

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : It was provided under the Federal laws that there must be freedom of trade, but this was a question of assistance to land owners, and the law dealing with the land contemplated residence.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT : You cannot penalise a man from living, say, in Victoria.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : That had already been done in the clause and members having jumped the big fence might just as well take the small one also. It was not desirable that six men, the majority of whom were out of the State, should be able to get six times the amount one man could obtain from the bank.

Hon. W. PATRICK : They do not get the money : it is spent on the land.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : It was the man who was the chief security, and it would be wise to have that man resident as he would make a good asset for the State. It would be safer for the Minister to provide that the man should be resident in the State.

Hon. W. PATRICK : The matter should be left in the hands of the trustees of the bank. There were many cases of land settlement taking place all over Western Australia where two or three men working on the goldfields had taken up land with a view of occupying it in the future. The money they were earning at present was being put into the land. Some of them might find it necessary before residing on the land to go to the Eastern States and there was no reason why they should be penalised. The Bill did not make it compulsory on the trustees to advance the money : it was a matter entirely in their discretion, and the control should be left with them. It would be a mistake to interfere with the Bill.

Hon. J. M. DREW : There were numbers of cases in various parts of the State where people had taken up land jointly and it would be a great injustice to say four brothers were only in a position to secure the loan which would be made to one individual.

Clause as amended put and passed.

Clause 5—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

House adjourned at 9.13 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 8th December, 1909.

	PAGE
Assent to Bills	1846
Papers presented	1846
Mines loan to R. Berteaux, Censure	1847
Questions: School Teachers, minimum salaries	1847
Land sale, Wanneroo	1847
Cohney Compensation inquiry, extension of time	1853
Notice Paper, Omission	1854
Bills: Interpretation Act Amendment, In.	1854
Legitimation, In.	1858
Landlord and Tenant, In.	1859
Motions: Poison Lands, Taxation allowance	1854
Mrs. Tracey's petition, Committee's recommendation	1860
Co-operation among producers	1869
Return: Railway employees and accidents	1858
Papers: Electoral office appointment	1860

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1. Abattoirs.
2. Public Education Endowment.
3. Redemption of Annuities.
4. Land Act Special Lease.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Lands: 1, Report by the Surveyor General to 30th June, 1909. 2, Report of the Woods and Forests Department to 30th June, 1909.

QUESTION—SCHOOL TEACHERS' MINIMUM SALARIES.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Education: 1, How many of the teachers in charge of schools are receiving less salary than £110 per annum, exclusive of house allowance? 2, What would be the additional cost to the State if all teachers in charge of schools were to receive the minimum salary of £110 per annum, exclusive of house allowance?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, 152 teachers. 2, £3,708.

QUESTION — LAND SALE, WANNEROO.

Mr. JACOBY asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Did the Lands Department sell

recently to Messrs. Clarkson Bros. 4,000 acres of land at Wanneroo at 3s. 9d. per acre? 2, If so, is the Minister aware— (a.) That the upset value of the land referred to was for a considerable period prior to the said sale fixed at 10s. per acre? (b.) That the opinion is held generally by those with knowledge of the said land that the timber, limestone, and firewood on the said land is worth at least 20s. per acre? (c.) That the Wanneroo road board value the said land at a minimum of 10s. per acre, and that in consequence one result of this sale of land below the recognised value will be to reduce the rating power of the board by two-thirds, disorganise the finances of the board, and destroy the value of similar lands bought from the Government at prices ranging from 10s. to 20s. per acre? 3, Will the Minister explain why opportunity was not afforded to the local residents to select at the reduced cost?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Grazing Lease No. 5168/68, containing about 4,134 acres, was granted to Henry Wilberforce Clarkson and Emma Isabel Clarkson. 2, (a.) No. "The Land Act, 1898," provides third-class land may be disposed of at 3s. 9d. per acre. (b.) The inspector's report does not support this opinion, and, on a check inspection being made, on my questioning the price recommended, the original inspector's report as to the land being worth only 3s. 9d. was confirmed. (c.) No. The value of the land was fixed on the recommendation, after careful inspection, of two competent departmental inspectors. 3. The opportunity was afforded.

Mr. JACOBY: Would the Minister indicate what opportunity was afforded, and whether the report mentioned anything regarding the amount of timber and limestone on the land, or if it referred only to the value from the agricultural point of view?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The land was open for selection and everyone had an equal right to apply for it. As to the other matter, he would look up the papers and inform the hon. member.

PAPERS PRESENTED—MINES LOAN TO R. BERTEAUX.

Amendment—Censure.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory) presented further papers regarding the President Loubet lease, and the report thereon by Warden Finnerly, and moved—

That the papers do lie on the table of the House.

Mr. COLLIER: I do not think that is the proper procedure. The report should be received and read to the House.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I thought an opportunity would be given to discuss the matter on the Loan Estimates.

Mr. COLLIER: The understanding was that the report would be presented to the House as soon as it was available, and that an opportunity would be given to members to consider it.

Mr. JOHNSON: This subject was the reason for one of the gravest charges ever laid in this House so far as my recollection goes, and it produced a very interesting debate. The Premier gave us an assurance that a special report would be made, and that an opportunity would be given members to discuss it. Now it is proposed to take the ordinary procedure as if it were an ordinary transaction. It is an extraordinary affair, and the papers should not merely be laid on the Table in the ordinary way. The Premier promised that we should have an opportunity to discuss the report which was called for at the request of members. The Minister should move that the report be taken into consideration.

The PREMIER: I thought that by putting the papers on the Table members would have an opportunity of perusing the report and going into the whole question, otherwise they would not be in a position to discuss the report.

Mr. JOHNSON: The report should be read.

Mr. BATH: If the Premier is going to be content to have the papers laid on the Table in the ordinary way, I wish to move the following amendment:—

That this House is of opinion that the Minister for Mines is deserving of

censure for his neglect in not instituting an early and searching inquiry into the charge made by the member for Boulder on the 15th September.

In connection with this matter I am not going to make any lengthy speech or traverse the remarks made by members when discussing this question the other evening on the Mines Estimates; but what I am going to point out this: On the 15th September the member for Boulder brought this matter up on a motion for the production of the papers, and in support of that motion, he made a definite charge that the shaft for which assistance was given, and which was supposed to be sunk to a depth of 193ft., was only 145ft. deep, and that the person who received assistance had defrauded the Government of the subsidy for the alleged depth sunk by 48 ft. The Minister said that the charge was a most serious one, that the State Mining Engineer would be sent up to report, and that the member for Boulder should then be content with the investigation by the State Mining Engineer—that he was going to make a full investigation, and at once. Now, as is proved by what has occurred since then, the matter went on from September 15th until early in December, a period of 10 or 11 weeks, during which the only report which was made was by the State Mining Engineer from his office in Perth. No attempt whatever was made to take what was the simplest possible action, and one that would commend itself to anyone with an acquaintance of mining, namely, to send a responsible officer, with or without the member for Boulder, who made the charge, to measure the shaft and ascertain whether or not the statements made were correct. And it was only when the matter was ventilated on the Mining Estimates, when members on both sides of the House expressed indignation that the matter had been neglected for so long, that the Minister and also the Premier, who then probably realised the gravity of the position, promised that the inquiry should be made and that a responsible officer, accompanied by the member for Boulder, or his representative, would go to the spot and ascertain whether or not the charge was correct. I wish to say

that a Minister charged, as the Minister for Mines is, with the administration of very large sums of money for the purpose of assisting mining development; charged as he is with the duty almost of expending that money without reference to Parliament other than the mere voting of the sum—it is incumbent upon him, and due to the members of the House, that he should be more than ordinarily careful of the expenditure of that money. He is trustee for this Parliament—trustee for the taxpayers generally; and when the charge is made that through this fraud—because that is what it amounts to—the taxpayers have been defrauded of a sum of at least £100, the Minister at the time should have had no hesitation in instituting an inquiry immediately.

Mr. George: What is the result of the inquiry?

Mr. BATH: It proves that the member for Boulder was absolutely correct in the charge he made on September 15th.

Mr. George: Where is the report?

Mr. Collier: They will not read it.

Mr. BATH: For the information of the member for Murray I might point out that the proposal by the Minister was merely to lay this report on the Table, just as ordinary papers are laid. That is not sufficient. On a matter of this kind we should have, as the kernel of those papers, a report by the State Mining Engineer on the spot; and that should have been read, and a motion made by the Minister who presented the papers that the report be received. Then the House would immediately be competent to take any action whatever on that motion that the report be received. Failing that motion, I have had to take action on the motion that the papers be laid on the Table of the House; and I am doing so because this is a matter which cannot be allowed to rest. It will go forth as the result of this case, that we are so careless of the honour of Parliament that a serious charge, such as that made by the member for Boulder, can be allowed to go for 11 weeks without serious investigation. The public will think that we are so regardless of the honour of Parliament, and of the honour of Ministers, that 15 weeks is a little time in which to investigate

this question. in which to ascertain whether or not the taxpayers have been defrauded. I say, on the other hand, that the Minister, perhaps more than any other member, should be solicitous of the honour of the House, and that when that statement was made by the member for Boulder action should have followed immediately. The wires should have been set to work, and the report should have been in the hands of the House in less than a week after the charge was made. In taking this action I wish to point out that when the member for North Fremantle made certain statements in the House, a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate those statements, and as the report of that Commission did not substantiate to the full the charges made, a vote of censure on the member for North Fremantle was moved in the House.

Mr. Bolton: On the very day the report was received.

Mr. BATH: I was away in Melbourne with the present Minister for Works at the time, but I understand the motion was moved immediately after the report was received.

Mr. Scaddan: The Minister for Railways raved over it.

Mr. BATH: That being so, I think that the action taken so precipitately on that occasion should have been followed up on the present occasion and the charges investigated by the Minister. It has been said that the officers of the department, and presumably the Minister includes himself in the statement, are not to blame in this affair. If the officers of the department acted under the instructions of the Minister in the action they took they are not to blame. If instead of doing, as the Minister on September 15th stated his intention of doing—if instead of sending the State Mining Engineer direct to the spot to pursue investigations—

The Minister for Mines: That is not quite a correct statement. I have *Hansard* before me.

Mr. BATH: On that occasion the Minister said—

"If there is the slightest reason for the statement he has made, the State

Mining Engineer himself will have to go up and make a report which I shall be pleased to submit to the member or to the House."

Later on he said—

"I am only anxious that the question shall be dealt with thoroughly and at once."

Does that not mean that the State Mining Engineer was to be despatched to make a report, and at once? That is how I read the words. Of course the Minister is at liberty to interpret them according to his own view of the situation, but the interpretation I placed upon them was that the Minister intended to send the State Mining Engineer to investigate the serious charge made by the member for Boulder. What I was going to say when the Minister interrupted me was that if, instead of sending the State Mining Engineer to the spot, the Minister was prepared to instruct the State Mining Engineer to make a report in his office in Perth—

Mr. Collier: Dated 17th September, two days after my motion.

Mr. BATH: He is not to blame, but the Minister himself is to blame, and I have no hesitation in saying that the Minister has shown himself absolutely regardless of the honour of the administration of the Mines Department, and also of this Parliament. That being so, I think the circumstances and the situation thoroughly warrant the motion that I have moved.

Mr. Holman: I would like to ask whether it is not usual, after an inquiry has been held, for the papers which have been taken away to be replaced on the table.

The Minister for Mines: They are on the table.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am afraid that I cannot accept the words of this amendment in their present form, namely, "And that this House is of opinion that the Minister for Mines is deserving of censure." I am afraid I could not accept them in that form, but if the hon. member will accept a suggestion, he might allow the papers to be placed on the Table and then raise the question of

privilege. The original question which the member has spoken to and upon which he has moved his amendment is that certain papers do lie on the table of the House. I am afraid that the words of the amendment hardly come as an amendment.

Mr. BATH: I cannot see how this can be construed into a question of privilege, nor can I see how definite action could be taken under that heading.

Mr. SPEAKER: The papers having been placed on the Table, you can rise to a question of privilege and move the motion.

Mr. BATH: I do not see that this in any way threatens the privileges of the House, and, therefore, I do not see that that course would be the proper one.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member would be in order under the right of privilege.

Mr. BATH: If the amendment is not acceptable I will give notice of motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members will keep order a moment, so that I may be heard. If the hon. member is desirous of giving notice he should give it now, and we can have it on the Notice Paper for to-morrow.

Mr. BATH: Then I formally give notice of it as a separate motion.

Mr. SCADDAN: I want to be certain of our position. If the leader of the Opposition gives this notice of motion is it the intention of the Government to accept it as a motion of no-confidence? The Minister for Mines is smiling, but he will not smile when this is all over. The point is, if the Government treats it as an ordinary motion it will be placed on the Notice Paper at their discretion, and no opportunity will be given of discussing it. I am not prepared to allow this motion to be passed over without discussion. I would draw the attention of the Premier to the fact that he gave a definite promise on this question, that when the report was brought down an opportunity would be given of discussing it.

The Premier: Well, I want to explain when I can get an opportunity.

Mr. GEORGE: It seems to me that this bit of a storm in a teacup wants to be made a little clearer, at all events for me to understand it. The report was to have been here to-day, and we were to have had an opportunity of discussing it. In a matter of this seriousness—and it is a serious matter—I might be permitted to suggest to the leader of the Opposition, if we could have an assurance that an opportunity will be given us to-morrow to discuss this question, I think he might accept that assurance. For myself in this matter, if the report should prove that the statements made by the member for Boulder are correct, and that there is not the slightest doubt but that some action has to be taken—not necessarily against the Minister for Mines; I do not know that he is to blame, or who is to blame—my action is not likely to be other than definite. The interests of the State are not to be neglected no matter who is to blame. If it is possible, the Government should read the report now, or lay it on the Table and get it into the newspapers so that we can discuss it to-morrow. That should be sufficient. Until I know what the report is I do not feel like going into the question of the issue of a vote of censure on a Minister or the Government; but if the thing is proved and the blame is on the Government, I am prepared to do my duty to the State irrespective of the side of the House on which I sit.

Mr. BATH (in explanation): I did not deem it necessary to ask from the Premier any assurance that the motion of which I have given notice for to-morrow would be discussed at the earliest possible moment. Seeing that is a motion of censure against the Premier's colleague, he should allow it to come on at the earliest possible moment for discussion. If opportunity is not given to discuss it to-morrow, other action will be taken; but my opinion is that it should not be necessary to ask for any assurance from the Premier that opportunity will be given to discuss the motion to-morrow.

The PREMIER: The promise I made was—"Since the member for Boulder had

stated that he would be satisfied if he obtained an assurance that he would be given an opportunity to discuss the question after the report had been obtained, and that he would be given an opportunity of being represented at the inquiry, he (the Premier) would be prepared to give that assurance. It would be necessary for the member for Boulder to see the Minister for Mines so that the matter might be proceeded with without unnecessary delay. Immediately the report came to hand the opportunity would be given for the matter to be fairly discussed in the House." I understood that it would be necessary to move that the report be laid on the Table of the House in order that members could have the opportunity of knowing its contents. Otherwise it would be a question of discussing the matter and not speaking to the facts. The leader of the Opposition has knowledge of the substance of the report, but other members know absolutely nothing of it. My idea was that the report should be placed on the Table, or that it could go into the Press; but if members desire it, I am prepared to read the report now. I did not see the report until four o'clock this afternoon. As some members know, I have been engaged nearly the whole day at a conference, and I had no opportunity of seeing the Minister for Mines; but last night my colleague gave me an indication of the nature of the report, and further said that the matter had been forwarded to the Crown Law Department for their advice as to what action should be taken. In regard to the promise I gave, the first thing on the following morning I rang up and arranged for an interview with the member for Boulder and the Minister for Mines in order that the necessary steps should be taken. I went to considerable trouble in order to see that there would not be any delay; in fact I sent telegrams to the hon. member's house in Subiaco asking him to call and meet me with the Minister for Mines, and I sent messages to this House and to different offices in the City so that no unnecessary delay should occur. We did not desire to hide anything in the matter, all we desired was that investigation should be

made without any unnecessary delay in accordance with the promise I made. I gave assurance that this would be promptly carried out and I think the member for Boulder knows that promise has been carried out.

Mr. Collier: So far it has.

The PREMIER: This report was only perused by me an hour ago and I then asked the Minister for Mines what he proposed to do with it. He said he thought it should be laid on the Table and discussed; and I am prepared to allow the matter to be discussed first thing tomorrow.

Mr. Walker: Let us have it read now.

The PREMIER: The only question was whether it should be discussed after it had been referred to the Crown Law Department for investigation. This is the report forwarded by Warden Finerty:—

"Canegrass, 6th December, 1909.

The Secretary for Mines, Perth.

In accordance with instructions I proceeded to Davyhurst on Saturday, 4th inst., in company with Messrs. Montgomery and Collier, and there met Mr. Greenard. Mr. Ey, late manager of Government battery at Mulwarrie, arrived early on Sunday morning. I received on Saturday afternoon a telegram from Mr. Berteaux, from Waverley, that on account of sickness he would be unable to attend at Davyhurst. To this I replied that I would proceed to Waverley, and there interview him. At the shaft at the mine, the late "President Loubet," which I was instructed to measure, the ladders were in such a dangerous state as to make it impossible for a man to go down with safety. Mr. Greenard therefore, on Sunday morning, obtained men and erected a windlass over the shaft and provided a "bosun's chair." We proceeded to the shaft and measured it to the satisfaction of Messrs. Collier and Montgomery. The depth of shaft, from collar to bottom, is one hundred and fifty-three feet six inches (153ft. 6ins.). Part of this depth consisted of nine feet (9ft.) from the original surface of ground to collar at top of dump. The collar and dump appeared to have been raised about two

feet from original height. I wished Mr. Ey to go down the shaft, in order if possible to locate the mark referred to in his statement. He was, however, so old and nervous when attempting to do so that I left it to his own judgment as to making an attempt. He decided not to go down. The shaft was searched for the mark by others, Messrs. Fox and Duncan, but without success. On that evening (Sunday) Messrs. Collier, Montgomery, Greenard, Ey, and myself, proceeded to Waverley. On the same evening those above mentioned and Mr. Berteaux met. I explained the instructions I had received—pointed out that I desired to take certain statements, but that I had no power to force a statement or to take such statement on oath. Messrs. Berteaux, Greenard, and Ey then voluntarily gave certain statements in each other's hearing, and after reading signed them. These statements I forward herewith. I do not consider it as part of my duty to make any comment on these statements, as in doing so I would be usurping the functions of a Judge. It is also quite possible that on inquiry by the proper department, much additional evidence might be obtained, which might show an altered appearance to that now presented.—(Sgd.) John M. Finnerty, Warden.

William Ey stated—I was instructed by the Mines Department to make certain measurements of sinking in a shaft on the "President Loubet" mine. That shaft was the one I visited this morning with those persons now present. When I first went there I told Mr. Berteaux for what purpose I had come. I then went down the shaft with Mr. Berteaux. He pointed out certain marks on the top of a set of timbers and said as near as I remember, "This is the mark Mr. Greenard left from which the work was to start at and that that was the 100ft. mark." I do not remember the exact words, but the words used were to the above effect. I am certain that in effect Mr. Berteaux said the mark was at the 100ft. level. I measured from there, and returned a certificate to the Mines Department. Subse-

quently as the work continued I made further measurements, always starting from this same mark to obtain the total of sinking. I never measured from the top of the shaft because I understood that Inspector Greenard had measured from the top and the mark shown me by Mr. Berteaux was Mr. Greenard's mark. My impression is that Mr. Greenard had told me that at or about the 100ft. there was a mark from which I was to measure. When measuring I stood on the set of timbers where the mark was and lowered the tape to Mr. Berteaux, who was below. I afterwards let it swing free from Mr. Berteaux to see that all was correct. I could always see the bottom of the work which was completed. I think Mr. Berteaux was at the bottom of the shaft in every case. There were also generally other men in the bottom of the shaft. I first heard that the measurements were not correct on Thursday evening last at Murrin Murrin.—(Sgd.) Wm. Ey. Witness—John M. Finnerty, Warden.

William Frederick Greenard stated—Under instructions from the Mines Department I visited the President Loubet Lease, and there met Mr. Berteaux. I went down the shaft in question. I came to the surface again. There was then no one in the shaft. I then measured the shaft by lowering a bucket by line on windlass to the bottom of shaft, counting the number of turns which went off the windlass, and calculated depth from the measured circumference of the windlass barrel. I do not remember if Mr. Berteaux was present at the time. I made the depth of the shaft quite 100 feet. I do not remember the exact measurement I furnished to the department. I explained to Mr. Berteaux on one of my visits the terms on which the subsidy would be granted. I told him that the condition as to depth which I would recommend would be that the subsidy should start from work done below the 100ft. level. I am quite certain that at the time I measured the shaft it was at least 100 feet deep. I did none of

the measuring in connection with the subsidy. I am certain that on the day I measured the shaft that Mr. Berteaux knew the depth was at least 100 feet. We discussed the whole of the work which was to proceed from the subsidy, and Mr. Berteaux agreed with me that the shaft was then at least 100 feet deep. The actual depth I returned to the Department in Perth on my return to Menzies. I measured the shaft I think as from the collar of the shaft. I have I believe the data in my diary which is at Menzies office. I am absolutely sure I measured the circumference of the windlass barrel. I have found from previous experience that such manner of measurement is reliable.—(Sgd.) W. F. Greenard. Witness—John M. Finnerty, Warden.

Rene Berteaux stated—I account for the difference in the present depth of the shaft, 153ft. 6in. from collar to bottom, instead of being 193 feet, in that the starting point from which I started to sink on subsidy was 69 feet (about) instead of 100 feet. The shaft was never measured by anyone before I got the subsidy. I did state that my shaft was 100 feet deep before I got the subsidy. I did not discover that the point from which I started to obtain the subsidy was not 100 feet deep until after I had ceased work in the shaft. After the subsidy commenced I raised the collar two feet further above the surface. I do not remember telling anyone measuring the shaft that I had done so. I do not think I pointed out any mark or told anyone measuring that it had been made by Mr. Greenard as the mark from which the subsidy for sinking would start. There was no question in the matter of the subsidy being for work done below the 100 feet. I held that I had, as stated in the agreement, to get the subsidy from wherever the shaft had then been sunk. I do not remember Mr. Greenard ever measuring the shaft in my presence. I won't say he did not measure it. I acknowledge that my representations to the Mines Department were that the shaft was 100 feet deep.

I do not know if any portion of the height above the natural surface to the collar was included in 100 feet of depth I represented to the Department. I say that the whole of the work for which I received subsidy was correctly measured and was done after I was granted the subsidy. I last saw the shaft about six months ago. I do not think that any alteration had been made about the dump since I had previously left it. I was present when Mr. Greenard came to the mine just before I received the subsidy. I do not remember him measuring the windlass barrel. I did point out to Mr. Ky where I considered the sinking on subsidy. I had made that mark myself as the point from which the subsidised work started. I found out that the work had not started from 100 feet deep when I wanted to put the mine under offer. I then measured the shaft, and found out that the shaft was not as deep as I thought it was. That was the first time I ever measured the shaft from top to bottom. When I stated to the Mines Department that the shaft was 100 feet deep, I guessed at the depth. I do not remember if I told Inspector Greenard that the shaft was 100 feet deep. I do not remember if he measured or not. Even if the depth from which the subsidised sinking should have started was 100 feet I do not know that the amount I received in subsidy should have made the total depth of shaft one hundred and ninety-three feet deep. I stopped drawing the subsidy before the amount granted had been exhausted.—(Signed.) Rene Berteaux. Witness—John M. Finnerty, Warden."

Question put and passed.

COHNEY COMPENSATION INQUIRY.

Extension of Time.

Mr. SWAN (North Perth): I beg to move—

That the time for bringing up this report be extended for one week.

The committee have had a number of

sittings, but have not been able to prepare their report owing to the non-attendance of some members who were appointed on that committee.

Mr. GEORGE: As I was elected a member of that committee and have not attended any of the meetings, I might be allowed to explain. I did not seek the position and I did not know that I had been appointed until it was too late to say anything to the House. I have not attended any of the meetings for the reason that during the debate which took place in the House on the motion, and together with the knowledge I had of the case, I formed so strong an opinion in connection with it, that I did not feel that I could act otherwise than perhaps in a biased way if I were to attend the meetings. I apologise to the House for not having mentioned this matter before, and I ask, if possible, that I should be discharged from the committee upon which I felt I could not serve.

Mr. SPEAKER: It will be necessary for someone to move that the hon. member be discharged from the committee.

Mr. SWAN: The committee have practically completed taking evidence, and I do not think it makes much difference now.

Question put and passed.

NOTICE PAPER—OMISSION.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to intimate that there is an omission from the notices of motion on the Notice Paper. This will be rectified to-morrow. I hope it will not inconvenience the member for Murchison who had given notice of his intention to move the motion which has been omitted.

BILL—INTERPRETATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Attorney General and read a first time.

MOTION—POISON LANDS, TAXATION ALLOWANCE.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray) moved—

That in the opinion of this House an allowance in the rate charged for land

tax should be made to all holders of agricultural land on which poison weed exists, and who are making bona fide efforts to eradicate same.

He said: In asking for the attention of the House in connection with this motion it is not necessary to say very much. It is a proposition which must commend itself to almost every member in the House. We know there are large areas of land in this State which are burdened with some of the great varieties of poison weed which we have in the State, and in many cases is a big burden cast upon the persons who hold these areas. It may be said that the people taking up the land have the opportunity of knowing what they will encounter. That may be, to a certain extent, correct, but I would point out the reason why consideration should be given in connection with this particular class of land. It has been laid down in all our Land Acts, that in areas where the poison weed is known to exist a low price shall be taken, but it has been made a condition by the Government that the poison shall be eradicated. I have in my mind a large estate which is held by a gentleman of the name of Wilkie who was formerly engaged in railway construction, and I know that gentleman must have spent between £20,000 and £25,000 in endeavouring to clear his property of the poison.

Mr. Horan: More like £60,000.

Mr. GEORGE: I said anything between £20,000 and £25,000. My friend the member for Yilgarn states that the sum expended is more like £60,000. I did not care to go as high as that, although I do not doubt that that sum of money has been spent: and more money, I think, will have to be spent before the land is thoroughly cleared of poison. The particular poison he has on his land is what is known as York Road, and he is obliged to pull up practically every piece of the poison, fill the holes, and stamp the earth down again so as to exclude the air from any portion of the roots. There is another poison called heart leaf on one estate that I know of where the holders have been engaged in periodically pulling

it up for 20 years, and they have not yet got rid of it. It seems to me that as the Parliament of the State have acquiesced in the fact that there should be a land tax placed on all agricultural lands, it would not be considered unfair that to those who have to struggle against difficulties such as those I have referred to, some allowance should be made. I know of one particular case where a man sent out his flock of sheep of 600 or 700, and the shepherd having been guilty of a little neglect during the night, on the next morning all the sheep that it was possible to collect and induce to walk, or stand on their legs, numbered 40. The balance were all dead, and the carcasses had to be destroyed by fire. I know of a number of instances in the South-West where cattle have got out, and one man whom I know in the Brunswick district, Mr. Castieau, lost 6 or 8 valuable bullocks not long ago in the course of a few hours. Any of the sheep owners in that district are liable to leave their gates open, or sheep may even stray through the fences into country in which poison exists, and the result is that the sheep may be collected only for the wool that it is possible to take off their backs. In that district there is little land which can be selected because it is mostly freehold, but the holder is placed under great expense to clear it and bring it into anything like a property of value. During the last few months the Government have sent down into these districts several inspectors who have looked at these lands in order to see whether the holders have been systematically undervaluing and paying less tax than they should have done. These inspectors made inquiries in a quiet manner, and many of the landowners were not even aware of the fact that the inspection or a valuation was being made, and they had no opportunity of pointing out to the inspectors the position in which they stood. If the result of the inspection should turn out in the direction of increased values which the State may or may not consider to be a fair thing, my pleading is that in connection with these properties throughout the whole of the State where poison weed exists, the holders should

have some consideration shown to them. I know of one estate of 5,000 acres of which 2,000 acres only can be used for the depasturing of stock. The other 3,000 acres contain poison, and if the owner were to turn his stock out into this tract of country, he would soon find himself in the Bankruptcy Court.

Mr. Angwin: They get the land cheap.

Mr. GEORGE: If the hon. member will wait a little while he will have an opportunity of expressing his opinion with regard to this matter. Even if the people do get the land cheap, sometimes it proves to be very dear indeed. The object of the State is to settle people on the land, and encourage them to settle on the land, and not as the hon. member's interjection would lead me to believe—I may be wrong in taking such a view of it, but I think that is his idea—that it is the State's desire to get the people to take up the land so that the State might have someone on whom to impose a tax. The land held by Mr. Wilkie, to which I have already referred, was obtained under special conditions. That gentleman, as the House has been informed by the member for Yilgarn, has spent £60,000 in attempting to eradicate the poison plant; so that even if he had been given this land cheaply, or even for nothing, in his case it has proved very costly. There are hon. members who think like myself that industries in the State are worth offering a bonus to. If a man engages on that most uncertain of propositions, the taking up of land, an industry in which a number of people are capable of being employed, he is as much entitled to consideration as is the manufacturer. Take, for instance, the Colliery coal industry. This Government and other Governments have made it their duty to assist that particular industry by giving it not a direct bonus, but by giving an extra price for the fuel, and there has been a considerable doubt amongst those who are experienced, as to whether the coal is worth the money or not. I am asking that the subject matter of my motion should be taken into consideration, and that the Government when framing regulations in connection with land, or in connection with the various taxes which are placed upon the land, they should con-

sider the men who have an uphill battle to fight, especially when they have to deal with poison plants. I do not mind giving members the benefit of my own experience. I recently lost 60 sheep which had got on to a patch of poison land which was fenced round; and for three years past has been examined carefully every month for poison. Last week I was on that particular patch myself, and I pulled up a handful of this poison. I got this comforting assurance given to me by some of the people around there, that if I lived for another 30 years, I could still go on picking the poison. Now I have only one ambition, and it is to live for that period of 30 years to prove either that these people know their business or that I do not. You cannot get rid of the poison because the seeds are there, and they keep coming up. The heartleaf poison seeds seem to drop and lie dormant until a bush fire comes along; then up it springs like beautiful lucerne. When a man goes on the land no matter what precautions he takes he will be faced with this difficulty, and when on top of that comes a considerable amount of taxation, I think that those who have to bear such a heavy burden are worthy of consideration at the hands of the Government. I put the motion forward for what it is worth and leave it to the House to accept or reject. I have had my little say, and I do not think I have done any harm. I beg to move the motion.

Mr. HAYWARD (Wellington): I have had something like 50 years' experience, and I know that in the brooks and rivers in this district the poison is found more or less. As the hon. member has stated, the seeds lay in the ground for years, and occasionally they are carried down by floods. Constant efforts have to be made to keep the poison down. I have spent some hundreds of pounds, I may say thousands, in eradicating this poison. It is a weed that cannot be eradicated in a few years. It is very important that when selectors go over land that this weed should be brought under their notice, because it affects the value of land considerably, and probably they know nothing whatever about it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. Mitchell): It would be a very bad pre-

cedent to allow a motion like this to pass. Poison is, undoubtedly, a great trouble to stock in various parts of the State. Years ago I had some experience of the poison in the district to which the hon. member refers, and I know the trouble in eradicating the poison. There are other troubles that may be treated in the same way if this motion were allowed to pass. In the South-West not only is poison a great trouble, but in many places drainage is necessary, and if we exempt a man from taxation because he has poison on his land, it can also be argued with equal force that a man's property that needs draining should be exempt from taxation also.

Mr. George: You are draining his property now.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I know people who have poison on their land, and I know that the Government generally, now and in the past, have given every consideration to those who have taken up poison country. Poison lands were granted at £1 per thousand acres, payable over 20 years, averaging something like 5d. per acre spread over 20 years; that practically means a free gift of the land so long as the weed is eradicated. The same thing, to some extent, applies to-day. We sell land on which poison is found, and if the land is sold after survey, or the land applied for has poison on it, it is taken up as third class land, which is due to the fact that there is poison on the land. If it were possible to instruct the Taxation Commissioner that he is to make an allowance to every man who claims to have found poison on his holding where would this exemption cease? The hon. member knows that for five years now every selector of 1,000 acres and under is exempt under the Act from taxation. I know there are half a dozen kinds of poison found in this State, which are not easily eradicable, and I know that there is poison on the land referred to. The owner bought the land for less than its value, because it had poison on it; probably he bought the land for not half what he would have had to pay if it had been free of the heartleaf poison. The argument put forward by the member in favour of exemption

from taxation is based on the assumption that the land is charged for at the rate of ordinary land free of poison. If that were so, probably those who took up land and paid for it under those conditions would be entitled to consideration. But is it so? A great deal of this poison land is sold at less than 5d. per acre, and the payment is spread over 20 years; whereas if land is free of poison, that is first-class land, it is sold at 10s. per acre, payable over 20 years; therefore, a person who has poison land gets a relief of 9s. 7d. per acre, therefore, he starts on a fair basis. Hon. members know that the value set on the land by the Taxation Commissioner is the unimproved value, that is the value of the land less cost of improvements. The House should not consent to a further exemption, and I do not think it is reasonable that the House should ask for any further exemption. If we agreed to this exemption, perhaps an owner may leave a little poison on his land; at any rate the motion may have that effect, because people will do these things. Many years ago some friends of mine sought to evade the customs duty. They got out a case from Home containing some instruments, which had been provided for by some charitably disposed persons and was intended for a public institution. There was some room in the box in which the instruments were packed, and some friends of mine thought it would be a good idea to evade paying certain taxes and they put some beautiful dresses in the box; but the case fell into the water and it had to be opened, and they had to pay the tax on the dresses after all. These good christian friends of mine would evade the payment of the customs duty, and therefore, perhaps the friends of the hon. member might be desirous of evading the payment of the income tax, by leaving a little poison on the land.

Mr. George: But all my friends are honest men.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am glad to hear it. All my friends are not honest men when it comes to the payment of taxes. Relief does come to the selectors of poison lands, first, in con-

nection with the price, and secondly the cost of grubbing the poison is counted an improvement under the conditional purchase conditions. It seems to me that the member for Murray has not made out a good case for the unfortunate friends of his who bought magnificent land in his locality. They have something very good down there which they have obtained for very little, and now they want the House to allow an exemption because they have poison on their land. Is it fair that the hon. member should ask that the people who have poison weed should be exempted from taxation? I hope the House will not agree to the motion, because the exemption would be so much worry and bother to the Government in calculating the land tax due to the State.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): I must confess I have a considerable amount of sympathy with the motion, only I am afraid it would be setting up a rather dangerous precedent. Those of us who have had an opportunity of travelling through poison country know that the poison is one of the curses of the district referred to, and the selectors who own the land are not in the fortunate position of many who have taken up land under conditional purchase, because the land in the neighbourhood was made freehold in the very early history of the State although at that time it did not require a great deal of money to obtain a quantity of land, because a person was given an acre of land for every 1s. 6d. of capital introduced into the State. The present owners have had to pay a considerable price, while, at the same time it is recognised that the eradication of the heart-leaf poison is also more difficult than some of the other poisons. What I would like to point out is, that there is some consideration granted to persons who eradicate poison, inasmuch as under the Land Act the eradication of poison constitutes an improvement. Much of the poison land, as pointed out by the Minister for Lands, was held in the early days and acquired at a very nominal sum; but notwithstanding the fact that it was acquired for a nominal

sun, it did not always follow that the persons were able to comply with the conditions, and consequently thousands of acres of poison land were forfeited in various parts of the State. As a matter of fact an area of 40,000 acres was forfeited in the neighbourhood of the railway which we were discussing last night, and on which the poison is now being eradicated owing to the fact of the land being closely settled. In regard to giving effect to the proposal it would entail I think—I have not looked into the question—an amendment of the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act. I do not know if there are regulations framed under that Act which would allow exemptions under the conditions stated by the member for Murray. At the same time one's sympathy, to a very large extent, goes out to those people at present engaged in clearing away this pest. I am afraid if the proposal is carried, as the Minister for Lands has already stated, it would lead to a very bad precedent, and might be followed by requests in regard to other difficulties which the settlers have to put up with. As pointed out, in cases where the country is low lying or heavily timbered, it might be urged that under those circumstances the settlers might have preferential treatment as compared with the settlers who can clear for a nominal amount, or where it is not necessary to spend money in draining.

Mr. GEORGE (in reply): I am afraid I have given the Minister for Lands a lot of trouble for he has not been able to pass this motion over in the nice easy manner so characteristic of him. Permit me to point out that there is a wide difference in the cases I have quoted from those mentioned by the Minister, who talked about boggy country and drainage. What is the history of a considerable portion of the South-West. The Minister himself has property down that way and he knows well that for the past sixteen or seventeen years the various Governments have been trying to assist settlers by cutting drains through the land. No Government have, however, had sufficient public spirit to say to a man

who has poison on his land "We will assist you to get rid of that which troubles you." If the poison is got rid of, as members know, the land is considerably increased in value. The Minister tells us about poison leases, but I was not dealing so much with them—although, I mentioned Wilkie's estate—but was dealing with freehold lands on which poison exists. The member for Wellington knows all about those lands, for there is much of it in his district. It is not the people who pay sixpence an acre and have twenty years to pay it in to whom I refer, but it is those who put their money into the land in order to get a living for their wives and children, and who are now doing their best to get rid of the poison on their property and so improve their holdings. The Minister desires members to believe that the only country reference was made to was poison country which can be obtained at a much lower price than any other sort of land. Some time ago I bought land myself in that locality.

The Minister for Lands: Your place was offered to me.

Mr. GEORGE: If the Minister will give me the money I have paid for the land and what I have spent on it he can have it and I will put up with the sleepless nights and the grey hairs which my experiences as a settler on the land have given me. I am as great a believer in our agricultural lands as any man in the State.

Mr. Scaddan: That is why you want to get rid of your block.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member himself is very fond of a row, well, in this particular case I have had my row with nature, and just now I want to hand a little of it over to the Minister for Lands. I am very much obliged to the Premier and the Minister for Lands for what they have said. I have had information from them which, when conveyed to the people for whom I act, will prove very pleasing knowledge. I was not aware, nor were they, that any consideration was given to freehold lands when eradicating poison. We knew there was consideration given as to poison leases but they will be very

glad to know that some consideration is given to the holders of freehold land. I hope members will allow me to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1. Legitimation.

2. Landlord and Tenant.

Received from the Legislative Council.

RETURN—RAILWAY EMPLOYEES AND ACCIDENTS.

Mr. SWAN (North Perth) moved—

That there be laid upon the Table of the House a return showing: 1, The number of fatal and other accidents which have occurred to guards and shunters in the Railway Department during the last ten years. 2, The number of hours for which the injured employee was on duty on the date of the accident, and preceding date. 3, In cases other than fatal, the length of time the employee was off duty as a result of the accident. 4, The number of cases in which the employee received pay under the Workers' Compensation Act.

It was unnecessary to say very much on this question. When the notice of motion was originally given the Minister for Railways said he would be prepared to accept it as a formal motion. On the following evening, however, it appeared at the bottom of the Notice Paper and the Minister said he would arrange to have it brought up and carried as a formal motion. On the next day he failed to do so, and later on said it would cause some trouble to prepare the return, and he would like an amendment of the motion. The amendment was discussed by the Minister and himself and it was promised that the motion would be redrafted and submitted to him to see if it would suit. If accepted in that form it would be dealt with as a formal motion. That was the last he had heard of it. He had come to the conclusion that he would not run after the Minister any more. When a man gave a promise to him he expected it to be kept, just as when he made a

promise he always kept it. He declined to run after anyone day after day and place himself under a compliment to him. It was to be hoped members would agree to have the report prepared and laid on the Table. It was very necessary that the information should be provided. A very large number of accidents had occurred to men in this particular calling and seeing that this was the biggest earning business of the State members should be placed in possession of facts as to the employees. Day after day men were injured in various ways, some of them fatally. He could take members to the ticket room at the Perth station and show them half a dozen young fellows, one with an arm cut off and another with one leg, and still others maimed for life. The Workers Compensation Act did not apply to any case where a worker was incapacitated for a less term than fourteen days. In many cases of accidents to railway employees the injured men recovered in ten or twelve days and received no consideration under that Act. Up to a few years ago there was an arrangement under an agreement with the department, by which the injured men should receive five-eighths pay. During the time the member for Murray was Commissioner of Railways that agreement was struck out and the men were brought under the Workers' Compensation Act. He had particularly asked to be supplied with information as to the number of hours the injured men were on duty on the day of the accident and the number of hours they worked on the preceding day. If that information were supplied it would be found that in a majority of cases accidents had occurred through employees being worked longer than reasonable hours. Particularly was this so with regard to shunting, which was a hard and tiring work and the most dangerous in the department. He had been given to understand that continually the men were employed at shunting for twelve hours without a break; this was playing with the men's lives. Too frequently we heard of cases of men being crippled in this particular calling. It was not so bad in the case of guards, but even there too many cases occurred. To enable us to realise the position of our State em-

ployees it was only right that this information should be supplied to members.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret): I second the motion.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND RAILWAYS (Hon. E. Gregory): The information asked for by the hon. member, if supplied as fully as he desired, would entail a very large expense. He had asked for a return showing all the accidents that had occurred to guards and shunters during the past ten years, and full particulars with regard to the hours they were on duty on the day of the accident and the day preceding it; in addition he desired certain other particulars. The member had spoken to him as to the matter before the motion came on, and he would have been prepared to deal with it as a formal motion if a slight amendment were accepted. He had redrafted a slight amendment.

Mr. Swan: I never saw one.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The amendment had been drafted in the House, and it was suggested by that amendment that instead of ten years the period should be limited to three, and that instead of every trivial accident being enumerated reference should only be made to those accidents which had caused men to be off duty for a period of at least fourteen days. It would be impossible to provide this session a return in conformity with the motion; in addition its preparation would cost a great deal of money. He would suggest that the member should accept an amendment to the effect that the first paragraph be altered to provide that the period should be for three years and that the accidents should refer only to those men who had been incapacitated from work for fourteen days or more.

Mr. Seaddan: That is no good to me at all.

Mr. Swan: I am prepared to accept the amendment with regard to years, but not the other.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Would the hon. member accept three years instead of ten?

Mr. Swan: Yes, but I will not accept the other.

The MINISTER FOR MINES moved an amendment—

That the word "ten" in line 4 be struck out and "three" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

Question as amended agreed to.

MOTION — MRS. TRACEY'S PETITION, SELECT COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION.

Mr. HARDWICK (East Perth) moved—

That in the opinion of this House it is advisable that effect be given to the recommendation of the select committee on the case of Mrs. Tracey.

A similar motion had been on the Notice Paper last session, but unfortunately it had never been given the prominence necessary in order to have the matter settled. His thanks were due to the Government for the opportunity given him to-day of having the matter fully debated and settled for all time.

Mr. Angwin: Do you want us to vote against it?

Mr. HARDWICK: Certainly not, but the Government would have to play some part in the deciding of the question. Under the British Constitution the lowliest in the land were afforded opportunities of bringing their grievances before the authorities; and there had been instances in which after redress of a grievance had been refused by the State Parliament, such grievance had been carried on to the highest authorities, and had been settled even by the signature of His Majesty himself. In order that members might thoroughly understand the situation he would remind them that in 1903 Mr. C. J. Moran had moved a similar motion, and with the permission of the House he would read a few lines from Mr. Moran's speech as reported in *Hansard*. Mr. Moran said—

"Last session a select committee consisting of himself and members for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson), the Swan (Mr. Jacoby), the Greenough (Mr. Stone), and Mount Margaret (Mr. Taylor), was appointed to inquire into the question of the alleged wrongs of Mrs. Tracey. The result of the in-

quiry was laid on the table of the House, and the committee reported they were of opinion that the lady had suffered some wrong in the past and was the victim of very unfortunate circumstances, and therefore was deserving of some consideration. The committee came to the conclusion that the best thing to do was to ask the Government to consider her case, and see whether it would not be the best way out of the difficulty to provide her with counsel so that her case might be reopened if she thought fit. This was a case involving considerable property and all the lady possessed; and it was not an unknown circumstance for the State to provide means by which the path of justice might be re-opened to a litigant. There was no need for him to do more than move that the report of the committee receive favourable consideration at the hands of the Government. They would probably inquire into the matter through the Crown Law Department, and probably the lady would be provided with counsel so that the case might be re-opened. No doubt the lady had suffered a loss, and it would be very wrong to prevent her case being re-opened."

It would be of interest to notice the part the gentlemen comprising that committee, or so many of them as were still in the House, would play in the debate. Many members of Parliament had promised the old lady that when the matter was brought before Parliament, they would not be lacking in their desire to see justice done to her. It would not be necessary to traverse the whole history of the case. It was sufficient to know that those who had gone thoroughly into it had come down to the House with a report favourable to the old lady. Mrs. Tracey had been an old pioneer, and was a very old West Australian, having come to the country when an infant. She was now an old lady battling with the adversities of life. She had played a very important part in the building up of Western Australia. Having no family, it was quite possible that she was without friends. She had played an important part in Western Australia as a nurse when nurses were only too few

in the State. She was familiar to all hon. members, and when gazing upon her furrowed cheek none could help realising that she had reached her declining years. Something certainly should be done for her. If other Governments had failed to discharge a duty towards one of the citizens, it did not follow that the present Government should do the same. It was for the Government to say whether they were going to do anything for this old lady; and he intended that the motion should go to the vote in order that it might be demonstrated to Mrs. Tracey once and for all what was her real position, and whether or not she could expect any consideration from the Government. She had said she was not particularly anxious for a compassionate allowance, that all she wanted was justice. A number of other hon. members would be speaking to the question, and perhaps they would be able to throw even more light upon it. It was a question deserving of the consideration of Parliament, more especially when it was remembered that this old lady had borne the heat and burden of the day. She had lived in the days when the conditions of the State were very different from what they were to-day, and if any hon. member would care to have half an hour's chat with her he would find that she could give him a better idea of the conditions of the past than was to be found in any printed record. He intended to press the motion to a division in order to indicate to the country how members felt on this question. Probably it would be found that a majority of hon. members were of opinion that justice had not been meted out, and that Mrs. Tracey had not received the consideration which should have been hers.

Mr. Scaddan: Tell us something about the case.

Mr. HARDWICK: The details he was leaving to the Attorney General, who as hon. members knew, had been a member of the committee which had reported that they were of opinion that the lady had suffered some wrong in the past, and was the victim of unfortunate circumstances, and therefore, deserving of consideration.

(Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.)

Mr. HARDWICK: Apparently someone had purloined his notes during the adjournment so as to prevent his speaking further. However, the question must be characterised as of importance, because the financial prospects of an individual were concerned. It was a case of penury for life, or a question of giving consideration to one who had fought a battle through life in her own cause. Whatever the opinion of members in regard to that lady might be, they must recognise in her character the trait of persistency in fighting her case. That trait had won her many admirers throughout the State. Men who came from the backblocks and listened to her orations on the Esplanade, felt that she laboured under a genuine grievance, and that the authorities had been lacking in their desire to do justice to her. In fighting her case she had spent a good deal of money. It was to be remembered that her case was decided in the days when the law was not so well within the reach of individuals as it was to-day, when the profession, known as the legal fraternity, were somewhat limited in numbers, and fairly unanimous in opinion. It was not always possible in those days to get the standard of justice now attained, and Mrs. Tracey was labouring under many difficulties in that direction. The Attorney General and other members of the select committee would assuredly enlighten the House on the subject.

Mr. MONGER (York): The hon member had left very little to add, except that many of those who had watched the career of this old lady held the opinion that she was undoubtedly deserving of some consideration at the hands of the present Government. For years and years past she had never lost an opportunity of bringing her case under the notice of the public and under the notice of Parliament, and the motion now moved by the member for East Perth had been submitted to Parliament year after year, frequently moved early in the session and from time to time placed at the bottom of the list. It was to be hoped that mem-

bers this evening would come to an absolute and definite opinion as to whether the old lady was deserving of the consideration to which a select committee appointed to inquire into her grievances some years ago thought she was entitled. Among the members of that Committee were the present Attorney General, and the members for Mount Margaret and Swan. That committee thought the old lady had a fair and reasonable grievance and they submitted that in their recommendation to the House. We would be lacking in duty if we did not, even at the eleventh hour, give the old lady that fair and reasonable recognition Parliament had already approved of. Certainly from a legal standpoint Mrs. Tracey had no legitimate claim against the Government, but she was a woman who had borne the heat and burden of the Western Australian early days, and was deserving of fair and reasonable consideration from us. On account of the work Mrs. Tracey had done 50 years ago for the pioneers of Western Australia, if for no other reason, she was deserving of fair and reasonable recognition. It gave him the greatest pleasure to second the motion so ably proposed by the member for East Perth, and he hoped hon. members would at all events, show their appreciation of the efforts of an old citizeness by giving her, at all events, a fair vote this evening.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): This matter was no new one to the House. The lady who formed the subject of the discussion, referred to by hon. members as an old lady, might have been characterised as a young lady when the matter was first brought before Parliament, since it was in 1889 that a select committee was first appointed to inquire into the grievances of Mrs. Tracey. That committee reported being unable to suggest any means by which Mrs. Tracey could be relieved of the losses sustained by her, which losses were attributed to Mrs. Tracey's desire to be at law and to improper advice. Later on a select committee was appointed in 1902, and it recommended that the Government should give consideration to the question of

granting Mrs. Tracey some compassionate allowance. That report was received and read in 1902; and in the following year, 1903, a motion was brought forward that the report of the select committee should receive consideration. Of the two findings of the select committees, the one that was adverse was received, while the one recommending the consideration of the House was not accepted. Probably many members were better posted in this rather intricate case than he was. The motion as submitted to the House was that it was advisable that effect be given to the recommendation of the select committee.

Mr. Draper: What was it?

The PREMIER: The select committee reported as follows:—

"Your committee have inquired into the petition of Mrs. Tracey and find:— That the whole of the facts were exhaustively inquired into by the select committee of Parliament in the year 1889. No new facts bearing on the case can be elicited. The petitioner suffered a great personal loss through processes of law. Your committee are unable to give any opinion concerning the legal aspect of the various cases. Your committee referred the whole matter to the Crown Law officers and asked:—1, Could Mrs. Tracey start law proceedings *de novo*. 2, Could she continue any of the old suits to a higher tribunal? Both queries were answered in the negative. In the one case she is met by the answer of *res judicata*? In the other case she is met by the answer that the time for appeal has long since expired. Considering the present position of the petitioner and the remarkable surroundings of the case, your committee recommend that the Government should consider the question of making her a compassionate allowance."

That report was signed by Mr. Moran who was chairman of the committee. When the matter was brought before the House the then Premier (Sir Walter James) stated that when members bore in mind the fact that the case had been fully argued on all sides they could not expect it to be reopened. The member for Clare-

mont at that time said it was necessary that further information should be obtained and Mr. Moran declared that he would read up the history of the whole case, and later on comment on it at length. The matter was considered by succeeding Governments and a letter was written during 1905 that the then Government could hold out no hope of Mrs. Tracey receiving a compassionate allowance. As a matter of fact an allowance was granted to Mrs. Tracey during the period of the Rason Government, and at the present time this lady was receiving fifteen shillings per week. To some extent therefore the desires of the select committee had been carried out, but whether it was an equitable compassionate allowance or not he (Mr. Moore) was not prepared to say. Needless to say Mrs. Tracey considered something more substantial should be granted and it was for the House to say whether they considered the small allowance now granted to that lady should be increased or otherwise. The original proposal last year was that another select committee should be appointed; the motion before the House at the present time was that the report of the select committee should receive favourable consideration. It was understood from that, that the compassionate allowance which had been granted was not commensurate with the requirements of the lady.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret): A select committee was appointed to deal with this case principally to see whether by any means Mrs. Tracey's case could be reopened in the Supreme Court. It was at that time the desire of the House that a select committee should be appointed to see whether that could be done and to recommend the Government to bear the expense of such a Supreme Court action, in order to enable the lady to get what she had been working for for many years, namely, justice in the State. The select committee found that they could not do anything in the way indicated. After having had the best of advice from the Crown Law Department and after having examined the officers of that department the committee found they were bound at every stage by the statute of limita-

tions. The case could not therefore be heard, and the committee mentioned that fact in its report. Having gone into the circumstances, however, and taking into consideration the time which had elapsed, and the conditions under which litigation was carried on in this State at that time, the committee was of opinion that this person had suffered a great wrong, but not at the hands of the State.

The Attorney General: The report does not disclose that.

Mr. TAYLOR: The committee could not find that the State was responsible in any way for the position in which Mrs. Tracey was at the time. It was recognised she was suffering a hardship, and in fairness to the old lady, and considering her unblemished character during her long residence in the State, the committee recommended the House to give her favourable consideration in the way of a compassionate allowance. There may have been some amount suggested during the debate in the House, but it was so long ago that he could not remember. At that time Mrs. Tracey was not receiving anything from the State, but two or three years after that when he (Mr. Taylor) had the honour to be Colonial Secretary, Mrs. Tracey was living where she had been residing for many years, in Stirling-street. Her residence was a dilapidated old place and she was paying a nominal rent for it, but the Health Department condemned it and she was then compelled to appeal to the Government for some assistance in the way of charity. He then in the ordinary way authorised Mr. Longmore, Superintendent of the Charities Department, to make Mrs. Tracey an allowance of 10s. per week. That, however, was not in any way in accordance with any motion of Parliament. Later on the amount was increased by a succeeding Government to 15s. a week. At that time Mrs. Tracey was in very poor circumstances. The payment which she was receiving should not in any way influence any action which members might feel disposed to take at the present time. Mrs. Tracey's case was worthy of some consideration.

Mr. Heitmann: On what grounds?

Mr. TAYLOR: On the grounds of the treatment she had received. It was the

duty of the State to protect its citizens and at the time Mrs. Tracey suffered her wrongs at the hands of the legal fraternity, according to the member for East Perth, who was a resident of the State at the time, things were done in rather a slipshod manner, and the justice which we were in the habit of receiving to-day was not so closely observed at that time.

Mr. Heitmann: The same thing happens to-day.

Mr. TAYLOR: Then it was not right, and Parliament would be acting humanely and charitably to Mrs. Tracey if they made her a grant which would keep poverty away from her door for the remainder of her life. She was an old lady now, and perhaps had not many more years to live. The House would act wisely not only by carrying the motion but in giving an indication to the Government that this lady should receive something which would keep her in fairly comfortable circumstances.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. J. L. Nanson): If the member for East Perth had not mentioned the fact, it would have escaped his (the Attorney General's) recollection that he had received the honourable but unsolicited appointment to serve upon a select committee to inquire into the claims and grievances of Mrs. Tracey. He had to plead guilty to not having attended any sittings of that committee and therefore could not speak with that knowledge of the inner details that was possessed by the member for Mt. Margaret. He supposed he was bound to accept some sort of vicarious responsibility for the report issued by that committee. It was therefore with a considerable amount of relief that he found there was nothing in the report to which he could take exception; nothing that the present or any other Government could be blamed for. He found that Mrs. Tracey's case had been the subject of inquiry by a previous select committee so far back as the year 1889, and that committee reported being unable to suggest any means by which Mrs. Tracey could be relieved of the loss which she had sustained; and that committee had attributed that loss to a de-

sire to defeat the law, and to having received improper legal advice. Mrs. Tracey was one of those people, not uncommon in any community, who thought they had a case which would enable them to acquire some modicum of this world's wealth, and having gone into the Courts experienced disappointment. The latter committee dealt with this matter when he (the Attorney General) occupied a position of greater freedom and less responsibility. This committee reported that they were unable to elicit any new facts bearing on the case. They did not report that the petitioner had suffered any grave wrong, or indeed that she had suffered any wrong at all, but they pointed out that she had suffered great personal loss through process of law. And the committee having discovered that this good lady had had this unfortunate experience, referred the whole matter to the Crown Law officers, and the Crown Law officers reported that so far as legal remedies were concerned, Mrs. Tracey had exhausted these. Her particular grievance had been adjudicated upon, the time for appeal had expired, and the matter could not be reopened in any Court of law. That finished the facts of the case as far as they were elicited by the select committee of 1902, and as they were reported upon by that committee. Now we came to the important part of the report and that was the recommendation. He was bound to confess the recommendation was of a somewhat non-committal character. He could not say at this long distance of time whether any individual member of the committee was responsible more than another for the non-committal character of the report. As far as his recollection of the then member for West Perth was concerned he could believe his Hibernian sympathies readily went out to any lady in distress, and if he could by straining the strict letter of the law or equity have laid before the House a recommendation very much stronger than the one contained in the report of that select committee no doubt he would have done so. But here we had this gentleman, warm-hearted, with Hibernian sympathies, who was unable to do more than to state that considering the present position of the

petitioner and the remarkable surroundings of the case, the committee recommended that the Government should consider the question of making Mrs. Tracey a compassionate allowance. That report did not mention any definite sum. It was open to the then Government, or any succeeding Government, either to disregard the report altogether, to pay Mrs. Tracey a lump sum, or perhaps what, if it were desired to extend consideration to her, was the wisest course of all, to pay her a pension which, while not raising her to a condition of affluence, would secure her against a condition of absolute penury for the rest of her days. The James Government took no action. Sir Walter James who was the then Premier had inquired exhaustively into Mrs. Tracey's case. It had come before him in various ways, and he was in a good position to judge, and acting from a strong sense of justice he came to the conclusion that the case was one in which the bounty of the Crown should not be extended. However, another Government came into power having as its Premier the member for Subiaco, and that Government did extend to Mrs. Tracey some measure of consideration, giving her an allowance of 10s. per week. In the usual order that Government was succeeded by another Government, and when the Rason Government came into office Mrs. Tracey not satisfied with the 10s. a week she was receiving from the bounty of the Government approached the Rason Government and succeeded in getting that amount increased by 50 per cent. That he understood was where the matter remained at the present day. Mrs. Tracey was getting something like 15s. a week at the present time. It could not be said that the report of the select committee of 1902 had been altogether disregarded. Considering the indefinite character of that report, how the members of that committee refrained from committing themselves to any definite opinion, it might well be argued that Mrs. Tracey received quite as much consideration as the Government were justified in giving to her. If the House wished to go further, it was not a question on which the Government felt very

strongly, it was a matter which we were willing to leave in the hands of the House. This lady's case had been before a great variety of Premiers and a considerable variety of other people. It had been before not only the Parliament, but Judges and officers of the Crown Law Department. The acting Chief Justice, he understood, had gone very carefully into the case, and the Crown Solicitor, Mr. Barker, went into the matter and reported that the case was hopeless from a legal point of view, and he further expressed the opinion that the papers did not make out a case for treatment that other suitors should not receive. It seemed a somewhat dangerous principle if the House was going to lay down that suitors who failed in the law courts should come to Parliament and receive consideration because of their failure. He did not know if Mrs. Tracey should receive further consideration than what she was already receiving, and if so he very much doubted whether it would be due so much to any facts in her particular case, as to the admiration which hon. members might have for the remarkable pertinacity to which the member for East Perth alluded. One could not but admire a lady who had for years past approached politicians and members of Parliament, and having listened to their honeyed speeches which did not materialise into anything very satisfactory in Mrs. Tracey's claims, after some 20 years of this experience she should still sufficiently retain her faith in human nature to pursue the same old course, and obtain the hearing of members of Parliament, and so invoke the chivalry of the member for East Perth to secure a revival of this long standing case. The matter was in the hands of members. He asked them to bear this fact in mind; if we were to reward the remarkable pertinacity of this lady it might result in a very short time in bringing up other disappointed litigants showing pertinacity, perhaps not equal to Mrs. Tracey, but similar to it. The case had received the investigation of absolutely impartial persons other than politicians, and if members felt they could afford to be charitable with the public funds—and he did not know why they

should be charitable with the public funds—unless they felt as trustees for the public they were justified in increasing the amount of allowance already given, he thought they would be wise to be guided by the impartial opinion of men like the Crown Law officers and other public servants who had considered the case, and decided that the Government had done as much as could be done, and that now this case should be regarded as closed for all time.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara): What would be the position if the motion were carried?

The Attorney General: There would be no result. We have already given effect to it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Mrs. Tracey was being very fairly treated now? If the motion were defeated it might be considered that the compassionate allowance she was receiving should be taken from her, as it was a direction from this House not to continue it; still, if a motion were carried, would the Government take it as an instruction that the allowance should be raised?

The Attorney General: No.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There should be a definite statement on the matter. He would like to say that the discussion of such important questions as this at length made one have a very high appreciation of the privilege of having a private members' night in this Chamber.

Mr. COLLIER (Boulder): As one of those members who came into the House in recent years, and not having had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the merits of the case, he thought the Government should have taken up a definite attitude on the question. They might have stated that they did not think Mrs. Tracey was entitled to any increased allowance to that she was now receiving. Personally, he was unable to decide whether Mrs. Tracey was entitled to anything at all. No member who had spoken had given any information. The member for East Perth dealt with the matter more or less sentimentally, but he gave no information to members.

Mr. Butcher: There is the report of the select committee.

Mr. COLLIER: What did the member for East Perth desire? If the House were going to consider the claims of every disappointed litigant, of everyone who had exhausted the process of the courts of the State and had been defeated, where was it going to end? The whole time of Parliament would be taken up in dealing with such cases. The law having decided that Mrs. Tracey had no legal claim, and the various Governments, and members who had inquired into the matter having been unable to show that she really was entitled to compensation, surely the case should not receive further consideration. He would not vote for a motion to increase the allowance. He would not like to see the old lady thrown on the world without means of living, but the amount she was now receiving, 15s. a week, would enable her to live in fairly decent circumstances. Mrs. Tracey had been fairly treated and no increase should be granted.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): The members for Pilbara and Boulder had, to a certain extent, stated his position with regard to the matter. He had no desire to see the present allowance taken away, but he was satisfied that if a proposal to give her a lump sum were carried it would place her in a worse position than now, when she was receiving 15s. a week. The most she could expect would be a lump sum of £100, but the allowance would be of much greater benefit to her than that sum. He would, therefore, move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion:—"By the continuation of the present allowance made to that lady."

Mr. HEITMANN (Cue) seconded.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray): It appeared that Mrs. Tracey was receiving 15s. a week, but she now desired to receive a larger grant, or a lump sum, and so extinguish her claim altogether. If she were to be paid a lump sum she might be soon in a position to receive the old age pension provided by the Commonwealth. So long as she received the 15s. a week she could not get that. His acquaintance with the lady dated some 20 years, and he

remembered the version of the case which she put forward then, and had distinct recollections of several occasions when the matter came up before Parliament. If, when the question was first brought before the House, a lump sum had been granted much more than that amount would have been saved owing to the waste of time being prevented. Either she should be given a lump sum, have her weekly pay increased, or have it taken away altogether. The last would not be a fair proposition. If he were Mrs. Tracey he would try and get the lump sum and subsequently apply for an old-age pension.

Mr. ANGWIN (East Fremantle) There was not much chance of Mrs. Tracey getting the old age pension; it was difficult for anyone to get it, and he knew the case of a man 90 years of age, a pioneer of the State, who spent years in the North-West. The Government used to grant him 10s. a week and rations, but when he applied for the old age pension the sum was reduced to 7s. a week without rations. The Government, however, he was glad to say, paid the man the additional three shillings and gave him rations. Mrs. Tracey's case deserved some consideration in order that it might be got rid of at once and for ever. Some members thought 15s. a week would be sufficient to keep any person, but he did not believe that, for anyone who received that sum only would have to pay it all away in rent and rations and would be compelled to beg for clothes. There was no doubt that the idea of the mover was to get the allowance increased, for had not that been the case the motion would never have been brought forward.

Mr. GOURLEY moved—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion negatived.

Mr. HEITMANN (Cue): From what could be learned there was nothing to show that this lady had any claim whatever upon the funds of the State.

Mr. Horan: That is admitted.

Mr. HEITMANN: If the State were to grant every old resident 15s. or a pound a week, and he was not saying for a moment they were not deserving of it,

the country would have to go in for a different scheme of old age pensions. Mrs. Tracey had stuck to the case for years past, and had now forced a member to bring it before the House for the second or third occasion; but, on no occasion had a case been made out warranting any consideration being given to her. True, the Government granted a compassionate allowance of 15s. a week, and while admitting that that was not a very grand living, still, in his opinion, the old lady was very fortunate in having a kind-hearted Government to grant her that amount. While he would be prepared to do all he lawfully could for her, still, if the State were to adopt this practice of assisting those who had been through the courts and had been compelled to pay law expenses, there was no knowing where it would end. Personally, he was involved in law expenses, but he would not go to the State to pay them. He would certainly oppose the motion if it was intended to ask the Government to increase the amount from fifteen shillings a week.

Mr. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): Having heard the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the question, and having heard the speech made by Mr. Moran, and having again heard the member for East Perth, he found himself in agreement with the last hon. member who had spoken. At no time had he heard any reasonable grounds why the Government should be asked to give anything in the nature of a compassionate allowance towards this petitioner. Possibly the old lady had grievances, but were they grievances against the Crown? If not, why should the taxpayers be called upon to grant a compassionate allowance? If it were understood that one person injured by another person had such a claim upon the Government, then it would be well to publish it far and wide, in order that all those who might be "rooked" by lawyers would come to the Government for their compassionate allowances. There were many who had had experience of going to law, and who had lived to regret it. Unfortunately hon. members were here to make the laws but

made them in such a fashion that only the lawyers understood them.

Mr. Heitmann: They do not understand them.

Mr. George: They understand them sufficiently well to get costs out of them.

Mr. SCADDAN: In the past the Government had been fairly generous towards this old lady. It was not that she could live in affluence on fifteen shillings a week, but the point was that there was no obligation on the Government to do anything at all for her. There were many other old people in the State just as well entitled to consideration, but who never approached anybody in connection with their grievances. All they could obtain was the amount the Commonwealth Government saw fit to allot them as old-age pensions. Hon. members ought not to say that in order to get rid of this old lady's importunity a lump sum should be granted to her. Hon. members were the trustees of the public funds and should not be intimidated by this old lady. For his part he was afraid of no man and of very few women. It was not at all certain that the member for East Perth had been at all anxious to bring this case forward. It would seem as though he had had to be whipped up to it. At all events he had not given the House any information with regard to the case. The Crown had given this old lady all the assistance that could possibly be expected of the Crown, and there was no further obligation on the Crown. He was going to support the amendment. The Government had been generous towards this old lady and she ought to be given to understand that members were of opinion that already more had been done than could reasonably have been expected.

Mr. BUTCHER (Gascoyne): The action of the member for East Perth in bringing this motion before the House was one to occasion extreme surprise. What could the hon. member's object have been, and what was he asking for? The hon. member had asked that effect should be given to the recommendation of the select committee which had in-

quired into the case. That recommendation was as follows:—

"Considering the present position of the petitioner and the remarkable surroundings of the case, your committee recommend that the Government should consider the question of making her a small compassionate allowance."

Apparently the committee had ignored altogether the claims of Mrs. Tracey on the Government. They had not for one moment suggested that the Government were responsible for the extraordinary surroundings of the case; they had recommended consideration of the question of a small, compassionate, charitable allowance. The House was not justified in going further into the matter. This question had been brought before the House every session during the last ten years. It had become monotonous and had degenerated into a source of wasting time. It was just about time the matter was dropped altogether. The Government had done everything which had been recommended to it by the committee.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. HARDWICK (in reply): The main question would have to be taken to a vote, because he had had the assurance of the lady that she had a huge majority in her favour.

Mr. Scaddan: It must be outside.

Mr. HARDWICK: It was to be hoped that hon. members who had voted for the amendment had not been led away by the brilliant speech of the member for Gascoyne. In following up this question he (Mr. Hardwick) had started from the result of the deliberations of the select committee appointed to investigate the case and which had sat some seven years ago. He had fully expected that those champions who had taken part on that committee would have come to his assistance to-night; but with the exception of the member for Mount Margaret, who had made a very good speech on the question and pointed out some facts hitherto unknown to the House, those hon. members had failed him. To be consistent with their previous records they should have assisted him to carry this motion. However, as it appeared to be the desire

of the House that this question should now be dropped he would say no more.

Question as amended put and passed.

Resolved, that motions be continued.

PAPERS—ELECTORAL OFFICE APPOINTMENT.

Mr. ANGWIN (East Fremantle) moved—

That all papers relating to the appointment of chief clerk, Electoral Office, Perth, and registrar for West Province, etc., be laid on the Table of the House.

The motion was for the purpose of seeing what steps were taken in regard to the appointment of this officer. When, last year, an appointment of a high official had been under consideration he (Mr. Angwin) had taken the stand that a senior officer who was qualified to carry out the duties of a superior vacancy should be promoted to that vacancy. In this case he believed a junior officer had been appointed to this position when there was a senior officer in the department capable of carrying out these duties. It appeared that the old system was in vogue, namely, that the officer who was continually at the elbow of his chief stood the best chance of promotion. The chief knew his work and therefore took steps by which the officer was promoted over the heads of senior officers fully qualified for the work who were not immediately and at all times in the presence of the chief. For this reason he moved for the papers.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—CO-OPERATION AMONG PRODUCERS.

Mr. BUTCHER (Gascoyne) moved—

That, in the opinion of this House, the best interests of the country would be aided were the policy of co-operation among producers definitely recognised by Parliament and advocated by the Government.

He said: I feel certain every member will agree that the present Government have shown a very earnest desire to further the very best interests of the agriculturists

by their land policy; but might we not go a little further and ask that the Government should foster the principles of joint action among agriculturists so that they would have a voice in the marketing, handling and disposal of their produce? It is claimed that co-operation is practically a huge monopoly, or may be one; but I would not advocate a monopoly of any description. A monopoly of capitalists is equally as dangerous to a community as a monopoly of workers. I am fully justified in this remark by the action taken by the President of the United States against the huge monopolies and trusts they have had for so many years in the United States to the detriment of the people. Also the monopolies brought about by the power of unions in the other States, which we see are using their power to the detriment of a very large portion of the community, justify my remarking that any monopoly brought about by co-operation is a menace to the community whether it be of capitalists or workers. The course I desire to pursue is neither of these I have just remarked on, but is a neutral course, the course of co-operation that is always advocated by Parliament and recognised by the Government. Monopolies, as they may be termed, of this nature are so restricted by the hands of the Government and by Parliament behind the Government that they cannot at any time be a menace to the community at large. Almost every industry throughout Australia has to a certain extent a society, an association, or a combination, with the exception of the agriculturists, and I think this exception is confined principally to Western Australia. I feel sure, and the agriculturists here will agree with me, when I say that the agriculturists of Western Australia are suffering very considerably to-day from their lack of organisation, or through not being organised at all. I do not advocate they should organise so as to become a source of danger to the community, because if they were to handle the products in such a way as to become a source of danger to the community they would be as bad as the monopolists I have spoken of. But with the recognition of Parliament and the assistance of the Government that would never take place.

This assistance would enable the producers to have control, to a certain extent, of the marketing of their produce so as to receive thereby a fair remuneration for their labours, and it would prevent the middleman or some other person from exploiting their products and making a huge sum out of them, to which sum, I contend, the producer is the man most entitled. In submitting this motion I hope it will be recognised my intention is not to do other than a fair thing to the producer and the consumer. During the last few years we have had the details of a monopoly which exists in the State, and is known as the meat ring. There was a Royal Commission appointed to go into the matter, and I think they did their duty.

Mr. George: Did they prove there was a meat ring?

Mr. BUTCHER: I think they successfully proved there was a meat ring, and they successfully proved the public suffered very considerably by the existence of that meat ring. If the Government would assist co-operation among the producers by establishing sale yards and freezing works and abattoirs, while keeping a controlling hand over the work to a great extent—let that control be ever so strong, I do not mind—I say unhesitatingly it would have the effect of giving a fair price to the producer and of reducing the price, taking the present basis, to the consumer. It would mean greater consumption of the article or commodity; and that certainly must be of advantage to the community; and at all times it would effectually prevent the matter becoming a monopoly or danger to the community. A motion was moved in the House a little while ago urging the Government to establish the State manufacture of machinery. I could not follow the hon. members who supported that altogether; but I say that should the Government assist a co-operation with that object in view, it would be in the best interests of the manufacturer and certainly of the worker and of the community generally. What I want to do is to avoid the State having absolute control over these matters, as it might possibly happen at some time or another that influence might be brought to bear to have

a detrimental effect on the producer, directly or indirectly; but if the Government were to assist a co-operation, by the very fact of giving assistance they would get the controlling hand and have influence over the workers and the co-operation. It would be in the best interests of the State if such a state of affairs were brought about.

Mr. Scaddan: The Government generally hand the worker over to the employer.

Mr. BUTCHER: With the House constituted as it is now there is not the slightest danger of the worker suffering at the hands of the Government; nor is there any such danger in a purely co-operative system, even without assistance given to it by the Government, in the present state of affairs. I want to see a fair thing to both parties. We are all workers, we all have to work, and we want to continue working. I want to see every worker from the lowest to the highest, wherever he is a worker, getting the greatest possible benefit from his labours.

Mr. Scaddan: And to keep him a worker.

Mr. BUTCHER: A man will get beyond that in a very short time if he is a worker.

Mr. Scaddan: And then every man will have to work instead of riding around in motor cars.

Mr. BUTCHER: If they want to ride in motor cars they can do so. If a man has determination and brains he can start to work at 10s. a week and in a few years will be driving a motor car, and his own at that. I worked for £1 a week and had to find myself in the necessities of life. I had to fight my own way. I had not the members of an organisation to say that I should get 8s. a day for eight hours' work, else I would have been in a very much better position to-day.

Mr. Scaddan: You are living on other workers, and you cannot deny it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. Bolton: Look at the land you got.

Mr. BUTCHER: I have not purchased a piece of land from the Government. I hold a pastoral lease which I bought from somebody else. I am occupying it now.

So far as agricultural land is concerned, I have not taken up a piece of land from the Government.

Mr. Bolton: Could I get the same property as you got?

Mr. BUTCHER: If you have the brains and the money, and if you have the brains you will get the money, but if you have not the brains you will never get it, and you will be a member of Parliament all your life. However, I regret the hon. member takes exception to my remarks. I am trying to do the best I possibly can for the workers of the State as well as the producers, but it seems to me that any man who gets up in the House, if he does not happen to be a direct Labour representative, is considered to be usurping the rights of hon. members of the Opposition if he champions the cause of the workers of the State: he is supposed to have no right to do it. I have just as much right to look after the labouring man in this State as to look after any other class, and I am going to do it as long as I am in the House, and whenever I have an opportunity of doing it. I consider I am doing my duty to the country and to the working man and everyone else when I am speaking on this subject, and I will continue doing it on every opportunity when I consider the interests of the workers are affected. In the Victoria district there is a farmers' association. It is unable to carry on. I believe the Government have gone to large expense building a grain shed at Geraldton to assist the farmers to store their wheat, and to save the expense of storing on the jetties or in private warehouses, but I believe that they want to hand this shed over to the Railway Department. If that should happen I cannot say that the producer's interests will be served. Why should not the Government hand over this shed to the association of farmers or producers and allow them to have full and entire control over the shed? In that case the Government would be assisting the farmers' association and doing a good thing to all parties concerned. Some time ago there was talk of the Government starting a State flour mill. In this case also I advocate that the

Government should assist in some way a co-operation with that object. It would answer the purpose hon. members wish in having State control over the mill; but it would not be altogether a State controlled mill; it would only be assistance to co-operation. There is another item in which the producers of the State are suffering considerably, that is from want of a chaff market. Members who have had anything to do with the production of chaff will know that the farmers are entirely in the hands of the Railway Department. The chaff is sent down in large consignments and auctioned in the railway yards, and the very fact of there being a charge for demurrage on trucks kept for a certain length of time is a means of forcing the sales. It puts the purchasers in a position of knowing that the producer has to sell. Consequently the price suffers and the chaff is not sold at its full value. If the Government would do something towards having a place where the unsold chaff could be stored at a low rate it would mean giving the producer very much better prices for the chaff than he now receives. Co-operation would soon spring up if these opportunities were offered. There would be co-operation of farmers, or some organisation of that description to deal with chaff. It only wants this House to announce such a thing and the Government to advocate it, and we will have this co-operation springing up in all directions, which must be to the interests of the community. In submitting this motion I say in all confidence that the more rational members of the House will realise that my desire is an honest one, that it is only to assist production from the soil, and assist the labourer who is principally concerned in that production, and I hope the House will give me credit for that and that only.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): I intend to support the motion moved by the hon. member, and to give the proposition contained in it my cordial endorsement. As far as the motion is concerned, while it calls upon Parliament and the Government to approve, or recognise a policy of co-operation. I would like to point out to

the hon. member who has moved it that there is very little that the State can do, or the Parliament can do, other than has been done already by past Parliaments. Some time ago, I think it was in 1902 or 1903, the House carried a Bill providing for the registration of co-operative and provident societies.

Mr. Angwin: That did not provide for loans from the Government.

Mr. BATH: The Act permits all these societies being registered under their simple rules, and give them the status which large companies and corporations enjoy on much cheaper terms. Apart from that I would impress upon the hon. member that co-operation is essentially a movement for those who are co-operative. It is essentially a movement for mutual help amongst sections of the people, and that being so, before co-operation can secure success amongst any body of people, the principle has to be recognised, and they have to be educated up to the advantages of co-operation. The member for Gascoyne altogether fails to appreciate the underlying principle of co-operation, when he imagines that for one moment it can be associated with monopoly. Co-operation rightly understood, understood in the terms under which the co-operation movement is run in the old country to-day, is as far apart from monopoly as the North Pole is from the South, and it is for the purpose of doing away with monopoly, for the purpose of removing the depredations of monopolists, made upon producers and consumers alike, that the co-operative movement has sprung up in the old country. That movement owes its origin to men who were occupying a humble sphere in life away back in the forties, and it was only because those men, humble as they were, had some insight into the evils which were affecting them that they were enabled to establish it on a firm basis. They started with a capital of £28; to-day, out of that germ, we have a movement which has a turnover of 112 millions and distributes amongst the co-operators profits amounting to 12 millions annually. It is true that the movement has been most successful on the side of distribution, that is in retailing products, and also in deal-

ing with them in a wholesale way, but the reason that it has not attained to such a great degree of success on the production side is because the producers have not been educated to the advantage as the consumers have; who have been brought together in large numbers, and have been associated in large centres of population, and one of the great features of the co-operative movement has been a determination by educational propaganda methods to spread light amongst the consuming population of the old country. On the other hand, the producers not having opportunities for coming together in the same way as the consumers, have not realised the advantage, but I am glad to say in the United Kingdom to-day, productive co-operation is making very substantial strides. There is a very great increase in the business and also in the profits, and I am hopeful that within 10 years we will find productive co-operation taking a worthy place alongside distributing co-operation.

Mr. Jacoby: What form is it taking in the United Kingdom?

Mr. BATH: The stimulus to co-operative production in the old country has been given by the operation of societies variously called agricultural societies, and agricultural development societies, but whose main object is to give encouragement to agricultural production, and, as a matter of fact, side by side with the movement for encouraging the principle of small holdings in the old country, we have these societies trying to teach small holders how they can make their small areas productive by joining together in co-operative societies in order to secure the best possible markets, free, as far as possible, from the intervention of the middleman, and to secure, as the hon. member has said, as near as possible the full product of their labour. On the Continent of Europe productive co-operation has reached very great limits indeed. The butter industry in Denmark has been built up almost entirely on co-operative effort, and it is because of that co-operative effort that Denmark is able to pour a large amount of butter into England as she is doing to-day.

Throughout France, Belgium, Austria, and Italy we have co-operative societies, which I believe in the total do a business approximating 50 million pounds annually, and while we in Australia have our banks run by the State, the agricultural banks of those countries are run by those co-operative societies, and have attained a high degree of success. In order to give hon. members an illustration of what is being done on the Continent with regard to co-operation, I need only refer to one illustration which, no doubt, is one of many, to show the good results that follow from the adoption of this principle. I have here a work, *Co-operative Industry*, by Ernest Aves, who came out to Australia lately to inquire into industrial conditions, and who has taken a great interest in co-operative effort. His work, however, is not as comprehensive as *Holyoak's History of Co-operation*, but it gives many facts dealing with co-operation which are not in Holyoak's work. One illustration I might quote is as follows:—

"A Flemish farmer at Goor went one day to the curé of the parish, M. l'Abbé Mellaerts, and spoke to him about the poor quality of his wheat crop. The curé had studied botany and kindred subjects at his seminary; he had especially followed up the subject of chemical manures, and he had made experiments on his own account in the garden of his house. So he asked the farmer, 'If I tell you of a remedy, will you use it?' 'If it is not too dear,' was the reply. When the farmer called again the abbé gave him a sack containing 25 kilogrammes of chemical manure. The farmer was reluctant to take it. He had no confidence in such manure as that because it did not smell strong enough. But he was induced to try it as an experiment, and he used it to grow some potatoes, with such excellent results that he went to the curé for more. Then several of his neighbours wanted supplies as well. Meanwhile the curé had been reading of what the peasants along the Rhine had done in the way of forming combinations for the joint purchase of agricultural necessities, and he called a

conference of members of his flock to consider the adoption of a like scheme for Goor. His parishioners had no great faith in the proposal, but seven of them put their names down as members of a Peasants' Guild, just to please him. They soon found, however, that they could get their supplies cheaper and of a better quality through the Guild than they could individually, and thereupon more members joined. Within a year the Guild consisted of 100 farmers. Considerations of health then compelled M. Mellaerts to remove to Louvain, where he became an active writer on agricultural combination. A conference of agriculturists at Louvain, organised by M. Mellaerts and others, followed in July, 1890, when it was decided that there ought to be in every commune in the province an agricultural association similar to the one at Goor, and that when formed, all of them should be connected with one central body. By the following year there were 89 local associations of different kinds ready for incorporation into an organisation to which the name of 'Boerenbond' was given. By 1893 the number of affiliated associations in the federation was 130. In 1897 the total increased to 380, and in 1900 to 450, representing upward of 26,000 members, and covering the provinces of Antwerp, Brabant, and Limbourg. The federation publishes a monthly agricultural review, holds innumerable conferences and periodical meetings, conducts experimental fields, has a central office from which a vast amount of gratuitous practical advice is given, exercises a useful influence in regard to legislation affecting agriculture, and carries on so big a business in grouping the orders of the local associations that it has organised a separate section for each commodity, set up a mill of its own for the preparation of feeding-stuffs, and established a wholesale warehouse of substantial proportions in the city of Antwerp—all this being done in a little more than a dozen years. To the original founder of this great federation is further due the introduc-

tion and popularisation in Belgium of Raiffeisen agricultural credit banks, of which there are close on 200, with about 10,000 members, in direct connection with the Boerenbond alone."

That shows what can be done as a result of the wise propaganda of one who is interested in the subject and who understands it. By his influence we see that from small beginnings the association has spread until it embraces a wide area, and what is true of Belgium is true of other European countries. Even Ireland, distressed Ireland, is showing the way to other parts of the United Kingdom with regard to co-operation. They have found that they have facilities there which, if properly utilised, will enable them to secure some of the trade in butter which, at present, goes to Denmark, and one has only to look on the details giving the increase in co-operative effort in Ireland to understand that it is making great strides year by year. We find from the smallest beginnings in Ireland they are reaching to a very prominent position to-day. And with the assistance which is now rendered by agricultural societies, and more particularly by propagandists who go from centre to centre giving information in regard to co-operation, they have established it on a firm foundation, and were it not for the fact that private railways in Ireland involve more cost to the producer to carry his butter from his farm to the market than it costs to bring it from Denmark, they would be making more rapid strides than at the present time. They are handicapped by the monopoly of private railways, and they are trying to secure some mitigation of that evil in order that co-operation might give better results than at present. We find the co-operation principle also in Australia, where those who understand the subject have made a very great success of productive co-operation. In Victoria we have the butter industry very largely carried on by co-operative societies, and in the northern rivers of New South Wales they have one of the strongest of these co-operative societies. They have established a butter factory at Byron Bay, and they have adopted the very

wise course of not being greedy for profits, having set apart a considerable portion of their profits for the purpose of extending their business.

[Mr. Daglish took the Chair.]

Mr. Butcher: Do they get no assistance from the Government?

Mr. BATH: None whatever; it is entirely the result of mutual effort and of the fact that they understood the subject and, consequently, were able to go ahead. Out of their profits they have established the biggest and one of the best equipped butter factories in Australia at Lisimore, and recently when they were met by a demand for higher freights from the shipping companies that have a monopoly of the carrying trade, some of the more radical spirits among the co-operators were desirous that they should extend their efforts by the purchase of a steamer of their own in order that they would be independent of the steamship companies. And although I am not quite sure on this point, I believe they have chartered a steamer and are carrying their butter from their own factories to Sydney, distributing it from their own warehouse in the New South Wales metropolis, and to that extent dispensing with the middleman, and so conserving their profits for the producers. The member for Gascoyne referred to the fact that some time ago a proposition was put forward for the State manufacture of machinery, and explained that he was opposed to that proposition, although on the other hand he is in favour of the State assisting co-operative societies to carry out this work. Now, I want to ask the hon. member what is State effort more than co-operation of the people, a wider co-operation than that of an individual society? It is co-operation of the whole people. That hon. members are continually trying to dissociate the Government from the people is the result of one of those conservative ideas which I cannot understand. The State manufacture of machinery would merely be the co-operation of the whole of the people for the benefit of the people through the Government, or in other words, through a board of directors entirely responsible to the co-operators to carry out the work.

That is what I wish to see in smaller departments. Co-operation amongst the producers can do very good work. It can carry out work with advantage to the producers themselves. In bigger work the intervention of the State merely means that in great undertakings we secure the co-operation of the whole of the people for the benefit of the whole of the people. As far as the spread of this principle among the people is concerned, and the assistance which the member for Gascoyne desired should be rendered to this movement, I am entirely in accord with him. This movement should be better understood among the producers, and the only way to bring this about is to go among them and have our propagandists giving them illustrations of the results in other countries where the movement has been adopted successfully, and showing them the way to go to work. Once they understand it we shall see the co-operative movement growing apace in Western Australia. I shall be glad to render any possible assistance in spreading the principle among the producers of Western Australia. I have tried to do it in the past and I will be glad to help to do it again in the future. I would like to see it go further; I would like to see productive co-operation growing up side by side with the distributive co-operation in Western Australia as in other parts of the world. Then there would be no possibility whatever of productive societies forgetting the interests of the consumers, and the consumers would profit by the result of co-operation. We find it has been so in the old country, where distributive co-operative societies have co-operated with productive societies and given them every assistance. They have their representative in Sydney and in all parts of the world. They have their steamers, and I am satisfied that if we are able to build up a successful movement in Western Australia we will have the cordial assistance and practical co-operation of the big wholesale societies of the old country. I fully endorse the sentiments of the hon. member in respect to the desire to spread this principle, and while supporting the motion I again affirm that it is not so much the question of any coddling

by the Government as it is of the producers themselves understanding the system, and by mutual help realising the advantages that can accrue from the adoption of this movement. I second the motion.

Mr. JACOBY (Swan): I have listened with considerable attention to the remarks of the member for Gascoyne with the view to seeing in what particular direction he would suggest that the Government should assist in promoting the co-operative societies.

Mr. Angwin: There is nothing said about assistance in the motion.

Mr. JACOBY: The effect of the motion is that the co-operative movement should be promoted. I would like to have heard in what particular direction the hon. member, from his own experience, could suggest that the Government should help this movement. In South Africa we have an object lesson in what the Government have attempted to do to promote co-operation amongst producers. There a special branch of the Agricultural Department was established, and a gentleman was secured from the old country whose special mission was to travel throughout the whole of the producing districts of South Africa.

Mr. Angwin: Which colony was that?

Mr. JACOBY: Cape Colony, I think; although I would not now be sure. This gentleman's special mission was to travel amongst the producers and show in what direction they could improve their condition by co-operation. The Government also promised a subsidy to each society formed. Unfortunately, although I have not been able to get the most recent results, the propaganda of this gentleman, supported by the proffered subsidy of the Government, did not succeed in bringing co-operation into anything like permanent success. But in New Zealand, a little bit closer home and on British territory, we find an example of successful co-operation which, perhaps, is a better example than any other I have heard of. There the co-operative movement has been carried out entirely and most successfully without any aid from the Government. But if we study the work in New Zealand this, apparently, is first of all necessary: That there

must be a desire on the part of sections of the producers whose interests are in common to co-operate, and that these producers must be prepared to come down substantially with cash to be put into their society to give that society an opportunity of securing the best possible brains for its management. The success of co-operation depends, not so much upon the principle, as upon the management of the association. If producers are prepared to recognise that first of all it is necessary that they should place any organisation which they propose to form in a good financial position, and recognise that the success of that organisation depends upon good management, and are prepared to pay for the best brains, then there will be more chance of co-operation with success amongst the producers than at the present time. While we have in Australia some records of success in this direction, at the same time, unfortunately, we have numerous records of failure, and most of these have been owing to the fact that the producers expected to put in a penny and get a pound's worth of benefit. South Africa has already provided another object lesson as to the way in which a State may assist producers; but that lesson has not yet been carried sufficiently far for us to be able to learn whether it is a method that may be successfully adopted elsewhere. The railways, which are owned by the Government, have arranged a system whereby producers who have commodities for sale inform the stationmaster nearest to them of the quantity of the goods they have to sell and the price they desire. A list of these goods is published by the railways each week, and placards are displayed on all the railway stations. A consumer wishing to purchase from the different farmers goes to the nearest stationmaster and orders his goods and pays for them. The railways notify the supplier who delivers the goods to the nearest station; the railways then take hold of the goods, deliver them to the consumer and pay the cash to the producer. That system has been in operation for one or two years in South Africa. Recently I wrote to the general manager of the South African railways

with the view to finding out whether it has been an absolute success, but he has not been able to assure me of that, because of the fact that the scheme has not yet emerged from its experimental stage. The question has been broached as to the value the adoption of this system might be to the workers of the State, and I think there is abundant opportunity for the consumers to form co-operative societies if they will first of all make up their minds they are going to provide the organisations with sufficient money to permit them to do the work sufficiently thoroughly and escape premature bankruptcy. There has been a number of failures brought about through lack of good management, and it would be a risky enterprise for the Government to embark on. If the people who desire to co-operate will only grasp the principles that if they put in sufficient money and pay sufficient salaries for management and get good management, there is a fair chance of making a success. Speaking of the producers of the British Empire generally, it is certainly a great difficulty to get successful organisation. Some time ago the *London Times* took up the question very thoroughly and sent a journalist throughout Europe to study the methods adopted in connection with the organisation of agriculture, and Mr. Pratt, this journalist, in his work entitled *Organisation of Agriculture*, deals very fully with the organisation of agriculture, principally regarding the co-operative movement on the Continent. It is strange that the superiority recognised in agricultural products coming from the Continent to England has been due to the business-like recognition of the producers of the Continent of the value of co-operation. In Denmark we have a magnificent example. Practically all the producing interests there are organised in some form or other, and every class of goods produced from the soil is handled through co-operative associations. The remarkable individualistic temperament of the people of the British Empire prevents them from agreeing readily to join their fellows in work of this nature. We have had frequent attempts in this State to organise producers; and, though not altogether

unsuccessful, they have been hampered by the disinclination of the producers to put up sufficient money to the organisation in order to permit it to do the work expected of it. We had an organisation with a turnover of something like £30,000 a year, but the total capital given to it by its members at the time was only about £2,500; and when occasionally there was cause for complaint, the members of the organisation failed to recognise that if they expected the organisation to do the whole of their work it was necessary for them to place it in a sufficiently strong position financially to do it. It is a matter entirely in the hands of the farmers or producers. If they like they can make a success of co-operation; but it is necessary to have their goodwill and their cash to do it. There is one direction in which perhaps the Government could do something to encourage co-operative work. Some time ago the Minister for Agriculture took steps in the direction. Special settlements have been made in certain farming districts of the State, and I believe that in connection with some of these settlements an attempt is being made to make one team and one machine do work for more than one farmer.

Mr. Angwin: How many settlements are like that in the State?

Mr. JACOBY: I only know of one where it has been tried; at any rate I am informed to that extent; and it seems to me here is a direction in which the Government could assist co-operation among the producers, and in which they could do an immense amount of good to the farmers settled on our lands with a small amount of capital. The greatest disadvantage to the small farmer is that he has to get a large amount of machinery and a wagon and a good team of horses though he has no work to fully occupy them. A group of six farmers could often by co-operating together in the purchase of machinery and horses in the early stages of their careers make a success where otherwise there is a risk of failure, and I suggest that in that direction the Government may find they can give some effect to the motion moved by the member for Gascoyne. The enthusiasm I possessed

some years ago on the subject of co-operation has not entirely left me; but it has been tempered by experience—and a pretty full experience—of the work of co-operation in the State. I think the member for Gascoyne has already had some experience in this direction; whether that experience has been satisfactory or not I do not know; but I believe he is still of opinion that the producers of the State can help themselves considerably if they are wise enough to do it by co-operation. As to what the Government can do beyond the suggestion already made I am not quite clear, and I hope that the hon. member when replying will be able to point out in what specific direction the Government may be able to render assistance.

Mr. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): If one could be certain of the motives of the hon. member who brought forward the motion—

Mr. Butcher: That is the worst part of it; you are always suspicious of some undercurrent.

Mr. SCADDAN: Let the hon. member have patience till I explain. If we were certain of the methods of the hon. member we could give the motion our hearty support, but the hon. member does not know anything about co-operation. He talks about it, but only deals with it from one standpoint, that is, help from the Government for one particular industry or one particular section of the community.

The Minister for Lands: He did not ask for any.

Mr. SCADDAN: That is the point. I want to know what the hon. member wants. He has not always shown anxiety for co-operation when motions or suggestions have been brought forward by members of the House to improve State co-operative organisations.

The Minister for Lands: What are they?

Mr. SCADDAN: The Minister for Lands comes forward with a Bill for a State Agricultural Bank, and then asks what forms of co-operation the State undertakes. What permits him to send a letter from here to Melbourne for 2d.? State co-operation. What causes the

farmer to get cheap money from the Agricultural Bank? State co-operation. What causes those engaged in the mining industry to obtain cheap treatment for their ores? State co-operation in providing batteries. If the member for Gascoyne were sincere in this matter he would assist the Opposition in establishing State flour mills for the farmers. What do we tax the people for? Simply to teach the people to co-operate in order to provide services. Why do we run our railways? In the interests of the people. We ask the people to co-operate in the direction of providing the transport trade. But the hon. member would stop there; he does not want to go to the fullest extent; he only wants co-operation in certain directions. He and others—I am not dealing with him personally, but as a member of the capitalistic class—

Mr. Butcher: That is what I am trying to avoid.

Mr. SCADDAN: The hon. member is not trying to avoid anything of the kind. I admit there are sections that form monopolies, and there may be monopolies that are not of the capitalistic class, but the hon. member will not doubt the statement made by Professor Jevons, an eminent political economist. That gentleman does not say co-operation means what the member for Gascoyne says; he says that real co-operation means making all those that work share in the profit. Every individual should share in the work and the profit, and we can only do that by State co-operation. A co-operation is only another form of a company. Goods are obtained through one source in order to save the profit that might be going to the middleman; there is a greater division of profits; but after all that is not real co-operation. Real co-operation is for every man in the community who works to share in the profits and get the benefit which he does not under an ordinary scheme of co-operation.

Mr. Butcher: I am not quite so socialistic as you are.

Mr. SCADDAN: Ah, yes! Socialism is only co-operation. The hon. member does not want co-operation; he wants only limited co-operation, co-operation

only in certain directions. If one were to talk socialism to the Minister for Mines he would laugh, yet he is in charge of one of the finest socialistic enterprises of the State. The Minister for Lands in charge of the Agricultural Bank obtains his capital to lend to the farmers from the savings of the workers. These savings are co-operated in one fund and distributed by the Minister, who does not believe in socialism, to the farming community, and in return the consumer gets the benefit of the co-operation.

The Minister for Lands: That is not co-operation.

Mr. SCADDAN: It is co-operation to the fullest extent. It causes the savings of the workers to be distributed among the producers, and in return the producers give it back to the consumer in cheaper rates. If the Agricultural Bank is not an advantage from the standpoint of the consumer as well as the producer it should not exist. Should we ask the consumer to hand over his savings to the Minister to provide a co-operative fund for the purpose of improving another man's holding if he does not get an advantage from it? Why do we ask people to pay taxes? The Minister for Lands will probably answer, "For the purpose of carrying on government." But what is government but a co-operation of the people's interests. Unfortunately under existing conditions, under the existing capitalistic system, the Government only exist for the purpose of the capitalists.

The Minister for Lands: Oh, rot!

Mr. SCADDAN: The worker is always working. When he ceases to work he becomes a capitalist, and a drone on other workers, irrespective of whether he has brains like the member for Gascoyne has or not. That is the point. How is the capital provided?

The Honorary Minister: Are you a capitalist?

Mr. SCADDAN: I am not, but in the ordinary condition of affairs in this country now I should not mind if I were. Anyhow the position is with the capitalist generally that while the few reap the benefit, the many suffer.

The Honorary Minister: That is according to their deserts.

Mr. SCADDAN: If the hon. member obtained his deserts the electors would not suffer him for 24 hours. The member for Gascoyne put his motion in such a shape that members are not informed what he really means. As a matter of fact I think he has brought it forward in the form in which it appears in order to avoid it being ruled out of order. What does he mean by the words "advocated by the Government"? In what direction does he think the Government should assist? I am going to support the motion for I believe in co-operation in all sections of the community. We can only get real co-operation when the State itself undertakes the control of all industries. We are told by some members that the more work we can produce the better it is for everyone. That is why many boot-makers in London go barefooted. It is because of the fact that they have overstocked the market in boots that they are placed in that unfortunate position. People go hungry because there is too much food. There are hundreds out of employment willing to produce more food and clothes but the trade is controlled by a few individuals under the existing system, and the result is that these unfortunate people have to go starving and half-clothed. The State cannot go in and assist. If the State is to become involved in co-operation every member of the community should reap the advantage of it. If the member for Gascoyne assures me that he proposes to have universal co-operation then the motion will meet with my heartiest support. I hope he will state exactly his intentions in this matter. Will the hon. member support a State flour mill?? That is co-operation.

The Minister for Lands: That is State trading.

Mr. SCADDAN: The State is the people.

Mr. George: What about lamb growing?

Mr. SCADDAN: There would be no harm in having co-operation in that. Would the member for Gascoyne support us in that direction? Let every section of the community reap the advantages to be derived from co-operation. Members would never per-

nuit the handing over of the post offices or the State railways to capitalists, nor would they allow private individuals to possess the Fremantle harbour. The State was asked to provide the money to build a dock at Fremantle, and the community have been called upon to pay taxes so that this shall be done. That is co-operation, for the works are taken in hand by the Government and built for the purpose of assisting trade. It is the middleman who comes between the producer and the consumer who has both at his mercy. When we can break down the middleman we shall have to put someone else in his place, and the proper institution to take that place is the State Government, who represent the people as a whole. At present, however, the State only exists, under the present social system, in the interests of one class. Produce wealth and congregate it in as few hands as possible, and the country is looked upon as wealthy. That is not correct. To my idea Western Australia is more wealthy than England, for here there is a less percentage of poverty-stricken people than in the old country. Wealth is not distributed in England as it is here. It is owing to the State taking the place of the middleman that this satisfactory position of affairs is brought about, and to extend that system I will support this and any other similar proposal. Will the member for Gascoyne support a proposal for the people to co-operate in the direction of having a State freezing and export department? I hope he will be prepared to go in for real co-operation.

Mr. Collier: What about a State coal mine?

Mr. SCADDAN: That would never be allowed for it would interfere with private enterprise. It is only so long as the great mass of the community are kept working that there can be the capitalistic class. If every man had to work no one would be wealthier than his neighbour, but it is where a man produces more than is returned to him that another is left in better circumstances. Some people are paid more for the work they perform than they require, and they congregate capital and use it in the direction of exploiting

other workers. Let every man be paid according to his work, and allow him to obtain all he can desire from that payment. Do not let him congregate wealth, so as to take from others a part of their product. How many members of the community are there who do nothing but ride about in their motor cars? They do not even take part in the work which other men do to bring them their wealth. Take the mining industry for example. How many men live in London and reap the advantage of the work performed by men employed here; by men who are risking their lives in connection with that work, and yet the State passes laws to increase the dividends of those wealthy men? There are arbitration courts established to make the workers work so many hours and for such small pay that the London directors and shareholders can get a greater profit.

Mr. George: They did not get the shares for nothing, they had to pay for them.

Mr. SCADDAN: But where did they get the money from in order to buy the shares?

Mr. George: Not out of you.

Mr. SCADDAN: They will not get it out of me if I can help it. I believe in co-operation extending to every person in the community who will work. If a man does not work he should not participate in any of the results of other people's work. If he is at the top of the ladder and will not work I would push him off, and if he is at the bottom of the ladder and will not work I would stand the ladder on him. Before a man can buy these shares or become interested in various ventures he must get the capital and to get that capital he must obtain it from those who work and produce more than they receive. Why even the fruit that grows on a tree is no use until labour is employed to pluck it.

Mr. Butcher: Why do you object if the labourer gets a fair and full wage?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is getting rather wide of the motion.

Mr. SCADDAN: Perhaps from the standpoint of the motion as submitted by

the hon. member I am, but what I say is that the State should take up all these questions on a co-operative basis. The State is not an institution apart from the people; it is the people themselves. Under the present system, however, the State does not co-operate in the interests of all the people, but only in the interests of a few who reap the advantage. The member for Gaseoyne, so far as he intends to go, is on the right track, for co-operation is a good thing, but I want him to extend the principle into the realms of the whole community. If the hon. member is sincere he will support real co-operation, so that everyone who works will reap their share of the profits.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. Mitchell): I have no objections to offer to the suggestion brought forward by the member for Gascoyne for the Government always encourage it. We believe in co-operation among producers. Have we not assisted the co-operative butter factory at Bunbury, and are we not prepared to assist the co-operative jam factory in the South-West? We are encouraging the latter because we realise that the fruit grown by the farmers should be turned into jam.

Mr. Angwin: The jam factories cannot purchase enough fruit.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is plenty of fruit offering, and the jam factories in existence can buy sufficient to make all the pulp they require to use for the whole year if they so desire.

Mr. Bath: At 9d. a pound.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The producers get nothing like that and I think if the hon. member could get that price for it, he would soon run a fruit shop. He knows that he can buy fruit at 1d. a pound. I endeavoured to set a co-operative factory going at Wyndham before the last general elections, but that principle did not suit my friends opposite then. I think the leader of the Opposition, or at all events some of his supporters, went into my district and talked against the co-operation I proposed, which meant the development of the North. Hon. members did not believe in co-operation when

that co-operation was proposed by the Government for the purpose of developing the North-West.

Mr. Troy: That was not co-operation.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is co-operation in the best possible sense. There was an agreement arranged in connection with that concern in the North-West, which would have meant co-operation. We have, however, gone on with the idea of assisting in this co-operative movement. We have a co-operative timber concern in the South-West; they receive just what the member for Gascoyne has asked, encouragement at the hands of the Government. I believe in co-operation to the fullest extent, and if farmers would co-operate they would do very much better. If they joined together for the purchase of their fertilisers, for instance, naturally they could have supplied to them more cheaply in a quantity of, say, 1,000 tons rather than if a hundred of them gave orders of 10 tons, but we must be consistent if we are to have it, and the Government will encourage it in every direction. We recently co-operated for the purpose of protecting the producers against rabbits: we have established rabbit boards and they are co-operative concerns. Something has been said, too, in connection with the grain sheds which have been erected, and the Government have assisted in the erection of co-operative grainsheds whenever an opportunity offered, and even the leader of the Opposition when in power I am sure helped in that direction. Something has been said in connection with State flour mills; State trading, however, is far apart from the idea of co-operation as put forward by the member for Gascoyne. I think some labour organisation in Eastern Australia had something to say in connection with socialism as opposed to co-operation. I think it was said there that co-operation was a gathering of people for their mutual benefit and necessarily, to some extent, for selfish purposes. At any rate it does seem to me that State trading is quite a different thing from co-operation. In co-operation people join together unanimously, but under a system of State trading they go in willy-nilly. I am altogether

opposed to State trading. For instance, a State flour mill, I am sure, would be disastrous to the farmers, but I would have nothing to say against a co-operative flour mill.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Do you believe in the whole State banding together for their benefit?

Mr. Jacoby: That is not co-operation; that is communism.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think when the leader of the Opposition referred to State trading as co-operation he made a serious mistake. One is wide apart from the other.

Mr. Bath: You are administering co-operative concerns without knowing that you are doing so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Imagine 100 farmers getting their flour from a State flour mill, one in competition with the other to sell their flour. What would be the result? The baker would get the best of the deal. Under a co-operative system it would be totally different. No ordinary miller will allow his brand to be hawked about by a dozen people; he refuses to grist because it is not wise to allow his brand to be hawked about.

Mr. Hudson: He sells it to all storekeepers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, but at a uniform price. The leader of the Opposition referred to co-operation in England. I believe it has been a signal success in some instances there, but, I believe, it has been a failure in many others. The French system of co-operation amongst producers has always appealed to me. That is a system of small co-operative colonies based upon the geographical position of the locality, where the people can band together for their mutual help and protection, and where the men see each other fairly frequently. Under these conditions the system has worked well. If we started a co-operative system among our farmers we would have to begin from Geraldton in the North and go down to Albany in the South, and the great distance would make it extremely difficult. There is no denying the fact, however, that it would be a good thing if the farmers could co-

operate to some extent, and it would be good also if the producers could do the same. When we get to the export stage, however, it is not so necessary. It is not necessary in the case of a wheat producer from day to day because he knows the exact value of the article he has to sell. London rules and he can reach London without the intervening middleman. There is machinery there through that socialistic institution, the private bank, to which some members object, which will ship for the farmer his wool or wheat, or any other thing that London will buy, and this will be done at a minimum of cost. Nothing can be cheaper.

Mr. Scaddan: All who handle it get a cut.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is not so; I have simply to say that as far as the Government are concerned we are willing to assist this co-operative movement, but it must be truly co-operative. We are opposed to State trading, at least I am, but I am not opposed to these people coming together for the better management of their concerns.

Mr. Bath: When are you going to sell the State railways?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is a very different matter. The Government, of course, can run a monopoly; they could run steamships if they owned them all. They could do anything, but they could not do it as economically as a well managed business concern. I repeat that I shall always be glad to advocate co-operation, and I am sure the Parliament of the State will also be glad to recognise it. I think the hon. member in bringing forward this motion was actuated by the best intentions, and has to be congratulated on the fact that he has caused to be ventilated this important question. A great deal has been said against the middleman, but I venture to say that it would be difficult to find a cheaper means of distribution in some directions. For instance, our fruit might well be distributed by a co-operation of growers. In any case I have no reason to offer any objection to this motion, which, I am sure, will be approved by the House.

Mr. TROY (Mount Magnet): I only want to remark with regard to this matter that the Minister, who talks about consistency is only consistent in his appalling ignorance of the subject under discussion. When he talks about the co-operative meat works in the North-West as having something in common with the co-operative timber industry in the South-West, he does not know what he is talking about. The meat industry in the North, which he calls a co-operative industry, was merely a syndicate of capitalists, who had combined for the purpose of exploiting the public, and therefore, in that respect it was, by no means a co-operative institution. In the case of the timber workers, every timber worker who is employed can become a member of the co-operation. The Ministerial section in this House are strangely at sea in regard to their views on co-operation and socialism. It is only when a question of this nature comes up for discussion that their limited knowledge is made known to the public. It was rather pleasant to hear the intelligent speech of the member for Ivanhoe in comparison with the platitudes uttered by hon. members opposite. The member for Swan talked about communism, when it was stated that a business was being run by the whole of the people of the State; that is not communism, it is socialism. Another hon. member spoke about the railways as being monopolies. Railways are not monopolies; they cannot be monopolies, for they are administered by the people on behalf of the people. That is just the position of our railways—the people own the railways. The railways are, or should be, administered equally on behalf of all the people, no one person receiving a privilege over another.

Mr. Scaddan: Who benefits by the profits we make from the railways?

Mr. TROY: The people do; but they would benefit to a very much greater extent if it were not for the fact that the capitalistic Government use that institution for the purpose of bolstering up certain private industries in the State. The Minister has stated that the Government are subsidising a co-operative jam factory,

and he spoke of this as being something in the interests of the people of the State. I would like to know what form this co-operative jam factory takes; is it a combination of capitalists or a co-operation of the fruitgrowers of the State?

Mr. Jacoby: A co-operation of the fruitgrowers in one particular district.

Mr. TROY: That is, to some extent, a co-operative concern. But it is not co-operative if a few fruitgrowers receive an advance from the Government and thus are enabled to exploit the rest of the community. The member for Gascoyne spoke of the capitalistic monopoly and of the workers' monopoly. He was opposed to both because in his opinion both were injurious. If I have any knowledge of these monopolies there is a distinction between the two. A capitalistic monopoly is a monopoly of a few institutions combined for the purpose of squeezing others and making profits, but the so-called monopoly of workers is merely a combination for the purpose of getting a fair living and getting their daily bread, and better protecting themselves against exploiters. It has been said that the agriculturists have no organisation. If they had an intelligent organisation they would never allow the private enterprise crowd to exploit them as they are being exploited. It is the purpose of the private enterprise crowd to keep the agriculturists without co-operation.

Mr. Jacoby: They have co-operation.

Mr. TROY: They have exploited the producer, and at the same time the consumer, by charging them a greater amount than they should be called upon to pay. I have had some experience of co-operation, and I heartily support the principle as carried out in New South Wales. Only last year I had an opportunity of going through the district in which the Society is operating and seeing how the principle was working there. When I was a lad in that district there was no possibility of co-operation, for the farmers were in the hands of the private enterprise crowd who exploited them and lived in Sydney in large mansions while the farmer lived

in a slab hut, and for the most, of the time had his land and crop mortgaged. But once the farmers understood the principle of co-operation conditions soon changed, and to-day they have the largest scheme of co-operation in Australia, with a turnover of hundreds of thousands of pounds. They have extended their operations, and are now dealing in all the products of the district, and do not employ the middleman at all. The result is that what was 12 years ago a very poor district is to-day in a most thriving condition. It has all been done by co-operation which has been brought about without any assistance from the Government.

The Honorary Minister: Was it not largely due to their turning their attention to dairying instead of sugar growing?

Mr. TROY: They are still growing sugar, although, of course, they are doing more dairying than sugar growing. In my boyhood days they also engaged in the production of maize, and I have seen thousands of bags of maize sent away for which the farmers did not get 1s. back although, on the strength of it, the produce merchants to whom the maize was sent owned large mansions.

Mr. Jacoby: What are you going to do to promote co-operation here?

Mr. TROY: What does the hon. member who moved the motion propose? I am advocating the principle of co-operation. I would above all advocate State socialism as we have it in our railways; but in order to lead up to State socialism I will advocate co-operation as being the next best thing. I would advocate that public-spirited men like the member for Swan, who really is somewhat interested in the people's welfare, should teach them the principle of co-operation.

Mr. Jacoby: We have done so. We have formed the association.

Mr. TROY: Then all that is now required is enthusiasm on the part of the people, and confidence in their leaders. Without these they cannot succeed. The people from whom I sprung did not require any assistance from the Government: they had confidence in themselves and in the men who led them, and to-day

they are enjoying the result of that confidence and independence. The Minister said that the project for State flour mills was impracticable. Yet we have State batteries, and in Queensland we have State sugar mills. Of course, it cannot be done if there is no willingness to do it.

The Honorary Minister: If a State flour mill were a good thing would not the member for Northam be only too ready to advocate the principle.

Mr. TROY: I am not so sure of that. There are reasons, perhaps, why he should not do so. I know it is a reasonable thing to expect that the State can do better on behalf of its people than can any private concern. Despite the opposition of members on the Ministerial side the system of socialism is going to grow and grow. It is growing, and none can stop it, and all those who are opposed to it will, little by little, march with us so long as they are compelled to do so. Year by year they are giving way. Look at the Agricultural Bank, look at the State export depot. Everything advocated by this party is opposed in the first place by members opposite and then afterwards taken up by them.

The Honorary Minister: Look at the result of the last municipal elections in London.

Mr. TROY: Bring us nearer home and look at the result of the Agricultural Bank here. It is in this that we can best judge the progress of the times. Before many years have passed the Government will be compelled to institute State flour mills just as they have adopted State batteries.

On motion by Mr. Layman, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. J. L. Nanson): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

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

Ayes	25
Noes	20

Majority for	5
--------------	----	----	---

AYES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Keenan
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Male
Mr. Carson	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Monger
Mr. Daglish	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Davies	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Draper	Mr. Nanson
Mr. George	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Gordon	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Gregory	Mr. J. Price
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Layman
Mr. Jacoby	(Teller)

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. O'Loghlin
Mr. Bath	Mr. W. Price
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Collier	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gill	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gourley	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Heitmann	Mr. Walker
Mr. Horan	Mr. Ware
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Troy
Mr. Johnson	(Teller).
Mr. McDowall	

Question thus passed.

House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 9th December, 1909.

	PAGE
Sitting days, additional	1985
Bills: Electoral Act Amendment, 3a.	1986
Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage, Report, 3a.	1986
Transfer of Land Act Amendment, Report, 3a.	1986
Agricultural Bank Act Amendment, Report stage	1986
Boyup-Kojonup Railway, 2a., Com.	1986
Fisheries Act Amendment, Assembly's insistence	1995
Land Act Amendment, Com.	2001
Adjournment, Monday sitting	2004

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

MOTION—SITTING DAYS, ADDITIONAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved—

That in addition to the business days as prescribed by Standing Order 48, the

House for the remainder of the present session do meet on Mondays and Fridays at 4.30 and sit till 6.15, and if requisite, from 7.30 onwards.

It was hoped that, perhaps by the end of next week we should be able to close the session, therefore he was bringing forward this motion with the object of enabling members to meet on additional days. The Notice Paper was not in a congested state, but he had thought members would prefer to meet on additional days rather than to crowd the business into a few sittings. Probably the House would meet to-morrow, although there might not be very much to do; still it would give an additional day for discussion, and then it might not be necessary for members to meet on Monday. If there were no business to be done there could be an adjournment until next Tuesday.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: It would be a pity to meet on the following day as most of the country members had arranged to go home. Personally he would have no objection whatever, to devoting the whole of next week from Monday to business, but he would certainly regret if a sitting were held to-morrow.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE was quite ready to support the motion providing there was no sitting on the following day. If the House were to meet then he could not be present as he had business to transact which he could not postpone. All business on the Notice Paper ought to be cleared off to-day.

Hon. C. A. PLESSE: It was to be hoped the Minister would not make a start with the extra sittings until Monday. He would be quite prepared to meet on that day.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (in reply): It was not necessary to alter the motion, for there would be no sitting on the following day unless it was necessary. His object in including it in the motion was that there were three Bills on the Notice Paper which would only go through the report stage to-day, but by sitting to-morrow they would be able to be read a third time and sent on to the Legislative Assembly. We might, however, be able to deal with these Bills to-day if the Standing Orders were suspended so as to