where these lines shall be placed. Then, in Section 13, where the confirmation by Parliament of the provisional order is being asked for, the following words occur:—

For the purposes of this Act frontagers and omnibus proprietors shall be deemed to have a *locus standi* to oppose the Bill.

Section 16 provides that the local authority may lease the tramways or take toll therefor, and in Section 28 there is power to sell the tramways if, at any time, it appears they are not being run properly. Then, there is a further power to sell also given to them. These various powers all go to show that the local authority has certain rights which are recognised by the Government in regard to these tramways. Then we come to the agreement with the promoters. The agreement with the promoters is set out in the Act of 1897, and that was the Act which, as I have already said, confirmed the provisional order given to Mr. Dickenson. One would have thought that, if this agreement were not approved of by Parliament, Parliament would have said to the council, "You have entered into an agreement by which you are at liberty to purchase after the lapse of certain years, and at the end of the term the tramways fall into your possession. We cannot recognise those rights." But we find that Parliament did recognise them. Section 7 of the Act has the following provision:—

Nothing herein contained shall prejudice or affect a certain agreement dated the 17th day of April, 1897, and made between "the Mayor, Councillors, and Citizens of the City of Perth" of the one part and the Promoter of the other part, except so far as the same is contrary to or in conflict with the provisions of this Act or the Tramways Act, 1885.

Is that not a deliberate recognition of the agreement entered into with Mr. Dickenson, which, as I say, gave these rights to the city council? Then we have the present Bill, and if hon. members will turn to the Schedule they will find this provision in the agreement under which the Government propose to purchase the tramways from the company—

And whereas it is provided by Section 29 of the said Tramways Act, 1885, that the promoters of any tramway authorised by Provisional Orders under that Act may with the consent of the Governor sell its undertaking to any person, and that where any such sale has been made all the rights, powers, authorities, obligations, and liabilities of the promoters in respect of the undertakings sold shall be transferred to, vested in, and may be exercised by, and shall attach to the person to whom the same has been sold.

There we find that in the Government's own agreement they recognise the rights given in the agreement between the Perth City Council and the tramways company and say that such rights shall attach to the Government themselves. What greater recognition can we find of the rights of the city council? But I go further than that even. If hon. members will turn to Clause 6, paragraph (b.), they will find—

All the rights, interests, and powers of all local authorities under and conferred by the said Acts and the provisional orders thereby confirmed and the agreements therein and in the Fourth Schedule hereto mentioned shall, notwithstanding anything contained in the Tramways Act, 1885, to the contrary, be extinguished.

There is the very word "rights" in the beginning of that paragraph, which says that all these rights shall be extinguished. I may be dense, but I cannot see the logic of the Government's contention that the Perth City Council have no rights under this agreement. As regards the value of the rights, I know nothing, but I do know that there are rights, and I do not care whether they are worth 2½d. or £200,000, or £500,000, they should be estimated. If the rights are of no value my opposition

is withdrawn, but I want a fair endeavour made to ascertain what the rights are. There are rights, and they should not be confiscated, nor did Parliament ever intend that they should be confiscated. How can we dissociate the Perth City Council from a private individual in this matter? If this were a private individual, Parliament would never endeavour to extinguish the rights, and the only ground for extinguishing them in this instance is that we are told the Perth City Council's rights are the rights of the whole people. If that is a true exposition of the relations between the Government and the local authorities, then all I can say is that the local authorities had better stop all enterprise at once. I am impressed by the way in which Mr. Colebatch referred to the value of those rights. He aptly said that the Government's own officers valued those rights at £100,000. A valuation was made on two bases. One basis was assuming the rights to be extinguished, and the other basis assuming the rights not to be extinguished, and there was a difference of £100,000 between the two. Surely that on paper shows what the rights are worth. They may be worth a great deal more, but on the Government's own admission they were worth something considerable. Mr. Cullen referred last night to the power of Parliament to extinguish those rights, and said that even though this Act were passed by Parliament, and Parliament extinguished those rights, as soon as the term under which the rights matured was complete the council could have recourse to the High Court to do them justice. I regret that I cannot agree with the hon. member in that view of the law. It is incontrovertible that Parliament is absolutely supreme. Parliament can, if it chooses, raze the house of each one of us to the ground, but is Parliament likely to do it?

Hon. J. F. Cullen: If this House were a reflex of the other House, would it not be done?

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: I must say that I cannot follow the hon. member in that argument. I give hon. members my view of the law as it is and I am afraid Mr. Cullen has not given the sub-

ject as careful consideration as he usually does. Parliament is all supreme, and can do whatever it pleases, and no High Court or any other court can touch its position, except when there is an infringement of the Constitution, when the High Court may then interfere. There is only one other matter I wish to refer to before sitting down. I regret to have noticed the remarks made by the Minister for Works last night. If the Minister wanted fair and impartial consideration given to the Bill in this House, the words uttered last night were best left unsaid, because if ever there was a threat uttered it was contained in the speech of the Minister for Works. While the matter is *sub judice*, remarks of that nature should not be made. I regret that I cannot support the motion of Mr. Colebatch but I certainly shall support Mr. Kingsmill if he moves to refer the Bill to a select committee.

The PRESIDENT: By the indulgence of the Council the Hon. Mr. Pennefather may be allowed to speak sitting.

Hon. R. W. PENNEFATHER (North): I would like to say a few words at this stage. Mr. Gawler has particularly pointed out the injustice of taking away rights without compensation. I think this is an argument which admits of no contradiction, and it is a great pity that the Government should lend themselves to the opposite view. Now, these are rights that have been vested in the city council, and I understand it is proposed to take them away without compensation. That, I think, is very wrong. If these rights were vested in an individual it would be called confiscation if Parliament took them away, and surely the same principle applies also to a corporate body. I cannot understand why the Government should go to the extreme of taking away the rights which have accrued to the corporation after so many years, without giving proper compensation for them. I do not wish to labour the question, but I do say that this is a proposition that members ought to approach with a great deal of caution. Any attempt at confiscation of rights, whether of an individual or of a corporation should be discountenanced.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): I shall be very brief in my remarks. I do not intend to go into any details because the matter has been fairly well discussed all round. The Government are simply giving practical expression to a desire by, I believe, all sections of the community for the nationalisation of the Perth trams. For quite a number of years past there has been an agitation, not only by the Labour party, but by almost all parties and all sections of the community, that these trams should be nationalised. Certainly there has also been agitation by some people in favour of municipalisation, but by far the greatest number favour nationalisation. I do not think any member will dispute that. The price and the conditions have been fixed with a desire to do justice not only to the municipality but also to the State. Much has been said about taking away rights from the municipal council, but there is also the question of the rights of the public to be considered, and I consider that the offer that is being made is a perfectly just offer. As a country member I would oppose to the very utmost any idea of giving the Perth City Council a halfpenny more, because I consider they are getting a fair deal from the State point of view and the municipality's point of view. Much of the opposition to the measure before us is so much bluff, and I think before we have finally dealt with the Bill members will accept nationalisation on the terms offered by the Government. A good deal has also been said about the party element in connection with this, about the platform of the Labour party being nationalisation, in fact, almost everything has been brought into this debate that was discussed in the course of the Address-in-reply. As evidence of the non-party attitude of the other House in regard to this question, there was an amendment moved to the Bill by the member for Perth, who is a member of our party. The Bill has been approached absolutely from a non-party standpoint. As Mr. Cornell said, the members of the Labour party knew no more about the Bill than any individual in the community

knew what the action of the Government would be. The matter has been handled entirely by the Government and not by the party, except that perhaps the majority of the party believe in nationalisation. I think some allowance should be made to members of the Labour party in replying to some of the assertions made by some members in this Chamber apart altogether from the subject under discussion. I refer particularly to the speech of Mr. Colebatch. That speech was unworthy of the hon. member. The innuendoes of the Address-in-reply debate were simply continued. We allow for a good deal of matter being introduced into the debate on the Address-in-reply, and we expect it, but I think it is going a little too far to have the same innuendoes and the same matter on every occasion a question is brought before the House. The principle idea that Mr. Colebatch gave utterance to was that no quarter should be given to the Bill because of something else in the Labour platform, and Mr. Sanderson, to a lesser extent, stressed this point. Mr. Colebatch says we have adult suffrage as a plank in our platform for municipalities and that part of our policy is land nationalisation. These are the principal reasons the hon. member is using to induce members to oppose the Bill.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Not at all, my objection is price chiefly.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): I think the hon. member's speech quietly read will convince every member that this was the underlying motive the hon. member used in appealing to the House to oppose the Bill. One other remark I want to refer to was that of Mr. Cullen, that before a certain Bill is ready, before he knows what is in it, and before the Government know what is in it, it is going to be killed. That is what members of our party have to put up with in this Chamber, and I think some latitude should be given to us in endeavouring to reply. The appeals are not to reason or justice, but to party prejudice in order to influence party opinion. I say emphatically that those who are opposing this matter are frightened to submit it to the bar of public opinion. If the municipal council

would submit the Bill to a referendum of the ratepayers of Perth, they would go down. They are afraid to do it, and consequently they approach this Chamber, the party of privilege, to help them out. If a referendum were taken of those concerned among the whole of the bodies, or even if a referendum were taken of these owners of this concession whom Mr. Colebatch has referred to, it would be overwhelmingly in favour of the terms offered by the Government; but they are frightened to allow a referendum to be taken and let the owners themselves decide. Mr. Colebatch's remarks put me in mind of a saying—when a starving man is asking for bread, do not give him anything because he may ask for butter. "The Labour party have two planks in their platform, adult suffrage in municipal elections and land nationalisation. Do not do them justice in letting this Bill pass." That is what it amounts to. Mr. Colebatch also made an astonishing and amazing proposition. He said that Perth has been built up by the ratepayers; he distinctly said that the municipalities had been built up by the ratepayers, though, in reply to an interjection, he qualified that. I do not know a more astonishing or amazing statement than that the capital city is made up by the ratepayers of that capital.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: From the very first I exempted Perth from my remarks.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): Then that takes a good deal of the argument away, but I would mention a few of the buildings that have been built by the State in Perth, for instance Parliament House, the Government buildings, the Observatory, and the Royal Mint; and then there are the gardens and those other various institutions in the capital city of the State that have been built by the State and with State money. Yet we are asked to say that the people of the State have no rights in connection with this tram service. I say they have equal rights with the ratepayers of Perth. Mr. Colebatch was also very keen in his criticism of the train service of the State. Another member was a little fairer and said that the Government had been in office only ten months and part of the trouble was due to other Governments, and it was not

altogether owing to the Labour Government.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: The hon. member is making a wrong statement. I said it was incidental to all forms of monopoly, nationalised or private.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): I have no desire to say that any member has made a statement he has not made, but that was the conclusion I arrived at. I have had a little experience with the tram service. I have had to stand repeatedly and watch trams go by because they were overcrowded. I use the trams fairly freely and I know no worse tram system in Australia than the Perth tram system. Not only are the trams overcrowded, but you cannot ride in them, especially in the back portions of them, on a fine day without getting almost covered with dust. The Perth tram system is one of the worst in Australia, and we might be fair, in drawing attention to the train service, and say what the tram service is like in private hands. The whole trouble in regard to the Government and the municipal council is that the council are desirous of running this public utility for profit in order that they may lessen the rates. That has been admitted, I think, by Mr. Molloy on one occasion. I do not think any member of the Government has had anything to say in connection with the incapacity or incompetency of the municipality; it would be pure imagination on the part of anyone making that statement, but there is no question the municipality are anxious to run this public utility in order to gain profits and save rates. I think in connection with all public utilities of the State the Government are quite right in seeking to bring about their nationalisation. Some may urge municipalisation. It is possible the municipal council may run the trams equally as well as the Government, but the majority of the people of the State and of Perth and suburbs favour nationalisation. If the Legislative Council continues to set itself up against public opinion, the time will come when perhaps hon. members will regret it. Mr. Sanderson said he could not get down to our regions. It was rather unkind of the hon. member. We often talk about our lofty ideals, but when

they are characterised as "getting down to our regions" I think the hon. member went a little further than he intended to.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): As a country member I would like indicate the direction in which I intend to vote. There is little new ground to break in this debate, even if I attempted to do it. I shall not support Mr. Colebatch's amendment, but later on, perhaps, an amendment having the same effect may have me supporting it if this Chamber is not giving the municipality of Perth fair play. I think the tramway company are on a tip-top wicket. As a business man, if I was in the same position as the city of Perth I would not think of letting my rights go in the same way as the Government are seeking to take them from the Perth City Council. When the Bill giving the rights to the tramway company was brought forward, the main feature of the Bill was that in time the trams would revert to the city council. What are a few years in the life of a city? Mr. Lynn made a very practical speech the other night, and I believe in the remark he made that whoever runs the electric lighting of a city should also run the trams. That statement is worthy of consideration, and if the people of Perth were consulted by referendum they would not be agreeable, I am sure, to their rights being taken away.

Hon. J. Cornell: Why not take a referendum then?

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: It is not too late to take one now. If the people say we are willing to forgo our rights, then I am sure this Chamber will not stand in the way. It would save all the feeling and heart-burning which we have suffered. I trust that at the eleventh hour the views of the people will be obtained on this matter. We will be sitting here some months yet, and it would not take more than three weeks or a month to obtain the views of the people by referendum. Why not let the people vote on the matter?

Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett: They claim that the whole State should vote.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: It is not my intention to take up the time of the House.

but I would like to say that, as a business man, if I was in the same position as the Perth City Council, I should use every effort I possessed to prevent my rights being taken away without compensation. The compensation of three per cent., as long as Parliament consents, is a ridiculous thing. I intend to vote for the select committee to be proposed by Mr. Kingsmill. I may say that I congratulate Mr. Colebatch on the speech which he made, and if better treatment is not meted out to the city of Perth I shall be willing to vote to throw out the Bill at the last stage.

Hon. F. CONNOR (North): I do not wish to give a silent vote. We have arrived at a stage when we can describe it as nationalisation run mad. The Government are trying to nationalise everything, and finking when they are dared to do it. If the Government are in earnest in trying to nationalise the tramways, then it is a matter purely for compromise. Nobody would say that the Government should walk in and take the rights of the city council away without giving them compensation. It is purely a matter of compromise—and I am sure Mr. Drew will agree that the best and only solution of the matter is the proposal suggested by Mr. Kingsmill that a select committee be appointed to go into the question, to take evidence and show what the position ought to be. Whether the position will be accepted by the people of Perth with good grace I do not know. This style of taking charge of the people's property is—it is a nasty word to use, but it is the only word in the vocabulary which, in my opinion, does describe the position—confiscation. It is a nasty thing to put up against any Government, any party, or any community of people. If the Bill is carried as it is brought down, that the rights of the Perth City Council be taken away from them, then I say it is purely and simply confiscation. I do not intend to labour the question, or to say more about it except this, that if a select committee be appointed and their report is brought down to us here and agreed to by us, I think the members in another place will be bound to accept it as a fair solution

of the question, for it is simply a matter for compromise.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East): I do not wish to give a silent vote on the matter. I say at once that it is my intention to support the amendment moved by Mr. Colebatch. Personally I was surprised when I saw the nature of the measure being placed before the country, and I endorse the remarks which Mr. Colebatch so ably placed before the Chamber the other day. This is a danger we see ahead. Money is scarce. Viewing it as I do, coming from the country, money is likely to be very difficult to obtain and it seems to me if the purchase is entered on we shall only be hampering other works that money can be devoted to. We also have to recognise that this House is essentially a House that is looked to to preserve the rights that we have heard spoken of throughout the debate. There is no question to my mind that the Perth Municipal Council has undoubted rights, and whether it is an individual or a municipality or any body of people whatever their rights are we should preserve those rights to them. With regard to the matter of nationalisation or municipalisation, it does not worry me in the least, but of the two I think I would prefer nationalisation. The question of referendum suggested by Mr. Lynn should appeal to everyone as a sure way of arriving at the opinion of those most capable to give a verdict. I would be satisfied if they were prepared to give up their rights, if a referendum was against them, confident that they would not give an opinion in favour of the present Government. It is not because the Bill is brought forward by the Government that I oppose the measure. I do not think the Government are making the best bargain or that we should agree without the question being submitted to a referendum of those mostly concerned, so as to enable the people to give a verdict. I shall vote with Mr. Colebatch.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West): This question has been thoroughly thrashed out. I think one feature of the case that stands out very clearly is that a corporate body is appointed of those persons in a municipality who under certain

legal enactments are entitled to vote for and place certain gentlemen in charge of municipal affairs. What do we find? That amongst the powers given to a municipality is that of allowing or giving another person the right to construct trams within that municipality. That establishes, I think, the fact that they have a right to do so. They have a perfect right to let that property, that interest, that right, call it by what name you like, and that being so, they have done it and they have let the right to construct and run trams in the municipality of Perth, but that right has now been questioned. In the agreement entered into there seems to be a time when the whole of these rights will revert to the corporate body and become theirs absolutely. So far as I can see the position is this: they having done that, a third person, in the shape of the Government, comes in and purchases the property, not at a price from the corporate body, but from a person who is renting it from the municipality. It is admitted on all hands that it is a valuable asset. I am not prepared to say what it is worth, but if it was mine, I should say it was worth a considerable sum, and I should be for sticking to it until the rights reverted to me, and I look on myself as equal to a corporate body. What is the position? A third person steps in and is negotiating for the purchase of this right without considering the rights of the person to whom it belongs. Parliament steps in and says, "Though you have the rights, we, as a Parliament, can give them to another person. We can override your rights." I do not dispute that. It has been said, take a referendum. I should not say that is the proper way to do it. Before you take away from the ratepayers that right to elect certain gentlemen, you should allow them time to do it. It may be said that the Perth City Council have not the ratepayers behind them; I am not prepared to say whether that is so or not, but the Perth ratepayers are responsible for the gentlemen forming the council being in their present position. So far as taking a referendum is concerned, let the constitutional method be adopted. Let the people wait until an-

other election comes round, and then the ratepayers of Perth will have an opportunity of saying, "We do not believe in your views. We will put others in your places." It is not right to say whether the mayor has bungled the matter or not. All I say is that the ratepayers have no idea of judging the qualities of the man. The people have put the mayor there and they have the right to turn him out very soon. Let these people who are constitutionally empowered to vote and put in representatives, let them say what is to be done, but do not go and ask for a referendum when there can be a decision in a proper and constitutional manner. I do not care very much whether it is nationalisation or municipalisation. If you ask me which I think is the better for all time I should say municipalisation; but as a country member I will not insist upon that view. We should allow this to go to a select committee. If I were the mayor I would stick like grim death: I would say, "I have been put in here, and until you put me out again I am going to do what I think is in the best interests of the city of Perth." I certainly think that would be the proper way to deal with this, bearing in mind that notwithstanding the Minister has said he would not give them another penny, it is only natural to expect that when the Minister knows what their rights really are he will, as an honest man, consider those rights and deal fairly by them. Let a fair thing to be done. Let us find out the value of these rights of the city of Perth, and when the value is discovered let justice be done. I will vote for the Bill going to a select committee.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH (North-East): Like other hon. members, I do not desire to cast a silent vote on this matter. I believe in nationalisation. I believe in it because I think it is the best for the people. We have our railways owned by the people, and we have a ferry service also owned by the people, and I see no reason why the tram service in the capital city should not be owned by the people. If private companies can make profits and send them out of the State to be distributed amongst a few people, I say the

Government will be quite justified in making the same profits and spending them within the State in the interests of the people who have supplied the money. A good deal has been said in this Chamber in regard to the Trades Hall. I am particularly pleased to hear hon. members quoting that institution at such great length and putting such stress on their remarks. I regard this with a great deal of pleasure, because I have had considerable experience of trades halls in Western Australia and I think it is to the credit of such institutions that they should be mentioned so frequently by hon. members. However, I want to say a few words in connection with the nationalisation of the trams and the remarks made by Mr. Colebatch. The hon. member said that if the trams were to be taken over by the Government they would be controlled by the Trades Hall. Prior to seeing the Bill brought down here I had no knowledge of it beyond what I heard hon. members say, namely, that a Bill would be introduced for the purpose of nationalising the tramways. I feel safe in saying that no debate has taken place in any institution belonging to the Labour party in regard to forcing the hands of the Government to bring about the nationalisation of the trams. I am quite certain the Trades Hall knew nothing of it beyond what I have stated. And even if they did, those who control the Trades Hall have as much right to place their views before the Government as have any other parties within the State. If the Trades Hall representatives have ideas that have been put forward by thousands of people, then I say the Government are in duty bound to consider the remarks of the representatives of that institution, just as in other circumstances they would consider the views of other semi-political organisations. The Trades Hall representatives have just as much right to make suggestions as have the Chamber of Mines and the Chambers of Commerce. I believe the files of the various departments will show that these institutions have in the past made suggestions to various Governments for certain legislation to be enacted. I think in the Mines Department in par-

ticular will be found considerable correspondence showing that the Chamber of Mines from time to time desired certain legislation in the interests of property owners as against the workers. Mr. Colebatch declared the money would be better used in constructing railways throughout the agricultural districts. I believe in agricultural railways, and I am prepared on every occasion to support any line for the benefit of the people of Western Australia, not even forgetting the Esperance line. That line is just as much deserving of being built as any of the other railways brought forward in Parliament. I have been down in this locality pretty often during the last three months, and I have not heard any complaints from ratepayers in regard to the proposed nationalising of the trams. On the other hand, I have heard many people say that the Government are to be commended for bringing in the Bill, and I believe that is the general feeling of the people of Perth. Whilst we consider Perth we must also remember that in a very few years the City will be a great deal larger than it is at the present time, and we must consider the greater Perth scheme also. There is no doubt in my mind that the surrounding municipalities are in favour of the nationalisation of the tramway service, and I say they have as much right to be considered as has Perth itself. With regard to the clause providing for three per cent. to be given to the municipalities, I would strike this out altogether. I think they have no more right to that three per cent. than have the people in other parts of Western Australia. I do not believe that any amount whatever should be given as compensation. One hon. member stated that before the last election the Labour party advocated an increase of wages to the railway men, and he went on to say that within a week of the Labour Government coming into power increases to the men to the tune of £32,000 were granted. I am really pleased to know that the Government did raise the wages of the lower paid men in the railway service. I think the increase ought to have been given years ago. It was a just claim, and I say the Government are to be commended for having taken that action. Let me say

also that the increases to school teachers and to the police were well deserved. It is a wonder that no Liberal member has attempted to make political capital out of those increases. The same hon. member said that when the employers were dictated to by employees they could not expect to be successful. I think that any working man has a perfect right to ask his employer for justice. Why should he be afraid to stand up and ask the employer for what he considers to be a fair thing? On some occasions you will find employers in the place of employees, and when that happens I have noticed that these ex-employers are always fully prepared to ask for what they consider just. I sincerely hope this measure will not be relegated to a select committee, because, in my opinion, it would be far better to throw it out altogether than to make a lot of useless work which in the end has but the same object in view.

Hon. F. DAVIS (Metropolitan-Suburban): During the debate many minor issues have been raised, but practically the discussion has chiefly ranged round the question of rights or no rights. Most hon. members appear to be willing that the Government should take over the trams conditionally, and therefore the question of nationalisation *versus* municipalisation is not the point at issue. It appears to be a question simply of rights or no rights. The thought has occurred to me that the most remarkable feature of this discussion is that no expression of opinion has been given by the people who claim to be most concerned, namely, the ratepayers of Perth. I notice, too, that Mr. Clarke, in particular, suggested that what he termed constitutional means should be adopted to ascertain the views of those people on this question. I would like to point out to Mr. Clarke that for two reasons the course he suggests would not be effective. In the first place the municipal elections do not take place for the next two or three months, and in the second place, when they do, only one-third, I think, of the members of the council will retire and so give the ratepayers an opportunity of expressing their opinion on this point. Over and above that, no election, municipal or Parliamentary, is ever decided upon one issue.

There is always a whole host of side issues brought in to play. Therefore, the opinion of the people could not be accurately ascertained by means of an election. I have spoken personally to a number of Perth ratepayers, and have not yet met one who was desirous of asking the Government to give the council three per cent., or any other sum, for what have been termed their rights. On certificates of titles to land will be found words to the effect that below a certain depth any minerals discovered shall be the property of the Government. In the same way, I take it, the Government in granting a right or concession to a municipality have in themselves the right to resume or take over that particular right or concession.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. F. DAVIS: During the debate on the Bill before us the claim has been that, if the Bill be adopted, it will, perhaps, hinder the scheme known as the Greater Perth scheme, because it is claimed that the principal item of that scheme will be the management of the tramway service running through the various municipalities. The contention is met, almost in one sentence, by the fact that all the municipalities outside that of Perth itself are unanimously in favour of the Government taking over and nationalising the tramway system.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: Without any conditions?

Hon. F. DAVIS: Yes, without any conditions at all.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: Are you sure?

Hon. F. DAVIS: Yes, I have received letters from the municipalities requesting me to support the Bill, which I would have done in any case even had I not received them; and in each of these letters the support was unconditional. I hold that the claim that the passing of the Bill will hinder the Greater Perth scheme is not borne out by facts. A good deal of stress has been laid on the value of the rival systems of nationalisation and municipalisation, and it is contended by some that healthy rivalry is good in the interests of those concerned. That may be so between two private enterprise firms, but the situation is changed when in the

one case the service is State-owned, and in the other municipally-owned. Those of us who have been on the goldfields remember that there is a private-enterprise tramway service running from Kalgoorlie to Boulder, and also there is a State-owned railway service running between the same two places. Some thirteen years ago, when I was a resident of the goldfields; the railway trains between Kalgoorlie and Boulder were simply packed; in fact, I have seen people hanging on to the sides of the trains in order to travel by them. That was prior to the advent of the trams, but on my going to the goldfields some two years ago, a different condition of things prevailed. The trains were not patronised to anything like the extent they were previously. I may say that the line between Kalgoorlie and Boulder was one of the best propositions the State ever had in railway services, but it has become very much less profitable, and the profits on that traffic between Kalgoorlie and Boulder which should have gone into the pockets of the State have gone into the pockets of private individuals.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: That is a bad argument for nationalisation.

Hon. F. DAVIS: The point I want to make is that the people as a whole are interested in the profit-making character of the railway system, and the profits that are made are for the benefit of the whole people, whereas the profits made by a tramway in competition with a railway service go into the pockets of comparatively a few. Good for the greatest number is far preferable to good for the few as in this case, and therefore I hold that rivalry between a municipal scheme or a private scheme and a State service is not a good thing, nor is it in the best interests of the whole of the people of the State. For a people, per medium of a service, whether tram or railway, to give away large profits, or allow them to be taken away and run into other channels, when they should be placed in the coffers of the State for the benefit of the whole, is, to my mind, a mild form of insanity, because by acts of that kind people are deliberately robbing themselves, and men who rob themselves cannot claim to be

very wise or sensible. One other reason why I support the purchase of the trams is that the undivided control of the two systems by the one department would make for greater efficiency. I was speaking only yesterday to a member of the House who, less than two years ago, visited New South Wales, and he informed me that it was astonishing the distance one could travel in the Sydney trams for a less sum than one can travel for on the trams in Perth, and he commended them very highly for their efficiency and cheapness. In Sydney the railways and the trams are owned by the Government and controlled by one department; they are a national concern; and I hold that, in proportion to population, what New South Wales can do, we in Western Australia ought to be able to do, or confess ourselves to be very inferior to the people in the East. I was surprised to hear several members remark on what is termed "trades hall domination." When I hear that phrase used, I have a curious mixture of feelings. Various feelings struggle for the mastery. I am partly amused, I am partly disgusted, and various other feelings rise in me, because it has been stated an interminable number of times, both on the platform and in the Press, that members of the party with which I am associated are pledged only to the extent of the principles they advocate in public as outlined in what is known as the Labour party's platform. That has been stated with such wearisome reiteration that one gets tired of having to state it again, and as I do not think that any man of intelligence who carefully considers the situation can possibly be ignorant of the fact, when I hear the cry raised it appears to me that none but those who will not see could fail to see that members of the Labour party are no more bound or dominated by what is called trades hall than any other member or section of the community. In fact, when I hear that cry, I really may be pardoned if sometimes the thought rushes into my mind, "Now, really, into what category does this man come? Is it possible that he is either a fool or a rogue"? Because it seems to me

that he is either one or the other, and one may be pardoned for classifying him in one of these categories—foolish for not knowing the position, or unfair if, knowing the position, he deliberately states a position that is not correct. I sincerely trust that this cry will not be raised in future; because it is possible for members of the party with which I am associated, if so they choose, to be just as severe and sarcastic, and a good deal more so, as the members who use this parrot-like cry. In common fairness and justice I think we might be accorded a certain amount of fairness and equity equally with the members of any other party, political or otherwise. The mover of the amendment is certainly thorough in what he says. He goes the whole hog in his statements, and in asserting that the rights of one or more men should prevail, he went to the extent of asserting that the right of one man should stand against the whole community.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: So it should, if it is a right.

Hon. F. DAVIS: If that contention is carried to a logical conclusion, it might create some very peculiar positions. If in regard to land, for instance, a right were acquired by purchase or other means to a very large area of land, the position might be a peculiar one. This may be illustrated by an incident I read of quite recently in one of the magazines. In one of the inland towns of the United States, a gentleman going along the road saw three boys who attracted his notice. Two of them were sitting on the road smoking cigarettes with a lordly air, while one boy was perched on the fence with a very despondent look on him, which particularly arrested the attention of the passer-by. He said to the boys, "What is the game"? One of the boys on the road answered, "This is John D. Rockefeller," indicating his companion on the road. "And I am Pierpont Morgan; do you see"? "Sure" said the stranger, "But who is the boy on the fence"? "Oh," replied the boy, "he is an ordinary citizen of the United States." "But what does he do on the fence, and why does he look so glum over this business"? was the question. The boy replied, "It is like this:

John D. Rockefeller and I own the United States, and we have told the boy to get off the earth, and he has got." Possibly if the idea of one man's rights against the whole community were maintained in every instance, some very extreme and peculiar positions might arise. I think it occurs to most reasonable men that the rights of the majority should certainly prevail against the rights of any one man.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: You mean the rights of the two boys against the one on the fence.

Hon. F. DAVIS: No, I say the rights of the majority. The hon. member ought to be fair, at least. I hold it is wrong that the rights of one man should prevail against the community.

Hon. C. Sommers: Would you not compensate the injured man?

Hon. F. DAVIS: I am referring merely to the point made that the rights of one man should stand against the community. I regret that Mr. Colebatch should have raised the question of the requirements of the agricultural districts as against those of the State. I presume that every member will do what he thinks fair and equitable in the interests of all. If the principle involved in the Bill appears to him to be right, I take it that in justice to his constituents, and more particularly to the State, each hon. member will do what he thinks right and fair. It seems to me that to pit the agricultural interests against those of the State is simply to appeal to local prejudices.

Hon. C. Sommers: Mr. Colebatch did not do that.

Hon. F. DAVIS: Then my hearing did not serve me aright.

Hon. C. Sommers: Nor your understanding.

Hon. F. DAVIS: The point was reported in the *West Australian*. Agricultural railways were referred to by the hon. member, which means country against town, and to my mind to appeal to one section of the community as against another is not right.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: But agricultural railways are in the interests both of the local district and of the City.

Hon. F. DAVIS: To my mind any appeal to local feeling is not wise.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: The Minister told us that the development of the country had made Perth. Now you say that in advocating agricultural railways I was opposing Perth.

Hon. F. DAVIS: I said it was regrettable to pit the needs of the country districts against those of the town. The question at issue can be decided on its merits, apart from appealing to the prejudices of one section as against another. I trust hon. members will deal with the question on its merits. The greatest good to the greatest number is the point that should appeal to us in this discussion. I trust hon. members will go fairly into the matter, and give to the question the thought and care and justice demanded.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE (North-East): I would like briefly to put my position before members this evening in connection with the measure under discussion. It seems to me that the stage has been reached when either the Government or a trust elected by the various corporate bodies interested in the metropolitan area must take in hand the facilities for the transit of residents and others in and around the district. In the alternative the people of the metropolis must make up their minds that they are going to put up with a very indifferent tram service for at least a period of thirteen years. At the end of that period, I have no hesitation in saying, the local governing bodies will be in a position to undertake the service on their own behalf, and in the best interests of the ratepayers and residents. The Bill does not provide for the municipalisation of the tramway service in any shape or form. I regret this, because I am to a great extent an advocate of the municipalisation of public utilities. I have had the honour of being connected with the municipality of Kalgoorlie, which was the first municipality in Western Australia to municipalise its lighting system, and my experience there has shown me that in a work of this kind a municipality can do such service to the residents in municipalising public utilities that I am inclined to go further and favour the municipalisation of the tramway system of Perth. As I have

said, the municipalisation of the tramway system is not provided for in the Bill, so that my difficulty is to decide between the position continuing in *statu quo*, or the nationalising of the system, as proposed by the Government. Much as I would prefer municipalising the Tramway of Perth, I am prepared to support their nationalisation if there is no alternative. I am prepared to support the Government ownership of trams, but only under certain conditions. In the first place I should like to be satisfied that the majority of the residents in the metropolitan area are in favour of nationalisation. In the second place I wish to be satisfied that a full measure of justice is going to be done to those who have undoubted valuable reversionary rights in the tramways. In the next place I think the House should be satisfied that the expenditure of a million of money for this tramway service is not going to retard in any way the building of agricultural and mining railways, and that it is not going to in any way at all prevent the development of our primary industries. Now, taking the first condition, namely the feeling satisfied that a majority of the residents of the metropolitan area are in favour of the scheme put forward by the Government: with others here I think it would be a fair thing to take a referendum, and I think that referendum should be taken on the roll of the Legislative Assembly. We would then get a fair indication of the desires of the majority of adults in the metropolitan area.

Hon. R. G. Ardagb: What about the ratepayers not on the Assembly roll?

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: The easiest way would be to take the Assembly roll, because every adult is entitled to be on that roll, and if he is not on it it is his own fault.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Why not take the ratepayers' roll?

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: No, I do not think so. In my second condition I say a fair and full measure of justice should be done to those with reversionary rights in the tramway system. I am not going to vote away those rights in connection with the Bill. I believe that if the Gov-

ernment are going to nationalise the tramways, the ratepayers of Perth should receive fair compensation for what will have been taken away from them. In regard to the third condition which I would impose, namely that the House should be satisfied the spending of the money on this tramway system is not going to retard the development of primary industries, I mentioned the fact that one million would probably be spent on the service. The Government propose to pay £475,000 for the property. But the expenditure is not going to stop there; that is merely the initial outlay. They tell us that if they take over the trams they are going to effect very extensive improvements, and I take it that before the tramway system is put on a basis such as the Government indicate, the expenditure will in all probability amount to one million sterling, if it does not exceed that sum. I want to point out the financial position of the State as it is to-day, or rather, as it was at the end of the year. In December, 1911, the State owed 21½ millions. That was the actual debt, allowing for the accumulated sinking fund. That debt is equal to £72 per head of the population. The interest bill for the year on that amount represents £1,100,000, or more than one-fourth the total revenue of the State. That is in the vicinity of £4 per head of the population. Each million borrowed will add over £3 to the debt per head of the population. Only the other day the Premier, speaking at Albany, said that to carry out the whole of the works which it was desired the Government should undertake would necessitate the borrowing of six millions. If that six millions be borrowed—and I take it if the present Administration remain in power they will go on steadily borrowing until they reach that amount—it will add £20 per head to the loan indebtedness of the State, making a total indebtedness of £92 per head of the population. In looking up the statistics of the Commonwealth I find that in New South Wales for the past ten years the full indebtedness per head of the population has been in the vicinity of £54; in Victoria it has never exceeded £43 during the last ten

years; in Queensland it has remained in the vicinity of from £75 to £77. The South Australian figures are the same. In Tasmania it is between £50 and £60, and in Western Australia it has gone up to as high as £83 per head. If the Government go on with their policy, and borrow six millions, the total indebtedness of the State per head of the population will be £92. I think this should give cause for reflection on the part of the Government. The statistics of the other States show that their indebtedness is very much lower than ours, and the question is, have we not reached the danger mark? I am not going to propose that the Government should cease borrowing. My point is that in this case they are going to spend a million of money in a work which could very well be undertaken by the local governing bodies, by a Greater Perth: and the local governing bodies would probably raise the money on debentures, which would not affect the borrowing powers of the State at all. I want to admit straight away that this proposition will be a profitable one. I have no doubt whatever that it will be a very profitable proposition; but I say that I would prefer to see it carried out by the local governing bodies rather than see the Government take it in hand. There are other works throughout the State crying out for the attention of the Government, and I think it would be very much better if the Government took these other works in hand and left this matter to the local governing bodies. Now, as I have said, I would like to see these conditions fulfilled before supporting the measure. It is not my intention to support the amendment. I intend to support the second reading. I am going to keep an open mind on the question. At present my inclination is to support the appointment of a select committee to go into the matter. With others who have spoken I think that it would not make the slightest difference if the Bill were hung up for a week or two. That would give ample opportunity to enable a referendum of the people of the metropolitan area to be taken, and would give the select committee time to take evidence from ratepayers

of Perth and those interested, and it would also give members an opportunity of seeing whether, in carrying out this proposal, the Government will be incurring an expenditure which might not be better used in works, if not of a more reproductive nature, at any rate works which will help the opening up and development of the State. In all probability I shall support the appointment of a select committee, not with the idea of killing the Bill, because if we are not to be allowed to municipalise the trams, in all probability the next best thing will be for the Government to take them over.

Hon. W. PATRICK (Central): I am rising simply to give reasons why I am going to vote in a particular direction. I am not going to say anything about the Trades Hall. I am going to stick to the question before the House for two or three minutes. I am sorry the leader of the House is not in his place. Assuming that the leader of the House is determined to stick to what he said he would, and also to what the Honorary Minister stated, the Government are not prepared for any compromise, but I have sufficient faith in human nature to think it is quite possible that they may change their minds when the whole of this question is thrashed thoroughly before a select committee, which I think will be the best thing to do. Of course I may say straight out that I am in favour of municipalisation. I can clearly understand why supporters of the Government are in favour of nationalisation. It is part of their creed, and they are quite right in advocating it. They believe it is the best thing and, according to the leader of the House, a municipality has practically no rights when the State comes in. That is a most extraordinary doctrine. So far as the management of public utilities by the State, or by municipalities are concerned, the municipalities composing Perth and the suburbs—the future greater Perth—would manage the trams much better than any Government could possibly do. They are on the spot, it would be in their interest and in the interest of the city to make the system as perfect as possible, and in looking after

the interest of the city they would be looking after the interest of the State.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: That is what the Government will do.

Hon. W. PATRICK: I do not think we have had any authoritative expression of opinion from any source which would lead us to believe that the Government have been asked to nationalise the trams. As far as the people of Perth are concerned, they have elected a council and a mayor to look after their interests and until that mayor and the councillors have been sent about their business, it is their duty to carry out their ideas from their point of view. I do not believe there is a single councillor representing Perth who is in favour of confiscating rights which belong to them under their agreement with the tramway company. It seems that some of the arguments used by the advocates of nationalisation were somewhat unfortunate. Mr. Kirwan contrasted the Sydney trams with the Perth trams. I am perfectly aware that at the present time the tramway system in Sydney is a fairly good one, though it is not to be compared with some of the other tramway systems, for instance, the tramway system in Adelaide. The Adelaide tramway system is not nationalised; it is being managed by a trust for the benefit of the city of Adelaide, and of the suburbs, but I say the comparison was somewhat unfortunate because the present tramway system in Sydney is considered by the Government of New South Wales so bad that, according to an utterance made eight or ten days ago, it will require five to seven millions of money to make the system suitable and up-to-date. It took the Government of New South Wales from 20 to 25 years to change from the worst tramway system on the globe without any exception to the present system. I have very vivid recollections of travelling on the old tramway system in Sydney and I have travelled a good bit in different portions of the globe, and nowhere was anything so bad or dangerous as the system of tramways run by the Government of New South Wales until a few years ago. I think the illustration made by Mr. Davis was somewhat unfortunate when he men-

tioned that before there were any facilities for travelling by train from Kalgoorlie to Boulder, the railway system was so badly managed and there was so little accommodation that people had to hold on to the outside of the carriages. He also stated that immediately the tramway system was inaugurated, the people left the Government railways and travelled on the trams. That was a splendid argument that the Government were incapable of managing the service properly. But my chief argument in favour of municipalisation—and strange to say the argument has been used to a very small extent indeed during this interesting debate—is that we must remember, even supposing the Sydney tramway system were a success, it so happens that that is the only national tramway system as far as I know. If members want to know anything about tramway systems they should go to the old country.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: To Glasgow.

Hon. W. PATRICK: Yes, to Glasgow, and they will find the system there run by the municipality that brings in approximately over £900,000 a year, provides a service that costs less than one penny, and serves over a million people within a radius of 14 miles. Nationalisation in Great Britain was just as possible as it is here; it would have been as easy for the Government to confiscate the rights of Glasgow as for the Government here to confiscate the rights of Perth. We hope that some day some of the young men like Mr. Cornell, who in years to come I have no doubt will become a good deal wiser than he is at present, will probably see a great city in this State of Western Australia that can be compared with Glasgow. Certainly there is every hope of it in a country approximately a million square miles in extent with unlimited resources in every direction. It would be nothing wonderful if there was a city of a million people within the lifetime of some of the people in this House of old fossils, as some people call it. The city of New York contains about 3½ millions of people, yet my father was there when it contained only 200,000 people, so it is quite possible, and what a magnificent as-

set would belong to Perth when that great city is built. I shall vote for the second reading and then for the proposal for a select committee, so that this matter can be thoroughly thrashed out and that the Government may have an opportunity of doing justice. My main reason for voting in that direction is that I consider no Government have any right to confiscate the rights which belong to any person in law, unless they are detrimental to the interests of the country. No one pretends for a moment, and the Government do not pretend for a moment, that if the Perth council continue to be the owners of the trams—at present Perth owns the trams and has simply leased them—they are prepared to sell their rights to the Government. The Government, however, say “No, we will confiscate them or rather extinguish them”; that is a new word for confiscate. And the Government say that unless we give them the power to extinguish these rights the Bill will be dropped. It would be a very good thing if the Bill were dropped if that is the only way they are prepared to deal with a great question such as this. There is no precedent in Australia, and certainly in no other portion of the British Empire, for a wholesale confiscation of this nature. Mr. Jenkins last night said there was a precedent but he had forgotten the circumstances of the case. He referred to the cyanide patent belonging to the Australian Gold and Copper Company. I remember a good deal about that. As a matter of fact the Government of Western Australia never proposed to confiscate the rights of that company, but at the request of nearly all the municipalities in the State, and a good number of others they introduced a measure to make the Executive for the time being, the Government, a court which would decide whether the patent was to be renewed when it lapsed in a year or two from that time. They were going to make the Executive the judges of whether the patent should be renewed. Of course they could not possibly introduce a measure to deal with one patent only and they introduced a general law which would deal with all patents. They passed this law, a very

foolish and most undemocratic thing, to shift the decision of a great question of any kind from the Supreme Court to an ephemeral body such as the Executive.

Hon. W. Kingsmill : They were undemocratic.

Hon. W. PATRICK : They were very undemocratic when they passed that law. I forget the composition of the Government, but that does not matter. The Bill was referred to the Imperial Parliament and it was thrown out. The matter was then referred to the Supreme Court, and the Court refused to renew the patent on the ground that the owners had been sufficiently remunerated during the time they possessed rights under it. I have no doubt, as Mr. McKenzie has said, that the tramway system, whether it belongs to the municipality or the Government, will be a profitable concern. But speaking as a country member, apart altogether from whether there will be a profit or a loss, I say that while the city of Perth is entitled to all the profits that may accrue from the enterprise, the State has no right to take from the municipal authorities that which belongs to them. Consequently, while I will vote for the second reading, I shall certainly not agree in Committee to anything in the nature of confiscation.

Hon. C. McKENZIE (South-East) : I desire to say a few words on this question because I consider it to be a matter that cannot be brushed aside lightly. I cannot see eye to eye with Mr. Colebatch, but I would like to see a select committee appointed to go thoroughly into the matter, because up to the present time there is very little known about it. Being a man of considerable municipal experience, I naturally lean towards municipalisation, and I, for one, if it is decided to nationalise this service, want to see the municipal authorities get whatever may be due to them. We have heard that the municipal council have no rights, and, although I am only a layman, and am not able to say anything definite on the question, I consider that this is one of the points on which we might get some information from the select committee. I hope, therefore, that this committee will

be appointed, and that it will go thoroughly into the matter. It is of such importance to the city that it should be thoroughly well understood before we commit ourselves to anything definite. As members are doubtless aware, I am a country member, and like many other country members, I have not had the opportunity of hearing what the citizens of Perth think about this question. It seems to me, however, that there certainly have not been any demonstrations on the question of the purchase of the tramways, and that the matter has been taken quietly. Consequently, one must be shy about putting the Bill through until more is known of it. It is my intention to support the second reading, but I sincerely hope the select committee will be appointed to go thoroughly into it.

Hon. E. McLARTY (South-West) : It is not my intention to make any lengthy remarks on the Bill. In the first place my opinion is that the tramway system should belong to the municipality, and I think that the Perth City Council should have any profits accruing from that service, and that these profits should be for the benefit of the ratepayers, which, of course, means for the benefit of the State generally. However, I am satisfied that the people desire a change from the present system, and I think it is perhaps an opportune time to make a change. The municipality have not the opportunity of taking over the tramways, and I certainly support the Government in the action they propose to take. I have no intention of referring to trades hall matters, as many hon. members have done. I am satisfied to declare that I want a better and a cheaper service. The charges at the present time are exorbitant, and while it is well known that I am not an advocate of nationalisation, in which I do not believe one bit—and if I differ from my friends on the other side I do so with the greatest respect to that party—I repeat, I am not in favour of nationalisation, and I consider that the service could be as well, if not better, managed by municipal control. At all events, the great question is whether the city council have any rights. There can

be no question that there are rights, and we should determine to what extent those rights should be considered. I am prepared to vote for the second reading although my sympathies to some extent are with the mover of the amendment, but I would prefer to see the Government take it over rather than that the system should remain in the company's hands. I think it is bound to be a profitable undertaking, whether it is municipalised or nationalised, and I am quite satisfied that it will be made to pay handsomely, even with considerably reduced fares. I shall not say anything further except to declare my intention of supporting the second reading, but if I had my own way I should have preferred to have seen the purchase effected by the municipal authorities.

Hon. B. C. O'BRIEN (Central) : It is difficult at this stage to break any new ground on this question. I am sorry that Mr. Colebatch saw fit to move such a drastic amendment, but by the tone of the speeches in this Chamber, it is not going to get very much support. One or two members who are likely to support Mr. Colebatch were rather uncompromising in their attitude. Mr. Connolly, for instance, has been very uncompromising to this measure, and he went so far as to say that practically there had been no demand by the people of the metropolis and in the immediate suburban areas for a change in the system. It must be a well known fact, and it is not a matter of yesterday or of to-day, but for the last two or three years, that there has been a clamour for a better and an improved tramway service in the metropolitan area. It is admitted by everyone that it is necessary that we should have a better service. Having arrived at that stage the question then arises, in what way should the system be improved in the interests of the people. I am in sympathy with the remarks made by a number of members that, if there are rights, which the mayor and councillors of Perth claim, those rights should be respected, but it is a difficult question. The rights to which they say they are entitled, and which they declare are now likely to be confis-

cated, I cannot see where they come in. It will be 27 years before this property becomes the absolute possession of the city council. We know that the city is being rebuilt and extended in every direction, and are we to sit back and suffer the wretched service we have at the present time? In the absence of a better method the Government have come to the assistance of the people and they have graciously told the people that they will give them a better system than they have had in the past. The system at the present time is wretched indeed, and that is known to everyone. Comparisons have been made with the railway service, but I think that it compares very favourably with the services in any other country, and with Government control of the tramway service in a rapidly growing city, such as we are living in at the present time, could be made to dovetail with the railway service, and in my humble opinion, the tramways could be worked more advantageously under a nationalised than under a municipalised scheme. I am not going to labour the question any further. I am strongly in favour of the Bill. Mr. Kingsmill's suggestion might be very reasonable, but I do not think it is necessary to refer the matter to a select committee. I intend to oppose the amendment and also the suggestion made by Mr. Kingsmill. There is another matter I would like to mention, and one of my colleagues referred to it to-night. I think that it is painful that we should have to refer to these matters continually, and although I do not think it is the proper place to air personal grievances, I feel that I must refer to an incident of last night. When Mr. Jenkins was speaking, I made a friendly interjection and the hon. member retorted that I had to vote as I was told. On this particular question I and my colleagues, who belong to the Labour party, are as free as birds in the air to vote as we like. We are as free to vote on this as we are on nearly all other questions. It is a well known fact that we are supposed to support our platform, and we will always do so, but on other questions we are as free, as I have already said, as the birds in the air, and it is not right that we should be

compelled to continually refute statements like that made by Mr. Jenkins.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Are you free to vote against the nationalisation of any industry?

Hon. B. C. O'BRIEN: No, nationalisation is a part of the platform, but this I would like to say has not been made a strictly party question. I do not think it is necessary for me to weary the House any further. I simply desire to say that it is time the long-suffering citizens of this city obtained a better tramway service than they have at the present time, and I have very much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (in reply): The Hon. Mr. Colebatch has moved an amendment that the Bill be read this day six months. I listened carefully to his speech and I regret that, unlike other hon. members, I am not in a position to compliment him either on the manner or the matter of his address. One could have expected that when the hon. member submitted an amendment which means the rejection of the measure he would support the action he had adopted in some substantial way. We could have expected that he would supply the House with some incontrovertible facts and sound arguments in justification of the course he had decided to adopt. But what do we find? A gaudy display of rhetoric, but nothing that is calculated to influence an unbiased mind. His speech was charged with political venom and teeming with the promptings of political partisanship, and all through the hon. member made an endeavour to appeal to party prejudices. The essence of his diatribe was that he was opposed to nationalisation because a Labour Government are in power in Western Australia. This is the same hon. gentleman who, in the course of his speech, said that he was surprised to see, during the discussion of the measure in another place, so many appeals to short-sighted prejudice. The hon. member did not only appeal to short-sighted prejudice—

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: I did not say that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I had taken a note of the hon. member's remarks, and I confirmed it by referring to

the report in the *West Australian*. The hon. member not only appealed to short-sighted prejudice, but also to small-minded and small-souled prejudice. The hon. member is pre-eminently a party politician; he occupies a high position in the Liberal League, and I do not think he should take up a stand in this Chamber which would give anyone the impression, perhaps unjustly, that he is pushing along the political barrow of that organisation through the medium of this House.

Hon. F. Connor: What has this to do with party politics?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Absolutely nothing, but Mr. Colebatch said a lot that had nothing to do with the measure under consideration. He stated that nationalisation under the present conditions meant control by the Trades Hall. I say that is a foul slander.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Have you seen the black list?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member had no justification for making that statement. He implied that we were false to our oaths of office and were perjurers; that is exactly what his words meant. It is tantamount to saying that our acts of administration are influenced by someone outside. He has made no effort, nor have other hon. members who also cast similar insinuations, in the direction of supplying facts in proof of what they asserted. Mr. Connolly stated that some time ago I met a deputation of prison warders who said that they had put us in office and that we must give them eight hours a day. It is about six months ago since I had the pleasure of introducing the eight hours system in the Fremantle gaol. I was not approached by the warders at all, but I saw the necessity of introducing the eight hours principle, and, although I was informed by the Comptroller General that it would prove unworkable, I sent down the Acting Under Secretary to Fremantle, and, within a week, the whole scheme was in operation.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: This is not six months ago; this is about two months ago.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Then about six weeks ago I asked a delegation from the Claremont Hospital for the

Insane to wait on me in order to assist me in my efforts to give an eight hours day to the staff of that institution. I also invited Dr. Montgomery to be present, but during the whole course of these proceedings no such words were uttered, and there was no reason why they should be uttered by any member of the deputation. The hon. member insinuated that I was under the domination of outside influence, but I have just as much right to say that the hon. member himself is a creature and servant of the Liberal League. I do not wish to say that, but I have just as much right to make that statement in regard to him as he had to make the remarks he did in regard to myself. Have we yielded in every instance to the demands of the labour bodies? We have had trouble with our own workmen in fully half a dozen instances, and we pointed to the Arbitration Court in several cases when we did not recognise the justice of their demands. Sir Edward Wittenoom, the other night, referred to the increase of wages to the railway servants. That increase was never solicited by the railway men, but within a week of our taking office, in accordance with our pledges before the general election, we made that increase. But while hon. members failed to produce one instance of domination by the labour organisations I could give numerous instances in which requests for increased wages have been made and absolutely refused. The exact cases must be fresh in the minds of every hon. member. Now what are the arguments which Mr. Colebatch submitted against nationalisation? That some unspecified trains, running to some unnamed places, have been from four to eleven hours late: that is the sum total of his argument against nationalisation. That, if it is anything, is a charge against the Commissioner of Railways, who is removed from political control. Surely, if such a grave state of affairs has arisen the hon. member should have taken action in this Chamber. He has asked a number of questions in regard to many small matters, but although he has been in this House since the 30th June, he has not asked one solitary question in regard to a matter, which is of such momentous im-

portance, as trains in the country districts being from four to eleven hours late, not once, but on many occasions. But this and other arguments of the hon. member have nothing to do with the tramway purchase; in fact, a great deal of the hon. member's speech was paltriness and pettiness itself. Because trains are late, the hon. member is opposed to State control of all undertakings, and he says he is not prepared to trust the administration of a Labour Government. If that is his attitude, he should oppose every piece of legislation submitted to this Chamber by the Labour Government, and he should even oppose Mr. Kingsmill's innocent Game Bill, because there is every indication that the Labour Government will have the control and the administration of that measure for some months to come. The hon. member does not trust us, but the people trust us; he does not trust the Premier, but the people of Western Australia have trusted him, and it is simply a question as to whether the judgment of the whole of the people is sounder than the judgment of the hon. member. The hon. gentleman stated that we are making a present to the tramway company of £100,000, but how he arrives at that conclusion I am at a loss to understand.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: There is the Premier's statement on pages 641-2 of *Hansard*.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is one of the Premier's statements, but the Premier further stated that if the valuation was based on the fact that the trams would revert to the city council in 1939, the value at the present time would be £400,000, a difference of £75,000.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: But they had other reversionary rights as well.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They have other rights, but they would have to pay for them. At the end of 1939, however, they would get the whole of the tramway service within the city boundaries without payment. The apparent object of the hon. member's statement is to create a bad impression; people outside will believe that this is a very bad deal for the State. Now when we commenced negotiations the bedrock price asked by the tramway company was £500,000: that was

the amount stated to the late Premier. That gentleman admitted in the Legislative Assembly that that was the amount which the tramway company wanted, and he considered that the Government in deciding to pay £475,000 were making a very good deal, and that if he had had the opportunity during the time he was in power he would have grasped it. Although in June last the amount at which the undertaking was offered by the tramway company was half a million, and although subsequently they improved the service by the expenditure of some £13,000, yet, on the top of that extra expenditure, we were able to purchase the system at £25,000 less than the price at which it had been offered to the previous Government. The valuation shows that £400,000 would be a fair price if we handed over the trams to the city council in 1939, but we do not propose in this Bill to do that.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: The Commissioner of Railways said that £400,000 would be a fair value, if you respect the city council's right.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes, based on the reversion to the city council in 1939. Now I contend that this purchase will do no injustice to Perth at all, because the Government must considerably extend this tramway system, and besides that, hon. members can safely rely that the fares will be reduced. The Government will not seek for any extravagant profit, and if the fares are reduced and the service is extended, as it must be, then a large amount of business which does not at present reach Perth will be diverted in this direction. Land values will go up in the city and the city council will get back, in return for the loss of the tramways, considerably more in the shape of rates than they could expect to get under the three per cents. mentioned in the Bill. Hitherto they have been receiving only something like £900 a year under the contract with the tramway company; but if, through the action of the Government, through the developmental policy of the Government, through the extension of the tramway services, Perth is built up to a greater extent than it otherwise would be, then the revenue of

the city council must be, and will be, considerably increased. I contend the municipal council have no rights as against the Government in a matter of this kind. There are instances in which a municipality would have rights against the Government; for example, if a municipal office were built from municipal funds it would be most unjust, and certainly it would be confiscation, for the Government to take charge of that municipal office without offering the municipality compensation. The streets are not the property of the municipality, they are the property of the Crown, and of the people of Western Australia. The previous Government resumed a large area of land in Geraldton on Marine-terrace, the main street, about 15 acres of land closely built upon, and they blocked up no less than 30 chains of Marine-terrace. They disfigured the town permanently by their action, and the loss of rates to the municipality is considerable, but no protest was entered by the people of the town against the Government's action, because they recognised the step taken was in the interests of the people and that it was in the interests of the railway service that the resumption should take place. The only request they made to the Government was to make Eleonor-street a chain wide and put it in good order and they would be satisfied.

Hon. W. Patriek: They did that according to the existing law; they did not require any Act of Parliament to do that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Before the construction of this tramway could be undertaken an Act of Parliament had to be passed, and I maintain if Parliament had the power to create this right, Parliament has the power to take it away if it considers it necessary and advisable and in the best interests of the body of the people to do so. There is a vast amount of State money spent annually in Perth, and there has been a large amount of State money spent in Perth for many years past. In the Zoological Gardens, the Museum, the public gardens, the parks and other avenues this money has been expended. Country members have protested against

this expenditure amounting to hundreds of thousands, but what has been the reply of members representing the city constituencies? This was the reply: "This is not a park belonging to Perth, the Zoo does not belong to Perth, this museum does not belong to Perth, it belongs to the citizens of Western Australia. Why are you complaining about the expenditure of money on it?" Yet now, when it comes to the question of trams, we find that the tramway service, instead of belonging to the people of Western Australia, belongs to a few ratepayers of Perth, in fact, it does not even belong to the residents of Perth, but to the property owners of Perth.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: The municipal council have no reversionary rights in the Zoo or the Museum.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Colebatch, in his concluding remarks, explained the whole reason for the milk in the cocoanut. He said this purchase would check the construction of agricultural railways. It is the same old fright I experienced when I approached members in connection with the purchase of the Midland Railway Company some seven or eight years ago. The motion did not reach this House, but anticipating its reaching us I had met several members representing agricultural constituencies and sounded them on the question, and they said that if the Government bought the Midland Railway Company's undertaking it would mean the expenditure of a million and a half and the State would not be able to go on the money market for more loans with which to construct agricultural railways in other parts of Western Australia. This is a very selfish view to take and a very parochial view, but it is a view that I am afraid is likely to influence some hon. members.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: The financial position is very different to-day.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes; and I have not the slightest doubt there will be no difficulty in raising the loan which is necessary in connection with this Bill. We will not even require the whole of

the money in order to effect the purchase. The company are prepared to take bonds to a reasonable extent, so hon. members need not let this matter weigh too heavily on them, if they are afraid of any financial crisis that may arise in consequence of an increase in the indebtedness of the State. There is nothing wrong in borrowing money so long as we have an asset to show, and here we have a tramway showing a profit of £41,000 a year. I anticipate, indeed I am in a position to state, that the profits will not reach that amount should the Government take over the trams, because it is intended that there shall be a very large amount written off each year by way of depreciation, something like £16,000 a year. If the Government make this purchase, it must not be expected that the same profits will continue, and if the profits, at any rate, for some years to come, will appear as nothing like £41,000, it will simply be due to the bookkeeping system that will be adopted. Now, the question is whether if this offer is to be rejected, the city council will be able to buy. I do not wish to cast any reflection upon them, but we are all aware of the beautiful mess they have made in connection with the Perth Gas Company, and we know what a burden has been cast upon the ratepayers of Perth in consequence. Mr. Kingsmill put the case very clearly. The Perth City Council will not acquire the control of the whole of the tramway service in 1939. We must bear that in mind. We are not only taking away from them reversionary rights that apply within the City boundaries. The Perth City Council will have nothing to do with the tramways outside their boundaries in 1939 unless they purchase from the outside municipalities.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: How could the outside municipalities run trams without them?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They would have to enter into fresh contracts with these municipalities. Some members would lead us to believe that the whole tramway system is affected by this Bill, but all the municipalities and roads boards with the exception of Perth have thoroughly agreed with the principle of the

measure and sacrificed and abandoned all their rights.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: They never had any.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Of course the other municipalities had rights; they had reversionary rights, although the values of the undertakings at the expiration of their contracts had to be decided in certain cases by arbitration. The only champions of the ratepayers of Perth that we have been able to discover are in this Chamber. There has been no protest against the action of the Government to any extent in introducing this Bill. It was well known throughout the State and the city that the Government proposed to take over with compensation the reversionary rights of the Perth municipality; but there has not even been a genuine anonymous letter in the newspapers against it. On the other hand, we have the whole of the Press of Perth at our back. There has not been a public meeting of denunciation; there has not been a single demonstration against. On the other hand, there have been public meetings which have supported the purchase, and there have been demonstrations in its favour. The only opposition emanates from a few city councillors and the mayor of the municipality of Perth. If the Perth City Council were satisfied with their case they would have consented to a referendum; but though they have had abundant opportunity, they have not done so, showing that they were afraid, showing that they dared not submit it to the people of Perth who have a just right to be considered in this matter. If they had had the courage to submit this to a referendum there would have been some excuse for hon. members' opposition.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Have they been asked for a referendum?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Why was there no referendum? We could not take a referendum without Parliamentary authority. Mr. Colebatch's statement with regard to the increased price of shares owing to the sale is not correct. There are £200,000 worth of shares, 100,000 preference and 100,000 ordinary. The preference have been at par for years past; there has been no material increase in the price of the preference shares. The ordin-

any shares two years ago were from 12s. to 15s., and the present price is 22s., easily accounted for by the fact that the company's profits have increased £10,000 in the past year. That is the reason for the increase, and not the fact that the Government had decided to buy. Mr. Sanderson says the federalisation of the railways may mean the federalisation of the trams. I am not a prophet, but if they can be federalised under State control I should say they can also be federalised under municipal control, so that the hon. member's statement need not be taken into consideration. However, it is a matter we need not trouble ourselves about at this particular stage. Sir Edward Wittenoom said that the great question was how the trams could best be run for the convenience of the people who use them. That is the crux of the whole question, and it is what hon. members should carefully and cautiously consider when they are passing judgment on the Bill. But I was very much surprised to hear Sir Edward Wittenoom say that the Government could never say "no" to any request for an increase of wages made to them. That is not correct. Every day we are saying "no" to requests for increased wages coming from some quarter or another. The Minister for Railways has had to say "no" repeatedly; the Minister for Works has had to say "no" repeatedly, and I have had to say "no." In fact only two weeks ago I was cited to the Arbitration Court because I had refused a request for an increase of wages, and refused it not once but twice.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: It shows the pressure that will be brought to bear on you.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No unfair influence has ever been attempted with me or any other Minister so far as I am aware. Eight years ago I was for 12 months or so in a Labour Government, and I have been 10 months in this Labour Government, and there has been no undue political influence attempted to be exercised on me, or, as far as I know, on any other Minister. The position is that the Perth City Council have no rights so far as the streets or tramways are concerned against the Government of Western Australia or, in other words, against the people of

Western Australia. They are simply the trustees for Parliament and through Parliament the trustees for the people. What Parliament gave, Parliament, in this connection at any rate, can take away; and whatever the ratepayers have paid for out of their own money, they are entitled to retain, and, in my opinion, they should be fully compensated for. But, apart from that, it seems to me they are not entitled to anything in the form of compensation. Mr. Connolly asked "Are we to get value for our money"? His Government made a desperate attempt, and his Premier made a desperate attempt to get the price reduced below £500,000. Having regard to that fact I do not see any grounds for complaint now that we have succeeded in securing an offer of the undertaking for £475,000. The hon. member says that this odd £75,000 is to be taken from the Perth City Council. He forgets altogether that there are other local authorities concerned, and which must be considered. Now he wants us to state whether the fares will be reduced. I do not know whether he would take it very much into consideration in coming to a decision, but he wants a definite statement as to whether the fares are going to be reduced. Although I stated to-night I am of opinion the fares will be reduced, I am not prepared to pin the Government down to that, to give a definite assurance that if the Bill goes through the fares will be immediately reduced. But I feel pretty certain there will be a reduction, and also that there will be widespread extensions of the system. During the course of his speech Mr. Gawler said that Parliament could raze your house to the ground if it wished; and Mr. Cullen interjected—I hope I did not understand him correctly—it seemed to me he interjected "If it was composed as the other place is composed, it would do so to-morrow."

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Oh no, no such thing.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Well, I am very glad to learn that I misunderstood the hon. member. There is no doubt the tramway system can never be municipalised under existing conditions. After 1939 the city council could only run the

trams within its own boundaries. It could not go outside; consequently it would have to make contracts with the other municipalities; hence chaos and confusion would reign supreme. The only remedy is nationalisation. Many hon. members may be opposed to nationalisation as a rule, but under the peculiar circumstances of the case I think they must come to the conclusion that in this instance the tramway service should be nationalised. I may say the Government have no desire to confiscate; but at the same time they have no intention of leaving a legacy of perpetual endowment to the city of Perth. That has been well thought out, and the decision arrived at. If Perth is not prepared to accept the conditions laid down in the Bill, then Perth must abide by the consequences. There is no opposition in Perth, no genuine opposition to this measure. The opposite emanates from a few only, not even from the great body of rate-payers. I daresay that 99 out of every 100 of the general body of the people are thoroughly in sympathy with the measure and hope to see it passed.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: But their elected representatives are against it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The elected representatives very often do not carry out the will of the people who elect them. Now the honourable gentlemen who vote against the Bill will take a very serious responsibility. If there were a possibility, even a remote possibility, of municipalisation, there would perhaps be some justification for such a course. I feel certain that the ill-advised amendment moved by Mr. Colebatch will meet with the fate it so richly merits. It seems to me to be unworthy of serious consideration. Should the measure be defeated now, or conditions imposed which the Government could not in justice accept—considering that they are the representatives of the people of Western Australia at the present time—if such conditions are imposed, and if the Government are not in a position to accept those conditions, and the Bill be rejected, then this House will have to take the full measure of responsibility. But I have sufficient confidence in hon. members to feel that

they will, eventually at any rate, approach this matter with a determination to do the right thing, and that in the end the right thing will be done.

Amendment (six months) put and negatived.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Referred to Select Committee.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move—

That you do now leave the Chair for the purpose of going into Committee on the Bill.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: I move as an amendment—

That the Bill be referred to a select committee consisting of five members, namely, the Hons. J. E. Dodd, D. G. Gawler, F. Davis, A. G. Jenkins, and R. J. Lynn, with power to call for persons, papers, and records, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned; to report on Tuesday, 27th instant.

I indicated sufficiently during the few remarks I had to make on the second reading that this course would be taken by me, and I gave what I am pleased to say, from the expressions of approval which have since followed, were practically sufficient reasons why this proposal should be adopted by this Chamber. Therefore I do not propose to do more than merely formally move the motion which I have just read. There are however, one or two remarks I would like to make. Mr. Kirwan gave utterance to the sentiment that this course was adopted by those who had not the pluck to defeat the Bill in any other way. Well, Sir, that statement is just as inaccurate in fact as it was ungraceful in expression. So far as I am concerned I think I have made my position abundantly clear on the matter. I should be very long sorry to see the Bill defeated; but at the same time it contains a principle which I look upon as vicious in the extreme. The main principle of the Bill is good, but one of the details of the Bill is, to me, abhorrent. For that reason I say that a select committee should be appointed in order that a last chance of stating their case should be afforded to

those two parties who, after all, form the parties to this dispute, namely, the Government of the State on the one hand, and the city council, who see themselves about to be dispossessed of their rights, on the other. This select committee should form the arena wherein those rights may be thrashed out and valued, and if possible, some compromise, some arrangement arrived at between the two parties. That is my sole reason for moving that this Bill be referred to a select committee. I have no wish to defeat the Bill; indeed on the contrary, I wish with all my heart that the Bill may pass; and the hon. member may be assured of my good intentions when he finds I do not even propose to place myself on the committee. Indeed after the remarks of the hon. member I should be placing myself in a most invidious position if I had proposed to include myself amongst the members of that committee.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I cannot support the motion because if I did so it would be admitting the necessity, and I see no necessity whatever, for the appointment of a select committee. Every member of the House has a thorough grasp of the question. It has been fully thrashed out, amply discussed, and not only the members of the House, but the people of the whole of the metropolitan area, by this time have a thorough grasp of the question. Within a very short time the reports of the proceedings of this Chamber during the week will be available to any hon. members who wish to complete their grasp of the question between this and next sitting. After reconsideration it is not my intention to go on with the Committee stage, and I am quite willing to postpone it until next week. But so far as the appointment of a select committee is concerned I see no good reason why it should receive my support, while there are very strong reasons why it should have my opposition. The position is that a fairly large amount of rolling stock will be required by either the tramway company or the Government by the end of this year. Without this rolling stock the tramway service will be unable to carry out its obligations, and

it is necessary that the rolling stock should be ordered without delay. The position is that under the present circumstances the Government do not feel justified in getting this rolling stock. The tramway company are in exactly the same position, so if there is any great delay in dealing with this measure and coming to a decision, it will place either the Government or the tramway company in a very awkward position indeed. I simply wish to place that fact before hon. members. If it is decided against my wishes that a select committee shall be appointed, I feel certain, from the assurance given, that the report will be forthcoming with all possible speed.

Hon. E. McLarty: Would a fortnight make much difference?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not think we shall sit next week.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Then it does not mean any delay.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I do not intend to labour the question but will vote against the proposal. As far as I can ascertain for all practical purposes select committees are of very little utility. We find that royal commissions are of very little utility. I think the membership of the committee is good, but I venture to say that their labours will prove abortive as far as any concrete decision being arrived at is concerned. No select committee or royal commission can reach far enough to ascertain the true views of the people, or even the ratepayers of Perth on this matter. Were it in the province of the select committee to recommend to the House, and get the assurance that the machinery would be placed at their disposal for taking a referendum of the people, I would offer no objection.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: So it is, they can recommend anything.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes, but they cannot do it. I will vote against the proposal because I think it will be of little utility, and when they have ceased their labours we will be in the same position as we are this evening.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I desire to support this amendment. I have

not had an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the question of a select committee and most of the other members have expressed their views. Because I was the mover of the original amendment I had no opportunity of discussing the suggestion which now becomes the amendment, that this select committee should be appointed. I have been subjected to a perfect bombardment of criticism during the course of the debate, very little of which I take the least exception to. I do not mind being told that I am animated to some extent by political prejudice. I suppose all members are. The leader of the House and the Honorary Minister, whom I regard always as absolutely fair-minded men, occasionally give me the impression that even they are now and again actuated by political prejudice. But the one charge I did not expect to be levelled against me, and which I think should not have been levelled against me, was the charge of cowardice. I knew when I proposed my amendment that I had not only the whole body of the Labour party but the whole of the Press of Perth against me, and in the face of that I take it it is extraordinary that I should be charged with cowardice. I stated in an interjection during the course of the debate that I would gladly have moved that the Bill be publicly burned, and I would have no objection to that ceremony taking place on the Esplanade on a Sunday afternoon to the accompaniment of banners and brass bands. With regard to the select committee, some suggestion has been made of taking a referendum. I would like to point out that the Municipal Corporations Act contains provisions for taking a referendum in certain circumstances. It also contains another provision that does not seem to have suggested itself to some members who have discussed this question. We have been told that because there has been no public meeting of protest against what the Government is doing, therefore the ratepayers are satisfied. As a matter of fact, the whole of the indication is that the ratepayers are satisfied with what their municipal representatives are doing. If the ratepayers were dissatisfied with the mayor and councillors in

this matter they have statutory power under the Act, by the petition of only 20 ratepayers, to compel the mayor to convene a public meeting to allow the ratepayers to express their opinions. But if a referendum is to be taken, I fail to see how anyone can have the privilege of voting except the ratepayers of Perth. They are the people who have the right. It is said that people outside are willing to surrender their right. If the rights of the people of Perth are to be surrendered, they must be surrendered by the ratepayers who own those rights and not by anyone else. There is another feature I would like the select committee to remember. I should strongly object to the ratepayers of Perth being compensated for their rights if such compensation is to mean that we, the people of the State generally, are to pay for the rights twice over. I refer to the statement of the Premier that the valuations he had received were to the effect that if the rights of the citizens of Perth—there is no reference in the valuation to the outside corporations—were recognised, the value of the undertaking is £375,000. If the rights are ignored the value is £475,000. I repeat that the more valuable of these two rights, according to this valuation, is not the right which accrues at the end of 29 years of taking the cars with a certain payment, but the right which occurs at the end of the term of purchasing these trams at a valuation and without payment for the goodwill. That is the more valuable right and the Government officials value it at £100,000 less. I should strongly protest against this committee making a recommendation that we should pay the Perth Tramway Company this £100,000 for a right they have not got, and then take another £100,000 out of the pockets of the people of the State to pay to the ratepayers of Perth. There is only one other remark I wish to make on this question and that is I hope the inquiry of this select committee will be very searching. One member interjected during the course of the debate that Mr. Molloy had circularised the members of this Council and thus put his view of the case before

them. I believe Mr. Molloy did so but he did it in an open, candid manner. He was not the only person who circularised at least a section of the members of Parliament in connection with this matter. I hold in my hand a copy of another circular and I wish to say at the outset that I believe no member of the Chamber and no member of the Government would countenance anything of this kind. I bring it forward as an instance of what is likely to be done and I give it as one reason why I am prepared to admit that I have a prejudice against Labour politics as they are conducted at present. This circular is unsigned; there is no imprint on it; that is an offence against the law. It reads "Heroes specially recommended to the Government for free Sea (badges)" and then follows a list of motormen and conductors showing their names and addresses, and those are the motormen and conductors who were in the service of the Perth Tramway Company and who were working during the recent strike.

Hon. J. Cornell: I would like the hon. member to connect that with Mr. Molloy.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I mentioned that Mr. Molloy sent his circular openly and candidly to every member, and that someone else sent this in a covert and unsigned manner.

The Colonial Secretary: Who sent it?

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I do not know.

The Colonial Secretary: What is the use of bringing it forward?

Hon. F. Davis: It was not sent to all members; I have not seen it.

The Colonial Secretary: And I have not.

Hon. P. H. COLEBATCH: It was circulated amongst certain members.

Amendment (select committee) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	17
Noes	7

Majority for	10
--------------	----	----	----

AYES.

Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. J. D. Connolly	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. F. Connor	Hon. R. D. McKenzie
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. E. McLarty
Hon. D. G. Gawler	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. A. G. Jenkins	Hon. H. P. Colebatch
Hon. W. Kingsmill	(Teller).

NOES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. F. Davis	Hon. B. C. O'Brien
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. J. Cornell
Hon. J. M. Drew	(Teller).

Amendment thus passed.

BILL—WHITE PHOSPHORUS MATCHES PROHIBITION.

Message received from the Legislative Assembly notifying that the Council's amendment had been agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT—ONE WEEK.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. DREW) moved—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 27th August.

Question passed.

House adjourned at 9.33 p.m.