

You, Sir, will notice that the latter sentence is governed by the phrase, "If, contrary to my view."

Hon. H. Stewart: It would be easy to get someone of a contrary view.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Sir Howard D'Egville's opinion, therefore, is that Section 6 of the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act was not incorporated in the Closer Settlement Bill; that the Closer Settlement Bill did not amend the Constitution Act; that the Bill need not be carried by an absolute majority of both Houses of Parliament; that the Bill was in order and the ruling of the President was correct; that the House was wrong in dissenting from the President's ruling.

Hon. H. Stewart: That is your interpretation of Sir Howard D'Egville's opinion?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: That is so. I have submitted this opinion of Sir Howard D'Egville to three eminent lawyers in Perth and they assure me that my interpretation is correct, and that the Bill was perfectly in order, according to Sir Howard D'Egville's opinion. I do not think any member of the House would gather these important conclusions from Mr. Lovekin's statement that Sir Howard D'Egville gave his opinion as he indicated. I do not wish to say any more on this point. I merely desired to draw the attention of the House to this, because I regard it as an important constitutional point. Many members of the House have not taken the opportunity to read the opinion of Sir Howard D'Egville. I do not ask them to accept my word, but to study that opinion for themselves. I think they will find I am right in my assertion that the opinion of Sir Howard D'Egville does not bear the construction that Mr. Lovekin indicated in his brief remarks when moving that the papers should be laid upon the Table of the House. I intend to support the second reading of the Bill. I hope the House will realise its responsibilities and will pass the second reading of the Bill, and do what it can to assure what I am confident is the object of the Bill, that people who own land shall not hang up and retard the development of the country but will be forced to relinquish their holdings with proper compensation paid to them for the land.

On motion by Hon. W. H. Kitson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.29 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 17th September, 1924.

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

QUESTION—WATER OVERFLOW, AVON AND MUNDARING.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Works: 1, What are the Avon River overflow gaugings at Northam 1914 to 1923? 2, What are the yearly overflow gaugings at Mundaring weir during the period 1914 to 1923?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM replied: 1, Avon River overflow gaugings at Northam, 1914 to 1923, were as under: 1914, five million gallons; 1915, 60,089 million gallons; 1916, 21,804 million gallons; 1917, 211,295 million gallons; 1918, 14,201 million gallons; 1919, 2,683 million gallons; 1920, 34,202 million gallons; 1921, 15,708 million gallons; 1922, 7,891 million gallons; 1923, 44,861 million gallons. 2, The yearly overflow gaugings at Mundaring Weir, 1914 to 1923, were as under: 1914, nil; 1915, 15,400 million gallons; 1916, 5,443 million gallons; 1917, 38,782 million gallons; 1918, 9,647 million gallons; 1919, 2,426 million gallons; 1920, 19,066 million gallons; 1921, 5,190 million gallons; 1922, 2,177 million gallons; 1923, 20,302 million gallons.

QUESTIONS (2)—WOOROLOO SANATORIUM.

Food Supplies.

Mr. MARSHALL asked Hon. S. W. Munsie, Honorary Minister: 1, Is he aware that dissatisfaction exists at the Wooroloo Sanatorium in regard to the supply of bread, meat and fish, these commodities being of inferior quality when served up to the patients? 2, Will he have a strict investigation made immediately to ascertain if the dissatisfaction is justified, and have it remedied if necessary? 3, Will he consider the proposal to purchase beef and mutton on the hoof, and slaughter it at the institu-

tion, thus ensuring a supply of fresh meat on the spot?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE replied: 1, From time to time complaints have been received; few of such complaints are justifiable. No recent complaints have been received regarding the bread, meat, fish, or other food supply. 2, Inquiries will be made to ascertain whether any dissatisfaction exists, and whether there is any justification for such, but it must be remembered that in any institution of this character complaints can always be found. 3, This proposal was carefully gone into some years ago, but the capital expenditure and added annual cost were not justified.

Hot Water Service.

Mr. TEESDALE (for Mr. Sampson) asked the Minister for Works: Will he inform the House when repairs and new work in connection with the hot water service at the Woeroloo Sanatorium will be completed?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (for the Minister for Works) replied: If the copper pipes which have been ordered are delivered within three months the work should be completed in April, 1925.

QUESTION—TIMBER, FRANKLAND RIVER DISTRICT.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH asked the Premier: 1, What is the approximate quantity of jarrah, karri, and marri timber in the Frankland River district? 2, What is the approximate value?

The PREMIER replied: Information available, as a result of forest classification, shows that west of the Frankland River to the Deep River, extending northwards for 16 miles, and east of the Frankland to Irwin Inlet extending northwards about five miles from the mouth of the Frankland River, there are approximately 50,000 loads of jarrah and one and three-quarter million loads of karri in the round. There are no particulars regarding marri. There is little information regarding the country immediately to the north of that referred to. 2, The approximate value of the jarrah and karri for export would be £4,350,000.

QUESTION—ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS.

Mr. TEESDALE (without notice) asked the Premier: Has a large number of Italians lately arrived in the State, all of them having work to go to, and have the Government any knowledge as to where such work is situated?

The PREMIER replied: I have no information upon the subject, but will make inquiries.

BILL—NOXIOUS WEEDS.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Council.

MOTION—GROUP SETTLEMENT.

Personnel of Royal Commission.

Mr. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [4.40]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the personnel of the Royal Commission on Group Settlement has not the confidence of the State generally and the South-West in particular, for the following reasons:—Because no member of the Commission is thoroughly conversant with agricultural and other requirements of the South-West, and further, the Chairman is unsuitable because he is prejudiced.

I feel I owe a duty to the South-West and to Western Australia in this matter. This is the greatest ramp that has ever been sought to be put over the people.

Mr. Lutey: What does a ramp mean?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is spelt with a "p." The Minister in charge of group settlement has to a great extent fallen down on his job. He was almost a greater advocate of the scheme than the Leader of the Opposition is to-day, but on account of some circumstances behind the scenes he has acted in this way, and appointed a Royal Commission consisting in the main of prejudiced individuals. The clutching of the unseen hand, that has been mentioned here before, is at work.

The Premier: Talk sense.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I believe that Beaufort-street is behind it. This little coterie on my left is also hand-in-glove with the Government. When the Premier was in Opposition and the Leader of the Country Party rose to his feet, nothing was too vitriolic for him to say. Every time the Premier opened his mouth he championed the cause of group settlement.

Mr. Hughes: You read that in the "Leader" last week.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That was a misleader.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: That is where the attack is coming from.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is coming from a member representing the South-West, who is going to do his best.

Mr. Lutey: The unseen hand is in evidence elsewhere.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: When I spoke on the Address-in-reply I favoured the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the group settlement scheme and immigration generally, but I hoped it would be appointed from outside the ranks of party politics. Group settlement is the basis of our immigration policy, but the Minister in charge has now notified the Imperial Government that no more group settlers are to come here

because there is not sufficient land for them.

The Premier: Do not misrepresent him. He has done nothing of the kind.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am merely quoting what the Minister is reported in the papers to have said.

The Premier: He has not said it.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is what I read.

The Premier: It was not because of insufficient land, but because we are waiting until we know the terms of the new agreement, which is a different thing.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That was not stated.

The Premier: It was. I ought to know.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I disagree with that statement. I remember reading that the Minister said there was no land within 12 miles of a railway for group settlers.

The Premier: That did not apply to the South-West. He was speaking of wheat land. You have not read the statement closely.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I did.

The Premier: You have fallen down on your job.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: A suggestion put forward at the Primary Producers' political conference has been carried into effect by the present Government. I will prove the correctness of that statement.

The Minister for Railways: Did we not go to the country on that?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: On the appointment of this Royal Commission?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Yes, certainly.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Not in connection with a commission on the immigration scheme. The Labour Party said that group settlement was a wonderful scheme, but that a commission of inquiry should be appointed to investigate the administration and expenditure incurred upon it.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: That is what we have done.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not object to that.

The Premier: It is not too clear what you object to.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not address other members.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Government have appointed a Commission the members of which are prejudiced, biassed and bigoted against the South-West. What do the members of Parliament from the South-West who sit behind the Government think of it?

Mr. A. Wansbrough: We agree with it.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) has group settlers in his electorate; the member for Albany (Mr. A. Wansbrough) also has some, and the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) represents the chief port through which the produce from the group settlements will be shipped. What do they think of this Commission?

The Premier: To say nothing about yourself.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It must have been a bitter pill for them to swallow when they were passed over.

Member: It must have been a more bitter one for you.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Why did you not go to your leader to get appointed?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Why has the member for Sussex (Mr. Barnard) been passed over? It must have been like a dose of castor oil for him.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: What has your leader to say about it?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am fighting for what I think is right in the interests of the South-West. Let us consider the members who have been appointed on the Royal Commission. First we have Mr. Walter Harper who is supposed to be an unbiassed person. He is a gentleman held in high repute. I claim, however, that he knows nothing about the conditions relating to group settlement in the South-West. At one time he was deputed by his leader, Mr. Monger, to go to the Peel Estate and to report upon it together with the possibilities of the South-West for settlement purposes.

Mr. Thomson: And his report was borne out by a select committee.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I remember his report and his speech at a political conference some time ago. It is a remarkable thing that his report has never yet been printed. He was supposed to have been for two hours only on the Peel Estate! I remember the conference, at which I was present. The then Minister for Agriculture, who had listened to Mr. Harper's statements, interjected: "God save this country from such pessimistic sons as you are." The words he used were something to that effect. I challenged Mr. Harper at the time. The Government may say that because he had a property at Balingup he knows something about the South-West. It is true that he had the Ferndale Estate there, but he was an absentee farmer. He paid casual visits to Balingup and someone else ran the farm for him, just the same as in Ireland there are big land owners but someone else pays the rent and runs the holding for them. I never before listened to such pessimistic utterances as those of Mr. Harper. They showed that he was biassed and prejudiced against the South-West from one end to the other. Yet this is a gentleman who is appointed chairman of the Royal Commission! Why was he so appointed? It was because there are two sections on the Opposition side of the House, the assistance of neither of which the Government require. Despite that fact, Ministers are pandering to those sections. I do not know why that is so. If the truth were known, I would bet that those sections I refer to pulled the strings and secured the appointment of Mr. Harper and of the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. John-

son), who are associated with the Westralian Farmers Ltd.

The Minister for Railways: You have a wonderful imagination.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You would not exclude them because of their association with the Westralian Farmers.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No; but I would exclude Mr. Harper because of his utterances. He is biased just as are the majority of the members of the Primary Producers' Association. They want everything for the wheat areas and are jealous of money spent in the South-West. The group settlement scheme is the basis of our immigration policy, and if the Government do not go on with it the chickens will come home to roost and will make a terribly dirty mess when they do so. We will feel the effects for the next two or three years. To show how biased the member for Guildford is, he has told us that he can see no good in the South-West. His interests are elsewhere and his feelings were indicated the other evening when he spoke in praise of the Westralian Farmers as the co-operative movement. He endeavoured to show that there was no connection between that firm and the Primary Producers' Association when I contended then there was. I shall show the House how the member for Guildford regards the South-West. Speaking in this Chamber on the Address-in-reply he said—

Dairying is the outstanding anomaly in Western Australia to-day. We go to the Old Country and ask people to come to our wonderful State, where land is available and where the production is enormous. Yet every month we have to disclose in our returns the fact that we cannot feed ourselves, that we have to bring in butter, eggs and other dairy-ing products.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The settlement of the South-West is an attempt to overcome that difficulty.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Then it will not do it.

That shows that the member for Guildford was biased from the outset. He is prejudiced before even the Commission takes evidence. He is the man who says that the South-West cannot grow sufficient to feed the people of this State. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) asked: "Are we to sky the towel?" The member for Guildford replied: "We tried to do that at Denmark and we failed. To-day we are trying to do the same thing in the group settlements and will again fail." There are two members of the Commission, the chairman and the member for Guildford, who are opposed tooth and nail to the South-West and can see no good in it. Yet they can be appointed on a body such as that. How can they be expected to issue a report such as we should expect from a Royal Commission?

The third member of the Commission to whom I will refer is the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay). I have nothing to say against that gentleman: I believe in his honesty of character and that he is a fair-minded man. He was one of the persons at the conference I referred to who was opposed to the developmental scheme for the South-West. He urged the appointment of a Royal Commission of inquiry.

Mr. Hughes: You were a happy family then.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I was never very happy. I have always been fighting for the South-West against fairly big odds. I made my position clear at the time. I believe the member for Toodyay will possibly give us a fair report, but I believe that he will be swayed by the interests of the wheat belt and that in consequence the South-West will be neglected by him. It would have been much better to have appointed a Royal Commission outside politics altogether. If it were not possible to get such a Commission in Western Australia it would have been better to go to the Eastern States and make the appointments from there. It would have been better to do that and get men who knew nothing about the conditions operating in the South-West so that they would not be prejudiced. Had that been done, we would not have had men appointed whose minds were warped before even any evidence had been taken. The member for York (Mr. Latham) is also a member of the Commission and he told the House he was absolutely opposed to such a Commission. He said there was no necessity for it. Speaking at the famous conference to which I have already made reference, the member for York said that Royal Commissions were not worth a "tuppenny hang" and that there was no justification for such a move. When a member says that he sees no justification for the appointment of a Royal Commission, what is the use of making him a member of such a body? His mind must be prejudiced. If he feels that way, what is the good of having him on the Commission? Then we have the Hon. T. Moore, a member of another place. I believe he knows something about the South-West, having cut sleepers from Jarrahdale to Karridale. He knows nothing about the agricultural portions of the South-West.

Mr. Panton: He knows as much about it as you do.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I question whether he knows as much about the South-West as the hon. member knows about Menzies, and that is very little indeed.

Mr. Marshall: He knew enough to beat one of your colleagues.

Mr. Panton: Evidently the people there thought I knew sufficient.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have great respect for that hon. member, whom I have known for many years. His interests, however, are centered in other parts of the State and I do not know that he will give the South-West a fair deal. We are entitled to consideration. We received that consideration from the Mitchell Government. I believe the purpose of the Royal Commission—I say it in all sincerity—is to attack the Leader of the Opposition and to find out all his sins and faults.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They will not find any.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I believe the purpose of the Royal Commission is to hold Sir James Mitchell up for sacrifice. I do not say that hon. member has not done some things that may be disapproved of by many people; at least he was swayed by his desire to do his best for Western Australia. When he presented the London agreement to us we held that it was sound and, at any rate with lip loyalty, we adopted it. I believe the Commission has been appointed for one specific purpose—to damn the South-West and stop the group settlement scheme. Once we stop that scheme we will stop immigration. Is it not better to bring in immigrants than to have boat loads of Italians coming to Western Australia with work to go to? Should we have that sort of thing when there are thousands of men walking about the streets of Perth looking for work?

Mr. Thomson: Many could get work if they went into the country.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is so; but we know there is turmoil in the country areas and that there are difficulties. I do not know that they could get too much work in the country. I saw an advertisement in the papers the other day inviting men to go to a certain job in the country. They had to be good axemen. The pay was 12s. a day and the men had to find their own tents.

Member: And keep themselves.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We do not want much of that sort of thing.

The Minister for Railways: What do you want? Immigrants at £1 a week?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Some of those people at £1 a week are much better off than many with large families who are in receipt of 15s. or £1 a day. That is where our system of employment is unfair. In the past the Labour Party have always criticised the Primary Producers' Association; to-day we find that party working hand in glove with that association.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It is a tribute to the party's sense.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It represents, not a marriage of convenience, but the return of Judas. You, Sir, will remember the previous occasion when Judas came in, when you were endeavouring to carry on the good government of the State, depending on that little crowd over there, who were even then waiting to sell you. Their chief tells them it is better to serve under the Labour Party

than under the Mitchell Government. Some day my words may come true.

Mr. Marshall: Your word is very unreliable.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Not so much so as that of the hon. member. Let me show by the reading of a motion what happened at that special political conference held on the 10th August, 1923, when they wanted to shower their sparks of wrath on the Mitchell Government. This is what was moved by the representatives of the York branch—

That conference request the Country Party to demand from the Government the appointment of a Royal Commission to investigate and report upon Sir James Mitchell's land settlement policy in the South-West, the said Commission to be vested with the following powers: 1. To inquire into the conditions of dairying and its kindred industries in the Denmark and Busselton, and others. (a) To determine the cost of production of dairy products in those districts, and (b) to find the average net earnings per day of those engaged in the industries in the districts mentioned. 2. To discover the actual cost per acre of clearing land and laying down permanent pastures, together with the cost per acre of improvements as now carried out under the group settlement scheme.

At that time it was being declared that the costs were abnormally high, that men were clearing land under sustenance, men not used to our conditions—but who, nevertheless, are going to make good farmers yet. At that time all knew that the land could be cleared at a lower cost by contract with the use of bullock teams.

The Minister for Railways: There have been four or five different systems.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is why I welcomed a Commission. It reminds me of the old adage: "It is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all." To-day we have lost, but just the same I do not want to see this great scheme of South-West development abandoned. I know in my heart that the scheme must go on. That resolution passed by conference continued—

3. To form a careful estimate of the value of production per acre that those new areas many reasonably be expected to give.

I am not sure that York has not had something to do with the appointment of this Commission, for three or four of the Commissioners are interested in wheat. Despite the assurances of delegates from the wheat belt that the motion was intended to prevent waste of money, it was received by the South-West section of the conference with determined opposition. It appeared to us that the conference had no confidence in the South-West. However, we knew what was behind the motion, namely, an endeavour by a section of that party, including the leader, to stab the then Premier in the back. York was described by some members of the association, who are no longer members,

as the sleepy hollow of the State, and as a community of weeping Jeremiahs. Mr. Silverstone moved the following amendment:—

That the investigation body be a board composed of primary producers, of representatives of the Government, and of the official Labour Party.

Mr. Sleeman: Was that when you were divorced from the party?

Mr. J. M. SMITH: I do not remember that there was actually a divorce; I believe it was nothing more than a gradual drifting apart. If this Royal Commission sits and takes evidence, it will be a calamity, not only for the South-West, but for the State generally, and will mean the end of our immigration policy. If the Government carry this Commission through and allow biased Commissioners, who can see no good in group settlement in the South-West, to go into the question and report, they will live to regret their action. This State has to be developed on a policy of immigration, land settlement, and borrowed money. What is a paltry million or so to a vast country like this? I hope the Premier will at least reconsider the appointment of the chairman of the Commission. I could point to a dozen men with a thorough knowledge of the South-West, unbiassed honourable men who have made their marks in the South-West, any of whom would have filled the position of chairman of the Commission with credit to themselves and advantage to the country. It would have been better to have had a Commission appointed outside the Chamber, rather than to have made of it a political body. Even at this late hour the Premier should cancel the appointment of chairman, and appoint one who is not politically interested, who has not criticised and condemned the the South-West and declared that dairying cannot be carried on down there. It would give the people more confidence in the Commission if the Premier would even now appoint an unbiased chairman who could bring an open mind to the study of group settlement in the South-West. I do not question Mr. Harper's honesty, nor his ability, but I know that he has been on the land himself; his father was a prosperous farmer, and had in Ferndale the best property in the South-West. Did he work it? No. He was an absentee landlord.

The Premier: He put more money into the land in the South-West than the hon. member has done.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I guarantee that by the sale of Ferndale he took out more money than he ever put into that property.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [5.14]: I wish to say a few words in respect of the attack made on the chairman of the Royal Commission, Mr. Walter Harper. As for the attack made on members of Parliament, they are here and will

be able to defend themselves, whereas Mr. Harper is not here, and consequently cannot speak for himself. I regard his appointment as the most excellent one the Government could have made in this State; and I say that as one who went to school with Mr. Harper and has noted his public activities from that time to the present.

Mr. Taylor: Of course, he is all right if taught in the same school as you were.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: He was taught in the High School, which was certainly the best in the State at that time. He is a young man and was born in the State. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) says that in the appointment of Mr. Harper as chairman of the Royal Commission he detects the unseen hand of Beaufort-street, of the Trades Hall. Mr. Harper has many excellent qualifications and views, but I do not think anyone will believe the hon. member when he suggests that Mr. Harper is either a supporter or a protégé of the Trades Hall.

Mr. J. H. Smith: On a point of order, I did not say in the appointment of Mr. Harper. I said in the appointment of the Commission.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I am glad to hear the hon. member is already correcting and explaining away what he said.

Mr. Richardson: What he never said.

Mr. SPEAKER: He denies that he said it, and the hon. member must not repeat it.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It is quite clear, now he has made that explanation, that a majority of the Commission are in no way associated with the Labour Party or the Trades Hall. Whatever Mr. Harper's political opinions may be, and he is a man who has looked after the co-operative matters and has not been mixed up with party politics, they are not associated with the views of the Government of the day. Mr. Harper is a young man who has spent the whole of his life in studying the problems of settlement as they affect the man on the land. He has been a successful agriculturist in the Swan district, in the viticultural districts, and in the South-West. On the property he owned near Balingup some of the first real work was done to show the value of subterranean clover and other grasses, and the suitability of the land of the South-West for intense culture. In this respect Mr. Harper and his associates, including Mr. Grasby, led the way to demonstrate the value of the South-West lands.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, you cannot say that.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: He was certainly amongst the foremost.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Nonsense!

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: And he is recognised as an authority on agricultural subjects and on matters affecting the in-

terests of the farmers' co-operative movement throughout the State. The public recognition of his abilities in this respect is shown by the positions he holds to-day. First, and probably this is where the sting comes in to the biased mind of the member for Nelson, he is chairman of directors of the Westralian Farmers Ltd.—the farmers' own co-operative company that is associated with the farmers' co-operative movement from one end of Western Australia to the other. Mr. Harper occupies a very high and honourable position in being chosen year after year as chairman of directors of the Westralian Farmers Ltd. I believe he is also president of the Co-operative Federation of Western Australia, with which the whole of the industrial co-operative movements, as well as the farmers' co-operative movement, are linked. At the co-operative conference this year Mr. Harper occupied the chair. Of course the Co-operative Federation of Western Australia is an entirely non-party organisation. It is an industrial as well as a farmers' gathering—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: All co-operative movements must be.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: And Mr. Harper is the gentleman who presides over the deliberations of the annual conference.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Is it a paid position?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It is not. The work he has been doing for the men on the land for years has been largely honorary. Some years ago Mr. Harper visited Europe and the United States, and spent nearly a year in studying agricultural subjects and problems, and questions of closer settlement and dairying. He visited the new fruit and intensive culture settlements in California, and thus gained great knowledge, and I doubt whether the like is possessed by any man in this State outside the Department of Agriculture. That he has studied these problems so widely qualifies him for the position to which he has been appointed. If this was one of the reasons that determined the Government in their choice, I congratulate them upon their decision.

Mr. Taylor: I do not think his ability has even been questioned. It was the matter of his prejudice.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: He is an independent man; he has not mixed up with party politics at all. The member for Nelson was good enough to refer to him as a man of honour and integrity. Mr. Harper is a man of judicial mind and possessed of sound judgment. He is the best possible chairman the Government could have appointed. If the Government do as well in other matters of administration, I shall be agreeably pleased and perhaps surprised. The member for Nelson referred to a paper that Mr. Harper read before the Primary Producers' Conference in Perth a year ago. As I remem-

ber it, his criticism was directed to the settlement of the Peel estate, and I venture to say the report of the select committee appointed by the Legislative Council was very much more scathing in its nature than anything he said. The parliamentary representatives of the Primary Producers' Association at that time were sharing with Sir James Mitchell the government of the country, and Mr. Harper's desire was to put any knowledge he possessed before the conference of the party sharing the administration of the country. I do not know whether Ministers of the Crown were present; the whole of the Country Party members, including its Ministers, were entitled to be there.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not know what was said there.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: But the hon. member's Ministers had every right to be present, as well as members of Parliament representing the Country Party, and the delegates. I do not remember the details of the paper, but I recollect that Mr. Harper pointed out the necessity for placing on good land men taking up small areas for intensive culture. He desired that the best land should be made available for group settlement, and he further desired that there should be careful administration of expenditure on group settlements, in order that the burden of repayment might be light. To the best of my memory the paper was helpful and valuable, and was promulgated with the idea of assisting the Government in their group settlement work. It is only because the chairman of the Royal Commission is not able to speak here that I have said a few words of what I know of him. I believe the Government made an excellent appointment.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The member for Nelson has referred to his prejudice.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I maintain that Mr. Harper has not a biased or prejudiced mind. He is a man of judicial temperament, possessing wide and special agricultural knowledge, and is highly qualified for the position to which the Government have appointed him.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.25]: I have no wish to criticise the Commission. The Premier did me the courtesy of asking me to name a member from this side of the House for the Royal Commission, and I suggested Mr. Latham. There are members representing the South-West on this side of the House, but I felt quite certain they would not wish to sit on the Royal Commission. Of course, I am responsible for the work going on in the South-West and I am not going to question the appointment of any Commission, or any form of inquiry. If I wanted an inquiry that would not impress the public very considerably, this Commission would suit me very well.

The Minister for Railways: What about your own nominees?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He is only one out of five members of the Commission.

Mr. Hughes: He is the only man in step?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: A Commission is appointed with the object of doing good, not of doing harm. The inquiry has been ordered in the hope that it will lead to some better result. There is no man in the State so foolish as to believe we have done all there is to be done.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I did not think you were so optimistic.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am not discussing the question from the hon. member's point of view. We have not yet got to the last ditch; we have not yet begun to fight for the development of this country. We have lingered long over this work.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: It is a great pity you did not linger longer before spending so much money and committing us to great expenditure.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member is quite incapable of forming a judgment that would be of any value. He does not even know what should be done on the goldfields he discusses so often. I have no objection to the hon. member expressing his opinions, because they carry no weight and have not the slightest influence.

The Minister for Railways interjected.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is another wise man who knows the number of pounds being expended. It is not a question of the number of pounds expended; it is the result obtained. I do not wish to wrangle about this matter, but I am not going to stand here and listen to interjections without replying to them. The Minister for Railways, when he occupied a seat on this side of the House, frequently spoke very plainly on matters of development, and yet he never saw beyond the end of the wharf at Geraldton and the 10-Mile Brook on this side.

The Minister for Railways: It is very easy to say that, but it is not so easy to prove it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: To prove it is quite easy. I am just pointing out to the Minister, as I am perfectly entitled to do, that we have lingered too long over this work of settling the country. The Premier knows what happened in Victoria, how in the years from 1851 to 1859 the population went from 77,000 to 520,000, the increase being greater than the total number of inhabitants of Western Australia at the present time. It does happen that in this country we have always had critics of that kind, people who objected to development. In saying that, I am not referring at all to the Premier, and certainly not to my old friend the Minister for Lands. The Premier knows as well as I do that the settle-

ment of the wheat belt used to be criticised. If we had had a Royal Commission of inquiry into the settlement of the wheat belt, there would have been no such export of wheat as we have now.

Mr. Taylor: You would have been hanged or shot.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have never quarrelled with the people who doubted, because they doubted then from want of knowledge. I never said that they were not honest in their objections to the development of the wheat belt. But I do ask hon. members to think what might have happened if the development of the wheat belt had been stopped, as it might easily have been stopped by a Royal Commission of inquiry. I was accused of extravagant management, of advancing money that would not give a profitable return to the man on the land. I was accused of destroying homes, of sending people out into the country to starve, of making it impossible for men to provide proper clothing for their wives. The results show that thousands of men who would to-day have been amongst the ranks of the wage-earners are in fact living comfortably and happily on the land, making money there, driving in motor cars, and generally doing well.

Mr. Hughes: The prompt action of the Labour Government during the drought of 1914 saved all that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The action of the Labour Government very nearly drove the settlers off the land.

Ministerial Members: Oh!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Let us face the position as fair-minded men should. Fortunately or unfortunately, the friends of the farmer to-day were the critics of those times. They were never in evidence when the farmer would have been glad of a helping hand or even a kind word. But when the day of better things came, when the farmer had money, when there were wheat schemes to be run, when there was profitable business to be done with the farmer, of course the farmer had swarms of friends. It was a useful political cry so long as the development of the wheat belt could be criticised.

The Minister for Railways: What about the motion?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This is about the motion.

The Minister for Railways: The motion refers to the personnel of the Commission.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I wish the Minister would keep quiet. Just as the wheat belt would have been destroyed by a Royal Commission in those days, so it may be that South-Western development will be retarded by a commission of inquiry. I hope it will not. The member for Nelson is only doing his duty in bringing the matter forward. As representative of the district he is very much concerned about the personnel of the Commission. It is always objectionable to have judges who have pre-

judged the case. I know Mr. Harper very well as an active and energetic young man, but he has had a little too much to say about South-Western development. I believe, and I am sure the Minister for Lands agrees with me, that the South-West will do as well in its way as the wheat belt has done in its way. In this country of ours we possess advantages held by very few other countries, and certainly by very few other Australian States. The South-Western land and the South-Western climate and the South-Western rainfall all help the production of anything one likes to grow. It does happen that in Western Australia we produce only a little of anything, but what we do produce is all of the very first quality. Our wheat, our wool, our fruit cannot be beaten in any part of the world. Now we have set about the development of this rich but difficult territory. I do not agree that we ought to have brought men from the East to examine the question of developing our lands. We have already had too much condemnation from the Eastern States, and it would have been possible to get from the East men more concerned that butter and bacon and other commodities should not be produced in Western Australia than concerned to see that they should be produced here. Our trade of 1½ millions sterling in butter, bacon, sugar and so forth is a very valuable trade to the Eastern States. If inquiry is necessary, we can do better by appointing men who are in Western Australia. We did have a Royal Commission to inquire into agriculture generally, and the report of that Commission has no doubt been read quite recently by the Government, read before they made the appointment of the present Royal Commission. The present Commission should have consisted of men capable of doing the best that can possibly be done for our great South-West. I am not prepared to say that the present Commission will attain anything like that objective, though I hope they will. All we are concerned about is the development of this country, and the bringing of prosperity to Western Australia. If immigration and development are stopped, there will be unemployment. We are not manufacturing much; and our gold mines, though there is talk of appointing a Royal Commission to inquire into the goldmining industry, do not appear to be doing anything, or immediately likely to do anything, that will mean a great production of wealth, or the employment of many men, or the creation of trade and the stimulation of commercial activity. The great industry open to us is agriculture, and a great step towards expanding agriculture is the development of the South-West. We have had back from the wheat belt every penny we spent there. Time and again during the last five years the Government have asked the farmers on the wheat belt to clear more land and have offered them whatever they might require for that purpose in the shape of advances.

The Minister for Railways: We are pressing money on them just the same; we are carrying on the good work.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No doubt. Hon. gentlemen opposite told the people they would do that.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: We have appointed this Royal Commission, and now you are growling.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Everybody in the State will know just what is being done from time to time.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I stopped the chief critic in reality, and that is why he is growling about the appointment of this Commission.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: To whom does the Honorary Minister refer?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You know all right.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Your late henchman.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I had no henchman.

Mr. George: The Honorary Minister is speaking in riddles.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: So far as I know, I am not even now criticising the appointments to the Royal Commission, but am pointing out the responsibility of the Commission, and am trying to impress upon the House the importance of the Commission's work to the workmen of this country, to the very men who are to be found at Beaufort-street—since Beaufort-street has been mentioned—and also to all other sections of the people. I hope Ministers are seized of the responsibilities of their positions.

The Minister for Railways: Do you suggest they are not?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have not made any such suggestion. I hope we all realise that our duty is to develop the country. If Ministers think it can be done without money, they are green. If they think it can be done without time, they are still green. If they think this country can do without development, they are very green indeed.

The Minister for Railways: We don't think any such thing.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Inquiry, honestly conducted and open and fair, and animated by a desire to help, can never do any harm.

Mr. Hughes: Have you known a Commission of this nature to be otherwise than honest?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Certainly not; but there is no getting away from the fact that Mr. Harper has already said enough, in a semi-public way, at a meeting of the Primary Producers' Association, to show that he is, or at that time was, prejudiced against the development of the South-West. Probably this discussion may do him some good. Men with open minds should have been appointed to the Commission. Particularly I think it is ex-

traordinary to go outside for a chairman. This is a paid Commission, and the chairman is always paid higher than the other members. If four members of Parliament can be found satisfactory, could not a fifth have been found who would make a satisfactory chairman? It is an extraordinary thing for four members of Parliament, who have been elected by the people, to be asked to sit under an outside chairman. I do not know that it has ever been done before. Further, I do not know what is in the minds of the Government.

Mr. North: The unseen hand.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Lunacy Commission had a chairman from outside, but he was a specialist. Mr. Harper is not the only specialist with regard to land settlement. There are specialists in that respect sitting on the other side of the Chamber, and I cannot see any specialist there who is not as good as Mr. Harper and would not have made as satisfactory a chairman as Mr. Harper. Every one of the four members of the Commission is answerable to the electors, and so it would have been better if the chairman had also been drawn from this House. The South-West will stand the fullest inquiry, and so will the group settlements. Many of the group settlers are our own working men, and they, helped by the Minister for Lands, are doing good, solid work. If in the rest of Australia there had been such criticism of development as we have had in this part of the continent, Australia would be a very poor place to live in to-day. The South-West is not a second Gippsland, it is better than Gippsland, because it is more easily handled, while the climate is infinitely superior. It has remained there all these years untouched, and now that we propose to develop it, we get all kinds of criticism and in some cases objections are raised. Our duty is clear; it is to Western Australia, and if we carry it out honestly and fearlessly, without regard to party, the State will derive the advantage. The Government know that I shall be only too willing to help them carry out the policy of developing that part of the State. We are all engaged in the work of governing Western Australia, and though we on this side of the House, at the moment, have not the same responsibility as members on the bench opposite, we still do not hesitate to offer our assistance. My opinion is that a better Commission could have been appointed from members sitting on the Ministerial side of the House. It is a pity to constitute a Commission of members, some of whom have expressed themselves against the work that they are asked to inquire into. The subject that the Commission has been asked to investigate is very big, as well as important, and we should agree that the mover of the motion has done his duty in bringing the matter before the House. I hope that the members representing the South-Western part of the State will have

something to say on the subject, because I am convinced they all believe in that part of the State.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, debate adjourned.

MOTION—POLICE DEPARTMENT, ADMINISTRATION.

To inquire by Select Committee.

Debate resumed from 3rd September on the motion by Mr. Hughes—

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the administration of the Police Department.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.50]: I listened with a great deal of interest to the remarks of the member who submitted the motion and I endeavoured to follow his reasoning in the hope of hearing logical arguments in favour of the appointment of a select committee. I wish to notify the House that it is my intention to move an amendment in the direction of having the investigations carried out by a judge of the Supreme Court. The motion, as amended, would then read—

That a judge of the Supreme Court be appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the administration of the Police Department.

If the mover of the motion turns to page 72 of the Standing Orders, he will find that a select committee has power to call for persons and papers and records, and that the chairman shall direct the Clerk to summon the witnesses to be examined before the committee. Then if he will turn to page 81, he will find that witnesses cannot be examined on oath except in cases provided for by law. Therefore, if the object he has in view is to carry out a thorough investigation into the administration of the department it would be better that the inquiry should be conducted by an impartial judge who would be able to take evidence on oath.

Mr. Hughes: Do you suggest that the select committee would be biased?

Mr. THOMSON: After having heard the speech of the hon. member, I must confess that he left me with the impression that he was biased.

Mr. Hughes: One must make out a prima facie case.

Mr. THOMSON: The Minister for Justice, in speaking to the motion, said that it was apparent there was discontent in the service with regard to promotions.

Mr. Mann: And there always will be.

Mr. THOMSON: No doubt. But the point is this: we are not going to argue that because there is discontent in the Police Department we should appoint a committee of members of this Chamber to inquire into the reasons for that discontent. The Police Department, above all other departments,

should be free from any taint of political bias.

Mr. Panton: There is discontent in the police forces throughout Australia.

Mr. THOMSON: That may be, but it is not right that men occupying positions in the Police Department should feel that a select committee of this House is going to inquire into the administration, and that they should fear possible intimidation. I am not suggesting that that is the motive behind the motion; I am just suggesting that that is the possible construction that may be put upon the appointment of a select committee. The Minister told us that the Commissioner had not used his personal influence to prevent promotions without recommendations being made by the inspectorial board. When the Minister makes a statement like that, he is rather casting a reflection upon his own administration.

The Minister for Justice: I said it had been stated.

Mr. THOMSON: If such is happening, then it is a reflection upon the general administration. The Minister went on to say that if the appointment of an appeal board was recommended by the committee, the Government would consider the matter. If the Minister thinks that an appeal board should be appointed, he should not delay in creating it.

The Minister for Justice: There have been no appointments in the inspectorial branch since I have been in charge.

Mr. THOMSON: I consider that the police occupy a peculiar position.

The Minister for Justice: The request was made by the Police Association.

Mr. THOMSON: Then it should not be necessary for the suggested select committee to consider whether or not there should be an appeal board. That is a responsibility which the Government should take on their own shoulders. The mover of the motion declared that he did not propose to say very much in support of the motion because it was one concerning which as little as possible should be said until the select committee had concluded its labours. That was no justification for asking for the appointment of a select committee. The hon. member remarked he had nothing to say, but probably would have something to say at a later stage, after the committee had concluded its labours. Are we to assume that it is the intention of the mover of the motion that the select committee should be free to delve into the archives of the Police Department, and secure information which, in my opinion, should be secret and sacred, and then disclose that information to the community at large by placing it on the Table of the House? Such a proceeding would be wrong. The hon. member also remarked that there had been a police strike in Victoria and that although the Western Australian police force had not reached a similar stage, there had been a number of strange happenings, not only in connection

with the internal administration of the department, but respecting the attitude the police should adopt towards various sections of the community. The Police Department do their duty justly and fairly to every section of the community, and I would regret very much if a charge such as that suggested by the hon. member when moving the motion, that there was a possibility of the department acting wrongfully against any section, could be made on sound or logical grounds. We have heard a great deal about graft that is in existence in America. I have only heard of it. I certainly would regret very much if it was possible to suggest that we had anything savouring of graft in the Police Department of this State. I honestly believe that the police in Western Australia compare more than favourably with any similar body in any other part of the world. I am dealing with the position as I know it, and if in the opinion of the House it is necessary to inquire into the internal administration of the department, that inquiry should be conducted by one who occupies a judicial position and who would be absolutely impartial. If the House thinks an inquiry is necessary it should be held by a judge who has a legal training and a knowledge of the working of the Police Department.

Mr. Lutey: Our judges have more to do now than they can carry out.

Mr. THOMSON: Perhaps some members of Parliament are in the same position. An inquiry by a judge would be of more value to the Minister than if it were made by hon. members. Unfortunately some of us may be biased. It is not right that the Police Department should be placed in fear lest at any time when the pendulum swings over, another section of the House may move for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into its affairs. Last night I stated I looked upon the Police Department as the law of the land. The police administer the laws that Parliament places upon the Statute-book, and do so impartially and with justice and fairness to all men. The appointment of a select committee would not be in the best interests of the department. If one is appointed the mover would be the chairman. I say respectfully and not at all offensively, that the few sentences I have quoted from the remarks of the member for East Perth show that he is already biased against the department. If there are anomalies in the police service to be rectified, this can be done by the Government granting to the police force the right to go to a board of appeal. If a police officer is being treated harshly he could go to that board. It would be most unwise to appoint this select committee. If, however, an inquiry is necessary, it should be held by a judge. I move an amendment—

That the words "select committee" be struck out and "Royal Commission consisting of a judge of the Supreme Court" be inserted in lieu.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam—on amendment) [6.7]: I object to any form of inquiry, but if there is to be one, it should be held by a Royal Commission. I do not say that to reflect upon the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes). It is the custom of this House for the mover of such a motion to be made chairman of such committee. It would not be his fault, therefore, if he became the chairman; but it is wrong that the member who asks for the inquiry should become a member of the board of inquiry.

Mr. Thomson: I did not suggest it is wrong.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do so. It is wrong that the member who makes the charge should also be on the select committee. It has, however, always been the custom. I intend to do my best to defeat any form of inquiry. No case has been made out for one. Any form of inquiry into the police force should only follow some definite charge, and be held with the full approval of the Government. Nothing has been advanced to justify an inquiry even by a Royal Commission. No trouble has been mentioned with which the Government are not capable of dealing. Ours is the best police force in Australia. No body of men in the State is doing its duty in any better way than are members of the police force. Theirs is an unpleasant task but they carry it out remarkably well, and we are all satisfied with them. An inquiry would set officer against officer and officer against man, and must leave an aftermath of trouble and bother which ought to be avoided. I support the amendment only because it is better to have a Royal Commission than a select committee, but I mean to do all I can to defeat the motion.

Mr. Thomson: I prefer a Royal Commission to the other form of inquiry, if an investigation is thought to be necessary.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope the hon. member will oppose the inquiry, even by Royal Commission, and that he is free to vote against the motion if it is amended.

Mr. Thomson: I am as free as air.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I will help the hon. member to amend the motion, but only with the idea of killing it later on.

Mr. HUGHES (East Perth—on amendment) [6.12]: If I speak against this amendment shall I be precluded from speaking in reply on the motion?

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member confines himself entirely to the amendment he will be able to speak later to the motion.

Mr. HUGHES: The remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the sub-Opposition would apply equally to any select committee.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I have said so.

Mr. HUGHES: Whenever a select committee is asked for, the mover is obliged to make out a prima facie case. He does not stand in the light of an accuser.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Very often he does.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss the main question, the wisdom or unwisdom, the advisability or otherwise, of an inquiry. He must discuss this amendment. The amendment confines the hon. member to a discussion upon the relative merits of an inquiry by a Royal Commission or a select committee. These are the only matters upon which he can speak now.

Mr. HUGHES: I shall wait to reply later on.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton—on amendment) [6.13]: I am inclined to favour the amendment, but it is a little east-iron in character for it lays down who is to be the Royal Commissioner. It may be desirable that the Royal Commission should be a judge, but in view of what is happening just now and the possibility of long-service leave being granted it may be inconvenient to appoint a judge for this purpose.

Mr. Mann: The commissioner should be someone with judicial experience.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: We may say that. The amendment would meet with more support if it did not specify a judge of the Supreme Court. Would I be permitted to move an amendment on the amendment to the end that the words I object to may be deleted from the amendment?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister is entitled to move an amendment on the amendment.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Since the tea adjournment I have been looking through the Standing Orders and I suggest to the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) that it will be necessary to dispose of the amendment, before I can proceed with my further proposal.

Mr. THOMSON: As the Minister has indicated that he is agreeable to the appointment of a Royal Commission, I will, with the permission of the House, withdraw the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment be withdrawn?

Members: No.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	..	17

Majority against .. 1

AYMS.

Mr. Barnard	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Brown	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Davy	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Denton	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Willcock
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Lambert	(Teller.)
Mr. Mann	

NOVS.

Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Millington
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Munse
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Panton
Mr. Heron	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Holman	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lutey	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. MANN (Perth) [7.40]: I oppose the motion because I am convinced that the appointment of a select committee of inquiry is not justified. It has not been asked for; it is not required. It has not been asked for by the public nor by the members of the police force.

Mr. Lambert: How do you know that?

Mr. Lutey: Who are the public?

Mr. MANN: I am as closely in touch with the members of the police force as any other member of this Chamber.

Mr. Holman: You are, with the heads.

Mr. MANN: There are always heads and tails; the hon. member is chiefly with the tails. There is no more contented body of men in any Government department of Western Australia than the police force.

Member: That shows you know nothing about it.

Mr. MANN: As with any large body of men in any Government department, there may be those who have grievances, probably because they have not received just what they think they should have obtained. The service has to be considered and also the convenience of the public. Consequently, when we are dealing with the administration of a department, it must be recognised that, of necessity, there must be some discontented men. Speaking generally of the police force, I can only say I am positive they are a contented body of men who do their work honourably and well.

Mr. Marshall: That must be since you left them.

Mr. MANN: If I were still in the police force, I might have something to do with the hon. member.

Mr. Holman: You would never be able to catch him.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MANN: The police force of Western Australia is the envy of the other States of the Commonwealth. There is no long record of undiscovered crimes

here such as is to be found in the other States. We never hear any serious charges of corruption or mal-administration here, nor do we hear the breath of suspicion regarding our officers.

Member: Then what are you afraid of?

Mr. MANN: I am afraid of nothing, neither is the department. It will probably appeal to every member as it appeals to me, that the working of a department must be interfered with if officers' duties are to be inquired into by members of Parliament who probably have some inside information from someone who has a personal grievance. Those concerned will feel that confidential files and reports are not safe if they are to be pulled out and criticised and laid bare before the public. I had the honour of serving in the Police Department for 24 years. During that time I was associated with all members, rising from the ranks to the various departmental heads. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) made various complaints, the most serious of which was that members of the police force had been incited by their officers to manufacture crime.

The Minister for Justice: To collect evidence.

Mr. MANN: I doubt if the hon. member will substantiate that charge. It has never been suggested in any of our courts by any solicitor for the defence or any prisoner that evidence has been manufactured.

Mr. Hughes: We know, you and I know, that evidence has been manufactured.

Mr. MANN: Nothing of the sort. If such a thing had occurred, would we not have heard of it in the courts? Would not prisoners have mentioned it? There has never been any suggestion of it. The hon. member suggested that uniform officers having long service should receive promotion into the C.I.D. when vacancies occur. An officer may be a very excellent officer on uniform duty, but may not be at all suitable for criminal investigation work. Notwithstanding that he may have a very fine record extending over many years and would certainly continue to do good service in his own department, he might be quite a failure in the other department. I can offer no better analogy than that of taking a man from, say, the sales department of a large warehouse, and giving him a position in the accountancy branch. The experience in the one post would serve him not at all in the other. Exception has been taken to the manner in which the men are promoted. I doubt if there is any better way than that of having the men selected for promotion by the officers who know what is required and who know the men. If it were left to the head of the department himself there might be a suggestion that he had some friendly feeling or special favouritism towards the man promoted; but when the man's career is placed before officers in a position to judge, and who know the man, then undoubtedly

those officers are the most capable of saying who should have promotion. In the service in Scotland Yard, it is the custom to place a man for six months under two different officers, and those in authority are guided by the reports of the officers as to whether or not that man is suited for a higher position. Who is going to judge? Are we to have a board of outside persons who know nothing about the qualifications of a police officer? Are we to take the bare file, and because one officer may have 20 years of clean service, whereas another has been fined for some breach of the regulations, to say that the officer with the clean file should have the higher position? If that were so, I know of some very good men who would have been passed over. For an officer in doing his duty always takes some risk, and there are times when he will of necessity break regulations, whereas another officer does nothing at all but follow the even tenor of his way. Will it be suggested that he should receive promotion before the man who has done excellent work? Who is in the best position to consider the qualifications of those men? The promotion board as at present constituted is a good one. There may be points that should be decided by an appeal board as, for instance, when the qualifications of two men are very close. In regard to complaints by members of the force, the men themselves have an association. The officers of that association are all drawn from the ranks. I know them all personally, and can say they are very capable men and utterly fearless. If it were not so, they would not be able to hold their positions. Those men would not allow any of their comrades to be given an unfair deal; they would throw the weight of their association on his side. From time to time they have found it necessary to approach the Minister with a request for amendment of regulations or for some concession; and they have accepted with good grace the decisions of the Minister. I understand that quite recently they approached the Minister and suggested that if there was to be an inquiry into their work it should be by a Royal Commission. The Minister can say whether or not that is correct. The men say they have no complaint, but if it be considered necessary to hold an inquiry into their work it should be by a Royal Commission, by someone who is not prejudiced against certain of their members. It would be useless for the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) to say he is not prejudiced against certain members of the force; because when speaking on the Estimates last year he was very clear in his charges against certain members of the force, and I am sure he has not now forgotten what he then said. I regret that the House did not see fit to carry the amendment and appoint the Royal Commission, rather than have the department inquired into by members of Parliament, all of whom will be prejudiced one way or the other, because certain political

views opposed to their own are held by certain members of the force. The police force have been carrying out many extraneous duties apart from those provided for in the Police Act. They have taken over the control of the Traffic Act. The Minister now in charge of that Act will, I am sure, admit that the work of the police in administering that Act has been very efficient.

Mr. Lambert: It is a credit to them.

Mr. MANN: But every police officer who does his duty fearlessly must at times tread on somebody's corns. Because, perhaps, he has trodden on the corns of the friend of a member of Parliament, he is now to be tried by the member of Parliament himself. Members, when they turned down that amendment, did not realise just what they were doing. Although some members have grievances against the police force, yet the first time they are in trouble it is to the police force that they run for assistance. I have frequently heard members of the public speak disparagingly of the police force; yet immediately trouble arose those people have had confidence enough in the force to go to them for protection. If we break down the morale of that service by investigating every little error made, we shall break down a most excellent service. There has never been a suggestion of any act of dishonesty or of corruption or of any maladministration by any member of the police force. From time to time the public have commended the force for its very excellent work. Members of this House also have commended the force for the manner in which it has done its work. If the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) had put up one specific charge against any officer I should have said, "By all means, let us inquire into it." But he did not do anything of the sort. He just said, "I have been told this and that, and I want to see whether it is true." The Minister is in a position to inquire into any little tittle tattle or charge made by any person against members of the force. And if any member of the force has a grievance against the officer controlling, he has his remedy. Moreover, in addition to the remedy provided by statute, he has his association to back him up if his grievance be justifiable. Another point the member for East Perth touched upon was that something wrong had been done because a young officer had had to walk the streets with a woman of disrepute. I doubt if that was a correct version of the incident. Frequently is it necessary to employ informers in cases of sly grog selling. The Act provides for it, or it would not be done. When a wine-shop or any other place is carrying on an illicit trade, and complaints are brought under the notice of the officers in charge of the force that women are being illicitly supplied with liquor, the officers are bound to take steps to prevent its continuance. The only steps open to them are those of a prosecution. So they have to avail themselves of an informer. I

know of instances in which young officers have been told off to accompany a man or woman into a wine saloon to see whether drink is being served. Prosecutions have followed, the circumstances have been narrated in the court and in some cases fines have been recorded. As an ex-officer of the department, I know that where a certain course of action has not met with the approval of those in charge, prosecutions have not followed. If the young officer told off to accompany the woman to the wine saloon considered his feelings were being injured, the best thing for him to do would be to find another job. If he cannot do his duty and forget about it afterwards, he would be better in some other walk of life. If his moral character is likely to suffer because of duty of that kind, he should seek other employment. Imagine a solicitor defending a woman of dissolute character and complaining that his feelings had been hurt! This is the duty of the police and, when the duty is done, the officer should forget having met the woman. The hon. member said this man had to pass his friends in the street. If he remains in the force he will have to pass his friends a hundred times and probably under worse conditions. Members of the force must have sufficient grit to do their work, knowing that it will not interfere with their moral character.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Minus a conscience.

Mr. MANN: Would it be suggested that because a detective was engaged in capturing thieves, he himself would become a thief. He must learn their habits and customs in order to combat their operations. He must go out at night and take risks, associate with them and learn their resorts and habits. Because a detective does that, will it be suggested that his moral character is going to suffer? He must have a character sufficiently strong to do his work, and so must the young officer who goes into a wine saloon to see a woman served with liquor. The hon. member said the police had been lined up and told they were not getting enough cases. I have never known anything of that sort to occur. If there has been a series of night crimes, the men going on duty have been lined up and told, "There is a mob of burglars at work and you must keep your eyes open. These men must be caught." That is a reasonable and common sense way of maintaining efficiency in the service. It livens the men up to a sense of their duty. I have never known it suggested that they must arrest the first man they see, and then get witnesses to give false evidence. The hon. member made a point about members of the force being transferred to distant parts of the State. That is done because, in the outlying stations, a police officer has to carry out many duties. In addition to being sergeant of police he is probably registrar of births, deaths and marriages,

mining registrar, bailiff, electoral registrar, clerk of courts, and many other things. So, he must be a man of long experience and considerable ability. There are not too many such officers, for they must come from the top rank of sergeants or senior constables. Consequently a sergeant may be sent out on such duty within a period of years. He may feel aggrieved, but those administering the department are in the best position to judge. They have to choose an officer for the job, and having chosen the man they consider most suitable, the responsibility is theirs.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Why is a man kept as senior constable for 22 years?

Mr. MANN: I do not know what case the hon. member has in mind, but I know of many men who have been constables for longer periods than that. Probably they are good constables, but would not make good officers.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Some of them have qualified for promotion by examination.

Mr. MANN: In every sphere of life there are men able to pass examinations, but they may not be the best men to fill higher positions. A case was brought under my notice by way of complaint of an officer sent to the North-West when it was not his turn. I went to the department and ascertained that he had never been to the North-West, although he had been in back parts of the country. I was told the transfer meant an increase of £175 a year to him, because of the extra duties, and that he was considered the most suitable officer for the position. The departmental view was, "It is necessary to have a good man for the position. If anything goes wrong we have to answer for it." Consequently I felt I could take no further action. Members of the force are well catered for. On entering the service they go through a good school. Their quarters are superior to any in the Commonwealth, and the conditions under which the barracks are controlled are equal to, if not better than those in any other State. The holiday terms and other privileges are first-class.

Mr. Marshall: You would not suggest that the traffic branch are working in a very good structure.

Mr. MANN: The members of that branch are compelled to work in an unsuitable building, but that is no fault of the department.

Mr. Marshall: It is a matter of administration.

Mr. MANN: The administration have protested for years. Last year I took the then Minister for Works down and showed him where the traffic branch were housed, and asked whether he thought it fair that men should be compelled to work under such conditions. He agreed it was not fair. He remedied one or two other grievances, and

promised to provide a more suitable building as soon as finances permitted.

Mr. George: If I had had the money, I would have done it at once.

Mr. MANN: The traffic branch are housed in a stable and the conditions under which they work are rotten. The head of the department, however, has been protesting for years. The housing of this branch has caused discontent amongst the men, and some have even asked to be transferred. That, however, is no reflection upon the department, who have to accept from the Government the premises given them. If there is any blame that better premises have not been provided, it lies with the Government. The Weights and Measures Act has been lying dormant for years because no suitable premises have been provided. The weights and scales are lying there and officers have been selected for the work, but no accommodation has been provided. I have endeavoured to show that the police are a first-class body of men, capable in their work as the records show. There is no long record of undiscovered crime here as there is in other States. There is no suggestion of corruption, dishonesty or maladministration. There has been no public outcry. The men have made no complaints and there has been no complaint from the courts where their work is reviewed. The hon. member has not even presented a case of suspicion. He has repeated hearsay, picked up from men in the street, and I submit that the House should not grant a select committee to inquire into the records of men who have done and are doing excellent service for the State.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [8.15]: I certainly would not vote for the appointment of a select committee, as suggested by the motion. I consider that the proper tribunal to inquire into a department like the police is one entirely independent of Parliament. It is generally admitted that we have a most efficient police force, giving great satisfaction. Probably there are cases that seem to call for investigation, and doubtless such cases are familiar to the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes). But I think that hon. member knows also that our police force, taken all round, are doing excellent service. I do not suppose a police force in any other part of the world is called upon to work under such difficult conditions as our force. Moreover, we have to consider not only the work done by members of the force in the metropolitan area. We must take into account, too, the altogether unselfish work done by them in the outback portions of the State, in the North-West, and at the isolated outposts of civilisation.

Mr. Lamond: They are getting well paid for what they do.

Mr. LAMBERT: One can at least appreciate their good work. The member for

Pilbara suggests that they are getting well paid.

Mr. George: In the way of abuse.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not think they are well enough paid. The major portion of their work is not the detection of crime. In many districts they do good service quite irrespective of what the Police Act lays down. Goldfields members who come in contact with the force must candidly acknowledge that the police do work of which the State may well be proud. The flock may contain black sheep, but the isolating of those cases would hardly be work proper for a select committee to perform. I hope that the Minister for Justice, even if the motion is defeated, will not be unmindful of many of the points advanced by the mover. The matter of promotion, and many other features touched upon by the hon. member, might well be investigated by a tribunal which would be accepted on all hands as totally unbiassed, and as being animated by the one desire to secure the better discipline of the police force. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) mentioned the work of the police force in connection with the Traffic Act. I agree that credit must be given to the force for their work in that connection. When the measure passed this Chamber, I made some perhaps flippant references to the police force, references intended in a merely jocular way. Unfortunately they were misunderstood by some members of the force.

Mr. Richardson: Not Understood" again!

Mr. LAMBERT: Probably that circumstance was responsible for my having to face the "bank" once or twice for breaches of the Traffic Act. No doubt to some extent I deserved it. Traffic conditions, it must be admitted, are a thousand times better now than they were in the days before the Act gave control to the force. Possibly there are anomalies in the matter of promotion, and there may be some just grievances legitimately calling for investigation; and therefore I hope the Minister for Justice will bear in mind the views expressed by various hon. members, and will recognise the necessity for appointing a Royal Commission of no political significance whatever. I hope it will be known for all time that this party will not tolerate anything having the slightest tinge of political colour in such a connection. I know the member for East Perth has not had anything of that sort in his mind even for a single moment. He comes in contact with many members of the force, and has knowledge of many of their grievances. Apparently every member for East Perth is saddled with all the grievances of members of the police force and of railway employees.

Mr. Hughes: Didn't you intend to move for a select committee?

Mr. LAMBERT: I intended to move for a Royal Commission. It seems to be the fate of every successive member for East

Perth to endeavour to rectify grievances against the Police Department and the Railway Department. That fact was, I believe, partly responsible for the political funeral of the last two members for East Perth. I do not think it will prove so in the case of the present member, who has sufficient ability to deal with such matters on their merits. I hope the House will refuse to appoint a select committee, and I hope that the Minister for Justice will appoint a Royal Commissioner quite separate from Parliament to investigate the various matters which have been raised in the course of this debate.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [8.22]: We have no opportunity now of further amending the motion. I trust the House will not give a select committee, because the motion is too sweeping. It asks for inquiry into the administration of the Police Department. That would mean that all the files and all the transactions of the department for years past would be scrutinised by the members of the select committee. Those members would be appointed from this House, and the proposed function is not one that members of Parliament should perform, nor is it one that would be accepted by the people of this State. If there is any specific grievance of any individual member of the police force, a select committee would be capable of inquiring into that matter, but not into all the ramifications of the department. If there is any necessity for an inquiry, no one will know that better than the Minister controlling the department. I hope the House will reject the motion. If there is necessity for a Royal Commission, I am confident that the Minister controlling the department will appoint it, and that that Commission will be absolutely free from any political party in this State or in any other State. Surely we can find somebody capable single-handed of making the necessary inquiry without giving the matter any political significance. I could say many things about the value of our police force. With other members I say that no man can travel this country from one end to the other without meeting the police in the little outback towns. The police are most courteous, and know their business, and control the areas without many prosecutions, which is the best sign of an efficient officer. Beyond doubt the police do their duty. I am sorry the member for East Perth was so wounded by some action of the Police Department that he moved this motion. The hon. member did not put up one tangible reason why the select committee should be appointed.

Mr. George: Not one.

Mr. TAYLOR: I listened with great patience to the hon. member.

Mr. Hughes: There are reasons.

Mr. TAYLOR: There may be, but no reason has been given for a sweeping motion of this kind to inquire into the whole administration of the Police Department.

Mr. George: If there are reasons, they ought to have been given.

Mr. TAYLOR: Yes, to justify the passing of the motion.

Mr. Sleeman: And then you would have said, "What a biased party!"

Mr. TAYLOR: I have tried to enter upon this debate without any party feeling. I place my confidence in the Minister controlling the department to do the right thing if the motion be rejected.

Mr. Hughes: That is why you called for some papers.

Mr. TAYLOR: I called for papers on one specific point.

Mr. Hughes: You did not have much confidence then.

Mr. TAYLOR: It was not a matter of confidence, but of wanting to see some papers, a totally different thing. This motion asks for a sweeping inquiry into the whole administration of the Police Department, and I hope the Government will oppose the motion, leaving the Minister, if he thinks fit, to appoint a Royal Commissioner outside all party politics.

Mr. HUGHES (East Perth—in reply) [8.26]: For about three hours this afternoon various members have extended themselves verbally in belittling members of Parliament in general.

Mr. George: No.

Mr. Taylor: Not on this debate.

Mr. HUGHES: We have listened to a dissertation on the incapacity of four members of Parliament who have been appointed Royal Commissioners. In very plain language we have been told that those hon. members are not capable of weighing evidence and giving an unbiased decision.

Mr. Richardson: On a point of order, is the hon. member in order in discussing what has already been dealt with by this House?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in discussing a matter already decided by the House.

Mr. HUGHES: Then I shall not give expression to the inference I gathered from the remarks made during the earlier debate. However, this House has for years been granting select committees.

Mr. Thomson: But never a select committee to inquire into the full working of a department.

Mr. HUGHES: The House has granted select committees to inquire into matters even more important than the working of a department. I can go back, and the member for Murray-Wellington can go back with me, to the time when a select committee was appointed to inquire into the integrity of a Premier, upon whom all sorts of innuendoes were cast. The Minister for Works of the day sat up burning the midnight oil to find out what had occurred in connection with his department. Let members who object to a select committee to inquire into the affairs of a department, cast their minds back to the Wyndham

Meat Works select committee and the Nevanas inquiry. Did not members of this House on that occasion inquire into the internal affairs of a department?

Mr. Taylor: They made a case, anyhow, or they would not have got a committee.

Mr. HUGHES: If they made a case, they did not achieve their object.

Mr. George: Certainly they did.

Mr. HUGHES: Their object was to damn eternally the reputation of a Labour Premier.

Mr. George: No; no. Mr. Speaker, I object to that.

Mr. HUGHES: If the hon. member interjecting is not careful, I will turn up some of the things he said three or four years ago.

Mr. Teesdale: How about turning yourself up?

Mr. George: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. member rise to a point of order?

Mr. George: The inquiry referred to was not for the purpose of scandalising a Premier.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Mr. HUGHES: Whenever it has been necessary to grant a select committee, two members have been selected from each side of the House, with the mover of the motion as a rule appointed chairman. Has it ever been suggested previously that members of this Chamber are incapable of weighing evidence and rendering an unbiassed decision? That is what has been suggested here this afternoon. That has been the tenor of the opposition to this motion for a select committee. It was not sufficient to suggest that the chairman was biassed, but the suggestion was also made that the other members of the committee were biassed; for we know that the chairman cannot bring in a finding on his own account, that he must have at least a majority of the committee behind him.

Mr. George: We do not yet know who the members of the committee are to be.

Mr. HUGHES: Notwithstanding which, we have had to listen to innuendoes that the committee would be biassed, and would bring in a finding not in accordance with the evidence.

Mr. George: Oh, that is what you say.

Mr. HUGHES: If the suggestions did not mean that, then what did they mean? It ill-becomes members to make such assertions about other members. That is what it amounts to.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are quite wrong.

Mr. HUGHES: One cannot make the sweeping assertion that the committee would be biassed, without impeaching the members of that committee.

Mr. Holman: Perhaps those you complain of were speaking for themselves.

Mr. HUGHES: Whether or not they intended to imply that, there is only one of two inferences to be drawn from their remarks: either that the unknown members of the committee were incapable—

Mr. Taylor: One of them is known. If we knew the other four as well as we know you, you would have no chance of getting the inquiry.

Mr. HUGHES: Surely it will not be suggested that the other four members would allow the chairman to lead them by the nose, and would subscribe their names to his report, whether it were right or wrong. The suggestions made could only mean that the committee would be incapable of examining the evidence and giving a proper decision, or, alternatively, that, prejudiced against the police, they would bring in a biassed verdict.

Mr. Taylor: We had better have a commission to inquire into the character of members of Parliament.

Mr. HUGHES: I would be prepared to have a commission to inquire into the charge made by the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) against the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George).

Mr. George: What charge?

Mr. HUGHES: The charge made when he accused you of selling your political principles in order to get a job.

Mr. George: I do not remember it.

Mr. HUGHES: You were not in Parliament at the time, but he used his privilege to make the charge.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must confine himself to the question.

Mr. George interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member need not trouble himself about me.

Mr. George: I am troubling about your repeating what is a palpable lie.

Mr. HUGHES: It is not a palpable lie. If the hon. member turns up page 164 of "Hansard" of 1904, he will see that the member for Mt. Margaret accused him of sacrificing his political principles in order to get a job.

Mr. George: It may have been said, but it was not true, all the same.

Mr. HUGHES: I agree with that, and I deplore the statement made by the member for Mt. Margaret. From some of the remarks heard to-night one would think the proposed inquiry was the result of a spasm in me. But for the last seven years, ever since the Labour Government went out of office, the Labour Party has been complaining of the administration of the police force. We require only a twopenny industrial dispute to find the police in mass formation, with guns and tents and ambulances, and nurses to take care of the wounded. At every twopenny little industrial dispute the police force has been called out on behalf of the Employers' Federation.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: We never saw you in the front line.

Mr. HUGHES: No, and you never will find me going to the other side of the world to shed the blood of the workers in the interests of capital.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: That is a lie!

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member knows it is true. The member for Perth talked about manufacturing evidence. Does he not remember the heresy hunts at the time of the conscription issue? How, then, can he deny the manufacturing of evidence?

Mr. Thomson: Is that what you want the inquiry for?

Mr. HUGHES: No, a committee from this House could not inquire into that, for it is a Commonwealth matter. However, the police are manufacturing evidence every day.

Mr. Mann: Give a concrete case.

Mr. HUGHES: What about the time when you made me deliver a speech on the Esplanade, although I was not within a mile of the place?

Mr. George: That's nothing. The Press once made me deliver a speech at Greenbushes when I was not out of the city.

Mr. Lambert: But then you talk in your sleep.

Mr. HUGHES: On this question of false evidence: does the member for Perth not know that a man, since dismissed from the force in disgrace, swore to words spoken at the rate 180 a minute—few expert shorthand writers can attain that speed—and on the strength of that evidence secured a conviction? Yet the member for Perth has the cheek to say he has not known of manufactured evidence.

Mr. Mann: That officer did not pretend to give the full length of the speech; he merely gave one sentence. Do not try to misrepresent him.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member says there has never been any complaint of corruption in the force. Surely he remembers one man who was prominent in manufacturing evidence against the anti-conscriptionists, and who with unexecuted warrants out for his arrest left this State to commit suicide in Sydney? Yet the member for Perth says that in 24 years there has not been the breath of suspicion against any police officer.

Mr. Thomson: Do you want this inquiry because you believe that evidence is being manufactured?

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member admitted the necessity for an inquiry, but thought it should be held by a Supreme Court judge.

Mr. Thomson: No, I said that if the House decided on the inquiry, I would prefer to have it made by a judge.

Mr. HUGHES: If there is no case for an inquiry, the hon. member should have said so.

Mr. George: You have not made out any case yet.

Mr. HUGHES: The member for Perth referred to the methods of promotion. Does he not know that although it is prescribed that men shall pass an examina-

tion to qualify for promotion, promotions have been made from unqualified men?

Mr. Thomson: Do you mean to say it is the function of a select committee to decide how members of the police force should be promoted?

Mr. HUGHES: It is the function of the House to inquire into the police force if an inquiry is necessary.

Mr. Taylor: You have not shown that it is necessary.

Mr. HUGHES: I probably would never succeed in making out a case to suit the member for Mt. Margaret.

Mr. George: That is not argument.

Mr. HUGHES: That he is satisfied all is not well in the department was shown by his action in moving for a file quite recently, and telling us that he would have something to say after he had seen the file.

Mr. Taylor: I wanted to find out something about the action of the Minister, not of the police. You want to get your brains brushed a bit.

Mr. HUGHES: If I have brains that need brushing, it is more than I can say for the hon. member.

Mr. George: But a certain make of brush not yet manufactured would be required.

Mr. HUGHES: We know there have been unexplained appointments. Although men have qualified by examination for promotion, unqualified men have been given the positions. Police officers suspected of being politically opposed to the reigning Government have not received justice, and when vacancies have occurred, they have not been considered. Men with first-class records have been kept for years in junior positions. When members opposite were in power they put the boots into everyone politically opposed to them. Members opposite need not try to smooth things over and pretend that they were imbued by a spirit of fairness. If we take their appointments, we can soon see how many people known to be supporters of the Labour Party have not received promotion when it was due to them.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It has never made the slightest difference.

Mr. Taylor: You would not expect your party to have the same capacity for positions as have our party?

Mr. Panton: That is why we are on this side of the House.

Mr. HUGHES: Does the member for Mt. Margaret flatter himself that he left this party and went to the other because he possessed superior ability?

Mr. Taylor: I like the way you put it—"left" that party.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member infers that he was kicked out. Had he been in the Army he would not have had a slide out with the boot; he would have been put against a wall and shot.

Mr. Taylor: While you joined up with the Germans, I was standing by the British Empire.

Mr. HUGHES: Surely the old Empire dodge has been worked out. Those who stayed behind and flapped flags, who made money out of the country, and gave three cheers for little Belgium—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must confine himself to the subject of the motion.

Mr. HUGHES: This is important. Members who were flapping flags and pleading for the Empire—

Mr. SPEAKER: The Empire is not under discussion. The hon. member replying to the motion for a select committee, and no new matter may be introduced.

Mr. HUGHES: I take it I am entitled to reply to interjections.

Mr. SPEAKER: Interjections are disorderly.

Mr. HUGHES: The desire for a select committee is not a personal fetish. It is something that the Labour movement have wanted for years, because they never had a fair deal when it came to the administration of the law by the police force.

Mr. Thomson: That is a shocking statement to make.

Mr. HUGHES: Long before I entered Parliament we had to protest against discrimination in the administration of the law. The law was administered against us in one direction and not against other sections of the community.

Mr. Chesson: That is correct.

Mr. Holman: You get that from every court.

Mr. HUGHES: I am told I have not made out a case for an inquiry. The Minister admitted that there was room for a difference of opinion on the question whether a board of inspectors was the most suitable body for making appointments. I cannot understand the attitude of the Minister on this occasion. He knew I wrote to him about a man who had been victimised, and asked him to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into cases of victimisation generally. He did not see fit to do it.

Mr. Thomson: He was going to give you a Royal Commission until you voted against him.

The Minister for Justice: You did not write to me.

Mr. HUGHES: I did. I suggested the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into cases of victimisation in the Public Service. Later I moved to obtain this select committee, not on my own account, but with the consent of the whole of the Parliamentary Labour Party. When it was mooted that a select committee should be appointed, the Commissioner of Police got busy with the Opposition in order to have the inquiry made by a Royal Commission. Why did he want to do that?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: So far as I know he did not do it.

Mr. HUGHES: There are lots of things the hon. member does not know.

Mr. Thomson: The Commissioner never asked me to do anything.

Mr. HUGHES: When it was suggested that the inquiry should be made by a Royal Commission, I was quite willing to leave the decision to the party. It was put to the party, who decided that a select committee should be moved for.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are letting out party secrets.

Mr. HUGHES: If the party had decided upon a Royal Commission instead of a select committee, I should have adopted their decision and been quite satisfied.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is for the House to decide.

Mr. HUGHES: Not so the Minister. When he could not get the party to agree to have an inquiry by Royal Commission, he tried to force it through with the help of the Opposition. The Minister did wrong; he should have stood up to the decision of the party, the same as I was in honour bound to do. The Minister cannot have it both ways.

The Minister for Justice: I stand for what I consider right.

Mr. HUGHES: Once an honourable understanding was arrived at, I would not try to use the forces opposite.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: He did not try to.

Mr. HUGHES: I object to the Minister after having lost in one way, trying to gain his end in another way. There is going to be no big end of the stick with me.

Mr. Davy: Is it honourable to discuss in the House what happens at party meetings?

Mr. HUGHES: It is honourable to discuss the business of the country. We have heard a lot of prating from the member for West Perth about the honour of this and that. I am afraid he is inclined to set himself upon a pedestal.

Mr. Davy: No, but he has due regard for the deficiencies.

Mr. Holman: This is only professional jealousy.

Mr. HUGHES: If I may give the member for West Perth advice, it would be not to make the pedestal too high because, if he does, his fall will be the greater.

Mr. Angelo: You cannot charge for your advice yet.

Mr. George: What is the size of your pedestal?

Mr. HUGHES: When the party decided upon a select committee, the Minister should have agreed to it. I strongly object to the Minister's action. I do not care whether he likes it or not.

The Minister for Justice: I am not particular, either.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not be personal.

The Minister for Justice: Do you think I shall weep over what you say?

Mr. HUGHES: No, but I shall voice a protest when something in the nature of a confidence trick is put over me.

Mr. George: Why not move a vote of no-confidence in the Government? We might join you.

Mr. Marshall: Of the two evils, he is choosing the lesser.

Mr. HUGHES: The Government would have to be bad indeed before I would assist the member for Murray-Wellington to return to the Treasury benches. The party realised that an inquiry was needed; it is the wish of the party that an inquiry be held. The fact of the Minister and other members supporting a Royal Commission shows that they think an inquiry necessary. They have made out a case, and I hope the motion will be agreed to.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	20

Majority against .. 4

AYES.

Mr. Chesson	Mr. Millington
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Muckle
Mr. Heron	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Holman	Mr. Slesman
Mr. Hughes	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Marshall	(Teller.)
Mr. McCallum	

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Barnard	Mr. North
Mr. Brown	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Davy	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Denton	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Mr. Georze	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Lambert	(Teller.)
Mr. Mann	

Question thus negatived.

MOTION—OVERSEAS MARKETING.

To inquire by Select Committee.

Debate resumed from the 10th September, on the motion by Mr. Griffiths—

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the matter of overseas markets for the products (exportable) of the group settlements, Peel estate, Upper Swan, and other settlements and agricultural areas. 1, Such inquiry to investigate the various pooling schemes and marketing legislation in vogue in the Eastern States, U.S.A., Canada, Europe, etc. 2, Co-operative efforts in the

marketing of fruit, etc. 3, To formulate a scheme suitable to Western Australian conditions and calculated to work in with an all-Australian scheme for the better handling and marketing of the products under review.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [9.4]: It seems to be the opinion of some members that this motion is somewhat ambitious and would not be effective. The Minister for Agriculture said he did not think it was necessary, and proceeded to deal with the value of our butter and bacon exports, and said that so far as these products might be grown on the Peel estate and in the group settlements there were already markets here. The motion, however, is one that the House might well consider. The organisation with which I am connected, on July 21, 1923, passed the following motion and sent it to the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Maley):—

That this executive is of opinion that a Government which invites people on the land to increase production and thereby glut the local market is responsible for incurring expense in finding other markets and consumers.

The executive was of opinion that a Government that spends £2,000,000 per annum on immigration and land settlement should set aside portion of that money for the purpose of finding markets. Some of us have contended that it is essential we should go in for what is called profitable production. We are told that the settlers in the Swan area are suffering greatly because they are not able to sell their produce. Considerable sums of money have been advanced by the State to soldier settlers to go in for viticulture. Mr. Davies, the secretary of the commercial travellers' organisation in Melbourne, has just returned from a mission to the Old Country. He stated in Perth that the dried fruits of Western Australia were of the best standard on the London market. I have before me a copy of the report on the marketing of the fruit, which was submitted to the Government after the visit of the "Kangaroo" to the Federated Malay States. This will show that there is a market overseas for our fruits, and that if properly organised it should be beneficial to those whom we are placing on the land. The report says—

I was interested to learn all possible about the supply of fruit at our own northern ports, but as only Port Sampson and Derby were touched, inquiries were restricted to these two places. Inhabitants there seem to be anxious to obtain supplies, and a limited quantity of fruit can always be sent there with advantage. Twenty-five shillings per case for apples or oranges can, I think, always be obtained, but, as stated before, the consumption is limited and would only amount to a very few cases per week.

The committee may be able to do a certain amount of good work in advancing some scheme whereby there may be a proper distribution of our produce in the North-West. The report proceeds—

There was an exhibit of a quantity of dried fruits, some of which were from Mr. Cox, the well-known grower, and some from the Swan settlers. The dried fruit was pronounced to be the best ever seen, and a good market is awaiting these products at Singapore.

What are our people doing, considering that there is a glut in dried fruit, if the report regarding the Malay States and Singapore is correct?

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. Marshall interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not interject when he is not in his proper place.

Mr. THOMSON: The report continues—

I cannot too strongly condemn this practice if it obtains—

The reference was to the sending of inferior fruit.

and must emphasise the necessity for the greatest care in picking and packing.

If we are to sell our products overseas the standard must be fixed by the Government, and the growers must maintain that standard. The report goes on—

I saw some of our apples and oranges offered for sale in the streets of Singapore, and they were being readily sold up to 7d. per fruit. True, this is a most exorbitant price, but from every person I came in contact with I got the same reply, that this was the price generally paid.

The members of that delegation visited Java, where our apples were bringing about 5d. each, owing to the shortage of fruit. The report further says there is a splendid market for our dried fruits in Java. It goes on to say—

Our exhibit of dried fruits, principally from Mr. Cox, caused a great deal of interest, and many of the merchants discussed the dried fruits with me. They are all of the one opinion, that the fruit must be in hermetically sealed tins. Weevils and fungi are very bad here, and from my observations I would consider that our fruits should be well dried and put in lever-top tins.

Here is a statement dealing with Kendenup, and I wish the member for East Perth were in his place to hear it—

The dried fruit exhibit put up by the Kendenup estate deserves something more than passing notice. The exhibit comprised fruit such as apples, pears, etc.—not currants or raisins—and many varieties of vegetables. There were parsnips, carrots, lettuce, onions, etc., and at every place we exhibited this was the centre of much attention. Un-

doubtedly a great deal can be done with this product when prices can be submitted. The Kendenup Co. are deserving of every praise for the starting of this process in Western Australia.

There is a phase of marketing to which the committee might devote its attention, namely, the dehydration process. There is a periodical glut in regard to many of our products, so that neither the growers nor the consumers obtain any benefit. The committee might, after making inquiries, be able to recommend to the Government that dehydration plants should be erected in certain districts with the object of stabilising the market, and ensuring to the producer a reasonable price for his products, which might otherwise be wasted. There are times when valuable products are dumped into the rubbish bin for want of a market. If the dehydration process were adopted these could be saved and utilised in various parts of the State. There is a big market for products of this kind. There has been a good deal of adverse criticism regarding the Kendenup settlement. I am convinced that Mr. De Garis will one day return to this State and show the people what can be done with this estate. He is making a laudable effort to pay his debts. I am sure that when he is in a financial position he will demonstrate to Western Australia what can be done with the land at Kendenup.

Mr. Marshall: Don't be misled by all you hear.

Mr. THOMSON: I make this prophecy, that the settlement will, in a shorter period than is anticipated, be placed on a sound basis. Unfortunately the shortage of money greatly affected the scheme.

Mr. Hughes: Misrepresentation was the trouble, and getting people's money by that means.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not know that this was so. A man who will do as Mr. De Garis is doing, pay thousands of pounds to his creditors who have no legal hold over him, is acting the part of an honourable man, and is determined to make good.

Mr. Teesdale: Do you know how he is paying it off?

Mr. Marshall: No, or he would not make the statement.

Mr. Hughes: By 6s. 6d. cheques.

Mr. Teesdale: Three shilling cheques.

Mr. Hughes: When he was afraid of his skin.

Mr. THOMSON: There are many people in this State to whom he owed considerable sums of money, and he has paid them in full. That is not the action of a dishonourable man. Many persons would take advantage of the fact that they had gone through the insolvency court, and claim that all the money they made subsequently was theirs.

Mr. Teesdale: You were an apologist for a man in a similar position before.

Do not forget the Gosnells estate. You made a frightful mess up there.

Mr. THOMSON: The hon. member is making a very peculiar suggestion. The statement I made dealing with the gentleman under discussion I will repeat, and then let the hon. member—

Mr. Teesdale: I did not mention any name. I mentioned the township.

Mr. THOMSON: The hon. member mentioned Gosnells.

Mr. Teesdale: Yes.

Mr. George: Is it not a case of a man awaiting trial?

Mr. Mann: Yes. It should not be discussed.

Mr. THOMSON: No, and I think it is very unkind of the member for Roebourne to suggest—

Mr. Teesdale: I wrapped the thing up a bit.

Mr. THOMSON: The hon. member ought not to have made the statement that I backed up a man who is dishonourable.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. THOMSON: By way of explanation I wish to say as regards the gentleman under discussion—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think the hon. member might as well leave that out.

Mr. Taylor: The case of the gentleman in question is sub judice, is at present in the law courts, and the individual should not be discussed.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No; the House should not discuss him.

Mr. THOMSON: With all respect to the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor), I want to say that the statement I made here was made without prejudice. I also said that throughout the period I had known him he had been quite honourable.

Mr. Teesdale: You read a letter.

Mr. THOMSON: Yes, and I would read it again in the same circumstances.

Mr. Teesdale: I am sorry to hear it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member for Katanning to keep to the motion before the Chair.

Mr. Teesdale: A scoundrel like that!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Teesdale: A man who rooked poor unfortunate women of their last pound!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Roebourne will please keep order.

Mr. THOMSON: I merely wish to point out that here we have a report to the effect that the products of the Kendenup dehydrator were approved of, and were considered one of the show portions of the exhibit sent by Western Australia to the Malaya States. I only stated in passing, and I will repeat, despite the jaundiced interjections of the member for Roebourne—

Mr. Teesdale: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Standing Order 131 provides—

No member shall use offensive or unbecoming words concerning another member of the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the member for Roebourne object to the words used by the member for Katanning?

Mr. Teesdale: Yes, sir.

Mr. THOMSON: I am very sorry, and I will say that the member for Roebourne is the meekest and most amiable member of the Chamber. The report in question further states that there would be a great future for the dehydrated products.

Mr. Teesdale: I introduced the dehydrator into this State, if it is news to you. I brought it out from England.

Mr. THOMSON: I am very sorry if I have unwittingly done the hon. member an injustice. I did not know he introduced the dehydrator. However, it is at Kendenup. I repeat that I believe, putting everything else on one side, the Kendenup Estate will one day be what its promoter confidently hoped it would be when he started the movement.

Mr. George: Let us hope it will be.

Mr. THOMSON: I am convinced that I shall be in the happy position of saying that it is.

Mr. Teesdale: Let us hope it will be, for the sake of the poor unfortunates who have been robbed.

Mr. THOMSON: We have heard a good deal in this House about the Queensland fruit marketing organisation, and in that connection I have here some information which I consider should be in the possession of the House. It will be very useful to the select committee, if appointed; and I propose, with the permission of hon. members, to quote certain extracts from the statement which I hold in my hand, a statement made by a Queensland fruitgrower to the Australian Fruit Council in Melbourne during May last:—

Queensland's Fruit Marketing Organisation.

This Organisation operates under a special Act of Parliament passed in November, 1923.

In 1922 the Queensland Government initiated a scheme of agricultural organisation. For two years the scheme has been entirely financed by them (to the extent of £58,000) and for the next three years they will finance £1 for £1. The amount raised by the producers themselves will be by means of a compulsory levy. This will be at the rate of 4d. on every £1 of produce sold and will be collected by means of a special stamp. A Council of Agriculture was created consisting of nineteen producers' representatives and six Government nominees.

The State was divided into nineteen districts each having a District Council, from each of which a representative was elected to the Council of Agriculture. These District Councils were elected from smaller bodies known as Local Producers' Associations, which comprise the primary producers in any particular locality, irrespective of their particular industry. Thus dairymen, fruitgrowers, sugar producers generally, agriculturalists, etc., were linked up in the one organisation and this paved the way for the sectional organisation.

2. The Council of Agriculture was divided into committees. The Fruit Committee, after immediate problems of the industry had been dealt with, considered that a comprehensive review of the marketing of Queensland fruit was necessary. To this end a Special Committee was appointed. A delegation visited other Australian States and the marketing

methods of other countries were closely studied. The evidence so obtained was analyzed and conclusions drawn. Concrete proposals were then made.

3. The condensed evidence, conclusions and concrete proposals were embodied in a special pamphlet issued to every registered fruitgrower at the expense of the Council of Agriculture. Local associations were asked to call their fruit members together to discuss the findings of the Committee and to appoint a delegate to a Special Conference of Fruit-growers to finalise matters. This Conference, which was one of the largest and most representative conferences of growers ever held in the State of Queensland, was held on the 18th and 20th July, 1923, and the recommendations of the Committee were adopted almost unanimously.

4. A feature of the investigation of the Conference was the whole-hearted support accorded the scheme by the Southern Queensland Fruitgrowers' Society, Ltd., a body which had done invaluable work for the Fruit Industry, particularly in the matter of transport. They recognised their sphere of usefulness was limited, and that control of the commodity was essential for permanent results.

5. The Government was then asked to give effect to the request of the Conference and in November the "Fruit Marketing Organisation Act of 1923" was placed on the Statute Book.

Provisions of the Act.

The keynote of the Act is "control." The Committee formed the opinion that even in highly organised countries, such as California, reliance upon the voluntary principle has been demonstrated to be inadequate for fully efficient fruit marketing organisation and distribution. In our own country the well-established Australian Dried Fruits Association has become increasingly more embarrassed by the growers outside the Association not exporting a reasonable quota.

The Act, therefore, is designed to prevent minority frustration of the endeavours of the majority.

Complete control is vested in a Committee of Direction of ten members. This body, although vested with full powers, is not an autocratic body. It is elected by various sectional councils, provided for under the Act, because of the problems attaching to the marketing of different classes of fruit varying so greatly. The Bananas, Deciduous, Pineapple, Citrus and other Fruits Councils have power of recall of their nominees. It is the policy of the Committee of Direction is not in accord with the policy of the Sectional Committee. These Sectional Committees are fully representative of each fruitgrowing district, e.g., the Banana Committee has 41 members, the Deciduous 25, the Pineapple 20, the Citrus 15, and the other Fruits 11, so that the growers completely control the situation.

The control extends even to the retailing if necessary, as provided for by Clause in the Act reading:—

The Committee of Direction shall have the following power—

"Prohibiting or regulating the use and management of fruit barrows, fruit stalls at railway stations, and fruitgrowers' retail shops."

The Act in Operation.

1. *No Government Interference.*—Although the Committee of Direction is vested with drastic powers, there are no Government nominees in this body. The Fruit Industry has been given complete control of its own affairs.

Finance.

Apart from the assistance rendered by the Council of Agriculture in initiating the project, no Government assistance has been asked for. A Bank overdraft was readily obtained, but the scheme has been self-supporting from the start and additionally, savings amounting to, at least, £15,000 per year have been announced to growers. The revenue is obtained from—(a.) Agents' relates; (b.) Railway rebates; (c.) Barrow rentals; (d.) Hawkers' licenses; (e.) Profits from retail sellers; (f.) Profits from buying for country trade. Our policy of financing is to take as a source of revenue any savings effected by co-operative handling and which would not be available to individual growers. When such savings are in excess of what is required, the excess amounts are refunded to growers by means of reductions in some particular way e.g., reduction on rail freights.

Commission Agents.

The policy of the Committee is to frankly recognise the sphere of the producer and distributor and to make use of existing methods of distribution where such are efficient and economical. In pursuance of this policy it was decided to limit the number of Commission Agents on the Southern Markets, and Agreements were entered into with them. In Brisbane Agreements are unnecessary as regulations under the Act will suffice.

Limitation of Agents was not adopted as a means of obtaining rebates. These are incidental. It was adopted because we believe that markets are largely at the mercy of weak holders. Our policy has not eliminated competition; on the contrary, it has intensified it. Each week a circular is published for the growers showing:—

(a) The quantity of their fruits sold by each individual agent.

(b) The highest, lowest, and average price obtained. This has resulted in each agent doing his utmost to maintain prices.

The Agents selected by us constitute an Advisory Committee under the Chairmanship of our representative on that particular market. They meet weekly. Many helpful suggestions have been received.

A feature of their deliberations is an estimate of quantities that their particular market can absorb, for four separate weeks ahead, at an approximate average. Our aim is to allocate supplies according to requirements as far as possible.

Limitation has proved very successful and prices have been well stabilised, especially as regards bananas.

Sectional Activities.

To have attempted to radically alter the marketing of all fruits immediately would have been to court disaster and when the Scheme was first proposed, it was laid down that reforms would be brought about gradually. One section, however—the pineapple section—called for immediate attention. The Pineapple is harvested all the year round, but the bulk of the crop is marketed in two main crops—(a) January to March; (b) June to August. During these periods supplies are much in excess of fresh fruit requirements, and 50 per cent. to 60 per cent. of the crop has to be canned. Individual canners made their arrangements with individual growers or centres, and the prices paid have been very unsatisfactory for a considerable period. Additionally, during each canning season there was a period in which supplies were so plentiful that canneries became congested and consignments had to be stopped. As no means of effective storage for this sub-tropical fruit is known, the result was that the fresh fruit market used to break to ruinous prices at which prices some canners used to operate and subsequently undercut the canned fruit prices. Canners used this undercutting as an argument against giving a better price to the grower.

Many growers believed that the solution lay in more effective fresh fruit distribution.

The Committee decided—(a) To control all Canning supplies: (i.) The Canners were notified that all pineapples purchased by them must be purchased through the Committee of Direction. (ii.) Brisbane Agents were instructed not to sell below 4s. per case, which was 6d. per case above factory prices.

As a result 3s. 6d. per case was obtained from the Canners. They had offered 3s. 2½d.

- (b) To endeavour to stimulate fresh fruit sales.
- (c) To advise allocations for Southern Markets.
- (d) Control of factory supplies involved obtaining: (i.) Estimates of crop from producing centres. (ii.) Canners' total weekly and daily requirements.

As practically all the fruit is consigned by rail to the factory the following procedure was adopted:—

- (1) All supplies were sent through a loader appointed by the Committee at each centre.
- (2) The loaders were in telephonic communication with head office daily, reported their loadings, and were instructed to which factory to send.
- (3) Supplies were allocated to the factories according to their capacity.
- (4) Growers were advised in what stage to pick their fruit and every effort was made to have the gardens kept well picked up in order to meet the inevitable glut period.

When the critical time arrived (this cannot be forecasted with any certainty) the canners were all working at their utmost capacity and no holdup of supplies resulted. The fresh fruit market was, therefore, unaffected and never fell below the prescribed minimum price for the season.

As a result of the summer operations, a price of 4s. per case has been fixed for the winter pack which is an increase of 1s. 6d. per case on last winter's price.

Fresh Fruit Distribution.

1. Representatives were sent into various likely districts to obtain orders from retailers.

2. Two packing sheds were established.

3. A "direct to the consumer" effort of single case lots was made. This included special cardboard carton containers for quick and cheap transit by passenger train at special rates granted by the Railway Commissioner. It was found—

(i.) Orders from retailers gradually dwindled, they preferring to draw all their fruit requirements from the one agent.

(ii.) Pineapple sales were difficult to stimulate because of the seasonal abundance of other fruits.

(iii.) The summer crop was uncertain in carrying and keeping qualities.

(iv.) The special efforts in many cases cut across existing channels of distribution and little or no increase of consumption probably resulted in these cases.

It was definitely demonstrated that distribution efforts alone were inadequate and that the pineapple problem is primarily a canning one. Arrangements have been made, therefore, for an increase in canning capacity to meet the hitherto critical two or three weeks, and have been concentrated on securing a better canning price. The efforts have been successful only because complete control of the crop by the committee has enabled the canners to operate with confidence.

Bananas.

During the period under review supplies of bananas have not been in excess of market requirements owing to drought conditions. By September, however, owing to more favourable weather conditions, supplies will be largely increased. Our efforts, therefore, have been chiefly directed to preparing for this contingency.

1. Limitation of Southern Agents with resultant committee work has stabilised the market very successfully.
2. A thorough investigation is being made to remedy deterioration of the banana after ripening.
3. The University of Queensland is conducting ripening experiments at our request, which if successful will be of far-reaching importance.
4. Special efforts are being made to ensure satisfactory grading and packing. Reports on faulty packs are sent weekly by our representative and the Government packer is concentrating on bananas. He has spent some time on the southern markets, examining consignments, taking photographs, and ascertaining the brands chiefly at fault. After a period of education, grading and packing, the packing will have to be satisfactory or the fruit will not be allowed to be marketed.

Deciduous, citrus, and other fruit have not been yet dealt with apart from matters of detail and transport arrangements.

Transport.

This was previously handled by the Southern Queensland Fruitgrowers' Society, but was taken over by the Committee of Direction. Three special trains leave Queensland weekly for the South, carrying a total of 300 to 400 tons. Loaders at the various stations receive the fruit from the growers and consign to the Committee's representatives at the various markets.

The deciduous fruit crop of the Stanthorpe district is handled during a short period (December to April) and special trains run daily to Brisbane carrying up to 150 tons of fruit and vegetables. Special truck loads are also arranged for other centres. These consignments are all received by our representatives and handed over to the Agents.

Country Distribution.

Apart from distribution to retailers which is being undertaken by us an interesting experiment is being conducted which may assume big proportions. Some of the smaller towns in the North of the State have been inadequately served at expensive rates in the past. At the request of Mr. Riordan, M.L.A., we arranged to forward a truck of fruit and vegetables at wholesale prices to the Cloncurry District. Owing to floods, this did not get to its intended destination, but the idea appealed to the towns concerned. The Wyangarie (Richmond) Shire Council took up the matter, and their energetic Shire Clerk now collects orders and wires weekly requirements. We consign in bulk and the trade has rapidly increased. Inquiries and orders are now being received from other centres.

Retail.

The scheme of marketing would not be complete unless retail trade was taken into account. We propose to open up eventually retail establishments in localities inadequately served. At present we have a stall in Brisbane near the Railway station, showing probably the finest display of fruit in the city, and a high-class show in an Arcade recently opened.

Street barrows and hawkers throughout the State come under our jurisdiction. At present these are licensed by us, but probably next year the barrows will be operated directly by us under a more efficient system than now obtains.

Account Sales.

Duplicate Account Sales are forwarded to us by our Selected Agents, and from these sales summaries are compiled weekly. This is a service much appreciated and is proving very helpful to us. For a short time all cheques passed through our office, but this proved very unsatisfactory and the idea was abandoned.

Conclusion.

In the concrete proposals adopted by the Conference was the following clause:—

"Fruit to be allowed at the outset to filter through existing channels, control gradually to be exercised as the bringing to fruition of a policy of extension of markets justifies this or as an approaching glut season renders this urgently desirable."

This policy is being carried out and the transition is made as easy as possible. It would have been easy to have made a spectacular display and used to the full the big powers conferred upon us, but such would almost certainly have ended disastrously. We are moving quietly and methodically towards our goal and making sure of each step. We do not claim that all our methods are applicable to every State, but we do claim that the principle behind our movement is sound and its adoption inevitable if the Fruit Industry in Australia is to be soundly re-established. We are producing at an abnormal time under peculiar conditions. A big impetus was given to production without any corresponding increase of markets. All sections are experiencing difficulty. Inasmuch as the Australian production of some fruits is entirely or almost entirely confined to Queensland, *e.g.*, Pineapples and Bananas, our Queensland Act is sufficient to meet the situation. With other fruits, State legislation may not be fully adequate and Federal legislation may have to be sought as is being done by the Dried Fruits Industry and by the Dairymen.

Concerted action by fruitgrowers on a sectional basis would result in immense benefits to the industry, and the time is ripe for local organisation and complete Federal organisation.

In reading such a long report I have probably wearied members somewhat, but in that report we have the gist of how the Queensland Act is being administered.

Mr. Marshall: We all know that. Did you think we didn't know anything about it?

Mr. THOMSON: So far, we have had nothing on record. Questions have been asked regarding the operations of that measure and some discussion has taken place. This is one of the problems that

Western Australia has to face. Side by side with the establishment of people on the land must go the provision of marketing facilities, by means of some such scheme as is outlined in the report I have read. I feel confident we could easily increase tenfold the consumption of dried fruits in Western Australia. Raisins, almonds and nuts are regarded as a pleasant dessert but we never see them on the tables in Parliament House. There are scores of clubs and restaurants throughout the city where these articles could be placed on the table and so increase the consumption of these excellent products. We know that 25s. can be obtained for oranges and apples at our north-western ports, and the same applies to our agricultural areas. There is a large market available here for those products. It is simply a matter of the growers coming together under a scheme such as that outlined in the report. If that were done, it would prove beneficial to Western Australia.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The growers are already dealing with that.

Mr. THOMSON: That is so, but the matter is before us for discussion now. I desire to see the proposed committee appointed. Some two years ago, when I returned from my trip to England, I took up some time in the House outlining the experiences I had at Home to show the difficulties our people were having in placing our products before the public there. It is important that our products shall be standardised and that nothing but first class fruit shall be exported. Considerable dissatisfaction was manifested some time ago because, although Western Australia sent fruit of first-class quality to the English market, Tasmania exported apples that were spotted. That was detrimental to the interests of Western Australia and certainly to the interests of the Commonwealth as a whole. We cannot afford to send out products of less than standardised quality. I am not going to argue that we have to do anything in respect of butter and bacon. For them we have a local market. But the report I have read shows that those interested are grappling with the position from a co-operative marketing point of view. To my mind the most important clause in the motion before us is that which reads—

To formulate a scheme suitable to Western Australia conditions and calculated to work in with an all-Australian scheme for the better handling and marketing of the products under review.

It is all very well to say there is plenty of time. Actually we require to take time by the forelock. The member for Avon is to be congratulated on having moved the motion. I hope the House will appoint the committee: not, as facetiously suggested, to go to America, for that was never the intention of the hon. member. If as the result of their deliberations the committee

are able to put up a scheme that will contain the germ of something practicable and so will be of benefit to the growers and to the State, the committee will have done good service. I support the motion.

Mr. MANN (Perth) [9.47]: While supporting the motion in the main, I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of Subclause (1) the words "Eastern States" be struck out and "Australia" inserted in lieu.

Mr. Marshall: What is the difference?

Mr. MANN: There is this difference, that under the motion as it stands, no inquiry could be made touching any scheme in operation or proposed to be put in operation in this State. There are several such schemes. For instance, last year Messrs. Brown and Dureau took up dried fruits grown on the Upper Swan, and through the agency of their world-wide branches were able to place on foreign markets a large quantity of currants that otherwise would have been lost. I have discussed this with the manager of that firm, and he advises me that there is a foreign market that can be developed. Last year the firm did not charge the growers any of their advertising or correspondence expenses, being satisfied to make the inquiry in order to see if a new market could be found. The manager assures me that his company is convinced that they can secure a market for a good deal of that produce. Again, Messrs. Foggit-Jones & Co. sent representatives to Mesopotamia, Egypt, Ceylon, and India to establish markets for bacon. They have spent a good deal of money in formulating a scheme for exploiting those markets. Then a company was formed to test the Mauritius market last year for the sale of our products. They found there a ready market, the only trouble being that of transport. That has been the stumbling block to our sending large supplies to the Mauritius. The motion in its present form would prevent inquiry being made into those markets I have enumerated. That is my sole reason for moving the amendment.

On motion by Minister for Lands, debate adjourned.

BILL—LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 10th September.

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [9.55]: I listened carefully to the speech made by the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) in opposition to that of the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes). After consideration of both efforts, I am inclined to favour the member for East Perth. It is not always that I find myself on his side. In all forms of exclusive rights, we find a tendency to curb

the ambitions of the younger fraternity to enter the learned professions. From the point of view of the community's interests, this Parliament is in duty bound to see that certain professions are protected, are accessible to none but duly qualified persons. But if we hedge about the legal profession to such an extent as to impose a hardship on young men desirous of entering that profession, we shall in due time find ourselves short of lawyers.

Mr. Davy: Wherever population is stable, lawyers are to be found in greater numbers than are required.

Mr. MARSHALL: Ah, but the hon. member misunderstands me; there are lawyers and lawyers. We require to see that we do not bring about a position in which it will be impossible for the community to secure at reasonable fees the services of those whom we protect. The member for East Perth and the member for West Perth were both right and wrong in their arguments. One of them said the legal profession had no minimum to their charges. As a lawyer you, Sir, will admit that by the same rule they have no maximum.

Mr. Davy: We have a maximum, and a very rigid one.

Mr. MARSHALL: If there be a maximum, the hon. member should have told the House what it is.

Mr. Davy: It would take a week to tell you the maximum for all the work a lawyer might do. It is laid down in the Supreme Court rules.

Mr. MARSHALL: The reason I wish to know the maximum is that I once found it necessary to seek the advice of a reputable legal firm in Perth, and for about ten minutes' work I was hit up for ten guineas for professional services.

Mr. Davy: I wish I had half the nerve of that firm of solicitors.

Mr. MARSHALL: I agree in the main with the argument of the member for West Perth, but we should not make it utterly impossible for the working class to enter this profession.

Mr. Davy: I suggested an alternative which is better and easier.

Mr. MARSHALL: If we consider the medical profession, we must recognise the harm being done by giving it exclusive rights. It is exceedingly difficult to get a doctor for outlying parts of the State, because the premium required is utterly impossible for many districts to bear. What is the difference in value from the point of view of the State between a doctor, a lawyer and an ordinary worker. A man working in the Sewerage Department is of equal value to the most proficient medical practitioner. The reason he cannot demand the same premium for his services is that he is in competition with a greater number of workers than is the doctor. If it were possible for everyone to become a doctor and everyone

desired to be a doctor, we would get medical service for nothing.

Mr. Stubbs: There would be no patients.

Mr. MARSHALL: We should endeavour to secure efficiency from the practitioner, doctor or lawyer, but we should not impose an embargo that will prevent the community from obtaining the services required at reasonable cost. The member for East Perth is deserving of some support. If there is not a shortage of legal practitioners, there must be a mutual understanding that no service shall be rendered for less than a certain premium. If that be not so, I shall in future avail myself of the services of the member for West Perth.

Mr. Davy: You will not be charged ten guineas for ten minutes' service.

Mr. MARSHALL: I shall take the hon. member's word of honour for it now. One could go to five different lawyers in the city and provided he had a reasonable banking account, could obtain five different opinions on the one point.

Mr. Davy: You do not believe that, do you?

Mr. MARSHALL: The more exclusive we make a profession, the more difficult it will be for people to secure advice. There was a time when a man who desired to drive an engine could walk up to it and take charge. That was found to be rather risky, so legislation was introduced to compel engine-drivers to pass an examination and thus prove themselves qualified. Now, however, a man has to be not only an engine-driver, but also an engineer, capable of taking his engine to pieces, repairing it, and re-assembling it. In some parts of the State there is a shortage of men for driving winding engines. In my district there was an accident recently due to the men being overworked.

Mr. Taylor: That is due to isolation. There is no dearth of engine-drivers on the Kalgoorlie goldfields.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is no isolation about a town like Meekatharra that is connected with railway. The shortage is due to legislation making it impossible for the average man to qualify. Consequently I am becoming rather suspicious of requests preferred to Parliament for certain rights for certain sections of the community. The last Parliament was noted for giving exclusive rights to particular sections. We had the registration of nurses, the registration of architects; in fact any body at all that had any influence could get registration. I do not know that lawyers or doctors have any more right than anyone else to come to Parliament and ask for exclusive rights, except where those rights are necessary in the interests of the community. Why not give the same consideration to the carpenter, the bricklayer and the sewerage worker?

Mr. Taylor: We have a Bill for them now, the Arbitration Bill.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is no intention to give them exclusive rights through Parliament. They are left to the mercy of a tribunal created by Parliament, but the more influential sections can come to us and point out how valuable they are to the community, and secure exclusive rights. We shall have the opticians and dentists coming along.

Mr. Pantou: They have been here already.

Mr. MARSHALL: They have as much right as the others. I wish to pay a tribute to the medical profession. We could not possibly do without doctors.

Mr. North: But you are not sure about the lawyers?

Mr. MARSHALL: Not too sure. I have had experience of both professions, and I have come to the conclusion that while the one exploits a man, the other saves a man. Most doctors are more than generous to the community, and give many hours of service for nothing.

Mr. Taylor: That applies to the honorary staff at the Perth Hospital.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, and many doctors do not hesitate to turn out at any hour of the night to attend the sick. I have yet to learn that any legal practitioner has done anything for which he has not been well paid. I am prepared on this occasion to follow the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes).

Mr. NORTH (Claremont) [10.15]: I have listened with interest to the debate on this Bill, in which East and West have joined hands. The Bill is not so logical throughout as might appear from the speech delivered by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes). He rather appealed to members in a spirit of logic, and brought forward reasons and arguments to show that in this State we are behind in the manner in which we lay open this profession to the public. He said the profession should be extended so that more members of the community could enter within its portals, and be available for the public to employ if they required to do so. He also said there is nothing in the Bill that is not already in force in the other States or here. On the question of eliminating the preliminary examination he referred to what apprentices in New South Wales. The New South Wales Act deals with the question as follows:—

Officers of the public service who have passed the examination as prescribed under the Public Service Act, 1902, or an equivalent examination under the Act, provided that such officers have been in the public service for 15 years, and are over 30 years of age. That is a very extensive qualification. It cannot be said that the suggested system of entering within the portals of the profession merely by examination can be compared with opening its doors to officers of

the public service in New South Wales who have been for 15 years in the service.

The Minister for Lands: That may not give them a knowledge to dispense law.

Mr. NORTH: Certainly not, and this is wider.

Mr. Hughes: They are not excused from the law examination.

Mr. NORTH: It cannot be claimed that there should be admitted to the profession any person merely over 30 years of age who can pass the intermediate and final examinations. I try to imagine that the member for East Perth is a logical individual, and that the cause he stands for is an intact and firm one—the cause of socialism. I cannot, however, understand his endeavour to encourage honest members of the community, accountants, business men, journalists, and so on, from the ranks of those useful avocations into the law, a profession that is referred to by socialists as made up of parasites on the community.

Mr. Taylor: Is it not called the devil's brigade?

Mr. NORTH: Yes. It is astounding to me that he should try to lead from the walks of upright duty accountants and other commercial men to the end that they may join a gang of parasites or the devil's brigade. It may be that the hon. member is not so confident that the millenium will arrive as quickly as he would desire, and that he thinks his logic requires a little common sense mixed with it. He may have thought he could turn his common cents into useful dollars if he was able to use the provisions of this Bill either personally or for his friends.

Mr. Hughes: Surely you do not suggest that I would get a royalty from each man who passed into the profession as a result of this Bill?

Mr. NORTH: No. Another member has referred to the safety of the public. I do not hold any brief for lawyers as such. I am, however, prepared to admit that it is an old profession, and that it was probably of greater value relatively to the community 200 or 300 years ago than it is to-day. In the days when people could neither read nor write, and the world loomed dark from lack of knowledge, probably lawyers were of more importance in relation to the other callings in the community than they are to-day. It is, however, still necessary for those who do patronise lawyers to be protected. We should not allow anyone to enter the profession merely because he is over the age of 30, and because he has passed an examination but has not served any articles or gained any experience. It must appeal to members that a candidate for admission to the profession must have had some contact with it. It is true, that does not necessarily apply in all cases. The member for West Perth and I and other counsel were admitted as barristers from the Old Country.

Mr. Davy: There are very few of those in Western Australia.

Mr. NORTH: I do not deprecate that test. But I am quite prepared to listen to the argument of the member for East Perth to the effect that education is mere trash, and that a man can learn more in a few years by following his ordinary avocation, and mixing with his fellow men, than he can by studying abstruse questions.

Mr. Hughes: I did not say that.

Mr. NORTH: I put that forward as a sort of bovrilised or tabloid conclusion of the hon. member's line of reasoning, when he said that a man who could pass a certain examination at the age of 22 was merely a dud compared with those who worked in ordinary walks of life. Those who have tried the ordinary avocations of life as well as hard study will agree that study is by far the more difficult.

Mr. Panton: It depends on when you start.

Mr. NORTH: I do not say there is any merit in study, or that it is as useful in the long run as an ordinary avocation. Study, however, has been found to be essential for anyone who is following a profession. The New South Wales provision to which I have referred is altogether different from that contained in the Bill. A remark of the member for East Perth one would hardly have anticipated, coming as it did from so sincere a socialist. He asked, "Why should talent be the only consideration for admission to the bar?"

Mr. Hughes: Why should it be?

Mr. NORTH: I asked the hon. member, "Does the present market warrant a fresh influx of lawyers?" I do not see why he is so anxious at this juncture to make it easier to enter the profession. It may be he is anxious to throw out those who are in it now.

Mr. Hughes: You volunteered to retire.

Mr. NORTH: I would be prepared to retire if the hon. member were admitted to the profession. Under the Bill all training and service under articles will be cut out. That is a serious matter. There is no calling in the State, whether that of engine-drivers, sewerage workers, or anything else in which some test and training are not necessary. For that reason alone I hope members will throw out the Bill. On another point, I am sure that on the score of fair play to the existing profession members will listen to me. Under the present Act a system of reciprocity is in force. A solicitor in this State has a right to go to another State, and after six months' residence practice there. That is a handy way of dealing with the law of supply and demand. We may not always have goldfields, and when times have been slack in the past many solicitors have gone to the Eastern States, and some to the Old Country to continue their profession. Under this Bill, which would make the profession an easy one to

get into, we shall lose our reciprocal rights, and as a result many solicitors will end up in the Old Men's Home, or be applying to the Government for sustenance. Hon. members may be aware that there are over a hundred solicitors now practising in the metropolitan area. I am forced to the conclusion that this Bill was intended to assist merely a few people in special circumstances. To alter the conditions just for that reason seems hardly necessary. I feel quite sure that the desired object will be attained by the suggested chair of law at the University, and therefore I hope hon. members will vote against the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. HUGHES (East Perth—in reply) [10.28]: I shall not occupy much time in replying, simply because there is very little to answer. The member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) in opening his remarks made much display about the bringing into existence of incompetent and dishonest lawyers. He talked a great deal about the honesty and the competency of lawyers.

Mr. Davy: About the necessity for honesty and competency.

Mr. HUGHES: Does the hon. member contend that those who attend the University till they are about 25 years are the only honest men in the community?

Mr. Davy: I never suggested such a thing.

Mr. HUGHES: Does the hon. member assert that a man cannot be honest if he has earned his living from the age of 14 years?

Mr. Davy: I never suggested such a thing, and you know it. I spoke of the necessity for honesty and competency.

Mr. HUGHES: There is no guarantee that the man who goes through the University will be more honest and more competent than the man who has earned his living from an early age. The hon. member says that if the Bill passes there will be more bad lawyers. For 31 years in this State the Legal Practitioners Act has prevailed, and under that measure the man who could afford to go to the Old Country and pass his law examinations there could return to Western Australia and practice as a lawyer without having served any articles at all.

Mr. Davy: But he had to be trained.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes, but not trained in articles; trained in the study of law. For 31 years that system prevailed, whereby a man who could afford to go to London or Dublin and pass his examinations there, might return to this State and be admitted to practice without serving any articles at all. But now, when I wish to extend a similar privilege to the man who cannot afford to go to the Old Country, we are told that that system is bad. However, it is a system that prevailed for 31 years without exciting opposition from the member for West Perth and other legal practitioners.

Mr. Davy: I did not take much interest in the legal profession 31 years ago.

Mr. HUGHES: The system was a good one during all that period; but now the attitude seems to be, "I am in; shut the gate." The cardinal feature of my Bill is that it involves no reduction whatever in the standard of the law examinations. The man who wants to be admitted to practice law under my Bill will be required to pass the intermediate and final law examinations prescribed by the Barristers' Board, who are not likely to reduce the standard of the examinations. It would not be wise for them to do so; a proper examination in law should be set to test the knowledge of candidates for admission. It is absurd to say that because men have gone to London or Dublin and obtained degrees there—

Mr. Taylor: How many of those men are practising in this State?

Mr. HUGHES: Two men who were probably the leading lawyers of this State—one of them left Western Australia not long ago—were admitted under that system.

Mr. North: They were trained as counsel, and not as solicitors, which is quite a different thing.

Mr. Davy: Who are those men?

Mr. HUGHES: The member for West Perth knows them as well as I do.

Mr. Davy: I do not know them.

Mr. North: They had to do more than pass examinations.

Mr. HUGHES: The system was all right so long as it was available to a section only. In my opinion, the man who earns his living in the day time and pursues his studies at night, and passes his examinations, has demonstrated a mentality quite equal to that of a man who goes to college and has nothing else to do. Indeed, it might be maintained that the mental calibre of the former is superior to that of the latter. Another point made by the member for West Perth was that if candidates were allowed to pass the law examination subject by subject, fools would pass.

Mr. Davy: I said fools could pass.

Mr. HUGHES: That is the same thing.

Mr. George: They do pass.

Mr. HUGHES: They do now. However, if the dictum of the member for West Perth is right, every lawyer who qualified in New South Wales is a fool.

Mr. Davy: Not at all. He may be.

Mr. HUGHES: It does not signify. However, even men who pass here under existing conditions do not always turn out successful lawyers. The test of a lawyer is when he gets into court and starts pleading.

Mr. Taylor: When he applies his knowledge.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes. First of all, however, he must possess a certificate to the effect that by examination he has demonstrated his possession of a sufficient knowledge of law. When he goes into court, his

success or failure depends on his capacity or incapacity to plead the law. The members for West Perth and Claremont both recognise that.

Mr. North: What about conveyancing?

Mr. HUGHES: What is the position as to that branch of law? In Queensland and New South Wales land agents do the conveyancing. A land agent can go before a judge of the Supreme Court to satisfy him of his, the applicant's, knowledge of conveyancing, and if he satisfies the judge he is admitted to practise as a conveyancer.

Mr. Davy: Only certain kinds of conveyancing.

Mr. HUGHES: The member for West Perth should read the rules and regulations governing admission to the profession in New South Wales and Queensland. Then he will know that there is a special type of lawyer known as a conveyancer, who is privileged—I speak from memory—to draw mortgages, wills, and leases. Strictly, he is not a legal practitioner at all. He is not required to pass any written examination in law. Therefore conveyancing does not represent any serious obstacle.

Mr. Davy: But such an applicant has to show that he has had training.

Mr. HUGHES: That is not so.

Mr. Taylor: The man must have some knowledge of law.

Mr. HUGHES: A knowledge of conveyancing as regards mortgages, leases, and wills.

Mr. North: That is all conveyancers do.

Mr. HUGHES: That is the only legal knowledge they have. I can inform the members for West Perth and Claremont that there is a great deal of conveyancing done in this State by land agents who are not lawyers at all. The reason why members of the legal profession have not kicked up a row about it is that they fear, if attention were drawn to the matter, our land agents might attain to the same position as Eastern States land agents who are admitted to practise as conveyancers. When lawyers here are asked why action is not taken against the land agent who does conveyancing work, that is the answer they give.

Mr. Davy: I don't know what lawyers told you that.

Mr. HUGHES: I meet a great many lawyers besides the member for West Perth, and those other lawyers also have views on this subject. The Bill simply provides that the same consideration shall be extended to the man who cannot afford to go to London or Dublin as to the man who can. I regard that proposal as entirely reasonable, and I hope the House will agree to the Bill.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	16
				—
A tie	..	..	..	0
				—

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Chesson	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Steeman
Mr. Hughes	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Millington
	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Barnard	Mr. North
Mr. Brown	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Davy	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Denton	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Mann	Mr. Richardson
	(Teller.)

Mr. SPEAKER: In conformity with the rules of the House I give my vote for further consideration of the Bill and vote with the ayes.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; Mr. Hughes in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Progress reported.

BILL—PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Council and read a first time.

House adjourned at 10.48 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 18th September, 1924.

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QUESTION—RAILWAYS, KALGOORLIE.

Hon. J. R. BROWN asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, How many men were employed at Kalgoorlie on the salaried and wages staff of the Railways in 1914 and 1924, respectively? 2, What were the salary and allowances paid for the same years to the district engineer in that district, and what are his duties? 3, Is it a fact that the chief clerk, Permanent Way Office, Kalgoorlie, pays men working along the line, which means a large amount of "away from home" allowance for him. Could not that work be done by the inspectors of permanent way? 4, Will the Minister inquire into the overhead charges in the Kalgoorlie district?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, 1914, salaried 44, wages 331, total 375; 1924, salaried 35, wages 175, total 210. 2, (a) Salary and allowances: 1914, £194; 1924, £374. (b) Responsible for the efficient maintenance of all railway lines, also construction and supervision of new works in his district, which extends from Booran to Laverton, Leonora, and all branches (602 miles of main line and 40 miles of sidings), and the control of all Way and Works staff, salaried and wages, stationed in such district. 3, For one section only, viz., Southern Cross to Bullabulling, which involves away from home allowance of 15s. 7d. per fortnight. Inspectors of permanent way pay the remainder of staff, but it is more convenient for this section to be paid by clerk in charge. 4, Overhead charges are under review throughout the whole year.

QUESTION—SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

Hon. W. H. KITSON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, On what date was the soldiers' settlement inquiry committee appointed? 2, What has been the cost incurred by such committee from its appointment up to the present time? 3, What useful work has it carried out to date?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, 24th December, 1923. 2, £760 8s. 7d. 3, 344 cases have been reviewed by the committee to date, and recommendations in connection therewith made to the Hon. Minister for Lands. The committee has inspected most of the repurchased estates and has also inspected the clearing carried out by unemployed returned soldiers in various localities, and submitted recommendations dealing with the adjustment of prices.

QUESTION—HORSESHOE BRIDGE TRAMWAY.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN (for Hon. J. Nicholson) asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Has the Commissioner of Railways, or other person, obtained a provisional order or other

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