

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 6th October, 1909.

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

QUESTION—METROPOLITAN SEWERAGE, RETICULATION.

Mr. SWAN asked the Minister for Works: 1, What is the reason that No. 2 reticulation contract is not being proceeded with? 2, Has the lowest tender been accepted? If not, why not? 3, Has any tender been accepted for No. 4 contract?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1 and 2. Owing to an informality, acceptance of the lowest tender was delayed, and it has since been withdrawn. The next lowest tender, being in order, has been recommended for acceptance. 3, Yes.

QUESTION—MILK PRESERVATION. PUSEY PROCESS.

Mr. WALKER asked the Premier: 1, Have the Government (as reported) the West Australian rights of the Pusey process for the preservation of milk under offer? 2, If so, have the Government submitted samples of same to experts for analytical and bacterial tests; and if so, with what results?

The PREMIER replied: 1. Yes. 2. Yes. The matter is being inquired into by Professor Lowrie and the Government Analyst, whose tests are not yet completed. We expect a report on Monday next.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1. Permanent Reserves Rededication (introduced by the Premier).

2, Coolgardie Recreation Reserve Revesting (introduced by the Minister for Lands).

RETURN—STIRLING ESTATE, DRAINAGE FUND.

On motion by Mr. Heitmann, ordered: "That there be laid upon the Table of the House a return showing the total amount set aside as a drainage fund for Stirling Estate, with a detailed statement of expenditure of same."

MOTION—POLICE DEPARTMENT, TO INQUIRE.

Mr. COLLIER (Boulder) moved—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the administration of the Police Department.

He said: I regret that the necessity for inquiry into the administration of this department should still exist, especially in view of the criticism levelled at it year after year in this House. Some two years ago the Leader of the Opposition moved a similar motion, and I think it was then clearly shown that there was grave cause for dissatisfaction in the ranks of the police force. If we look at the discussion in connection with the Estimates of this department last year, we will see that for a space of three or four hours hon. members retailed the grievances and the many injustices then existing among the rank and file of the police force. It seems to me that criticism on the Estimates is altogether useless; at least it has been shown to be so with regard to this department, for year after year it has been allowed to go unheeded. I do not know whether that is due to the fact that the Minister controlling the department is not a member of this House, but there seems to have existed an amount of indifference altogether unfair to hon. members. I do not wish to go into the financial aspect of the management of the police force because I think that is largely a matter for the Government in considering any question of economy. I could point to the fact that the cost per head of the population

is much higher in Western Australia, almost double in fact what it is in any other State of the Commonwealth.

~~The Minister for Works: I do not think it is double.~~

Mr. COLLIER: In comparison with some of the States it is fully double, and compared with Queensland it is much more than 50 per cent. higher. I could also point to the fact that as compared with the Eastern States our police force is much more extensively officered. We have a larger proportion of officers to men than they have in any of the Eastern States, but I may say that is largely a matter for the consideration of the Minister controlling the department. What I wish to deal with more particularly is the internal working as it affects the duties of the rank and file. The first question I wish to refer to is that of promotion. I think it will be said that in every other department of life as well as in the police department every man who joins a service does not desire to remain on the bottom rung of the ladder. If he displays energy, zeal, and intelligence, he expects to have reasonable facilities for rising and some day reaching the top of the tree. With our police force here the method of promotion is very unsatisfactory indeed. It is not by seniority, nor is it by merit. The regulation dealing with promotion provides that the favourable report of the immediate superior officer will be an indispensable requisite to promotion. That indispensable requisite is responsible for reducing the ranks of our police force, and I was going to say, almost to the unspeakable level of toadyism. To make favouritism a *sine qua non* of promotion is to put a premium on sycophancy. It is not the most capable man and the most independent man who is going to obtain a favoured report at the hands of his superior officer; it is very often the man who is prepared to blacken the boots of his superior officer.

The Minister for Works: Would you do away with it?

Mr. COLLIER: I would take away the power from any one individual who held the welfare of another man wholly in his hand.

The Minister for Works: There must be some rule.

Mr. COLLIER: But the Minister will not contend that in every system it is impossible? There should be a board of competent men, men who are capable of judging ability and qualification when the question of promotion comes in, and an impartial board should decide on the matter of promotion. We should not say that an indispensable requisite of promotion must be the favourable report of an immediate superior officer. We know well that officers of the police force, like other persons, are merely human, and it is often the case that the man who gains that indispensable requisite is the man who is on terms of good friendship with his officer. It may be that he belongs to the same club, or the same lodge, or even to the same brand of Christianity that influences the superior officer in deciding in favour of any particular constable. Let me take an instance. Leonora is a place with a sergeant and four or five constables. Before the constable at Leonora can obtain promotion he must have the approval of the inspector who is resident at Menzies, but the inspector only visits outlying centres such as Leonora at rare intervals, and it is impossible for him to say what are the qualities and abilities of each constable in his great area, consequently he has to fall back upon the report of the sergeant in charge of the station.

The Minister for Works: Would not a board have to do the same thing?

Mr. COLLIER: As I was pointing out, a board would be more impartial, and would not be swayed by personal influences to the same extent as individuals would be. It is possible for a constable to incur the displeasure of his superior officers; and though he may be a capable man, promotion may be denied him. The man who is more inclined to fawn on his superior officers is the man who is more likely to obtain approval. Closely allied to the question of promotion is that of appointments, and there appears to be no prescribed examination, either physical or educational, for admittance to our police force. It is entirely within the province of the Commissioner of Police

to appoint any man he chooses, not only as a probationer but to any position in the force with the approval of the Executive Council—a condition of things that does not obtain in any other State in the Commonwealth. We need only look round the streets and notice some of the constables on duty to become aware of the fact that some men have got into the police force through influence. In any case to give to one individual the power to appoint anyone he likes to the police force is to open the door to influence, whether it be exercised or not. In the past appointments have been made to important positions of men who have never spent an hour in the police force in this or any other State of the Commonwealth. Regulation 261 reads—

“When a vacancy occurs in the higher grades of the force and the duties of the vacant office are of such a nature that the Governor-in-Council shall be of opinion that there is no person in the department who is competent to discharge them, the Governor-in-Council may appoint thereto such person as he may think fit, with or without examination or probation, although not previously engaged in the police force.”

Under that regulation men have been appointed as sergeants and inspectors over the heads of, I venture to say, more competent men in the rank and file. It has been said that Napoleon's great success lay in the fact that every soldier in his armies carried a marshal's baton in his knapsack, and I contend it would be more conducive to the smooth and efficient working of our police force if every constable was certain, provided he conducted himself properly, that he carried the Commissioner's baton in his knapsack. That has not been the case. I can give instances of a number of men who have been appointed. There was Inspector Newlands who was appointed sub-inspector and soon afterwards was made inspector. He has since been retired, for what I do not know, though he has not reached the retiring age. Then Inspector Drewery was appointed first-class constable, but within a month he was made sub-inspector. Then Inspector

Ord was appointed sergeant at first, and a short time afterwards was made sub-inspector. Again Sub-Inspector Munchin was appointed in like manner.

The Minister for Works: How long since is that?

Mr. COLLIER: It does not matter. The regulation is still in existence. What has taken place in the past it is quite possible may take place in the future.

The Minister for Works: In similar circumstances. The appointments might have been justified.

Mr. COLLIER: I hold these appointments were not justified.

The Minister for Works: You were not in the State at the time.

Mr. COLLIER: I was not, but a person has the opportunity of gaining knowledge of what is taking place in the other States besides that in which he lives. There was also Inspector Mellish imported from Scotland Yard, and after 12 months his services were dispensed with, and the Government had to compensate him to the extent of £500. Will the Minister say we have not first-class men among our corporals and sergeants capable of filling these positions? Is the standard of ability and intelligence of the police force of Western Australia lower than it is in the other States? Because I would remind the Minister that in Victoria and New South Wales every post from that of Commissioner down to probationer is filled, and has always been filled, by men from the ranks. There has not been in either State any appointment made from outside the ranks of the force for many years past, and surely if in the East when they require officers they can find in the ranks the material capable of filling the posts, we can do the same in this State.

The Minister for Works: You are talking of 15 years ago.

Mr. COLLIER: Some of them were not 15 years ago.

The Minister for Works: Look at the latest instance.

Mr. COLLIER: It does not matter about that. If it was possible to do it in the past, it is possible to do it in the future. The very fact that these men have been appointed has been an injustice to the others in the force. There are men

lower down in the police force to-day than they should be because of these appointments in the past. Another case is that of Sub-Inspector Orme, who was appointed sub-inspector to commence with. Perhaps some members who have been in Parliament longer than I have been will recollect that officer. I believe he was connected with some little incident.

The Minister for Works: That appointment was about 16 or 17 years ago.

Mr. COLLIER: This sub-inspector was connected with some little incident relating to this House not many years ago, and for giving information to the newspapers was reduced in rank and removed to Cue. He was appointed sub-inspector to begin with.

The Minister for Works: That was more than ten years ago.

Mr. COLLIER: I admit it was done ten years ago: but I am complaining about the regulation that gives power to one man to make appointments such as these, and I say it is quite possible for it to happen in the future as it happened in the past. At any rate this officer after having been removed to Cue embezzled some of the moneys of the department, for which he was prosecuted. There was a shortage of several hundreds, and of course he had to retire from the force. It is quite true, as the Minister says, these appointments have not happened recently, but they have been an injustice, and this might possibly occur in the future. In the police forces of the Eastern States there is a well-regulated system of promotion whereby every man may be moved from the lowest rung of the ladder right up to the position of Commissioner. Another matter to which I wish to refer is one which is almost a perennial cause of complaint. I refer to the management of the police benefit fund. Last year I said in dealing with the Estimates that the increase of contributions to this fund which took place in July, 1907, was not warranted, and I still have that opinion. The fund has been in existence since 1866, and when the increased contribution was made it had a credit balance of £11,000. The Government said the increase was made because the fund was not

in a solvent condition, but surely if there had been sufficient to meet all the demands made on the fund since 1866, and there was still a credit balance of £11,000, the fund could not be said to be in an insolvent condition. A constable has now to contribute between 6s. and 7s. per month to the fund, and that is considerably higher than the rate of contribution in any of the Eastern States of the Commonwealth. It is 2½ per cent. in Victoria, and 2 per cent. in Queensland and New South Wales, and in each case the figures mentioned are the maximum which is never levied unless the fund is in such a position that it is necessary to levy the maximum. It is different here. It would not matter if the fund were to have £40,000 in hand to-morrow the constables would still have to contribute their 3 per cent., which amounts to about 6s. or 7s. a month on the wage of a second-class constable. This is a matter of genuine grievance to the constables, and I hope—but it is no use hoping because the matter has been complained about so often, and no regard has been paid to it. There is also the management of the fund.

Mr. Heitmann: That is lovely.

Mr. COLLIER: The board, which I was going to characterise as an irresponsible board, because it is responsible to no one, except perhaps to the Government—it certainly is not responsible to the men who find the money, and it is quite contrary to all our accepted canons of taxation that the men who contribute the money should have no say in its distribution—the board two years ago framed a regulation which reads—

"In future the benefit fund board will be empowered to determine the amount of gratuity, if any, due to any member of the force who may have served with indifferent conduct."

That is a scandalous state of affairs that this board has taken to itself the right to say whether a man who has paid contributions, perhaps for 15 or 20 years, shall get any gratuity on his retirement from the force. In fact some men have been penalised under this regulation. There was one constable who had served 12 years, during which period he had been

three times charged with drunkenness, though in the latter part of his service he had a clean sheet. This constable was entitled to £155 on retiring, but the board decided to grant him £50 only.

The Minister for Works: What was his name?

Mr. COLLIER: It was Constable Cas-serley. The board actually fined him £105 for these three offences of drunkenness, or £35 for each offence; and it has to be remembered that the constable had already been tried for these offences and punished for them, but afterwards when he came along and wished to draw his gratuity the board piled on another fine to the extent of £35 for each offence. That was an absolute injustice. In other States of the Commonwealth the money the constables are entitled to on retiring from the force is a statutory right, and no board or officials can gainsay it at their sweet will. Another constable resigned after 15 years and claimed £190, but only received £90. The board deducted £100 from him because he had served with indifferent conduct. Let me point out what indifferent conduct means. Every constable has a record sheet and the officer in charge, wherever he may be stationed, is empowered, by regulation, to enter up his opinion of the character, both public and private, of that particular constable. The policeman himself does not know, when he is moved from one district to another, what is entered up on his record sheet by his superior officer. The sheet is sent to the next station he goes to. He has not an opportunity of knowing what the opinions of his superior officers may have been in all the districts where he had been stationed. When he expresses a desire to retire this record sheet is placed before the board who perhaps deduct £50 or £100 because of his indifferent conduct. It is quite possible that one of his superior officers may have taken some dislike to the constable and entered up an opinion wholly unwarranted and quite unjust. The constable has no method of appeal, no means of having the opinion set aside or enquired into. The record is final and has to be accepted. It will be seen that this power to deduct amounts for indifferent conduct becomes all the more un-

just in view of the powers of the superior officer to enter up opinions on the constable's record sheet. I also wish to refer—I am sorry the Premier is not here as he took considerable interest in this matter—to the conduct of the election which took place recently of the representatives on the board. No better evidence could be produced of the necessity for an enquiry into the management by the permanent heads of the department than the manner in which they conducted the ballots for election of representatives to the board. I had thought that according to the promise of the Premier, the last election would have been removed entirely from their influence. I find in going through the file which the Colonial Secretary gave me an opportunity of seeing, that this was not so, for the hand of the permanent head of the department can be seen right through the conduct of the ballot. An instruction was placed on the ballot paper which restricted the constables' choice of representation, because it was laid down that he should take into consideration where the candidate he voted for was stationed. The constable was instructed to vote for those who, if not stationed in Perth, were within easy access of the City and could attend the meetings. That is a restriction of the right of an elector. Secondly, I complain that the names of the candidates were not placed on the ballot paper. The ballot first asked the question whether the constable had confidence in the Commissioner and then, this point having been decided, the constable was asked to write in the names of the persons whom he wished to have on the board in the Commissioner's place. Whoever heard of an election held on such lines? Why was not the election held in the ordinary way with the names of the candidates placed on the ballot paper. I suppose it was considered *infra dig.* for the Commissioner to have his name on the ballot paper alongside that of an ordinary constable. Further, the constable had to say whether he desired an alteration or not. It is a strange thing that, although the department were supposed to have nothing to do with the election, the same methods were adopted as in both the previous ballots, which

were conducted by the department. It is clear that strenuous efforts were made to retain the Commissioner and to show that was so I will read a circular sent to the police stations. From time to time the Premier has stated, and the Colonial Secretary has endorsed that view, that the Government were perfectly indifferent as to whether the Commissioner were on the board or not. The manner in which the election was conducted convinces me that the Colonial Secretary, at any rate, desired the Commissioner on the board. The circular, which was dated 4th April, 1909, and was issued while the ballot was on, contains the following:—

"Police Benefit Fund. The committee appointed by the metropolitan police desires to inform members of the force generally that the following steps have been taken. A deputation (representing the metropolitan police) waited upon the Acting Premier on the 30th ult. to explain that it was the wish of that body that the contributors to the fund should be allowed to have a direct representative on the board in addition to, not in lieu of, the Commissioner of Police, and suggested that the election should be postponed until the Premier could be so informed. The Acting Premier replied that the present election was to redeem the promise made to Parliament by the Premier that the police should have the opportunity of saying whether they wanted direct representation in lieu of the Commissioner. He stated that if the Commissioner received a majority of votes at this election, the question of an additional representative would be considered by the Government, if so desired."

That was holding out a direct inducement.

The Minister for Works: No it was not.

Mr. COLLIER: It was a direct inducement to members of the force to vote for the Commissioner.

The Minister for Works: If the Commissioner were not on the board there was no necessity for an additional representative, for they would have a direct representative.

Mr. COLLIER: It has always been contended by the Government that the Commissioner really was a representative of the men. The Premier himself said that the Commissioner represented the men, and that the Under Secretary of the Colonial Secretary's Department, and the Under Treasurer represented the Government. If the Commissioner had been representing the men why should the question of giving an additional representative be considered only if he were retained. It really means that the Government were prepared to give the men two representatives on that board.

The Minister for Works: Because these men asked for it. They said they wanted the Commissioner, and another man in addition.

Mr. COLLIER: A little hole and corner meeting organised under the wing of the Commissioner.

The Minister for Works: Read the words again and you will see the interpretation. *

Mr. COLLIER: There can be only one interpretation. The words in the circular are, "He stated that if the Commissioner received a majority of votes at this election, the question of an additional representative would be considered by the Government." There can be only one interpretation, and that is that the Government desired to retain the Commissioner, and the direct inducement was offered to the men that if they voted for the Commissioner they would be given an additional representative afterwards.

The Minister for Works: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. COLLIER: That is the only interpretation I can place upon it. The ballot was not conducted fairly, the Commissioner should have been compelled to submit himself for nomination and his name should have been placed on the ballot paper with those of the constables, as is done in all other elections, of which we have any knowledge. I wish also to refer to the question of wages. There is not a body of men in this State so poorly paid as constables. There are able-bodied men—second-class constables, who comprise

about one-half of the force—who receive the magnificent wage of 7s. 6d. a day for a period of 10 years. After a period of nine years they receive no more than for the first six months they are in the force. Is that an evidence of capable management? Will the Minister himself say that a man he takes into his service and who has no knowledge of the duties he has to perform, is worth as much to him six months afterwards as after he has been in the service ten years? That is the condition of things in the force. The wage is absolute sweating and there are no men in the State, labourers or men having any other kind of occupation, who do not get more than 7s. 6d. a day. After a period of service of at most five years the constables should be entitled to a rise. They should start considerably higher than 7s. 6d., for they should get at the outset at least 8s. a day and the wages should go on mounting up as their service continues and they become proficient in their work. In none of the other States have constables to remain as long as ten years at the same wages as when they enter the force. Over there opportunities are given to the men to qualify themselves, by passing an examination, for an increased salary. I notice that this year's Estimates show it is intended to give an increase of 6d. a day to first-class constables who have served with good conduct for 10 years. I have no objection to their wages being increased from 8s. 6d. to 9s. a day, as that is little enough, but if any increase is contemplated those at the bottom rung of the ladder should first have received consideration. The man getting the miserable, paltry wage of 7s. 6d. per day should have been given a rise first. The question of holidays is also the cause of much grievance amongst members of the force. Other members of the service receive in the way of holidays, in addition to their annual leave of three or four weeks, all public holidays and a considerable time off in addition, for they get from one o'clock on Saturday until Monday morning; besides that, at the end of 10 years they are entitled to three months' long leave. These privileges are not enjoyed by members of the force. They

are entitled to three weeks in the year and only three weeks. They work seven days a week, with the exception of one holiday in the month, and they also work on holidays. This is a particular grievance in the case of constables stationed in remote places or in the out-back centres. The matter has been repeatedly brought before the attention of the Commissioner, but he has refused to meet the men. A constable stationed in the North-West, say at Nullagine, would find his three weeks' holiday absolutely useless, as it would take him something like the full period to get to Port Hedland and back; in other words, by the time he reached Port Hedland it would be necessary to return to Nullagine in order to be back at his post at the expiration of his leave.

The Minister for Works: He could spend his holiday at Port Hedland.

Mr. COLLIER: Even if he could get to Port Hedland there is not much inducement for him to spend a holiday there. What they have been asking for is that their leave should be allowed to accumulate, and that at the end of, say, 4 years they could come to Perth or to some other civilized centre. If they were to avail themselves of the regulation and take the three weeks' holiday every year it would involve the department in a much greater expense than would the taking of accumulated leave. A constable would have to be sent to relieve the man going on leave, and he would have to be paid some 6s. per day travelling allowance while going backwards and forwards. On the whole the expense would be much greater than it would be if the department allowed the leave to accumulate. Yet, I understand, the request has been refused on the score of expense. It seems to me a most reasonable request that they should be allowed at the end of a period to enjoy their holidays. Even the constables stationed on our Eastern goldfields do not always avail themselves of their annual holiday, for the simple reason that they have not sufficient money for the purpose. A bare wage of 7s. 6d. does not allow them to save sufficient money to take an annual holiday, whereas if the leave were allowed to accumulate it would be of some use to

them. I also wish to refer to the question of appeals. At the present time a constable charged with any offence has the right to demand a board of inquiry. I believe that in the Bill that has recently passed another House the Commissioner has had cheek enough to introduce some Russian methods taking away from the constable the right of appeal. It is provided that in respect to any offence believed to be not serious a board of inquiry is to be denied to the police. I just want to give an instance to the Minister for Works of what sometimes happens to constables charged with offences. Only quite recently a detective in the department—personally I do not know him—was dismissed by the Commissioner for some reason which appeared to the Commissioner sufficient. That detective secured a board of inquiry; and the board of inquiry, after investigating the case, decided to reinstate the detective and to fine him £5. Now there is a very great difference between fining a man £5 for an offence and depriving him of his means of livelihood. I am reminded that he was dismissed within one month of being entitled to his gratuity; he had only one month to serve to complete 12 years' service, yet in face of that the Commissioner dismissed him without any consideration whatever. If it had not been that he was entitled to demand a board of inquiry he would have had no redress of any kind. Yet in the Bill which we are presently to consider the Commissioner proposes to take away from the constable the right of appeal. I am not going to say anything about the manner in which these boards are sometimes appointed. In other branches of the service in all appeals the person charged has the right to nominate one member of the board of inquiry. But in the Police Department the Commissioner has the absolute and sole right to nominate whom he wishes. The constable may object as much as he pleases, but he has no redress. I know of cases where there have been sitting on boards of inquiry trying constables, close blood relations to the man who laid the charge. This, too, notwithstanding the fact that the constable protested. In one instance a

constable said to the Commissioner, "You can appoint anybody else you like, but I consider I will not get justice if this man be allowed to sit on the board." That protest went unheeded. The Commissioner may appoint whom he wishes. And it is to be remembered that the inspector in charge of the district acts as prosecutor in these inquiries, and it invariably happens that another inspector sits on the board. It may be said that an inspector from, say, Fremantle sitting on the board has nothing to do with the charge laid by an inspector from, say, Kalgoorlie. But we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that there is a fraternal feeling existing between these inspectors. For the most part they have been in the department for a number of years, and at some period probably have been closely associated with each other. And we have the one man sitting to hear a charge laid by his brother officer. I want to take this opportunity of telling the Minister that so far as I am concerned the Bill which provides for the abolition of a board of inquiry at the Commissioner's sweet will is going to have a very stormy passage through this House. There is only one other matter to which I wish to refer, namely, the mistrust that seems to prevail with the Commissioner and other superior officers as against the members of the police force. The men are hemmed in by rules and regulations in every possible direction. There are in all some 708 regulations providing for the control of police constables. It is almost impossible for a policeman to look over his shoulder or to wink an eyelid without breaking a regulation. Many of these regulations interfere with a man's liberty in a degree that no individual, be he commissioner or, I was going to say, king, should have the right to do. Regulation 45, referring to an officer, states—

"He will visit the stations, lockups, watchhouses, stables, etc., in his district as often as possible at uncertain times. He will see that they are kept clean and in proper order. He will examine police quarters, horses, bedding, furniture, stores, etc."

It is to be noted that that regulation says he shall examine police quarters. This has been held to give him the right to enter the inner rooms of the quarters of married constables. He may go in at uncertain hours.

The Minister for Works: Is he likely to do so?

Mr. COLLIER: It is not what he is likely to do. I could give instances in which it has been done. Yet I am not going to give the Minister information which perhaps will make the life of some constable even more miserable than it is at the present time. If I could give such information without injury to the men concerned I would readily give it. The thing has been done. And it must be remembered that a constable stationed in the country has to pay a rent of some £20 for his premises. Why, then, should an officer have the right to enter that constable's private apartments at any hour of the day and night? Regulation 91 says—

"He is to make an immediate report of any man who absents himself from parade or duty (unless illness is the cause of such absence), or from his quarters at night without leave."

Does the Commissioner think he has an army of criminals under him that they must be continually spied upon and watched not only during the time they are on duty, but during sleeping hours as well? Why should it be necessary?

The Minister for Works: Does the regulation say "private dwelling?"

Mr. COLLIER: He has not any private dwelling. The regulation says "quarters."

The Minister for Works: Is "quarters" to be construed into "private dwellings?"

Mr. COLLIER: Certainly; what else are they? The quarters are the rooms in which he lives. He is not to be allowed to absent himself from parade or duty, or from his quarters at night without leave—quarters here meaning wherever he is living and sleeping. He must first of all get the permission of an officer to leave. Another regulation says he is not allowed to have any friend in his quarters without permission. So, before he can leave

to see a friend or have a friend visit him he must have permission.

Mr. Walker: That regulation would serve to keep out his mother-in-law.

Mr. COLLIER: That is the only merit the regulation possesses. Regulation 92 is the gem of the lot. It says—

"When any constable or sub-officer fails to attend a station at the proper time for duty, sending a medical certificate in explanation, the sub-officer in charge of the station should proceed to visit him without delay (unless he has gone to an hospital) and submit a report on his condition."

In the first place he produces a medical certificate. But this is not sufficient for the police force. They must send an officer to report on his condition. Is that officer going to examine him and decide for himself as to whether or not the constable is fit for duty? And supposing the officer decides that he is fit for duty, which is to prevail, the report of the officer or the medical certificate? Why the absurdity of the thing amounts to a satire on the medical fraternity. The certificate of a medical man is not going to be accepted until an officer also goes along and examines the patient and certifies to the fact that he is not able to work. There are dozens of regulations of that kind. I will just read one other. It is Regulation 297 and it runs as follows:—

"A member of the force is liable to dismissal from the service, or other punishment, for getting married without the permission of the Commissioner."

I want to know what right has the Commissioner to choose any man's wife for him?

Mr. Taylor: He is not a bad judge.

Mr. COLLIER: There is a danger that if the Commissioner for the time being happens to have an eye for a pretty woman, there may be occasion to realise to the full the wisdom hidden in the old music-hall song "Never introduce your donah to a pal." The Commissioner might take the girl from him. I want to ask, what moral or legal right has the Commissioner to say that any man shall not marry without his permission. The whole thing is absurd. No one should be

obliged to obtain permission from his "boss" for the time being, to marry. There are regulations that provide that a constable may not keep a goat or fowl without the permission of his senior officer. Constables are hemmed in by regulations which should only prevail in a country like Russia. They do not obtain in connection with the police force in any of the other States. I wish to say in conclusion that an inquiry is necessary in this department. The possibilities of reform have been exhausted year after year when discussing the question on the Estimates, and it seems to me that nothing short of a thorough searching inquiry will bring into existence a state of contentment in the police force and remove many of the grievances the constables labour under at the present time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. F. Wilson): I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	19
Noes	..	..	..	18
—				
Majority for	..	..	..	1

AYES.

Mr. Butcher	Mr. Keenan
Mr. Carson	Mr. Male
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Davies	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Draper	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Osborn
Mr. George	Mr. J. Price
Mr. Gordon	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Layman
Mr. Jacoby	(Teller).

NOES.

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

Motion thus passed: the debate adjourned.

MOTION — PRISON AND LUNACY EMPLOYEES, APPEAL.

Mr. ANGWIN (East Fremantle) moved—

That in the opinion of this House the same right of appeal should be allowed to employees in the Prison and Lunacy Departments as is granted to railway employees and other public servants.

For many years the officers or servants engaged in the prisons and asylums were under the same conditions as other officers in the public service. Previous to the passing of the Public Service Act of 1904 the officers were under similar conditions to other servants, but there were certain provisions in the Act which gave the Governor-in-Council power to exempt certain officers from the provisions of the Act. For some considerable time this matter was under consideration, and in August, 1906, steps were taken by the Governor-in-Council to remove a number of persons engaged as warders in the gaols, and attendants in the asylum, from the provisions of the Act. It did not apply to all officials. Certain warders still remained under the provisions of the Act, also certain asylum attendants. He thought the warders and head attendants and nurses were still kept under the provisions of the Public Service Act of 1904. Seeing the nature of their employment, and the conditions under which these officials were engaged, they should have the same rights and privileges, and should be placed under the same conditions as others employed in the service of the Government. The railway servants had the right of appeal given to them if they were dissatisfied with any action taken. Then again, there was the right of appeal given to any person employed under the Public Service Act. Then there was a sort of appeal, though it did not give complete satisfaction, in the police department. Therefore the only public servants of a permanent nature who did not have the right of appeal were those employed in the prisons and the lunatic asylum. Occasionally, as far as the prisons were concerned, if a serious offence was committed, inquiry

was made, but the general right of appeal was denied. These officers had been removed from the Public Service Act, and were under the complete control of the officer who engaged them. For a long time Ministers had been pestered with questions dealing with the regulations under which these persons were working, as to their hours of labour, or rather the confinement which those engaged in the prisons had to put up with previous to entering on what were called their hours of labour. For some years scarcely a session of Parliament went by without Ministers being pestered with questions on this subject, and if there was dissatisfaction, and officers had the right of putting their cases before an appeal board, there was the possibility of any grievance being removed on appeal. Then in regard to promotion, there were persons whose service was not so long as others, who were promoted over their seniors. Seniority had entirely been put on one side and officers promoted over the heads of others who had not served such a long term, although senior officers were quite as competent, and had carried out their work satisfactorily in the past. If these officers had the right of appeal a good deal of the dissatisfaction existing would have been removed. In the asylum the officials were under a different system from that obtaining in gaols. The attendants were engaged at first at a very low salary, and they had to put in three years before they were able to take up their duties. A good deal of their spare time had to be given up in looking into the system of management, dealing with various portions of their work, and in carrying out their arduous duties, because all would agree that those engaged in the asylum had not the best jobs in the world. A great deal of responsibility was cast on their shoulders, and they had to pay attention to details. These officials had for three years to go under a course of training and at the end of three years, if qualified, they obtained a certificate of competency: then they were considered full attendants. The three years, which they had to put in, were almost wasted—three years, as far as the outside work

was concerned. During this time they had to study the system, and they were at the whim of any officer who might dismiss them at a moment's notice.

The Attorney General: Not of any officer.

Mr. ANGWIN: The officer in charge for the time being. We must realise that the officer in charge, nine times out of ten, had to rely on those under him.

The Attorney General: The appeal board, equally with the medical officer, would have to rely upon evidence.

Mr. ANGWIN: At the present time not one of these officers had an opportunity to appeal against any decision, but if a board were appointed he would be allowed to give evidence on his own behalf and perhaps be able to call witnesses.

The Attorney General: Do you suggest that the medical superintendent does not give a man a hearing before dismissing him?

Mr. ANGWIN: The medical superintendent was the judge. To show the necessity for an appeal board some time ago several asylum attendants were fined heavily. At that time the superintendent was away on a holiday but when he returned he went into the whole matter and, realising that an injustice had been done, reduced the fines considerably. This showed that if the nurses had the right to appeal to an independent person they would be much more fairly treated. The medical superintendent and his officers came under the Public Service Act and therefore those working under them should have the same rights of appeal. While it was recognised that those holding positions of chief warder, medical officer, or chief attendant, had the right to appeal under the Public Service Act the House should allow those employed under such officers to have the same right. A request in this direction had been made for some years past and if it were acceded to, the tendency would not be in any way to injure the discipline of the gaols and asylums. The tendency would in fact be rather the reverse, for the officers would be made more careful.

The Minister for Works: It has not been found so in the other States.

Mr. ANGWIN: It would assist those in control to have proper supervision. Some time ago a nurse in the Coolgardie hospital was dismissed by the medical officer; an inquiry was held by the Public Service Commissioner—this was previous to 1906—and that officer found that it was the medical officer who was wrong. The nurse was reinstated and subsequently filled the position of matron in one of the country hospitals. That showed clearly that if the officials had the right given them to appeal it would be the means of assisting the senior officers in carrying out their arduous duties in the way they should. Surely Ministers did not wish members of Parliament to be bothered with questions of this kind, affecting the public service, but so long as the present system existed complaints would be received by members. The present position was that a person employed by a private employer had a far better chance of getting justice than one employed in a Government department which was under the charge of a civil servant.

The Attorney General: Why?

Mr. ANGWIN: Because a private employer was more sympathetic and would consider the past services of the man, whereas a public servant on many occasions would rise in his dignity and refuse that justice to which the man under him was entitled. There were numerous instances of this. During the recent absence on leave of Dr. Montgomery a good deal of dissatisfaction existed in the asylum. Many fines had been imposed which, in the opinion of some of the men, were harsh and unjust. It was to be hoped that when the doctor went into these cases he would see that again during his absence unjust fines had been imposed and that he would reduce them. The salaries of employees in the gaols and asylums were not very high and the institutions were managed very cheaply, the cost in fact comparing very favourably with that in any other part of the world. That showed clearly the kind of officers employed there and that the good results followed the work, not only of those in charge, but of every officer from top to bottom. The work performed by the officials was of

anything but a pleasant character and we should do all possible to make their case easier, and give them the right to bring any grievance they suffered from before the appeal board.

Mr. FOULKES (Claremont): It was known that for some time past there had been dissatisfaction on the part of the staff engaged in the asylum and that there had been a great deal of difficulty on the part of the superintendent to obtain men suitable for the work on which they were employed. Certainly that work was very disagreeable, and did not appeal to many people. Assuredly the Minister in charge of these two departments should desire to make the lives of these men as light and attractive as possible. All were anxious that those afflicted mentally should receive all possible attention, and if they were to receive that, it was of the utmost importance that the men and women who had to wait on the patients should be of the best character. It was to be hoped the Ministry would agree to the proposal made and grant the privilege asked for. So far as the Railway Department were concerned the board had been a most material factor in the welfare of the staff, for the men felt more secure and knew there was no chance of their being harshly treated by their superior officers, as at all times they had the right of appeal.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray): There was no great objection to his mind to the same rule of an appeal board being made to apply to all sections of the Public Service. However, he rose to speak owing to the remarks made by the member for Claremont who seemed to think that the heads of the Railway Department were inclined to be swayed more by representations made to them by subordinate officers than they were by any sense of justice.

Mr. Foulkes: That was not my meaning.

Mr. GEORGE: That was the meaning of what the hon. member said, but if he did not mean that it was a good thing. No member could speak with more authority on that point than he (Mr. George), for he had spent five years at the head of the department, and could assure the House, would give his word of honour, that after going through hundreds and

hundreds of cases in the department he knew that in nearly every instance, if not in every instance, he had found a desire on the part of the heads to try and get at the really fair, equitable basis of the whole matter.

Mr. Swan: The subordinate officers do not know much about equity.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member occupied a position in the department but it was doubtful whether that position gave him an opportunity of sitting in any judicial capacity. If an appeal court was granted that should settle the matter. There was an appeal court in the Railway Department. At first he (Mr. George) sat on it and he tried to be just and fair. He may have erred—it was natural for anyone to err—but he tried to be fair. A good many people believed he succeeded. After a while the duties of the position became too burdensome and an appeal board was formed. It consisted of an independent president, one representative of the department, and a representative of the men. One would have thought that a tribunal like that, giving a decision in a case, the matter would have ended there, but there were numerous instances where appeals were afterwards made to the Commissioner to reopen proceedings because the persons concerned thought they would get better justice. If the archives of the Railway Department could be opened there would be found hundreds of letters from people who were not satisfied with the appeal board decisions.

Mr. Heitmann: They might have done the same if you had heard the appeals.

Mr. GEORGE: Possibly; no one was satisfied if punished. The hon. member might carry his memory back to the time when as a schoolboy he got a lathering, and he had to put up with that punishment. If we granted this appeal board, its decision should be made final. There should not be an appeal beyond the appeal board, or an appeal to members of Parliament to bring pressure to bear to alter the decisions given. If it was right to have an appeal board its decision should be final.

Mr. Scaddan: The railway appeal board's decisions are always accepted as final.

Mr. GEORGE: The point was that the decisions of an appeal board should be regarded as absolutely final. If not we were going to have what would be nothing else but a regular farce, and these appeal board investigations would be merely a means to try and get information from both sides with the object of using it in the case of a further appeal. Was that not rather playing the fool with the business? If there was an appeal board and there were men on it who could be trusted, their decisions should be final. We should not have this twopenny-halfpenny business of members of Parliament interviewing Ministers, getting the papers and files, and securing information from them for the purpose of another appeal.

Mr. Scaddan: That is the case where the department has refused to accept the judgment of the appeal board.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. gentleman could speak according to his knowledge: he (Mr. George) was speaking according to his own knowledge and experience, and things were more likely to come under his notice than the notice of the hon. member. Hon. members should understand what he was trying to drive at, that was that if there were to be appeal boards, appellants should respect the decision given, and once the decision was given no one should go behind it and endeavour to get some other body to upset it. Questions that might come up might involve a penalty of 5s. or 10s. or some other little matter.

Mr. Scaddan: It is not a little matter to a man getting 6s. a day.

Mr. GEORGE: Was the hon. member aware of the fact that those who were running big concerns had their time fully taken up in fulfilling their trust to the State without having to deal with questions of a trivial nature? We knew well that some people suffered injustice and had to sit down upon it. In the Railway Department there was an appeal board and yet hundreds of men, during his term of office, appealed to him as Commissioner to take up their cases. What the House should do in connection with the motion moved by the member for East Fremantle was that if it agreed to

grant him an appeal board, those interested should play the part of men, and respect the decisions that might be given by it. If the appeal board that might be constituted was not good we should take it in hand and establish an appeal board whose decisions could be respected.

Mr. Walker: We cannot get an infallible board.

Mr. GEORGE: The number of infallible men in this world was limited. He (Mr. George) could see only one at that moment, if he had a mirror before him he might be able to see another. If the House determined to grant the request of the hon. member, members should see that the decisions that might be given were final.

Mr. GILL (Balkatta): The member for Murray had put forward reasons for the establishment of an appeal board such as had been advocated by the member for East Fremantle. Seeing that we had already established the principle in the public service and the Railway Department, the motion should commend itself to the Minister. We had accepted the principle in the public service, consequently it would be a fair proposition for the Minister to accept it with regard to the departments mentioned in the motion, the prisons and the lunacy. The remarks of the member for Murray, which would appeal to members most, were those in connection with the acceptance of a decision of the appeal board, and members would be pleased that the hon. gentleman was so emphatic with regard to the question. Of course the hon. member was now in the position to stand by and tell other people what they should do. As one of those who represented the men on the railway appeal board when it was first established, he (Mr. Gill) knew of several decisions arrived at, and there were three or four others since he had severed his connection with the railway service, that had not been carried into effect by the Railway Department.

Mr. George: You should have let me know about it.

Mr. GILL: The Commissioner must have known about it. The first case that occurred to his memory (it was nearly

six years ago) was that of a man who was dismissed from the Railway Department and of course that dismissal met with the approval of the Commissioner. The Commissioner should not be blamed for that because he took the recommendation of the officers and did not have time to go into details. This was a wages man.

Mr. George: I had nothing to do with wages men.

Mr. GILL: This man was dismissed and he appealed. The appeal board decided that he should be reinstated, and he was reinstated as the charge against him could not be proved. That man was reinstated, but what did the department do? The department took him back into the service and packed him away to the back country where they knew the man would not go. That was the manner in which the decisions of the appeal board were carried out in many instances. The member for Murray evidently did not know all that was going on in the Railway Department. However, there was no desire at that stage to go into the question of the management of the Railway Department.

The Minister for Works: Where was he working?

Mr. GILL: At Fremantle.

The Minister for Works: Was he not liable to removal?

Mr. GILL: Yes, but not through the decision of the appeal board. The board decided that he must be reinstated and the report got out that the Commissioner had said he would not reinstate the man despite all the appeal boards. The fact remained that the man was not reinstated at Fremantle; he was sent as far as the department could send him to the South-West. That was not the spirit in which the appeal board was established; the man should have been put back into his former position.

Mr. George: I should like to see the papers in connection with that.

Mr. GILL: No doubt the papers were available. With regard to the establishment of an appeal board in connection with the prisons and lunacy departments it would give a great amount of satisfaction, and despite all that had been said

by the member for Murray as to the great number of letters asking for appeals to be reopened, the appeal board in the Railway Department was one of the finest institutions connected with that branch of the State service in the way of giving contentment to the men. Having come into contact with a great number of men who had occasion to appear before the appeal board, whether the decisions had been in their favour or against them, it had been found that these decisions had been accepted always without demur.

The Minister for Works: Is the appeal board costly?

Mr. GILL: The cost of the appeal board is trivial. Mr. Roe was one of the members of the railway appeal board, the department was represented by Mr. Hope, and the men were represented by one of the wages staff, and this man, while serving on the board, was simply paid his wages.

The Minister for Works: What about the witnesses?

Mr. GILL: The board had the right to say who should pay the costs of the inquiry. If the inquiry were a trivial one the Act provided that the appellant should pay the costs if the case went against him, but generally speaking the costs were not heavy. The hon. member for Murray would bear out that statement.

Mr. George: No, the costs are not heavy.

Mr. GILL: If we could only establish the same thing with regard to the prisons and other institutions it would tend to the better performance of the duties of the people engaged in these branches of the service.

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

Mr. GILL: There was one aspect of the question which the Attorney General did not grasp, namely, the reason for an appeal board. Naturally the Minister would ask himself why an appeal board should be necessary to deal with Government servants when it was not provided in connection with a private firm. It was a difficult question to answer, but the fact remained that in the Government service

for one reason or another very many injustices occurred. Oftentimes things of a very trivial nature were dealt with in a serious manner, and this inflicted great hardships on some of the men. For that reason it had been found necessary in some departments, particularly in the Railway Department, to establish an appeal board. To give an instance which might appeal to the Minister, there was the case of an officer who was reported as having committed some offence and who was fined a day's pay. This had been previous to the establishment of the appeal board. The officer was given no opportunity whatever of appealing. He certainly had been asked why a certain thing had occurred and had explained that so far as he was concerned he knew nothing whatever about it. But the verdict had come down from the office that he was to be fined one day's pay. And to this had been added the caution that if a similar case were to occur again his services would be dispensed with. What he (Mr. Gill) had told the House was a positive fact, and he was in a position to say that the officer was no more guilty of the offence than any member of the House. And this was only one of many such cases. He was given to understand that the same thing was occurring to-day in other departments. That being so, was it not only just that some tribunal should be set up to ensure justice being dealt out to the men? That was all the men were asking for. The principle had been found to answer admirably in the railway service, and he had no doubt that it would give every satisfaction in the departments alluded to in the motion. It would create a sense of contentment in the service, which would benefit the State generally. He hoped the Minister would consider it favourably and consent to the establishment of an appeal board.

Mr. DAGLISH (Subiaco) supported the motion for the reason that it was in the interests of the public service itself, and in the interests, not only of the men engaged in these different departments, but of the officers in charge. Power of dismissing or refusing to dismiss any man against whom a charge was made was too

large a power altogether to give to any individual, himself a public servant. It would be regarded by the House as an outrage if any hon. member brought forward a proposition that either the Inspector General of the Insane or the Superintendent of Prisons should be entirely at the mercy of any one individual—that anyone should have the right absolutely to dismiss either of those officers. Surely then it was reasonable that the same principle should be applied to the subordinates. Even though the functions he was called upon to perform might not be of high importance every man had equal right to consideration with the officer in charge of his department so long as his duties were well discharged. Recently he (Mr. Daglish) had had occasion to bring under the notice of the Minister the case of a man who had been dismissed from the lunatic asylum at Claremont. This man had complained of having been dismissed without inquiry; and although it had been held by the Inspector General of the department that the man was not qualified to retain his employment, at the same time he was allowed to continue for seven weeks in his position before the dismissal was put into effect. In other words, after he had been found to be unfit to retain his office he had been given all the responsibilities of that office and all the opportunities, whatever they might have been, of doing wrong, for no less a period than seven weeks.

The Attorney General: Was it not longer? Because before he was found to be unfit he had all those opportunities.

Mr. DAGLISH: That was so, but the point was that after having been found to be unfit he had still been allowed to retain his employment for another seven weeks. If he really had been unfit, then obviously it was improper to retain him for seven weeks afterwards. However, while the man had made one statement to him (Mr. Daglish), the Minister, on the case being referred to him, had produced a totally different statement made on behalf of the department. One of the two statements was, of course, untrue. The one had been made by the Inspector General and the other by the dismissed

employee; and in that case the Inspector General had been practically both accuser and judge. That was the position which had been filled in the past by the Superintendent of Prisons in respect to the prison warders and by the Inspector General of Insane in respect to the employees at the lunatic asylum.

The Attorney General: But if you dismiss a clerk in your employ there is no talk of appeal.

Mr. DAGLISH: It was scarcely reasonable to compare an employee in the public service with an employee of a private firm. The conditions were not at all the same. In the first place the man who employed a clerk or any other employee in private service found the money and profited or lost by the manner in which the employee discharged his duties. And that private employer was himself the sole sufferer if he got rid of a good man or retained a bad one in his employ. This, of course was not the case in regard to the public service, and it could not be alleged that any monetary loss was suffered by the Superintendent of Prisons if he were to lose an officer competent to carry out his work, or were to retain the services of an inferior man. That very essential made the private employer thoroughly qualified to form a judgment. His personal interests, his pocket—which after all got more consideration probably than any higher interest—took the risk and got the benefit or suffered the loss as the result of any action in this regard. But it was to be remembered that the Minister would not take up the same position in regard to a higher officer. Under the Public Service Act a judge had been placed over the officers in the public service; but those officers had been given the right to appeal against that judge. Again, in the Railway Department, there had been established an officer with very large powers; but in order that those powers might be properly exercised the subordinate had the right of appeal. The right of appeal was either a right justified by the Minister, or a right condemned by the Minister. If it were justifiable why limit it to the railway officers and to classified public ser-

vants? Why give it to the police and refuse it to the employees in the prisons and asylums? If it were a right principle then it should not be limited at all; while on the other hand if it were a bad principle it should not be allowed to continue. The employees to be found in the asylums and in the prisons should be treated just the same as all other employees in the Government service. It was not in the interests of the higher officials to give them too much power in this respect, nor did it make for the best administration of the institutions concerned. It was to the disadvantage of those higher officials that they should be forced to, at times, take the very bread away from their employees. It was on these principles he submitted that the motion was fair and reasonable. He would like to see both classes of officers alluded to in the motion included in the Public Service Act. He did not know why they had been omitted, nor could he see why a man who drove a pen should be more favourably treated than a man employed as a warder or attendant. He would have been pleased if the member for East Fremantle had gone a little further in his motion. But if these men were not to be brought under the provisions of the Public Service Act, at all events he would ask that the small measure of justice demanded should be extended to them. It was to be remembered that the motion was not asking that any inefficient individual should be allowed to remain in the public service, or that any privilege should be extended to anybody at all. It was merely asking that before being punished on the score of any charge preferred against them, these officers should have a fair hearing. Only a week ago he (Mr. Daglish) had brought before the House a case in which a man from one of these departments had not been given a hearing. The case was one in which gross injustice had been perpetrated upon an officer previously employed in one of these departments. It was not pleasant to think that it was still possible that similar injustice might be perpetrated in the service. He did not know whether the Minister intended to oppose the motion or to support it, but he would

ask that the Minister should not bring forward any objection that carried no great weight. While he was particularly desirous of supporting the motion so far as the attendants at the asylum were concerned, he would like to see its scope widened so as to include not only the attendants at the lunatic asylum and the warders at the gaol, but also those employed at the Old Men's Depot at Claremont who were practically working under the same conditions. He trusted the Ministry would have no objection to the motion.

On motion by the Minister for Works debate adjourned.

Motions interrupted by Standing Orders.

RESOLUTION—STANDING ORDERS AMENDMENT. LAPSED BILLS

Order of the Day read for the consideration of Legislative Council's Message asking concurrence in the following resolution:—"That for the greater expedition of public business it is desirable, in the opinion of this House, that Standing Orders be adopted by this House similar to those in force in the Commonwealth Senate, providing that the consideration of lapsed Bills may be resumed at the stage reached by such Bills during the preceding session."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS moved—

That the Order be postponed.

Mr. DAGLISH: This matter might be made the subject of a report by the Standing Orders Committee. It would be better for it to come before the House on the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee than to be considered straight off as a suggestion from another place.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the hon. member moved in that direction there would be no objection.

Motion withdrawn.

Mr. DAGLISH moved—

That the consideration of the Legislative Council's Message be referred to the Standing Orders Committee.

Question passed.

MOTION—IMMIGRATION SYSTEM.

To inquire as to effect.

Debate resumed from the 9th September on the motion of Mr. Daglish: "That a select committee be appointed to investigate the effect of the present immigration system upon land settlement and upon the condition of workers in the towns of the State."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. Mitchell): I have listened with interest to the speeches delivered on this question by hon. members, and I fail to see that any good reason has been made out as to why we should agree to the appointment of a select committee. We all agree that it is a question of the utmost importance, every member favours the bringing in of people. We all know that we must have population if we are to do anything with the State. We all agree that we should get people on the land, and it is also agreed that people should only come in for that purpose. I think it is better that all who come in should come here with the object of settling on the land, and I am sure the officers in London do their best to send out only people who will become settlers. The Government have done their best to bring in people to settle them on the lands of the State. There is no doubt about that. Some few have drifted into the towns it is true; that will always be the case; but if all these people have gone on the land it must make some additional work for the people who come to the towns. It has been said that these people have filled places previously filled by our own tradesmen, and it is reasonable to suppose that this is so. When these people come out, naturally it is with the idea of becoming farmers, but when they go down to that beautiful country represented by the member for Forrest, and they find they have to move all those big trees before they can become settlers, they are readily persuaded that it is easier for them to become workers on the timber mills, or timber hewers; so it is quite possible these men do drift away from their original purposes, because I believe they all leave England believing that they will become successful settlers, and it is true

that the conditions existing here are not understood by these intending immigrants. However, if hon. members can supply us with the names of those people who have taken this work, then we will have something to go on.

Mr. Gill: You know that there are 15 in the Government workshops.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There are a few of those who have been brought in who have drifted to the cities, but some of our own people who set out to become farmers have drifted back into the cities. Probably that is the curse of Australia. Many people are compelled to live in the cities. Fifty members of this House live in Perth. These 50 would probably like to go on the land, but are, as members of Parliament, compelled to live in Perth. Probably it is the same with these people. For reasons over which they have no control they are perhaps obliged to live down here. But is it not a fact that the great majority, practically the whole of these immigrants, do go on the land in some degree, some as owners, others to work for farmers? I admit quite frankly that a few of them find work down in the City, and that a few of them find work in the country towns, but after all are we not to risk something? Members admit that these people should come in to compete with our own farm workers, and it is conceivable that if a large number of people are brought in to fill up the empty spaces in this land of ours we are bound, in order to make the City, to bring in people to settle in the City. However, for the moment we are honestly endeavouring to bring in people to settle on the land. We are honestly endeavouring to give every man an opportunity of becoming a farmer.

Mr. Underwood: Yes, on low wages.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I believe the member for Pilbara has become a farmer. We are honestly endeavouring to make farmers not only of those who come in, but of the other people who are here, and who are willing to take the risk of making a living on the land.

Mr. Daglish: Are you opposing the motion?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, I think it is quite unnecessary; I think no

case has been made out in support of the appointment of a select committee. In any event I wish to say the Government are doing their very best to settle the people on the land. There has been some criticism in regard to the Lands Department, but it is easy to criticise, it is easy to say the officers are not doing their duty, that they show no interest in the people brought here, and that they set them on some ungenerous bit of land where they must fail.

Mr. Taylor: It is also quite easy to prove it in some instances.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is easy to prove failure everywhere. It is easy to show that some people fail; it would be strange if they did not; but the percentage of failures on the land is much less than in the ordinary occupations of life. It does not prove the system is wrong because a few of those who came out to become farmers allegedly drift back to the cities.

Mr. Hudson: What is the system?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We endeavour to bring out English-speaking people from the old country who will become settlers. We endeavour to get men of experience to settle on the waste lands of the State. I wish to say just a word in connection with our system of land settlement, and I think members will see there is no reason why these men when they come out should not become successful settlers; because, notwithstanding anything said to the contrary, every help is given to these men to become farmers. We do not want them in the city, we want them on the land, just as we want the people of the State to become settlers.

Mr. Taylor: But you are giving them the preference.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I expected to hear that. It is not the case. If the hon. member will go to the Lands Office to-morrow morning I will see that he gets a block of land the same as the others. The system of land settlement means that if a man desires to become a settler he can become one without much trouble and with very little capital. The system is to survey before selection to a

great extent. Not only do we survey the country but we put in railways, make roads, provide water supplies for the people, and advance them money from the Agricultural Bank. I have here a small plan showing the system existing now, and it is made clear by the plan to those people who desire to take up a block exactly what money they will receive, if they take it up, as an advance from the Agricultural Bank. Here is a description of a block at Kodj Kodjin, against which the Bank were willing to advance £500. The block has been sold, but there are many others available. A day or two ago a survey was completed of 90,000 acres to the north of Kellerberrin, while every day surveyors send in plans of the blocks they have cut up. This system is a comparatively new one, as it is only three or four months since it was instituted. In a week or two there will be a large number of blocks surveyed and awaiting the inspection of the Agricultural Bank officials. There is land in the South-West suitable for potatoes, dairying, fruit-growing, and intense cultivation, and only to-day 25 blocks were thrown open; each of these blocks will have set against it on the plan the amount the Agricultural Bank will be prepared to advance on it. All this is being done for the people who come here in order that they may be encouraged to go on the land when they arrive. If a man cannot become a farmer under this system it would be better for him to remain in the old country. Something has been said in regard to the case of Mr. Charteris. I do not know if the Leader of the Opposition intended to saddle the Lands Department with the responsibility of this man's failure. At any rate, the fact is that Mr. Charteris arrived here and three or four days afterwards took up some land, and the result was disastrous. I believe, if he had sought the advice of the responsible officers as soon as he arrived he would have become a successful settler. The Government were not responsible for that failure, for they would have been delighted to have provided that man with a block of land under the system I have just explained.

Mr. Bath: The Government were to blame for misleading him in the old country.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think it would be difficult for the hon. member to prove that he was misled there. He might read up the actual facts of the case.

Mr. Heitmann: Send him Home and he will find out the facts.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would be glad to do that, and the hon. member who interjected might go with him. The case of Mr. Charteris was a very unfortunate one, because he had the makings of a good settler. Then there was the Sturman case: he selected land on the Margaret River. Here was the case of a man who selected a home-stead farm before the land was surveyed. He went on it and did some work there, and it was found out subsequently that the position of his block was not accurate and he was moved. The surveyor was told to do the best he could to fix Mr. Sturman up. The settler went there with several relatives, but they left the locality and he found it difficult to stay there by himself so far from other settlers. I believe he came to Perth and made a selection of land near the City, but he has since abandoned it. I want members to believe that the officers who have to attend to the people who are brought here endeavour to make agriculturists of all of them. Then, too, to get away from the land settlement question, something has been said about the domestic servants. It was said, I believe, that the domestics who came here are employed at very low wages.

Mr. Heitmann: The Government bring them out and sweat them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is news to me that the Government sweat anyone. In any event, we find on inquiry that 65 of these domestic servants went to the immigrants' Home, and from there received situations in Perth at an average wage of £1 0s. 6d. per week. The smallest wage paid was 15s. Something was also said about the Government paying to assist the wives and families of people here to come from the Eastern States. The statement was hardly accu-

rate, seeing that during the past 12 months 149 families have been granted assisted passages from the Eastern States.

Mr. Gill: Have you assisted any families since the item on the Estimates was reduced?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have been advised that families have been assisted.

Mr. Bath: The Premier says that, since then, none have been assisted.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: During the 12 months 149 families were brought in. Of course, they guaranteed to return the money advanced. Altogether, 2,500 people have been assisted since 1902 to come here from the Eastern States.

Mr. Underwood: How many did you assist out of it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The population is increasing month by month, so there is a percentage in favour of the arrivals. I remember some time ago, when speaking in a country district, someone interjected, "Why do you bring these wasters from the old country?" And I replied, "Will you give me the name of one of those immigrants who is not a good worker, and who is not doing well?"

Mr. Bolton: Mr. George, of the Fremantle gaol, will give you a few names.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: And a good many names of those who are not immigrants. I think there are very few members here who could give me the name of an immigrant who has been a failure. There was never a time in the State when there was more work for men to do than to-day, and there was never a time in Western Australia when men were doing better or when there were fewer out of work. The calibre of the immigrant has been attacked, but I have seen a good many of them in various parts of the State, and from experience can say that they are not only good citizens but are also good workers, and will become successful agriculturists. I have employed some of them myself and found them very satisfactory. In fact, no man could be more satisfactory than some of the young men who have come here as immigrants. I have a man working for me who came from the old country two years ago. He

was a clerk in a gas office and knew nothing of agriculture then, but he came out and was willing to work. He has been with me for over 12 months, and I can say he has become a first-class farm hand, and capable of doing work as well as the most experienced man on my place. We must have people in Western Australia. We cannot do without population, and we must bring out those most likely to succeed. Ask me to make a farmer of a man and I will choose a man with brains and energy rather than one of experience who has not the same ability. The men from the old country who are willing to work, whether they are farm hands or clerks, will become good settlers if they are given the opportunity. It seems to me, when population is so much needed, we should not hesitate for a moment to encourage the people to come here. It is not possible for us to hold these 600 odd millions of acres with 280,000 people for all time; it is advisable that we should fill up all the vacant spaces as soon as possible. Can this be done if we take no risks, if we are not to bring people from the old country who may not all become farmers? When men are brought in and they fail on the land what is to be done with them, or what are they to do? They must find work, and they drift into the City and country towns. They have to follow some occupation to gain sufficient to live upon. They bear the burden of taxation with the other residents, for as soon as they land here they have to pay taxes.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why do you give them preference?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They do not get preference so far as I know. Everyone prefers to have some one he knows working for him rather than immigrants who have not become acclimatised. I do not believe the immigrants ask for preference, but that the majority are enterprising desirable persons, willing to put up with hardships and work.

Mr. Heilmann: Do they not get special concessions?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; they do not. It is true we have agents and lecturers in the old country whose work it is to try and encourage people to come

out, just as we have our agent in Melbourne to give information to people in Victoria who want to come over here. Would members have it otherwise? Are we not to have those agents abroad and to show the old country what lands we have out here to offer to the man desirous of settling?

Mr. Scaddan: You have not the land to offer.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We have the land to offer, and we invite immigrants to come here and share the burden with the rest of the people.

Mr. Bolton: That is all they do share.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The burden of government is too great for 280,000 people and we invite others to come here to share not only the burden but also the advantages this State has to offer. It can be said with truth that there are few places in the world which offer the same opportunities as Western Australia; there is no place which has the same liberal land laws, and there is no country which desires as much as this to secure people to till the land. Is it not right therefore that people should be encouraged to come here? As far as I am concerned this will be the policy that will always be pursued. I should be ashamed of myself if I thought that I should ever do otherwise. I do not want to live in a place with 280,000 people all my life. I should very much like to follow the Canadian system. Just a night or two ago I turned up some figures, and I saw that last year Canada secured 270,000 people.

Mr. Scaddan: How many went out?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I suppose some of them are shuffling out all the time; but I think most of them remained in Canada. It does appear to me that if the system of immigration adopted by Canada were in force here, and we could get a couple of hundred thousand people we would hear very much less of the troubles of the few. No one having listened to the debate on this motion can come to the conclusion that there is any need for a select committee to investigate this question, but there will always be some people sitting on these benches and

some sitting on the opposite benches asking for select committees. Canada by its adoption of a liberal immigration system has made great strides in development and progress, and so it would be in this State if we could only adopt similar lines. Of course one must admit that there will always be some failures.

Mr. Underwood: There will always be failures when you get parasites, lecturers, shipping agents, clerks, and touts.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is true no doubt that there will be all these animals that the hon. member has referred to; and why should there not? At any rate the point I wish to make is that we must have population, and in bringing about this population we are bound to get some people of the classes referred to. I would welcome the introduction of the Canadian system, and I would like to get ready for English people and bring them here in shiploads.

Mr. Bath: You started at the wrong end; you should begin by making the country attractive.

The Attorney General: Is there any country more attractive than Western Australia?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: What I should like to do is to get all our land surveyed: railway lines surveyed and built, and make preparation generally on a large scale. When we remember that there is in the South-Western corner of this State a great area of ten or eleven million acres with an average rainfall of from 25 to 60 inches awaiting development, it will be realised that we have something to do. It is the duty of the Government even at the risk of having some failures to bring in many people and as speedily as possible. I would like to ask the member for Subiaco to let us have the names of the people who have failed, and who have forced others out of employment. One hears a good deal about these things, but when one inquires it is difficult to get at the bottom of these complaints. As far as I am concerned I do not think there is the slightest need for a select committee. I believe that the only thing that can be said against the policy of the Government

is that it is not active enough. The £1,000 which was the grant for last year, in my opinion should have been £100,000. As soon as we get ready for a larger number of people, I hope the Government of the day, whether it be the Government at present in power or the Government with the Leader of the Opposition at the head will see to it that English people are given the opportunity to become settlers in Western Australia. I do not see at all how this country can expect to make much advancement with the small population we have to-day.

Mr. Gill: Do any of these people ever come out a second time?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I should refuse to bring them out a second time. What good can come by the appointment of a select committee on this question? Will it disclose that the system has been a failure?

Mr. Bolton: The select committee will have to find that out.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We have many opportunities of inquiring into this question, and we inquire into all cases as they arise and so far nothing has been found out which in my opinion will justify the appointment of a select committee. The select committee may result in the airing of the grievances of one or two who through no fault of the Government have failed. I hope hon. members will agree that all that can be done is being done, and that every effort is made to settle the people on the land as soon as they arrive in Western Australia.

Mr. ANGWIN (East Fremantle): I do not intend to take up much time, but it appears to me that the Minister has failed to realise that the application for a select committee in this instance has come from his own side of the House. I realise that there may be some difficulty in sifting the evidence, and in regard to submitting a report in connection with this matter, but at the same time I am of opinion that the select committee will be the means of removing a good deal of misunderstanding that appears to have

got abroad in Western Australia regarding those who have been assisted to come to this State. During my short stay in London at the invitation of the Agent General, Mr. Rason, I spent some time in the immigration office, and I looked carefully into the system that is adopted in that office with regard to getting suitable people to send to Western Australia as immigrants. My views with regard to the matter, which I have expressed on several occasions in this House, have been in opposition to the payment of money to assist immigrants to come to Western Australia. I have always held that if the sum of money paid to the shipping companies for private passages for people from the old country to Western Australia were expended in a manner similar to that which has been done by the Government at Tammin, we should have a far better class of settler on the land and we should remove from our midst a large number of the unemployed, and then by having our unemployed absorbed in this way there would be a demand for labour and a large number of people would come here at their own expense. I am of opinion that a large number of persons referred to in this State as having been engaged in some of our works are people who have paid their own passages to Western Australia and have not come out as assisted immigrants. The ship that I returned to the State in from England landed 103 passengers, and of that number there were only nine who would go on the labour market as assisted immigrants. The total number of assisted immigrants was 32. It appears therefore as far as the labour market is affected by the assisted immigrants, there were merely nine to whom any opposition might be offered, but in every instance as far as I could gather all these people came here for the express purpose of settling on the land. At the same time on board that ship there were several men who had paid their own passages, and who I thought at the time had made a mistake in coming here because, in connection with the employment they had been accustomed to follow, they would find it difficult to secure an engagement in this

State, and consequently would be disappointed. The member for Balkatta wanted to know whether the Government assisted immigrants to come here a second time. I have here a form which has to be filled in and signed at the Agent General's office before assistance is given to an emigrant. It says: "The Agent General for Western Australia: Sir, I hereby apply for a passage at reduced rates to Western Australia, and hereby declare that the particulars given below are true, that I have never been a resident of Western Australia before." That may answer the hon. member. Then it goes on—

"and I go there to take up land and settle, or to enter domestic service. I also declare to act in accordance with the conditions given on the back of the form."

Then it provides that the applicant must give references from two or more respectable persons who are well known, and copies of the references as to character of the person or past experience in agriculture or domestic work must be submitted with the applications. It shows clearly as far as the Agent General is concerned that if he grants a passage to a person who previously resided in Western Australia, that person has misled him by wrongly signing the form. Then before an assisted passage is granted the applicant must produce references from two respectable persons which will declare that he has been accustomed to follow the avocation of a farmer. I came across several men who had made applications for assisted passages to this State. One or two I know at the present time have taken up land in this State, but they paid their own fares because they could not produce references to the effect that they had of late years been working on a farm. These people were refused assistance at the Agent General's office. Another who was in a position similar to that of the man to whom the Leader of the Opposition referred a few nights ago was an army pensioner. He had been on the land until he was 21 years of age, and he had a small sum of money and his pension, and desired to come to Western

Australia. He applied to the Agent General for an assisted passage in accordance with the advertisements, but because he had not been actually engaged on farming work, though he had been on the land, he was refused an assisted passage. He paid his own passage, and to-day is on the land somewhere in the Northam district. The member for Guildford referred to the Agent General as assisting those who came to Western Australia and paid their own passages. The hon. member ought to be fully aware that the Agent General does not have any connection whatever with those who pay their own passages. It is the shipping companies these people make all arrangements with. In regard to Mr. Ranford, there is of course a possibility of persons going to him for information, and it is likely that the same application was made to Mr. Ranford, and that he, perhaps, gave information to these people who were coming here. But we have to look carefully into the manner in which that application was made, and inquire as to whether it referred to land or to other avenues of employment. I believe we have in Western Australia to-day, as far as land settlement is concerned, greater openings than exist in any other part of the British Empire. There seems to have been a feeling aroused in other parts of the Commonwealth in regard to the position of the Labour party in respect to immigration. The attitude I take up I have taken from the Leader of the Opposition, who said there was no objection to the bringing out of suitable immigrants, but that the objection was to the bringing out of unsuitable immigrants. I am thoroughly in accord with that, and I believe that through the action of members here a stricter supervision is being exercised in the Agent General's office to-day than ever before. We in Western Australia, unfortunately, have been placed in a very awkward position. A little while ago there were several young persons sent out here under an association. I am pleased to know that this has been stopped. These were the people the member for North Fremantle referred to. We have had to suffer through these persons sent out

under an association, and not directly through the Agent General. Now, I am under the impression that if this committee be appointed they will find that these persons who complain are not those who come out as assisted immigrants, or rather, that if they did come out as assisted immigrants they came under false pretences. Other persons who come here and pay their fares have a perfect right to come and look for work and do as they like. The only point we have to consider is whether we are using the people's money to bring people into the State for no other purpose than to seek employment in the towns. If these people have come here to follow various trades they certainly have come under false pretences; because I am satisfied that the Agent General will not accept any person whatever at the present time unless he can prove that he has been accustomed to farming, and that his intention is to settle on the land when he gets here.

Mr. Bath: They issue a leaflet in which they ask intending immigrants to write to their friends here for information about the particular trade which they follow.

Mr. ANGWIN: That refers to those who wish to pay their fares, and not to assisted immigrants.

Mr. Seaddan: It does refer to these assisted immigrants.

Mr. ANGWIN: I have already quoted a form which has to be signed before they can get a passage.

Mr. Bath: That form is for visitors.

Mr. ANGWIN: Nothing of the sort. I will read it again for the edification of the hon. member—

"I hereby apply for a passage at reduced rates to Western Australia and I hereby declare that the particulars given below are true, that I have never been a resident of Western Australia before, and that I go to that State for the purpose of taking up land and settling thereon."

Although we do not suffer from it very much out here, it must be known that there is a system in vogue in England whereby shipping companies induce assisted immigrants to come out to the var-

ious States of Australia except, perhaps, Western Australia. For every person approved by the various Agents General and granted assisted passages by the States a shipping agent is paid £2 per head; but in respect to Western Australia they get only £1 per head. It will be realised that as far as Western Australia is concerned shipping agents are not very anxious to send us immigrants, because they will try if possible to get them all to go to the other States from which the shipping companies get the larger bounties. Still some people are, of course, determined to come to Western Australia, and there is a possibility that certain wrong information is given; but it is given by the shipping agents. Under the system in vogue in the Agent General's office in London I fail to see how any person, after communicating with that office, after seeing the refusals which have been given to various persons who applied for assisted passages, can be led astray. A little while ago I referred to Mr. Dolley.

Mr. Underwood: I could show you statements a yard long made by Dolley.

Mr. ANGWIN: I do not want to know anything of Mr. Dolley.

Mr. Underwood: Neither do I.

Mr. ANGWIN: So far as I know he is a servant of the Government in England. He is carrying out his work in the Immigration Office, and so long as he carries out that work and sends to Western Australia suitable immigrants who will go on the land, and not those who will fill our towns, then he is faithfully performing the work required of him. Whether or not he makes statements which are wrong I do not know; but I do know that I heard him address a number of immigrants who were coming here. I heard him explain the position to those immigrants; and he explained it in a way to which no hon. member here could take exception. He told them the hardships they would have to put up with, and the position in which they would find themselves when they got here.

Mr. Scaddan: Would you expect him to do otherwise while you were there?

Mr. ANGWIN: I want to say that while it might be urged that Mr. Dolley

had put things in this way because I happened to be there, still there was nothing whatever to prevent any of those immigrants from asking questions of Mr. Dolley if Mr. Dolley's statements had not coincided with other statements made to them by other representatives of Western Australia. I am sure if there had been any discrepancy they would have seized that opportunity of inquiring into it. For my part I do not believe in the system of assisted passages. I have voted and spoken against it on many occasions. I am of opinion that a great many of the statements made by persons who come to this State as assisted immigrants, and who have come for the express purpose, not of settling on the land but of following their respective avocations, are not entitled to much consideration at our hands. I was very much surprised when the Minister for Railways told the House that there were assisted immigrants at Midland Junction. If there are any such immigrants in our workshops, if I were in charge I would dismiss every one of them from that employment. I maintain that if they came out here under false representation they are entitled to no consideration whatever. There is a possibility of persons being led astray on their way out to Western Australia. I am not going to blame the Ministry for that. When I arrived at Colombo in July last I found stuck up on the notice board an advertisement issued by the Western Australian Government Railways, and knowing the position in Western Australia, that there were a number of boilermakers and fitters about when I left, I naturally made some inquiries about this notice. Not only that, several persons who were there made inquiries from me in regard to these positions advertised by the Railway Department. This was the notice—

"Western Australian Government Railways—Wanted 15 fitters, 11 boilermakers, 11 boilermaker's assistants, 2 turners, 2 junior labourers for rivetting. Men with locomotive experience given preference; none but first-class tradesmen required."

On inquiry I found that this was sent by someone in Western Australia to his wife

who was coming out, requesting that it be stuck up for the information of the public. I told every person I talked to about this that I thought there were sufficient men in Western Australia for all the work offered, but I know that one or two passengers left the ship at Fremantle on account of this notice. I believe they got employment but not as fitters or as boilermakers, and that they are very pleased that they stayed behind.

The Minister for Works: There are no boilermakers out of employment in the State now.

Mr. ANGWIN: But there are plenty who have been dismissed from our railways who are anxious to return. I have received letters from the Eastern States to that effect.

The Minister for Works: We cannot get boilermakers.

Mr. ANGWIN: The Minister for Railways denied that there were applications calling for fitters, but this is the copy of the advertisement. In conclusion, I may say that I hope the Government will welcome the appointment of a select committee on this question. I honestly believe when the committee makes due inquiries it will find that so far as the system in vogue is concerned, and so far as the immigrants that come here are concerned, it will have nothing to complain about, and that it will realise that we are getting in Western Australia the best class of immigrants that comes to Australia. Only last week I saw published in the Press a commendation of the class of immigrants coming to Western Australia. I certainly think that the system adopted in London to-day is very good and one that will no doubt be the means of bringing to this State a lot of desirable citizens to help build up Western Australia. I had personal interviews with every person who came on assisted passages to Western Australia on board the "Orsova," and I have no hesitation in saying that Western Australia could do well with a few thousands of the same class of people.

Mr. FOULKES (Claremont): Any one who has heard the discussion this evening cannot but recognise that mem-

bers on both sides of the House are anxious to promote the best class of immigration. During the last few years it has been frequently pointed out by speakers on both sides of the House that it is necessary to promote the immigration of agriculturists, but nevertheless many mistakes have been made during the past few years, and unfortunately the cause of immigration has been seriously damaged owing to the fact that proper care has not been taken to see that only agriculturists were encouraged to come to the State. I welcome the motion because I think it will be the means of clearing up many misconceptions in regard to immigration, and of letting the general public know what are the steps taken by the Government of the State to encourage immigration. I am going to ask the mover of the motion to agree to an amendment. I agree that the select committee should be appointed to investigate the effect of the present immigration system upon land settlement and upon the condition of the workers in the towns of the State; but I would ask the House to agree to the addition of certain words. I move as an amendment—

That the following be added to the motion: "And also to inquire as to what are the best steps to take to promote the immigration of suitable agriculturists to the State."

If we pass the motion as it is the only result would be to find out what mistakes have been made, and most of us know that a great many mistakes have been made in the past few years. I want to go a step further and to find out, not only what mistakes have been made, but also what is the best course for us to adopt. No doubt the future of the State depends on how our lands are settled in the next few years. There has been a severe depression during the last few years, and it is only during the last few months the people have realised that they can look for better conditions owing to the splendid development in our agricultural districts. But it would not do for us to let things stand at the present stage. We must do all we possibly can to try to encourage as many immigrants as we can get to

come here, because I am satisfied that the future of the State depends upon our ability to attain that end, and I hope the House will agree to my amendment so that the committee may seriously consider and report to the House as to what are the best steps to secure the immigration of suitable agriculturists. I have worded the amendment carefully, and only propose to ask the House to agree to the principle that we should get agriculturists to come here. For my part if an immigrant came to the State I would not give him employment in the Government service as long as we have such a large number of unemployed among our own population. There is a better chance of having a good system adopted if a committee inquires into the whole matter. I feel quite certain the committee will come to the conclusion that we have dealt with the immigration system in a most piecemeal and casual fashion. We have not spent enough money on it for one thing. During the past few years we have been satisfied with sending home one man to lecture and give information to the residents of Great Britain as to what are the agricultural possibilities of this State, and in some cases we have not sent home the right class of man to do it. If I had my way the men I would send would be farmers. I would be prepared to send half a dozen or a dozen farmers. I know that is the Canadian system. I have met the Canadian farmers in Great Britain. I have seen them travelling about the agricultural districts in England. They do not frequent the towns.

Mr. Underwood: The Canadian boom burst two or three years ago.

Mr. FOULKES: We do not want another boom to burst. All we want is to see that we establish the right system.

Mr. Underwood: But what is the use of following Canada?

Mr. FOULKES: The lecturers who go to England from Canada are all practical farmers, and they go through the agricultural districts and call upon the various agriculturists, and give information to them. I quite recognise that there are many thousands who leave Europe and go to Canada who are most unsuitable

and who have to return, but it is comparatively easy for people to go from Europe to Canada: it is only five days' journey and the people who go there are not taking any great risk in leaving Europe. Many people go to Canada and try their fortunes, and if they find they are unsuccessful they do not sustain any great loss because they can easily return to Europe.

Mr. Bath: Our population has increased at a greater ratio than that of Canada.

Mr. FOULKES: What I want is to see it increase at an even greater ratio. No one can be satisfied with the position of Western Australia so long as we have the small population we now have of something like 270,000 people. The increase during the last year was only 8,000.

Mr. Bath: So long as your landowners will put up notices "trespassers prosecuted," then so long will it be the same.

Mr. FOULKES: I have frequently seen those notices in Great Britain, and I want to help the people there by telling them that they can come to a country where they do not see notices of that kind.

Mr. Bath: It is what the monopolists do here.

Mr. FOULKES: I have no doubt there are monopolists here, but there is also an enormous quantity of land available for the people if they come here.

Mr. Scaddan: Where is it?

Mr. FOULKES: The hon. member sat on a Commission that was appointed some years ago to inquire into the agricultural resources of the State, and I remember that the hon. member travelled through many of the agricultural districts, and in the report of the Commission he said with his colleagues that there was any quantity of agricultural land suitable for immigration.

Mr. Scaddan: But where is it now?

Mr. FOULKES: I heard statements of that kind made four or five years ago. There were many hon. members, particularly among the Labour members, who used to say that we had not the land suitable, but during the last few years events have shown how wrong they were.

Mr. Bath: You have never heard any Labour member say that.

Mr. FOULKES: I have heard them say that and many extraordinary things.

Mr. Bath: You have heard them say that it was not made available.

Mr. FOULKES: We will take care that the land is made available. All we have to do is to construct another thousand miles of agricultural railways.

Mr. Bolton: Let us cultivate the land we have alongside the railways.

Mr. FOULKES: I say that all the agriculturists of this State are doing as much as they possibly can to cultivate the quantity of land they hold. It will be interesting to know the experience of the Leader of the Opposition. I give him credit that he is doing all he possibly can to cultivate the quantity of land he holds, but he is not able to do it all. I have no doubt like many of us he suffers from want of capital. Of course I apologise if I am wrong in that respect. Possibly I am.

Mr. Bath: I would like to have as much capital as the hon. member and I would cultivate more than he does on his holding.

Mr. FOULKES: I do not wish to intrude on the hon. member's private affairs, but I know that he does not cultivate the whole of the land he holds.

Mr. Bath: How much does the hon. member cultivate?

Mr. FOULKES: We will deal with the hon. member who attempts to cross-examine me. I am quite sure that the hon. member has not cultivated all the land he holds. He has had the land for quite sufficient time to enable him to do so if he had so desired. He could have cleared all the land he has in two years, and there are many men here who have only been on their land for two years and have put in some 600 or 700 acres of crop in that time.

The Honorary Minister: What percentage of his land has the member for Pilbara cultivated?

Mr. FOULKES: It is sufficient for me to deal with the Leader of the Opposition. I have put several questions to him but he refrains from answering them. He is

like the Scotchman who makes a practice of answering questions by putting others. I am quite sure that the reason there is such a large quantity of land here not made adequate use of is want of capital. I hope both sides of the House will agree to my amendment which is to add to the motion the words, "This committee shall be asked also to inquire as to the best steps to promote the immigration of suitable agriculturists to this State."

Mr. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): I see no reason why we should agree to support the amendment. It is only four years since the Royal Commission sat to inquire into the best means of inducing agriculturists to come to this State. I held the view before the Commission sat, and I still hold it, that the best possible method of inducing people to come here is to show that we have already in our midst a satisfied and prosperous farming industry. If we have such people we do not want to advertise, for they will do all the advertising necessary. If a person comes here and the conditions are such that he is contented with his lot, he will induce others of his friends in the particular town from which he comes to follow his example. The position existing to-day, however, is that a great number of the immigrants are compelled, after arriving here, to go 20 or 30 miles from the existing line of railway in order to obtain land to settle on, with the result that they are very dissatisfied with their lot, and do not advise others to follow their example. About the only advertisement Western Australia gets from the private individual is of a nature that does not redound to the credit of the State. The immigrants write to their friends of the conditions they find existing here. They point out that they were shown magnificent agricultural land by limelight when they were in England, and were assured there were thousands of acres of similar land here awaiting settlement, but that the fact is this land is from 25 to 30 miles from a railway. Will the Minister deny that is the position to-day?

The Honorary Minister: That is quite wrong.

Mr. SCADDAN: The Royal Commission made certain recommendations con-

cerning the kind of immigrants to encourage, and there is no necessity for the amendment to the motion. The Commission also recommended that light spur railways should be built.

Mr. Foulkes: There will be greater talent on this committee than there was on the Royal Commission.

Mr. SCADDAN: The Agent General, who is now responsible for sending out immigrants, was a member of the Commission, but he retired before the report was sent in, and thus we were able to make a liberal report. The Government are now carrying out the recommendations made by the Royal Commission but, unfortunately, they have overlooked the main points. The Commission recommended that land selection before survey should be stopped absolutely. There was no question of partial stopping, for the idea was that no further lands should be allowed to be taken up until after survey. They said that even if the principle meant setting back settlement for some years that would not matter, owing to the great ultimate advantage it would be to the State. The Government, however, were afraid of the hue and cry of the "mark-time" policy that existed then, with the result that they permitted free selection to continue, and now the Premier is busy every Friday receiving deputations asking for railway connections, simply because the settlers were able to go out and freely select. In some parts of the country the settlers took up 300 or 400 acres leaving all the country surrounding it second-class, with the result that for years they would not be pestered with people wanting land in the locality. If the department had first surveyed the land they would have cut it up into such blocks that the first and second class land would have come together, and there would have been room for a number of settlers. This is a matter of considerable moment to the State, for we want to see that the best interests of the State are conserved. The Commission also recommended that certain portions of land along the railway lines should be reserved for the benefit of immigrants from outside the Commonwealth. The object of the Commission was that a great number of immigrants,

when taken so far from railway lines, found they were surrounded, although at a considerable distance, by others whom they had never met before, they were isolated, they were living under new conditions, none of their old friends were near them to talk to, with the result that they became very despondent and dissatisfied; whereas if they had a community to themselves, they would form their own associations and friends, with the result that they would be more contented, and there would not be the complaints that they were isolated in the bush. English people do not make friends so quickly as Australians. I have always contended that this State is not justified in spending the taxpayers' money in inducing immigrants of any sort to come to this State.

Mr. Bath: Spending loan money.

Mr. SCADDAN: I do not care whether it is loan or revenue. If it requires assistance in the direction of paid passage money to get immigrants to come here, those persons are not in a fit financial position to tackle the great difficulties they have to face in Western Australia. It is no use comparing Canada with Western Australia as a field for immigration. Eventually the settler here will have a great advantage, I admit, but the initial difficulties of Western Australia are in a great measure almost insurmountable as compared with Canada. The immigrant for the latter country can choose his block in London, he is taken across, put on his block, and can get a crop the following season. An immigrant cannot do that here, for when he is taken to the virgin bush he has to start straight away to clear. The immigrants have been misled considerably concerning the nature of the returns they will receive from their labours during the first year or two. The Commission pointed out the advantage of ring-barking and allowing the timber to dry and burn off, but this means two years before a return is received. An immigrant is not told that.

Mr. Jacoby: What portion of the country are you referring to?

Mr. SCADDAN: To the cereal growing portion. In 12 months an immigrant might be able to get 10 acres of crop in,

but he is heart-broken if that is all the result he can get for his first year's labour. He wants capital. If the land were surveyed and rung before the immigrant arrived he would know the condition of the land, and that it would not take him long to get a return. Certainly instances have been quoted on several occasions as to men without capital succeeding quickly. I know of instances myself, but the conditions were very different from what they are now. Take Mr. Hayter, of Dowerin. He told the Commission he went on the land with £15 in his pocket, and succeeded so well that a few years afterwards he would not sell the property for £3,000. He also told the Commission that 14 days after going on the block he had to leave it in order to get employment with someone else. He carted sleepers, made good money, and later on went back to the land and worked on it. These conditions do not exist to-day.

Mr. Osborn: They do; and the men are adopting that course.

Mr. SCADDAN: I know many gold-fields people who have taken land up, but they are unable to find employment among the other farmers. Very many of them have been compelled to go back to the mines for a few months to raise more capital so that they can carry on their property. The Premier will probably admit having received applications from very many men for exemption from the residential clauses, so as to enable them to go back and earn more money on the fields. If they could obtain employment in the neighbourhood they would not do that, for they would like to remain near their blocks.

Mr. Jacoby: It is a matter of getting higher wages on the fields.

Mr. SCADDAN: It is a matter of being able to find employment. Until the conditions are altered to enable immigrants or others to settle on the land and get a speedy return, it is foolhardy to spend the moneys of the State inducing people to come here.

The Attorney General: Settlers can obtain work on other farms.

Mr. SCADDAN: They cannot do it. We know that in all the towns there are a number of immigrants working to-day. I sympathise with them for I know the position they are in; they have spent their capital and must find work. Surely they cannot be allowed to starve. There are hundreds of men in the country looking for work the whole time. I have pointed out the reason why men cannot be got to work in the country. I saw an application for a person who was wanted to work in the country and he had to rise at five in the morning, start by milking the cows, go on through the day, finish it at midnight, and for this receive 15s. a week, and then the farmers complain that they cannot get men to work. I will show you you cannot get labour. There is one case in the Commission's report which has been overlooked by almost everybody. I do not think the public or even the Press took the opportunity of reading this report. This case that I intend to refer to is one that members should not lose sight of. It seems to sum up the position exactly, and it reads as follows:—

"The present population of the State contains an abnormal proportion of workers. This condition can remain healthy only so long as the mines, forests, cornfields, public works, and the building trade can keep these workers employed. Communication with other countries being frequent, any demand for more workers is rapidly supplied. Under such conditions it is clear that any State expenditure on the introduction of men needing employment would be of doubtful utility, if not a dangerous policy. To encourage the immigration of men without means, who would necessarily have to seek employment from others to save the necessary money with which to improve their selections, would be detrimental to the interests of the local worker, and tend to still further delay the proper development of the land. For instance, Mr. Hayter, of Dowerin, told the Commission he went on the land with £15, and nine days after taking possession had to seek work elsewhere. Had there been no employers he must have failed."

That is the position to-day. Let me say in connection with the statement made by the member for East Fremantle that what he read from the agreement intending emigrants sign, does not bind that emigrant in any way to settle on the land. The emigrant may declare his intention of taking up land, but that does not say that he intends to settle on it when he takes it up. Hon. members themselves have taken up land and not settled on it although they are settled in Western Australia. Immigrants can come here and take up a homestead block of 160 acres which they get for practically nothing, and still remain in town. I have a leaflet here, or it may be a leaf from a booklet, sent out by Paisley in Scotland, and this purports to give reliable information with regard to immigration in Western Australia. It says among other things—

“An immigration depot has recently been established at Perth for the reception of emigrants. Three days board and residence are provided [and I might say while many of our own citizens are practically starving]. Nominated emigrants are not admitted. Emigrants who have notified to the Agent General in London, the ship they are taking, are met at Fremantle by an official, who assists them with information as to lodgings, work, etc. All persons seeking employment should communicate with any friends they may have in Western Australia, mentioning their trade, and the ship they are coming by. A register of persons in need of work is kept at the office of the Government Labour Bureau, Irwin Street, Perth. There is a Government Labour Bureau at Fremantle, Kalgoorlie, and Northam.”

Kalgoorlie no less. Why should agriculturists go to Kalgoorlie to take up land? That is the remarkable thing about it. That information I am informed is supplied by the Agent General's office. If anyone can deny the fact that that is not inducing men to obtain work at their trade in Western Australia I cannot read English. No person knowing Western Australia would advise people to go to the labour bureau in Kalgoorlie to take up land.

Mr. Foulkes: We have nothing to do with that.

Mr. SCADDAN: I say the information is supplied by the Agent General's office in London. The Premier himself must know that the information is obtained from that source because the information is reliable in every sense. As a matter of fact it is reliable altogether because a number of immigrants have come out here and secured work at their trade. These immigrants are working to-day at their trade at the Midland workshops, showing that the information as issued by the Immigration Information Bureau is reliable and undoubtedly is supplied by the Agent General's office. I will believe that that is so until something is proved to the contrary. This leaflet also advises domestic servants to come to Western Australia where there is a splendid opening. There is a little paragraph dealing with that that might interest hon. members. It says—

“There is at all times a good demand in Western Australia for domestic servants, especially good cooks and general female servants.”

The Premier: Is that not true?

Mr. SCADDAN: It is to an extent, but I will show later on the nature of the demand. The paragraph goes on—

“Domestic servants must understand house work, and not think they are going out to a life of idleness. In a country where almost everyone is a worker, mistresses know what good work is and do much of it themselves. There are few places where more than two servants are kept, and in most households there is only one.”

It also gives the rates of wages paid per week in Western Australia, but I would like to inform the Premier that the rates they say can be obtained in Perth or the surrounding districts, or in Western Australia generally, are not borne out by the advertisements which appear in our own paper.

The Premier: Or by statistics? Read out what they say.

Mr. SCADDAN: I will let the Premier have this leaflet. It says here the rates of wages are as follow:—Cooks, 20s. to 30s.; dairymaids, 10s. to 15s.

Mr. Collier: Where are the dairy-maids?

Mr. SCADDAN: The Premier will tell us. Farm servants, 10s. to 15s.; general servants, 10s. to 20s.; housemaids, 10s. to 17s. 6d.; laundresses, 20s. to 30s.; married couples on farms, 27s. 6d. to 40s. There is a wide margin there. Encumbrances, I suppose, will come in there. Nursemaids, 5s. to 10s.; parlourmaids, 10s. to 17s. 6d.; waitresses, 15s. to 40s; and servants on the goldfields, 20s. to 40s.

The Premier: Is that correct?

Mr. SCADDAN: It is not correct.

The Premier: Then the rates are too low.

Mr. SCADDAN: I might inform hon. members if they look up the *West Australian* situations vacant column they will find there is no mention of the amount of wages offered unless that amount exceeds 20s., and the reason is that the matter was brought so prominently before the public by discussion in the House that they now refrain from mentioning the amount if it is less than 20s. I have a copy of the *West Australian* of 11th September, in which there appear three advertisements for general servants, and where the amount mentioned was less than £1. The first reads, "Wanted a general servant, 14 shillings." That is below the minimum in England.

The Premier: I can speak from experience. There are two girls in my household who receive £1 a week each.

Mr. SCADDAN: The hon. member manages his own home, not the whole State.

The Premier: If the hon. member pays 10s. I cannot help it.

Mr. SCADDAN: I pay 10 shillings? Unfortunately I cannot pay anything.

The Premier: Well, if you ridicule the idea, I cannot help it.

Mr. SCADDAN: The Premier in the course of the debate on this question said—

"The Government had no objection to making available any information possible on this important subject. In regard to the importation of girls who were prepared to go into domestic ser-

vice he could hardly support the contention of the last speaker on the subject, because his experience was that any girl who was prepared to work at all could get at least £1 per week in the employment of any respectable family."

I take that to mean that any person who pays less than £1 a week is not respectable. The second advertisement that I have here reads, "Wanted a general servant; wages, 15s.," and another one states that the wages will be 12s. 6d. These are the only three advertisements where the amount was mentioned, and in no case does the amount exceed 15s. I have obtained a copy of a few engagements of domestic servants made in a certain bureau in Perth, and for the enlightenment of the Honorary Minister I will give particulars of them. On 20th August an engagement was made of a general where there were four people in the house, and to attend to all duties, for 15s. a week. The next was at Cottesloe, a general servant, no washing, two adults and six children, 15s. a week. Another is a general for the Nurses' Maternity Home, Midland Junction, a heavy place, 12s. 6d. a week. At Cottesloe with a reputed wealthy family, a general to attend to all duties, washing included, five people, 12s. 6d. per week. These are at least supposed to be respectable families. I could give the names of the people, but I do not desire to do so here. These extracts I have given have been copied from the register, and are reliable. On 2nd September at South Perth a general was wanted to attend to all duties, seven people in the home, a little help given, for 12s. 6d. a week. On 6th September for big luncheon rooms in St. George's-terrace somewhere near the Weld Club a cook was wanted for £1 per week. They stated in their advertisements that cooks could get from £2 to £3 a week. This cook had to provide for 100 at dinner and had to sleep away from the premises. In the same house a kitchen maid was wanted for 15s. and had to sleep out. On 8th September, at Ord-street, West Perth, this is amongst the elite, a general was required for 15s. a week including washing and six in the family. In the Methodist College a gene-

ral—the principal work being in the kitchen, was wanted for 15s. a week. Again, in Subiaco, useful help or elderly woman, for the magnificent salary of 6s. a week. Then at Mundaring, a cook is required, wages 17s. 6d. At Narrogin, 10 miles out from the station, one, a cook, another a laundress; six children and seven adults, cook to bake the bread.

The Premier: And chop the wood.

Mr. SCADDAN: Yes; wages offered 10s. a week. I think I have mentioned sufficient instances to show that there are quite a number of anything but respectable homes in this community, according to the statement of the Premier himself. There are hundreds of girls in Perth—I am assured by those who ought to know that good places are never vacant a day. It is only these places that are marked. The girls know the places and will not go there. It is not only a matter of the wages, but of the treatment these girls get. Hon. members, if they cared to take the trouble, would find that it is nearly always the same people applying for girls every day in the *West Australian*. I admit there are exceptions to the rule. There are a great number who do pay their girls fair wages and who give them fair treatment. Those places never find any difficulty in getting suitable girls. Now, I hold the view that if you can show a prosperous and contented farming community they will make their condition known wherever they have friends, and you will very soon have sufficient men coming in to keep us going without having to bring assisted immigrants to Western Australia. The great deterrent to immigrants coming to Western Australia is the fact that so many outside have received news from those who found themselves disgusted with the conditions on their arrival here. They found the difficulties almost insurmountable. There is no use in attempting to compare Western Australia to Canada from the point of view of the new arrival. In Canada he can obtain for his labour fair wages for at least two years. It is unwise to encourage these people to come here. If they come they must eventually flock into the towns, and tradesmen and artisans are leaving Western Australia

to-day because their avocations are overcrowded, and the inducements offered are better in the other States. It is all because we are going ahead with this foolhardy method of inducing people to come here without first being able to satisfy them when they do arrive. Let me tell the member for Claremont that the Royal Commission went into the question of land settlement for cereal growing and learned that there was something between 9 and 10 million acres of land available for settlement in wheat growing country. But there is very little of that area left, because we are settling our lands at the rate of about a million and a half acres per year.

The Premier: Two million acres last year, including grazing leases. Practically 800,000 acres of first-class land.

Mr. SCADDAN: Well, we are settling about a million acres of our wheat growing land every year. Already we have settled about five million acres of land since the Commission sat, unless a great quantity of land which had been previously taken up has reverted to the Crown. I know that is the case, but I know, of course, it is not wise to mention the fact that a great amount of revenue derived by the Lands Department is for survey fees for work previously performed.

The Premier: What do you mean?

Mr. SCADDAN: I mean that the original owner of the land has already paid the fees.

The Premier: They have not been paying survey fees three years yet.

Mr. SCADDAN: When a piece of land, which has been taken up, is forfeited to the Crown the pegs are already in and the block is already surveyed, yet the new man has to pay the survey fees over again.

The Premier: He pays half the survey fees.

Mr. SCADDAN: Well, that is for something not done, or, rather, something already done and paid for. It would be interesting to know how much of that two million acres we boast of having settled last year is land previously taken up and reverted to the Crown. Again, it would be interesting to know how

many mortgages the Agricultural Bank have had to transfer from the original mortgagor; how many have taken out mortgages in the Agricultural Bank which the Agricultural Bank have had to transfer to another person. Then we would find how many people go on the land and how many are failures.

The Premier: They are facts about which you could get information at any time.

Mr. SCADDAN: It will be interesting to have it when the Land Estimates are being discussed. It requires capital to succeed in Western Australia, and those people we are inducing to come here are people without capital. The individual who has capital is too independent to ask the State to pay half his passage money, and have it said afterwards that he is an assisted immigrant. The result is that the people we are inducing to come to Western Australia by paying their passages are people who, nine times out of ten, will not succeed unless they are spoon-fed to an extent the Government are not prepared to spoon-feed their own people. I am going to protest against it on every occasion. I say, attend to those already on the land, and they will soon let their friends in other parts of the world know that Western Australia is a good place to come to. Therefore, I will support this committee to inquire into the matter in so far as the effect it has had on our lands; but I will not support the amendment, because I cannot see the necessity for it, having regard to the fact that a Royal Commission recently investigated this very question.

Mr. JACOBY (Swan): The figures quoted by the hon. member, the figures taken from the report of the Royal Commission which sat four years ago, regarding the land available for wheat growing in the State, have been proved on further investigation to be quite below the actual quantity available. We are now quite sure that we have something like 20 million acres of good land available. I would not like it to go forth that there was any idea that the small amount of land thought four years ago to have been available has already been

selected. Regarding this question of immigration I hold the view that it would be wiser for Western Australia to leave the broad question of immigration entirely to the Federal Government. I think we should first direct our attention to the surveying of land close enough to railway lines, or to projected railway lines; that we should survey that before selection, and have a valuation made by the Agricultural Bank; that we should perfect the system now in operation in the Lands Department, and extend the scope of our Agricultural Bank so that it will give greater facilities and advance a little more money to farmers. Then if we make those facts known in the Eastern States we will get all the settlers we can safely handle for some years to come. In the Eastern States there is a great demand for farming lands in all directions, and the vigorous policy of advertising now being adopted by the Queensland Government is attracting a large number of immigrants to that State. I understand that our Government are not pursuing an active policy of advertising in the Eastern States, because they have wisely decided that it would be better first to have a sufficient quantity of land surveyed ready for selection. Then the immigrant knows where to get the land, and how much money he can get from the Agricultural Bank on that land. When the surveyors now at work have sufficient land surveyed, I trust the Government will make the conditions of this State known in the Eastern States, where men are crowded out for want of land. Men are going from Victoria to New South Wales, and from Victoria and from South Australia to Queensland, and I question whether that State or any other State can offer the great advantages which this State now offers. I agree that most of the men who have been coming from the countries where we have been looking for immigrants are not able to adapt themselves to our conditions very readily. Perhaps if we were to devote our attention to Scotchmen, to Scandinavians and to Danes we might get men who could more readily adapt themselves to

our conditions; but as far as the ordinary British immigrant who comes out here is concerned, he becomes absolutely disheartened when he sees the wild bush, and he is apt to sit down in despair and require a good deal of stimulating before achieving success. On the matter of immigration I hold that we should leave it to the Federal Government; we should let them advertise to the world at large the conditions we have. Then all we have to do will be to make known in Australasia itself the advantages we have to offer. Then we will have an abundance of men of the right class to settle on our shores. I am not opposed to the motion. I do not know that the Committee if appointed is going to do very much to help us out of our difficulties. In the past our main difficulty has been this system of selection before survey. When we overcome this difficulty and get the Lands Department organised and our land ready for settlement; and when we let the people know what the conditions are, we will get rid of most of the causes of complaint that have been so unsatisfactory in the past. I intend to vote for the appointment of this select committee, but I really think if we confine our attentions to securing men in Australia itself we will have far more satisfactory results in the settlement of our lands.

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

Ayes	..	26
Noes	..	17
		—
Majority for	..	9
		—

AYES.

Mr. Bath	Mr. Layman
Mr. Brown	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Butcher	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Carson	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Daglish	Mr. O'Loughlen
Mr. Davies	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Draper	Mr. J. Price
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. W. Price
Mr. George	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Jacoby	
Mr. Keenan	

(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Collier	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gill	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gourley	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Holman	Mr. Walker
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Ware
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Heltmann
Mr. Male	(Teller).

Amendment thus passed.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

Ballot taken, and a select committee appointed consisting of Messrs. Collier, Layman, Male, Scaddan, and the mover.

Mr. DAGLISH moved—

That the Committee have power to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, to call for persons and papers, and to report this day four weeks.

Mr. JACOBY: Was there any probability of the committee reporting this session? There had been a practice in the past where committees were appointed and were subsequently converted into Commissions, and ultimately became very expensive. There should be a protest against a continuation of this practice. It was to be hoped the mover would give an assurance that the committee would be able to report before the session was over.

Mr. TAYLOR: The House should have an assurance from the mover that the report would be submitted for their consideration before the session closed. Members should be given an opportunity to obtain and discuss the results of the investigation.

Mr. DAGLISH: Notice of this motion was given on the 29th July, the first day on which the House sat. Since then nine weeks had elapsed, a delay for which he was not responsible. The motion was moved on the 8th September, and it was to be regretted that the committee did not start immediately afterwards. Tonight the motion had been added to by an amendment enormously enlarging the work of the committee, another matter for which he was not responsible.

Mr. Scaddan: You are, for you voted for it.

Mr. DAGLISH: While there was very little hope that the report would be

brought up four weeks hence, he trusted and believed that before the session closed, he did not know the duration of the session, it would be possible, even with the enlargement of the work, to bring up a satisfactory report.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.7 p.m.

—
PAIN.

Hon. H. Gregory. Mr. A. A. Wilson.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 7th October, 1909.

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

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Works: Return showing the amounts paid in grants and subsidies to the Miners' Institute at Cue. (Ordered on motion by Mr. Heitmann.)

QUESTION—SANATORIUM, COOLGARDIE.

Mr. GILL asked the Premier: Is it true that the wine and other stimulants that it has been customary to supply to patients at the sanatorium at Coolgardie have been stopped? If so, by whose instructions, and for what reason?

The PREMIER replied: No restriction has been placed upon the supply of stimulants whenever deemed necessary by the medical officer in charge of the sanatorium.

QUESTION—BLACKBOY INDUSTRY.

Mr. O'DOUGHLIN asked the Premier: 1, Has any further progress been made with the agreement between the Government and Dr. Black and others re the starting of the blackboy industry? 2, Can the Premier give the House any idea as to when this industry will be started?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The agreement was completed and signed on the 25th November last, and I am informed by his solicitor here that at the present time Dr. Black is in London making final arrangements. 2, By the terms of the agreement Dr. Black has to expend £1,000 on the undertaking before the 25th of next month, and failing compliance therewith within 30 days after notice of default has been sent to him, the agreement will be liable to forfeiture.

QUESTION—MILK PRESERVATION. PUSEY PROCESS.

Mr. WALKER asked the Premier: 1, When does the option of purchase of the Pusey process for the preservation of milk expire? 2, If it has already expired has provision been made for an extension of time in order to enable reports to be received and considered? 3, What has been the cause of the delay in obtaining and considering these reports?

The PREMIER replied: 1, On the 8th inst. 2, No. 3, The necessity for making full investigations.

BILL—LAND ACT SPECIAL LEASE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): Since the Minister for Works introduced this measure and gave us detailed information, I have had an opportunity of perusing the lease which is embodied in the Bill, and, as far as I can see, the Government have endeavoured to the fullest extent in their power to safeguard the interests of the State. There is no doubt that the company, if they had so desired to establish the industry, could have found land which they could have purchased for the pur-