

ferred to another branch of the service. Despite the standard of efficiency in the Public Service many years ago, a new practice is growing up of making all officers qualify.

Mr. Mann: You are not now confusing the railway service with the Public Service, are you?

Mr. HUGHES: No. The hon. member will know that in the police force of recent years examinations have been set for promotion. Efficient officers of many years' standing would find it difficult to pass those examinations. The same practice is growing up in the railway service. Examinations in practical work are prescribed. If men already occupying responsible positions were asked to pass those examinations, many of them, although sound practical men of 20 or 30 years' experience, would find difficulty in doing so. Connolly was put into the audit branch for a few months, and given a test. To be a successful auditor one requires great power of concentration. Auditing is a particularly monotonous occupation, for which one requires to be trained from youth. Anyone with experience of the work will realise that to take a man 40 years of age, who has spent 25 years in the record branch, and ask him to qualify as an auditor in a couple of months, is to demand the impossible. There are in other branches plenty of efficient men who could not qualify as auditors. That is the contention under which the Commissioner is now casting aspersions on Connolly's efficiency. In view of the fact that there is some doubt, first of all as to whether this officer has had justice, and whether the provisions of the Superannuation Act have been complied with, I hold that a proper investigation should be made. Therefore, without further detaining the House, I move my motion, hoping that the Minister for Railways will not adjourn the debate, but will have it settled to-night. He has had seven or eight months in which to consider it, and he is au fait with the facts.

The Minister for Railways: No, I'm not. Lord deliver us! do you think that is all I have to do?

Mr. HUGHES: What else have you to do?

The Minister for Railways: For one thing, I have to keep one eye on you. That keeps me fairly busy.

Mr. Corboy: And you have to keep the other on Plantagenet.

Mr. HUGHES: The Minister has had seven or eight months to go into the case, and he knew I was going to move the motion. Therefore I hope he will not delay the thing by asking for an adjournment. It does not matter how much time he may or may not have, for he has no case in answer to the motion.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [10.8]: I wish to say a few words in support of the motion. This question was debated in the House last session, and the member for East Perth has reviewed the facts at length

to-night, so I do not propose to repeat them. It appears to me Connolly has been treated very harshly. I do not know him at all, but I know there is among the railway officers a strong feeling that an injustice has been done to this man. It is feared, too, that this case may be treated as a precedent and that many officials of the Railway Department may be adversely affected by the decision arrived at. Many public servants spend their whole lives working for the Government at low salaries, considerably less than they would earn outside, because of the rights and privileges they are building up for their own protection in old age, and for the protection of their wives and families. I know the Minister does not believe in repudiation, and that it is not the wish of members that any rights a public servant has honestly earned should be taken away from him without the fullest possible reason. It seems to me almost incredible, yet we had it certified by members of the House last session, that the Commissioner should have made the statement that Connolly had served faithfully and diligently, notwithstanding which the Commissioner refused to issue a certificate to that effect. My own experience of the Commissioner is that his word is his bond and his bond his word. I believe that if he made that statement he would be quite prepared to confirm it in writing. At any rate, that is the ex parte statement given to us. In my opinion the member for East Perth has made out a strong case for investigation, and I hope the Government will agree to the appointment of a select committee.

On motion by the Minister for Railways, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.10 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 13th September, 1923.

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

QUESTION—TAXES NOT COLLECTED.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN asked the Minister for Education: 1, What was the amount of tax uncollected in respect to (a) incomes, (b) dividend duties under the assessments for the financial year 1921-1922? 2, The like for the financial year 1922-23?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, (a) Income tax £102,828, (b) dividend duty £6,453. 2, (a) Income tax £121,966, (b) dividend duty £11,226.

QUESTION—INSPECTION OF MACHINERY DEPARTMENT.

Hon. A. BURVILL asked the Minister for Education: 1, Has Inspector Gill of the Inspection of Machinery Department retired, or is he about to retire from the service? 2, If so, on what date? 3, Is the position of technical adviser to the Chief Inspector to be continued or abolished? 4, Will applications be called for in the *Government Gazette*, as provided for in the Public Service Act, to fill any position created by staff changes in the Machinery Department, thereby giving officers with many years of efficient service an opportunity to apply?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Yes. 2, Date not definitely fixed. 3 and 4, It is proposed to continue the office of Inspector of Machinery at present occupied by Inspector Gill, and the position will be filled in accordance with the Public Service Act and regulations.

QUESTION—ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION, BELMONT PARK.

Hon. J. DUFFELL asked the Minister for Education: 1, What was the cost of the poles, mains, service lines, transformers, and all other plant, apparatus, and things (with the exception of meters) installed in the Belmont Park Road District as now constituted? 2, By whom was such cost borne? 3, If such cost was borne by the Government, does the agreement set out in the schedule to the Bill contemplate the handing over of these assets to the corporation without payment?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Not known to the Government. 2, Perth City Council. 3, Answered by No. 2.

QUESTION—OPTICIANS BILL.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is it the intention of the Government, as recommended by a select committee of the House, to introduce this session a Bill for the regulation of persons practising as opticians? 2, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: Yes.

QUESTION—GRASS PATCH TOWNSHIP.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Minister for Education: 1, Why was the name of the Grass Patch township changed to that of Warden? 2, Were residents within the Grass Patch locality, or was the Postmaster General, consulted regarding such change of name? 3, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, The name was changed to Warden in 1920 at the request of the Grass Patch Settlers' Association. 2 and 3, Answered by No. 1.

RETURN—ESPERANCE NORTHWARDS RAILWAY, LAND RESUMPTIONS.

On motion by Hon. J. CORNELL ordered—

That a return be laid on the Table of the House showing: (a) the names of persons holding freehold land resumed in connection with the construction of the Esperance Northward railway; (b) the acreage in each individual case; (c) the amount offered as compensation to each individual concerned.

BILLS (3)—THIRD READING.

1, Registration of Deeds Amendment.

Passed.

2, Amendments Incorporation.

Transmitted to the Assembly.

BILL—PINJARRA-DWARDA RAILWAY EXTENSION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. J. A. GREIG (South-East) [4.40]: I support the second reading of this Bill for the sole reason that I may have an opportunity for moving for the appointment of a select committee to deal with it. The deviation set out in this measure is a step in the right direction, but it is only one step. It retraces that step after going a few miles, and then turns back to the old survey. In the interests of the State the line should proceed as the deviation sets out, say, for the first few miles, which is in accordance with the latest report of the advisory board, and the present Act should be repealed so far as any further distance is concerned. If the present proposal is carried out, no people will be served who would not be served under the latest report of the advisory board. That is what the board had in mind when it reported, although it was not asked to express an opinion as to whether the line from Dwarda to Narrogin should be gone on with or not. I congratulate the Leader of the House upon the excellent speech he made yesterday upon a bad case. He certainly did his cause justice, and had he taken up

the case for the other side I think he would have made a still more excellent speech. He said the line was authorised nine years ago after a complete investigation had been made, and that Governments since then had promised to honour the Act. That is correct. The line was authorised on evidence taken 13 years ago. The world has been turned practically upside down since then. The progress made in land settlement, particularly in the agricultural areas, has put quite a different complexion over the whole thing. Although I do not wish to do anything that is dishonourable, or repeal anything, I do think that when members of this House are of opinion that a line to cost £136,000 would not serve as many people as a line running less than half the distance, effect should be given to that opinion even if there is an Act in existence. The Bill to which I refer passed another place with only two speeches, that of the mover and that of the seconder. It also passed in this House in the same way.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: On the last day of the session.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: Mr. Drew, the then Leader of the House, put forward three points in his speech on the second reading. He said that, so far as he could see, if the line were constructed it would not serve anyone who was not already served by a railway, because no man was more than 15 miles from a railway. Secondly, he thought it would open up practically no new first-class land—it had been selected years before the line was promised. Thirdly, if the line were built the Commissioner of Railways had stated he would not use it; he would not send goods from Perth or Fremantle to Narrogin, or from Narrogin to Perth or Fremantle over it, because the grades were too steep. The grades from Pinjarra would be about one in 30, and from the top of the hills down to Pinjarra, one in 40. How that Bill was ever passed by this Chamber I do not know! I do not think any such Bill introduced by the Leader of the House could have been passed by Parliament during my membership. This matter was well advertised. The people of Narrogin talked about the proposition so much that members apparently thought the railway was justified, and the advisory board reported in favour of it. The Leader of the House also said that no great disadvantage would be suffered if the Bill were agreed to as it stands at present. I want to show hon. members that the people affected do not agree with that statement. I have a copy of a circular letter which I presume has been sent to all members. It is signed by Mr. W. H. Price, honorary secretary of the Hotham Valley Railway League. Hon. members will notice that the secretary gives facts and figures, and so far as I know them the details are correct. I do not know the locality well enough to swear as to their accuracy, but seeing that the people have put these details down on paper, the Premier and Minister for Education can look up reports and maps to ascertain whether the

statements are correct. For my part, I believe the statements are true. The Leader of the House said that the deviation proposed would reduce the distances from the railway to the extent of four or five miles according to the deviation made. I am sure that the Minister had no intention of misleading hon. members. The Hotham Valley Railway League show in their circular a list of the settlers who would be served by a line to Codjototine, who, if the line were taken from Dwarda, would be from 16 to 20 miles away from the nearest point of the proposed railway.

The Minister for Education: As much as 20 miles?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: Yes. There are in the list over 40 settlers to be served, if the line goes to Codjototine. These will be brought seven miles closer to railway communication than would be the case if the Bill were passed as proposed. A resolution carried by the league was to the effect that they were of the opinion that it would be a wrongful expenditure of public money if the Government were to build the line as proposed. These people do not mean that it would be legally wrong for the Government to do so, but rather that it would be unreasonable to build such a line when so many other places require railway facilities. They mean that if the line were built to Codjototine it would serve 60 people as against 17 who would be served if the line were constructed as proposed in the Bill.

Hon. J. Duffell: They mean that the money could be better spent elsewhere.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: They mean that it could be better spent on the altered route they desire, for which only half the money would be required. It is true that the construction of the line to Codjototine would stop at a dead end. Not unreasonably they point out that the line has been reported upon to Codjototine Pool, and they ask for a line to that point for the present. They are content to leave it to the Railway Advisory Board to decide where the line will go from that point. In reading through the files, I notice that the Minister for Works pointed out in one communication that if the line went to this terminus, it would have to go on to Pingelly or Popanyinning. I do not contend for that, but I would leave it to the Advisory Board to decide. I would not advance my personal opinions against those of the board seeing that I have not the intimate knowledge of the country to the north, that I have of the land between Dwarda and Narrogin. There may have been arguments in favour of the route laid down in the Act when the Advisory Board reported on it 13 years ago.

Hon. J. Duffell: Do you say it would cost half the sum involved in the line as surveyed at present?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: That would be for 13 miles of railway.

The Minister for Education: But that would take it to a dead end.

Hon. J. Duffell: How far would it be from the dead end to the existing railways?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: It would be from 20 to 21 miles from the Great Southern railway. I am of the opinion, however, that the Advisory Board would not recommend the extension of the line to connect up with the Great Southern railway, because they would be running between existing lines 20 miles apart. For my part I think the board would probably recommend that it should go still further north. I do not know anything about the land north of Codjatown, but I know that the 13 miles of railway I advocate will serve more people than the 24 miles of railway proposed under the Bill. I want the Leader of the House to be clear regarding these statements made by the Hotham Valley Railway League, and the distance settlers will be away from the railway. During the course of his speech the Minister said that Codjatown was not exactly in the centre of a forest, and if the line went there it would connect up with no other railway. Codjatown is the centre of an area that is a long way better than land between Dwarda and Narrogin. He also said that the line should be built from Dwarda to Narrogin because the timber mills desired to send their timber down to the Great Southern railway. The timber mills are now practically the same distance from Narrogin as they would be if this line were built from Dwarda. Surely the Government do not desire to build a line at a cost of £136,000 to enable the State Sawmills to deliver timber to Narrogin while it can be procured from other mills nearer, just as cheaply. There is a mill 10 or 12 miles nearer to Narrogin than Dwellingup would be if this line were constructed. I have the report of a deputation which waited on the Premier recently at Narrogin. It is true that the advisory board reported on this line 13 years ago, and that a great deal of influence was used to get the line to Narrogin. I do not say the influence was wrongly brought to bear, but the people of Narrogin are great barrackers for their town. I really admire the community spirit of Narrogin.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Do they admire yours?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: No one knows that community spirit better than I do, and no one has had the efforts of people applied against himself more than I have had. I have a clear conscience about what I am doing and it does not trouble me. I came to this Chamber to legislate for the State as a whole, and that is what I am endeavouring to do in taking my present stand on this Bill. I knew that as soon as I spoke regarding this matter I would bring a hornet's nest about my ears. I wish to draw the attention of the House to the type of argument used by the Narrogin people in their endeavour to have the railway line constructed to their centre. I think the Advisory Board, not looking for trouble, realised that if the report was not in favour of Narrogin, there would be an outcry. I find various letters and telegrams

from Narrogin pressing the Government to come to a decision favourable to that centre. My sympathies are with the Government, who, I hope, will be strong enough to do what is best in the interests of the State. I trust that when a wrong has to be righted, they will reverse the earlier decision. The account I refer to is a condensed shorthand report of what took place at Narrogin on the 11th August, 1922. The deputation was introduced by Mr. Johnston, M.L.A., and he made an opening speech in which he said that the surveyed line was authorised in April, 1913, that the line from Narrogin to Dwarda was only part of what they were asking for, and that later on they would advocate another link being constructed to join Dwarda with Armadale through such country as one sees along the Perth-Albany-road. Hon. members know that country and the amount of settlement there. I only know of two settlers along that route as surveyed. Mr. Johnston, however, pointed out that the construction of this line would mean only another length of 40 miles of railway to link up with Armadale. Dwarda is not more than 25 miles from Williams, and Armadale is 20 miles from Perth. There is a surveyed road from Armadale to Perth, with mile posts all along the route. It is 100 miles from Perth to Williams so that there is a discrepancy of 15 miles in Mr. Johnston's estimate. I find these little discrepancies cropping up right through the arguments put before the Government.

Hon. J. Duffell: Fifteen miles more or less?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: It will mean a length of more than 40 miles to connect up the line as suggested. If Mr. Johnston had said 55 miles instead of 40 miles, I would not take exception to the statement, for that would be the distance as the crow flies. Knowing the grades in the Darling Range, however, and that it is from one in 30 to one in 40 on the other section as I have already indicated, I think it right to assume that there would be considerable deviation and that the best grades through the ranges would be one in 50. Mr. Johnston also pointed out to the Premier that Mr. Muir, then engineer for railway construction, had said that there would be grades of one in 70 between Dwarda and Narrogin. I can hardly think that Mr. Muir would have made such a statement, seeing that not even a trial survey had been made. I asked a question last session as to whether surveys had been made and I received a reply in the negative. Names are given in the report of some of the deputations who waited on the Premier. Dr. Mackie said that even in 1913 considerable difficulty was experienced in sending wheat from Spencer's Brook and that with increased production, the position would become more acute in the future. That was correct in 1913, but since that year, the Government have deepened the harbour at Bunbury and to-day the biggest wheat boat

can load wheat at that port. Bunbury is the natural port for Narrogin.

Hon. J. Nicholson: And Collie, too.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: Yes, practically the whole of the wheat from Narrogin went to Bunbury while the Government pool was in existence. Last year for some reason that I have not yet ferreted out, 11,000 tons of wheat were sent to Fremantle for shipment, while 16,000 tons were shipped from Bunbury. This should not be so, and the reason should be ascertained. The farmer's wheat should not be hauled unnecessarily long distances when there is a natural port from which it could be shipped. What the doctor said was quite correct in 1913, but that is an argument why the Government should reconsider the Bill. Then came Mr. Barron, chairman of the Narrogin Road Board, who pointed out that many of the farmers were penalised by the long distances they had to cart their stuff. He was advocating the Dwarda-Narrogin railway, which is 34 miles from point to point. He said some of the farmers had to cart 20 miles into Narrogin. It puzzles me why some farmers should cart 20 miles into Narrogin and then send their produce 174 miles to Fremantle, when they could cart it 12 miles to the head of the line at Dwarda, down Mill all the way, and pay freight on 112 miles to Fremantle. This is the kind of statement that is put up to the Government; and the Premier, who does not know the country as I do, cannot see the defects in the arguments. Next came Mr. Muller, representing the Williams Road Board. I saw the chairman of the Williams Road Board a few days afterwards and asked him whether Mr. Muller had been authorised to represent the board. The chairman replied, "No, he simply took it upon himself." Mr. Muller stated, among other things, that he considered 400 settlers could be placed in the district if it were opened up by a railway. Here is a district claiming 34 miles of railway and there is not one settler 15 miles distant from an existing line. The proposed railway will run between two other lines. Yet this man gave evidence that, in his opinion, 400 settlers could be placed in the district if the line were constructed. Then came Mr. Hart, representing the Cuballing Road Board. He endorsed the remarks of the various speakers. Mr. Pollard, representing the Marradong Road Board, pointed out that this was a mixed farming district. The land was capable of producing everything the South-West could produce. I hope members representing the South-West Province are listening. They think they have some rich country in the South-West that can excel anything in the State. This man asked for a railway to be built to Narrogin at a cost of £136,000. In the Marradong district the township together with the bulk of the settlement is six miles from the railway siding at Boddington.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is the natural outlet for this particular district.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: Yes. Mr. Pollard himself, I think, is nine miles from a railway. He said the land was capable of producing everything the South-West could produce, but the settlers were handicapped owing to a lack of railway facilities. "The suggested railway," he continued, "would give the dairy and mixed farming industry a chance to develop. The people of the Marradong district desired to get their produce to the butter factory at Narrogin." If they carted their produce six miles to the Boddington siding and entrained it there, a journey of 100 miles would land it in Perth or Bunbury. The same gentleman also said that the further development of the timber industry depended on the railway to Narrogin. Seeing that Narrogin can get from Collie all the timber it requires, why build a second line to supply Narrogin with timber? In conclusion Mr. Pollard said, "Tons of tomatoes and strawberries were being produced in the district." I have lived adjacent to that district for over 20 years and I have never heard of any man there producing 1 cwt. of strawberries in any one year.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Might not he have been referring to quondongs?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: He must have been. That is the whole of the evidence given in this report. Other men gave evidence; I was there and heard it. I do not know why they were not reported. I am satisfied that if these men could only see their own statements in fair print, if they would pause and reflect on them, it would be apparent that between the statements they have made and the line of strict veracity, there is a wide and unbridgeable chasm. The Premier, in replying, said—

There was no place in the State that he was more proud of and no place that he had been able to do more for. He did not know why Bunbury should not serve them as a port as it was much nearer than the long line round. When communication was put through, it was urged that it would bring the settlers much nearer to the port than they would be by way of Spencer's Brook. Bunbury was a cheap harbour and stuff was cheaply handled there. Now that they had the line, they had forgotten Bunbury.

I cannot understand for the life of me why these people should be fighting so strongly for another railway into Narrogin. That town is fairly well served. To-day it has four railway lines running out north, south, east and west, and on the eastern side, not many miles out, there is a junction, the benefit of which Narrogin enjoys. It is practically equivalent to a fifth line running into the town. Now they are advocating a sixth line. The people who are strongest in their advocacy of this line are the men who boasted Narrogin to what it is to-day. Some people there are acting like tea-and-sugar bushrangers; they are adopting towards the Government an attitude of "Bail up!" They are not considering the interests or the finances of the State.

When the line was first proposed and the people of the Narrogin district were struggling on their farms, not much opposition was raised. The people of Popanyinning knew they had a good case and they thought the merits of their case would win the day for them. The Government even built a very large railway siding at Popanyinning, and took the precaution to provide for a junction when they were enlarging the railway station. Evidently the heads of the department thought the line would junction there. Through the people of Popanyinning not putting up a fight and through the inaccurate methods employed by the deputation from Narrogin, the various Governments have been led to believe that Narrogin had a better case than it really has. I do not blame the whole of the Narrogin people. Only a small coterie there are fighting for this railway. The only advantage that will accrue will be to the tradespeople, who will be able to sell a little more to the navvies while the line is being constructed. Practically all fair-minded people agree that the line ought not to go to Narrogin. They agree that other places have a much better claim, but they leave it to the people who have taken up the fight. The honest-thinking people are saying nothing; in fact, a fair amount of courage would be needed to stand up and oppose this line. To do that would be very risky for a business man in Narrogin. He would be boycotted. I have been boycotted, though, fortunately, I have not a business there. The Commissioner of Railways, in his report dated the 12th August, 1922, stated—

With regard to the connection of Narrogin with Dwarda, personally I think this is one of the last of the extensions which should be undertaken. From Narrogin to Perth via Dwarda we can take only 235-ton loads and from Perth to Narrogin via Dwarda the largest load we can take is 140 tons.

There is a difference in the grades. Going to Narrogin the grade is one in 30 and coming back it is one in 40. This, of course, makes a big difference to the tonnage that an engine can haul.

This is due to the grades between Dwellingup and Boddington. The track from the flat about seven miles out of Pinjarra up the hill to Marrinup is not only extremely steep but the curves are very bad. Between Narrogin and Perth very much larger loads can be taken over the main line, the load ex Narrogin being 350 tons as against 235 tons ex Narrogin via Dwarda. The construction of the line will also have the effect of decreasing the distance between Narrogin and the metropolitan area by 17 miles—

I notice that some of these reports give the distance as 17 miles and others as 19 miles.

Hon. H. Stewart: Two miles is nothing to quibble about.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I thought it well to mention the difference.

and consequently reducing the rates on goods by that extent, not only for Narrogin but for all stations south of Narrogin as well, and will consequently represent a considerable decrease in earnings, although, because of the location of the line, we shall almost certainly have to continue carrying everything over the main line as at the present time.

To the Commissioner of Railways we look to make the railways pay. If the line is constructed, he will still send his traffic via Spencer's Brook to Narrogin, 162 miles, and will be able to charge freight on a mileage of only 143. This will apply to not only the goods carried to Narrogin, but also to the goods forwarded to places south of Narrogin right down to Albany, and on all the spur lines. Speaking on the Address-in-reply, I estimated the loss of revenue to the Railway Department consequent upon this proposal at £100,000 a year. I think now the loss will be all that. I have here still another report, one from the Railway Advisory Board recommending that the line should go to Codjotoline.

The Minister for Education: It does not say that.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: The board were not asked to report on the present line. The House will remember that last session I moved a motion asking for a comprehensive and up-to-date report on the proposal. However, the Government took no notice of it. This report of the Railway Advisory Board is dated the 15th March, 1921, and so far as I know it is the latest report of the board. Indeed, it is the only report of the board on that country since 1913. When I asked the Premier the other day whether he would get an up-to-date report, he replied that he did not want any more reports. The Railway Advisory Board were asked to report on a certain line from Dwarda to Codjotoline, and not as to whether the other line should be repealed. Their report reads—

Re Dwarda extension railway. (1) The Railway Advisory Board inspected the route of the proposed extension in September last, but its report has been held over pending receipt of returns from settlers in the country to be served. Many of the settlers in the district have failed to furnish the required information, but the board now reports on the information available, which appears to have been supplied by the bulk of the developed properties. (2) The extension of the line from Dwarda to Narrogin was authorised by Act No. 15 of 1915, the survey of which is shown approximately on attached plan, but this line will not serve the country to the north of the Hotham River. (3) The natural route of an extension from Dwarda to serve the settlers along the river and for some distance to the north and south of it, is up the valley of the Hotham River, and, if the line were extended on this route to the vicinity of Codjotoline Pool, the area men-

tioned in the following paragraph would be served, such area being beyond a distance of 10 miles from existing railways. (3) The area mentioned in the preceding paragraph is shown on plan and marked "A-B-C-D." It contains 130,000 acres, of which 56,860 acres are occupied, 5,200 acres reserved, and 38,500 acres vacant. (5) Returns have been furnished for 71,952 acres of occupied land, which show that 29,816 acres have been cleared and that 31,625 acres of cultivable land are still uncleared. An inspection of the district showed it to be a good mixed farming district, and capable, with better communication, of producing much more than at present. (6) The tonnage supplied by 48 of the 78 landholders showed that the tonnage sent away by rail last year amounted to about 2,000 tons, while about one-third of that tonnage was received. It may be remarked that as a good many soldiers have recently settled in the district on the Noombling Estate, as well as on other properties, this tonnage will undoubtedly increase in the future. (7) The board recommends that the route shown in red be adopted for an extension of about 13 miles from Dwarda to the vicinity of Codjatoine Pool, in that (a) it will serve the greatest area, (b) it will serve the most settlers, (c) there are no engineering difficulties. (8) The estimated cost per mile is £4,000.

That is the same cost as on the Narrogin-Dwarda line. The report shows that 13 miles of railway will serve far more people than would 34 miles.

Hon. J. Nicholson: And cost so much less.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: The cost per mile is the same.

The Minister for Education: But this would mean breaking faith with the other people.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: Only with people who have taken up land since the railway was promised. I have asked those who favour the line to name such men. I myself do not know of one. All the settlers in the district took up their land many years ago. An argument put up to me recently at Codjatoine was that the settlers on the Noombling estate wanted the line in order that they could send their cream into Narrogin. If that is their chief reason, I suggest that the Government should send a one-ton motor truck once a week to the estate, because that truck would take all the cream produced. It was mentioned by the Leader of the House, with regard to the grades from Pinjarra to the top of the hills, that once one got to the top of the hills there was an easy run into Narrogin. I can excuse the Leader of the House for having made that statement, as he has not been over the route. However, he is an old and a good surveyor, and an experienced bushman; and I suggest that he should inspect the route. I fail to see how the railway is going to run downhill into Narrogin unless it runs the reverse way to that which water runs. Narrogin is one

of the highest points on the Great Southern Railway. I can only presume that the Leader of the House has been misinformed. This Chamber is very much more enlightened on the question than another place is, and I hope hon. members will grant me a select committee.

Hon. J. Duffell: What about a joint select committee of both Houses?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I understand such a committee cannot be appointed, because the suggestion has been turned down in another place. The Standing Orders, I believe, require us in such circumstances to appoint a select committee from our own House.

Hon. J. Duffell: I do not think that would affect the position at all if we asked for a joint select committee.

Hon. H. Stewart: It would be a more practical and more feasible method of dealing with the problem.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I am not too sure of that. I do not know what the position would be if we asked for a joint select committee and the other House turned down our request. However, when the time arrives I intend to move for a select committee to inquire into the subject. I think members of this Chamber and a majority of members elsewhere will be glad to have something definite placed before them.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.27]: From the remarks of the Leader of the House and those of the last speaker, it seems to me that most of us are in a predicament over this battle of routes. Evidently the proposed line is very necessary in certain directions. I am not clear as to whether the route proposed by the Bill is the correct one. Certainly I require more information to enable me to cast an intelligent vote. A huge sum of money is involved, and I would like the point cleared up as to the possibility of getting a joint select committee, seeing that the Bill has already been passed by another place. I am prepared to vote for a joint select committee with a view to securing more information.

Hon. R. J. LYNN (West) [5.28]: I greatly regret that I know nothing about the district which is in question, and I am sorry to think that a huge expenditure, approximating £136,000, should have been voted for the construction of the Dwarda-Narrogin railway without this House being fully alive to the position.

The Minister for Education: Read the reports.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Mr. Greig this afternoon made a very serious statement, one which unquestionably justifies the appointment of a select committee. The hon. member said that a line serving a larger number of people could be constructed at half the cost of the railway proposed by this Bill. I consider it would be criminally wasteful on the part of the Government to expend such a huge sum on a railway unless the route was one that

would serve the majority of the people interested. This is a battle of routes. Evidently there are two sections in connection with railway construction in the area concerned, and evidently those sections are strongly opposed to one another. Therefore to proceed with the work in the absence of full inquiry would be quite unjustifiable. Our railway system is just on the verge of paying interest and sinking fund. At present there seems to be an opportunity to rid ourselves of the deficit that has been with us for so many years. Before we burden the State with further capital expenditure, involving additional interest and sinking fund liability, we should go very fully into the matter. All that the House desires is sufficient light to enable members to know what is going on.

The Minister for Education: Read the file and you will have that information.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: If the Minister were to come here to-morrow and tell me something about the South-West Province, of which he knows everything, if he said that for some reason a proposed expenditure down there was not justified, he would be right in resenting any reluctance on my part to accept his views. Why, then, should I not accept the views of Mr. Greig on a matter in which that hon. member is so keenly interested? Mr. Greig, in making his statement, incurred some risk in his own province. Certainly he is not seeking to make himself popular, as is very evident in the Narrogin district. As he is not doing this to suit his own ends, he is entitled to every credit for telling the House that in his own province an expenditure of £140,000 is not justified. Not knowing that part of the State, I cannot say whether or not it is entitled to railway construction; but on the statement made by Mr. Greig it is clear that the proposed expenditure could, by following another route, be reduced by 50 per cent., notwithstanding which the line would then serve a bigger population and be of greater assistance to the railway authorities. Surely, then, Mr. Greig's statement is deserving of every consideration!

The Minister for Education: But it is entirely wrong.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: That is a very unkind thing for the Minister to say. Mr. Greig quoted a letter in which those responsible for the working of the railways declared that in their opinion the haulage over the line proposed under the Bill, owing to the grade, would not be 75 per cent. of that on the alternative line. The tonnages quoted were, I think, 350 as against 160. In view of the statement made by Mr. Greig, I say it would be advisable to hasten slowly. In days gone by we have passed railway Bills in the closing hours of the session, committing the State to heavy expenditure on railway construction; and as a result we have watched the interest charges climbing up until they represented a heavy burden on the community. What objection

can there be to a joint select committee inquiring into the proposed railway?

The Minister for Education: We already have the reports of the experts.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Exactly. But would it not be better to have a joint committee take all the evidence and report to us? We could then cast an intelligent vote, or, at all events, a vote in accordance with our intelligence. If this were a private railway, with no risk to the State, it would not matter; but in view of the State expenditure involved we should have all possible light on the subject. Mr. Greig asks that a select committee be appointed in order that all the people interested might give their evidence before that committee. I will vote against the second reading, if for no other reason than that I will not be a party to incurring the expenditure of so large a sum on so little information.

The Minister for Education: Your vote, if effective, would defeat the end you have in view, for the Bill is only for the deviation of a line already authorised.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: If, because we honestly vote against a measure in order to save expenditure, the Minister and his colleagues persist in constructing a line authorised 13 years ago, they will be subjected to a good deal of criticism, and will have to accept full responsibility for their action. I know nothing at all about the country to be served by the railway, but I realise that it is ten or eleven years since the original Bill was passed, and that in all probability important changes have since taken place in that district. It is better to hasten slowly and build up the State on a sound foundation, as against a policy of hurried expenditure. Because of that I will support the appointment of a select committee, hoping that it will be a joint select committee.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East), [5.40]: I will vote for the second reading. In view of the Minister's speech and that of Mr. Greig, we can do nothing else than vote for the second reading and send the Bill to a select committee. Everybody knew long ago that Mr. Greig intended to move for a select committee. Under an honourable understanding that has subsisted for many years, Mr. Greig, although of course representing the whole of the South-East Province, is regarded as the immediate representative of the northern part, while by the same reasoning I am the immediate representative of the central part, and Mr. Burvill that of the southern portion. So, when we are considering this railway, Mr. Greig is the immediate representative of the people most concerned. Not only am I well conversant with the country to be traversed by the railway, but also I have had extensive training in engineering and railway matters. Therefore I am able to say confidently that the problem before us is a difficult one. Before ever I was a member of Parliament I saw for myself the evils

that arose in Victoria through politicians interfering too much with the routes of railway lines. Eventually that system was amended, and a standing committee of railways appointed to advise Parliament as to the routes of new lines. In this State we look to the Railway Advisory Board for guidance, and whenever any section of my electors wish to advocate a certain route I invariably stick to the finding of the non-political advisory board. In this instance we have before us a railway proposition which it is proposed should be carried out on the lines suggested by the advisory board, first in 1911 and again on later dates. I am not prepared to express an opinion as to the route the line should follow. That is best determined by those who are appointed to take into consideration engineering difficulties and the general development of the country. So that when it comes to a question of a member saying that the line should go here, or that it should go in another direction, I am not prepared to follow that member. At the same time if an hon. member declares that there are statements on the files which show that the construction of a line in a certain direction will prove harmful, and that he is prepared to abide by the decision of a competent body, which may be asked to determine the best route for all concerned, then I shall be prepared to follow that hon. member. Mr. Greig has taken that attitude. I do not claim to possess a detailed knowledge of that part of the State that is possessed by the hon. member, though I am familiar with the district, and am acquainted with a number of the settlers. At the same time I am aware that there is a great diversity of opinion regarding the route the proposed railway should take. Not by any means will everyone be found to agree with Mr. Greig. I have gone into the matter from the point of view presented by Mr. Greig to the House last year, and I have perused the files for the purpose of finding out whether they substantiate what the hon. member told the House. He asked a series of questions and received replies which enabled him to submit the motion which the House adopted last year. The file discloses that the grades were as the hon. member stated. The House decided in favour of a new report by the advisory board. The resolution went from here to another place, but no action has since been taken by the Government. It is interesting to notice the manner in which the Government have treated that resolution. Shall we say they treated it in a cavalier fashion? Or shall we more correctly say that they absolutely ignored it?

Hon. R. J. Lynn: It is only characteristic of what the Government have always done.

Hon. H. STEWART: Let us contrast with that action what the Government did in respect of a resolution carried in another place at the instance of a member of the Assembly, recommending that the emoluments of members generally should be increased. In that case we had the "West Australian" declar-

ing that the Assembly gave the Government a constitutional instruction to submit a Bill to meet the wishes of that House. We in this House apparently cannot give any such constitutional instruction. At the time Mr. Greig's resolution was carried, probably we took no step to point out that the Legislative Council desired that an investigation should be made in connection with the construction of this particular railway so as to determine as suggested by Mr. Greig, whether an alteration of the route would lead to economies.

Hon. F. H. Harris: It may have escaped their notice.

Hon. H. STEWART: Many things do escape their notice, and it is rather a pity that they comment in the way they do on some of the matters which do come under their notice. There is another aspect which makes the position difficult for this Chamber to deal with. Mr. Greig will admit that there are many people in that belt of country between the South-West line and the Great Southern who are in need of railway communication. It is admitted that the proposed line will serve some of those people. The deviation that the Bill seeks to authorise will improve the position by taking the line further north. We have to look at the matter from the point of view of practicability. If this Chamber does not agree to the deviation there stands on the statute book an Act which directs the Government to construct the line as at present authorised. If there is a better route, and the Government will not ask the advisory board to report on it, how will our rejection of the Bill before us improve the position of those people whom we wish to serve? The problem which faces us is, how can this Chamber compel the Government to make inquiries respecting the area we wish to serve, and then having carried out the investigations, how can we compel the Government to build a railway which we think will best serve the interests of the greater number?

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Have we any justification for anticipating that the Government will meet the wishes of this House?

Hon. H. STEWART: No doubt the hon. member bases that interjection on his past experience. Having gone through the authentic information which Mr. Greig placed before this House, I am convinced that Mr. Greig made out a good case for a thorough investigation. To show that the action of this Chamber exercised the minds of the Government, I propose to read two letters from the file. The first was written by Mr. W. J. George and it appears on page 216 of the file. In this respect it is a pity that hon. members have not had an opportunity of seeing the maps attached to the file, but I will hold them up to give members an idea of what the position is. Mr. George's letter was written on the 24th August, 1922. That was about the time when Mr. Greig was asking in this House questions on which he afterwards based his case. At any rate, matters were being investigated at that time, and

the Minister for Works on the 24th August, 1922, wrote as follows to the Premier:—

I received from your office yesterday a bundle of files dealing with this matter, and afterwards, on inquiry from Mr. Shapcott I received the advisory board's report. The Engineer-in-Chief informs me that he has not seen this report previously, and had he done so, of course, he could not have gone on with the construction of the proposed line until he had received instruction either to ignore the representations of the advisory board, or to have a survey made with the object of testing out their recommendation that the line from Dwarda should proceed northwards beyond the block formerly belonging to Michael Brown, and to a point known as Codjatatine Pool. He applied to Mr. King of the Lands Department some time ago to know if there was an advisory board report on this line, but was informed that Mr. King was not aware that one existed, or had been put forward, which to me is not understandable, seeing that the report in question and now to hand is signed by Mr. King. The position to me seems to be rather complicated. On the route as passed by Parliament clearing operations to the extent of £1,000 have been carried on, and the men are working from both points with the object of getting this work through as quickly as possible, and of course absorbing a certain number of men who would otherwise be unemployed. The depot we are arranging at Dwarda in connection with the sleepers and other material will, of course, come in, no matter which route the line follows, but on reference to the notes of the deputation which waited on you on the 11th inst., introduced by Mr. E. B. Johnston, M.L.A., and dealing with both the Narrogin-Dwarda and the Dwarda-Armadale line, the report states—"Mr Johnston asks if they could take it that the Narrogin-Dwarda line would be completed by this time next year. The Hon. the Premier said that the work would be pushed on with, but he could not tell them anything definite regarding it."

Mr. Greig represents that part of the State, and knows more about it than any other member. I am dealing with this matter as a citizen, and as a representative of the Province. In justice to the State I have looked up these files. I will now read the letter from the Commissioner of Railways to the secretary of the Premier, dated 12th August, 1922—

With regard to the connection of Narrogin with Dwarda, personally I think this is about one of the last of the extensions which should be undertaken. From Narrogin to Perth via Dwarda we can take only 235 tons load, and from Perth to Narrogin via Dwarda the largest load we can take is 140 tons. This is due to the grade between Dwellingup and Boddington. The track from the flat about seven miles out of Pinjarra, up the hill to Marrinup, is

not only extremely steep but the curves are very bad. Between Narrogin and Perth very much larger loads can be taken over the main line, the load ex Narrogin being 350 tons as against the 235 tons ex Narrogin via Dwarda. The construction of the line will also have the effect of decreasing the distance between Narrogin and the metropolitan area by 17 miles, and consequently reducing the rates on goods by that extent, not only for Narrogin but for all stations south of Narrogin as well, and will consequently represent a considerable decrease in earnings, although, because of the location of the line, we shall almost certainly have to continue carrying everything over the main line as at the present time.

The question is whether the Government will serve this country in the best way for the State, and whether, if a select committee investigates this matter and acquaints the House with the correct position, we can deal with the area in the way it should be dealt with. Upon the files is a plan accompanying the report of the advisory board. The patch of blue is the area the board says is well settled, but not served by a railway within 10 miles. To the north is the line recommended by the advisory board to Codjatatine. In June of this year Engineer Babbington examined both sides of the Hotham River to Codjatatine, the new route recommended by the Railway Advisory Board in March, 1922, to ascertain which would be the better side for the line. He pointed out that the red line to the north would be cheaper because it would mean the acquisition of less property. The line already authorised from Dwarda to Narrogin is also shown, and to the north is the proposed deviation as outlined in the Bill. The work should be done on the report of technical officers, and should take into account the people who have been there for many years and the returned soldiers who were lately settled there, both of which classes of settler require railway facilities at once. Consideration should be given to the interests of the State and the working of the railways. We also have to consider the means by which all this can be brought about. Members of the Council have to see how we can deal with this proposition, so that if the Council turns down the deviation authorised by the Bill, we will not be left with only the original proposition, and be unable to get anything better.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West—in reply) [6.12]: I cannot let the debate close without referring to Mr. Lynn's remarks. He was under a misapprehension when he said what he did. He cast a reflection on the Government when he stated that they intended to spend £136,000, whereas if they built a line the other way they would spend only half that amount. Mr. Greig stated that the line from Dwarda to Codjatatine would cost only half the money that a line from Dwarda to

Narrogin would cost. If the line were taken only to Codjototine it would finish at a dead end. It is in the minds of people, who intend that the railway should be carried to that point, to take it right through, either to Pingelly or some other point on the Great Southern. The construction of the line will cost just as much as a line going to Narrogin.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: It will serve four times the number of people.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member has put a wrong construction on the proposition and has been speaking under a misapprehension. He charged the Government with spending £136,000 when they could have done work just as advantageous to the State by spending half the amount.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the House is wrong. I said the majority of the people could be served by about half the proposed expenditure on the construction of this line. I made no reference to any distance or to any length of line.

The PRESIDENT: Mr. Lynn is quite in order.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am in order. Mr. Lynn did make that statement.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: When we adjourned for dinner I was endeavouring to explain what appeared to me to be Mr. Lynn's misunderstanding regarding the interpretation he put upon the statement made by Mr. Greig. I do not desire to take up the time of the House at any great length, but the hon. member conveyed to my mind that the Government were incurring an expenditure of £136,000 when they could get practically the same results from the expenditure of half that money.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: That is quite wrong.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am glad to hear the hon. member make that remark. That was the impression conveyed to my mind. I want to clear up the position on behalf of the Government, who would not be worthy of consideration by any member in this Chamber or another place, if they were prepared to spend £136,000 when they could get the same results by expending £60,000.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: No other member had that impression.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Then let "Hansard" speak for itself. The Dwarda-Narrogin line is estimated to cost £136,000, and that line will extend over a distance of 36 miles. Mr. Greig's proposition is to construct a line north from Dwarda to Codjototine, a distance of 13 miles, the estimated cost of which would be something like £52,000.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: My point is: Will the line serve the great bulk of the people?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member knows well if he has read the files and understands what the Bill means, that it is for a connection between the South-Western railway and the Great Southern Railway. That is the object of the Bill.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I thought it was to serve the settlers.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member knows that it is a question of constructing a line to link up the South-Western line at Pinjarra with Narrogin on the Great Southern Railway. If that railway be not constructed so as to give effect to that objective, we will not be constructing the line as authorised by Parliament. The 36 miles of railway is to be constructed in order to make that connection. If that objective is to be abandoned, we are to repudiate Parliament's decision and break faith with the people—the Government are not prepared to do that—and in lieu of the authorised railway, construct the extension to Codjototine, at a cost of £52,000. It will mean that the railway will be taken to a dead-end. It may cost half the amount of the complete line, but having constructed the extension to Codjototine, Parliament will not have carried out the objective of the Bill. It would be necessary to turn east to link up with the main railway section, probably at Pingelly, in which event that line would cost as much as the one proposed in the Bill.

Hon. A. Lovekin: But it would serve more people?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am making it clear that the Government did not contemplate anything but the connection of the two main railway lines. Mr. Greig has admitted he desires to get the line to Codjototine, but does not want to leave it there. He was honest and straightforward in his admission that later on he wants it to be continued to link up with the Great Southern Railway. He contends that if it is taken in that direction, it will serve more people.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That is the point.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It is not the point. The Government do not contemplate spending £136,000 on the line, if the same object can be attained by the expenditure of £52,000. That is what I understood the hon. member to say was the position.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Would that not be too silly for words?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is the impression conveyed to my mind.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: My object is to protect you, if it is possible.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member cannot do that, because if we are to carry out the railway project, according to the Advisory Board's report, whether it be taken to Narrogin, Brookton or any other place, the Government do not intend to allow the railway to stop at a dead end. The Government would be forced to continue

the line if it were taken to Codjatonine, and carry it on to Brookton or some other point along the line at a cost practically equal to that suggested in the Bill.

Hon. A. Lovekin: But would it convenience more settlers?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member knows the position. I hope Mr. Lynn understands it too.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: I do understand it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: In that case, I am glad I have made this explanation. As to the select committee, I hope the House will not agree to its appointment. The Government have in view the carrying out of a promise made 10 or 12 years ago.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: That does not refer to the line in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, it does. The line is the one authorised by Parliament. The difference is that in the original Act the deviation permitted was one of two miles. The Bill seeks authorisation for a deviation of five miles. That is the whole point. The railway is already authorised. If the Government chose to do so, they could start building this line to-morrow.

Hon. J. Cornell: Why don't you do so?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There are a certain number of settlers on the Noombling estate who will be served by the deviation of the line, and that will be of advantage to the State. It was considered that tenders should not be called for the construction of the line until Parliament had authorised the deviation proposed.

Hon. J. Cornell: If they shift another five miles, what then?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That aspect does not enter into the question. The people in the Hotham Valley and at Noombling are satisfied with the position. I will not labour the question. I am pleased that Mr. Lynn understands the position. It is just as well that it should be cleared up. The questions which hon. members have to decide are: is the deviation satisfactory; will it cater for those it is intended to serve; and is it right for the Government to carry out the work?

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [7.42]: I move—

That consideration of the Bill in Committee be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

Hon. J. A. GREIG (South-East) [7.43]: I move an amendment—

That the Bill be referred to a select committee consisting of the Hon. W. Carroll, Hon. H. Seddon and the mover,

with power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, to adjourn from place to place and to report on Thursday, 4th October.

Hon. A. BURVILL (South-East) [7.44]: With my two colleagues, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Greig, I am interested to a certain extent in the Bill. I have listened to the Leader of the House, and to Mr. Greig. The Bill seeks to amend the present Act. A report furnished by the Commissioner of Railways condemns the Bill and, I take it, the amendment as well. There is the Advisory Board's report recommending a railway from Dwarda to Codjatonine, and the motion passed by Parliament that this matter should be investigated. No investigation has been made by this House, but apparently a concession has been made in that the Bill has been presented to the House in an amended form. In view of the conflict of opinion between the Commissioner of Railways and the Advisory Board—unfortunately the board did not report on the actual line, but on only a portion of it—the position is not clear enough to justify my registering a vote upon it. Therefore, I favour the appointment of a select committee.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East) [7.46]: Members should recognise that the people in the district are scattered and that all interests should be represented. If a select committee is to get a proper appreciation of the position, it is important that the different sections be given ample notice and opportunity to present their case. I take it a select committee would deal with the extension and would not be able to consider any of the proposed alternatives Mr. Greig suggested. I think the House should consider this point at once.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [7.47]: Would the select committee be debarred from examining the alternative projects suggested by Mr. Greig?

Hon. A. Lovekin: First let us see what their report is.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: After all that has been said by the Minister and by members interested in the district, fuller light should be thrown on the question. One section favours the proposal in the Bill. The Minister has stated that the Government would not be parties to breaking a promise made many years ago. The Bill in a measure does break the promise made to people who have settled in the district; therefore, it is the more necessary that an inquiry be held. It is our duty and the duty of the Government to see that new railways serve the greatest possible number of people and confer the greatest possible benefit on the State. Much has been said regarding the advantages of various routes, but it will be the duty of a select committee, if appointed, to bring in recommendations, and members will then be in a position to decide the best course to adopt.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [7.50]: I oppose the appointment of a select committee. The Government have thoroughly considered the position; their engineers, railway authorities and land officers have reported, and there is ample information in the file to enable members to make up their minds. Mr. Nicholson inferred that the proposed deviation—a matter of five instead of two miles—was in itself an act of repudiation. I do not agree with him. In all such measures a centre line is laid down and a margin for deviation is allowed. The objective of the Government was to build a line from Pinjarra to Narrogin and, if we depart from that long standing promise, it will be a bad thing for the State. Before that is done, a better case should be set up. No one has succeeded in showing that an error has been made.

Hon. J. Nicholson: A select committee would decide that.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It has not been shown that the proposed deviation would not be satisfactory. I fear I shall be almost alone in voting against a select committee, because a majority of members seem to favour further inquiry. If a select committee is appointed, I hope the inquiry will be completed expeditiously.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [7.53]: Eleven years ago Parliament passed a Bill for the construction of a railway on a certain route. Now an effort is being made to infuse a little life into the proposal, and it has been discovered that the deviation is insufficient. Mr. Greig's intention is not to prevent the construction of the railway altogether.

The Minister for Education: Yes, it is.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The report of the select committee will show that. I think he desires an inquiry to determine whether the deviation in the Bill is necessary or whether there should be a greater deviation. If the deviation in the Bill is sufficient, well and good; if a greater deviation is considered necessary to serve a large number of people or secure better grades, the Government should fall in with the select committee's recommendations. If they do not, the Bill will be lost and the route already authorised will stand.

Hon. J. A. GREIG (South-East—in reply) [7.55]: The select committee would give both sides ample opportunity to express their views, and would look to the interests of the State. All possible evidence would be presented so that members might have a fair statement to guide them in coming to a decision. Few questions that have come before the House in recent years were more deserving of an inquiry than this one. I have referred to the mis-statements made by deputations to members of the Government. We all know what deputations are; they exaggerate, and I am of opinion that Ministers have been deceived by the evidence placed before them. I wish to have evidence collected and placed before members so that they can read it and con-

sider it in the light of the summing up of the select committee.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It would be a guide to the Government.

Hon. H. Stewart: And to the Advisory Board.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I have suggested Mr. Carroll as a practical man with a good knowledge of the value of land. Mr. Seddon is a man of considerable experience in the working of railways and the matter of grades. Such a select committee would be quite independent—those two members have never been to the district—and thus the House could be sure of receiving an impartial report.

Amendment put and passed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. H. Stewart and the Pinjarra-Dwarda Railway Extension.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East) [7.58]: On a point of explanation, when I was speaking on the Bill I read a letter appearing on pages 202 to 204 of the file. The letter was the reply by the Premier to the deputation from representatives of Narrogin who discussed this railway with him. During the tea adjournment Mr. Greig informed me that he was present when the Premier's reply was made to the deputation, and that the deputation brought up the question of the connection of Dwarda to Narrogin, and also the further extension to Armadale from Dwarda. The reply from the Premier which I read covered the two questions, and somewhat complicated the issue. It is only fair that I should explain that. Had I known that was the position, I would not have read the communication. I was under a misapprehension for it appeared to me, as a man having no knowledge of the subject beyond what appeared on the file, that the position was such as I described in my speech. I thought I dealt with the one matter. My colleague, Mr. Greig, told me he could not have read that letter, because he knew more about the matter than I did. It is only fair to make this explanation, and inform the House that my remarks and the emphasis I laid upon the contents of the letter, were all given under a misapprehension. In the circumstances, I withdraw the interpretation I put on the communication. I will seek the excision of that letter and my remarks from the report in "Hansard."

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [8.0]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, 25th September.

I had intended to move the second reading of the Property Bill to-night, but as the debate on the railway Bill has taken longer than

I expected, I do not now propose to proceed with the Property Bill. I wish to explain to you, Mr. President, that under my instructions copies of the Bill have been distributed amongst members. It is not usual to do this until the second reading is about to be moved. I would ask you to overlook my action on this occasion. I thought it would be well for members to have copies of the Bill so that they might peruse it, and I asked the Clerk to have them distributed, believing that we would be dealing with it to-night.

Hon. A. Lovekin: We can deal with it to-night.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not propose to proceed with it to-night.

Hon. J. Duffell: Have copies been sent to the Barristers' Board?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Copies of the previous Bill were sent to the Barristers' Board, and copies of this Bill will also be forwarded.

The PRESIDENT: Very well.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [8.2]: My view is that these Bills should be distributed amongst members at the earliest possible moment, whether the second reading has been moved or not, so that members may have the fullest opportunity to look into them. It is all very well to sit and listen to a second reading speech from a Minister on a Bill such as this Property Bill, which no member has ever seen. I do not think that is a proper procedure at all. It seems to me more or less a matter of red tape.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East) [8.3]: During this session we have had several Bills delivered to us before the second reading, and we have been able to follow the subject matter while the second reading speeches have been made.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is against the Standing Orders.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West—in reply) [8.4]: I think that what I have stated is the rule.

The PRESIDENT: It has always been the custom. It is not in the Standing Orders, though.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If it is your wish, Mr. President, that in future copies of a Bill shall be distributed when the measure is introduced, of course that will be done.

The PRESIDENT: I will think the matter over.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Bills are distributed elsewhere as soon as they have been read the first time.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 8.5 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 13th September, 1923.

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

QUESTION—ELECTORAL OFFICIALS, WEST PROVINCE.

Mr. STUBES, for Capt. Carter, asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, How many electoral officials were employed in each district of the West Province on the 8th inst.? 2, How many of these special appointments were temporary hands? 3, How many were returned soldiers? 4, Will the Minister also specify the number of returned men employed in each district separately?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Fremantle, 16; N.E. Fremantle, 17; S. Fremantle, 20. 2, Fremantle, 12; N.E. Fremantle, 10; S. Fremantle, 12. 3, Fremantle, 9; N.E. Fremantle, 10; S. Fremantle, 9. 4, Fremantle, 11; N.E. Fremantle, 11; S. Fremantle, 11.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, LEAD REQUIREMENTS.

Mr. LAMBERT asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What were the quantities of red and white lead respectively in oil and powdered form used by the Railway Department for the year ended 31st August, 1923? 2, What was the average price paid? 3, Has the locally manufactured article been offered to the department? 4, Will he have inquiries made as to the suitability of the local product for the requirements of the Railway Department?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, White lead in oil, 21 tons; white lead dry, 6 cwt.; red lead in oil, nil; red lead dry, 2 tons 7 cwt. 2, White lead in oil, £59 per ton; white lead dry, £73 per ton; red lead dry, £63 10s. 3, Yes. 4, Tests are being made.

QUESTION—ARBITRATION COURT CONGESTION.

Mr. McCALLUM asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that owing to the congested condition of its work certain industrial awards of the Court of Arbitration are likely to