

lature got over the difficulty by providing that wherever a local authority corresponding to our roads board machinery, raised a certain minimum rate and thus relieved the Consolidated Revenue, the central treasury, of subsidies that local authority ousted the State land tax; the result being that one tax is collected at a cost of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., as against two taxes which amount to anything up to 15 per cent. When the Roads Act Amendment Bill comes on for consideration I shall ask the very serious attention of the Government and this House to the wisdom of following the example of New South Wales; but I recognise it would not serve any good end to delay the House over this Bill which under our present circumstances, seems absolutely necessary.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment; the report adopted.

Read a third time and passed.

House adjourned at 4.17 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 14th December, 1909.

Papers presented	PAGE
Questions: Vaccination Act Prosecutions	2167
" Irrigation Expert	2167
Bills: Leonora Tramways Act, 1A.	2167
Cottesloe Beach Rates Validation, 1B.	2167
Roads Act Amendment, 1A.	2167
Land and Income Tax, 2A., Com. 3A.	2167
Constitution Act Amendment, 2A., Com., 3A.	2173
Agricultural Lands Purchase, Com.	2200

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By Mr. Speaker: Public Accounts to 30th June, 1909, with Auditor General's Report.

By the Premier: (1.) Report of the Chief Harbour Master to 30th June, 1909.

(2.) By-laws of the Norseman Local Board of Health.

By the Minister for Works: Report of Public Works Department for 1908-9.

QUESTION—VACCINATION ACT PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. BOLTON asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that the Health Department are engaging counsel to appear for prosecutions under the Vaccination Act, thus putting defendants to unnecessary expense? 2, In view of the direct assurance given to myself that the Compulsory Vaccination Officer should conduct the prosecutions will he issue an instruction in accordance with that promise? 3, In view of the above mentioned promise will he favourably consider the remission of the 15s. 6d. costs in each of the four cases tried at the Fremantle police court on Wednesday, the 8th instant.

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, Arrangements have been made by the Medical Department for counsel to assist the Compulsory Officer, owing to the Magisterial Bench at Fremantle having recently held that that officer had no legal standing. 3, Enquiries will be made into the specific instances referred to, and the hon. member duly advised of the decision.

QUESTION—IRRIGATION EXPERT.

Mr. ANGWIN without notice asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Has an irrigation expert been appointed for the Agricultural Department? 2, If so, what is the name of the expert? 3, Has the expert been in charge of irrigation works in any other part of the world outside of Western Australia; if so, what works? 4, Were applications for the position advertised for in the Eastern States as well as in this State. 5, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes. 2, Arthur Henry Scott. 3, Yes; at Renmark, S.A. 4, No. 5, It was not considered necessary.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

1, Leonora Tramways Act.
2, Cottesloe Beach Rates Validation.
3, Roads Act Amendment. Introduced by the Minister for Works.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 30th November.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): The Premier in introducing the second reading of this measure which seeks to impose the Land and Income Tax for a further financial year has stated that when the Assessment Bill was before the House no objection was taken to it because of its permanent nature. That is only partially true, as while hon. members did not take exception to it on that account, there were many who did take exception to the division of the taxation measures into two—that is the separation of the Assessment Bill which was made a permanent measure, and the Land and Income Tax Bill which was made one of yearly enactment. At that time our objection was so strong that members of the Ministry, especially the then Attorney General tried to construe our attitude into opposition to the principle of land values taxation, and he did not scruple to go on the platform at Kalgoorlie—and I believe his example was followed by the Premier at Coolgardie—and our opposition to the separation of the measure was used as an argument that members of the Labour party were opposed to the principles of land values taxation. My objection to the separation of those two measures is just as strong at the present time, and I know of no custom or no method which is more pernicious than that this House should have to pass half a land taxation measure each year while a new Parliament other than the one which passed the Assessment Bill is called upon to acquiesce in the incidence of the tax without having the opportunity to discuss it. The Premier states that it is an advantage to have the Assessment Bill separate from the other because it gives some assurance of permanence to the taxpayer. It enables them to understand exactly what assessment will be made, and arrange their books accordingly; and know what amount they will be called upon to pay each year. In opposition to that there is this fact, that so far as Western Australia is concerned the Land and Income Taxes were new measures, and we could only rely on the experience gained from

those Acts in operation to understand how the incidence would work out, and whether they had been adjusted with justice to all the taxpayers. At the time the measure was passed last year I attempted by an amendment to secure a discussion of the Assessment Bill, but was then ruled out of order and the attempt that was made this session was also ruled out of order. However, I have approached it in another way, and when the Bill is in Committee I intend to move an amendment which will have the effect of repealing certain provisions in the Assessment Bill. Before the measure goes into Committee I will give notice of my amendment. My proposition is to follow the example laid down in other Bills passed this session where repeal clauses are provided repealing sections in Acts which have been passed in previous sessions. My desire, and that of other hon. members, is to review the exemptions provided, especially so far as the land tax is concerned. These are provided for in the Land and Income Tax Assessment Bill, and yet they have a very direct and important bearing on the incidence of the land tax. The Government, during the past two years in which the land tax has been raised, have deliberately thrown away revenue; and in view of the small amount realised, I believe for the proper financing of our affairs in the future, in order to do better than we have done in the past two or three years, and in order to make a more serious attempt to remove the deficit we should review the exemptions provided in the Assessment Bill. I have advocated previously that it would be a good idea, and one that would be of advantage to the policy of decentralisation, to hand over this taxation, that is, on the unimproved value of land, to the local governing bodies, provided they are prepared to adjust their franchise on a more democratic basis. I believe this course will be found to be necessary in the future, because year after year we are shearing the local governing bodies of their revenue and depriving them of the means essential for carrying out in the various districts necessary works so essential to the development of the country. If we were to hand over this

taxation to them it would mean that the taxpayer, either in the municipality or the road district, would be more prepared to pay a higher amount of taxation to the roads board or the municipal council, because he would know that the State would not come in on top with another tax on the same value. We now provide for taxation on unimproved values of lands by roads boards, and a number of boards have availed themselves of the right, but no provision whatever is made under the Roads Act for exemptions. A man with a small holding pays his portion on the unearned increment just in the same way as a man with a large holding does, and the only provision that limits this is that which provides the minimum rate by which the holder, the unimproved value of whose land may only return a tax of 1s. or 1s. 6d., has to pay a minimum tax of, I think, 10s. In my opinion we would be taking a step in advance, tending towards wiser administration of our finances, and would be getting better value for our money if we were to hand over this tax to the local governing bodies, as has been done in New South Wales. The Premier in moving the second reading quoted certain remarks I made on the second reading of the Land and Income Tax Assessment Bill, and referred to my statement that the Bill, in its then form, would mean that the wage-earners on the Eastern Goldfields would contribute a very considerable portion of the taxation under that Bill. The Premier now refers to the figures submitted by the Commissioner of Taxation to show that this prediction of mine was not realised; but I would remind the Premier that the Bill, as it was finally passed, bore altogether a different aspect from that it bore when it was first introduced. It was owing to amendments submitted mainly from the Opposition that the incidence of the income tax was altered and the burden made more proportionate to the capacity of the taxpayers to bear it. Let me quote a few of the changes made in the Bill from the time it was first submitted to when it left our hands. In the first place, we raised the exemption from £150 to £200; and we made it a complete exemption, whereas

in the Bill as originally submitted there was a straightout exemption to £100, while from £100 to £150 the exemption was reduced, and from £150 to £200 the exemption was still further reduced. The amendment introduced made it a straight-out exemption to £200. So that those to whom £200 represented the amount necessary to maintain themselves and families in decent comfort might be exempted, the standard of exemption was fixed at £200; and that, of course, made a material alteration in the incidence of the income tax, as it meant that a considerable number of persons who would have had to pay income tax under the proposal introduced by the then Treasurer were exempted. Again, there was a provision, which I moved and which was carried, providing for a deduction for each of the taxpayer's children under 14 years of age. That also made a difference, though not so much as the £200 exemption, in the incidence of the tax, and eliminated a further number of taxpayers from being taxed under this measure. There was also a proposal in the original Bill which provided that where a taxpayer owned his own property 4 per cent. of the capital value of that property was to be regarded as income, and income tax was to be paid on it. That was strongly opposed in this Chamber and was eliminated in another place, and it still further reduced the number of taxpayers. These items altogether changed the incidence of the taxation and placed the burden on the shoulders of those better able to bear it. I only wish to say that if the Bill had been passed as originally submitted the prediction made by hon. members on this side of the House, with a knowledge of the number of taxpayers and the earnings of those taxpayers on the goldfields, would have been realised. The Premier has alluded to the fact that very little knowledge has been gained up to date of the incidence of the land tax, but it has been discovered from the fact that valuers were sent throughout the South-Western district and the metropolitan area, that the actual unimproved values were, in some instances, higher than those submitted in the taxation returns. I have all along held that this would be found

to be the case. When one looks at the amount actually raised under our land tax and hears the remarks made by the Minister for Lands as to the values of our agricultural areas, the one statement does not square with the other. I am satisfied that all along the State has not been deriving the amount it should have derived from the operations of the land tax, even with the exemptions that exist and the provisions made for rebates. This convinces me that we want to take to ourselves the same power that they have in New Zealand, the provision that the State may compulsorily resume land at the unimproved value fixed by the land owner, with a fair allowance for disturbance and, of course, with an addition for improvements. If this course were adopted it would mean that the cost of collecting the land tax could be considerably reduced; there would be no need for an elaborate valuation, which always costs a considerable sum of money; we could rely on the valuations of owners themselves; because it would mean that the owners would be afraid to fix low values as they would know that the State would step in, as was actually done in New Zealand, and secure valuable estates for closer settlement. I hope this matter will be given consideration by the Government. Members of the House have no chance whatever of dealing with it—or of attempting to have it carried into effect—for the simple reason that we have no opportunity of dealing with the Assessment Bill. I object to members of the House who are really responsible for taxation being called upon to vote taxation without having any chance whatever of determining the incidence of that taxation. The Land and Income Tax Assessment Act must be regarded as an integral part of our taxation measure; and even if it be not submitted each year, at least a new Parliament should have the opportunity of reviewing it. However, as I said before, I intend to deal with one section in the Assessment Act by moving an amendment to this Bill when we are in Committee.

Mr. JOHNSON (Guildford): I support the leader of the Opposition in protesting against this Bill coming in year

after year without our having the opportunity of reviewing the assessment. There is one matter brought under my notice that I desire to place before the House to illustrate how essential it is we should have the opportunity of reviewing the Assessment Bill in order to overcome difficulties such as those I propose laying before the House. A friend of mine, a man who has worked for some years on the Hannans belt underground, was fortunate enough to get into the Marmont mine at Meekatharra. He worked on the lease and developed it and the mine has become dividend-paying. The individuals comprised in the Marmont syndicate also spend money in developing other propositions, but the Commissioner of Taxation takes up the position that, although this friend of mine takes the money from the Marmont mine and prospects other propositions, he declines to allow for the money spent in prospecting the other shows.

Mr. Heitmann: Quite right, too.

The Premier: Would not that apply to other businesses?

Mr. JOHNSON: They do not enforce it in connection with businesses. If a man is running two businesses he is not made to pay on what he makes out of one business. He would pay on what he makes on the two businesses.

Mr. Butcher: They are separate assessments.

Mr. JOHNSON: Who is to determine whether they are to be two assessments? These shows at Meekatharra were close to one another. He has prospected other leases on the strength of the Marmion, and it is not fair that he should be ruled in the way he has been. The Commissioner is fixing a different set of conditions for the man who develops mines from the man running a separate business. In ordinary business a man can set off the two, and balance a loss in one against a profit in another; but that is not allowed to be done by the prospector.

Mr. Carson: They will not allow that to a bootmaker.

Mr. JOHNSON: It appears to me that if the action of the Commissioner is right the Assessment Act wants amending, or

at all events there should be some explanation afforded, as the position is distinctly unfair. It will have the effect of preventing people from taking a profit out of one mine in order to spend it in prospecting for others. The man who is prospecting should be encouraged rather than the reverse.

The Premier: In one instance it is a company, and the other a private show.

Mr. JOHNSON: The individual made a profit out of one mine and used it in prospecting for other shows. He wanted to write off a loss against the gain, and that course was quite legitimate. The Commissioner, however, says that he must pay on the dividends of the Marmion and lose all his expenditure on the other show. Take my own case as a contractor. If I am contracting all the year round, possibly I suffer loss in some contracts and make a profit in others, and when submitting my return the whole business is put in as that of contracting, the losses are deducted from the profits, and the return is made out to show my income. Why should not the same thing apply in the case of a mining prospector? The man is following the calling of a mining prospector, he has one good show and with the money he makes from that he is trying to find other mines. Surely that is a great advantage to the State, but the Commissioner takes the attitude that it is not a legitimate business.

Mr. Angwin: How would it apply if he finds mines in other parts of the world?

Mr. JOHNSON: His work has to be within a reasonable distance of the show from which he is making a profit, so that they can be worked together. My informant put the case to the Commissioner that if instead of being a mining prospector he had been a member of the Stock Exchange, bought shares and lost in one deal and gained in the other, would it be right to combine these two, and only pay on the annual income? The Commissioner said that was all right, because it was a legitimate business. Surely the prospecting business is a better one in the interests of the State than share-broking, and it is certainly more legitimate; but still the Commissioner decided otherwise and the man has to pay on the profits

and gets no credit for the money he puts into other propositions. There seems to have been a misunderstanding over this matter, so I have taken the opportunity of laying the matter before the Premier, in order that he can give us an idea as to whether the Commissioner is to continue to penalise the mining industry, as compared with other business from which an income is derived.

The PREMIER (in reply): The leader of the Opposition has intimated that he proposes in Committee to move a new clause with the object of repealing a clause in the Assessment Act, in order that he may review all exemptions in regard to the land tax; also that he is of opinion that the amount derived from the land tax should be handed over to the local bodies in lieu of money which was previously advanced by the Government for the purpose of making roads in the various localities. That opens up a very big subject, and although the system has been recently adopted in New South Wales, still at the present time I am not prepared offhand to come to any conclusion on a matter of such wide-reaching importance. Another objection is taken to the method of valuation. Mention has been made, as was previously done, of the practice adopted in New Zealand whereby every individual should make his own valuation and that the State had the right to purchase the property provided they paid within ten per cent. excess of the valuation. I do not know that that has been altogether a success in New Zealand, and I am under the impression that steps are being taken to repeal that clause. So far as the valuations of this State are concerned, undoubtedly those put in to the Commissioner were considerably below the values we have arrived at as a result of valuations made in various parts of the State. I trust that the result of these new valuations, which have been made by inspectors of conditional purchases in various country districts, will remove many anomalies now existing as to values. We know that the roads board valuations have been in some cases in the past anything but satisfactory. In some roads

board districts the practice has simply been adopted of valuing freehold lands at £1 and conditional purchases at 10s. irrespective of the locality, the proximity of a holding to a railway, or otherwise. The member for Guildford has raised a point which he says is being considered at the present time. I understand he refers to dividends being received and devoted to another business. He is of opinion that in such cases the dividends should count as an exemption. If that suggestion were adopted it would mean that in the case of a man receiving a large amount in dividends from shares and investing that money in certain speculations, if such transactions did not turn out remunerative he would not have to pay income tax.

Mr. JOHNSON: This is purely the same business.

The PREMIER: Supposing a man receives certain dividends from investment in bank shares. Under the present practice he is exempt up to the amount of the dividends he receives, although as a matter of fact he would be paying at that time 1s. in the £ dividend duty, he would only be exempt to the amount of 4d. in the £ income tax exemption which to me seems an anomaly. The Commissioner is of opinion that some amendment of the Dividend Duties Act should be made, so that the Income Tax and Dividend Duties Acts should be consolidated. The question is under consideration now. Other points have arisen which constitute anomalies and the Commissioner is dealing with them. At the same time certain members are desirous that the Assessment Act should be reconsidered, but in view of the fact that several actions have been referred to the Courts the Commissioner is anxious that a decision on those cases should be obtained before any amendment of the measure takes place. As to the point raised by the member for Guildford, I will place that matter before the Commissioner. At the present time I am not seized of all the facts of the matter nor in a position to give an interpretation of the cases he has presented.

Mr. JOHNSON (in explanation) This man's trade is that of developing mines.

The Premier said that if a stockbroker bought shares to-day and made a profit, while he lost on his transactions to-morrow he could calculate exactly how he comes out and only pay on the actual income.

The Premier: Your case is that of a man not making a profit but receiving dividends.

Mr. JOHNSON: The Commissioner says that a man on the Stock Exchange has a certain trade or profession which is legitimate, but that if a man works mines that is not legitimate. As a matter of fact there is a business exactly the same, but the latter is much the more legitimate. If it is right to put the profit against the loss in the one case, it is so in the other; whereas if it is wrong in the one case, it is also wrong in the other.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee:

Mr. Daglish in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

New Clause—Repeal:

Mr. BATH moved—

That the following be added to stand as Clause 2: "The Act mentioned in the First Schedule is hereby repealed to the extent therein stated."

It would be necessary subsequently to add a schedule to the Bill in order to show what portion of the Act was to be repealed. That schedule would subsequently take the following form:—"7 Edw. VII. Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, Section 10 and Subsections 2, 3, and 4 of Section 11." Section 10 referred to the rebate of tax on improved lands. Subsection 2 of Section 11 stated "Lands the unimproved value of which does not exceed £50 are exempted from assessment for taxation." Subsection 3 referred to improved land outside the boundaries of any municipality, used solely or principally for agricultural, horticultural, pastoral or grazing purposes; while Subsection 4 dealt with lands held under contract for conditional purchase made before or after the commencement of the Act under "The Land Act, 1898," or any amendment thereof. His reason for doing this was that the

Government and Parliament were deliberately depriving themselves of a very considerable amount of revenue by these exemptions. The estimated amount of these exemptions when the Bill was submitted in 1907 was £30,000; and at the present time, with the small amount raised under the tax, it seemed that the expense of constituting the Taxation Department was hardly justified by the amount collected. If the roads boards or municipalities were employing this method of taxation there would be no question whatever of the exemptions being inserted in the Bill. The roads boards had no provision for an exemption of the kind. Where the Treasurer was endeavouring to obtain revenue to make up the loss due to the decline in the amount received from the Commonwealth, and where the attempts being made to reduce the deficit had signally failed, it was essential that we should secure more revenue than we were getting to-day. Certainly we could not afford to throw away £30,000 revenue. It was for this reason that he moved the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment could not be accepted, because it was necessary that such an amendment should be moved by a Minister of the Crown.

Mr. BATH: For what reason?

The CHAIRMAN: Because under Section 67 of the Constitution Act it was necessary that such a motion should be recommended to the Assembly by message from the Governor.

Mr. BATH: Precisely the same amendments had been received and accepted by the Chairman when first the measure was under discussion.

The Premier: Not in the Land Tax measure.

Mr. BATH: The amendments had been made to the Assessment measure and were received by the Chairman when the Bill was under discussion. Although not carried, still there had been no question whatever about their being received. Indeed, they had been received on two separate occasions, once prior to the rejection of the Bill by the Legislative Council, and again when the Bill was re-introduced.

The PREMIER: Certainly the adoption of the amendment would mean an

additional impost, and consequently should be introduced by message.

The CHAIRMAN: In *May*, 11th edition, page 625, a ruling was laid down as follows:—

“No augmentation of a tax or duty asked by the Crown, as has been already explained, can be proposed to the Committee, nor tax imposed, save upon the motion of a Minister of the Crown; and accordingly an amendment designed to extend the imposition of licenses upon brewers, as proposed by the Government, to other manufacturers, was ruled to be irregular; nor would the amendment to extend the imposition of a tax to persons enjoying an exemption therefrom be now permitted.”

Clearly there was no alternative to ruling the amendment out of order.

Mr. BATH: Had the amendment any different application from those submitted during the discussion on this same Bill when first received?

The CHAIRMAN: No ruling could be given on that point. He could only rule on the amendment before him.

Mr. BATH: You yourself were in the Chair.

The Premier: The tax did not then obtain.

Mr. BATH: The Assessment Bill was then in existence. The Premier was ready to explain this, but how did he explain the fact that the amendments were received on that occasion?

The Premier: Because the tax was not then in force.

The CHAIRMAN: The ruling had already been given that the clause should not be received.

Preamble, title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 2nd December.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): I do not think I know of anything more farcical

than the introduction of this amending Constitution Bill at this stage of the session. The submission of this measure to the Legislative Council at this time in the session is a direct invitation to the Council to reject the Bill on the grounds that they have not sufficient time in which to discuss it. I think it would have been just as well, and infinitely more candid on the part of the Government to have intimated that they had no intention of dealing with the Bill this year, and to have left it over for another session. A measure of this kind should have been in our hands at the very beginning of the session; and I want to repeat my protest against this method of dealing with important legislation, and this slipshod manner of carrying out solemn pledges given to the electors. This Bill has been promised, or was promised by Mr. Rason in 1905, and that promise has been solemnly repeated in every policy speech since delivered. And except for the Bill introduced by the ex-Attorney General on the night before we prorogued in 1906, no attempt whatever has been made to carry that pledge into effect. The Treasurer in submitting the Bill to the House excused it by saying it was only a little one; but, he said, some reforms have to come slowly. As far as this reform is concerned it is not coming at all; it is not moving one jot, nor is it likely to be moved forward by this farcical introduction of this measure at this stage of the session. I do not think, however, that the little time at our disposal should prevent hon. members who have serious convictions on this question of Legislative Council reform from dealing with it in a thorough manner. For myself I regard the reform as embodied in this Bill as entirely inadequate. Even if it were regarded as a substantial measure in 1905, the condition of things and the attitude of electors throughout Australia have radically changed since that time. They have had before their eyes the constitution of the Commonwealth Parliament, and particularly have they watched the attitude of that Parliament towards industrial measures as contrasted with the attitude of the State Parliaments towards industrial legislation, and also the attitude of the State

Administrations in regard to industrial measures which are already on the statute-book. And the comparison is entirely unfavourable to the States, and Western Australia is included in the unfavourable comparison. We have had the president of the Federal Arbitration Court laying down what are epoch making declarations as to the duties of the Arbitration Court, or any tribunals called on to decide disputes between the employer and the employed; and on the other hand we have had in the States examples of industrial legislation which were passed for the express purpose of giving relief to large bodies of workers being entirely ignored and their administration made a by-word. That is not a position which makes for the enhancement of either the reputation or prestige of the State Parliament in Western Australia; and to one who desires to see our Parliament retain its powers, to retain possession of its importance, to retain its hold over local development, the contrast which is shown between State reactionary tendency and the more radical purposes and ideas of the Federal Parliament does not contribute towards that object. That being so, instead of the electors of Western Australia being content with the proposals for the reduction of the franchise their idea is to forge further ahead. To-day—I speak emphatically, and with a knowledge of the views of a great many electors throughout the State—they are declaring, not for reform of the Legislative Council, but are declaring for its abolition and they have very good reason to ask for this. They advanced very good reasons in favour of this so far back as the time when the people were being appealed to to accept the constitution of the Commonwealth. One of the arguments that was used, not only by the democratic section, but also those who may be regarded as conservatives, was that in the constitution of the Federal Parliament and the consummation of Federation there would be no need for elaborate State establishments, which up to that time existed. I remember Sir Josiah Symon, who can be regarded as no other than a conservative, speaking at Kalgorlie stating that we could dispense with

the second House of the Legislature in each of the States, and that there could be a considerable saving in the establishments so far as State Governments were concerned. This was one of the arguments put forward by a great many of those appealing to the electors throughout Australia to accept the constitution to support their claims. Of course there are those who say that if we were to abolish the second Chamber we would be detracting from the dignity of our Parliament, we would be belittling the State Parliament and adding to the strength of the Federal Parliament. I believe the contrary will be the case. After all, it is a question of what constitutes the dignity of a Parliament. I believe we could get along just as effectually, that we could pass better legislation, and ensure better administration with one House of Parliament than we do at the present time with two. After all, the dignity of a Parliament is determined by the capacity of the members who constitute that Parliament, and by the work that they do, good or bad; and if we had a Parliament with one House, elected on the same basis as the Federal Parliament is elected at the present time, I am satisfied that our prestige, as a State Parliament, would be enhanced in the eyes of the great body of the electors in Western Australia; instead of detracting from our dignity, it would add to it. Then there is the consideration of expense we hear so frequently. It is an argument which carries great weight with the public that Australia is over-governed, that we have too many members of Parliament, that they could be reduced, and much expense could be saved with advantage to the people of Australia. There is a good deal of sense in that argument. While I, for one, under existing circumstances would not regard a reduction of the number of members of this House as being in the interests of our large and undeveloped State, I do believe we could well dispense with a House that is elected only on a restricted franchise. The argument which is so often advanced as to the main justification for the expense of a second Chamber, is that it is a check on hasty legislation. This is the one gleam of humour in my opinion that

lies in the reactionary road of the Legislative Councils in this and the other States. It is difficult for anyone to point out the hasty legislation they have checked. I do know on many occasions where it has been a question of some special advantage to property, and is opposed to the interests of the great body of people, there has been no branch of the Legislature more hasty than the Legislative Councils in carrying that legislation into effect. We have only to instance the bank panic in New South Wales, when the Legislative Council there sat throughout the night and waited impatiently for the Legislative Assembly to pass a measure making the notes of the banks a legal tender, and then to pass the Bill through with the briefest discussion. Then in this House, we know the railway Bills which have been sent to the Legislative Council and have been passed with the smallest discussion. But where it is a question of a Factories Act, a question dealing with industrial life which is going to elevate the distress under which people labour, then we find the Legislative Council coming to the front in its much boasted capacity as a check on hasty legislation. I remember in 1904 the Labour Government passed through this House a Bill amending and liberalising the Savings Bank, and it was ignominiously rejected by the Legislative Council with the briefest amount of discussion. The directors of the private banks made very short work of the measure, but when later on the present Minister for Works, as Colonial Treasurer, passed through a measure almost word for word with that Bill introduced by the Labour Government and sent it to the Legislative Council, they accepted it, showing that it was mere prejudice against the Labour Government which actuated the Legislative Council in what they did.

The Premier: They treated the Government very fairly.

Mr. BATH: That was one of the examples of how they treated them, and if one could go over the records one could quote other instances. I say they did not treat the Government fairly.

The Premier: The Minister himself says they treated him fairly.

Mr. BATH: I differ from the Minister who made that statement. We have only to refer to the Fire Brigades Bill which was rejected with very little discussion last session, and the amendment of the Licensing Bill which had been introduced from time to time to suspend the granting of new licenses pending a comprehensive Licensing Bill, which had been promised from time to time, being brought down. When this Bill was sent to the Legislative Council they were very hasty in the manner in which they dealt with that Bill.

Mr. Heitmann: The Mines Regulation Bill was put through in five minutes.

Mr. BATH: There is a worse evil in another direction, that the Legislative Council very often plays into the hands of a Government which is desirous that certain Bills should be rejected. It is because a Government is not desirous of passing certain measures that it can rely on them being rejected by another place. We find the Legislative Council very often becomes a very useful ally for reactionary purposes in this manner. From time to time Bills which are badly drafted are quickly fixed up and in a hasty fashion are sent to the Legislative Council, and the representative of the Government there is entrusted with amendments by the score, so that they may be introduced in that Chamber, whereas if there was only one Chamber the Government would have to see that the Parliamentary draftsman carried out his work in a proper manner, and they would have to ensure that this House should be given time to deal with the measures properly so that there would be no need for a second Chamber to patch them up at the behest of the Government. It is placing a premium on insincerity, on bad draftsmanship, and on careless, slipshod work to have another Chamber to take the responsibility of the Government. I believe with one Chamber we would have better legislation, which would be more carefully considered, and there would be less likelihood of the Acts being contested in the Courts

of the State. Then the other argument, and I was surprised to find this trotted out by the Premier, was that property should have some special consideration over and above the claims of humanity. He made use of the expression that a man who could put his hat on his head and clear out of the country was not entitled to the same consideration as the man who owned property. How often do we find in this State at the present time men possessing property are drawing incomes from the developing of the State, and drawing these incomes when they live out of this country? Some of them are living in the old country, and are drawing incomes from the man who has only got a hat to put on his head. On the other hand, there is no one who is less able to shift from State to State, or even from place to place within the State, than the man who has to find his family with bread and butter. He finds it most difficult to shift from place to place within the State, and he is the man who very often takes a more genuine interest and disinterested view of political affairs than the man who owns property. I have been ashamed to find recently the anarchistic tendency of the man of property in the State. Look at the Chamber of Mines at Kalgoorlie. Week after week we find that they will not have this measure or that passed. They are practically going to defy law and order in the State if certain Bills are passed. If we make provision by which workers are to be compensated, or other means for the care of those suffering from miners' complaint, the Chamber of Mines is going to defy the whole interests of the miners on the Eastern belt by throwing them adrift and picking out those men who are able-bodied and in perfect health; and in other directions in regard to the regulations of mines we find them urging the same argument. If we pass legislation in the interests of the people they will take this step in order to show this Parliament that we have no right to deal with these matters. That shows to me whether property takes anything but a disinterested view and a view which is often

inimical to the best interests of the State. Then again this claim that property should be represented is entirely foreign to the whole principle of democratic government, because after all it is not property that votes, it is the man, and the whole object of our education system is to educate towards democracy. When we grant adult suffrage in the lower House we have a safeguard when we have free and compulsory education in order that the electors of the future may be fully qualified to vote. Will anyone tell me that the mere possession of property argues possession of superior intellect; that the mere possession of property makes a man better entitled to vote than thousands of others who may not possess the same qualifications? It is absurd. Then again as to character; the property qualification makes no stipulation whatever as to how a man has amassed property. He may have amassed property for instance by selling adulterated goods; he may have amassed property by carrying on a doubtful business transaction, as many of them do until they are found out; he may amass it in a hundred doubtful ways; yet the fact that he possesses property entitles him to vote. It is entirely opposed to the whole principle of democratic representation. I know of no argument so weak as that the mere possession of property should entitle a man to special privileges which the great bulk of the people do not enjoy. There is a method by which property could secure, if it so desired, representation in Parliament without the necessity of a second Chamber. If we had an equitable system of proportional representation in Western Australia, a system which applied all round, and not to special districts, then property owners if they thought it essential that they should have special representation in Parliament to consider their interests, through that proportional representation, could organise and secure that special representation; therefore it is not necessary to have two houses of Parliament, one of them elected on a restricted franchise, to secure that object. I believe it is a wrong idea, and one that is not in the best interests of the

State, that any body of people should devote their whole legislative aim to securing special consideration for property as opposed to the general interests of the State. Too often does it mean that reforms for the protection of people have either been prevented or delayed. Take for instance the question of health administration. If those who are charged with health administration were consulted, they would have to admit that the great obstacle to having a clean and healthy State and rooting out diseases is that the property-owners set themselves up as a wall against the adoption of sanitary measures. We find that in the old country this is the case. Only the other day the Duke of Northumberland fought strongly and bitterly against the Housing and Town Planning Bill, and he said that the consideration of the health of the community would have to give way to the consideration of the landlords' rights; by that he meant the landlords' privileges. Yet a few weeks later the very same Duke was fined for having unhealthy and insanitary premises, and the evidence disclosed a scandalous condition of affairs. He gave as his excuse that if these tenements were to be put in order it would mean that the people living in them would have no roofs. It did not occur to him that it would be possible to put up a decent sanitary house. This is only an example which has occurred in the old country of how property by special representation very often defies legislation which is essential to the health and lives of the people. The Premier has referred to this measure as an instalment of reform, and it is true that it is a step in the right direction. We have found that since the present Government have been in power the franchise is only enjoyed by one-third of the adult population of Western Australia, and the very interpretation which has been placed by the present Government on the franchise provisions in the Constitution Act has tended to restrict the franchise rather than to widen it. Even in the days of Sir John Forrest a more liberal interpretation was placed on the meaning of the term "clear

annual value" than has been placed on it by the present Government. The Premier says that the latest interpretation is because of a certain decision having been given by the English courts, and the Government thought it necessary that the decision should be followed in connection with the interpretation of our own Constitution Act. I would point out that in South Australia this decision of the English court has had no effect on the interpretation in that State. They are still accepting the annual rateable value as the determining factor in fixing the franchise. I think the Government should have continued to accept the interpretation which has always been placed upon it in Western Australia until the last Council elections, and to allow someone else to dissent from the view or combat it.

The Premier: Was it not accepted at the last Council elections?

Mr. BATH: No; the decision was arrived at too late for the people to get on the rolls and their claims were refused, and that too after the Premier said that the old course would be followed.

Mr. Bolton: It is worse now.

Mr. BATH: Yes. At the present time the names of those people who before were entitled to be on the roll and were regarded as having sufficient qualification have been refused and they are not enrolled. That is the reason I asked a few days ago whether the Premier was going to carry out the undertaking he gave to the deputation which waited on him in 1908, just prior to the general elections. Sir Walter James when Premier of this State when asked the question in the House as to what interpretation he placed on "clear annual value," when we were dealing with the Constitution Bill, said that any person who had premises of a rental value of ten shillings a week would be entitled to be placed on the roll. As far as this Bill is concerned, I am going to accept it as an instalment of reform, but before the Bill passes I am going to try for something more liberal than is provided in the measure. I am hopeful even in spite of the late stage of the session that the Premier and his Government

will be able to bring sufficient influence or persuasion to bear on another place, so that the Bill may be passed into law, and so that the promise which has been made for so many years will be carried into effect, and enable this more liberal interpretation to take effect at the next general elections. In the meantime I hope the Government will see their way clear to carry out the undertaking given to the members for Kanowna and Ivanhoe and others, that the Government will continue the practice adopted in previous years, prior to 1908, namely that anyone with premises of a rental value of ten shillings a week will be entitled to enrolment as before. If this reform does nothing else than widen to a certain extent the franchise, it will give an opportunity of bringing influence to bear through the election of members to fight for a greater instalment later on, and go on fighting by instalments until the time will arrive when we shall have only one branch of the legislature in Western Australia, and when the more vigorous and intellectual members of the Legislative Council will be enabled to fight their way into this Chamber, instead of vegetating in another place. By this instalment of reform, if the people are alive to their interests, they will use it as a lever to secure further instalments, until finally property restriction will be done away with altogether. I intend in Committee to bring forward amendments in the direction of securing adult suffrage for the Upper House as it is for the Legislative Assembly, and if we cannot secure that, to secure a still further reduction in the franchise as it is proposed in this Bill. I hope that the consideration of the Bill will be facilitated in this House. We do not want to give another place the excuse that they had no opportunity of discussing it and then rejecting it as another example of hasty legislation sent along from this Chamber.

Mr. WALKER (Kanowna): I echo the sentiment of the leader of the Opposition who desires to have the passage of this measure facilitated through this Chamber. Yet I cannot forbear expressing what to me is

meant as a note of warning in this kind of piecemeal legislation. If there is anything that ought to be condemned it is this tinkering with the relationship of the two Houses. I notice a smile illuminating the features of the Attorney General. I presume in his usual form he will get up and say, "Now that we have heard the airy arguments of the hon. member for Kanowna, just listen to me." I presume he is contemplating some such utterance as that, but I have made some observations even within my short life. I cannot compare with the Attorney General in antiquity and hoary-headedness, but I have been able to make observations as I have gone on in life, and in one thing I have become certain, and that is, any attempt to place another Chamber, so far as the franchise is concerned, upon the level of what is called the Lower Chamber—I do not know whether it is contemptuously so called or not—any such attempt is an attempt to defeat the purpose of two Houses. It would be only a duplication of one House, nothing more nor less than putting two sets of men elected upon the same franchise to do the same work twice over. We have imitated the British Constitution, but there is quite a different reason for the existence of the Upper House, or House of Lords, in England from what exists in Western Australia. The House of Lords, strictly speaking, is the original Parliament. Parliamentary institutions arose out of the King's Court or the King's Council, and it was only owing to a revolutionary time, a distinct step in revolution, when Sir Simon de Montfort summoned the burgesses to Parliament, that we got the nucleus of the House of Commons; and from that day to this the House of Commons has been fighting for supremacy against that ruling order that exists by hereditary right. Peers amongst each other, the advisers of the Kings, the House of Lords, having legislative privileges by hereditary right, were a distinct class of men; and they have held that privilege up to now.

Mr. Taylor: They are getting a shock now.

Mr. WALKER: They are getting a shock at the present moment as they got a shock under the great revolu-

tion under Cromwell, and when more or less they were limited in their powers at that subsequent revolution under William the Third. But the point is that in England they have distinct privileges and powers that make the House of Lords a separate branch of the Legislature. For instance, they try offences; they have the power of hearing and judging on a trial of impeachment. That privilege has been handed down to them. There is nothing analogous to it in this State. Again, they claim to continue in their positions by virtue of that right which brings Ministers and public servants in the service of the Crown under the operations of the justice administered from the Woolsack. In our imitation we have a sham, no reality; our imitation of the House of Lords and the House of Commons is purely a shadow. Our Upper House has not the excuse, nor the powers, nor the justification for its existence that the House of Lords has. That is the point I am making. Here it is no more than class legislation; that is all it denotes and signifies, and nothing else; and if that point is grasped, I need dwell upon it no further. The Legislative Council in Western Australia is no more than representation of a section of the people to prevent the bulk of the people obtaining their rights and their will. That is all it exists for; that is all its purposes. If we put its members on a level, as far as the franchise is concerned, that we have for this House, they are as strong as we are; they represent the people as much as we do; they can in no way be intimidated by the popular will, for they have the popular will; they become strong and fortified. It will be remembered when the change was made in the Constitution of the State of Victoria when the old system of the nominee Chamber, which had this merit, that it enabled experienced men to be selected and put there because of their experience—when the nominee Chamber gave place to the elective Chamber, from that day forth there was a lull in the democratic spirit of Victorian politics; there was not the same promise, the same advancement, the same liberalisation; and it is only since

the Labour movement has got a hold in Victoria that a liberal spirit has again manifested itself. The Upper House checked legislation and killed legislation in Victoria, and it has always had the excuse that it has had the authority of the people because it is elected. It is much the same here, and if we make it that the Upper House can be elected directly from the people on the same franchise as ours they can say "You are no more the people's House than we are; we have the people's mandate as much as you have."

Mr. Jacoby: They would claim to participate in money measures.

Mr. WALKER: I think they should do so if they are the people's representatives purely and simply. If the two Houses be simply one big House put in two, I think they should have the right to all our privileges. That is my point. I do not object to the biggest aristocrat, conservative, or property-owner, by whatever name he is distinguished, holding the confidence of the people and going into the functions of representation; but I say he should sit among the others and not have a House to himself. It is in the conflict of thought that all wisdom comes forth. Every kind of philosophy, policy, dream or object in life stagnates if it be not criticised. It withers, it dies for want of that life that criticism brings. We are at a critical stage. I submit by lowering the franchise of the Upper House we are strengthening it, and I object to that. Our purpose should be to strengthen the Assembly all we can, and I would suggest that if we are going to amend the Constitution we should amend it in the direction that we would have certain large constituencies equivalent to the shires in the old country where there is an election for the whole shire as well as an election for the towns within the area. But the shire representative sits in the House of Commons with exactly the same rights as the sub-town representative.

The Honorary Minister: They have not two votes, one for the town and one for the shire.

Mr. WALKER: There are those who represent a country like Lancashire, and

there are others who represent towns in Lancashire. No matter how the electoral rolls are divided, one representative represents the area which covers the sub-areas. The sub-areas are represented in Parliament and the shire is represented in Parliament, and it is generally the rich man who is representing the shire. An amendment of that kind—I am not at all wedded to it—would not be inadvisable in this country if we are making changes; and when we have a large area the rich man may run for it, and obtain, if he can, a seat in this House.

The Premier: With a larger constituency the less chance a rich man has got.

Mr. WALKER: Of course if he cannot win it that will be his misfortune. But there is room for enlarging the Lower Chamber and doing away with the other Chamber. Lessening the franchise and putting the other Chamber upon the lower franchise would put the other Chamber on the same basis, and we would have two Houses where one would do, and doing the work twice. There is no excuse such as that of preventing hasty legislation. There is no excuse for the existence of another House on that score. We cannot get the work done. We are almost at the fag end of the session compelled to sit up all night in order to hasten along legislation. We cannot go fast enough as it is. Why then is it needed to have another Chamber sitting over us?

Mr. Troy: It is an imitation of the House of Lords; that is all.

Mr. WALKER: It is a poor imitation. If one talks of the representation of property, is it not already in this Chamber?

Mr. Taylor: On the Government side of the House.

Mr. WALKER: I do not object to it; I have property; the hon. member has property, valuable property. He has also his manhood, and in a democratic country what more do we want than manhood? Under that class come all those who have property and those who have none. What more classes do we want in this State of ours? Where is the distinction? Where are the wealthy that are to be specially protected by having a special Chamber in which to sit and be capable

of judging from it all the laws which are to govern a democratic land? We have not that class. We have no classes in Western Australia. Why pretend we have? Why say we have? It is a sham. That is the point from which I look at it. There is no need for the existence of another Chamber.

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

Mr. WALKER: Before tea I was endeavouring to make it clear that we have no justification whatever for the continuance of the present order of things, the present bi-cameral system, in a State like this. Second Chamber legislation has been of the very greatest service at times, but I question very much whether the ills done by it have not counteracted the services rendered. The House of Lords itself has constantly stood in the face of reform. It has been a hindrance to progressive legislation for centuries. All those reforms that were passed in the reign of Queen Victoria, and her immediate predecessors, were opposed and strenuously resisted by the House of Lords, and the great Reform Bill itself would never have been passed had it not been for the creation of Peers in order that the hostility might be overcome. In America, which is another imitation of the bi-cameral legislation of the old land, it has been the Senate that has held the United States in pawn. The Senate precipitated the war between the North and the South, and it was the perpetual defender of slavery. It was in the teeth of the hostility of the Senate that Abraham Lincoln, by his signature, cast the chains from those dusky slaves of the South. If one contrasts the benefits that have accrued to humanity by the conjunction of two Houses in the process of legislation with the benefits that were borne of a single Chamber legislation, the merits in favour of the latter are astounding. It was a single Chamber in France that abolished feudalism root and branch. It was that single Chamber that made it for ever impossible to return back to those old days of aristocratic tyranny, when those who held their lands in their own

right, considered those who dwell upon them as their slaves. It was a single Chamber in England which, during the early portion of the revolution under Cromwell, gave the foundation to those rights and privileges that, cultivated and nurtured, have made the British people the liberty-loving people they are. When these facts are considered, what argument further can be used to support a second Chamber? I may be asked how I can defend the dual Chamber in the Commonwealth. Frankly I admit that even here I am not enamoured of the existence of two Chambers; but there is far more justification for the existence of the second Chamber in the Commonwealth than there is for a second Chamber in Western Australia. It is clear that in the Senate there are two distinct interests, not necessarily clashing; there is the popular Chamber dealing with the rights of the people as a whole, and there is the Senate, that has the particular province allotted to it of defending the existence of the rights and privileges of the States as sovereign entities. There is some show of reason, therefore, for the existence of the Senate, but what separate interest from those of this House has our second Chamber to defend in this country? Absolutely none. The members come from no different class from those who are in this Chamber. There are wealthier men, I believe, in this Chamber than the other one. A poor man can get into the second Chamber here; property is not a qualification at all events for those who are Legislative Councillors. There are men who are as poor as the poorest of Labour members, who hold, or have held, seats in that Chamber, and so far as the accumulation of wealth is concerned, I believe we have richer men sitting here than they have in the Legislative Council. So where is the distinction? There is none whatever. Why, therefore, have the two? I want to point out that the value of that argument of revision, and the value of the argument of delay fall altogether to the ground when we remember that the two Chambers work simultaneously. Half its time the other House has to adjourn

because there is not work enough furnished from this Chamber. The Legislative Council repeatedly puts aside whatever we send up, and has to adjourn again for more work from this Chamber. How then is it putting a check upon hasty or any other legislation?

Mr. Collier: And they initiate legislation there.

Mr. WALKER: So there is the double work of the two Houses, and they all go the slower for it. I could understand, if we enlarged this Chamber and had speeches delivered by members of the other Chamber, small in number and limited in length though those speeches might be, thus adding to the number of speeches delivered by members in this Chamber, there would be some delay, but there is none whatever when they sit at the same time as we do, going over the same work in a shorter fashion. There is no argument of delay in that respect, but I base my argument upon quite another ground, as applied to this State. We are on the verge of having to fight for our very existence, not alone as a bicameral system of legislation, but as a legislature at all. There is a cry throughout the country, that is spreading, that this Chamber, in the presence of the Federal body, is useless. It is said that Parliament is unnecessary, and all that can be done by a State Legislature can be done wiser and better by the Commonwealth Parliament.

Mr. Collier: There is a danger of its growing.

Mr. WALKER: It is growing; it is not a danger that is hypothetical, but is in actual existence.

Mr. Jacoby: I am glad you describe it as a danger.

Mr. WALKER: Certainly I do regard it as a danger. Isolated as we are, separated by that immense area of unsettled land, or by the vast extent of the Great Australian Bight from our nearest neighbour—

Mr. Hudson: It ought to be settled.

Mr. WALKER: I hope it will be in the days to come, but I am speaking of conditions as they are. We are isolated from our nearest neighbour and cannot

afford to lose any of our individual sovereignty as a State. We must retain the right to look after our own internal affairs. On matters peculiar to Western Australia, belonging to Western Australia, needful to Western Australia, we in this State must have command; that is an absolute necessity for our development. We cannot effectually be governed from the East; we cannot effectually develop our resources superintended alone from the East. We must be able to give immediate remedy and redress to the grievances in our midst; we must be able to apply immediate cure to the diseases, financial or otherwise, in our midst. All our domestic troubles, all our industrial differences we must be able to tend immediately they arise. We must not have to wait for this long communication, and this long investigation, the long delay that distance from the Federal capital necessarily means. We must be able therefore to look after Western Australia here and on the spot, and consequently we cannot afford to allow another authority to wipe our Parliaments out of existence any more than our Parliament can afford to cripple municipal councils or roads boards. They are all necessary; you cannot have too much government of that kind if it be wise and patriotic. But there is a problem facing us, and it has actually got into the sphere of discussion and intention; and there are those who are championing the idea that if the local Parliaments could be done away with the Commonwealth Parliament would have a freer hand to develop the welfare of the whole of the Commonwealth. Now what is the chief argument for that—what do they most rely upon to bolster up their argument? They rely on the existence of a body of men who have never originated a truly liberal or democratic measure, but have strangled many of them. They rely on the existence of this useless ornament to our Legislature—I speak not disrespectfully—and they say: "How can you develop in line with the progress of democratic movement the world wide whilst you carry that weight around your neck? Far better to wipe out the Parliament than that the Parliament should live with this check to

progress." And there is a good deal of force in that argument. They say: "What is the good of your talking about democratic measures, about reforms of that kind? You can talk about them, but you become a useless debating society. You air your speeches on the subject; they are sent to another place, cast into the waste-paper basket; time is lost, energy is exhausted; spirits are broken, until democracy moans with its hopelessness and despair." "That is the position," they say, "as it exists at the present time. So long as that body is there you can make no real strides, you cannot go ahead. You come upon the dead level, perhaps just a shade ahead, of your predecessors. But one Government will be the successor in repetition of its predecessor. You will only repeat the old forms, and the old indolence, and the old incapacity. And so you go on exhausting the patience of the people, wearying them in their hopes of advancement, until advancement become impossible and they turn their eyes from the capital of this State and look for a greater aim." I say they are doing it already. There is where my plea is to-night; not to bolster up and make stronger another institution, but to destroy another institution in order that this body may be strengthened for the fight that is coming. There is, I like to think, no man more patriotic towards this State than am I. I believe in Western Australia's great possibilities for the sheltering, not of thousands but of millions; of making homes innumerable for a noble and enlightened people. I believe in that. But if we are to fight for that we must fight as one army, as one body, with no weight to carry but the weapons for our purpose. We cannot fight a battle if we are divided into two classes—fictitious classes, absolutely fictitious. There is no property in that House that there is not in this. There is no class in Western Australia. It is a fiction, a pure fiction to say that they represent the property of Western Australia. The property of Western Australia is the property of Nature, the property of us all. There are some that may have more advantages than others; but the wealth of Nature is denied to none in this coun-

try. It is not like the old country where you may have an aristocracy of long, delicate breeding, and education and training, until you have a sort of superior human creature. In this country, I venture to say, some of your richest men are the most unpolished, the most ignorant, the most unsociable; those, in fact, who have had luck, and who have had little of that discipline of faculty and character which fits them for a nobler destiny of life. Why, then, say that one so merely distinguished deserves a separate Chamber to sit in? If they sat in this House would we pollute them? Would they edge away from us as though our persons would convey to them some species of contamination?

Mr. Collier: They shut us out on opening and closing days.

Mr. WALKER: These are the old forms, the fiddle-de-dee, the mask of effete curiosities. They are dead and gone, but it is time we awakened to our situation. We have a real battle ahead of us, real work to do. For that central body of the Commonwealth, by whomsoever filled, will by the law of Nature work for new and extended powers for itself. It is the law. I blame no individuals for it; whoever went into that whirlpool would be carried with its swirl. We have to fight for our existence; we have to fight for our own sovereignty within our own borders; we have to fight for the right to look after our own affairs and mind our own business, and see to our own welfare. And how can we fight when we see these old marks of distinction between those equally zealous for the welfare of the State? Why separate us with bars and buildings? Let them come here amongst us in this House, if they can get elected, and here let us have the benefit of their counsel; and if it be wise let us enjoy their wisdom and profit by it. That is the course to take. As feudalism has passed away from the face of Europe so that never again shall knights traverse the earth to the sound of their spurs and the rattling of their armour; as no longer the old signs of supposed hereditary superiority can exist amongst men; as the greatest duke has to sit side by side in the self-same garments with the humblest

commoner—so here is a new country, free from the old world's troubles and traditions, we look into the future and recognise no superiority but that of honour and manhood. In this land of ours we cannot recognise birth as a distinction; we cannot recognise wealth as a distinction; manhood, honour, and honesty are the only insignia of nobility. And as the House of Lords itself this very night trembles for its security on the sacred soil of conservative England; as that great institution, faced by the charges of censure, to-night stands upon its trial here in the motherland, some of the noblest patriots of England are touring the length and breadth of the kingdom in order to bring that House itself to its level; a House honoured by a myriad traditions of a grand and noble history. As that House before popular opinion to-night is being tried in the balance and has already been declared wanting; so here this mere flimsy imitation of that great institution, sheltering itself only behind that word imitation, must pass away as useless and effete, as a remnant of a former government that has become useless, of no service to mankind, swept away in the current of the progress of things. And if it is said that the House of Lords must go, shall we hesitate to say here that our Upper House must go? Then will you say to me, "Will you vote for this Bill if you believe this?" I say, "Unfortunately I have to, because again we are handicapped by that very institution which has been created in imitation of the old world forms." Reform of the Upper House by the tradition of the House of Lords, more or less admitted by the House of Commons itself, can only originate in the House of Lords. Probably within a week the Legislative Council will throw out this measure on the grounds that their institution is sacred, that we cannot touch it. That is the peculiarity of it; that is one of its drawbacks: they will not allow us to do more than suggest reform or talk reform at them: they will not let us deal with them; they claim that as their prerogative; in fact they claim to be an entirely independent branch of the Legislature. So when this Bill reaches that Chamber it

may receive scant courtesy. Why then shall I vote for it? Because if we can get a lower franchise it is possible we may get as honest patriots—I do not say those who are now there are dishonest patriots—we may get in that Chamber those who believe that the institution is in the present circumstances useless, that it is a weight on us, and that, instead of aiding our efforts in the encounter that comes upon us, it prevents us from having free arms and strong hearts. We may under a lower franchise get those men in the Upper House, and for that purpose I am going to vote to bring the franchise down to the level of manhood suffrage if we can. And why not face it I ask the Government supporters? We will have this measure thrown out with the lowered franchise. Why not have it drawn out on manhood franchise?

Mr. Brown: We are going to vote against the Bill.

Mr. WALKER: Some Government supporters will, but surely the Government are not going to vote against the Bill. I ask why not send up the Bill with manhood suffrage? They are not prouder in that institution, the Upper House, than they are in the Senate.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They claim to be superior.

Mr. WALKER: They may claim to be superior; that is their misfortune.

"O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as others see us!"

I say they are not superior to those we send into the Senate. The brightest sons of Australia have been sent into the Legislative halls by manhood suffrage. Our Bartons, Watsons, Fishers, and Deakins have been sent in by manhood suffrage; and are they scornful of the confidence of their fellow men in that Chamber? I shall vote for this Bill with a view, if possible, to get someone in that Chamber by a lowered franchise who will help to bring about the reform we are aiming at. I am not aiming at depreciating legislation or humiliating anyone, I am aiming at getting a united army, a stronger body of legislators imbued with patriotism for Western Australia.

Mr. BROWN (Perth): It is my intention to vote against the second reading of this Bill. We have heard a diatribe from the member for Kanowna about the uselessness of the Upper House. I am quite certain that if every member of the Assembly came imbued with different ideas from the member for Kanowna better work could be done in the House. We have repeatedly heard of the little time and attention given by members of the Upper House to Bills that reach the Council, but in this House session after session we have seen the first day of the week taken up by points of order, and the second day by private member's business, with only the third day left for work. We have also seen in the past how the Labour party have respected the rights of property. The first Municipal Bill they brought in provided that the sole persons to have the right to vote for or against a loan should be the property-owners; and I think the major portion of the taxation in the State falls, as we have seen during the introduction of the Land Tax Bill, upon the property-owners of the State. We have in our State a most liberal franchise for the election of the Upper House; more liberal than they have in other parts of Australasia.

Mr. McDowall: Nonsense!

Mr. BROWN: The hon. member says "nonsense"; but I believe the same franchise as we have here, £25, obtains in South Australia, and the same franchise obtains in Victoria without payment of members.

Mr. Collier: It is £15 in Victoria.

Mr. BROWN: It is £25 without payment of members. A far worse system prevails in New South Wales. They have a nominated Upper House and also no payment of members, and also in democratic New Zealand, which we hear gentlemen of the Opposition quoting so frequently, there is a nominated Upper House. I am sorry to find the Government pandering to the Opposition by reducing the franchise. There is no great cry for it in the State, and I regret exceedingly the Ministry should have seen fit to put this on their platform. I intend to vote against the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet): The Government cannot be accused of making undue haste in regard to keeping their pledges so far as this measure is concerned; because since 1905 they have promised the people of the State that a measure of the character just brought down would be introduced at the earliest possible date. It will be remembered by hon. members who were in Parliament in 1905 that Mr. Rason, who was then the Premier, promised the people of the State that one of the first measures to be introduced would be a measure providing for a reduction of the franchise for the election of members to the Upper House; and although Mr. Rason did not keep his promise, the present Government, which is the Government that succeeded Mr. Rason's, also made that distinct promise to the people. I cannot help thinking there is no sincerity whatever in regard to the intentions of the Government in this matter. If there had been any sincerity in regard to it, the measure would not have been brought down during the very last days of the session when there is little possibility of its getting through. It must be remembered that the House which is deemed to be a House to check hasty legislation will take some steps to see that this legislation, at all events, does not pass through the House too rapidly; and I am somewhat of the opinion that this measure will not pass Parliament this session at any rate. Again, it must be remembered that the Legislative Council elections will occur next May, and naturally we may expect that the gentlemen in another Chamber will not be too desirous of having the franchise reduced so as to have a greater number of people having a voice in saying whether they shall enter the House again or not. The Premier said that the Bill before the House proposed to reduce the qualification so that practically all, irrespective of class, who are permanently in the State, would have a voice in the election of the Legislative Council. If that is the Premier's intention, I feel sure it will not find favour in the other Chamber. But it is not so. The Government are not giving every class representation. They are not giving the whole

of the people representation. They are still perpetuating the class distinction which has been in operation in this and other States since the establishment of Responsible Government. With the exception of the Referendum Bill introduced by the then Premier, the member for Subiaco, there has been no effort in this House worthy of being called an effort with a view to bringing the franchise of the other Chamber into touch with the people as a whole. The history of franchise reform in this State shows that the Constitution was given in 1890, and that Constitution provided two Chambers. The Legislative Assembly franchise has since then been reduced from the exclusive property qualification, through the granting of womanhood suffrage, to adult suffrage as we have it to-day. The power of the people has compelled the franchise of this Chamber to be an adult one, although when the Assembly was first formed it was almost exclusively a property Chamber as is now the case with the Legislative Council. With the exception of granting womanhood suffrage, the franchise for the Legislative Council has remained the same, and there has been no attempt, other than the one I have mentioned, that by the member for Subiaco when he was leader of the Labour Government, to bring about a better state of affairs. The Assembly can lay claim to being the people's House, and if the people exercise the franchise given them they have every hope that legislation will be enacted in their interests? The position is entirely different in the other Chamber. The possession of property alone gives the person the opportunity of being represented in that House. The highest intelligence, the possession of every virtue, or the possession of any qualification other than that of property does not entitle a person to representation in the other Chamber; and as a result we cannot expect from that Chamber any legislation other than that which will be enacted in the interests of a propertied class and not in the interests of the people. Property has its defenders in the Assembly. Property is very well represented here, because many of the measures we pass impose greater penalties for the harm done to property

than for that done to life and limb; and while property has its defenders here and is well represented in the Assembly, it has also almost exclusive representation in the other Chamber. The member for Perth condemned the Government for bringing in a measure such as this. I am not surprised at his condemnation because he and others of his class would oppose all legislation in the interests of the people, all democratic legislation until such time as their fear of the people would compel them to pass it. The member for Perth is like other members I have heard speaking, most unprogressive and reactionary, and any advance he will make will be impelled by his fear of the people. We may expect no progressive legislation in this State until we compel our politicians to carry that legislation because of their fear of the people who are their masters. Again, the Premier was good enough to say that the Constitution of the various States provided for a second Chamber whose functions were principally those of review. He also said that the power of rejection was very seldom exercised, although it was recognised that the powers of each House were to a large extent co-equal. It is amusing to hear from the Premier that the power of rejection is seldom exercised. Will the Premier carry his mind back a few years to the time when he prorogued the House and tendered his resignation to the Governor because that House refused to pass the land tax measure after it had been submitted to them on several occasions. Does he not remember that on that occasion the other Chamber exercised the right, if they have any, to reject the measure. When making that remark about the Upper Chamber the Premier must have forgotten that occasion.

The Premier: I said that the power was seldom exercised.

Mr. TROY: I can give other instances in which it has been exercised to the detriment of the people of the State. The other Chamber, on that occasion, rejected the Land Tax Bill three times with the result that this House prorogued in order to consider its position. Later on owing to the fact that the Premier unhappily

did not possess sufficient backbone, the interests of the people represented in this Chamber were subordinated to the interests of the Legislative Council, with the result that the Government accepted their demands and brought in a land and income tax measure with the difference that whereas the income tax imposed a tax of fourpence in the pound with an exemption of £150, the land tax, which the gentlemen in the other Chamber were opposed to, only imposed a tax of a half-penny or a penny in the pound with the exemptions of £50 and additional rebates. The intention of the Upper House on that occasion was clear. They desired to relieve the people they represented of the burden of the land tax, and to force the taxation on the great body of the workers so that the revenue required would be raised, not by the people from whom it should have been obtained, but from the workers who were unrepresented in that Chamber, thus carrying out the same policy which the House they are supposed to imitate carried out in the Imperial Parliament. Historians point out that the war of American Independence was caused because the landlord classes in England desired to relieve themselves of the burden of taxation by placing it on the backs of the American people who were not represented in the Parliament of Great Britain. The Upper House of this State did the very same thing in order to relieve themselves and those they represented from the burden of land taxation, and they compelled the Government of this country to back down and bring in a measure with the intention of imposing a heavy burden of taxation on people unrepresented in the Upper Chamber. The Premier in his speech went on to say, "It will be generally conceded that the Upper House should be the House of review where the more stable elements of population obtain representation." This reminds me that the quotation coming from the Premier is by no means original; I have heard it before, and always in favour of the maintenance of the Upper Chamber. "The latter is a calm judicial house of review." What is the history of this "house of review?" We are told that that House is absolutely unbiassed, that

it is not a class House, that it is not a partisan house but merely a "calm, judicial house of review." Take the action of that House when the Labour Government were in power. Members will remember that the member for Guildford, the then Minister for Works, initiated a pipe-making manufactory at Fremantle and this "house of review" so far forgot itself as to take up a partisan attitude, and I think Mr. Randell moved a vote of censure on the Labour Government because they had in the interests of the people initiated that industry. This "house of review" carried that motion, pretty unanimously, thereby showing, as may be seen by their speeches, that instead of being a "house of review" they were a House representing the property class. Take the motion moved by Mr. Moss, who proposed a vote of censure on the Labour Government because they prosecuted the Potosi Company at Yundamindera. The action taken by the members of the Upper House on that occasion also proved that the House cannot lay claim to being a non-partisan Chamber. The utterances proved that they were a class Chamber of the most virulent type. In marked contrast to their action when the welfare of the people was concerned was their action when Sir Edward Wittenoom, then a member of the Upper House, moved an amendment of the Truck Act. It will be remembered that Sir Edward Wittenoom took action because certain employees of the Combine who had been paid in kind and not in money had sued the Combine and recovered their money. The Combine had acted most illegally. Their representative in this Chamber had been a party to the passing of the Truck Act. He knew at the time of the passage of the Act that the measure was aimed at the Combine, yet despite that the Combine carried on their business in utter violation of the principles of that measure. When the men took action, Sir Edward Wittenoom moved an amendment to the Act, and in a surprisingly small space of time carried it through the Upper House. Reading the speeches one is struck with the cordiality with which the amendment was

agreed to notwithstanding the fact that the company had violated the laws of this State. There were vehement denunciations of the workers. I commend those speeches to members. It will be found that there again the Council supported the interests of property against those of the people as a whole. Not only were they seeking to assist the Combine out of the results of their illegal actions, but they made the legislation retrospective, the first time I believe any retrospective legislation of that character has ever been enacted in this Parliament. At the same time the very same people threw aside the Inspection of Machinery Bill, which provided for the care of the lives and limbs of the people engaged in industrial occupations. By way of comparison let me draw the attention of this House to another instance in which the Upper Chamber dealt with a piece of legislation which conferred an advantage on a small body of workers, but not in the interests of the Combine. The leader of the Opposition had introduced to this Chamber about the same year a measure providing for one holiday a month being given to the bread carters. It was sent to the Upper House, and although it had the cordial approval of the employers of the State—it was supported by the then member for Balkatta, Mr. Veryard, a master baker—and was in operation in Fremantle by agreement, nevertheless it received but very little consideration from members of the Upper House. Members may gain some idea of the manner of debate in that House when I tell them that one of the reasons given for the rejection of the measure by Mr. Sommers was that he had been taught all his life to pray for his daily bread, and that, if he passed that measure, one day a month he would not get that daily bread. Such intellectual reasoning is worthy of special mention, and it merely proves that whereas in one case members were willing to pass retrospective legislation in order to get a certain industrial concern out of a difficulty, in another case they would not give the slightest attention to the needs of the hard workers of the State. I quote these instances to show members what a “calm judicial house of review” we have

in the other Chamber. Another claim in favour of the maintenance of the other Chamber is the allegation that it is a check on hasty legislation. Let me also dissipate that claim. At the end of the session of 1905 three railway bills providing for an expenditure of £176,000, an Appropriation Bill providing for the expenditure of £316,000, an amendment to the Metropolitan Water Works Bill to increase the borrowing powers of the board from £420,000 to £820,000, were all passed through their first, second, and third readings in about half an hour. That is the Chamber, whose duty it is to check hasty legislation. It can properly be called the “greased-lightning” Chamber for it can pass more legislation in a shorter time than any other Parliament in the world. These instances should satisfy us as to the class character of the Upper House, and its position with regard to the people's welfare. I will admit that property has certain rights, such as security and protection, but these rights should not constitute the privilege to say what sort of legislation is best in the interests of the people and what is not. People who have no property know that as well as those who have; they know just as well what is in their interests as the people who have property. Property does not constitute the brains and the intelligence of the State, neither does it constitute all the wisdom of the State.

Mr. Gordon: It constitutes a good deal of thrift.

Mr. TROY: I will deal with that later on. Is there not in national life something more valuable than the wealth producing proclivities of a certain class of people? Is not the welfare of the people above all this? Should the welfare of the people be subordinate to the interests of the wealth procuring proclivities of a few who have exclusive representation in another Chamber, and who want to keep that. The strength of any State does not depend upon class distinction; the more class distinctions are emphasised the weaker the State becomes in consequence. It is worth while remembering that political class distinctions were first made by the acquisition of property. He who had no pro-

erty became the servant, and that was the beginning of the inequality, a fallacy which political science built on, and is still building on. The Government which adheres to that principle have in the long run, become weaker, and became subject to internal dissensions. Power and slavery went with property and slavery became property. Those States which believed in slavery were weaker than those countries which recognised the people as against every other consideration. We are endeavouring in this House, at least members on this side are endeavouring to break down those class distinctions, but despite the progress of democratic thought in this House and in this country we have not made any progress as far as the liberalisation of the other Chamber is concerned. To-day I had the pleasure of reading an able speech which was delivered by the late Mr. Justice Hensman, who was a member of the first Legislative Council in this State, or, rather, the Legislative Council prior to Responsible Government, and he made a speech in favour of the democratic representation of the people, which no member on the Ministerial side of the House is sufficiently democratic to make to-night. This was 19 years ago, so that we can claim that members on the other side of the House have made no progress whatever. We are told that property has additional claims for representation. I am quoting the words of the Premier. Does the possession of property, land, houses, cattle, sheep or anything else, prove the fitness of a person to representation in this Chamber, or anywhere else?

Mr. Gordon: Undoubtedly.

Mr. TROY: If so, then there must be degrees of fitness. Where is the hon. member's consistency if property is proof of fitness. Why give the man who has property worth £100 the same representation in Parliament as the man who has property worth £100,000? If property is the proof, where is the consistency in that argument if it is not adopted in its entirety. In the same manner, if it is not a proof why refuse a citizen in this State the franchise if he possesses property of the value of, say, £40 10s. while the per-

son who owns property valued at £50 gets a vote. Where is the reason in that? This is just what the Government are doing, and what members opposite propose to support. Property and wealth are at all times very transitory. A person may possess property to-day; to-morrow he may be without it, and no matter whether he is or not, the possession of it does not add one bit to his character or to his worth as a citizen. Neither can the loss of it take anything away from his character or worth as a citizen. It might in the eyes of some people, but in reality a citizen is as good without money as he is with it. I have seen some men whom the possession of money made veritable wasters; when they had no money they were decent citizens. Take the case of a farmer: he is entitled to vote for the Upper House, but by some act of Providence he may lose his property, and at once he is denied a vote: he is at once disgraced and is no longer considered worthy to vote for the Upper House. That is just what this Government propose to do when it sets up as one of the reasons why people should have representation in the Parliament of this country the fact that they must possess property. The member for Canning, who no one takes very seriously, but who, occasionally, like all of his class, makes an interjection which is worthy of notice, stated a little while ago that the thrifty person was entitled to more representation than the person who was not. How far are we to follow this assertion. Can it be said that the person who hangs to every penny he makes and then puts it into land is, after all, the best citizen? Let me give some examples. I know some people in my constituency who have made money out of mines; some have put their money into land in order to reap the unearned increment, others have made money and utilised it in prospecting and developing mines, and employing labour, and, probably, as has frequently been the case, they have been unfortunate enough to lose it all. At once they are refused a vote, while the man who has put his money into Perth property and is waiting to secure the unearned increment is

entitled to a vote, and by the Government of this State is looked upon as the most worthy individual. But he is not. The best citizen is the one who goes out and endeavours to develop the State. Let me give one example in the State, the case of "Paddy" Hannan, who found Kalgoorlie. By finding Kalgoorlie he gave wealth to thousands in this State, and he gave thousands of persons the opportunity of being represented in this Parliament, and being present here and in the other House, but he got very little himself. Those who came after him reaped the advantage of his labours, and those who represent that Province in the other House would not be there but for the labours of Hannan and others like him, and yet these same persons would refuse the vote to a man like Hannan who did so much for the development of the State. That is just what it means, when it is insisted that no person is entitled to the franchise in connection with the election of a member to the Upper House unless he possesses a certain amount of property. The workers in a country are responsible for all the values. On the Legislative Assembly roll we find the names of 130,000 people, while on the Legislative Council roll there are 37,000. Over 100,000 of the best citizens of the State, who are the very foundation of the State's prosperity are refused a vote for the other Chamber because they do not possess a certain amount of property, which this Government state they should possess in order to have a share in that representation. Take away this 100,000 and where is the wealth of this country that you talk about. Take these people away and where will the wealth be? If these people were taken out of the country the thirty odd thousand who have a vote for the Legislative Council, or many of them, would not have a vote because their land would diminish in value so much. Their property and their values are made by the people who are in the State, and take away those people who are denied a vote and many would not have sufficient property of a value to enable them to sit in that Chamber. Another argument used is that of the stake in the country. This we have fre-

quently heard from the Honorary Minister. "We must give the man with a stake in the country full representation. Now, as a matter of fact, the people are the stake and the people are the country."

The Honorary Minister: The property is the stake.

Mr. TROY: The property would not be worth 2½d. without the people. The people are the only stake; the people are the country. The Government recognise this, because when they bring down a Loan Bill they tell us that the national debt is so much per head of the population; not so much per brick, or per building or per sheep, but so much per head of the population. And when we go to the British money-lender we give a security, not of property, not of bricks and mortar, but of the people. Therefore, it depends upon the people just how far we succeed when we go to the British money-lender. If our population were 5 millions instead of 270,000 we could get a better deal than we get to-day from the British money-lender, because that gentleman recognises that the people are the only consideration. Therefore, the people are the only factor to be considered in measures of this kind. Then, take the money we borrow from the money-lender. Do the people in another Chamber pay any more by way of interest on this than is paid by the ordinary worker with no representation in that Chamber? Every man, woman and child is responsible for an equal share of that national debt. The person with property is not asked to pay any more than the person with no property: he is only asked to be responsible for the same amount as the most humble individual is responsible for. But that money which is borrowed is expended by the wealthy classes who have this extra representation. It is expended in works which will increase their wealth and raise the value of their stock and lands: and they pledge the people of the country to pay that money back to the British bondholder, and these people, the flesh and blood of the State, are pledged to pay this money back. Yet we deny them representation in the Parliament of the country. The present franchise is little better than a species of political fraud.

It gives with one hand and it takes away with the other. Largely it ignores the people's welfare, and penalises them in the interests of the propertied classes. There might be some excuse if the representation in another Chamber was based on education, or on a moral test; but this is not so. Any person, no matter what his character—he may be the worst scoundrel in the country, the most villainous type of man, yet he can have a vote in the election of a member of the Upper House so long as he has property. He may be a sweeter sweating his employees, he may be a usurer, or he may be a person who rents houses for purposes which I cannot mention here; yet, despite his moral defects, he has a vote, while a much worthier individual has none, merely because he does not hold a so-called stake in the country. The Legislative Council is an anomaly, and a reproach within a Commonwealth exercising larger powers and greater responsibilities, and in respect to which all the people are competent to exercise a vote. In respect to the Federal Parliament, which has larger powers, which has greater responsibilities, whose duty consists in the moulding of this nation, every adult person is entitled to representation and is given representation. Yet here in our State Parliament we are so unprogressive, so reactionary, that we deem ourselves liberal and progressive because we intend to extend the franchise for the Upper House and allow a few more persons to vote, whereas in the Commonwealth Parliament every person is entitled to that consideration. It will be said that if both Houses had the same representation there would be no necessity for the two Houses. In this I cordially agree; there is no necessity for two Houses. Before the Constitution was conferred on this State, and when the negotiations were taking place between the Imperial Government and the then Legislative Council of Western Australia, Lord Knutsford, then Secretary for State, pointed out to the Legislative Council of Western Australia that they would be doing a wise thing if they provided for one House and one House only. In one of his despatches to the Governor of the time, Sir F. Napier Broome, Lord Knuts-

ford said, "Having regard to the present population it may deserve consideration whether responsible Government might not with advantage be initiated in a Legislature consisting of a single elective Chamber." And in support of his contention he pointed out the position in Canada of Ontario, which had some time previously been granted a Constitution providing for a single-Chamber Legislature. The reply given to Lord Knutsford as the reason why the bi-cameral system should obtain in Western Australia was that Western Australia was not on all-fours with Ontario, because whereas Western Australia was largely an independent colony the province of Ontario had behind it the Dominion Government of Canada. Now, if that argument was the only one which could then be advanced we cannot advance it to-day. If, 19 years ago, our only argument in favour of the second Chamber was that we had not a Government behind us such as Ontario had in the Dominion of Canada, this does not obtain to-day, because we have behind us the Commonwealth Government of Australia. We ought at least to follow the example of Canada in this respect. Ever since the granting of a Constitution to Ontario providing for a single-Chamber Legislature, each province of Canada which has secured responsible Government has adopted that same class of Legislature. Now, taking the single-Chamber Legislatures in Canada we have the State of New Brunswick, with a population of 331,000. For this population 46 members are deemed to be competent to legislate. Here in Western Australia we have 270,000, with 80 members and two Houses of Parliament. In Ontario they have a population of two million souls satisfied with 98 members and one House of Parliament. In Manitoba they have a population of 225,000, with 40 members and one House; in British Columbia they have a population of 178,000 with 38 members; in Prince Edward Island a population of 103,000 with 30 members; in Alberta a population of 185,000 with 25 members, and in Saskatchewan a population of 257,000 with 25 members.

Mr. Male: The whole lot would not make Western Australia in area.

Mr. TROY: In Western Australia we have only 270,000 people, yet we require 80 members of Parliament with two Houses. In these days of retrenchment the least we might expect is that members would admit that what was good enough for the provinces of Canada is good enough for us. In Canada they are perfectly satisfied with one House; why then, should not we be satisfied? There is no necessity for two or three, or a dozen; one House should be sufficient. However, it seems that we want the other to be a sort of anchor on us. If hon. members on that side of the Chamber are so badly in need of an anchor, surely they could get one without requiring one in the form of another Chamber which is a drag on all progressive legislation in the State. In these days of depression when we are casting about for means to raise money in order to finance undertakings to develop the State, when we are assured that we cannot pay sufficient salaries to our civil servants, and are straining every point to make ends meet; when we cannot give water supplies to the prospectors of the remote areas, when we cannot give roads and bridges to the settlers in agricultural areas—at such a time is it not reasonable to expect that members might do something towards cutting down the expenses of Parliament and providing one House sufficient for all the requirements? The cost of the upkeep of Parliament is £26,000 annually. That is exclusive of costly elections, the cost of rolls, the cost of returns to this House, the cost of railway passes, etcetera. If we were to abolish the other Chamber we could save at least £12,000 to the State, £12,000 which would build at least 12 miles of railway. And I believe that twelve miles of railway would be of more advantage to the people of the State than an Upper Chamber, and I say it without disrespect to the Chamber, if it can be taken as such. Twelve thousand pounds spent in the development of the State can be better utilised than in providing a House of Parliament that is not necessary. The first essential in practical legislation is the abolition of the Upper House, not only in this State but in

other States of Australia. We have no need for an Upper House. I want to point out to those hon. members who are putting up the bogey of Unification and urging that certain persons are acting detrimental to the interests of the State, that what is doing more for Unification than any other thing is the existence of the Legislative Council on its present franchise, or on any franchise other than adult suffrage. For instance, the people of the State have been waiting year after year to have progressive legislation enacted and they have become disheartened. They find that the pledges given them by politicians are never fulfilled, and they cannot be fulfilled while there is another Chamber which is not representative of the people but is representative of that class whose interest it is to oppose all progressive legislation. As a result the people's minds are turned towards the Federal Parliament where they have absolute representation, where every person is represented, and in which they hope that legislation refused them here will be enacted. So the people who are doing more for Unification are those who favour the existence of the Legislative Council, and they are the persons who must take the responsibility, if any responsibility exists, in regard to doing an injury to this State by estranging the people from our legislatures. That is all I have to say. I do not think we can expect much from the legislation proposed. We are told to believe it is a big step in advance: but I want to say it means nothing to the people, it secures to them no advantage. I shall not be satisfied until we have at least adult franchise, and I am glad to know the leader of the Opposition is moving in that direction. If we have adult suffrage we can secure the fullest representation of the people in the Upper Chamber. There are dozens of members sitting in that Chamber who would not be there one day holding the positions they do and taking the actions they take in opposition to the people's interests if the people were fully represented, and we cannot have any legislation passed in the State in the interests of the people unless

we have both Houses of Parliament or the whole of Parliament fully representative of the whole of the people.

Mr. SPEAKER: According to the Constitution Act the second reading of this Bill must be carried by an absolute majority, and unless any member calls for a division I am now prepared to declare the second reading carried.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee:

Mr. Taylor in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of 63 Vict., No. 19, Sec. 15:

Mr. BATH moved an amendment—

That the words "amended as follows" in line 2 be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—"Struck out and the following is inserted in lieu thereof, 'Every person who possesses the qualification of an elector for the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia as provided by the Electoral Act, 1907, shall be entitled to be registered as an elector, and when enrolled, and so long as he continues to reside in the province for which he is enrolled, to vote at the election of a member of the Legislative Council for that province.'"

He had no intention of traversing the arguments used on the second reading, but if we were to have a second Chamber he proposed by this amendment to bring that Chamber into line with the Commonwealth by providing for adult suffrage. It was recognised that with the existence of two Houses based upon the same suffrage we would be creating somewhat of an anomaly, but this difficulty could be overcome, and the amendment if carried could later on be followed up by a provision by which the other House, if based upon adult suffrage, might be elected on much larger electorates than we had at present. In fact we might go so far as to create a second Chamber with smaller numbers than at present in which the whole constituency would vote as one electorate on the principle of proportional representation. This would give to the House a different aspect to that it at pre-

sent enjoyed. It would differentiate it altogether from the Legislative Assembly, and at the same time there could be no possible argument that the Legislative Council was elected upon a more restricted franchise than that of the Assembly. That was the only objection against the existing Constitution at present, and it was the objection which could be urged, perhaps not with equal force, but still with some considerable force, against the existence of the Chamber itself—ever on the basis provided for in the Bill. In his opinion we had arrived at the parting of the ways. We had to stand by and acquiesce in a gradual alienation of popular loyalty from the State Parliament in Western Australia, loyalty which was never more urgently needed in the interests of the community than now. The affections of the people were turned to the Federal Parliament where they had adequate representation, where indeed there was no distinction made between one class and another. His contention all along had been that if anyone was really patriotic, really desirous of preserving the State's autonomous powers and of obtaining home rule, the only way it could be done was by giving home rule in reality, and not by making a pretence of it. That was his object in moving the amendment.

The PREMIER: If the hon. member were sincere in his desire to secure some measure of reform, he must from his experience recognise that reforms come slowly, and that his amendment even if carried by this Committee would not be accepted by another place.

Mr. Underwood: None of it will be accepted there, so it is all the same.

The PREMIER: There was no reason to believe that members of another place would not realise it was necessary that some step should be taken towards broadening the franchise.

Mr. Jacoby: Which would strengthen their position.

The PREMIER: That was so. If the reform were effected the Constitution of the Legislative Council would be in advance of anything in existence in Australia now. We should be well satisfied with that advance.

Mr. Collier : It is the same in Victoria.

The PREMIER : The Constitution in Victoria was restricted to this extent, that the members of the Legislative Council received no honorarium for the work they performed, consequently it followed that those eligible for election were limited in number, therefore our advance was greater than theirs. The leader of the Opposition had said that unless some drastic steps were taken to broaden the franchise the affections of the people generally would be turned to the Federal Parliament, and he outlined a reform, which he thought would be of value, to the effect that the representatives of the Legislative Council should be elected by the manhood of the State voting as a whole. Unless a man had a very big organisation behind him it would be impossible for him in such circumstances to get elected to that Chamber, and there would be the same feature here as in the Federal Parliament now where all the members were elected by one portion of the community. It was not advisable that the representation to the Senate from this State should be merely of one class.

Mr. O'Loughlen : The Upper House here is representative of one class now.

The PREMIER : The powers of rejection by that House had very seldom been exercised. When there was only one representative of labour in the Legislative Council they gave every consideration to the measures sent up and acted in an impartial manner. It would be inadvisable for the member to press his amendment as there was no chance of its being given effect to even if it passed this Chamber. If sincere in our desire for reform we should take the measure offered rather than attempt to insert a proposal we knew would never be accepted.

Mr. TROY : How did the Premier know the proposal would not be accepted by another Chamber ?

Mr. Jacoby : You know yourself it would not be.

Mr. TROY : There was no reason why it should not be accepted, and no argument had been used as to why it should be rejected here. The mere

fact that the Bill went some distance though not far enough, was no reason why it should be accepted ? We had not dealt with a measure like this for some 19 years.

The Honorary Minister : You had 14 months when you might have done something.

Mr. TROY : And the hon. member secured election by making a definite promise that he would come back here to see this was done ; but he sat in the Ministry for nearly four years and left without doing anything. It was a reasonable amendment, and was merely with the object of giving the people representation. Surely none would oppose it. If the Attorney General opposed it now it would prove him to be a reactionary as compared with what he was a few years ago.

Mr. ANGWIN : Just after the general elections the Premier made the statement that the larger number of electors in this State were represented by his side of the House. If he honestly believed that he should have no hesitation in agreeing to the amendment. The Premier had said when dealing with the Federal Parliament that it was not right that the Senate should be representative of only one class of the community. If it were true that it was not right for the Senate to be representative of only one class could it be argued that it was right that one party only should be represented in the Legislative Council ? He did not agree that the Council would oppose such an amendment as this, for some members there believed in the vote of the people and were of opinion that the views they had as to various measures were those of the great majority of the people. They would therefore be satisfied if the election to that Chamber were by the majority of the people. The Legislative Council should be given an opportunity to show that they had confidence in the people of the State.

Mr. WALKER : The amendment was a very trivial change from what was proposed. If we were going down to six shillings a week as a qualification for a voter, would one rob a man of a vote for that sum ? What was good enough for

the Senate was surely good enough for the Upper House here. We were making reform ridiculous by going only a very short distance, and there was really nothing to prevent us from going so far as manhood suffrage. Let the human creature be recognised as the only voting power. All believed in the rule of the majority of human beings, and if so, then go to the extreme of our principles. If the result of manhood suffrage for the Legislative Council would be to create a Labour Upper House, well what of that? Could we stop at 6s. Was it not a ridiculous stopping place? He could not believe that the Upper House would throw it out on that score. He was perfectly convinced from rumours which had been afloat that it would be fired out. We might as well, therefore, have the credit of going the whole lot because it would be lost anyhow. What guarantee was there that the Bill would go through as it stood? There was no guarantee at all. In fact remarks had issued from that sacred Chamber to the effect that the Bill would be shelved on technical points as soon as it reached there. Let the Bill go up, therefore, and be interred as a respectable fully fledged democratic measure instead of a 6s. measure. It was neither fish flesh, nor fowl. He remembered Sir Edmund Barton advocating the adoption of the Federal Constitution, and the chief note sounded again and again was that the Constitution would be the most democratic Constitution in the world, because its Senate would be elected on manhood suffrage; that was the boast. It was not beneath our dignity, therefore, to be on the same level. Let us say that the Federal Constitution did not stand alone and that in Western Australia we had a like suffrage, and we, therefore, in that respect were as democratic as the Commonwealth.

Mr. BATH: The Premier had assured the Committee that all reforms must be gradual. This, was the most gradual of all, and was just about as gradual as the Licensing Bill, which for "gradualness" had taken the cake in the House. The Premier implored the Committee to consider the feelings of the Legislative Coun-

cil, and to take note that they were likely to reject it and therefore we should not send it up in the proposed amended form. The member for Swan would remember that in 1903 we dealt with an amendment of the Constitution by which we provided for the reduction of the franchise and he (Mr. Bath) remembered well on that occasion how the then Premier, Sir Walter James, implored the Committee to be moderate and send up something which the Upper House would be able to pass, and his plea for moderation was accepted by a majority of members at that time, and the reform was made as palatable as possible for the consideration of the Legislative Council. When it reached that Chamber, however, they gathered round it like vultures from afar and in a short time the mangled remains came back to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Jacoby: It did not come back.

Mr. BATH: The hon. member was right, the mangled remains stayed behind. This plea had been made time and time again, even in connection with the Land Tax Bill. We had always been asked not to consider if from the point of view of the electors who had sent the members to Parliament to express certain views, and to use their influence to mould legislation in a certain way, but to consider if from the point of view of the other Chamber. That plea was made by the present Minister for Works when in charge of the Land Tax Bill and on that occasion the plea received very little consideration at the hands of the other Chamber. In view of that experience would it not be as well to mould legislation according to the views of the Legislative Assembly, and in pursuance of the mandate members of the Assembly had received from their electors? We would be acting more creditably if we dealt with this legislation in the manner we thought best, and then left it to the wisdom of members of another place to deal with it from their point of view. On no occasion had the Legislative Assembly ever had consideration extended to them from the Legislative Council. It seemed futile and he would almost say cowardly on the part of members of the Assembly to depart from their

opinions on this matter in connection with this amendment. As the member for Kanowna had pointed out, the difference was not such a great one, but the point of view that should be looked at was that where there was a certain franchise which necessitated the possession of a qualification of a certain value; even whether it be £15 or £25 we opened up the way to eternal trouble in connection with the enrolment of electors and in connection with the actual voting. There were always those who used every means and who did not stop at the expenditure of money in order to prevent electors from exercising the franchise to which they were entitled. These difficulties occurred in 1906 in connection with the enrolment of electors at that time. If we passed this amendment we would obviate a great many of those difficulties and we would simplify the process of getting on the roll. We would also to a large extent prevent those who made it their business to expend time and money in preventing people from enjoying the franchise, to which they were entitled, and we would be doing something greater, and that was making our Parliament as democratic as that of the Commonwealth.

The PREMIER: The hon. member was sent here with a mandate from his electors in favour of adult suffrage.

Mr. Bath: Abolition.

The PREMIER: Then the hon. member should be consistent. He (the Premier) got a mandate from his electors with regard to this matter, and that was to reduce the franchise from £25 to £15; in fact that was a plank in the platform of the Government proposals.

Mr. KEENAN: The leader of the Opposition had asked the House to accept the amendment he had moved, and he had given as the principal reason that moderation as supplied to measures sent to the Legislative Council in the past had not been successful. The hon. member had told the Committee that Sir Walter James had brought down a certain measure and recommended it for acceptance principally on the ground that it was moderate, and that that measure on being presented to another

place was rejected. If the argument meant anything it meant that because a moderate measure had been rejected one which made more extensive demands was more likely to be accepted. If a certain body were not prepared to accept a measure for the reform of that body, which might fairly be described as moderate, they were not in the least likely to accept a measure which was of an extreme character.

Mr. Bath: It will have the effect of opening the eyes of the people to the nature of the position.

Mr. KEENAN: It might mean that it would allow members to have an ultimate goal as their aim, to explain their views and advertise those views, but it would not mean that any progress had been made. The member for Kanowna had asked what guarantee was there that this particular measure would receive any consideration at the hands of members of another place. There was this guarantee that this particular measure of reform had been submitted to the electorates and the Government had been returned to power authorised by those electorates to give effect to it. The question could not be raised in another place that in fact there had been no popular mandate for the Bill; because it had been endorsed by the electors on several occasions. This in itself removed a very serious objection which might be offered to the measure when presented for consideration in another place; but the effect of the amendment would be to wreck the Bill. Such an amendment would have seemed natural and proper coming from the member for Perth, but coming from the leader of the Opposition it seemed very much out of place. All history was against any sanguine expectation that true reform could be effected by a single act. Reforms were gradual in their development. What he would impress upon the Committee was that if the measure were passed in this House hon. members would have a right to ask that it should be not merely considered but assented to in another place, seeing that it had been authorised by a majority of the electorates of the States. He

believed that the Bill would do good. for, holding the view that ultimately we should reach a goal far in advance of what was set out in the Bill, he was desirous of achieving that purpose by a gradual process. That being so, he hoped the leader of the Opposition would not by pressing his amendment spoil the measure and ruin its chances of acceptance in another place.

Mr. W. PRICE : The view of the member for Kalgoorlie be the effect of the amendment would be to kill the Bill would not find many adherents. In 1903 a motion had been carried fixing the franchise for another place at £10. On looking through the debate that had taken place on that occasion he had found some interesting remarks by hon. members. He would have liked to have heard the Attorney General on the subject to-night, because in 1903 that gentleman had made an impassioned appeal to the members in favour of a Single-Chamber Constitution, an appeal worthy of being read to hon. members on this occasion. The Premier had stated earlier in the evening that he was here with a mandate to reduce the franchise from £25 to £15. Most hon. members might claim that they had had similar mandates, while a good many had had mandates to effect a much more material reform which would eventually lead to the abolition of the Upper House. No valid objection could be raised to the bringing of members of the Upper Chamber into closer touch with the people. It might be stated—indeed it probably would be stated—that if we were to make manhood suffrage the basis of the Upper House both houses would be on the same footing, and there would no longer be a necessity for two Houses. However, that was altogether another question, for members were not discussing whether or not there should be two Houses, but merely the partial reform of one house. By carrying the second reading of the Bill members had practically affirmed the continuation of the Upper House. The question now to be decided was the franchise of that House. Yet, if manhood suffrage were deemed good enough for the Constitution of the Australian Parliament, it might well be ac-

cepted for this section of the Commonwealth. What peculiar virtue or qualification did the payment of £15 rent give to any man? Surely a man's intellect should be the deciding factor in his qualification to vote. If he had sufficient intellect to render him competent to vote for a member of the Legislative Assembly, or for a member of either of the Commonwealth Houses, then surely he should be deemed competent to vote for a member of the Legislative Council. Yet it was a fact that a citizen might be qualified to occupy a seat in the Legislative Assembly, if not, indeed, in the Legislative Council, and might not be qualified to exercise a vote for an election to the Legislative Council; still members of the Legislative Council had the right to deal with legislation agreed to by the Assembly. The idea was ridiculous: and even if the Premier could not alter his views, then members of the Government side who had committed themselves five years ago to the single-chamber Constitution should see the necessity for supporting the amendment.

Mr. TROY : The Attorney was such a charming evolutionist that one was justified in referring a little further to his actions on the previous occasion when a similar measure to this was being discussed. The member for Albany could rest assured that the Attorney General from whom he expected some little repentance would show none. In 1903 the Attorney General said—

“I have yet to learn that I have repented; I have yet to learn for any utterance I have made in the House I need any repentance.”

Again the Attorney General said—

“There can be no question, even if those of us who advocate a single-chamber constitution at the present time are somewhat in advance of current opinion in this House, that sooner or later, and probably sooner rather than later, we are bound to see the triumph of our principles.”

The Attorney General had not repented. Presumably if he had repented, his principles were only for the time being

sleeping. Again the Attorney General said—

"In other words, it is necessary in a democratic community—a community in which by a pleasing fiction it is assumed that the majority rule—to have a body which shall prevent the majority from ruling."

That was what the Attorney General was doing to-night by calmly supporting the Government in this measure. Again, the Attorney General said—

"The abolition of the Upper Chamber would imbue members of this House with a far greater sense of their political responsibility, and legislation here would be infinitely better considered. I do not altogether despair of yet being able to convert the Premier himself. I believe that if we had in this country a single-chamber Constitution, we should wean the Premier from the error of his ways; that we should not find him at the beginning of the session bringing down to this House a huge programme of legislation."

Again speaking on Canada he said—

"The dual-chamber Constitution has been abolished in five provinces out of the seven; and that abolition is not of yesterday; it was effected some considerable time ago, and we should therefore have heard had it been attended with evil results. It is not for me to show that no evil results have followed the adoption of the single-chamber Constitution in Canada. I have diligently sought to ascertain, before I made up my mind on this subject; whether any evil results have followed; and I have been utterly unable to find any opinion which carries any weight at all showing the revolutionary, the disastrous consequences predicted by some people have followed in the case of the Canadian provinces . . . The provinces in which the Upper Chambers have been abolished are the most democratic provinces in the Canadian Dominion. The people are quite as vigorously and furiously democratic as those of Australia; they are quite as intelligent."

Hansard was full of the hon. member's presumably earnest advocacy of the rights of the people five years ago.

Mr. Underwood: And calm, judicious utterances also.

Mr. TROY: To-night we had the deplorable exhibition of the hon. gentleman being absolutely afraid to say anything in support of his alleged principles. There was hope that five years hence the hon. gentleman might just as vigorously and furiously advocate the principles as he did five years ago. Other Government members were afraid to speak. Had the member for Swan nothing to say? It was regrettable there was in the House a body of persons like dumb, driven cattle in that they were afraid to advocate what they promised the people. The majority of Ministerialists had not the courage to go out to the people and tell them they were opposed to adult suffrage for the Upper House.

The Honorary Minister: Rubbish! We told them that at the elections.

Mr. TROY had opposed some Ministerialists at the elections and they advocated time after time adult suffrage for both Houses.

Mr. Jacoby: Who were they?

Mr. TROY: Members of the Chamber and candidates they supported. One case in particular was that of a Ministerial candidate at Mount Magnet.

Mr. Jacoby: The hon. member had accused him of advocating manhood suffrage for the Upper House. He had never done so.

Mr. TROY: Let the hon. member refresh his memory from *Hansard*. Was one expected to take a denial from that side of the House?

Mr. Jacoby: In asking one to refresh his memory from *Hansard* the hon. member was making a statement.

Mr. Bolton: What is the point of order? Is it fair to interrupt the speaker?

Mr. Jacoby had simply risen to repeat his denial. The hon. member had inferred there was a statement in *Hansard* concerning him. He denied there was any such statement there.

Mr. TROY: The hon. member could please himself as to what he denied. It was only surprising the hon. member did not make a speech.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must accept the hon. member's denial.

Mr. TROY: No assertion was made. The hon. member was simply asked to refresh his memory from *Hansard*.

Mr. Jacoby: In what way?

Mr. TROY: The hon. member was apparently so dense that he needed an explanation.

Mr. Jacoby: I ask you to produce the statement from *Hansard*.

Mr. TROY: Why did not the hon. member make a speech? Why sit as if deaf and dumb and prepared to swallow his alleged principles? Ministerial members were bulldozed in regard to the measure. They would not go into a democratic constituency to oppose adult franchise for both Houses. We were told by the member for Kalgoorlie that the people had to accept reforms in stages. The people had waited with patience. Members received the support of the people by advocating strong measures, but when they arrived in the House they temporised and put objections in the way of the will of the people being carried out, and asked others to accept reforms by instalments when they well knew these instalments lasted for many years, and that the people were not prepared to wait. There was a limit to the patience of the people. Water when dammed back overflowed its barriers when the pressure became too strong, and so it was with the patience of the people. Members might take a lesson from history. History proved conclusively that the people though patient for generations, had their patience exhausted, and at last rose and demanded that politicians should carry out their pledges.

The Honorary Minister: Why, you are a regular Jeremiah!

Mr. TROY: It was amazing to see members refuse to give their opinion in regard to principles they once advocated. What were we coming to? In a few moments when the division was taken the majority of members would come in knowing nothing about the principle at issue, and nothing about what was being discussed, and would vote for a Government that included in its

members one hon. member who at one time was an ardent supporter of the principles the Opposition were endeavouring to have carried to-night but was now going back on his principles. To this he (Mr. Troy) took the strongest objection. It was time some member should demand that the political morality members held as theirs should be shown to-night.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	18
Noes	..	..	..	22

Majority against .. 4

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bath	Mr. O'Loughlen
Mr. Bolton	Mr. W. Price
Mr. Collier	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gill	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Heilmann	Mr. Walker
Mr. Holman	Mr. Ware
Mr. Horan	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hudson	(Teller).
Mr. Johnson	

NOES.

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

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. HUDSON moved a further amendment—

That in line 7 the words "fifteen pounds" be struck out and "one pound" inserted in lieu.

The Bill proposed to reduce the annual value from £25 to £15; but this amendment was brought forward with the object of ensuring household suffrage.

The PREMIER: The amendment would mean that instead of making the weekly value of the house, as in the Bill, six shillings it would work out at about fourpence. The member could hardly be serious in his suggestion. He had no

experience of any tenement that would only bring in fourpence a week.

Mr. BATH: The amendment was introduced for the purpose of making a household qualification for the Legislative Council. It was difficult to frame an amendment providing for that except in the manner now suggested. It might be interesting to the Premier to know that in 1888 when the proposed constitution of the State was under consideration in the Legislative Council a present member, Mr. Randell, expressed himself in favour of household suffrage. He was also in favour of giving lodgers a vote. That was an alternative proposal to a despatch of Lord Knutsford, who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies, in which he strongly recommended to the Governor of Western Australia that this State should be content with a Legislature having one branch. The Secretary of State pointed to the position of Ontario and some other of the Canadian provinces. The then members of the Legislative Council were strongly opposed to the idea of legislation by one House, for they wanted to have an imitation of the British Houses of Parliament. Evidently in opposition to Lord Knutsford's ideas Mr. Randell went so far as to approve of household suffrage, and for lodgers to vote. It appeared that we were now going backwards, for in 1903 this House declared in favour of a £10 franchise, whereas now we were content with asking for £15. If the members of the Government could suggest any means by which household suffrage could be secured other than that suggested in the amendment he would be glad. All that was desired by the amendment was to secure household suffrage.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment; the report adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE.

In Committee.

Mr. Taylor in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2, 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Sources of funds for purpose of Act:

Mr. BATH: Was the Minister aware of the fact that there was a typographical error in the last line of the Clause; the sum £500,000 appeared instead of £400,000.

On motion by the Minister for Lands the word "five" in the last line of the clause was struck out and "four" inserted in lieu.

Clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 5—Land Purchase Board:

Mr. BATH: It seemed that this clause would provide something in the nature of jobs for people. He failed to see the necessity for having five people on the board; it would mean the payment of a considerable sum in fees, and in view of the admonition of the Treasurer to keep the finances within reasonable limits the action of the Minister in providing for so large a board could not be understood. The old board consisted of three members, a number which should be ample. He moved an amendment—

That in line 2 the word "five" be struck out and "three" inserted in lieu.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The existing provision was for five members. It was necessary to have five because three would form a quorum, and it was no always possible to get the full number.

Mr. Collier: Who constitute the present board:

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Mr. E. M. Clarke, M.L.C., Mr. Gell, Mr. W. Paterson, Mr. W. B. Mitchell, and Mr. John Roberts.

Mr. Draper: How are they paid?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Two guineas a sitting.

Mr. Bath: Are there civil servants among them?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Mr. Paterson, but he did not draw fees.

Mr. Bolton: What about Mr. Clarke?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Mr. Clarke, he understood, drew no fees, certainly Mr. Paterson did not.

Mr. BATH: If the Minister for Lands would inquire more closely he would probably find that all the members of the

board had been drawing moneys in connection therewith. Whether they were called fees or expenses it was impossible to say, but the moneys had been drawn. In his (Mr. Bath's) opinion three members would be quite sufficient for the board. The difficulty in regard to the quorum could easily be overcome by reducing the size of that quorum.

Mr. ANGWIN: If we had departmental officers qualified for the work why have a board at all? He would vote against the clause as it stood. There was a great tendency to hand over all responsible functions to boards. On this board there was a member of Parliament receiving fees.

Mr. Hayward: He is not receiving fees.

Mr. ANGWIN: The Minister for Lands had said that Mr. Clarke was not drawing fees, but the leader of the Opposition had said that every member was drawing his fees.

Mr. Bath: I was referring to the public servants.

Mr. ANGWIN: It was to be hoped the Government would take into consideration the advisability of lessening the number of these boards. Hon. members should strike out the clause altogether. The boards were not required if we had qualified officers, and he believed that we had officers fully qualified.

Mr. GEORGE: Under the Bill a board was to be appointed; in fact, a board had been already created under the existing Act. We had another similar board in connection with the Agricultural Bank. The members of the latter board had to know something about land in order that they might lend money on it. He would suggest that a permanent board be appointed to carry out the duties of the two existing boards. This arrangement would be economical and in every sense effective. The agricultural bank business and the business of lands purchase were so clearly connected that one permanent board of gentlemen experienced in land matters might very properly be constituted to look after both affairs. The clause might well be reconsidered with that end in view. To his thinking five members were not too many for a board of this description. These gentlemen were scattered

pretty well all over the country and probably not more than two or three of them would make an inspection. The responsibility should certainly be shared.

Mr. JACOBY: By having a larger board it permitted our getting the service of men with practical experience in different parts of the State. The responsibility was too great to put on a small board. It was absurd to ask civil servants to do the work. The work needed the experience of practical farmers.

Mr. HAYWARD: It was essential members of the board should reside in different parts of the State. A man with a knowledge of the South-West would probably be at sea in the North. The members of the board were now scattered all over the State.

Mr. BATH: It was to avoid the local members of the board deciding on a repurchase from a parochial point of view that an amendment was necessary. We should have a board who would attend to carry out these responsible duties. However, we delegated too many powers to boards, powers that could well be carried out by responsible officers of the department. The experts the Minister claimed to have should at least be equal to this task.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: These gentlemen made valuations. Officers of the department were capable of doing this, but it was a good thing to have men from each district, men who knew the values of land in their districts. The plan had been in operation for 13 years and apparently the member for Brown Hill, when in control of the Lands Department, found no objection to it. The members of the board were only paid for the services they rendered. Professor Lowrie was capable of doing the work, but he was already overloaded with work. The fee of two guineas was very small.

Mr. Angwin: Do they get free railway passes?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They had merely their fares paid. It was advisable that the board should be retained as it was now formed. Was it suggested for one moment that the members of the board were incompetent?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: An effort should be made to do away with the present board. There were in the Lands Department some excellent officers who could very well do the work needed under the Bill. There were qualified surveyors who could report on the estates offered for sale; their reports would be unbiased, and without any local influence. He had no doubt whatever as to the ability and honesty of the gentlemen forming the board now, but the position was that there were plenty of men employed by the Government who could do the work, and it was not necessary to go to the expense of getting outsiders.

Mr. GEORGE: Certainly there were officers in the department who could be trusted honestly and honourably to do the work, but although that was so it must not be forgotten that there was no department where there was such a necessity for keeping the work up to date as the Lands, and there was no department where the work, through its accumulation and quick growth, was so much in arrears; therefore it would be inadvisable to take those senior officers away from their duties.

Mr. Johnson: The juniors do the work now and are hampered by the seniors. Take the seniors away and the juniors will not be hampered.

Mr. GEORGE: Surely that was not the case. It would be inadvisable for officers of the Lands Department to undertake this work. There was one point, however, that might be urged, and that was that the members of this board and the members of the board who controlled the Agricultural Bank should be one and the same. If that were so and the board purchased an estate the members would know, when that land was cut up and the new owners came to them for money, how far they could go in lending the bank's funds on the property.

Mr. W. PRICE: Did the present members of the board receive any consideration other than their fees? Did they receive railway travelling facilities in the shape of free passes over all lines such as were

granted to members of another board which had been under discussion?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The members of the board received two guineas a day and thirty shillings travelling expenses, together with the railway passes for the day. They did not have general railway passes over all lines, but simply had their train fare paid for a special journey. As opportunity offered he would be glad to appoint the present trustees of the Agricultural Bank as members of the board. Members probably would not want him to remove any of the present members of the board in order to make room for the trustees.

Mr. ANGWIN: We had the manager of the Agricultural Bank who was in himself an expert farmer; then there was the Director of Agriculture, with his expert knowledge, and there was another officer in the Lands Department who would be able to advise in the sub-division of the land that it was desired to purchase; he referred to the Surveyor-General. These officers would be better able to safeguard the interests of the State than a board engaged at fees of two guineas per day. Hon. members should vote against the clause for the purpose of placing the responsibility on the officers.

Amendment put and negatived.

[Mr. Dalglish took the Chair.]

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

Ayes	..	..	..	24
Noes	..	..	..	17
				—
Majority for	..	..	..	7
				—

AYES.

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

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Bath	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bolton	Mr. W. Price
Mr. Collier	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gill	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Heltmann	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Holman	Mr. Ware
Mr. Horan	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hudson	

(Teller).

Clause thus passed.

Clause 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Land Purchase Board to report:

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The clause provided that "the land purchase board, before making their report, may examine the land." It seemed extraordinary that we should allow the board the option of making a report without seeing the land. He moved an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subclause 2 the word "may" be struck out and "shall" inserted in lieu.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.19 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 15th December, 1909.

	PAGE
Papers presented ..	2203
Motion: Collie coalfield, reward for discoverer ..	2203
Bills: Goomalling-Wongan Hills Railway, 3a. ...	2203
Dowerin-Merridin Railway, 3a. ...	2203
Constitution Act Amendment, 1 and 2a. ...	2205

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

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary:—Report of the Agricultural Bank for the year ended 30th June, 1909.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1. Goomalling—Wongan Hills Railway, *passed.*
2. Dowerin-Merridin Railway, *passed.*

MOTION—COLLIE COALFIELD, REWARD FOR DISCOVERER.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the motion of the Hon. E. McLarty, "That in the opinion of this House the services rendered to this State by Mr. A. Perren, the discoverer of the Collie Coalfield should be recognised."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): I moved the adjournment of this debate yesterday. I must confess that I did not follow the mover very closely. Still I think his main argument was that the State had never recognised the services rendered by the discoverer of the Collie coalfields. I have since secured some particulars from the Mines Department and it would appear that this gentleman has had some substantial recognition.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: All the speakers yesterday admitted that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I listened to Mr. McLarty and I gathered from him that Mr. Perren had got merely a portion of £100.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: He got half of £500.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He has had more than that. On the 10th August, 1887, a notice was published in the *Government Gazette* offering a reward of £1,000 for the discovery of payable coal. In 1889 Mr. Perren showed a certain gentleman the locality in which he had picked up some coal. In October of the same year these two gentlemen arrived in Perth, and applied for certain land in the vicinity of this discovery. Mr. Perren was generally recognised as the discoverer of the Collie field, and in 1889 £100 was paid to him and £100 to the other gentleman. Subsequently the balance of £800 was equally allotted to the two. That makes £500 that Mr. Perren has received in cash. The Collie Mining district was declared on the 25th August, 1892, abolished on the 2nd August, 1895, and again declared on the 21st February, 1896. When this gentleman who accompanied Mr. Perren applied for the reward the following minute was made by Sir John Forrest, the then Premier, to the Hon. E. H. Wittenoom, the then Minister for Mines:—"10th November, 1897.