

the company that the holder will surrender any shares held by him exceeding one hundred shares at a price equal to the amount actually paid up on such shares, to enable other wheat-growers who may not be shareholders in the company to acquire shares. (4.) The following words are inserted at the commencement of paragraph (n) of Clause 2, namely:—"That the company's memorandum of association shall be forthwith amended so far as necessary to give effect to the foregoing covenants and," and the word "otherwise" is inserted after the words "shall not," in line 1 of the said paragraph (n).

It is only right that after 10 years the rental for this land should be re-assessed on the basis of 5 per cent. of the unimproved capital value, such value to be fixed by the Surveyor General. A similar clause operates in connection with the lease of the land to the Fremantle freezing works.

The PREMIER: I was responsible for fixing the rental at £250. I held the opinion that the company were supplying facilities that I always felt should be supplied by the Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is why I am against you.

The PREMIER: When the farmers offered to do this I said I was obliged to them, and they could do so, and that I preferred the co-operative ownership of the work, which could then only be used by the farmers themselves. I am sure no one would object to a rental based on 5 per cent. of the value of the land.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The site is worth £500 a year now.

The PREMIER: If the rent comes to more than £250, the £250 stands, but I think it will be less than that. If it be less I agree to the 5 per cent. basis. I suggest, however, that the whole question be postponed, so that the new clause may be re-drafted.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.31 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 22nd November, 1921.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE — WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS AND STATE SHIPPING SERVICE.

Interim Report presented.

Hon. J. J. Holmes brought up an interim report of the select committee referring to the Wyndham Meat Works.

Report received, read, and ordered to be printed.

On motion by Hon. J. J. Holmes the time for bringing up the report of the Select Committee upon the State Steamship service was extended until Thursday, 8th December.

SELECT COMMITTEE—CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Report presented.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the Constitution Act Amendment Bill.

Report received, read, and ordered to be printed.

BILL—INSPECTION OF MACHINERY.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT.

Recommittal.

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, Bill re-committed for the purpose of further considering Clause 2; Hon. J. Ewing in the Chair; Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 24.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Last session when the Bill was passed it contained an exemption in the case of machinery driven by a plant not exceeding one horse power. In the Bill now before us that exemption is struck out. There are several users of small machinery, such as dressmakers, who if the clause is passed with-

out amendment will be called upon to pay fees, post notices, and do everything else, such as is required of users of large machinery. While I agree as to the necessity for the registration and inspection of machinery of large horse-power, people using such small powered machinery as those I have referred to should be left to continue as in the past. The clause should be struck out. If members agree to that course it will leave the Act as it stands now.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I strongly opposed the insertion of these words when they were inserted on the motion of Mr. Lovekin last session. Mr. Lovekin gave very different reasons for putting the words in the section when the matter was discussed on that occasion. He then pointed out that private persons having machinery in their houses driven by motors of less than one horse-power would be compelled to register and submit to the conditions outlined in the Bill.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That applies now.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is not the case. Subsection 8 of Section 4 sets out that the term factory shall not include "any building, premises, or place in which any person, not being of the Chinese or other Asiatic race, is engaged in any trade, occupation or process mentioned in paragraphs 1 to 8, inclusive, of this definition at home, that is to say, in private premises used as a dwelling or in any adjacent building or structure appropriated to the use of the household and in which no steam or other mechanical power in excess of one horse-power is used in aid of the manufacturing process carried on there, and where the only persons engaged do not exceed four and are members of the same family, and dwelling there." That is an exemption with which we do not propose to interfere. The inclusion of the reference to power "not exceeding one horse-power" had the effect of excluding from the necessity to register no fewer than 90 places that had formerly been registered, many of which undoubtedly should have been so registered. Those excluded under that amendment included bootmakers, clay processes and potteries, woodworkers, motor and cycle manufacturers, printers and bookbinders, and a number of others.

Hon. H. Stewart: Could not some of those have been registered under another portion of the Act?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: None of those I have referred to could be registered under the Act, and cannot be registered unless Clause 2 of the Bill is agreed to. I can see no reason why the clause should not be retained.

Hon. H. STEWART: I cannot quite grasp the significance of the exemptions referred to by the Minister.

Hon. F. H. Harris: I think they were very liberal.

Hon. H. STEWART: If we strike out the words "not exceeding one horse-power," it practically means that any mechanical contrivance, even to an egg beater, would be quite sufficient to warrant it being registered under the Act. I want to know in detail what are the factories referred to by the Minister and why they cannot be registered. I should think that most of them could be registered under Subsection 1 of Section 4, which provides that a factory means and includes "any building, premises or place in which four or more persons are engaged, directly or indirectly, in any handicraft or in preparing or manufacturing goods for trade or sale." Last session I pointed out that the inclusion of the words "any clap pit or quarry" would hamper operations in the outer portions of the State. If the words which have been referred to are struck out, it will be necessary to add another clause to the effect that a factory shall include a place where four or more persons are employed.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Under the Act the four persons must be in the same family.

Hon. H. STEWART: The addition I suggest would bring the Bill into conformity with the existing definition of a factory. If the insertion of the clause is necessary to prevent sweating or unfair competition, I am open to be converted.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: According to the Minister, 90 persons have been excluded from the Act because of Section 4 of last session's measure. What can be the motive behind it? Nothing but what we have seen all along—pure taxation. The object is to get a miserable 5s. from the so-called factory owners who are carrying on trade in a small way. I have enough interest in this place to see that those 90 small people are not harassed by bringing them under the Act. I am quite willing to have their paltry 5s. added to the fees I have to pay rather than see 90 persons struggling to get a living and harassed in this way. I propose to press for the deletion of the clause and will take the matter to a division.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: To a large extent I am in accord with the Leader of the House, but at the same time, I feel with Mr. Lovekin, that it is not necessary to harass people if we can avoid it. Paragraph (f) of Subclause 8 has a limiting effect inasmuch as it prescribes that the four people engaged in a factory must be members of the same family. That is what makes it so proscribed. If it applied to four persons, not necessarily of the one family, it would be different. I am inclined to agree with Mr. Stewart's views.

Clause put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	11
Noes	14
Majority against				3

ATTEN

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. E. H. Harris
Hon. F. A. Baglin	Hon. J. W. Hickey
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. A. H. Panton
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. J. E. Dodd	(Teller.)

NOSS.

Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. J. Mills
Hon. V. Hammersley	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. A. Lovekin	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. R. J. Lynn	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. C. McKenzie	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. G. W. Miles	Hon. J. Nicholson
	(Teller.)

Clause thus negatived.

Bill again reported with a further amendment.

BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Ewing in the Chair; the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Conditions of contracts for treatment of ore:

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I oppose the clause. When the Bill was introduced in another place, it did not contain Clause 10. This clause affects the question of tributing greatly, and tributing has become a most important part of gold mining; in fact it is the backbone of the industry.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: That is why the clause should be retained.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: We want to get a measure which will be favourably received by both parties. A great deal of dissatisfaction was expressed with the measure which was passed last session. The objects then sought to be attained were largely frustrated. It is unfortunate, as Mr. Sanderson remarked, that there is not a representative of the mine owners in this House.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is the fortune of war.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: It is a calamity, especially as the miners are so ably represented by five or six members. It would be much better if we had a representative of the mine owners here who could discuss these questions with the same knowledge that the miners' representatives possess.

Hon. A. H. Panton: We have an ex-Minister for Mines speaking at present.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: It is not necessary for the Minister for Mines to have actual experience; so long as he has sufficient wisdom to direct the knowledge submitted to him, that is all we expect. I am informed on very good authority that if this clause is retained, it will do as much harm in the direction of preventing work as did the Act of last year. We do not want

that unfortunate state of affairs to be repeated. We all want the tributing work to proceed smoothly. So unsatisfactory did the Act of last session prove and so little was the amount of work done under it, compared with what might have been done, that the Government considered it advisable to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the question of tributing—a very wise action on their part. The Royal Commission was a representative one; each member understood the subject, and brought the best of his experience to bear in order to secure satisfactory results. A great deal of evidence was taken, evidence on which we are unable to express an opinion, because it has not been laid on the Table. It was so voluminous that it was impossible to place it at the disposal of members. In the circumstances it is hardly fair to expect members to be able to discuss the evidence in detail. The Royal Commission, having thoroughly investigated the questions so ably discussed by Mr. Panton the other day, arrived at what was considered a satisfactory conclusion to both parties. So satisfactory did it appear to the Government that they adopted the report in toto and embodied it in the Bill. The measure met with the approval of members in another place, except that this clause was inserted. I understand its insertion was proposed by one of the members of the Royal Commission.

Hon. A. Sanderson: Did that member make a minority report?

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: No; I think he added an addendum in which he stated some of his ideas. We should hesitate to accept an amendment representing the views of the minority, when the majority of the Commission have had no opportunity to discuss it. It is unreasonable that one member, after having agreed to a large extent to the report, should then secure an important amendment which other members of the Commission have been unable to discuss. Had another member suggested an amendment in the opposite direction, there would have been a pretty loud outcry.

Hon. A. H. Panton: No louder than is being made by you.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: Yes, much worse. I hope that the good sense of the Committee will not permit this clause to be retained. The Royal Commission arrived at a definite understanding satisfactory to both parties. The Government, who are pretty good judges of the matter, so far agreed with the Commission that they embodied the recommendations in the Bill. The Bill was unaltered in another place except by the insertion of this clause. Therefore, I think it the duty of members not to agree to the retention of this clause.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: If I claimed to be a representative of the mine owners, the mine owners would repudiate me as such. On the other hand, I hardly think I can claim to be a representative of the workers.

If I did, probably a majority of the workers on the Golden Mile would also repudiate me. I do, however, claim to be a representative of the mining industry and the goldfields generally, and I try, in common with other goldfield members, to do the best I can for the goldfields and for every section of the community. When I was last on the fields, a few days ago, a deputation from the Prospectors and Tributers' Association saw me and certain other goldfields members who happened to be in Kalgoorlie at the time, and from what those men told us, I intend to vote in favour of the clause as it stands. I only wish that hon. members could have heard those men put their case as they put it to Mr. Panton, Mr. Harris, and myself. The members of the deputation were hard-working, earnest men; they were not extremists in any way. There are two points involved in this clause, one is regarding the payment of not less than 90 per cent. extraction, and the other is whether or not the tributer shall get one-half of the gold premium. I claim that the tributers in asking for those two things are asking only for what is fair and reasonable. On the point of the 90 per cent. extraction there may be some people who will put forward the plea that 90 per cent. extraction cannot be obtained. I might be permitted to quote the case of four of the leading mines in order to show that that extraction has been obtained over and over again, and that it is being obtained now on several of the mines. Take the Associated mine. In 1911 that mine treated 105,000 tons of ore. The total cost of mining and treatment was 22s. 6d. The grade of the ore treated averaged only 6.5 dwts. The extraction in that case was 92.57 per cent.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Did the Royal Commission have all this information?

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The evidence taken by the Commission was not published. If anyone desires to discover what evidence was given he will have to wade through a great deal of typewritten matter. Therefore there is no harm in giving these facts to the Committee. After all, it is a question of the difference of opinion between members of the Commission. The second mine I wish to refer to is the Oroya Links, which to-day is being worked entirely on tribute. That mine has not been worked except by tributers for the past two and a half years. In 1911 it treated 100,000 tons of ore of an average grade of only 5.6 dwts. The extraction in that case was 92.96 per cent. The Kalgurli mine, the manager of which wrote a letter which Mr. Sanderson read in the House a few nights ago, treated in 1911 a total of 127,000 tons of ore of an average grade of 10 dwts. The extraction was 94.65 per cent. The fourth mine, the Perseverance, which is now let wholly on tribute, in 1911 treated 243,000 tons of ore of an average grade of only 6 dwts., and the average extraction was 90.15 per cent. I claim that these figures and the experience of mining men generally

show that 90 per cent. extraction is not too much for the tributers to ask. In the matter of the gold premium, after all it seems to me that they are rather moderate in asking for half. Take the case of wheat. If, as the result of a pool, an increased price were to be secured, what would be thought of anyone who said, "We will take the whole of the increase"? The tributers do not ask for the whole of the premium; they merely ask for half. I trust the Committee will support the clause as it stands. It shows on the face of it that there has been a compromise inasmuch as the tributers are willing to accept one-half of the premium.

Hon. J. E. DODD: The conditions under which tributing has been carried on have proved a sore point on the goldfields for a long time. We ought to have brought in legislation a few years ago to regulate tributing, and if that legislation had been carried, we would probably not be up against the condition of affairs existing to-day. It was only last year that we passed an Act which gave the tributer his just rights. The question of compensation was brought before the House by the Labour Government some years ago, but it was defeated. We are in exactly the same position to-day in regard to tributing as we are in regarding miners' phthisis. We have not been able to get anything done so far as this complaint is concerned, and the position is just the same in regard to tributing. The position to-day is that on the goldfields nearly half of the mines are being worked by tributers, and as time goes on all the mines will be manned by tributers. Consequently, we must make conditions which will be just. On looking at the clause, I wondered whether or not we might be going too far, but anyone reading the clause in conjunction with the rest of the Bill must say that there is not anything particularly unfair about it. For instance, is there anything unfair in asking that the tributer shall receive 50 per cent. of the gold premium? Why should not the tributer get the benefit of the increased price of gold? With regard to the extraction, there is a proviso in the clause that if the extraction cannot be reached, the company may apply to the warden and the amount may then be reduced. So far as the Commission itself was concerned, I think its appointment was a huge mistake. The Government should have summoned a round table conference and the matter would then have been settled in no time. I might say that I commenced work as a tributer when 13 years of age and I know everything about tributing from A to Z. The conditions relating to tributing have always been unsatisfactory and they are unsatisfactory to-day. The tributer has to take the whole of the responsibility of the mining regulations and in many other ways, such as in connection with treatment, haulage and other charges, and he is up against a pretty hard proposition. I cannot see anything particularly unfair about the clause and I hope it will be passed.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I am not going to be bemused by the arguments and pleadings of two very clever members of the Committee. I regret that I have failed in my appeal to the goldfields members, but they have plainly stated that they are going to try to put this clause in. Therefore, I propose to ignore them, and address myself to hon. members who have not yet made up their minds. I do not intend to get down to the level of discussing the clause on the technical points as to percentage and so forth. Members generally should not do so, because they would be at a very unfair disadvantage as compared with Mr. Kirwan and Mr. Dodd. On page 2011 of last session's "Hansard" hon. members will find a report of the remarks on this question made by the Minister, by you, Mr. Chairman, and by myself. At three o'clock in the morning I tendered certain advice, based on information which I had received; and that advice has been justified by experience. Had a conference been held by the Minister, acting in a semi-judicial capacity, there would have been a very reasonable Bill. Why was not some agreement arrived at as the result of last year's conference? Last year's Act was the result of last year's conference.

Hon. F. A. Baglin: The mine owners went on strike.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: That interjection shows how difficult it is to get at the facts of this matter. Now, what was the object of appointing this Royal Commission? The appointment was made because the Government were compelled to admit that last session's legislation was impossible.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Because the mine owners got to work on that legislation with a big hammer.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Mr. Scaddan brought in this Bill without this clause. Will the Committee accept the recommendations of the Royal Commission? If not, on what grounds will it not do so?

Hon. A. Panton: Do you not know the constitution of the Royal Commission?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Are we going to criticise the personnel of the Commission?

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: What do you object to in the clause?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I object to putting in a clause of which the Commission do not approve.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: One member of the Commission approved of it.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Are we non-goldfields members to take upon ourselves the responsibility of over-riding the Royal Commission?

Hon. E. H. Harris: Have you any objection to the report presented by the Commission?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I have not seen it. Where is it?

Hon. E. H. Harris: It has been on the Table of the House for a fortnight.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I have had a good deal of work on my hands, and I do

not know that I should be much wiser if I had read the report. Are we to throw aside the Commission's recommendations?

Hon. E. H. Harris: We have already adopted all their recommendations, up to Clause 9.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Then I ask, why did not the Minister for Mines put this clause into the Bill? We know why it was put in, and by whom it was put in.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That is what is wrong with it.

Hon. F. A. Baglin: Let us know what is your objection to it?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I have endeavoured to make myself clear on that point for the last ten minutes.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The attitude of the Government is that, having appointed a Royal Commission, we desire to observe in its entirety the Commission's report. The Bill was drafted with that understanding, and I intend to vote against this clause. The Commission did consider the subject-matter of the clause, and declined to insert in their report a recommendation in conformity with the clause. Because of that, one member of the Commission submitted an addendum to the report which reads—

I have the honour to submit the following in amplification of the report which has been signed by your Commissioners on the subletting on tribute in the mining industry:—(1) I desire to intimate that I have signed such report subject to the following qualifications and reservations:—“Section 27, subsection (c). That the cost of haulage and cartage should be deducted before any royalty is taken. Deletion of subsection (d). I assented to the deletion of this subsection because I realised that treatment and other charges would probably be increased if the tributer is paid the full market value of the gold produced by him. I submit that that contingent upon there being no increase in the present treatment, royalty, and other imposts, and the tributer who sells his ore being paid on not less than 90 per cent. extraction, then and in such circumstances the tributer should receive not less than 50 per cent. of the net value of the gold premium. Finally, I submit that the Minister should be empowered, by amendment of existing legislation, to frame regulations for the enforcement of the Act in whole or in part. I have the honour to be Your Excellency's most obedient servant. (Signed) S. W. Munsie, M.L.A.

Hon. G. W. Miles: How many members were on the commission?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Three: Mr. Owen, the magistrate, who was previously warden on the goldfields; Mr. Wellstead, representing the mine owners; and Mr. Munsie, representing the tributers.

Progress reported.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

BILL—PERMANENT RESERVE (POINT WALTER).

Assembly's Message.

Message received from the Assembly notifying that it had agreed to the Council's amendment, subject to a modification.

BILL—PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 16th November.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [7.32]: The Bill sets forth entirely new legislation. Most of the Bills we have been considering this session have been amending measures, but that before us launches out in a new direction. Whilst a great deal is to be said in favour of the Bill, I am fully aware that a good deal can be said in opposition to it. One has to bear in mind that we are passing through abnormal times. The Government, in common with most Governments, are experiencing great difficulties in meeting their financial engagements. Nearly all the Governments in the world are going to the bad in that respect. Some time ago a member of this Chamber suggested that the Government should appoint a committee of business experts to advise them in regard to the finances. He believed that the wide experience of such men would probably enable the Government to stem the current of adversity. That scheme has been adopted by the Mother of Parliaments. We have in these legislative halls men capable through their commercial experience of rendering any advice necessary to enable the Government to combat their existing troubles. The difficulty is not so much in respect of the State trading concerns as in respect of obligations which have been entered into by previous Governments, and have been aggravated by the abnormal times, the result, principally, of the war. On reading history we find that after every big war similar conditions have obtained; so it can be truthfully said that the present state of affairs was not entirely unlooked for, and is in strict keeping with history. It would be of very great advantage if the proposed committee could be created. Having regard to the very full powers with which they will be invested, I think a good deal could be saved in future expenditure. It has been said that the Government in bringing down the Bill are attempting to shoulder responsibility on to the proposed committee. Personally I do not think anything of the kind. Naturally the Government are desirous of bringing about an improved state of affairs and, as has been pointed out already, if we consider the public utilities in operation at the present time we shall see that in those public utilities there is plenty of room for the consideration of the proposed committee. I was astonished at the figures quoted by the Leader of the House on the second reading. The Minister told

us that the gross earnings of the public utilities for the past year amounted to £3,758,689 and that the cost of earning that money amounted to £4,473,489, showing a loss for the year of £714,800. These are amazing figures. When we realise the enormous loss and compare it with the figures of the total deficit we see that there is indeed room for the activities of the proposed committee. It might be argued that the committee would not have sufficient strength of will to enter into some of these big questions. I realise that the personnel of the proposed committee will have to be seriously considered, it being imperative that we should have on the committee men who would not be afraid to voice their opinions and go fully into the matters outlined in Clause 12, more particularly the questions relating to the public utilities. We require men who will not be afraid of the power of the vote. We know that there have been members of Parliament who would be afraid to voice their opinions and go as fully into these matters as they ought to go, fearing the result at the next election.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You do not wish to insinuate that the Minister is afraid of that?

Hon. J. DUFFELL: Of course not. I am speaking generally. It is essential that men of the strongest character should constitute this committee.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Stronger than that of the Minister?

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I have not the Minister in mind. My idea is that the Bill should provide ways and means for the securing of information which even the Minister could not get.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Nonsense!

Hon. J. DUFFELL: There is no nonsense about it. The proposed committee will be invested with such powers as will enable them to get the fullest information, and so they will have every opportunity for bringing before Parliament even the question of retaining a Minister of the Crown. They are to have the fullest power; indeed it is astonishing that so much power should be proposed to be conferred upon the committee.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: How will they get information which is denied to the Minister?

Hon. J. DUFFELL: Their powers will enable them to get information which the head of a department would not feel disposed to supply to his Minister. That is the point. We have had instances of a Minister seeking information and having to take what his responsible officer has given to him; and the Minister has put it before Parliament with the best intentions, but further investigations have proved that the information was not altogether in accordance with facts. The proposed committee would have ample power, and so would succeed in getting accurate information. Many things are to be undertaken by the proposed committee. Personally I am doubtful as to those who would

be most suitable as members of this committee. I do not think the most suitable members would be available. Still I am prepared to support the second reading, although when in Committee I have one or two amendments of minor importance to move; because I am rather sceptical about the result of a committee appointed for three years, a period so short that possibly the committee may not have an opportunity for showing their full ability. In appointing a committee of this nature we are not actually launching out in the dark. The Commonwealth Government and the States of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia have such committees as that proposed. Some of these committees have been at work for a considerable number of years. It may be argued that this is an expensive luxury. The fact remains there has apparently been no attempt in any of these Parliaments to displace the Parliamentary committee. In these circumstances I intend to support the second reading of this Bill.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [7.45]: I listened very attentively to the speech of the Leader of the House in introducing this Bill. He made reference to the fate of a similar Bill which was introduced some time ago. I sincerely trust that the Bill now before us will meet with the same fate as the Bill which was introduced in 1911 or 1912. I think I am correct in saying that the present Minister voted against that Bill.

The Minister for Education: I was not in the House.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: At all events he voted against the last Bill that was introduced, and it was thrown out after one speech was made. The hon. member recorded his vote in favour of the rejection of the Bill. The Leader of the House now tells us that circumstances have altered since then. I suggest they have not altered in such a way as to render this Bill necessary. I am prepared to admit, and if necessary prove, that in those days we had statesmen handling the affairs of the country, and that we have drifted from statesmen to politicians. We have evidence of that almost every day in the week. My definition of a statesman is that when a difficulty arises he says "How will this affect the country," and he acts accordingly. The politician, however, says, "How will this affect me?" He puts himself first and the State next. Perhaps I may go further and say that we have drifted from an administration of competence to an administration of incompetence. I think Sir Edward Wittoum said that after the speech of the Leader of the House there was very little to be said in condemnation of the present administration.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You suggest we should drift back to statesmen?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We will never do that until the country rebels. The country rebelled once, and the incident is clear in my memory. When a country rebels the re-

sult is serious for those rebelled against. I remember that three Ministers were defeated, and when the three surviving Ministers met the House the Leader of the Opposition took the business out of their hands. Bills like this will go a long way towards making the country rebel. When this Bill was introduced in another place, it provided that the members of the committee should act in an honorary capacity. That was the matured consideration, I presume, of Cabinet. Cabinet decided that members, who had had their salaries increased by 33 1/3rd per cent., should take on this responsibility without additional remuneration. They were to do their duty to the country without further salary. The suggestion was practically laughed out of the House. I think I remember reading in the "West Australian" that it was received with derisive laughter. Another place was not long in making its views felt, and the views of the Ministry became subservient to the views of that House. The result is we are now to have a paid committee instead of an honorary committee. Why did not the Government stand by their Bill after coming to that matured conclusion, and say "This is our Bill; this or nothing?"

Hon. J. Duffell: They have to abide by the majority.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That is the politician. The statesman says "This is right. I will do it; never mind the majority."

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: You could not get the Bill through.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It is proposed to appoint three members from another place and two members from the Council. Upon these five gentlemen will depend the salvation of the country. If I understand the Leader of the House, that is the correct position. Common sense compels me to ask—what are Ministers going to do when this Bill becomes law? The only way in which I could be induced to support this Bill is that it should provide that those men who are to do the work of the country shall draw the salary of the Ministers, and the Ministers receive a salary at the rate of £1 1s. a day. It is proposed that the committee should make recommendations to Ministers, and that Ministers should give their approval to those recommendations. How are these men to be elected to the committee? The Leader of the House has said that the Government have no axe to grind. In effect he said that so far as the Government are concerned any old thing in the way of a committee will do.

The Minister for Education: I said nothing of the kind.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It will be left to the House.

Hon. J. Duffell: He did not even infer that.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: When the matter is left to another place what does it mean? It means a member of the Country Party, a member of the Labour Party, and a member of the Liberal Party, irrespective of their qualifications, will fill these three offices.

These are the gentlemen who are to stand as a buffer between the Government and the people, and who, irrespective of their qualifications, are to be the salvation of the country. Their services are to cost £1 ls. a sitting with travelling expenses. They are to have the right to meet at any time when Parliament is not sitting, and in any place. They are to travel from one end of the country to the other, meet when they think fit, and send in a bill to responsible Ministers, who will pay. Is it proposed that the committee shall inquire into the running of our railways? The railways are under a special Act, and the Commissioner has special privileges and special protection for himself and the railways under that Act. If I were Commissioner for Railways, and a committee of this kind were to come on the premises, I should have it compulsorily removed. I should say, "I am Commissioner for Railways under a special Act and until the Government remove me from office I am in charge of the railways, and you can go about your business."

Hon. J. Ewing: They want to inquire into the railways.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The solution of the trouble does not lie in appointing more people to make these inquiries. If the hon. member suggests that the Commissioner for Railways is not capable of running the service the only way out of the difficulty is to get someone who is capable.

Hon. J. Ewing: I did not suggest that.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Is it suggested that five members of Parliament, who belong to some party or other, shall be the salvation of the railways? That would be an insult to our intelligence. Do not let us have five politicians, who will make confusion worse confounded. Parliament has removed our railways from political control, and has said that in their interests the politicians shall be counted out. Under this Bill Parliament is asked to introduce the politician, who knows nothing about the business.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: Speak for yourself.

THE PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I have the floor at present. What power will the committee have to deal with other public utilities, and such things as come under special Acts? Is this irresponsible committee, that only makes recommendations to the Government, to override the officers that are entrusted under special Acts to administer certain departments connected with the affairs of the country? What will the committee do to develop the North-West? Will they override the Commissioner for the North-West, who has just been appointed, under the administration of the Leader of the House, with a flourish of trumpets to develop the North? Will they override the consulting engineer, who has been appointed to assist in that development? Is the development of the North-West to be held up while the committee travel the length and breadth of the North to decide what shall be done there? I understand that the Commissioner for the North-West has been ap-

pointed to develop the North with powers to deal with matters, because of some special qualification he possesses. He is to be paid a certain salary. Will the committee of five, whose only qualification is that of being politicians, have power to adjudicate upon all matters that are under consideration?

The Minister for Education: Where do you get that in the Bill?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not get it in the Bill. I am asking for information. I am asking what is to become of the Commissioner for the North-West and who is to develop that part of the State; the Commissioner or the committee?

The Minister for Education: What will the committee have to do with it?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They have to inquire into everything, even the expenditure of money.

The Minister for Education: Apparently the hon. member has not read the Bill.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They would have to inquire into all expenditure exceeding £20,000. If I know Ministers, there never will be any expenditure that will have to be inquired into. If it is a work they do want the estimate will be £19,999, and the committee will never be called upon to deal with it. If there is a work they do not want the estimate will be £20,001, and the committee will report, and the Government will be relieved of the responsibility of saying yes or no.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: Are you speaking from experience?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The report upon the Wyndham Meat Works, that was read this afternoon, shows that £38,000 was spent last year at Wyndham without the knowledge of the Government or the Public Works Department, and without an officer of the department being on the premises. It also shows that £15,000 was spent this year, and that a special man was brought from Queensland to report upon the works. Because of the fact that not one of these items exceeds £4,000, the whole of this expenditure would be outside the scope of the committee. So much for the power of the committee to prevent such things as we brought under the notice of the House to-day! There never will be anything brought under the notice of the committee unless it is something the Government want thrown out. Until this session of Parliament we had two Honorary Ministers attached to the Government, who were paid by the portfolio Ministers. I could never understand the position. From what I was taught at school "honorary" meant honorary, and Honorary Ministers, therefore, would do the work for nothing. These Honorary Ministers, however, were paid by the other Ministers of the Crown. When the Mitchell Government came into power, they decided that they could get on very well without Honorary Ministers and they dispensed with them. We have had evidence furnished by the select committee in their report this afternoon, and reading be-

tween the lines one can see the difficulties into which Honorary Ministers have landed this country. I am afraid that, instead of having two Honorary Ministers paid by other Ministers, if this Bill becomes an Act, we will have five extra Honorary Ministers paid by the State.

Member: It might be better, too.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It might be better for the Ministers, but I question the wisdom of giving the Government five additional votes on the floor of Parliament, which will be very handy when they are in a tight corner.

Hon. J. Duffell: That is a very long shot on that point.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: When you are up against serious problems and wicked things, it devolves upon someone to get as near the mark as he can, without departing from the rules of the House. There will be this advantage, that the five new members of the committee will be another buffer between the public and the Government. The public will come along with the request for something or other; the Government will say that their request will cost over £20,000, and that it will have to be referred to the parliamentary standing committee. I think the public have had quite enough jokes put up on them during the last few years without this joke in addition. That is one of the reasons I have for opposing the Bill with all my power. Another aspect is that Ministers will be relieved of their definite promises. We know that the Minister for the North-West and the Premier recently toured the northern portions of this State. While touring those parts, they made promises. Those promises have never been before Parliament in the shape of a Bill or a vote, and if this is passed then "good-bye to those promises." I want the people generally throughout the State to recognise this fact. The Premier and the Minister for the North-West promised works which are absolutely necessary, but the responsibility of deciding whether the promises shall be fulfilled, is to be given to an irresponsible committee. We are told that under this Bill the appointment of the committee will result in considerable saving. I am bound to remind members that Ministers are above such a committee. Ministers spend tens of thousands of pounds, and, in some cases, hundreds of thousands of pounds, without the authority of Parliament, which is the highest tribunal in the land. What notice will they take of the recommendation of five members of a parliamentary committee, two elected from this Chamber and three from the other House? Assuming the committee to be appointed, what will they do in the way of recommendations? I think I am justified in saying we have no money to spend on public works.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We have to get money to spend.

Hon. J. Duffell: There is money to be spent on public utilities.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We are trying to get three million pounds on the London money market. If my memory serves me aright, two millions of that amount will be devoted to paying Treasury bills which are due next month. That will reduce the amount to one million pounds, and if we accept the published figures as correct, that million pounds will be required to meet this year's deficit. Mr. Miles says that we will have to borrow money. Of course we will have to borrow that money, if we can invest it in works that will be profitable. But is the country to go on borrowing money to meet the deficit? It will take us all our time to do that, if I can judge the money market correctly. While we are doing that, however, we are asked to appoint a committee to report upon new works. I do not think there was ever a time when the necessity for a committee of this kind did not exist more than the present. If we were launching upon a bold policy for the expenditure of money, a committee like that under consideration would be necessary, but here we are right up against it! I think that is admitted by everyone. Yet in the face of that, we are asked to appoint this committee to inquire into new public works. On the other hand, we know there is no money. Reference has been made to what has happened elsewhere, where such committees have been appointed. So far as I can judge, the only people who are favourable to a continuation of such committees are the people who are appointed to positions on those committees. We have heard references to the Federal Public Works Committee. There is another side to the story. Outside those members who are on the committee, I do not know that there are many people who are in favour of the public works committee being continued. Next we come to the, to me, astounding proposition that the Leader of the House put up when he stated that this is one of the most important Bills of the session. I have looked at the Governor's Speech. We find no reference therein to this most important Bill.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The good wine always comes last.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: In the Governor's Speech we hear of a Redistribution of Seats Bill, which may come forward this year or next year, or perhaps never, and of other Bills, but there is no reference to the Public Works Committee Bill. The question arises, why was there no mention of such an important Bill in the Governor's Speech? In view of the Minister's statements, one is compelled to ask: Why is there all this hurry up about this particular Bill? Why has the Bill developed into one of the most important Bills of the session? I am inclined to connect this Bill with the Como tramway extension.

Hon. H. Stewart: A matter of evasion of responsibility.

Hon. J. Nicholson: This Bill would not apply to that extension.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not think it would, but we have some new members

in Parliament and I propose to enlighten those members on this particular subject. There was trouble in another place over tramway extensions and there was dissension among parties sitting behind the Government. Simultaneously with that there was a Bill of this description suggested to deal with the matter. So far as I can see, the Government have slipped out of a very awkward position. The member for Leederville condemned the Como extension and the member for Canning recommended it. A Bill has come along relieving the minds of those two members. It relieves the Government of a difficult position but gets the country into a far worse position. I would like to tell those hon. members that they should not be sidetracked. If my definition of this Bill be correct, then the committee will not deal with the Como tramway extension at all, because it has already been approved. Whether right or wrong, the work was approved and I understand that the rails have already been purchased and that the material is here.

Hon. J. Duffell: That is not the only tramway extension that will be gone on with.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Bill becomes a Government necessity and not a State necessity.

Hon. J. Duffell: We will want an extension of the trams to Belmont.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. President, will you appeal to the hon. member to keep quiet. He had his opportunity and gave us what information he had on the subject. The hon. member told us everything he knew and spoke very briefly. Then he sat down.

Hon. J. Duffell: It would be better if the hon. member did not say so much.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. J. Duffell: Only a lot of gas!

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I come to the question of the committee's powers under the Bill. The committee will have powers against the public of which they should not be possessed. They have very little power to deal with public affairs and I think if the Railway Commissioner knows his powers and his position, he will warn these gentlemen off the premises. He will do that if he knows his powers and his duty. The authority, however, is to be given to this committee to issue a warrant and arrest any member of the public. Any member of the public can be called upon to come before the committee and give information.

Hon. J. Duffell: That is quite right.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: So far as I am concerned, I do not think it will be long if the Bill be passed, before I shall be behind four walls, because if I say things that I will feel compelled to say, I shall be hauled before the committee. I shall probably be fined £500 or the committee may give me three months' imprisonment. Are the public to be put under the thumbs of five members of Parliament in such a way as I have indicated? If we were to give power to the committee to deal with the Government, I would be in favour of the Bill, but to give the

committee power to arrest members of the public and fine them £500 or imprison them for three months, is an indication to the public that if they do not keep quiet the Government will send the committee out after them. We are to give the committee power to enter and inspect "land, places and buildings." I might be comfortably tucked in bed in my sleeping-out verandah, with a net thrown over the bed to keep out the mosquitoes, when the members of the parliamentary committee might burst through and say, "Here, we want you. You have been saying something about the Government." I can read common sense and that is what, I think, is in the Bill.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You have vivid flights of imagination.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: To have vivid flights of imagination, one requires to have brains. No one would possibly accuse the hon. member of ever having vivid flights of imagination. The life of the committee, too, is to coincide with the life of the Government. No matter how well the committee carry out their functions, the Government may be sent about their business by the country, members may be re-elected to Parliament, but because the Government go out, the committee have to go out too.

The Minister for Education: Where do you get that?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: From the words "life of the Parliament."

Hon. H. Stewart: That is, the life of the Government.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am speaking of the present Government.

Hon. H. Stewart: Do you think they will last so long?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes, because of a combination of circumstances—

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Over which we—

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: —have no control. There are four parties to be considered now. Two parties were bad enough but now we have four to consider and the effect of this is that one has been put into power to keep the other three out of power. As to the method of the appointment, the Minister stressed the fact that under the provisions of previous Bills, the Minister would have nominated the members of the committee. I should say that the Minister should nominate members of the committee in order to get a decent committee from both Houses of Parliament, and the Minister should have some say as to who should be on that committee. Under this Bill, however, the Government say, "Any old committee will do; appoint the members yourselves and, irrespective of their qualifications, we will transfer the consideration of these works to them and we can go on."

The Minister for Education: You know very well it does not say anything of the kind.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am referring to what the Minister said in moving the second reading of the Bill.

The Minister for Education: On a point of order, I uttered not one word or one word meaning anything like what the hon. member has suggested.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I must accept the apology. My only regret is that the rules of the House prevent me from quoting "Hansard."

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must accept the statement.

The Minister for Education: The hon. member cannot help being insulting.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The public will be insulted and will be justified in feeling insulted regarding the necessity for the Bill which has cropped up quite recently. Let me quote from the Premier's budget speech and show what he said—

Now, it is true that Ministers are responsible for expenditure by all departments, but it must also be borne in mind that the permanent heads and under secretaries are responsible to the Ministers. We have a system which will keep them up to the mark, I think; and certainly the system will enable us to know from month to month just how every item of expenditure is being utilised.

The Minister for Education: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member a few minutes ago was expressing regret that he could not quote the exact words of the speech. Now he is quoting from a speech made by the Premier in another place this session.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am reading from my notes.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member knows he must not refer to the debates of this session in another place.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I can read what was published in the Press.

The PRESIDENT: I ask the hon. member not to interrupt me. If those words are a quotation from a speech of an hon. member in another place this session, he must not use them.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: All I can say is that I proposed to convict the Premier out of his own mouth. The Leader of the House found me just on the point of doing it, and he protects the Premier behind the rules of this House. By these means I am prevented from telling the public of this State what the Premier has said, which is exactly the opposite of what the Leader of the House told us was necessary when he moved the second reading of this Bill. I will leave that point. The Minister knows well that, had I been permitted to quote from the Premier's remarks, I would have shown to the House—

The Minister for Education: I again rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in attributing to me ulterior motives when I merely asked that he conform to the rules of the House. I have no idea what the hon. member wished to quote any more than any other member of the House.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must not attribute motives.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If I attributed motives, I am sorry. I must remind the Leader of the House that he comes here continually and quotes, and no exception is taken.

The Minister for Education: I must again rise to a point of order. The hon. member is accusing me of breaking the rules of the House. I have not done any such thing knowingly and, if I did such a thing and my notice was directed to it, I should immediately withdraw. He says I constantly do this sort of thing. His remark is absolutely unfounded.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: All I can say is that I have the Premier of this country right in the bag over this Bill and, had I not been occupied with a select committee, I would have made an extract from the Press report instead of from "Hansard" which I am not permitted to quote. I have been for days engaged upon work in connection with the select committee, work which the Minister himself should have done, and because I did not have time to make extracts from the Press but am compelled to make them from "Hansard," the Minister protects himself and the Premier behind the rules of Parliament. The Leader of the House knows that the Premier's utterances published in the Press—

The Minister for Education: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member to be permitted to say just what he likes regardless of my denial, or of truth or anything else? I said and I repeat that I had no idea what the hon. member wanted to quote. He is not telling the truth.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. the Minister himself is now breaking the rules of the House.

The Minister for Education: Some extraordinary action is necessary in order to prevent the hon. member from repeating these unfounded statements.

The PRESIDENT: What is the expression of which the hon. the Minister complains?

The Minister for Education: His statement that I knew what he was about to quote and that, if he were allowed to read it, it would condemn the Premier. I know nothing about it. I merely rose to a point of order, because the hon. member was offending against the rules of the House.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I said that I had the Premier in the bag. If I could have quoted from the Press instead of from "Hansard," I could have proved my point. The Minister has prevented me from doing so. That, however, does not ruffle me, much as it may ruffle the Minister. If I had had time to get the quotation from the Press, the Minister would not have prevented me from quoting it. Without labouring the question further, I propose to vote against the second reading of the Bill. I am bound to say that, from the evidence before me the Bill, in my opinion, was conceived in haste and that its object is to relieve Ministers of their rightful responsibilities.

Hon. J. Duffell: And reduce taxation.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It would also appear to give the Government additional voting strength in both Houses. The Bill, in my opinion, is contrary to the best interests of the country and I shall therefore vote against the second reading.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East) [8.22]: When I read through this Bill I realised that, under certain circumstances, there might be some excuse for introducing it. I thought it possible that the Leader of the House, in moving the second reading, might put forward some plausible reasons which would lead one to support the measure. To my mind he gave none. It might have been possible to modify or weaken my opposition to the Bill, but the Leader of the House has only raised in me an uncompromising opposition to the measure. It is my intention to vote against the second reading, and to endeavour to convert other members to join with me in taking that attitude. There seems to be one technical omission from the Bill. Clause 16, Subclause 2 refers to form A as being in the schedule; Clause 17, Subclause 2 refers to form B as appearing in the schedule, Clause 20, Subclause 2, refers to forms C and D as being in the schedule. Yet my copy of the Bill contains no schedule at all, and the forms mentioned are not included. One would hope that a measure of this kind would tend to put the government of the country on statesmanlike and different lines, and do away with what has caused a good deal of mal-administration and unwarranted expenditure—I refer to the parochial influence of the roads and bridges member. In my opinion this Bill will do nothing towards modifying that state of affairs. When the Lefroy Government took office, they had an excellent opportunity to organise their big majority and conduct the business of the country on more statesmanlike and less parochial lines. If they had had the backbone to stand firm and be the leaders, instead of taking their orders from their supporters, the position of the State would probably have been much more favourable than it is to-day. The advocacy of the Leader of the House in introducing this motion has not in any way minimised my opposition. In fact the Minister's speech might be summed up as a deliberate admission of weakness and ineffectiveness. The Minister gave as one reason for the rejection of similar measures on previous occasions that the conditions differed from those obtaining to-day, and he proceeded to quote a number of figures, particularly dealing with railway administration and finance, to show that the position is much worse now than it was 10 years ago. We are all aware of this. I cannot fail to recollect that the position of the railways was bad before the present Commissioner was appointed. The present Commissioner of Railways was appointed by the present Government. The present Minister for Railways was appointed to that portfolio while he was

not a member of Parliament, and now the Government come to us and ask for the appointment of a committee to inquire into a department, the Commissioner controlling which they themselves appointed. They said he was quite competent for the office of Commissioner. Now they admit that the position is bad, and they ask for the appointment of a committee to investigate the working of a department controlled by a man for whose competency and ability they practically vouched. At any rate, both the Minister and the Commissioner were appointed by the authority of the present Government.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Premier said in his last budget speech that he had every confidence in the Commissioner of Railways.

Hon. H. STEWART: The Leader of the House admitted that something further must be done, and he practically admitted the inability of the Government to deal with the position. The Government have as their head a Premier with many years experience of ministerial office. Among their members are also two ex-Premiers and another Minister who has held office for many years. There are four politicians with many years ministerial experience and two young Ministers. The Government took office knowing what the position was and pledged to improve the position. The position has not improved; it is much worse. The Leader of the House told us it was so much worse, and asked us to consent to the appointment of a public works committee in order that some remedy might be found, a remedy which the Government have failed to find.

Hon. J. Duffell: They are country party members.

Hon. H. STEWART: I do not know what the hon. member is referring to.

Hon. J. Duffell: I am referring to the two young Ministers you mentioned.

Hon. H. STEWART: By their actions they will be judged. The youngest Minister, from my knowledge of his administrative acts, seems to have warranted his appointment more than any other member of the Cabinet. I believe his appointment will be justified. I would like to see the youngest Minister in an administration with colleagues of comparable calibre associated with him.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And a stronger leader.

Hon. H. STEWART: Yes. The Premier has associated with him two ex-Premiers and a gentleman who has occupied the position of acting-Premier, Commissioner of Railways, and Minister for Works for many years. He has behind him a solid majority, whenever he accepts a motion as a vote of no-confidence. But that depends upon the means adopted in carrying out the government of the country. At times, when it does not suit the Leader of the Government to treat an amendment as vital, we see the Government supporters split up anyhow, and that distinguished Cabinet, or I should say, that Cabinet, distinguished because it has experienced Ministers in its personnel, and with a solid

backing, fails to deal with the position. I am left almost aghast at the situation. Where a Government has come into office to conduct the business of the country on sound and successful lines, and to retrieve the position, they should first of all endeavour to find out what are the factors which are responsible for the position as it exists, and then endeavour to remedy them. The Minister, in introducing the Bill, said that the Government did not have time to deal with these matters. I should think that the first business of the Government would be to find the time to deal with such matters, or those factors which were most prejudicially affecting the business of the country. The railways which have been going to leeward to the extent of hundreds of thousands of pounds have been largely responsible for our deficit. What steps have the Government taken to deal with that position, say, during the past two years? I submit that the Government, instead of signing papers and entering up minutes, should have appointed a Royal Commission or a select committee, or the members of the Government themselves should have taken steps to investigate the position. The action of the Government shows that we are justified in opposing the measure if only for the reason that they are asking private members to do what the Government themselves should have done. The Government have been carrying on by a policy of bluff. I certainly do not think that the Minister for Railways should be away at the present time as he is, on such a trip, and making other trips as well, as he did when he ran away to the Eastern States at the end of last session, when we were dealing with the Mining Bill which held up tributings for 12 months. The action of the Government in introducing the Bill we are now considering shows that the Minister for Railways should be in his place trying to improve the existing state of affairs in the Railway Department which he controls. The Government have not the backbone to put forward recommendations that are necessary.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: But the Ministry are a Country Party Ministry.

Hon. J. W. Holmes: We do not know any party here.

Hon. H. STEWART: I am talking of the Government, not of the party. When the Government bring down a Bill like the one we have before us, I feel that I am justified in opposing it just as strongly as I opposed the Bill for the appointment of three Railway Commissioners, and other Bills as well. This is not the first time that I have taken such a course. I did exactly the same thing when the Lefroy Government were in office, and probably would have done likewise while the Colebatch Government were in office had I been given the opportunity by that Government having lived long enough to meet Parliament. Because an hon. member belongs to a particular party, that is no reason why he should not have the right to criticise the actions of the Gov-

ernment when he considers that criticism is in the interests of the State. At any rate, I know what course of action I can always take. I can always take steps to safeguard my position, and make myself independent. It was only last session that I reviewed the history of the previous three Governments and pointed out, as I am doing now, that the Lefroy Government missed a splendid opportunity of raising the status of politics in Western Australia. The Leader of the House suggested when introducing the Bill, that Ministers were too busy to deal with what was most important for the improvement of the condition of affairs in the State. Had the Minister's speech been published in extenso in the daily Press, the public would have held the Mitchell Government in very poor esteem. I regard the Bill as a gross evasion of responsibility. Last year the Grain Elevators Bill was to have come down from another place at a reasonable period of the session. But what happened? Although the Premier promised to send it along reasonably early, he procrastinated until the end of the session, when it was not possible to get the Bill through this House.

The PRESIDENT: I do not think the hon. member's remarks have very much to do with the Bill before the House.

Hon. H. STEWART: I intend to connect up my remarks with the Bill. I claim that the introduction of this Bill is an evasion of responsibility on the part of the Government, and that this is not the first instance of such an evasion. If I am in order, and I think I am, I would point out that last session the Government were guilty of a similar evasion of responsibility. In another place, as I have gathered, rather than have dissatisfaction, the Government are frequently prepared to agree to the introduction of an amendment which may be foreign to the purpose of a Government Bill.

The PRESIDENT: Is the hon. member discussing the Bill or the Government?

Hon. H. STEWART: I am giving reasons for the rejection of the Bill. As I have already said, one reason is the Government's evasion of responsibility.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: This Bill will be the Government if it is passed.

Hon. H. STEWART: The Government are shelving responsibility just as they did when they appointed the Mable Royal Commission, the Education Royal Commission, the Tributings Royal Commission and the Lunacy Royal Commission. They are always evading their responsibilities by getting someone else to make recommendations. This course enables them to get along very nicely. There is a good deal in what Sir Edward Wittenoom said that this Bill will strengthen the position of the Government, and it is one of the unspoken arguments of the Government, that it will practically secure for them five adherents, or strengthen the support of certain members, because of the positions they will hold as members of this committee. So far as I could gather, the only reason

which the Leader of the House submitted in support of the passage of the Bill was that it was necessary to have the committee as a last resource, because the Government could no longer deal with the position as it stood to-day. I will not be one to assist the Government to bring about such a state of affairs. Coming to the Bill itself, it will not in my opinion have the effect that is claimed for it. Another reason why I intend to vote against the second reading is that it will further increase the cost of government. I have suggested a reduction in the cost of government by reducing the number of members of this House and having two instead of three representatives of each province and by holding the elections every three years instead of every two, years. The reply I received in effect was that the amount to be saved would be so paltry that such a change would not be worth while. We have also been told that the increased salary paid to members amounted to such a small sum that a saving in that direction also would not be worth while. But all these paltry amounts would go some way towards decreasing the deficit. It is proposed in the Bill that the standing committee will not deal with a matter until an explanation has been given in the Assembly, and the explanation shall comprise an estimate of the cost, together with plans and specifications, as the Minister deems proper, and these shall be authenticated and verified. Then we shall have this committee duplicating work. They will have power to call in technical assessors to report on the work of the professional officers of the departments. In connection with all big undertakings of a technical character it is always well not to be unduly parsimonious in the preliminary investigation work; but a parliamentary committee of say five laymen is hardly the body to deal with technical questions, even by way of preliminary investigation. The limit of £20,000 will exclude many new works costing, say, £10,000 or £15,000; and we have instances of such works having proved failures.

Hon. T. Moore: Why not reduce the limit?

Hon. H. STEWART: At what shall we fix the limit? A reduction of the limit would, moreover, involve additional expense. Let me give illustrations of works which have proved failures. In 1919 I drew attention here to the Torbay-Grassmere drainage scheme, near Albany. Prior to the introduction of that scheme the Government used to allow about £40 per annum for the clearing away of a sand bar which formed at the mouth of the Torbay creek. This enabled the settlers to deal with their crops. Then the Government proposed a drainage work estimated to cost under £10,000. They actually spent £15,000, with the result that the settlers are now really worse off. Some of them have been ruined; about half their number have been compelled to quit their holdings. In 1920 I repeated my comments on the same matter, which has been investigated in the law

courts, with the result that definite proof was forthcoming of the work having failed of its purpose. As far back as 1917 the present Premier—then Minister for Agriculture—said the matter was urgent and must receive attention. But nothing has been done yet.

Hon. J. Ewing: That is not the only case. Hon. H. STEWART: No. I am coming to another soon. Under paragraph (a) of Subclause 1 of Clause 12 the committee would not have power to prevent the construction of such a work.

The Minister for Education: Yes.

Hon. H. STEWART: The limit is £20,000.

The Minister for Education: Reference of works costing £20,000 or over is compulsory.

Hon. H. STEWART: Since 1917, when the Torbay-Grassmere settlers began to press for an equitable settlement of the matter, successive Ministers for Works and also successive Premiers have done nothing. Are we to expect that this committee will make Premiers and Ministers strong enough to do something? In 1920, on the Address-in-reply, I drew attention to the Wagin water supply. I quoted a report that at the meeting of the Wagin Water Board last held up to that date, it was stated that the dam contained about $4\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons of water, whereas with a 12-in. rainfall the dam was supposed to provide a storage of 15 million gallons. The department have been tinkering and tampering with that dam ever since. I can speak of the matter with perfect independence, because I am not even a consumer of the Wagin Water Board. The work was estimated for, and was carried out, and it has failed, and no remedy has been forthcoming. The cost of the work is not £15,000. As the Minister has indicated, such a work could be dealt with by the proposed committee; but the Bill does not provide that it shall be.

Hon. J. Ewing: What is wrong with the engineers?

Hon. H. STEWART: Two of the engineers who were connected with that work are no longer in the service. Other illustrations of the same sort could be given. Possibly this measure is intended as a means of fortifying the Government to bring in recommendations for the remedying of grievances. That is suggested by paragraph (b) of Subclause 1 of Clause 12, which authorises the committee to consider and report upon—any matter relating to the management or working of Government railways, tramways, and other public works under the provisions of any statute, or the service rendered thereby, or the proposed discontinuance of any railway or tramway, which the committee is by resolution of either House of Parliament authorised to inquire into and report upon.

Under that paragraph such things as I have referred to might be dealt with by the committee, though for years Ministers have failed to deal with them. If the measure

passes the second reading—I hope it will not—a reduction of the limit to considerably below £20,000 would be highly desirable. Mr. Holmes has traversed the ground with regard to inquiries by the committee into the management and working of the Government railways and tramways and of other public works. The Railway Department is conducted under special legislation. How could the Commissioner be expected to maintain his authority and dignity and self-respect if this committee were sent to inquire into his administration and actions? By far the better course would be to appoint a Royal Commission of railway authorities competent to go into technical questions of traffic and development. And if the Railway Department is to be inquired into, why not other departments? Education, say; or, especially, the Public Works Department, in the light of the two instances I have just given. Certainly I see no logical reason for singling out a peculiarly technical department like that of the railways to have its administration inquired into by this committee of laymen. Indeed, there is no necessity whatever for the Bill in that respect, seeing that the Government could appoint a select committee or a Royal Commission for that purpose. The Government, as I say, have always revelled in Royal Commissions.

Hon. T. Moore: And now you want another.

Hon. H. STEWART: I am not advocating another Royal Commission. However, I fail to see that what would be practically a Royal Commission of five members of Parliament can be the proper body to inquire into railway administration. I fear that the experience we have already had of Royal Commissions would be repeated by this committee; that there would be a mere shelving of responsibility. Now as regards the personnel of the committee: the committee would have to deal with peculiarly technical subjects, and a large variety of them. A Parliamentary committee would not be the right body to appoint to deal with such matters for a period of three years. For the investigation of different branches of engineering, of railways, of public works, of water supply, of traffic, different committees would be needed—in each instance a committee consisting of men who have made special studies along certain lines. How could one expect that one committee would be best suited to deal with such a range of subjects? For each particular question the members of the committee should be carefully selected. That end can be more readily attained by the appointment of select committees or Royal Commissions, although, I repeat, I do not hold with the appointment of Royal Commissions, seeing the recommendations that have come from them in the past. I fail to see any immediate necessity for the Bill, which the Leader of the House has characterised as extremely important. I could conceive that such a proposal as this would be deserving of consideration if a new Government came into

power and claimed that the establishment of such a body as here proposed was necessary with a view to getting the country out of its difficulties. However, after the admission we have had from the Leader of the House that the Government are unable to deal with the position, I am not prepared to support the second reading of this Bill. As I have already mentioned, the committee will not stop roads and bridges works. Mr. Duffell said that we wanted a committee of men who would not be afraid of the power of the vote. It is hardly necessary to comment on that remark. But was the hon. member speaking of the Government just then, or of the proposed committee, I wonder? Mr. Duffell also suggested that the committee might secure information that would cause a Minister to vacate his office. To me such a position is inconceivable. I believe there is no bribery or corruption in Western Australian, or Australian, politics. I cannot conceive that any such case of carelessness or maladministration, however strong and condemnatory, would culminate in the vacation of his office by any of the old Ministers except under compulsion.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [9.0]: I am at a loss to understand why so much heat has been engendered over this question.

The Minister for Education: It is rather extraordinary.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Even my friend who is largely associated with the Wyndham Meat Works almost choked, either with emotion or with anger.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Because it is a wicked thing to bring in a Bill like this.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It is a very simple kind of Bill. In view of the general position in the country, to call it of first-class importance seems to me an exaggeration. I cannot now put my hand upon it, but in the first volume of "Parliamentary Debates in Western Australia" will be found the report of a debate on a proposal to appoint such a committee as that contemplated in the Bill. But at present is it a sensible proposition that we should pass a Bill of this nature? Here we have the 22nd November. When are we to finish? Probably on the 22nd December.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Before that, surely!

Hon. A. SANDERSON: We generally end up a few hours before Christmas. So we may take it that we have about a month in which to get through our work. Everybody knows that the Ministry are demoralised; they are demoralised themselves and are demoralising the country. It is odd that a Minister should come down and characterise this as a Bill of first-class importance when it was not even mentioned in the Governor's Speech. Under Clause 12 the proposed committee are empowered to deal with certain work "except work already authorised by Parliament." That is to say, if the work has been already authorised by Parliament, the proposed committee cannot touch it. Here

again I am at a disadvantage in not being able to put my finger on the complete list of authorised works. It must run into some millions of pounds, works authorised and not yet constructed. Perhaps the most striking illustration is the Esperance railway. The people down there have indeed good reason to complain. I fought the Esperance railway to the death. We were defeated. Very well, they have won that. Let them put the work through. That work could not be interfered with by the proposed committee. There must be dozens of similar illustrations. While at Tammin recently I was very much impressed by what was told me by a farmer who declared he and his fellows had been definitely promised by the Premier that a particular railway would be constructed within a particular time. It is common knowledge that the Premier has promised railways all over the place. We, too, have promised railways which have never been constructed. All the works already authorised should be put in a list, and the Premier should make a public announcement that he intends to carry them out in a given order when the money is available, and that alternatively they will be struck off the list. It is a monstrous thing that settlers and the public, accustomed to pay regard to the promises of Ministers of the Crown, should find the years going past and none of these authorised works being constructed.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is doing a lot of harm to settlement.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Unquestionably, a great deal of harm.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: They want this loan money to meet the deficit.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I do not want to go into that. My friend is almost carried away by his indignation. I share his indignation, but he and I are not running this country.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: No; you are only running this Council.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: We cannot even do that. Let us accept the hon. member's challenge and reject the Bill on the second reading!

Hon. T. Moore: Why this heat?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I press this question of time on the attention of the House. If we reject the Bill now, it will do no damage whatever; because there is no question to bring before the proposed committee which under the Bill they are to be permitted to deal with; for as I have pointed out, there are all these authorised works blocking the way. I would not object to the passing of the second reading in the ordinary course of events if things were fairly normal and if this measure had been forecasted in the Governor's Speech; but under the existing conditions I object to passing the second reading, which will be merely a waste of time. We have a dozen or so Bills which require consideration, and we have about four weeks in which to attend to them. I do not wish to see a repetition of what has hap-

pened in the past, when in the last hours of the session attempts have been made to rush important business through. If we reject the Bill on the second reading—

Hon. G. W. Miles: We will reject it all right.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It will be some indication to the Government that we entirely disapprove of this measure. What is the use of hon. members blaming the Government over public works and public finance when we have an illustration like that picnic in the South-West?

Hon. G. W. Miles: Oh, that was no picnic.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The public support, and members of Parliament support, this wild indulgence in what are called reproductive public works, and the proposed committee are to deal with such works. We have enough public works on the list. Our money is mortgaged for future works. I hope we shall put them in hand and deal fairly with the settlers, who are entitled to consideration. In regard to the Bill, if the Government really consider it to be of first-class importance, let them bring it down at a later date, next session.

On motion by Hon. J. W. Kirwan, debate adjourned.

BILL—GOLD BUYERS.

In Committee.

Resumed from 15th November; Hon. J. Ewing in the Chair, the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

Clause 5—Licenses (partly considered):

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subclause 2 "assayer" be struck out and "smelter" inserted in lieu.

No indication is given of the qualifications to be held by an applicant for a license. If a man wanted to arrive at the assay value of a mine he would go, not to a gold smelter, but to a gold assayer.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member has not given a single reason for the amendment. The provision is not intended to affect assayers of gold-bearing ore.

Hon. E. H. Harris: But the public will put that interpretation upon it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not think there is any reason to fear that. Ordinary gold-bearing ore is not included either in the definition of "gold" or in that of "gold matter," and consequently this does not apply to the assayer at all. It is not intended to interfere with those carrying on legitimate business of that kind. As I say, the hon. member has given no reason whatever for the amendment.

Hon. H. STEWART: I am an assayer and chemist of many years' experience in different parts of the world. Under this

Bill I can assay my own samples. I have had a conference this afternoon with the President of the Mining Association of Western Australia, and with Mr. C. M. Harris, the assayer for the banks. We went through the Bill and could see no objection, as assayers, to the clause. Most of the work in making assays is placed with a man because of his technical knowledge, and not because of the sign he puts up over his door. This provision will not be prejudicial to assayers who are practising, but it will have a prejudicial effect to the Bill if the word "smelter" is substituted for the word "assayer."

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I have no desire to assist those who may be indulging in any illicit practices. I am moving solely in the interests of those who are conducting the business of assaying, and who take exception to the clause as it stands. If my amendment is agreed to it will remove a great deal of the misconception that has arisen.

Hon. H. STEWART: I presume that the fee in the case of a license will not be a large one. If an assayer is qualified, and is of good repute, he will have no difficulty in getting a license. I have gone into the matter with men who are closely connected with the industry, and with this part of it in particular, and we consider it will not have a prejudicial effect upon the ordinary assayer in dealing with the general business of assaying.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I understand the carrying of this amendment would have an extraordinary effect, inasmuch as assayers would be expected to be licensed, although there is no provision for licensing smelters. I believe there is no such calling as that of gold smelter, while there is a well-known avocation of assayer or gold assayer. The assayer, purely and simply, is rarely called upon to smelt gold. When he does so he has to keep a proper account of the gold so that its origin may be traced. The men who set themselves up as assayers and smelt stolen gold would no longer be able to carry on that business under this Bill. If the amendment is carried one of the main objects of the Bill will be defeated. Mr. Harris would be well advised to withdraw his amendment.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I hope Mr. Harris will not persist in his amendment. If the word "smelter" were included in the Bill it would create a good many difficulties and misunderstandings. The term "gold assayer" is clearly defined, whereas the term "gold smelter" would be open to all kinds of misconceptions.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 6, after the word "Act" in line 2, the words "but the warden may in writing authorise the sale of gold specimens" be inserted.

I do not say that provision is not made for persons taking out a special license as provided in Clause 16. People should be allowed to dispose of gold specimens without having to take out a special license. My amendment would facilitate the exchange of specimens for a consideration, and the permit would have to be granted by the warden.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Bill was introduced to prevent trafficking in specimens. A good deal of illicit dealing in gold is done by this means. Then there is no reason why a person in the honest possession of a gold specimen should not be able to get for it what it would bring in the open market. In the opinion of the department the proviso that a specimen can only be sold under permit from the warden would be a sufficient guarantee that it came honestly into the possession of the person desirous of selling it.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I am advised that the provision will do no good and in fact will do a great deal of harm. It will open the door to dealing in illicit gold specimens. One of the main objects of the Bill is to stop illicit trafficking in gold, and there is an easy way of engaging in that traffic by way of gold specimens. The warden cannot always know when a transaction has been a genuine one, and difficulty would be experienced subsequently if the necessity for identifying specimens arose.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6 to 16—agreed to.

Clause 17—Licenses for treatment works, etc.:

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I move an amendment—

That in line 10 of paragraph (b) of Subclause 1 the word "registered" be struck out.

If the Mining Act Amendment Bill now before the House is passed, those engaged in tributating will, of necessity, have to be registered. Last session a Bill was passed, but the Minister for Mines found it necessary to suspend the operations of the measure. Since then, those who have been tributating, and who are unregistered, have been carrying on. We cannot assume what, should the Bill under discussion be passed, the position of those unregistered tributators will be if they cannot get rid of their gold. The inclusion of the word "registered" would be all right, if we had passed the Bill which we have still under discussion.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Mr. Harris is not quite right in saying that unregistered tributators are recognised under the existing legislation. It depends upon the Bill before the House whether they are recognised or not. Owing to the difficulties which arose, the Minister for Mines gave an undertaking that proceedings would not be taken against unregistered tributators until the end

of the present year to enable the trouble to be overcome.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: That is an indication that it may be necessary to renew that undertaking.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not think so. At any rate, it is a bad principle that there should be unregistered tributers.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I do not think it would be right to agree to the amendment, because we would have under one Bill, unregistered tributers allowed to carry on operations and under another Bill we would require them to be registered. Particularly is that undesirable when an effort is being made to deal with the disposal of stolen gold or gold ores. In the circumstances it would be wise to leave the word "registered" in the paragraph.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: My only object is to protect the tributers who are now unregistered under the existing arrangements.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I intend to move a further amendment to substitute in line 1 of Subclause 6 the word "roasting," in lieu of "smelting," as applied to furnaces. I would like to be informed as to whether there exists in Western Australia a smelting furnace suitable for the extraction of gold of a capacity of not less than 20 tons of ore per day.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The only smelter of that capacity that I know of is at the Fremantle Smelting Works.

Hon. H. Stewart: The Government smelters at Ravensthorpe have a greater capacity too.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The intention was to effectively prevent people who are trafficking in illicit gold, going to small treatment plants, and the provision for 20 tons of ore per day is really an exemption in favour of the Fremantle Smelting Works. I do not know that gold ore is treated there.

Hon. H. STEWART: The aspect raised presents only one phase of the industry. The treatment plants at Fremantle and Ravensthorpe practically deal with the gold in the nature of an alloy. The Fremantle works are in the position that they can buy all classes of ores, but they may impose certain limitations regarding desirable or undesirable constituents. The Fremantle works can buy lead ores or gold and silver ores and utilise these silicious ores as flux. The same thing applies to the Ravensthorpe smelters. It was evidently in the minds of people who drafted the Bill that no provision should be made for small works where they take a certain amount of gold and treat it.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: This clause is rather important. It is proposed to give somewhat large privileges. The question of roasting gold cannot very well come into the consideration of this matter. The clause is inserted to enable legitimate business to be carried on.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: There is no business being carried on.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: Yes, at Fremantle.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: There is nothing being done at Fremantle.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: Subclause 6 provides that no person except the owner or manager of a smelting furnace suitable for the extraction of gold and of a capacity of not less than 20 tons per day, shall hold a license as a dealer in gold matter, and also a gold assayer's license. It is desired that such licenses shall not be given to persons carrying on illegitimate businesses.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Unless the plant is of 20 tons capacity.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: The Fremantle Smelting Works should not be harassed if it is desired to treat gold through their furnace. Years ago they used to do it. The effect of the clause is that the Fremantle smelters, or any other firm, could obtain a license as a right under Clause 17, and also hold a license to deal in gold matter, while those engaged in illicit dealing and possessing a small furnace could not do so. The question of roasting has nothing to do with the point, and the word "roasting" could not be substituted for "smelting." The striking out of "twenty" and the insertion of the word "five" would tend to defeat the object of the clause. Small furnaces, which might be built by those engaged in illicit dealing, could not be built up to a capacity of 20 tons a day. In the circumstances, it would be wise to retain the clause.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The clause will hit the man legitimately engaged in dealing in gold matter as defined in the interpretation clause. There is no smelting furnace of 20 tons used except at Fremantle, which is an agency for lead. This clause would give a monopoly to the smelting furnace at Fremantle. There are men legitimately operating whose business would be diverted to Fremantle. I move an amendment—

That is Subclause 6 "smelting" be struck out and the word "roasting" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I move a further amendment—

That in Subclause 6 "twenty" be struck out and the word "five" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 18 to 51—agreed to.

Clause 52—Magistrate may authorise samples to be taken:

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I move an amendment—

That after "proceedings" in line 10 of Subclause 1 the words "and such entry, inspection, and taking away of samples shall be done in the presence of the per-

son charged, who shall be provided with check samples."

This is entirely a matter of fair play to any accused person.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am advised that the amendment would be calculated to destroy the value of the clause. If an interested person was allowed to be present at the breaking down of the ore, it would be impossible to guard against the salting of the samples.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: I am advised in the same way. The amendment would defeat the end aimed at.

Hon. H. STEWART: I have been similarly advised.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: You have all been instructed from the same source.

Hon. H. STEWART: But if the man sent to take the samples knew his business, there could be no salting. If the accused was allowed to be present, the man in charge of the breaking of samples would not allow him within range. It would not be the value of the ore, but the nature of the ore which would count. It is nonsense to put up the plea of salting in opposition to the amendment.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The accused would not have an opportunity to salt the mine if the man responsible for breaking the samples knew his business. The accused should have the right to be present to see whence the samples were taken so that, when preparing his defence, he would have an opportunity to combat the evidence.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 53 to 55—agreed to.

Schedules, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment.

Recommittal.

Bill recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clause 4.

Hon. J. Ewing in the Chair; the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

Clause 4—Parts of the State may be exempted from provisions of Act:

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The clause provides that the Governor may from time to time by proclamation declare any part of the State to be, or cease to be, exempt from the operation of the Act. The necessity for that provision is obvious, but it is equally clear that in many cases circumstances may arise where it may be desirable to exempt a portion of the State from some of the provisions, while allowing other provisions of the Act to apply. The clause as it stands will not permit of that being done. I propose therefore to move an amendment—

That all the words after "may" in the first line be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"by order in Council

exempt any defined portion of the State from the operations of all or any of the provisions of this Act, but any such order may in like manner be varied or revoked."

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Bill again reported with an amendment.

House adjourned at 10.5 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 22nd November, 1921.

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

QUESTION—SCHOOL TEACHERS' APPEAL BOARD.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Premier: 1, Is there any special reason why he has declined to inform the House of the amount of fees being paid to Mr. Downing, K.C., for his services before the School Teachers' Appeal Board? 2, If not, will he reconsider his answer of the 9th inst., and make the information available to the taxpayers, who have to find the money to meet these charges?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The answer given embodied all the information then available. 2, Mr. Downing's account has not yet been received, but will be computed from the following schedule:—Case fee, £13 2s. 6d.; daily refresher fee, £10 10s.; conference fee, £1 1s.; or if exceeding one hour, £2 2s.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It is about time it was stopped.

QUESTION—RAILWAY SHUNTERS' BOOTS.

Mr. MANN asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that Joseph Jackson, a shunter employed at Merredin station, met with serious injuries on the 11th inst., result-