

the raising of the age might better secure the men concerned.

Hon. T. MOORE: If a man is 21 years of age, he receives the full wage. It does not matter whether he is 25 or 35. The wingies and stumpies are the instigators of the Bill. Many of these men are out of work, and it is a deplorable state of affairs. I do not wish to rush the Bill through. If further inquiry is desired, it is only necessary to suggest it and I shall concur. In reply to Mr. Hamersley, I do not think there is one hotel of less than three storeys that has a lift, and surely the licensee of a three-storied hotel is in a position to employ a liftman. This should not be detrimental to the passing of the Bill. The hotels are doing well and should be employing these men. I do not think there is any justification for holding up the Bill on the ground that the hotel-keepers may be put to some inconvenience. They are the people to whom we look, and have a right to look, to employ these men wherever possible.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 9.38 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 7th November, 1923.

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

QUESTION—WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS, CASKS.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Premier: 1, Was there a large number of casks imported for the use of the Wyndham Meat Works this year? 2, If so, what was the number? 3, What timber was used in the manufacture of the casks? 4, Was any firm or person carrying on business in Western Australia requested to quote for the casks to be manufactured in Western Australia out of timber grown in this State? 5, If not, why not?

The PREMIER replied: 1, A number were imported. 2, 933. 3, 901 Victorian Blackwood and 32 Victorian Oak. 4, No. 5, The management considered it improbable that Western Australian firms could have successfully handled the orders. Shipping and other arrangements did not permit of any uncertainty as to quality or delivery. In future local firms will be asked to quote for the supply of casks manufactured from local timber.

QUESTION—BROOME STORES, SHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Premier: 1, Are stores or goods required by the Government for the town and district of Broome mostly shipped by the steamers trading to Singapore? 2, If so, what is the reason for not shipping such stores or goods by the State-owned boats?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, Sometimes, but only when State steamers are not available, or arrangements for transport inland necessitate it.

QUESTION—GOVERNMENT WORKS, PREFERENCE.

Mr. LUTEY (for Mr. Corboy) asked the Premier: Is it a fact that instructions have been issued that on Government works ex-Imperial soldiers who have migrated to this State must be given preference of employment over native-born Australians?

The PREMIER replied: No.

QUESTION—ROAD MAKING, PERTH-ARMADALE.

Mr. WILLCOCK asked the Minister for Works: 1, Of the £10,963 spent on the Perth-Armadale road, what are the respective amounts paid by the bodies concerned? 2, Is it anticipated there will be any further expenditure on this road in connection with the present reconstruction or repairs? 3, If so, what bodies are contributing to the payments and what are the respective amounts?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Of the £10,963 spent on the Perth-Arma-

dale road the respective amounts paid by the bodies concerned are as follows:—

	Grant.	Subsidy, year	Bal. from last grant.	Their own Funds.	Total.
Gossells Road Board	£ 5,650	£ 300	£ 179	£ 198	£ 6,327
Canning Park Road Board	1,200	...	...	...	1,200
Armadale-Kelmscott Road Board	3,000	...	...	100	3,100
Public Works Department	331	...	...	...	331
	...	...	...	...	10,963

2, Yes. 3, Public Works Department only. Estimated expenditure £150.

SELECT COMMITTEE, BRITISH IMPERIAL OIL COMPANY LTD. (PRIVATE) BILL.

Discharge of Order.

Order of the Day read for the presentation of the report of the select committee.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.35]: There has been some difficulty with regard to the site proposed in the Bill. The officials of the Public Works Department are of opinion that the suggested site may be required at some future date and it, therefore, became necessary to change the site. The head office of the Company is in London and there has been some difficulty in proceeding. On account of the lack of time and the near approach of the end of the session, I move—

That the Order be discharged from the Notice Paper.

Question put and passed.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Busselton-Margaret River Railway Deviation.
 - 2, Flinders Bay-Margaret River Railway Deviation.
 - 3, Yarramony-Newearnie Railway.
- Introduced by the Minister for Works.

MOTION—SANDALWOOD, AMENDED REGULATIONS.

To disallow.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.38]: I move—

That the amended regulations under the Forests Act, 1918, published in the "Government Gazette" of Tuesday, 30th October, and laid upon the Table of the Legislative Assembly on the same day, be disallowed.

Possibly members feel they have had a surfeit of discussion during the present session on matters relating to sandalwood.

The Minister for Mines: Some of us have.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If any such feeling should obtain, I must disclaim any responsibility for it. It is due entirely to the incomprehensible manner in which the Government have handled the whole business, a manner that must be rather confusing if not confounding to those members who supported the Government in their opposition to the motion. When the matter was before the House previously, the Minister for Forests asked by way of interjection why I was so interested in the matter, and similar questions were asked by members that addressed themselves to the discussion. Some members professed astonishment that I should submit such a motion, and the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) in a kind of veiled way said either too much or not enough.

Mr. Underwood: Oh, he said enough.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Very rarely does he offend on the ground of not saying enough. He said he believed the Chinese were exercising a subtle influence and were mainly responsible for the opposition displayed to the policy of the Government. I do not know what the hon. member meant by "subtle influence," or whether he intended to convey the impression that my action in submitting the motion or that of members of the Opposition in supporting it was in any way dictated by the subtle influence supposed to be possessed by the Chinese. Lest I be again accused before this debate closes, and lest it be suggested by some members that they are unable to understand why I am moving in the matter, I intend to make my position perfectly clear. I have taken action from the commencement in response first of all to a request from the council in the district I represent, the municipality of Boulder. I have taken action also in response to scores of letters received from people throughout the State interested in the sandalwood business. Quite a number of petitions signed by the getters were forwarded to me and, in response to those requests I, as a public man, felt compelled to take action. When the advertisement appeared in the Press calling for tenders—some time in March—I received a wire dated 23rd March from the Mayor of Boulder as follows:—

Council emphatically protest against monopoly of sandalwood being given any individual or firm and consider any such action detrimental to the best interests of the goldfields to which the State owes so much.

Following that I received a wire dated 6th April that read—

What date would suit you to attend the public indignation meeting protest against the sandalwood proposal. Please confer with Cornell and other members. Kindly keep me posted regarding Government movements.

I have read those telegrams for the information of members that may be in doubt as to why I moved in this matter. On the 21st

May I received a letter from the town clerk of Kalgoolie as follows:—

I am directed by my council to address all the goldfields members of Parliament asking them to maintain opposition to the letting of the proposed sandalwood contract to the utmost. It is felt that any apparent weakening may induce the Government to persevere with its intention to let this contract, when continued opposition may yet defeat the proposal. I have therefore to ask that you will, consistent with your own views on the matter, endeavour to comply with the wishes of the council.

It was stated that a copy of the letter had also been forwarded to Messrs. Ardagh, Kirwan, Harris, Seddon, Dodd, Cornell, Munsie, Cunningham, Mullany, Lutey, and Lambert, and that all replies received were in the affirmative. Therefore I consider I was justified in taking immediate steps to deal with the matter. In consultation with other goldfields members I arranged a deputation to the Premier. The newspaper report of the deputation says that it consisted of 21 members of both Houses of Parliament and three other citizens, and was introduced by the Leader of the Opposition. The report then says that I went on to state the objections that were offered to the Government's proposal, and that I concluded by saying that my main point was that the matter should be held in abeyance until Parliament met. This is followed by the word "applause" in parenthesis. I am also reported as having said that the attendance of so many members of Parliament was justification for the request that the matter should not be dealt with while the House was not sitting. I need not quote the remarks made in opposition to the Government's proposal by Dr. Saw, the Speaker of this House, Mr. Heron, Mr. Mullany, and others. I asked that action be deferred until the House had had an opportunity of considering the Government's proposal, and therefore, when the House did meet, I was in duty bound to take some definite action to bring the matter before the Chamber, in order that hon. members should be afforded an opportunity of considering it. I think I have made it clear why I have moved in the matter. I did it in response to applications from cutters all over the State, in response to a request from the municipal council of my district, and in response to the desire expressed by all the 21 members who were present at that deputation. If other members had been following events associated with the calling of tenders in March until the House met, there would not be any need for them to ask in this House why I have moved in the matter, or to express surprise that I should submit a motion of this kind. In view of the protests from all over the State, no other course was open to me. During the discussion here it has been contended by members of the Government and those who support the Government proposal, that that proposal was made solely, or almost solely, in the interest of the pullers; but neither any

Minister nor any of the speakers in support of the motion was able to present to the House even one telegram, or one letter, of approval or endorsement of the Government proposal from any puller in the State. By not one item of documentary proof were they able to support their contention that they were acting in the interests of the pullers.

Mr. Teesdale: It is simple common sense that the pullers would not object to an increase.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member has no opinion at all on the matter.

Mr. Teesdale: Surely they would not object to an increase.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They were objecting to the Government's proposal, although the Government declared that their action would bring the pullers a large increase. Notwithstanding that declaration of the Government, the pullers did object; and apparently they were willing to risk the possibility of a lower price, as contended by Government supporters, in view of the competition in the trade. Therefore the hon. member's interjection has no point whatever. Notwithstanding all the widespread declarations of the Government that they would stabilise the industry and keep in permanent employment those who would be permitted to engage in the trade, and that the pullers would get a considerably larger payment per ton than formerly, the pullers did protest from one end of the State to the other.

Mr. Teesdale: We shall know more in six months.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No doubt. So far as I know, there was no support for the Government's proposal from any quarter in this State.

The Minister for Mines: The file discloses that the forest ranger reported that the pullers supported the proposal.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No doubt the forest ranger said they did. But I venture to say that if the forest ranger had any reasonable evidence of that support, the Minister would be able to produce it.

The Minister for Mines: It is on the file.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know what is on the file. No definite proof has been forthcoming. The Government's proposal was opposed by all the local authorities on the goldfields, and opposed by all the getters in the business, so far as I know, and also opposed by every section of the community except one section. It was not opposed when it was promulgated three years ago, and it has not been opposed on this occasion, by Paterson & Coy. That is what stands out as a fact.

Mr. Underwood: Who is opposing it?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am opposing it, and that is sufficient for the time being.

Mr. Underwood: Paterson is out now.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He is well and truly in.

Mr. Underwood: John Stewart is well in, too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We will see, before we finish, where Stewart is and also where Paterson is. It was contended in this House that the protests against the monopoly arose only after the tenders had closed and there were disappointed tenderers. That is not correct. From the very moment the suggestion was put forward, three years ago, and again from the very moment it was suggested this year, the traders in the business protested most bitterly, every one of them, except Paterson & Coy. I do not know whether Paterson & Coy. had some prophetic vision with regard to the ultimate end of the whole business, or whether they were philanthropic enough to take their chance in a tender and prepared to go out of business if they failed to obtain the contract. That may have been their attitude. But the fact is that neither Paterson & Coy. nor the dummy company who were going to get the monopoly—

Mr. Underwood: Try John Stewart.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member is very consistent. He knows all about it. Apparently he is willing to back the Government when they face north, and equally willing to back them when they face south.

Mr. Underwood: I am not prepared to back John Stewart.

Mr. Teesdale: John Stewart was too high-principled to stop in this House; he got out of it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not fighting for John Stewart.

Mr. Teesdale: I am talking to the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood).

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member need not insinuate so far as I am concerned. My attitude has been consistent all through. I have asked all along for a fair go for all interests concerned and open trading.

Mr. Teesdale: Stewart reflected on you when he got out, too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not care whether he did or not. So far as I am concerned, he is just as reputable a citizen as Duncan Paterson or anyone associated with Paterson. At least, John Stewart had good enough standing in this State to induce a majority of the electors of Claremont to return him to this House; and he resigned of his own free will. I do not wish to enter into a discussion of the merits of John Stewart or of any other trader, but I know that John Stewart has been a reputable business man here for the past 25 years. I believe he is of good standing in the circles where he has been doing business. Furthermore, he is the oldest sandalwood dealer in the trade, with which he has been associated for the past quarter of a century. I say again that the only persons in the State who did not object to the proposed monopoly were Paterson and Company and the dummy company.

Mr. Pickering: You might give the company the benefit of the doubt as to their genuineness.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am merely stating a fact, which the hon. member cannot controvert. He can draw what conclusions he likes.

Neither Paterson and Company nor the company objected to the proposal of the Government.

Capt. Carter: Neither did Messrs. Burridge and Warren.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, because Burridge and Warren are Paterson and Company. Burridge and Warren are former employees of Paterson, and they have not traded in sandalwood since the time they separated from Paterson and Company.

Mr. Mann: They are not associated with Paterson & Company to-day.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know they are not.

Capt. Carter: Was not John Stewart formerly with Paterson & Company?

Mr. Underwood: This is only a bit of a brawl.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member interjecting is a very suitable man to be in a brawl.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. P. COLLIER: I will add that the hon. member is in a very suitable condition to enter into a brawl.

Mr. Underwood: I am not too bad.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The motion which finally went to a division in this House was that the Government should not make the grant of a sole right to pull and remove sandalwood from Crown lands, or to deal with sandalwood under the grant of a monopoly. That was a definite and specific motion, and it was defeated by a majority of the members in this House, which means, of course, that every one of the 21 members who voted against the motion declared by that vote that the right and proper way to handle the business was by the grant of the sole right or monopoly. They voted against the motion which opposed monopoly. Therefore they declared that monopoly was the right, proper, and effective way of handling the business. When moving my motion I said—

The Government say that their object is to ensure a higher return to the pullers and an increased royalty to the Crown. Those opposing the new proposal are unable to see that to achieve this dual object it is necessary to grant a monopoly to any firm. If the Government feel that, say, £12 or £15 per ton is a fair price for the pullers, and that a £6 or £8 royalty would not be too much, I see no reason why they should not fix those sums and allow those persons in the business to continue as in the past.

That was my statement, and that is precisely the policy that the Government have now adopted.

Mr. Mann: Have you any cause for further complaint?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Certainly. What an accommodating conscience the hon. member has!

Mr. Teesdale: John Stewart has been along.

Hon. P. COLLIER: John Stewart as a business man is entitled to a fair deal.

The Minister for Mines: That is what he has got.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We shall see. The hon. member's statements on the matter are not worth much consideration.

Mr. Teesdale: You would not have heard a word from John Stewart if he had got the contract.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Probably not. That has nothing to do with me. But I protested from the very commencement, from the very announcement of the calling of tenders, against a monopoly. Neither I nor anybody else at the time could know who was going to be the successful tenderer. Irrespective of who was tendering, my action has been consistent.

The Minister for Mines: Come to the point.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I will deal with all the points if I can. Any point I miss the Minister can take up. The Minister convinced the majority of the House only a few weeks ago that a certain course of action was the only right one. I have no doubt he will convince the same members on this occasion that a directly opposite course of action is the right one.

Mr. Teesdale: It may turn out so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member will accept anything the Minister puts forward. He joined in the deputation of protest against the monopoly, and later justified his change of front by declaring that he had had light thrown on the matter since.

Mr. Teesdale: A lot of us knew very little about it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: When I went on the deputation, I knew just as much as I know now.

Mr. Teesdale: We have heard a lot since then.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the hon. member cares to read up the report of the deputation, he will find that I protested on similar lines to those on which my recent protests have been based.

Mr. Teesdale: I never—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I must ask the member for Roebourne to recollect that he will have his full opportunity later. I must also ask him to let the Leader of the Opposition proceed.

Mr. Teesdale: You can have it on your own!

Hon. P. COLLIER: We know that whatever the Government do is right in the eyes of the member for Roebourne.

Mr. Teesdale: We shall see in six months' time whether you are right.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The member for Roebourne is now entering into the realms of prophecy. He is now predicting what will be in six months' time.

Mr. Teesdale: There may be a boomerang.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Perhaps. Many things can happen inside six months. Some of them may prove catastrophic to the hon. member and others associated with him.

Capt. Carter: The same thing may happen to some of your friends.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, and the hon. member may get lost in the deluge.

Mr. Mann: The wish is father to the thought.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The wish is supported by the thought on this occasion. When I declared, and when every member on this side declared that the matter could be regulated by the Government fixing a royalty to be paid to the Crown, and fixing a price to be paid to the getter, the contention was emphatically denied by every member on the Government side of the House who spoke against the motion. Those members declared that sandalwood could be handled only by granting the sole right, or a monopoly, that it was not possible to control it, if it were to be in the hands of more than one person.

Mr. Mann: That may yet be proved to be correct.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Anything may happen. The House was convinced by the long speech made by the Minister. He elaborated most eloquently upon the difficulty and impossibility of the whole thing being handled except under the proposals of the Government. Although the Minister is burdened by a number of portfolios, he was able to give up a couple of months of his time to the study of the question of exchange and he submitted himself at the University as a pupil of Professor Shann.

The Minister for Mines: I would not have John Stewart come along to give me lessons.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But the Minister probably had Duncan Paterson and Johns giving him information.

The Minister for Mines: And probably not; nor even Texas Green.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Texas Green is not in the State.

Capt. Carter: But he is in a company.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He has as much right to be a shareholder in a company as has the Minister.

The Minister for Mines: What are you insinuating?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member is a shareholder in companies and Texas Green has as much right to be a shareholder in a company.

The Minister for Mines: I am not interested in sandalwood in any way.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I never insinuated anything of the sort. I have not said anything from which such an inference could be drawn. The Government declared emphatically that sandalwood could be handled only by a monopoly, and that was supported by members opposite. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) said that it could only be dealt with by one selling agent.

Mr. Mann: Effectively.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member did not say effectively. He cannot amend "Hansard" at this stage. He should have corrected it next day before it was printed. It is too late to amend it now, and he cannot interpolate words into "Hansard" that do not appear there. He declared it could only be handled by one selling agency. That statement was clear and definite. He said, further,

that if we were going to give the selling agency to anyone, we should give it to a British firm, one whose profits could be taxed by the State and Commonwealth.

Mr. Mann: You agree with that?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, but I desire to say that the hon. member's action squares with that declaration. He said, "Let us not give it to a firm in China that has only Chinese interests and all of whose profits are kept in China." The hon. member made a dramatic disclosure with regard to one of the people trading in sandalwood. He obtained a balance sheet of some Chinese company and read out the list of shareholders and other information contained in that document to prove that one of the traders was John Hector, who was merely an agent for Chinese. It is now proposed that Hector shall secure 10 per cent. of the sandalwood.

The Minister for Mines: His proposition.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The member for Perth would wipe out all the Chinese interests. He declared, "Let us give it to Britishers who will be subject to State and Commonwealth taxation."

The Minister for Mines: Hector has declared that he is acting on his own behalf.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Where did the member for Perth get that balance sheet?

The Minister for Mines: That referred to what took place some time before.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I believe that the balance sheet was some three years old.

Mr. Mann: I said so at the time.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The whole object the hon. member had in view was to discredit John Hector.

The Minister for Mines: There has been a good deal said to discredit people in this business.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not responsible for that. I do not accept any responsibility for the literature that has been published. The hon. member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood), who is temporarily absent from the Chamber, through necessity or desire—

Mr. Richardson: That is not worthy of you.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am the judge of what is worthy. When an hon. member throws taunts at me across the floor of the Chamber, I will throw them back.

Capt. Carter: The member for Pilbara never does.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The member for Leederville is not always in the Chamber, while I am continuously in my seat, and I know what I am saying. If I am to have taunts thrown at me I will throw them back no matter where they may come from. The member for Pilbara said that what the Government did propose was to grant a permit which would enable a man to handle sandalwood as the sole selling agent. He said further that if the supporters of the motion could put up a better proposition than that of the Government he would support it, but that no other proposition had been suggested notwithstanding

the fact that a definite proposal had been submitted by a speaker on this side of the House.

Mr. Mann: On a point of order: The Leader of the Opposition said just now that a certain word which I claimed to have used did not appear in "Hansard." As a matter of fact it is there.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is not in the copy I have.

Mr. Mann: What I am reported to have said is "I am still convinced that the only effective way of dealing with sandalwood in China . . ." You see therefore that I did use the word "effective."

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is what I said.

Mr. Mann: You said "effective" was not there.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I took my report from the "Daily News" which, so far as we know is taken from "Hansard."

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And before it is corrected.

Mr. Mann: Be fair if you cannot be just.

Hon. P. COLLIER: As a matter of fact the "Daily News" report is taken from the first pull of "Hansard" and if there should be a variation between the two reports it is on account of the corrections made by members.

The Premier: Oh, no!

Mr. Mann: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The member for Perth said that the member for Leederville was one of those who was surprised. As a matter of fact the member for Leederville chastised the Government for their dilatoriness in not having gone on with the monopoly, thereby losing some £35,000 or £40,000 in revenue. He declared that the Minister had put up a thoroughly businesslike proposition and added, "I see no force in the contention of the Leader of the Opposition. If the Government are worth their salt they will go ahead and carry out their policy in a straightforward manner." That is definite enough. The hon. member is entitled to express that opinion. If the Government were worth their salt they would carry out their policy in a straightforward manner! Their policy was to grant a sole monopoly. They have not gone ahead with their policy and therefore, according to the hon. member's argument, they are not worth their salt so far as this matter is concerned. Instead they have somersaulted and to an extent adopted the proposal advanced by the Opposition.

Capt. Carter: That part of the original policy to derive a proper royalty is still retained.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There was no difference of opinion between the two sets of members who spoke as to the justification for the Government obtaining a fair amount of royalty or to the payment of a fair sum to the getters. All were in agreement with that; but where we did differ in regard to the motion was as to the method whereby what was desired could be obtained. The Government and their supporters declared that it could only be done by the granting of a monopoly.

Capt. Carter: And the Government have not followed that policy.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, but instead of granting a monopoly or the sole right to one firm or company, they propose to permit every person who was previously engaged in it to carry it on—a monopoly to be given to four or five. The hon. member will not argue that there is not a difference between the contention advanced on the previous occasion, and that of to-day. The member for Katanning said, "It would be criminal if we forbade the acceptance of a tender which would secure a return to the State." The Government did not accept any tender; they ran away immediately after the matter was decided in the House and the contentions they had advanced throughout a period of months. Then the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) took a hand. He said—

It seems to me there is only one interest that can gain by a diversity of interest in the control of the sandalwood trade, and that is the Chinese. The proposal of the Government is a good sound proposal. It is the best and most feasible that has been advanced. The only alternative is to start a further State enterprise. The best course is for the Government to accept the tender.

That was his attitude. It rests with the hon. member to say whether he approves of the attitude of the Government in running away from the policy he supported on that occasion. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) said—

I will show my interest in the cutters by supporting the proposal. It is in the interests of the men who have been pulling sandalwood in the bush, and is also in the interests of the State.

What was in the interests of the State? The proposal of the Government to cut everybody except one company out of the trade. I wonder whether the hon. member will equally support the Government now that they have dropped that proposal? The policy of controlling the business by one company has been abandoned. Instead of facing north, as they were, the Government are now facing south. Will the hon. member equally support them in this new attitude? The hon. member said he had changed his mind as from the time he was present at the deputation, because much light had been thrown on the subject during the discussion. I suppose every member knew much more about the trade when the discussion was nearing its end than he had done six months previously. So the hon. member would be justified in changing his mind in the light of fresh information. But does the hon. member still support the Government in their new attitude?

Mr. Teesdale: Undoubtedly. You cannot stop industry. You must have the next best thing. We cannot get the one.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But you were free to get the one! A majority of the House supported the Government, endorsed their proposals. They had a majority behind them!

Mr. Teesdale: But not a brutal majority.

Hon. P. COLLIER: How many would the hon. member say the Government should have before they proceed to give effect to their policy? Why, Governments in every State of the Commonwealth have carried on for years with a majority of one! Does the hon. member suggest the Government should hesitate to do anything unless supported by a substantial majority on every occasion? Then, to wind up the whole thing, the Minister for Mines was most emphatic. I suppose he really gave the lead to the others. Then why did the Minister not go on with his proposal?

The Minister for Mines: It can be explained.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Evidently some new information came to light—because the hon. member had no qualifications to his contention that the business could only be handled by one company. He said it was chaos or monopoly. Those were practically his last words on the subject.

The Minister for Mines: Are you getting that from an advertisement, or from "Hansard"?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am getting it from a newspaper that states it is an extract from "Hansard." It is not an advertisement at all, but a news item. It appeared in the newspaper that the Minister had stated it was chaos or monopoly. I have no doubt the words were correct; but even if the Minister did not employ those words, he employed hundreds of words to the very same purpose and effect. There could have been nothing more definite. As the result of his sojourn at the University, taking tuition from Professor Shann, and Professor Shann having failed him, the Minister had recourse to the University library, and spoke at length on the complex question of exchange. It was all very mysterious to hon. members. In some way he made it appear that this exchange was linked up with the necessity for granting a monopoly in the handling of sandalwood. Every point he brought forward, every argument he advanced, was directed towards proving his contention that the sandalwood business could only be handled by a monopoly. Now what do we find? That the Government have gone back upon that basis. They admit now it is possible to control the industry without granting a monopoly, that it is possible to permit all those who have been trading in sandalwood to continue to trade in it.

The Premier: It is still a monopoly.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Only amongst those previously engaged in the business. That was all we asked for. Repeatedly we asked that those engaged in the business should be permitted to continue in it.

The Premier: Then why are you not satisfied?

Mr. Mullany: What is your objection to the Premier's regulations?

Hon. P. COLLIER: That the whole of the regulations are essential to the carrying out

of a policy the Government have adopted, and I am opposed to that policy.

Mr. Mullany: Why?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I will give the hon. member reasons. I am not finished yet.

The Minister for Mines: You have not started on the new regulations yet.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Everything I am saying has to do with the new regulations.

Mr. Mullany: I am waiting for it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member is generally patient. If he waits long enough he will get it, but at the stage when I think it is desirable to let him have it. I am opposing the policy now adopted by the Government, or the principles embodied in it, just as I was opposed to their earlier policy. Therefore I am opposed to the regulations, because they have been promulgated to enable the Government to give effect to their latest policy in the handling of sandalwood. They have decided, I understand, to permit all those companies formerly engaged in the business to continue, but they are apportioning the business out.

The Minister for Mines: That is what the member for North-East Fremantle asked, namely, that it should be given a trial.

Hon. P. COLLIER: So, too, did I ask for it. I asked for nothing else.

The Minister for Mines: You asked for a higher royalty, and a higher payment for the getters.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I said subject to those. It was put forward first by the member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany), and I supported it.

The Minister for Mines: I think you stated the amount of royalty you favoured.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I said it should be, say, £12 or £14. I could not say the exact amount, because I did not know what would be a fair thing. But I have no doubt the amounts fixed by the Government are fair. Nobody could complain that \$9 royalty is not sufficient. Nobody acquainted with the conditions of the puller would say that £16 per ton would not be a fair payment for his work. I accept the amounts fixed as being fair. That is the contention I have taken all along: that, subject to those amounts being fixed at a fair thing, all engaged in the trade should be allowed to continue. The Government have taken those in the business and have apportioned it out amongst them in the following ratio: to Paterson & Co. 62½ per cent., to John Hector 10 per cent., to Burridge & Warren 2½ per cent., and to the W.A. Sandalwood Co. 25 per cent.

The Minister for Mines: We fixed it on the basis of their previous export.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, but that is the percentage the Government propose to allow as the respective export trade of those firms.

The Minister for Mines: On a monopoly basis.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, and the Government say, "We will take the export. If it should be 6,000 tons for the year, the maximum or the minimum quantity you can have of that is so and so." But in order to en-

able them to arrive at this percentage apportioned out to the different companies they had to take some basis, and I understand the basis adopted is the export trade done by those firms during the past 12 years. It works out on this percentage basis laid down, that is to say, that during the last 12 years Paterson & Co. exported 62½ per cent. of the total overseas trade. Therefore they are to be permitted to have 62½ per cent. of the trade under the new proposals. So, too, in respect of John Hector and the others. Taking this 12-year period we find that Paterson & Co. will obtain about 75 per cent. of the trade, Hector being counted in with them. What induced the Government to fix upon this period as the basis for allocating the output?

The Minister for Mines: The Government did not fix the period. The Conservator of Forests recommended that a basis founded on recent years would be abnormal, and therefore those years could not be accepted as standing by themselves.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Why not five years or 15 years?

Mr. Lutey: Why any?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The 12-year period enabled Paterson & Co. to get a larger percentage of the trade than would be the case if any other period had been taken.

Mr. Lutey: It is a destruction of competition.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the past five years had been taken, which would be a fair stretch, the other company, the Co-operative Company, —if the three trading firms were joined together—would have got the majority of the trade. If a 20-year period had been adopted John Stewart would have had most of the trade, because years ago he was a greater exporter of sandalwood than anyone else.

The Premier: What about 10 years?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Why was the 12-year period adopted, and from what motive?

The Minister for Mines: It was recommended by the Conservator on good grounds. You are not justified in saying he had any motive.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then what was his object? He must have had an object behind his selection of that period. He did not place the numbers in a hat and select one in a haphazard way. I do not know whether the file that was laid on the Table this afternoon deals with the whole thing.

The Minister for Mines: It deals with the calling of tenders and every action taken since, with the exception of the trading operations.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I understand no other period would have given Paterson & Co. such a high percentage of the trade. The Australian Traders Co., Ltd., are not to get any of the trade. This shows inconsistency on the part of the Government. Two or three weeks ago they were prepared, on the recommendation of the Conservator, to grant a monopoly to a certain company, and to put every other trader out of business. In the new pro-

posal the company which, a couple of weeks ago, would have had the whole trade, is now out of it. The recommendation of the Conservator was that this tender should be adopted. The Minister stated it was the intention of the Government to adopt the recommendation that would grant to that company the sole right.

The Premier: I do not think that was said.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This company was to keep the getters permanently employed. The recommendation is on the file.

The Minister for Mines: No one said the Government intended to accept that recommendation.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Government announced their intention of accepting a tender.

Mr. Teesdale: Would you say the whole trade should be thrown open?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Yes.

Mr. Teesdale: They would chop it to pieces. What about the getter?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The getter is protected in the matter of price, although he may not be protected in the matter of permanent employment. That is his lookout. It is the same state of affairs he has always encountered.

The Premier: You can only get him a decent price if you limit the export.

The Minister for Mines: The trouble would be the spasmodic trade.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister's objection to any other than one company handling the trade was that there would be spasmodic employment for the getters, and he said the only way it could be regulated and controlled was by placing the trade in the hands of one company. He is now putting that argument forward in support of his proposal to allow all the companies to trade. The company which, apparently, would have secured the contract if the Government had gone on with their intentions, and had accepted the recommendations of the Conservator, is to-day wiped out. Strange to say there is no complaint. That company, it was contended, was Paterson's company.

The Minister for Mines: It does not matter to Stewart's company whether it is Paterson & Co. or the Australian Traders Ltd.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They are one. That is clear. The tender of Paterson & Co. was signed by John as manager, and the tender of the other company was signed by the same gentleman. One tender was £2 lower than the other. Why did he go through the farce of putting in a tender for Paterson & Co. £2 lower than the other? He signed both tenders. It did not matter which company secured the contract, for they were practically identical.

Mr. Teesdale: Would you not think he would have borrowed some clerk's name?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I was surprised to find two tenders signed by the same person.

Mr. Teesdale: Had he anything to hide?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Was it not a waste of paper that he should put in a second tender when he knew it was £2 a ton lower than

that which was put in earlier? Perhaps it was a case of not letting his left hand know what his right hand was doing.

The Minister for Mines: The Co-operative Company put in three tenders, one 5s. higher than anyone else's.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: One has been condemned and the other praised.

The Minister for Mines: It is six of one and half a dozen of the other.

The Premier: The Government are not responsible for the manner in which the tenders are lodged.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not holding them responsible. We have narrowly averted the position whereby the Government would have given the whole of the sandalwood business to one firm, which is now cut out altogether.

The Minister for Mines: I understand they will do the trading.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not understand how that can be so.

The Minister for Mines: We are not concerned about who the people are so long as they can undertake their obligations.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The name of this firm does not appear in the proposals. No doubt in the interlocking of companies it will be possible for these people to trade. The Government now say it is a fair thing that only those firms or companies, who have been in the business for 12 years, shall conduct it in the future. There is no provision for a new company to come in.

The Minister for Mines: The shoe pinches, because had Stewart stood out on his own he would have got a greater percentage.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Stewart is fighting for his own interests.

The Minister for Mines: He is practically fighting for what he objected to.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Only four firms are allowed to remain in the trade. Burridge and Warren have not been trading in sandalwood for the last three or four years, although they are getting a percentage of it now. These men were employees of Paterson & Co. and severed their connection with that firm three or four years ago, and formed the company of Burridge and Warren.

The Minister for Mines: No one is losing on that ground except Paterson & Co., because the percentage of interest they had in the trade has been taken out of their share and not that of John Stewart's.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I want to see Paterson & Co. get a fair deal. Are the Government justified in taking 2½ per cent. of the trade away, simply because Burridge and Warren, three or four years ago, were shareholders in Paterson & Co.? If Burridge and Warren are to be given a percentage solely on account of the fact that they were shareholders in Paterson & Company—

The Minister for Mines: On exactly the same basis, we took a percentage from Paterson & Company when they shipped for Joyce & Company, when that firm was on the job.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know anything about that.

The Minister for Mines: I do.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Simply because these people were shareholders in Paterson & Company, they should not be entitled to this consideration.

Mr. Teesdale: Has it been unfair to any extent?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know what the hon. member means.

Mr. Teesdale: You will not admit anything this afternoon.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member would support the Government even though they faced north, south, east, and west, on any subject.

Mr. Teesdale: I have been known to sit and vote on the Opposition side of the House.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I admire the supporter who will stick to a Government even when they are wrong. Such an one is unlike the lukewarm supporter. He will deny to-day what he affirmed yesterday and affirm to-day what he denied the day before.

Mr. Teesdale: Everything is wrong with you to-day!

Mrs. Cowan: It is a true partnership between the member for Roebourne and the Government, just like matrimony.

The Minister for Mines: They get a divorce sometimes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That may be so. Sometimes there is a desertion without going through the process of a divorce. The member for Roebourne, however, is not built that way.

The Minister for Mines: More than once this session he has been a Mormon, in that he has supported both sides.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Government are wrong in apportioning the trade as they have done.

The Minister for Mines: Would you apportion more of it to John Stewart?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I would give him the same liberty and freedom as I would give to Paterson & Co., John Heefor, or Burrridge & Warren. I would say to them, "You have to pay £9 per ton royalty to the State and £16 per ton to the cutters. Subject to that, you can get whatever trade you are able to secure."

The Minister for Mines: Under such conditions the men would have three months' work and nine months' idleness!

Hon. P. COLLIER: They have had that in the past and they will have it in the future.

The Minister for Mines: No, they will not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, they will. The Minister stated before that the only way to deal with the sandalwood trade was to grant a monopoly, and yet he has stated that there are three years' supply in Western Australia.

The Premier: We did not say that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, you did.

The Premier: No, three years' supply in China.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister stated that stocks were available for a period of three years. He said there was one year's

supply in China and two or three years' supply here.

The Premier: The hon. member is wrong.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not; look up "Hansard."

The Minister for Mines: I said there were three years' stocks in hand.

Mr. Teesdale: Not here.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It matters not where they are. If there are three years' stocks held, it means that China can get what it requires for three years without the cutters being employed to produce fresh supplies.

The Minister for Mines: We have made provision to get over that difficulty.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister made provision for everything imaginable when he was going to give a monopoly to one firm! He overlooked one thing apparently.

The Minister for Mines: I overlooked John Stewart. That was the only fly in the ointment.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the Minister says I am taking action for John Stewart, it is not correct. I am not concerned about John Stewart or any other firm.

Mr. Teesdale: Hear, hear! That is right.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There has been an insinuation that because Mr. Green is a shareholder in one of the companies, members on the Opposition side of the House are actuated by feelings of friendship for Mr. Green. His name was read out from the list of shareholders and the Minister, when reading it, interpolated something that is not to be found in that list. When he came to Mr. Green's name, the Minister stated, "Mr. Texas Green, M.P." I am sure those words do not appear in the schedule! The object of this interpolation was to discredit the action taken by this side of the House.

The Premier: Not at all.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then what was the object?

Mr. Teesdale: It was in derision of "M.P."

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have acted for equal and fair trading in this industry. I shall be interested to know what argument the Conservator advances in support of his selection of the 12-year period, in order to fix the percentages to be allowed in the future. The cutters have now been handed over as employees to the four firms who are to trade in this industry in the future. Previously, the cutters were free to pull sandalwood for the firm who treated them best. Now they will be at the mercy of the few firms who are allowed to deal in sandalwood.

The Premier: At any rate the cutters will now get some decent coin of the realm for their work.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That has never been disputed, but I believe they can get that decent coin of the realm for their work without it being necessary for the Government to hand over two-thirds of a monopoly to one particular company engaged in this industry.

The Premier: They have not done very well for themselves during the past 10 years.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That may be so, but I have no doubt that the cutters will have some fear regarding the altered attitude of the Government. I want members to bear in mind, no matter what specious arguments may be put up in support of the present proposal, the Government's policy, which has now been abandoned, was also justified a few weeks ago from every possible angle. Apparently members, who formerly said that the industry could only be handled in one way, are now prepared to recant and admit they were wrong. They are now prepared to show that it can be handled along the lines suggested by the Opposition. Some of those hon. members said it was a criminal thing not to go on with the Government's scheme. They declared that the Government should go straight forward with their proposition and chastised Ministers for not having the courage to do it in the first instance, thus securing £30,000 or £40,000 additional revenue. I am opposed to the regulations and I hope they will be disallowed. There is no warrant for the Government interfering with the trading rights of reputable people in the community, so long as the object they have in view can be justified without so doing. There are two points to be considered. The Government should get a fair return from the industry by way of royalty, and, secondly, the cutter should receive fair payment for his work.

The Minister for Mines: There has been free trading for about 50 years and the State has got little out of it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That was because no Government took action to secure more from the industry. It can be done now without restricting the rights of those who may desire to trade.

The Minister for Mines: Surely you would impose stipulations regarding the maximum and minimum to be exported, so as to stabilise the industry? It cannot be done otherwise.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes.

The Minister for Mines: How can it be done if you allow everyone to trade?

Mr. Lutey: It will regulate itself.

Hon. P. COLLIER: When we see that 6,000 tons or 5,000 tons are available on trucks, it can be announced that no more exporting will be allowed for the time being.

The Minister for Mines: That means putting all the cutters out of work.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It may mean putting them out of work in any case, and the cutters are prepared to take the risk of being put out of work. They prefer some competition amongst the traders rather than that they should be in the hands of monopolists.

The Minister for Mines: They are to be in the hands of no one.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There will be but four firms.

The Minister for Mines: That is not so.

The Colonial Secretary: They had competition in the past and did not do very well.

Hon. P. COLLIER: How many times am I to reply to that point? They did not have

the protecting influence of compulsory payments to the cutters. With such an addition, the position is an entirely different one. The competition I speak of has no relationship to the competition that has obtained in the past. There has been competition under which the trader pays whatever he likes and gets his sandalwood from the cutter at as low a price as possible. There is no analogy between that sort of competition and the competition I am speaking of. The firms will have to trade subject to the payments to the Government and to the cutter.

The Minister for Mines: And under your suggestion they would close down whenever they liked. I would not have that. The trade must be stabilised.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If it can be handled in the way that has been done, by regulating the quantity to be exported every year, and if it was necessary to fix a percentage, I want to know why the 12-year period was selected as the basis for fixing the proportion each trader should have in the future.

The Minister for Mines: We had to take some period to start with.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course. It seems to me, however, that it is going back a long way. We are asked to go back years before some of those now engaged in the business started their operations. Joyce and Watkins have been in business for about five years only.

Mr. Davies: No, about 10 years.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is not so. They have been in business for about five years.

The Minister for Mines: They have been in and out of the business.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Since they started operations they have always been in the trade.

The Minister for Mines: Only up to a point. They had to get another firm to export for them.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That has nothing to do with it.

The Minister for Mines: It has everything to do with it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: One of the other companies, which is a co-operative concern, has only been in business for five or six years.

The Minister for Mines: That has nothing to do with the apportioning of the trade.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, but if the Government had taken a five or six-year period as the basis, it would have considerably reduced the percentage Paterson & Co. will have in the future operations. A five or six-year period would have been fair. They have gone back for a number of years when there were only two or three companies trading, excepting of course whatever Chinese may have been in the business and have since gone out. I object to the shilly-shallying manner in which the Government have handled the business. Now you see it and now you don't. First it could be done in only one way and, after losing tens of thousands of pounds in revenue during a protracted debate in this House—

Mr. Pickering: That was due to Parliamentarians' objections.

The Premier: The hon. member should not complain about that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the Government had viewed the matter in the beginning in the light in which they view it now, the whole business would have been finalised months ago. It was because the Government sat tight for a period of six or seven weeks, stoutly maintaining that the business could be done in only one particular way, that the delay occurred. When they got a vote of the House endorsing their policy, instructing them to go ahead, saying in effect, "You are right; we are convinced; you have satisfied us that is the proper and only way by which it can be satisfactorily handled from the point of view of the State and the getter," they turned around and a day or two afterwards said in effect, "We find now we were entirely mistaken; it is impossible to fix these prices; it is possible to regulate the business without granting the monopoly that we contended was essential to the proper conduct of the business."

The Premier: It is a jolly good thing for the getters and for the State, anyhow.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It may be a good thing for the getters, but the getters have not said so. Even with all the risk—and the getters have experienced unemployment in the past; they have gone through times when there was no business doing—notwithstanding that knowledge, they still say they want no monopoly. So far as I know, there is no definite evidence—certainly none has been forthcoming up to date from any source whatsoever—that the getters prefer any kind of a monopoly whether of one firm or four firms. The getters know what it is to have periods of unemployment, and they say, notwithstanding their experience of unemployment, they prefer to go on without handing themselves over as it were body and soul to any little group of monopolists.

The Premier: You bet they prefer £16 to £9 a ton.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is not the question. They have been told that under a monopoly they would get something in the vicinity of £16. The statement has been broadcasted throughout the State that they would get a very large increase on what they had received hitherto, but notwithstanding all that, they have not supported the policy of the Government in any instance that I know of.

Mr. Pickering: They had confidence in the Government giving effect to it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: To what?

Mr. Pickering: The policy of £16 per ton and a monopoly.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They had confidence that the Government would grant a monopoly and they protested against it. They were told through the Press they would get a greatly increased price, but notwithstanding that they have opposed it throughout. This is not fair trading. People that have embarked upon

business in this State have a right to a fair deal from the Government, a fair open go—

The Premier: They are getting it, too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Subject, of course, to their own capacity and ability to conduct the business and subject to any regulations that may be equitably promulgated by the Government.

The Premier: We are protecting the getter.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Premier frequently runs into that corner and pleads that the Government are protecting the getter. That was the sole argument advanced for giving control of the industry to one company—it was all in the interests of the getter. Have the Government now abandoned the getter?

The Premier: No, we have not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Government have gone back on every argument they advanced in the House a few weeks ago; they have recanted every statement in support of the policy they then put forward.

The Minister for Mines: We are putting the firms on a basis according to their past business.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And anybody else that might come in? Why block anybody?

The Premier: Why? Can anyone work on the wharf at Fremantle?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not arguing for those that are engaged in the business now. If those that have been in the business for some years are to be permitted to trade openly and freely, it should be open to any other firm or company that cares to enter the business.

The Minister for Mines: Then you cannot make a maximum and a minimum under those conditions.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is unnecessary to do so.

The Minister for Mines: You cannot keep the men working without it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The men managed to exist in the past when there was no such limitation as a maximum or a minimum.

The Minister for Mines: You are right when you say they "managed to exist."

Hon. P. COLLIER: They managed to carry on without any limitation whatever, and they were getting only £9 or £10 per ton. Surely they will be able to carry on when they are going to get £16 per ton!

The Minister for Mines: If they can get a buyer.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They will get a buyer all right.

The Minister for Mines: They cannot get a buyer.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They will; so long as there is a demand in China for sandalwood so long will there be buyers.

The Minister for Mines: The demand fluctuates.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am aware of that.

The Minister for Mines: We say it should be stabilised.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That was the argument before.

The Minister for Mines: That is the purpose.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No doubt the Minister will as convincingly demonstrate again on this occasion that this is the only way the business can be satisfactorily regulated. He will tell as the only way it can be stabilised is by adopting the present proposal, just as vigorously as he asserted a few weeks ago that it could be done only in the opposite way.

The Minister for Mines: It is not the opposite way.

Mr. Teesdale: You remember when the price was £7 a ton?

Hon. P. COLLIER: That has nothing to do with the question.

Mr. Teesdale: It might come down to that again.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It cannot if the Government stipulate that the price must be £16. They state in the regulations that £16 must be paid, and it will have to be paid.

Mr. Teesdale: What if they stop buying?

Hon. P. COLLIER: It does not matter. If the Government stipulate £16, it must be paid. The Minister for Mines: There would be no purchasers.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Why not?

The Minister for Mines: Because they have large stocks obtained at a price that will return them a big profit.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They will purchase as in the past.

The Minister for Mines: And they will come along by deputation as they did previously crying for a reduction in the royalty.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know that they did that.

The Minister for Mines: I do.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The only deputation I know of was the one referred to by the member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson). The Press were not represented at that deputation; only a few members of Parliament and a sandalwood getter were present. Therefore the hon. member must have got his information from a source in the Minister's office.

The Minister for Mines: I do not know where he got it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It shows he went nosing around for information or that it was gratuitously offered to him. The information was not correct. Although I was present at the deputation I did not support the request of the sandalwood getter for a reduction of royalty. The Minister explained that such a step would not assist the getters at all, and I endorse the view of the Minister. No member present supported the request. The Minister will recollect that I did not speak at the deputation. I was not aware of the nature of the request until the getter spoke.

The Minister for Mines: I merely stated that the getter came along and asked for a reduction.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so.

The Minister for Mines: He had a petition.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No doubt he spoke for other getters, but his proposal would not have assisted them. The present indications are that the Government do not know where they are.

The Minister for Mines: We know where we are.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister said it meant confusion or monopoly.

The Minister for Mines: Those are not the words I used.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In any case it is chaos and confusion.

The Minister for Mines: Confusion worse confounded.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Government have confounded some of their supporters.

The Minister for Mines: And compounded with others.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No doubt many of those supporters will endeavour to justify their change of front, along with the Minister.

On motion by the Minister for Mines, debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

PAPERS—STATE HOTELS.

B. Seppelt & Sons, Ltd.

On motion by Hon. W. C. Angwin ordered—

That all papers and communications which have passed between the State Hotels Department and Messrs. B. Seppelt & Sons, Ltd., Fremantle, since the 1st day of March, 1923, and also all papers relating thereto, be laid on the Table of the House.

BILL—WOMEN'S LEGAL STATUS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 5th September.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [7.34]: This Bill was introduced by the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan), who as usual pointed out the disabilities under which women labour. I was not aware that all the disabilities which she mentioned applied to the fair sex. The hon. member's measure asks that no person shall be disqualified because of sex from holding any public position. She further asks that marriage shall be no bar. I do not quite know what she means by that. I wonder what would happen if both husband and wife came into this House! Who would look after the family then? How far is it intended to go?

Mr. Underwood: Do you consult the wife?

The PREMIER: Of course I do. But suppose the wife obtained a public position which took her away from the State for a

considerable time. Desertion, I believe, is a ground for divorce under our law. What would happen if the member for West Perth became Agent General for three years?

Mr. Underwood: Then she would take her encumbrances with her.

The PREMIER: I have no objection whatever to women being qualified to hold any public position. I have no objection whatever to their becoming lawyers. I agree to the removal of every sex disqualification. Possibly all members may not be in accord with that view. However, the result of the removal of the disqualification in the case of this House was that, at the first time of asking, the member for West Perth was returned. I believe that in most of the States of the Commonwealth women are allowed to become lawyers and to practise. The present Bill, I understand, is taken from an Imperial Act and a New South Wales Act. The member for West Perth, however, is altogether in the wrong when she proposes to make women equal to men. Women are superior to men to-day, and the control of men by women is much greater than the control of women by men. I trust that all women will not wish to become lawyers or members of Parliament. While no doubt a good many women prefer to engage in professions and callings, it is a very bad thing for the men of a country to get out of the habit of keeping the women of the country. Every man should be married, every man should keep a wife. I think the good old custom of the men providing for the women should still be adhered to, and of course it will be adhered to even if this Bill becomes law. There are now, however, many women with a good deal of ambition, and they wish for opportunities to exercise their talents. I think the House will agree that there should be no bar to their ambition. If they can qualify for a profession, they should be allowed to practise. If they can attain to public position, they should be allowed to hold those positions. But the marriage service should be remembered. Of course I do not know about the "Love, honour, and obey." I suppose, however, that women will still obey their husbands if this Bill passes. I shall not oppose the second reading. Having already determined to make women eligible for election to Parliament, we should remove the other disqualifications.

Mr. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [7.41]: This Bill proposes to give the sexes equality in professions and vocations. No doubt the practice and custom of the present time, whether they are law or not, place the female sex under a distinct disadvantage as regards most of the professions; and I am at one with the mover in her desire to remove any such disabilities, and to see that women are given equal opportunities with men. But the measure proposes to establish equality in vocations, too. In most vocations the female sex is given, by law and by industrial agreements, distinct advantages over

the male sex. The Bill proposes to take away those advantages, and to place the two sexes on an equality.

Mrs. Cowan: That has not been the effect of such legislation elsewhere.

Mr. McCALLUM: No other State has gone so far as is proposed by this Bill. Then comes the question of the effect which the passing of such a measure as this would have upon existing laws. How many laws does this Bill propose to repeal? I remember reading of a case in the Privy Council where a lady of title held that the passing of a law of this description by the British Parliament entitled her to take her seat in the House of Lords. The Privy Council, however, held that the measure did not repeal the English law which prevented the lady from taking her seat. Unless an Act is specifically named in such a Bill as this, the Bill does not operate to repeal such an Act. Therefore I am very doubtful as to how far this Bill will go to repeal existing laws. The measure proposes to remove any disqualification of women—

from entering or assuming or carrying on any other civil profession or vocation, any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding.

Section 59 of our Factories Act debars women from working in white lead factories, for instance, and in other poisonous trades. Will the placing of women on an equality with men by this Bill involve the repeal of that section of the Factories Act?

The Minister for Works: The women will please themselves.

Mr. McCALLUM: Will this Bill mean the repeal of advantages gained for women as the result of years of industrial agitation, advantages but recently confirmed by the decision of the League of Nations that in all countries which are parties to the league women should be prohibited from working in such factories and trades? Is woman to be reduced to the level of mere man by this Bill? The words I have quoted from Clause 2 appear to me to have that effect.

The Premier: If the Bill passes, women will still be able to do as they like.

Mr. McCALLUM: That provision will have to be altered before it can receive the support of members on this side. As regards the trades I have referred to, the law has placed women in a superior position to men.

The Minister for Works: The employers in such trades can refuse to employ women.

Mr. McCALLUM: We know that the employers will go for the cheapest labour. Competition will compel them to do that and it was to prevent that that Parliament approved of the Factories Act. It is agreed by all countries that women should not be permitted to enter dangerous trades, married women particularly, as they are more susceptible to poison.

The Premier: This will not override the Factories Act.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Bill distinctly states "any law or usage notwithstanding." How far is that going?

The Premier: It will not override any existing Act.

Mr. McCALLUM: It sets out to repeal all the laws that have a bearing on the difference in the equality of the sexes. Section 54 of the Factories Act states—

No occupier of a factory shall employ a male under 18 years of age or a woman in any part of such factory in which there is carried on (a) the process of silvering of mirrors by the mercurial process or (b) the process of making white lead.

The next clause also may be quoted—

No occupier of the factory shall employ a female under 18 years of age in any part of such factory in which the process of melting or annealing glass is carried on.

The Bill will permit women to engage in that work.

The Premier: I doubt it.

Mr. McCALLUM: It distinctly says so. Here is where the great danger comes in. As the result of the agitation on the part of trades unions, women now enjoy many advantages that they did not previously possess. For instance, under the Bill women may be expected to stand in shops just as men do. This and many other advantages were obtained for women by means of industrial agreements, arbitration awards, and the laws of the State. It appears that if the word "vocation" is left in the Bill, it will have the effect of destroying all the good work that has been done for the female sex. Section 56 of the Factories Act provides—

No occupier of a factory shall employ therein a girl under 16 years of age if there is carried on therein (a) the making or finishing of bricks or tiles, not being ornamental tiles, or (b) the making or finishing of salt.

The Bill will repeal that.

The Premier: What about sitting on juries?

Mr. McCALLUM: That will be more professional. I am prepared to support the Bill so far as it will raise women to an equality with men where at the present time a disadvantage is suffered. But I will not be a party to the lowering of the status in any shape or form. The Bill seeks to do that. Section 68 of the Factories Act says—

No woman shall knowingly work and no occupier of a factory shall knowingly require or permit any woman to work in any factory during the six weeks immediately prior to or after her confinement.

This Bill will repeal that. It sets out to abolish all distinctions made between the sexes. Wherever there is a distinction made "any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding" is not to apply. I could give innumerable instances where girls have a distinct advantage in industry, having gained it by years of agitation on the part of trades unions by means of strikes and in other ways. I desire that to be maintained. I appeal to the member for West Perth to modify the clause. It appears to me that the word "vocation" should come out. By leaving in the word we shall penalise the female sex

and take away the privileges dearly won in the past and now greatly appreciated by all women.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [7.52]: After the second reading of the Bill had been moved I had a doubt about it similar to that expressed by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum). I therefore waited on the Solicitor General, my object being to get an amendment framed which would provide that the measure should not override any existing legislation in respect of the female sex. The Solicitor General assured me that the Bill would have no such effect.

Mr. Lutey: The English in it is very plain.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Solicitor General pointed out that there were various laws in England that protected the female sex. There was also a statute in force similar to the Bill now under discussion, and it had not affected other statutes in existence. He quoted from Halsbury and other authorities, and I came away satisfied with the advice he gave, that the Bill would not in any way interfere with the Factories Act or any other legislation in force. There is, however, one word in the Bill, which was referred to by the Premier, and to which consideration might be given—I refer to "marriage." The Education Department do not, if they can possibly avoid it, employ married women as teachers. They endeavour, as far as possible, to secure the services of unmarried women. If the clause applies to all vocations and professions the effect might be to prevent a number of young women getting married.

Mr. Underwood: That would be bad.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I agree with the Premier, that the best thing we can do is to try to bring about more marriages so as to secure in that way an increase in our population. I merely rose to assure the member for South Fremantle that the Solicitor General does not endorse the fears he has in respect of the female sex.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [7.57]: I intend to support the second reading of the Bill, but when it is in Committee it may be necessary to strike out the word "vocation." The main object of the Bill is to permit women to become practitioners in the courts of law. We have already permitted them to practise as doctors, and if they are capable of following that profession, I am prepared to let them have a try at the law. Nobody is compelled to go to law, but nearly everyone is obliged to have a doctor. If we can trust women with our lives, we can likewise trust them with our legal affairs. With regard to the remarks of the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin), that the Bill may prevent young women from getting married, I do not think there is anything Parliament can do that will prevent a young man and a young woman getting married if they feel that way inclined. I have no fear whatever about the Bill inter-

fering with our percentage of marriages. That is something that Parliament has not, and never will, control. I intend to support the second reading, and in Committees may consider it advisable to suggest the striking out of "vocation."

Mr. LATHAM (York) [7.59]: I support the second reading, and at the same time point out that I do not know whether it is a step in the right direction to try to bring about an equality of the sexes. Women have more important functions to perform than to enter the professional world. They are the custodians of our race, for a start. On woman depends the future of our race. We want women to be intellectually fitted to become the mothers of our future generations. More than ever before is that necessary. We have only to read some of the works in our library to see that in certain nations people mentally afflicted are being released from institutions and that, unfortunately, a substantial percentage of them bring into the world mentally afflicted children. Our women, on entering professions, will be just about at marriageable age. I hope that before taking up professional careers they will seriously consider their responsibilities to the nation.

Mr. Underwood: They ought to be compelled to marry.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not know that, exactly, but it is a very serious question and is occupying the minds of our soundest thinkers.

Mr. Marshall: Would it be a hardship to bring about compulsory marriage?

Mr. LATHAM: I do not know what I should like to do to the hon. member. Sometimes I should like to do more than that to him, perhaps to marry him to half-a-dozen women, some of them real termagants. The New South Wales Act, provisions from which have been incorporated in the Bill, denies to women the avocations mentioned by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) but specially points out the positions they may occupy, such as that of Lord Mayor or of a member of Parliament, or even of a judge of the Supreme Court. I will support the second reading, but I am not sure that the Bill is a step in the right direction. I hope there will be no ill-effects from this attempt to place women on an equality with men. Personally, I do not think it possible to reduce women to the level of men.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [8.4]: The Bill has my full support. It is a step in the right direction. Moreover, it has been tried with success in more than one part of the British Empire. We have already let down the barriers in a number of instances, as by permitting ladies to sit in this Chamber, and by permitting them to practise as doctors. Therefore, there can be no logic in depriving them of the right to follow any other profession for which, by education and training, they feel themselves fitted. But it would be wise if the member in charge of the measure con-

sented to amendments such as are in existence in the New South Wales Act, preventing the doors being opened to women to enter upon dangerous occupations mentioned in the Factories Act. Under the Bill a woman could go into those avocations, from which she is at present excluded, not because of her sex, but on account of risks run to health and life in pursuing those avocations. Notwithstanding the assurance given that the measure, if passed as it stands, will not repeal existing legislation unless specially mentioned, the measure, with those words in it "notwithstanding any law to the contrary," may be interpreted as repealing by implication all those previously existing legislative enactments. It is laid down by Maxwell in his "Interpretation of Statutes" as follows:—

Again, if the co-existence of two sets of provisions would be destructive of the object for which the later was passed, the earlier would be repealed by the later.

He has an equally striking statement—

So, where one Act empowered justices to enforce the payment of costs given by the Queen's Bench on appeal against convictions, except where the party liable was under recognisances to pay such costs; and a later one authorised the Quarter Sessions to give costs in "any appeal," to be recovered in the manner provided by the first Act; it was held that the exception in that Act was impliedly repealed.

The point is, are we impliedly repealing the provisions in the Factories Act and other Acts of a like character? The point may be arguable in law, but we do not want to make that necessary. I think it would be a better form of putting it if we more definitely stated to what avocations women should be admitted. The New South Wales Act makes it more definite. Section 2 reads:—

A person shall not by reason of sex be deemed to be under any disability or subject to any disqualification—(a) to be elected and to act as a member of the Legislative Assembly; (b) to be elected and to act as Lord Mayor or alderman of the Municipal Council of Sydney, mayor, president, alderman, or councillor of any municipality or shire under the laws relating to local government; (c) to be appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, or of a district court of New South Wales, or chairman of Quarter Sessions, or a stipendiary or police magistrate, or a justice of the peace; (d) to be admitted and to practice as a barrister or solicitor of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, or to practice as a conveyancer, any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding.

Those things are definite, but when we throw in the wide provision that women may enter any civil profession or avocation we do impliedly repeal Acts that prevent women from entering certain avocations; because this gives women the right to enter into any avocation she pleases, any law or usage of the country notwithstanding. Every member desires to help the member for West Perth (Mrs.

Cowan) in getting this through, but I think it would be wise to so amend the Bill in Committee as to show respect for those laws that are intended not to disqualify a woman by virtue of her sex, but to protect her from injury.

Hon. M. F. TROY (Mount Magnet) [8.10]: I will support the measure. No person in the community, however reactionary, desires to prevent a woman from attaining any position in the civil life of the country for which she is fitted. But I do not know that the blessings to be conferred by the Bill are going to help the sex very much. One or two ambitious women there may be who would give their all to attain a place in the civil and social life of the country; but if I know anything of the sex, the greatest ambition of any woman is to make a home, have children, and live the natural life for which she was created. I also resent the suggestion that there is antagonism between the sexes, that men have sought to keep women in their places, to relegate them to the fireside, while the men monopolise all the privileges of our social life. I do not think that was ever in any man's mind. There may be a few men who consider women inferior animals not entitled to the privileges enjoyed by men, but they are few indeed, and I have not met them. I had intended to read an extract from Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies," in which he sets out the place for women in society. Unfortunately, I cannot lay my hand on it in the library. I suppose some student has it away.

Capt. Carter: It would not be considered sufficiently modern.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Perhaps not, but one cannot deny the validity of Ruskin's views on the place of women in society. I would admire that woman most who has a natural desire to make a home, to bring children into the world, and to give her life to the training of the character of those children. If a woman were to reach the highest possible eminence, would that satisfy her natural craving for a home with children? I think not. The time must inevitably come when that sort of thing, when her eminence in civil life, would be dead sea fruit to her; for after all, there is in every woman's heart the natural love for home and children that, in my opinion, is her greatest adornment. The entrance of women and girls into the everyday commercial life of the country has not been to their disadvantage. The fact that women have mixed with men in offices has made them more familiar with men. It has not maintained for them that great respect and courtesy that they received from men in the past. Women complain to-day that men will not give up to them their seats in trams and trains, that men do not hold the same chivalrous ideas towards them as they did in olden days. They do not receive that treatment from men, because a woman is not to-day the retiring creature she used to be, covered with blushes and full of modesty. The sexes meet on grounds of equality. They have familiarised themselves

with men. All that sort of thing may be looked upon as progress, but it is progress that savours of decay and degeneracy. To-day women discuss all kinds of things on an equality with men. Years ago modest women would not have thought of discussing these things with the opposite sex. Women will discuss with men all the details of a divorce case. They work in lawyers' offices and discuss those things there. They also discuss them at the table. It is social gossip for them. Women who have become notorious are more sought after than otherwise by other women.

Mrs. Cowan: Who puts all those cases into the paper?

Hon. M. F. TROY: It is the women who encourage the newspapers to publish the frivolous items called society gossip. It is the women who read the column "Mainly about people." When a man takes the paper home the first thing the woman in the house looks at is "Mainly about people." When the weekly paper comes to a home the first thing the women look at is the social gossip, and such small items that interest them.

The Minister for Works: They want to know what the other women are wearing and doing.

Hon. M. F. TROY: That sort of thing has begotten and is bound to beget a shallow state of mind.

Hon. P. Collier: You are old-fashioned.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Probably I am. I am satisfied to allow a woman to enter into any sphere of life she wishes to enter, but I do hold the opinion that the familiarity that is now evident between men and women, as a result of their environment in offices and business centres, has not been to the advantage of women.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You must admit that the Christian world has been built up on your old fashioned ideals.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I do not know how it was built up. Women have the equality they have been looking for but they have lost the better things of life. They have lost the courtesy of man to woman, for they have met men on the same plane. Women may seek these openings that are provided in the Bill because of their ambitions, but I do not think they will ever be satisfied with that sphere of life that brings them into sordid competition with men. Man has always looked upon woman as the finer, the better, the gentler, and the more beautiful creature. What man will fail to acknowledge that in his life he owes a great deal to the influence of some good woman? There never was a man who was worth anything at all who did not acknowledge the influence upon his life of some good woman. I have always resented the suggestion of antagonism between the sexes, or that man was keeping woman down and denying her her rights and privileges in life. A good woman exercises more influence in her home upon the world at large by her gentleness, and her wisdom than she can do in thousands of Parliaments or courts of law.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is the view of the great majority of women.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes. I am sorry that women are entering into spheres to which they are aspiring. We find them now in Parliament. I do not personally resent the presence here of the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan), but I think it is a pity that women should be brought into sordid competition with men. Men are the rougher creatures. We were made for the hurly-burly of life, whereas the rightful place for a woman is in her home, and with her children. Her husband should be her friend and companion. If, however, women wish to enter these spheres let them do so. I cannot help feeling that more and more they will find they are losing that courtesy and chivalry that men have in the past shown towards women. They will lose all that is best and most valuable in this world. The familiarities I speak of are largely responsible for the increases in divorce. Women in lawyers' offices have become familiar with such subjects. They will discuss sex affairs with men. Some of them have lost their sense of modesty, which cannot be good for them. I have heard it said that they should be taught about all these things. Some of them may be able to stand it; they have the strength of mind to resist the dangers. With others it would not be so. The greatest support and protection women have is their modesty. Men are prepared to leave open to women all the avenues they seek, but cannot help thinking that these will amount to dead sea fruit in the end. Women may attain to the highest positions in the land in the public, professional, and social life of the country, but in the end they will have no children and no home. They will feel they have indeed given their lives for naught.

Mr. MULLANY (Menzies) [8.25]: I appreciate the object of the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) in endeavouring to better the conditions for women. I am rather doubtful whether she has fully considered the effect of this Bill. To a large extent I agree with the sentiments of the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy). There are concrete instances of laws which have been made for the protection of women. They are not permitted to engage in certain vocations. If this Bill becomes law it will have an effect not contemplated by the member who introduced it. Clause 2 of the Bill says—

A person shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage from the exercise of any public function or from being appointed to or holding any civil or judicial office or post or from being admitted or entitled to practise as a practitioner within the meaning of that term in the Legal Practitioners Act, 1893, or from entering or assuming or carrying on any other civil profession or vocation, any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding.

The last sentence is one that specially appeals to me. "Any other civil profession

or vocation, any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding." Section 53 of the Mines Regulation Act says—

No boy under the age of 16 years and no female shall be employed below ground in any mine.

I would ask the member for West Perth whether mining is a vocation. I say it is. Has she considered that question and the effect upon the situation if the Bill becomes law? It is clear that if we pass this Bill in its present form this section of the Mines Regulation Act will go by the board, for it will be permissible for females to be employed underground.

Hon. P. Collier: Anywhere and everywhere.

Mr. MULLANY: I do not think the member for West Perth desires that to happen. She cannot have given the matter sufficient thought. There are vocations and professions to which women should be admitted. A considerable amount of thought will require to be given to a Bill of this kind in order to provide exactly what the hon. member desires to attain. In Committee the Bill may be amended, but in its present form I cannot bring myself to support the second reading.

Mrs. COWAN (West Perth—in reply) [8.30]: I am sorry that some members imagine that I or any other woman would wish to introduce legislation to deprive women of the protective measures given to them for racial reasons.

Mr. Mullany: The Bill is doing it.

Mrs. COWAN: For fear that might be the position, as when suggested by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin), I waited upon the Solicitor General and discussed the matter with him. This is his opinion—

The Bill, which removes certain disqualifications on account of sex, in no way affects the provisions of other Acts, such as the Factories and Shops Act, enacted in the interests of women and girls and for their protection. The Bill, as you are aware, adopts the Imperial Acts 9 and 10, Geo. V., C. 71, and the New South Wales Act of 1919. It has never been suggested in England or New South Wales that the removal of these disqualifications would be to prejudice women in other directions. The Factory Acts, for instance, in England and New South Wales, contain provisions for the protection of women and young persons, just as in our Acts, which are wholly unaffected by the removal of sex disqualification.

The Solicitor General says he sees no reason why I should not proceed with the Bill.

Mr. McCallum: I would not rely on his opinion too much.

Mrs. COWAN: I will not object to an amendment such as the member for North-East Fremantle suggested. No woman would wish for anything that would harm

any member of her sex. If we made it possible for women to work in lead factories, we would harm our race, and no one desires to do that. Something has been said about the position of married women. The suggestion that disqualifications should apply to them is a mistake, for many reasons. I know of no reason why married women should not be allowed to teach in our schools. Surely a married woman is the very best person to do so when her children have reached a reasonable age.

Mr. Davies: Married women are not prevented from teaching to-day.

Mrs. COWAN: Yes, they are.

The Minister for Mines: They are not.

Mr. Davies: There are plenty of married women who are teaching. I know of many cases.

Mrs. COWAN: They are not allowed to teach unless they are widows. They have to resign if they get married.

The Minister for Mines: I can give you two instances where married women are teaching, and the husbands stay at home to do the housework!

Mrs. COWAN: If they are not men enough to go out and earn a living for their families, do you blame the women for doing it?

The Minister for Mines: No, I am envious of them.

Mrs. COWAN: Women are allowed to work at various vocations. For instance, nursing, teaching, housekeeping, acting, and gardening are vocations, and we would not think of debarring women from participating in them, whether they be married or single. If a woman is able, and it is necessary to augment the family income, she should be permitted to do so. I have not heard anyone suggest the necessity for a law to prohibit women, when the necessity arises, from going out charring or washing or doing any other unpleasant work. No one has suggested that should be disallowed.

Mr. Latham: You would not suggest that the men should do that work?

Mrs. COWAN: Why not? They are as capable as we are.

Mr. McCallum: What about the Factories and Shops Act, and the Mines Regulation Act?

Mrs. COWAN: That does not prevent women from going out washing.

Mr. McCallum: It prevents them from engaging in some objectionable avocations.

Mrs. COWAN: The hon. member talked about certain Acts which seek to protect the interests of women, but no one desires to interfere with them.

Mr. McCallum: But the Bill does so.

Mrs. COWAN: No one would say that a woman should not be prevented from working for six weeks before or after the birth of a child. No attempt is made in the Bill to interfere with that. While such a legislative provision does exist, why has no one attempted to provide that if she stops at home during the trying period she passes through at that time there should be monetary provision to allow of it?

Mr. McCallum: Only the trades unions have attempted to do anything in that direction.

Mrs. COWAN: That is not so. Women should receive better consideration in those circumstances, and we have not got it.

Mr. Cunningham: You will not get it from your side of the House.

Mrs. COWAN: It is a great mistake to say that.

Mr. Hughes: Your Party control the Government; why do you not do something?

Mrs. COWAN: When a family has grown up, why should the wife not be permitted to go out and do something? Women get very lonely when their husbands are away all the time. I do not wish to indulge in mutual recriminations on the subject, but I was sorry to hear the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) speak as he did. After all, it is not altogether the fault of women and girls that they have to go out to work. The fact is that no man can keep a family of four or five girls going unless he is wealthy. In such circumstances, the girls have to do something to maintain themselves. Unless we open various vocations to enable those girls to earn their living, they cannot be kept at home because, under existing conditions, those very things which would keep them at home have been removed outside for commercial reasons. That is one reason why I ask for the passage of the Bill. I want to know why we do not object to women washing and charring?

Mr. Latham: You do not expect a man to do that sort of thing?

Mrs. COWAN: There is a great deal of truth in what Havelock Ellis said when he referred to the curious point of view we hold regarding the opposite sex. He said:—

It is perhaps not strange that the uncertainty of knowing whether she was a goddess, or a house-servant, or something in between, should have stricken women so long with a kind of paralysis.

Women are recovering from that state of paralysis, and are asking for these various things now. That paralysis is at an end, and women are realising that they must be out and alongside their menfolk. It will take some time for the menfolk to get used to it, and it is rather hard for them at the start. Wise women will see that it is done as tactfully as possible, and men need not be afraid.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Women do not want to go on juries now.

Mrs. COWAN: Yes, they do, in cases where women and children are concerned. Havelock Ellis also said:—

We may regard all discussion on the everlasting alleged inferiority of women as absolutely futile and foolish, and also that the conviction of some men that women are not fitted to exercise various social and political duties, and the conviction of some women that men are a morally inferior sex, are both alike absurd, for they both rest on the assumption that women do not inherit from their fathers, nor men from

their mothers. We are not at liberty to introduce any artificial sex barrier into social concerns, for the hope of our future civilisation lies in the development in equal freedom of both masculine and feminine elements in life.

We must work together and be side by side.

Mr. J. Thomson: Who wrote that?

Mrs. COWAN: Those are the words of Havelock Ellis, the noted writer on sociological topics.

Mr. J. Thomson: I do not know him.

Mrs. COWAN: The hon. member should know all of these writers. Havelock Ellis is a famous scientist.

Mr. J. Thomson: I do not know him, and I do not want to know him.

Mrs. COWAN: I trust hon. members will agree to the second reading of the Bill, and that women will be admitted to the various vocations where they can gain a footing. I trust they will occupy a better position in time to come.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Angelo in the Chair; Mrs. Cowan in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Removal of disqualification on grounds of success:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No doubt the Solicitor General was right when he said the Bill did not actually repeal any other Act. I have looked up the English Act, from which the Bill is taken, and find that the list of Acts affected is set out in the schedule. The Bill is almost word for word with the first portion of the English Act which, however, contains four clauses, one of which has a number of paragraphs. One of the objects of the English Act was to permit women to serve on juries. There is special provision setting out how juries are to be called.

Mrs. COWAN: I will not ask for any provision regarding women sitting on juries.

The Minister for Mines: Women do not want to take that responsibility, but they wish to be admitted to the bar.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I know that women do not want to act on juries.

Mrs. Cowan: I think they do.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member does not know the views of her own sex! They do not want to sit on juries. For that matter, men do not wish to go on juries either.

Mrs. Cowan: In any case, I do not ask for that provision.

Mr. McCallum: But the Bill brings in everything.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The English Act was assented to on the 23rd December, 1919, and it is similar to the Bill before us in re-

gard to the first section. The Bill will repeal other Acts passed for the protection of women.

Mrs. Cowan: No, that is not altogether desired.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But it repeals everything.

Hon. P. Collier: You are embracing everything under your Bill.

Mrs. COWAN: No, I am not.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The English Act repeals portions of the following Acts: The Juries Act, 1870; the Juries Act (Ireland), 1871; the Local Government Act, 1894; the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894; the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898; the Qualification of Women (County and Borough Councils) Act, 1907; the Qualification of Women (County Town Councils) (Scotland) Act, 1907; the Local Authorities (Ireland) (Qualification of Women) Act, 1911; the County and Borough Councils (Qualification) Act, 1914; and the County, Town and Parish Councils (Qualification) (Scotland) Act 1914. All the other Acts not repealed stand. Therefore the Solicitor General was correct. I am confident a majority of the women do not want to serve on juries. Perhaps half a dozen or a dozen do.

The Minister for Mines: We could name them, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I could name some of them. Women generally have not expressed any wish to serve on juries. How would it be possible for a majority of women to leave their families and serve on juries perhaps for a week?

Hon. P. Collier: If they were summoned they would have to serve.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: To include the words "or marriage" would have the effect of taking mothers away from their children. My wife would not go; she would rather pay the fine. She is opposed to women getting these powers, and there are thousands of others holding similar views. Those asking for these powers number perhaps a dozen in Perth and the country.

Hon. P. Collier: None in the country.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There will be no choice; they will be compelled to serve on juries, and I am sure the women would resent such a provision. The member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) should confine the Bill to what she definitely desires. If she wishes to make provision for women to enter the legal profession, she should stipulate it.

Mrs. Cowan: The Solicitor General tells me that does not apply.

Hon. T. WALKER: The amendment might well be accepted as a preliminary to a more drastic amendment. The word "sex" covers both married and single women. The New South Wales Act provides that a person shall not by reason of sex be deemed to be

under any disability or subject to any disqualification. That covers all women. Therefore it is not necessary to include the words "or marriage." In England there are special reasons for including those words. Marriage does carry certain disqualifications as to occupying a position or exercising power under the English law. We have got rid of those, so we need not retain the words in this clause. Evidently there has been too much hasty copying of the English statute. The clause shows the evil of copying. When an Act specially repeals other Acts only those mentioned are affected. The Acts not mentioned still operate. The concluding phrase of Clause 2 is taken from the New South Wales Act. That Act expressly states what should be done. I suggest that the member for West Perth should agree to report progress or to substitute Section 2 of the New South Wales Act for this clause. She should state definitely what she desires, and leave untouched what she wishes to preserve. Then there could be no doubt as to how other matters will be affected.

Mrs. Cowan: I do not object to adopting the New South Wales section.

Hon. T. WALKER: It would be better to report progress in order that the matter might be carefully considered.

Progress reported.

BILL — PUBLIC SERVICE APPEAL BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Capt. CARTER (Leederville) [8.58] in moving the second reading said: This is a short Bill designed to amend the Public Service Appeal Board Act of 1920. Members are familiar with the Appeal Board, and no doubt have followed closely its operations during the past year or two. Recently there occurred a case—and I understand there are several similar cases—in which the Appeal Board dismissed an application by public servants because the board considered they did not possess the necessary jurisdiction to decide the issue placed before them on the appeal. Portion of Subsection 2 of Section 6 of the principal Act reads—

If any question shall arise as to which of several awards or agreements is applicable, the board shall determine which award or agreement shall apply.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What awards are applicable to public servants?

Capt. CARTER: If the hon. member will read Section 6, Subsection 2, he will find that—

Any person employed in the Public Service at a daily or weekly rate of wages who is not a public servant within the meaning of Section 2 of this Act shall be paid in accordance with any award or industrial agreement under the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912, applicable to workers of his class, whether such award or agreement is binding on the Crown or not.

Such an employee must be paid in accordance with the award or industrial agreement even if there is no common rule binding the Crown, and even although the Crown did not appear in the case.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Appeal Board, then, are to decide what the Arbitration Court have already decided?

Capt. CARTER: The reason for this Bill will be more clearly indicated if I cite a case. In this morning's newspaper we saw the findings of the Appeal Board in a number of cases recently before that tribunal. One of the cases was that of a man who had been employed as far back as 1919 as a cleaner at the Perth Technical School. As part of his contract with the Government, this man has been in residence at the school. His application to the Appeal Board was that he should be classified as a caretaker under the cleaners, caretakers, and lift attendants award, No. 14, of 1920. The position which has arisen is that the Appeal Board refused to undertake the responsibility of deciding whether the man comes under the operation of that award. It is not my intention to discuss the merits or demerits of the case, beyond saying that from my point of view as a layman the individual, if he was employed as a caretaker doing cleaning work and odd jobs of carpentering and nightly inspection of premises, and if he lived on the premises at the request of his employer, should be called not only a cleaner but also a caretaker.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why not call him a carpenter if he is doing carpenter's work?

Capt. CARTER: He was doing very little carpentering work, merely as a gardener whom the hon. member called in to do a day's work might put up a trellis.

Mr. Hughes: Are you speaking of the man at the Perth Technical School?

Capt. CARTER: Yes.

Mr. Hughes: That man was almost exclusively engaged on repairing joinery.

Capt. CARTER: The hon. member's information may come from sources of which I know nothing. I heard of the case primarily from the individual himself. Afterwards I read the history of the case before the Appeal Board. It is a case typical of those to which this amending Bill would apply. The man was required to live on the premises, and that is not a usual stipulation in the case of a joiner or a carpenter. He was required to make nightly rounds and to look after the lighting of the place. He had to overlook the work done by other cleaners and caretakers in the Perth Technical School buildings. His application seemed to me perfectly reasonable. However, he was turned down by the Appeal Board on the ground that they could not undertake jurisdiction in the case. They said they had not sufficient power to decide the case, and were not called upon to determine the position with regard to this particular employee. For Subsection 2 of Section 6 I have prepared the following substitution:—

If any question shall arise as to which of several awards or agreements is applic-

able, or as to whether any award is applicable or not—

That was the point at which the board stumbled.

or as to what portion of any award or agreement is applicable to a particular person to whom this subsection applies, the board shall determine such question.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We shall not want any Ministers at all directly. The department ought to be able to settle such a question.

Capt. CARTER: I am not prepared to say that the appointment of the Appeal Board was superfluous. I would not suggest that for a moment, having regard to the very heavy work and the number of appeals coming before the board, which seem amply to justify the appointment. However, here is a specific case which I use to illustrate the fact that the functioning of the board is not always what Parliament intended it to be. Therefore I think the Bill is necessary. It will extend the instruction which Parliament has given to the Appeal Board, along the lines of jurisdiction.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Does not this Bill really mean that the decision of the court has been given and that the Minister or the head of the department will not carry it out?

Capt. CARTER: Naturally. A man would not approach the board unless he had been previously turned down by the Public Service Commissioner.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Public Service Commissioner does not deal with those men.

Capt. CARTER: Assume it was the head of the department, then. In this case, I think, the Public Service Commissioner had primary jurisdiction. But whoever it was, he declined to recognise the right of the man to come under the award. The man then approached the Appeal Board, with the result which I have briefly outlined. This morning's newspaper shows that his appeal was dismissed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is the only appeal that was dismissed. The board raised the wage in every other case.

Capt. CARTER: I have here a rough outline of the board's decision. They decided that in White's case there was only the bare question, firstly, was White entitled to be paid under the cleaners, caretakers, and life attendants award or not, and, secondly, if he was entitled to be paid under that award, in what capacity. The board decided that they had no jurisdiction to determine either of those two questions. Logically, I think, the board should have power to decide whether a man working in a vocation of this nature—and many similar cases occur in the Public Service—should come under an award or an industrial agreement. I ask the House to accept this amending Bill for the purpose of making clear and precise the directions which Parliament desired to give to the Appeal Board. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

MOTION—EMPIRE GOLD MINING SYNDICATE.

To inquire by Royal Commission.

Debate resumed from the 26th September on the following motion by Hon. M. F. Troy:—

That in the opinion of this House it is in the interests of the State in general, and of the mining industry in particular, that a Royal Commission be appointed to investigate the affairs of the Empire Gold Mining Syndicate with a view to ascertaining: 1, Who were the original members of the syndicate. 2, The manner in which assays were made and who was responsible for declaring the assayed samples alleged to have been taken from the syndicate's leases at Hancock's, Sandstone, to be worth from 70zs. to 70cs. per ton, when in reality the stone from which they were taken proved to be worth only so many pennyweights. 3, Who was responsible for the publication in the newspapers of frequent reports of the discovery of high values in the leases held by the Empire Syndicate, values which it was afterwards shown never existed. And that the Commission have power to examine persons and papers and also the banking accounts of all the people responsible for the formation of the syndicate.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [9.14]: I support the motion for the appointment of a Royal Commission. If everything was right with the syndicate, Mr. Doolette himself should welcome an inquiry. According to reports circulated at the time, he himself was taken in over the ramp. If that is so, he should be glad to assist, so far as he can, to have the whole matter investigated thoroughly. The samples that were taken should be examined. A ramp of this nature does no good to the State. Many people were induced to take up shares on the strength of Press reports concerning samples taken and assays made during a period of six months. Naturally, it will mean that those people who were victimised by the Sandstone ramp will be chary about making further investments in mining propositions even though those propositions may have a good chance of turning out successfully. The member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) went into the subject of this ramp very thoroughly. He dealt fully with the sampling and the assays and showed that at Sandstone, where the Empire Syndicate was operating, there are ironstone lodes. The old hands there knew how to get probably decent samples over some of the ironstone blows, but everyone was aware that the values did not go down to any depth. Mr. Doolette took a nine months' option on the 16th October and all the money that he deposited was the sum of 1s. The amount of £3,500 was to be paid over if the option was exercised. We know that the option was never exercised and that the vendors got nothing beyond their shilling. We are familiar with the fact that by means of the publication of almost daily

reports which declared the Empire Syndicate leases to be of fabulous richness, the shares went up to as high as £32. If, as the reports stated, the samples were taken over big widths during the period of practically six months, there was certainly something wrong in connection with the sampling. Anyone with experience of mining knows that everything depends upon sampling. The assays would probably be genuine, but the sampling must have been taken over a very narrow width, of perhaps a few inches only; or else the samples which gave the extraordinary value we read about did not come out of the Empire Syndicate's leases. We all know Mr. Doolette very well and no one will take him to be a fool. Mr. Doolette employed a manager and that manager took the samples which went from one to ten ounces. Mr. Doolette himself would also take samples to verify the results given by his manager. It has been given out that Mr. Doolette was deceived and taken in by his manager. There is no one foolish enough to believe that Mr. Doolette did not investigate the position and take samples for himself during a good portion of the time that he was in Sandstone. As a matter of fact he was moving backwards and forwards between Perth and Sandstone during the period that the Empire Syndicate had the leases. According to the reports that were published, there was a long shoot of stone from which rich values were reported. I am not one who will believe that this was not a put up affair on the public. No one could possibly have been there during a period of six months without doing a certain amount of development and without being in the position of proving how the samples were taken. According to the report of the directors, samples were sent down weekly. That was so, and no doubt the assays were genuine. What we want to know is who was responsible for taking the samples, and where those samples came from. We should know who really took them and whether they came from Sandstone. We know that it is the easiest thing in the world in connection with mining ventures to get hold of decent stone that will assay well, and then make use of it. Someone was responsible for this ramp and we want to find out who that person was. Too many ramps of a similar character have been put up on the public of Western Australia, and the effect of them is that whenever a genuine proposition is brought forward, the greatest difficulty is experienced in raising capital with which to work it. No steps have been taken by the Government to protect the public who are prepared to invest capital in mining propositions. Here now is an opportunity for the Government to carry out the inquiry as suggested by the member for Mt. Magnet and perhaps later on take steps to see that the investing community are safeguarded against ramps of the Sandstone description. We know that it was not until Mr. Mather, representing the Mararoa Company, went to Sandstone and took several options for his company that the bubble

burst. Mr. Mather gave substantial cash deposits for the leases over which he took options, and he left Sandstone later on with the same good reputation that he had when he went there. The vendors who had transactions with Mr. Mather were satisfied that he gave them a fair deal. Mr. Mather took his sampling plant there and it was chiefly through his development work that suspicion was first created in connection with the Empire Syndicate's operations; it was about then that it was learned that these were not genuine. Mr. Mather sampled the various shows over which he had options and incidentally some of the sampling of the stone from the Empire Syndicate's leases was done through him. When the suspicion was aroused the shares dropped in value. Then followed the result of the crushing that had been put through. The tonnage treated was 879 and the average yield was $3\frac{3}{4}$ dwts. over the plates and 6 dwts. in the sands. Then of course the bottom fell out of the market. What a discrepancy between the reports published of from one to ten ounces and the result of the crushing which averaged 3 dwts.! Either the gold was in the residues or the sampling was not genuine. We know that the gold was not contained in the residues. Therefore the only conclusion to be arrived at is that the gold was not in any of the leases. The member for Mt. Magnet when moving for the appointment of a Royal Commission dealt exhaustively with this Sandstone ramp—it cannot be called anything but a ramp—and there is no need for me to elaborate what was said by him beyond saying that the public must be protected. Mr. Doolette wrote to the Press soon after the motion was moved for the appointment of a Royal Commission and he gave some figures to show the amount of money that was expended in Sandstone as the result of his taking over the options for the Empire Syndicate. No doubt some money was expended; that could not be avoided during the progress of his operations. But why did he refuse to allow the vendors to go near the battery to watch their own crushing? Then the vendors applied to him for a refund of a sum of £10. They had a prospecting area before the Empire Syndicate took over the option and they were obliged to take up a lease which cost £10. Mr. Doolette refused their application for the refund. Mr. Doolette advanced the argument that by taking up these options he was instrumental in providing employment in the district, and that because of that fact, there should not be any inquiry. Such an argument might be expected from a successful burglar, who, after having carried on his depredations, urged that no action should be taken against him because he had spent the result of his operations in building a mansion and in that way provided work by the expenditure of his ill-gotten wealth. Mr. Doolette claims that £4,000 was spent in the district amongst woodcutters and carters and also that a considerable sum of money went to

the storekeepers. Let me inform Mr. Doolette that many of the storekeepers have been ruined by the Sandstone ramp. They got in big stocks and gave credit. At the present time they are carrying what is practically dead stock and large amounts of money are owing to them. The vendors Prendergast and McElhinney worked these leases before the Empire Syndicate took an option over them, and were probably able to make a living from them in the manner that prospectors do. They got their leases back after they were turned down by the syndicate. I trust the House will agree to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the transactions over the Empire leases. It is time the State took action in respect of these mining ramps. If everything has been fair and above board, Mr. Doolette should be the first to welcome the Commission. If the Commission be granted, it will show the world that the Government are out to protect the investing public. I hope the motion will be carried.

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [9.32]: If I thought the Commission would do any good, I would support it. However, I am afraid it cannot do any good. When first I came into the House I suggested to the Government that before a company could place a prospectus on the market it should be submitted to the Mines Department, for checking by an inspector. But, I being a bush member, it was considered impudence in me to even suggest such drastic legislation. It appealed to me, because I had been mixed up in this sort of thing, and so was speaking personally. I remember at Broken Hill, after receiving a prospectus I went out to see the costeeens and open cuts referred to in that document, but discovered that they were not in existence. I took samples and had them assayed, and found they were not up to the mark. It then occurred to me that if company promoters were compelled to take their prospectuses to the Mines Department for confirmation it would be a very fine thing for hundreds of small investors who are robbed right and left. This company under consideration has also been a robbery, but I do not think the promoters were in it. That is why I am afraid no good can come of the Commission. I have heard on good authority that the wretched ramp was perpetrated by one man who, instead of attending to his duty, was drunk practically the whole time, and was sending down all sorts of glowing reports. I believe the promoters were dropped just as badly as were others. I mention this to show that I have a perfectly free mind in the matter. Indeed I have a few shares myself if anybody wishes to buy them.

Hon. P. Collier: Why did not you get out when they were at £32?

Mr. TEESDALE: I was away at the time.

Mr. Lambert: I told you to put on skates and get around the sharebrokers in an effort to get rid of the shares.

Mr. TEESDALE: I wish the mover of the motion would bring down a Bill to prevent

these wretched scandals being perpetrated in the future. He would have the support of every member of the House. It is the small man who gets stuck with these cheap shares, and often loses all his savings. He is robbed just as is a man who is dropped with a bottle behind some low pub, and his money taken out of his pocket. However, I do not think the promoters of this ramp made anything out of it. The Commission will mean a big expense, and will not be of much use.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.37]: The reasons advanced by the hon. member for not supporting the motion are the very reasons that induce me to support it. The hon. member, having some knowledge of the promoters and those associated with them, may be quite satisfied that they were entirely free from responsibility for those glowing reports. He may further be satisfied that the manager, or some person on the spot, who was neglecting his work was the person really responsible. But what is desired is that to the investing public in this and other States it should be definitely cleared up and made known who was responsible for what took place. If we leave things as they are, without any inquiry, there will be uncertainty and suspicion in the minds of all those who have had any association with this company, and that will operate to the prejudice of mining generally in this State. We want the responsibility placed where it belongs, and that can only be done through a searching investigation by a Royal Commission. I agree with the hon. member that the time has long gone by when Parliament should have taken action in the direction he has indicated. To-day, unfortunately, it is open for any thief or impostor to launch a prospectus for the formation of a company in mining or anything else, and there is no check upon him, no authority to investigate the statements made in his prospectus. Consequently many of the unsuspecting public are deceived and robbed. In Queensland recently an Act was passed giving the Government control of the promotion of insurance companies. Under that Act a Government official has the right to investigate the statements contained in the prospectus. This is necessary because of numerous mushroom insurance companies springing up in Queensland, indeed all over Australia. There must be enormous profits made out of the promotion of insurance companies. I have here a most glowing prospectus issued by a man of practically no standing in the country, who has journeyed over to one of the Eastern States and is launching an insurance company under a magnificent title. The company looks very promising with an authorised capital of £200,000 in 40,000 shares of £5 each. Incidentally, the promoter is to receive a good block of fully paid shares as substantial payment for his brains and energy in promoting the company, and is to have first call on the profits for an annual income of £750 for life. These insurance companies are being launched all over the Commonwealth.

Mr. Johnston: The authorities are dealing with them in New South Wales.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The authorities in Queensland have already dealt with them. It is essential that they should be dealt with in Western Australia also. We are altogether behind the times in this. There is no question that, as the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) has said, because of similar scandals that have occurred in the past history of mining in this State the industry has been tremendously harmed. The hon. member in moving the motion referred to report succeeding report day after day, each one more glowing than its predecessor. Each day the values were increasing and the lode was widening, until, as the hon. member said, it extended for miles north, south, east, and west of the original discovery. Listening to that, I thought I was back again in the days of Bullfinch. So did the reports from Bullfinch follow each other day by day, until even staid, stolid members of the House were stampeded, and in a Budget speech delivered in this Assembly and accepting newspaper reports of the values from day to day, glowing references were made to the discoveries at Bullfinch. It was cabled to the Old Country and appeared in the Press of Great Britain as being the authoritative statement of a responsible Minister of the Crown in this State. A few days afterwards it was followed up by the introduction of a Bill for the construction of a railway, although at that time the grass roots at Bullfinch had scarcely been disturbed. There was a shaft a score or so of feet down, said to be on wonderful values of eight or nine ounces of gold to the ton. In order to keep pace with this development a Bill was introduced for the immediate construction of a railway. The House was carried off its feet. The final report that appeared in the Press was that some firm in Melbourne, whose name is not unconnected with Kendenup in recent events, announced that they had offered in cash to Mr. Doolette, who is in some way connected with the matter under discussion, half a million pounds. It was indicated that Mr. Doolette was given 24 hours in which to accept this offer. It was a dramatic announcement and created a sensation in the mining world. Everyone was wondering what Mr. Doolette's decision would be. Would he turn down this cash offer of half a million? The 24 hours expired, everyone holding his breath. It was announced next day that Mr. Doolette, folding his arms, had casually stated that half a million was no good to him.

Mr. Willcock: Make it a million.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It has not been given to many men in their career, off hand and in a casual way, to refuse a cash offer of half a million pounds for any proposition. We know the history of Bullfinch. The enormous lodes of eight or nine ounces to the ton dwindled down to eight or nine pennyweights. The mine worked for a few years, but the average output was eight or nine pennyweights to the ton. To-day we have a railway from Southern Cross to Bullfinch lying

idle, and the whole place deserted. A few years ago there was the Hampton Plains boom. Tremendous harm was done by that to the mining industry. Practically every man and woman in Kalgoorlie or Boulder lost money in that boom. Those who had not the ready cash to put into it borrowed the money. Others raised what they could on the property they possessed. Many of them since that time have been labouring to clear off their liabilities, which they incurred while investing in the wonderful mines of Hampton Plains. A few men must have made large sums of money, but the multitude on the fields lost theirs and depleted their resources.

Mr. Harrison: There are some mines still there.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If we compare the mines that were painted to the public during the boom with those that have survived, we get a comparison approaching that of a rushlight to a star. The mines bear no resemblance to those that were depicted so brightly to the public.

Mr. Mullany: They are as a glow worm is to a star.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They may be said to be as a glow worm is to the sun. Action was taken with reference to the Bullfinch, and a couple of men stood prosecution in the police court. Nothing came of this.

Mr. Mullany: One man got six months.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Not over the Bullfinch.

Mr. Mullany: Over something that occurred round about there.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Two men were prosecuted in the Police Court on a charge of conspiracy, one of the most difficult charges in the calendar. It was very difficult to produce sufficient evidence to convict them.

Mr. Heron: One man was fined, Thomas

Hon. P. COLLIER: He had nothing to do with what I am talking about.

Mr. Mullany: It was over the Chaffinch.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In the prosecution I am speaking of no one was convicted. One man was sent to gaol over another mine in the district. We took no action to prevent a recurrence of that kind. No action was taken over the Hampton Plains. Now we have had the Empire Syndicate at Sandstone. In the course of a year or two this will be followed by something else of the same kind.

Mr. Teesdale: Not forgetting Lake Eva.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Later on the matter will have blown over, and the public will again be ready to take the bait. This Commission must do good. If the investigation is a thorough one it should be possible for the Commissioner to indicate pretty definitely who was responsible for the glowing accounts that appeared in the Press, and who made money as a result of them. If we do that we shall show to the investing public that Parliament is not prepared to allow these things to continue, and is in earnest in taking definite steps to place the responsibility on the right shoulders. It

must be beneficial to the industry, and probably will be a guide to Parliament in the future in framing legislation to prevent the recurrence of these scandals.

Mr. MULLANY (Menzies) [9.53]: I support the motion, although I am somewhat inclined to agree with the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) that it will not bring about much good.

Mr. Lutey: Let us try.

Mr. MULLANY: I am willing to try. I think the member for Roebourne intended to convey that an inquiry would not incriminate anyone, and that it would not be possible to punish the guilty persons if such are found.

Mr. Teesdale: That is so.

Mr. MULLANY: There are other aspects of the situation which have been outlined by the Leader of the Opposition. It will do a tremendous amount of good to the mining industry if Parliament shows that it is alive to what has been going on, and has a desire to see that mining propositions are put forward on an honest, fair and legitimate basis. That sums up the whole situation. Our mining must be carried on cleanly. We all know the value of the gold mining industry to Western Australia. Notwithstanding that just at present mining may be said to be under a cloud, we do not believe our gold mining resources have been worked out. A duty is cast upon Parliament to tell the world as clearly as possible that we desire our mining operations to be carried on cleanly and in a legitimate manner. The member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) throws grave doubt on the question whether the market operations in connection with the Empire Syndicate were carried on in a fair and legitimate manner. I have no desire to charge any particular individual. There can be no doubt that the operations of the syndicate, followed by the published result of the crushings, had a detrimental effect upon people who had legitimate mining propositions to place before the public. At the time when the operations of the syndicate were exploded, and the result of the crushing was made known, I was endeavouring to raise a little capital to put into the resuscitation of the old Lady Shenton gold mine in Menzies. I was pleased at the reception I had at the hands of some men in Perth, who recognised the benefit to the State of the mining industry, and who put in some of their money to help those who were trying to reopen this particular mine. Other people, who in the past had contributed generously to the opening up of mining propositions, said "Talk anything else but mining, I am finished with it." This was the direct result of the impression given to the public over the Empire Syndicate. There are scores of men in the State who call themselves mining men, prospectors and mining investors, and who claim that they have done something to push on the

mining industry, whereas the only gold they have ever discovered bears the imprint of the King's head upon it. These are people we want to discourage. I support the motion but think it requires amendment. In one place it reads—

To ascertain the manner in which assays were made and who was responsible for declaring the assayed samples.

I noticed in the paper a protest from a firm of assayers in Perth against the attack they said had been made upon them by the member for Mt. Magnet in moving this motion. I cannot see that he made any attack upon them. They are reputable assayers. Their business is simply to assay and ascertain the contents of any sample sent to them. I believe they did this in a competent manner. In order to widen the scope of the Royal Commission I should like to see an amendment made in the following terms:—

The manner in which samples were taken and assays were made.

Hon. M. F. Troy: I agree to that.

Mr. MULLANY: The vital point is in regard to the manner in which samples were taken. I have heard it said outside this House, and the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) said it here to-night, that the responsibility is put on some individual who is supposed to have been sent to take the samples. I do not know whether that is correct or not. However, simply to ascertain the manner in which assays were made would not give any further information. The assayers would deal by the recognised methods with the samples furnished to them. It will be necessary to ascertain who took the samples, and how they were taken, and who forwarded them to the assayers.

Mr. Marshall: And who put the salt in them.

Mr. MULLANY: I will not make any suggestion like that. If salting has been resorted to, it is for the Royal Commission to find out. I do not regard it as wise for any member to make such a suggestion at this stage. Now with regard to the people who put their money into the proposition. I followed fairly closely the reports as they appeared, and I have not been able to understand how any man with any mining knowledge at all, could have been induced to invest in the venture on the reports published. It seems that certain persons went to an old gold-mining field, a field that had been exploited 20 years ago, and on which numerous shafts had been sunk. So far as I have been able to gather from the reports published, and from the speech of the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy), those people simply went down old abandoned shafts, took samples, and published statements that there were 10z., 20z., 40z., 50z., 70z., and 100z. assays. Any man with the slightest mining knowledge would know perfectly well that the miners who sank the shafts in days gone by would never have abandoned the propositions if those values had been there.

Mr. Teesdale: A shot in an old face has often brought down gold.

Mr. MULLANY: Yes. That reminds me of the Irishman who, after sinking a shaft to a certain depth, stopped owing to lack of resources. Then somebody else came and sank 2ft. more and got good values. The Irishman thereupon declared that in future he would never stop sinking a shaft until he had gone two or three feet further. These people did not sink shafts further. For the honour of the State the whole business should be investigated. Certainly some people were drawn into the speculation by the high results which were published, but which were not borne out by the battery. The carrying of the amendment I have suggested would give the Royal Commission a wider scope. Accordingly I move an amendment—

That in paragraph 2 of the motion, after the word "which," line 1, there be inserted "samples were taken and."

Amendment put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: 1 move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

MOTION—GOSNELLS ESTATE.

To inquire by Royal Commission.

Debate resumed from the 26th September on the following motion by Mr. Mann:—

That in the opinion of this House a Royal Commission, consisting of a judge of the Supreme Court, should be appointed to investigate the affairs of the Gosnells Estate Company before and after the appointment of a receiver, and more particularly the transactions connected with the sale of the company's lands and the failure to provide a title on completion of the terms of contract by the producer.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [10.9]: I shall not offer any objection to the inquiry desired by the mover, though I rather think the matter is one capable of settlement through the ordinary channels before the courts of the land.

Mr. Mann: That has been tried.

Mr. Teesdale: The people have no more money.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The courts have been tried, and very little has resulted. If those concerned think that they would get some sort of satisfaction from an inquiry, perhaps the House is justified in granting it. However, I suggest the deletion of the words "consisting of a judge of the Supreme Court." I do not think that provision is necessary. The matter has come before at least one judge already, and may, as the result of this inquiry, come before other judges. The hands of the Government should not be tied in any way as re-

gards the appointment of a Royal Commission of this kind. I, therefore, move an amendment—

That the words "consisting of a judge of the Supreme Court" be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.10 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 8th November, 1923.

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

BILL—PINJARRA-DWARDA RAILWAY EXTENSION ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [4.34]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Hon. A. BURVILL (South-East) [4.35]: Yesterday I intimated that I would move for the recommittal of the Bill with a view to amending it and shortening the distance of this line. I find now that this alteration can be made by regulation. I will, therefore, leave it to the Minister to see that this procedure is followed.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West—in reply) [4.36]: I recognise the importance of the statement the hon. member has made, and I assure him that representations along those lines will be made to the Government.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time, and passed.