

ing expenses, interest, and sinking fund. I have endeavoured to show that the arguments in favour of the line, though I am afraid rather imperfectly, will benefit a large agricultural community. Sir John Forrest, far-seeing and patriotic statesman, took up this line some years ago, and went so far as to have it surveyed and tried to have it constructed. I have shown that a keen business man like Mr. Smith thought the timber there sufficient to start a mill; I have shown that Mr. Ferguson is willing to construct a line into the forest. I have shown that the Timber Commission recommended a line there. If we had only 20 miles of line it would be a great benefit to the farmers there. According to figures it would be much shorter to construct a line from Marradong to Pinjarrah and then to Perth, a distance of 94 miles, than to go to Narrogin; for if the line goes to Narrogin it means 60 miles, and there will be an additional 120 miles to reach Fremantle, so that the distance is much shorter to go by way of Pinjarrah. This line I am proposing, after a few miles enters the electorate of the member for Forrest and shortly afterwards enters the electorate of the member for Williams, who no doubt will have something to say on the matter. In conclusion I would like to say we want this railway badly for the benefit of the farming community. We want to see an army of men employed in the timber forests, with their wives and families domiciled there, happy and contented. We want the silent forests to become active centres of industry; we want, instead of the parrot's screech, to hear the sound of the woodman's axe. I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

MR. A. J. WILSON (Forrest): I beg to second the motion.

On motion by the PREMIER, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 12 minutes to 10 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday 26th July, 1906.

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THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—GOLD BUYING, THE MINT METHOD.

MR. EWING (without notice) asked the Treasurer: Will he, in view of the statements appearing in to day's *West Australian* as having been made by a mine manager in Kalgoorlie, re the methods of gold-buying practised at the Perth Mint, obtain from the Deputy Master of that institution a statement showing the procedure followed, and lay the same upon the table of the House?

THE TREASURER replied: Yes.

CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES (TEMPORARY).

MR. SPEAKER informed the House that he had appointed the members for Perth (Mr. H. Brown), Subiaco (Mr. Daglish), and Claremont (Mr. Foulkes) as temporary Chairmen of Committees.

ELECTORAL—GERALDTON SEAT, MR. CARSON.

MR. H. CARSON (Geraldton): I desire to make a personal explanation. As members are aware, I have for some considerable time absented myself from my seat; and I wish briefly to state my reasons for so doing. Members doubtless know that I am placed in a very unsatisfactory and to my mind a very

humiliating position. At the same time, this is no fault of mine; and I have no desire whatever to occupy illegally a seat in this House. Personally I have no desire to sit while my seat is being challenged. But seeing that other than personal motives have to be considered, and in view of the Premier's remarks last night in this House, and at the wish of my electors, I have resolved to take my seat here again. It is not my intention to refer at all to the case which, as everyone knows, is *sub judice*; but members will doubtless recollect that some eight months ago I was declared duly elected to the Geraldton seat, that a petition was lodged against my return, and that the case was heard some six weeks ago or more at Geraldton and referred to Perth for argument, and I hope final decision. Members are also aware, I think, that no decision was given, but that the case is farther postponed until some indefinite date. This is certainly very unfair to the Geraldton electorate; and I think it deplorable that any member should be kept in suspense for such a considerable time after he has been declared duly elected. The Government will, I hope, take early steps to have the electoral roll altered so that no such proceedings may again be allowed to occur. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and hon. members for giving me the opportunity of making this personal explanation.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): I desire only to ask in this contingency whether you, Mr. Speaker, have made any investigation into the position of affairs, and what is your ruling regarding the right of the hon. member to sit while his case is *sub judice*. I have no desire to do anything which will be detrimental to the electors of Geraldton; but at the same time I think that every member should take care that the rules of the House, or failing them the procedure adopted in the House of Commons, are strictly adhered to in this Chamber. So long as the position of a member of Parliament is the subject of proceedings at law, so long as the case is *sub judice*, I think we should have your ruling, sir, as to whether he is entitled to take his seat, so that there may be no possible doubt in the mind of any member of the House.

THE PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): This, I think, is a question which to a certain extent must be decided by common-sense rules. That is how it appeals to me. Suppose that after a general election the Government were returned with 25 supporters, while there were 23 members in Opposition; then if petitions were lodged against two or three Government members, it would be possible, pending the hearing of the petitions, for the Government to be ousted by the Opposition. As the writ of the returning officer has not been declared void, I think the hon. member will be perfectly justified in taking his seat.

MR. BATH: I wish to explain that I have no desire to do anything that may be detrimental to the electors of Geraldton or to the member who has taken his seat for that constituency. All I desire is that whatever shall be done shall be done in a legal manner, and in consonance with the rules and regulations that govern this House, and in consonance with constitutional practice. I merely got up for the purpose of asking for the ruling of the Speaker in regard to this point, so that there might be no possible doubt concerning it, or any doubtful precedent created which would govern any case that might arise in the future.

[MR. TAYLOR rose to speak.]

MR. SPEAKER: It is hardly in order to debate this. The Leader of the Opposition was justified in raising this point. I need only say that, according to the Electoral Act, the hon. member, so far as I am concerned or so far as the House is concerned, is entitled to hold his seat until the court decides the point.

MR. BATH: I am perfectly satisfied with your ruling. I merely wish to have it so that no possible doubt may arise.

GOLD STEALING AT KALGOORLIE. REPORTS EXAGGERATED. DIVISION AS TO URGENCY.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): I desire, if the House will grant permission, to move the adjournment of the House in order to call attention to certain sensational statements made, not only in Western Australia but in the old country, in regard to gold stealing on the goldfields.

Question (that leave be granted) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	14
Noes	...	...	...	21

Majority against ... 7

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Barnett	Mr. Brebber
Mr. Bath	Mr. Brown
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Carson
Mr. Eddy	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Hicks	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Gull
Mr. Lynch	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Scaddan	Mr. Keenan
Mr. Taylor	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Varyard	Mr. Male
Mr. Walker	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Ware	Mr. Monger
Mr. Troy (Teller).	Mr. N. J. Moore
	Mr. S. F. Moore
	Mr. Piesse
	Mr. Smith
	Mr. Stone
	Mr. A. J. Wilson
	Mr. F. Wilson
	Mr. Hardwick (Teller).

Question thus negatived; leave refused.

EXPLANATIONS.

MR. BATH: My object in desiring to move the adjournment of the House and to treat this as a matter of urgency was because in a London publication certain sensational statements have been made which are unwarranted in the extreme, and are not backed up in any shape or form by the slightest tittle of evidence, and which are a most discreditable attack on the honour of this country, an attack which, if left unanswered, will mean that the State will be greatly discredited in the eyes of the people in the old country and in the eyes of all people where the publication is circulated. I desired to take the earliest opportunity of moving the adjournment of the House in order that the matter might be ventilated, so that such sensational statements could be replied to and so that the honour of Western Australia might be vindicated in the eyes of the people of Great Britain. That was my object, and I may say it is most unheard of for leave to be refused.

MR. JOHNSON: Did you speak to the Premier beforehand?

MR. BATH: I spoke to the Ministers who were here. I spoke to the Attorney General and to the Minister for Mines.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I am sorry I did not speak before the division, to explain why this motion was

opposed. The Leader of the Opposition saw me just before the meeting of the House, and told me of his intention to move the adjournment of the House in connection with this matter. I told him that I did not think the statements made by Mr. Scantlebury were such as called for an answer by such an important procedure as moving the adjournment of the House. I advised him that he should table a motion, and then we could take into full consideration the reports submitted to the House a few nights ago—the reports made by the warden, the resident magistrate, and one of the inspectors on the goldfields. I think these reports ought to be considered carefully and with every justice to those who have made them from time to time. Due consideration should be given to them, and not by a scratch motion of this sort. I advised the member that it would be better to table a motion, and then the question could be thoroughly discussed in the House. As far as the Government are concerned, as soon as we saw the statement the Premier sent a cable message to London, stating that the statements made by Mr. Scantlebury were greatly exaggerated. We admit, and it is the case with every goldfield in the world, that a certain amount of gold stealing is carried on in Western Australia; and I may point out that every attempt will be made by legislation and administration to cope with the stealing. The Police Bill before the House makes farther restrictions, and in the Mines Regulation Bill farther restrictions are imposed in the mining legislation. With a view of putting all facts before members, it would be wiser and better in the interests of the country, the House could pass a better judgment, and we should be able to reply to attacks and give full discussion to the matter, if a motion were tabled in regular course. That is why I asked the House to defer considering the matter till a later stage, rather than discuss it at present. I assure members that a cable has been sent by the Premier to the Agent General, which will, to a certain extent, qualify the statements made by Mr. Scantlebury. I feel satisfied that when that report and the reports of the officers which were lately laid on the table have

been fully considered, the House will be able to give proper and due consideration to the reports made.

MR. BATH: How could you send a cable, when you had not seen the report until I showed it to you a few moments ago?

THE PREMIER: If the hon. member wishes to doubt the statement of the Minister for Mines, I can assure him that a cable was sent in these words:—

Scantlebury's statement re alleged gold stealing causing much comment, and greatly exaggerated. Provision being made amend Police Act and Mines Act for farther restrictions and severer penalties. Undoubtedly certain amount gold stealing prevalent, but every precaution being exercised to mitigate this evil.

[Several interjections.]

MR. SCADDAN: That is an awful admission.

THE PREMIER: Is there none going on, then?

MR. SPEAKER: I wish to put down any informality. I permitted the explanations on the part of the Leaders of the Opposition and the Government, for there seemed to be some misunderstanding when the division took place on the matter; but it is quite out of order to proceed farther now.

QUESTION—DRAINAGE WORKS, WEST COOLUP.

MR. McLARTY asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What is the actual cost of construction of No. 1 drain, West Coolup, the cost of surveys in connection with same to date? 2, The amount of money received to date from the increased price of the land since construction of drain? 3, How much money has the Lands Department received from blocks which have been settled and thrown up and resold? 4, Seeing that the Government are doing drainage work at Hamel, Harvey, and elsewhere, what is their reason for refusing to carry out farther drainage works in West Coolup district? 5, Is the expense of the survey party frequently camped at Coolup being made a charge against the West Coolup drain? 6, What is the cost of construction of the Greenlands road drain, and cost of survey of same?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, (a.) Cost of construction,

£1,811 7s. 6d.; (b.) Cost of surveys, £160 11s. 1d. 2, £96 17s. 9d. 3, Information not readily available, but will be got out if possible. 4, As the lands to be benefited by the proposed additional drains are almost entirely private lands, it is not considered advisable to expend more money in drainage in this area unless the selectors agree to contribute towards the interest and sinking fund on the cost of the work. 5, No. 6, (a.) Cost of construction, £687 1s. 10d.; (b.) Cost of surveys, £43 19s.

QUESTION—GOLD-STEALING REPORTS.

MR. BATH asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Has his attention been drawn to the fact that the remarks in the *Chamber of Mines Journal* for June, ament gold-stealing, are very similar to Detective Kavanagh's report? 2, Was the information supplied to the Chamber of Mines prior to the report being presented to Parliament? 3, If so, why?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, No. 2, No information was supplied to the Chamber of Mines by the Mines Department in connection with this matter.

QUESTION—EARLY CLOSING AMENDMENTS.

MR. BATH asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Government to introduce amendments to the Early Closing Act, on the lines suggested by the Chief Inspector of Factories?

THE PREMIER replied: I have not yet had an opportunity of considering the amendments referred to. I will reply to the member at a later sitting.

QUESTION—LITHOGRAPHIC, PARTICULARS.

MR. HOLMAN asked the Treasurer: 1, What is the number of inches produced during the past year by the photo-process engraver in the Government Lithographic Department? 2, The cost per inch to produce same? 3, Does any officer in the Department receive any salary as Photo-process Engraving Instructor in connection with the Technical School or College? 4, If so, (a) the name of the officer, (b) amount of salary received from the Department, (c) amount received as instructor? 5, The number

of pupils attending the classes for instruction?

THE TREASURER replied: 1, 8,500 inches. The photo-process engraver is also engaged on other photographic work. 2, From 3d. to 6½d. per inch according to the nature of the work; average cost, 4d. per inch. 3, Yes. 4 (a) Mr. O. F. Grattan; (b) £230; (c) 12s. 6d. per lesson, four nights a week—forty weeks in a year, total £100 per annum. 5, Two pupils in the process-engraving class, three in the general photography class.

QUESTION—RAILWAY DEVIATION, COLLIE-NARROGIN.

MR. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it true that his Department is considering a proposed alteration in the route of the Collie end of the Collie-Narrogin Railway? 2, If so will he consult Parliament before any alteration is made?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, A shorter and what is believed to be a less costly route is under consideration. 2, As it is well within the authorised limit of deviation, it is not proposed to consult Parliament if it be ultimately adopted. In further reply to the member, I would like to say that instructions were given a month ago to make a survey direct east from Collie, with a view of joining on to the existing permanent survey which was made some time ago. As a result of the survey, Mr. Wilson, the engineer in charge of the survey, reported that it is possible to obtain a ruling grade of 1 in 80, and the line will be some 74 chains shorter than the existing proposed line, and the cost will be something like £3,000 less. It is proposed, as soon as the sectional plans are prepared in connection with the survey, to proceed with the work from the Collie end. At the present time the work will be proceeded with from Dardanup.

QUESTION—RAILWAY CARS, CONSTRUCTION.

MR. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Railways: Will the ten corridor cars which it is proposed to build at the State Works at Midland Junction be started at the same time and built simultaneously with those to be built by a private firm?

THE PREMIER replied: The work will be put in hand as soon as the material is in the workshops. It is not anticipated that there will be any undue delay, and I trust the work will be proceeded with simultaneously with the manufacture of the other cars. However, the Commissioner must be given a free hand in their construction.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

(1) **SECOND-HAND DEALERS**, (2) **PERMANENT RESERVES REDEDICATION**, transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—STAMP ACT AMENDMENT. IN COMMITTEE.

MR. ILLINGWORTH in the Chair; the **TREASURER** in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Schedule to Act No. 20 of 1905:

MR. BATH moved an amendment that the following words be added to paragraph (a)—

Under the heading of Articles of Clerkship, “£10” is struck out and “ten shillings” is inserted.

He failed to see why there should be such enormous discrepancy between the stamp duty exacted on articles of apprenticeship and that exacted under articles of clerkship. In one case the stamp duty was 5s. and in the other £10. The charge of £10 was most unjust, and seemed specially designed to prevent anyone, unless possessed of considerable funds, from having the opportunity of being articulated to a solicitor and eventually becoming a member of the legal profession. He failed to see why anyone who had the slightest desire to stand as a democrat should acquiesce in a continuation of this position of affairs.

THE TREASURER was sorry he could not accept the amendment. Years ago the matter was thoroughly threshed out. Whenever we had had an amendment of the Stamp Act, the question had invariably cropped up and previous Parliaments had thought that the fee of £10 should be charged. If this profession resulted in such great benefit to those who entered it, the least persons entering it should do was to pay £10 for the privilege of serving their articles. Ten pounds would not deter anyone from

entering the profession if he wished to do so.

MR. HUDSON: Could the hon. gentleman mention any other place where £10 was charged?

THE TREASURER said he understood that in the old country the stamp duty was considerably higher than £10.

MR. TAYLOR: People were not so democratic in the old country as in Australia.

THE TREASURER: It was not a question of being democratic, but was whether the charge was a fair one, and he had yet to learn that it was unfair.

MR. TAYLOR: The Treasurer had his eye to the main chance and would not allow the Treasury to be depleted in any way. [THE TREASURER: We could not afford it.] The hon. gentleman was advised by the Attorney General that a fee equal to this, if not higher, existed in England.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: About five times as high in the case of a barrister.

MR. TAYLOR: That was quite a different thing.

MR. HUDSON: A barrister here had to pay £50 altogether.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Twenty-five pounds.

MR. HUDSON: Thirty guineas was paid on admission, and the charge for the advertisements under rules, six guineas; also a £10 stamp. How far short was that of £50?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The whole charge was about £25.

MR. TAYLOR hoped the Committee would not assist the Treasurer to extract £10 from the persons referred to. If a layman touched anything dealing with the legal profession, he had to do so with bated breath, and whilst the profession was kept as a close preserve for a few in the circle things would be that way.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was impossible in a case of this kind to produce an *ad valorem* scale and say that so much should be charged, and there was a comparison which justified it. If he wanted to become a dentist, popularly called a tooth-jerker, and got a certificate, he would have to pay a stamp duty of £10. He knew from personal knowledge that if a dentist omitted to pay it for a year or two that dentist got into arrears which might

reach £30 or £40. Why was that charge made? Simply because it was supposed to be a fair thing that those who obtained the right to practise dentistry should contribute in fair proportion to the revenue of the country. It seemed the only desire at the bottom of the motion was that every possible means should be taken to make the legal profession appear cheap and nasty. [MR. BATH: No.] Then why not ask that a dentist or any other class of professional man should be admitted for 10s., which was only a nominal fee? Was not the action taken founded on stupid hostility to the legal profession? He did not see why it should be persevered in as it was. It was an old-time fallacy, which we had hoped modern knowledge and education had removed, that the legal profession was something to be jeered and sneered at or made the subject of pettifogging remarks by anyone capable of making them, it being suggested that persons should be admitted for a penny stamp or something of that kind. These remarks were entirely out of harmony with the times in which we lived, and the less we heard of them the better it would be for the country.

MR. HUDSON: The later observations of the Attorney General were sound; but the rest of his speech was wide of the mark. The amendment proposed to eliminate a tax, not on the admission to practise as a barrister or other professional man, but on a youth when entering the profession. An articled clerk must serve five years before he had to pay the £50. The Attorney General said that the admission fee was £25, and that he (Mr. Hudson) knew it. That statement was unjustifiable. Under Section 15 of the Legal Practitioners Act a fee of 30 guineas had to be paid on admission, to the board, and under the original Stamp Act a duty of £10 on admission, making £40. By the rules of the Barristers' Board an applicant must advertise four times in each of the daily papers, the advertisements costing six guineas, or a total of £46 16s. He had said £50, and apologised for the £3 14s.

MR. BATH: No attack on the legal profession had been made by him in moving the amendment. The Attorney General, owing to lack of argument, abused the Opposition. There was a

vast difference between the dentist who paid stamp duty on the certificate entitling him to practise and a boy entering on a legal career. A dentist's certificate enabled him at once to earn a considerable income, while the article clerk had to travel a long way before he earned anything. The Treasurer argued that the £10 duty was imposed on the latter because of the special knowledge required. Did the payment ensure that the boy had that knowledge? On the contrary, did not the fee often prevent poor parents from entering promising boys in the legal profession? Against some of the duties it might be difficult to argue specifically; but not so with this one, when compared with the duty of 5s. on articles of apprenticeship. For the article clerk's £10 duty no justification had been attempted by Ministers. Members who desired that any profession should be open to any promising boy must agree with the amendment.

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

Ayes	...	...	13
Noes	...	...	22
Majority against			9

AYES.
 Mr. Bath
 Mr. Bolton
 Mr. Gull
 Mr. Heitmann
 Mr. Hicks
 Mr. Hudson
 Mr. Johnson
 Mr. Lynch
 Mr. Scaddan
 Mr. Taylor
 Mr. Ware
 Mr. A. J. Wilson
 Mr. Troy (Teller).

NOES.
 Mr. Barnett
 Mr. Brebber
 Mr. Brown
 Mr. Butcher
 Mr. Cowcher
 Mr. Davies
 Mr. Eddy
 Mr. Ewing
 Mr. Gordon
 Mr. Gregory
 Mr. Hayward
 Mr. Keenan
 Mr. Male
 Mr. Mitchell
 Mr. N. J. Moore
 Mr. S. F. Moore
 Mr. Piesse
 Mr. Price
 Mr. Smith
 Mr. Varyard
 Mr. F. Wilson
 Mr. Hardwick (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

THE TREASURER moved an amendment, that the following be added to paragraph (b):—

Receipt of master or mate, coastwise, taken in lieu of bill of lading, for goods not exceeding half a ton, weight or measurement, 3d.

MR. S. F. MOORE: The amendment proposed to treat similarly coastal and foreign bills of lading; whereas the former should be treated more liberally. He moved that all the words after

"lading," in the amendment, be struck out.

THE TREASURER: The hon. member's farther amendment would leave the law as it stood, and coastwise bills of lading would continue to bear a duty of 1s. The present Act provided for this; but owing to the presence of the words "for goods exported," a doubt arose whether goods sent coastwise could be deemed to be "exported." Hence, on the second reading he expressed his intention of striking out these words, thus insuring that all bills of lading should bear a shilling stamp. A northern member, however, pointed out that North-West residents were in the habit of ordering small parcels of goods from Perth and Fremantle, and on such parcels it would be hard to inflict a shilling stamp duty; hence the amendment reducing the duty to 3d. He failed to see why the Timber Combine, shipping 100 loads of timber to the North-West, should not pay 1s. duty the same as if shipping 100 loads to another part of the world; and he failed to see why coal proprietors should not pay 1s. duty on 150 tons of coal sent along the coast. The object of the amendment was to protect people in getting small domestic or trade supplies, and to assist those in the North-West or at any port along our coast.

MR. S. F. MOORE: Then let the weight be one ton.

THE TREASURER: This was a very small charge. What was 3d. on half a ton of iron, or 1s. on a ton of iron?

MR. S. F. MOORE: Then keep it at 1s.

THE TREASURER: That would be good for the Treasury, but there was no desire to be harsh on the small man. The member for Irwin evidently did not want people residing in the North-West to get small parcels taken up by steamers at a cheap rate. If we left it at 1s., a person getting a suit of clothes up by steamer would need to pay 1s. stamp duty on the parcel. The duty should be 3d. on such a parcel.

MR. BUTCHER: There was no desire to increase the taxation or to inflict any farther burden on the people in the North-West. There was a desire to see the duty reduced and the measurement increased to a ton, because half a ton was a very small measurement. By increas-

ing the measurement it would not be conceding much.

MR. BOLTON: The member for Irwin would not obtain the object he sought, because the effect of the amendment would be to make the charge 1s. for every parcel. Apparently the hon. member had moved the amendment without taking notice of the proposal of the Treasurer to make the charge 3d. for packages measuring under half a ton. The duty of 1s. was well enough for persons dealing largely in heavy goods, but some persons had to send to Perth from the North-West for 10lbs. of potatoes, and it was not fair to charge 1s. stamp duty on such small parcels. The proposal of the Treasurer was very fair.

MR. MALE: The intention of the member for Irwin had been misunderstood. It was to improve on the Treasurer's amendment by making the charge 3d. for all receipts for cargo along the coast. He (Mr. Male) was pleased the Treasurer had made some concession, but he regretted the Minister had not seen his way clear to go as far as the member for Irwin wished. The principle of penalising shippers on the coast was unfair, and it was not by any means an equitable tax. People living inland had goods sent by rail without paying any stamp duty; but because persons unfortunately lived along the coast, beyond the range of railway communication, they were penalised by a stamp duty on every consignment, which was hardly an encouragement to people to settle in the North. Rather it was a handicap. The old stamp duty imposed a tax of 3d. on all receipts for cargo measuring half a ton. Now that 3d. was to be raised to 1s. In fairness to the settlers in the North-West, the Treasurer should reconsider the matter, and if not able to reduce the duty to 3d. on all consignments, he might extend to one ton the measurement on which 3d. would be the duty.

MR. BATH: The duty of 1s. might be evaded by dividing the tonnage into more than one parcel.

MR. MALE: That would hardly be the case, because the ship would charge for the additional bills of lading that would be necessary.

Amendment (Mr. S. F. Moore's) put and negatived.

MR. BUTCHER moved an amendment on the Treasurer's amendment—

That the words "half a" be struck out, and "one" inserted in lieu.

The object was to extend the exemption of the 1s. duty to goods measuring one ton, instead of half a ton, as mentioned in the paragraph sought to be included in the Bill by the Treasurer. It would be a little concession to the small people living in coastal towns.

MR. TAYLOR: The arguments put forward by those representing the North-West were hardly strong enough. If those interested would make a clean breast of the matter and say this was for the benefit of the traders, members could understand the amendment. Half a ton was no small package. Members would facilitate people in every part of the State getting comforts for their homes; but to make the measurement a ton was more than the suit of clothes mentioned previously, and was purely a matter for traders. There certainly was no reason why the people in the North-West should be taxed because they got their goods by water, when we did not tax people getting goods by rail, though of course it was infinitely more costly to get goods by rail than by water; but the Committee should not vote for the increase in the measurement with the belief that it was for the benefit of settlers. The amendment was not in the interest of the settlers, but was in the interest of traders who wanted to get a ton of stuff exempt from paying 1s. stamp duty.

MR. BUTCHER: The hon. member was not open to conviction, therefore it was no use explaining the amendment for his benefit. But the hon. member had been talking about a subject of which he knew absolutely nothing. If the hon. member knew anything about trading in the North-West he would know how useless a ton of goods would be to the trader. The traders had their stuff forwarded in scores of tons at a time. The people he wished to protect were Government officials living in the different ports, who liked to get their parcels of fruit or vegetables up. It was not the traders at all. The amount was reasonable and just, and every person who had been to the North would say that.

MR. BOLTON: The member for Mt. Margaret did not know what he was talking about. It had been the practice up to the present time to charge 3d. for any small parcel, and it was a mistake that the amount for a parcel should be increased to 1s. We wished to revert to the former charge. It was only necessary to send a pair of wheels to the North to be over half a ton weight or measurement, and it was for the ship to say whether the weight or measurement was taken, and the stamp duty was paid according to the ship's measurement.

THE TREASURER: So many goods were carried by measurement that it was impossible to get the dead weight; therefore the Committee should not strike out the word "measurement." If we altered the amount to one ton the Government would lose revenue, and we wanted every penny of revenue we could possibly collect. Not so many pairs of wheels were sent to the North as members thought, and if they were sent, then 1s. should be paid on them.

MR. TAYLOR: The monthly Statistical Abstract, which the Treasurer the other evening said was not a reliable document—

THE TREASURER: Nothing of the kind was said by him. Look at *Hansard*.

MR. TAYLOR: We had to take the Abstract as correct, and it gave the total imports at the various ports during 1904-5 as follow:—Carnarvon, £6,033 in twelve months; Port Hedland, £6,485; Derby, £4,202; Onslow, £4,442; Wyndham, £2,498; Dongarra, £146.

MR. S. F. MOORE: That was not correct.

MR. TAYLOR: There was another member who questioned the accuracy of the figures. Every assistance should be given to help the people up North. He would not assist to help the Treasurer by increasing the duty. There was no desire to prevent people in the North-West from getting their supplies as cheaply as possible; at the same time he was strongly of opinion that as far as the small people in the North-West were concerned, that section of the community would be met by the proposal of the Treasurer. A ton measurement was more than a small parcel.

MR. HAYWARD: The member for Mt. Margaret, in reading out the returns,

had misled the House, perhaps unintentionally. These imports did not apply to coastwise trade at all.

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

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

Majority against ... 4

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Bath	Mr. Barnett
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Brebber
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Brown
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Davies
Mr. Gull	Mr. Eddy
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Horan	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Heilmann
Mr. Male	Mr. Keenan
Mr. S. F. Moore	Mr. Lynch
Mr. Piesse	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Scaddan	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Walker	Mr. Price
Mr. Ware	Mr. Smith
Mr. Troy (Teller).	Mr. Taylor
	Mr. Varyard
	Mr. A. J. Wilson
	Mr. F. Wilson
	Mr. Hardwick (Teller).

Amendment (Mr. Butcher's) thus negatived; the Treasurer's amendment passed.

THE TREASURER moved an amendment—

That paragraphs (c.) and (d.) be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—(c.) Under the heading "Conveyance or Transfer," after the word "property" the following words are inserted: ("except any scrip or shares of any incorporated mining company carrying on the business of mining within the State.") Also, after line 6, a paragraph is inserted as follows:—Transfer on sale of any scrip or share certificate of any incorporated mining company carrying on the business of mining within the State, 1d.

Amendment passed.

On farther motion by the TREASURER, a paragraph added as follows:—

(e.) Under the heading "Policy of Insurance on any vessel," all the words and figures from the word "Policy" to "and see Sections 67-69" inclusive, are struck out.

Clause as amended agreed to.

New Clause:

THE TREASURER moved that the following be added as a clause:—

Amendment of Section 23.—Section twenty-three of the principal Act is hereby amended by inserting after the word "unnecessary," in line twenty-two, the words "and on payment by the applicant of such fee as may be prescribed by regulation which the Governor is hereby authorised to make."

Clause agreed to.

New Clause:

MR. TAYLOR (in absence of Mr. Collier) moved that the following be added as a clause:—

The funds of any registered friendly society are hereby exempt from the provisions of this and the principal Act.

He did not think the Treasurer would be too anxious to enforce taxation of friendly societies, because they paid those who were injured or ill, in many cases he believed weekly amounts; the amount in some societies being 30s. a week.

THE TREASURER: If this clause were carried, friendly societies would be exempt from all taxation under this measure or the principal Act.

MR. SCADDAN: The hon. member referred to the contributions of members.

THE TREASURER: That was not specified.

MR. SCADDAN: No; but that was the idea. It was a matter of framing a new clause.

THE TREASURER could not frame a new clause on the spur of the moment; to meet the idea of the hon. member.

MR. BATH: The idea of the hon. member was that in case of receipts for the contributions of members, the friendly societies should be exempt from the stamp duty. The clause was somewhat comprehensive as it stood, and if the Minister gave an opportunity on recommitment, a clause might be drafted to meet the specific desire the hon. member had in his mind.

THE TREASURER: Was it of so much importance? Did not the bulk of the friendly societies pay their sums in amounts under £2?

MR. BATH: No; often they let the amount run on.

THE TREASURER: How many would get the benefit, if the request made were acceded to?

MR. BATH: Then there was the receipt of sick pay, for instance.

MR. TAYLOR: That was what he (Mr. Taylor) was aiming at.

THE TREASURER: If they paid more than £2, was it not because they had fallen into arrears?

MR. TAYLOR: No. Payments might be made fortnightly. He understood the member for Boulder desired to relieve members of friendly societies who had fallen ill and were receiving sick pay

which they would have to give a receipt for. Sometimes they were away at Perth, and the money would be sent from Kalgoorlie.

THE TREASURER: They could give two receipts, and not one, for the whole.

MR. TAYLOR thought it would be better if we could exempt these people.

MR. SCADDAN: Moneys received from the members of friendly societies were included in the exemptions, but he understood the object of the member for Boulder was that members who received sick pay should also be exempt. We could amend the Act so that payments to or from any of these societies' members would be exempt.

Clause put and negatived.

THE TREASURER: Any member had a right to move for recommitment. When we saw the clause the hon. member wished to draft, we could come to a decision as to whether we could agree to it or not.

Title:

On motion by the TREASURER, the Title amended, describing the measure as an Act to further amend the Stamp Act 1882 and to amend the Stamp Act Amendment Act, 1895.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT. RECOMMITTAL.

On motion by the ATTORNEY GENERAL, Bill recommitment for amendments.

New Clause:

MR. TROY moved that the following be added as a clause:—

Any person who, before or during his service under articles has taken the degree of Bachelor of Laws or of Arts at any university recognised by the Board in the United Kingdom or any part of the Commonwealth of Australia or of New Zealand shall, after serving a term of Articles for three years, be admitted to practise as a barrister, solicitor, attorney, and proctor.

He desired to liberalise the measure in a sense, and to bring it into conformity with the Acts existing in the other States and in other portions of the British dominions. The parent Act provided that any person who possessed the degree of bachelor of laws might, after serving a term of three years' articles, be admitted to the bar; and since the degree of bachelor of arts was very similar to the degree of bachelor of laws, he wanted

to have that inserted also, so that any person who gained this degree either before he became articled or during the services of his term might be entitled, after passing the law examinations, to be admitted as a barrister or solicitor. Either of the degrees could be obtained in this State, because every year there were examinations held under the patronage of the Adelaide University.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: A wide distinction must be drawn between the degree of bachelor of laws and that of bachelor of arts. A person who had the degree of bachelor of laws obtained it largely through his knowledge of law; whereas a person who took the degree of bachelor of arts obtained it purely and simply through his knowledge of ordinary subjects, some of these being entirely remote from the consideration of law. One could get the degree of bachelor of arts through knowledge of modern languages, and even through artistic knowledge which some of us indulged in with regard to classical matters. The principal Act provided that a bachelor of laws could be admitted after serving three years' articles, complying with the rules, and passing examinations. The amendment was most irregular; and even if it were wise, the mover should have sought to insert it in the proper subsection of the principal Act. As it stood, the amendment would provide that any bachelor of arts who served a term of articles would thereupon become a barrister. This would override the principal Act, and enable men to gain admission without examination. The Bill dealt with but one section of the community, the managing clerks; and if we extended it to deal with articulated clerks, we should open a door that would be hard to shut.

MR. HUDSON agreed with much said by the Attorney General. For the legal profession educational qualifications were essential. The amendment would lead to great confusion in the principal Act and its amendments. If the mover attempted personally to take both the LL.B. and the B.A. degrees, he would ascertain the great difference between them. The subjects studied for a B.A. degree had nothing to do with law, and in some universities did not include even logic.

MR. TROY: Between the two degrees the distinction was slight. At Oxford

and Cambridge the LL.B. degree was never taken. The amendment would bring our law into conformity with that of the Eastern States, where the term of articles was for a bachelor of arts reduced to three years. Why place greater hardships and restrictions on our law students then were placed on law students in other States? The result was that a South Australian student who could be admitted to the bar of that State after taking his B.A. degree and serving three years' articles, came here and was, after six months, admitted to practise with Western Australian barristers who had served for five years. If this policy were pursued, all our legal talent would be imported from the East. Why not allow our students the advantages of the liberal conditions enjoyed in the sister States and New Zealand, as well as throughout the Empire? Would the Attorney General alter the amendment so as to put it in order?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: No.

Amendment put and negatived.

New Clause—Degrees *honoris causa*:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that the following be added as a clause:—

The Barristers' Board may present to any person, *honoris causa*, a certificate entitling him to be admitted a practitioner, notwithstanding that such person shall not have complied with the provisions of the principal Act or any Act amending the same, in respect of the qualifications therein prescribed as necessary for such admission, or in respect of any of such qualifications. Provided that no person so admitted shall be entitled, by reason of such admission, to engage himself in the practice or discharge of any legal business for reward, or to appear as counsel or solicitor in any cause, matter, or suit in any court of civil or criminal jurisdiction in Western Australia.

This power was enjoyed by all the bodies entitled to confer legal degrees in the old country. In these bodies the jurisdiction was inherent; whereas our board was appointed by statute. It might be desirable to extend to distinguished visitors the compliment of degrees *honoris causa*; and such degrees were purely honorary.

MR. WALKER: Was not the motion rather outside the scope of the Bill?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes; and that he had already admitted. But this was not an operative clause. It did not admit or reject any candidate, and it was almost formal.

MR. A. J. WILSON: The clause was an innovation. On what grounds would the degrees be conferred? If it were desired to honour the gentleman mentioned the other night by the member for Claremont (Mr. Foulkes), the Barristers' Board might find means of doing so without moving the whole machinery of Parliament.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: None could forecast the circumstances in which the board would grant an honorary degree. If a solicitor or barrister of high standing in the East came here as a visitor and was entertained by the board, by the profession, or by the Judges, the circumstances might warrant the granting of a degree, which was looked on as a high compliment. Such degrees were given only to distinguished strangers, or to distinguished statesmen who had earned them.

MR. HUDSON: In this State were some doctors *honoris causa*.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes; and one of them, who was famous, might possibly accept this degree from the board.

MR. A. J. WILSON: The member for Claremont originally proposed this as a means of admitting to the profession anyone who had for five years been Registrar of the Supreme Court.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: That proposal had been rejected by the Government.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Was that to be the reason for passing the new clause?

Question put and negatived.

Bill farther reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

At 6:30, the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

MOTION—COLLIE COAL INDUSTRY, TO ADOPT RECOMMENDATIONS.

Debate resumed from the 18th July, on the motion by Mr. Ewing, "That the recommendations contained in Dr. Jack's report upon the Collie Coal Industry should be given effect to by the Government."

MR. T. HAYWARD (Wellington): I wish to say but few words on the motion. In advocating the adoption of Dr. Jack's report, it must be borne in mind that he was quite impartial and

that he arrived at his conclusions after seven months' serious consideration. I wish to refer to two paragraphs of his report which bear particularly on this question. In paragraph 92, Dr. Jack states that ores and concentrates of different values are carried at rates according to their value, and he argues that coal is an ore of heat and power, and therefore should be carried in accordance with its value as compared with Newcastle coal. The force of that argument must be apparent to every member. It is a very impartial and correct statement to make. It is very evident that if Collie coal is to be carried at the same rate as and in competition with Newcastle coal, it is not given a fair chance. I think this recommendation should be carried out, and if it were it would greatly assist the industry. The recommendation in paragraph 107 is that if the rate of carriage for Newcastle coal is fixed at two-thirds of a penny per ton, the rate for Collie coal should be a halfpenny. The report also states that it would be observed that when the haulage rates are two-thirds of a penny and one halfpenny per ton respectively, 10s. per ton was an equitable price for Collie coal, based upon a price for Newcastle coal quoted at Fremantle of 15s. 4d. per ton. The case has been clearly put by the member for Collie, and I hope members will take the recommendations of Dr. Jack into serious consideration, and that the Government will feel it to be their duty to adopt the report as has been proposed. It is only fair to the Collie and to the State generally that these recommendations should be carried out. In relation to the question of the use of local coal on the railways, it was stated before the commission that the Commissioner of Railways in Victoria was prepared to pay 2s. per ton over and above its commercial value for Victorian coal for the sake of having a coal-mining industry in that State; and I think that applies equally to this State. I do not need to say more than that I hope the Government will see their way to carry out the recommendations of Dr. Jack.

MR. H. E. BOLTON (North Fremantle): I wish at the outset to assure the hon. member for Collie and other hon. members that while my remarks may be somewhat opposed to this motion,

I do not intend exactly opposing it. But I think it only right that at least both sides of the question should be placed before the House; and having had some little experience of this local commodity, I feel it my duty to put before members just a few matters in connection therewith. I do not intend to make any lengthy remarks. I do not think the matter really calls for lengthy remarks. I listened very carefully to the member for Collie, and I have refreshed my memory since then; but I feel somehow that I hardly know what the hon. member really wants, unless it be that he considers the whole crux of the question lies in the amount of the freights charged for the carriage of the coal from the pit's mouth to the distant depôts of the Railway Department. If that be it, it is, in my opinion, more a matter for the administration of the Railway Department than for discussion in this House; but if the hon. member was working gradually up to that point, he used a good many arguments, notably that of the calorific value of Collie coal as compared with Newcastle, which give one the right to enter into the disabilities, if they may be so termed, existing in regard to Collie coal, and which really belong to it. For instance, members are not aware of the real cost of this coal to the State. I do not want my remarks to be misconstrued; I am not running down the Collie coal by any means. I have used a good deal of it, and in some cases I have found it an excellent coal, but in other instances I have found it not fit to tip into the sea, and not fit to be put on any locomotive tender. Members may remember that before Collie coal could be used on our locomotives with any success it was found necessary to alter the pattern of the grates. That meant that the fire-bars, in order to burn this coal, had to be made on a different pattern, very much wider in the spaces. In addition to that, it was also found necessary, mainly I believe in the interests of our agricultural friends, to put special funnels on the locomotives at considerable cost. These funnels were not successful because they failed to answer the purpose for which money had been expended on them. If they did arrest the sparks, they usually arrested the engine and the train as well, and if they were found to be inconvenient in

running the train they were allowed to get into a loose way, which allowed not only the train to proceed on its way but the sparks also, and as many sparks were emitted as if no money had been expended on these funnels. I maintain, notwithstanding that the coal has a great deal to recommend it, as the member representing the district has told us—and even now the department is using a greater proportion of it, some 79 per cent. I believe—still it should be pointed out that the cost of the alteration of the grates and funnels, or smoke-stacks, of the locomotives should really be debited to Collie coal. There is not the least doubt that but for Collie coal these alterations would not have been necessary, though if the alterations carried out had been successful, the cost, for the sake of a local industry, would have been justified. I will go so far as to say that, but I believe that a much larger sum was spent on those so-called improvements than was necessary; and if that sum were debited to Collie coal, as it should be, the cost of that coal to the State would be very much higher than some members think. Then I would farther point out that there is, in many instances, more expenditure in connection with Collie coal than would be incurred with Newcastle coal. When Collie coal was first used, Newcastle coal was then in general use, but on a few engines Collie coal was used, not exactly for testing purposes; but notwithstanding there was no officer appointed to ride on the locomotive to test the coal, a given quantity of coal was eked out to each engine and a careful computation was kept by the department. It was found almost impossible at the time of which I speak to break the coal with the small hammers supplied to those engaged on the engines. The member for Collie could bear me out in this, although he smiles. It was found necessary to first of all break the coal on the coal stage before putting it on the locomotive. Not only could it not be broken, but it used to fly into small pieces in a manner most dangerous to the men and to the safety of the gauge glasses and other breakables on the foot-plate. From that date to the present it has been necessary to engage an additional staff to break the Collie coal from the big sizes in which it

is delivered, to the ordinary size in which Newcastle coal is delivered to the engines. If you put Collie coal on the tenders or in the bunkers, which is worse, it is impossible to break it in time to use it. So it was found necessary to employ additional hands to break it up. Also if the coal is handled in its green state there is a good deal of slack. It was found necessary to screen it before putting it on the engines. This all goes to show the additional labour necessary to handle this coal, the cost of which does not show in the cost of the coal to the State. If all this is taken into consideration, it will at least let the Government see that Collie coal has had a fair chance up to now. Then, again, there is a considerable loss of weight in transit. It has been proved beyond doubt—and even Dr. Jack admits it—that if it takes, as it does unfortunately, four or five or six days for a truck of coal to go from Collie to, say, Kalgoorlie or Menzies—and delays are necessary sometimes—there is a considerable loss, no matter what you do, in that coal. Its exposure to the atmosphere has a deteriorating effect; and if the truck were weighed on leaving the mine at Collie and carefully guarded all the way to Kalgoorlie—if it took four or five days on the journey—and then weighed again at Kalgoorlie, it would surprise members to know the loss in transit. There is another difficulty, to my mind the most serious of all; and if the member for Collie can see any way out of this difficulty, he will not only do as great a service to the State as Dr. Jack did, but even greater service. If I remember rightly, the hon. member in discussing Dr. Jack's report considered that Dr. Jack was heaven-sent, that he had done such a service to the State as no other man ever did before. And now when I agree with the hon. member, he disputes that Dr. Jack did a service to the State. The difficulty I refer to is this. If it were possible for the daily supply of Collie coal to arrive at the different depôts and the supply could be used daily, there would be no complaints as to Collie coal: the evil would be removed, and the difficulty which now arises daily would disappear. But what do we find? The difficulty is this, that the mines have a certain output per day, and I speak with some

little knowledge as I was stationed at that depôt for some time and know that a certain output takes place daily; and although the coal is consigned from Collie every day, the first stage is to Brunswick Junction. At this Junction, which is passed by the Bunbury traffic, there is not always room for half or a small percentage of the coal to be taken on, there is not room on the train which has a certain tonnage to haul, and there is not sufficient room on the train to haul the coal. I am explaining that if a train leaves Bunbury fully loaded or nearly full, it is impossible for that train to take up several trucks of coal, or the train would be overloaded from Brunswick Junction. Members can see that. There is a loco-depôt at Collie, and that depôt sends locomotives to Brunswick and back, the homeward trip being done with empty trucks. If so many loaded trucks are left at Brunswick to be forwarded to their destination, which in all cases but one is to the capital, the exception being the Bunbury end, it is not possible for a train to take on all the coal. The member says that it is not the fault of the coal. Who said it was? I am dealing with the disabilities under which the coal labours, and if the hon. member can remove those disabilities so much the better for the Collie coal. This tonnage is sometimes more than the engine can haul, so that the coal has to remain at Brunswick Junction. The coal is taken as far as Picton Junction, where again there is a branch from Greenbushes, and the trains are often overloaded there. The coal is left at Picton. From there it goes to Pinjarrah, where all trains are reduced and the coal is left at Pinjarrah. The trains which are following cannot make room for the coal left at Pinjarrah, so that it has to remain there. The coal is carried from Pinjarrah to Perth, and by the time it reaches Perth it sometimes happens it is two or three days from the time it left Collie until it reaches Perth. Members know the alteration of grade at Midland Junction, which causes the loads to be considerably reduced. It takes generally a week, sometimes more, for coal to get to Kalgoorlie. I may tell the member for Collie I have had a look through Dr. Jack's report; I have not digested it as much as he has done, and I must compliment him on his know-

ledge of that report, which is very voluminous and takes a deal of time to digest. The coal takes a week to get to Kalgoorlie, and according to a section of Dr. Jack's report if this coal could be used in two days there would be no complaints or loss through deterioration or exposure to the atmosphere. I can absolutely bear out that statement from my own personal and practical knowledge. If the coal could be used within two days of mining there would be no trouble with the coal. But it is not possible to get it to Kalgoorlie under existing arrangements under a week. Dr. Jack's statements go to prove that. When the coal reaches Kalgoorlie it is not worth much. If the member for Collie can get better arrangements for the transit of this coal he will overcome one of the greatest disabilities it labours under. I am inclined to think instead of the member hanging round the one point of a reduction of freights, if he could arrange for the Government to allow the coal to get to its destination in a far shorter time, he need not ask for a reduction of freights, because the usual practice—and I speak now again from local knowledge—in Kalgoorlie is to use the coal that comes first to hand, and not the coal that comes last. It will be recognised at once that it is not possible to forward a day's supply day by day, therefore it is necessary for Kalgoorlie to keep at least from 120 tons to 180 tons of Collie coal on hand. This coal is kept on hand in a heap, and it would become absolutely useless in a few months, not fit not only for locomotive purposes, but not fit for anything at all, except for the duststorms to blow it away when it goes to powder. Collie coal being used daily, the department use the coal in the heap as it stands, and as the coal comes it is placed at the end of the heap. It naturally follows that a fortnight may elapse before coal is used, and in a fortnight the coal begins to go bad. We know of the case of a fire at Kalgoorlie where spontaneous combustion took place, and at Southern Cross.

MR. HORAN: There was no spontaneous combustion at all. It took fire, not from spontaneous combustion.

MR. BOLTON: If it is a matter of a technical term, the member can follow me and give the House an explanation of the

fire. The department spent a good deal of money trying to trace the origin of that fire, and perhaps the member will be able to tell the House and the department how it occurred. I only know the department tried to find out the origin of that fire. It is not possible to use the coal when fresh mined. If it were possible, all the disabilities under which Collie coal labours would be removed. Until such time as the department, I was going to say wakens up and agrees to hasten the transit of the coal, it is no use people talking of a reduction of freights. If freights were reduced according to the calorific value of the coal—

MR. EWING: We are not asking for a reduction.

MR. BOLTON: Then I have to admit that after all I have listened to and read, I do not know what the member for Collie wants. What is the necessity for the motion? I take the opportunity of saying that when I interjected during his speech he said, "My word, the hon. member for North Fremantle has grasped it at last." Evidently he was too previous, for I have not grasped it, and I do not know when I shall grasp it. I know how the motion reads and what it entails. It deals principally with Dr. Jack's report. If the member says I am wrong in saying that it asks for a reduction of freights, or preferential rates, then I do not know what the motion means. If it were possible to use the coal when fresh mined, then I think the member for Collie and the people of Collie would have no cause to complain. At present that is not possible. And there seems to be no immediate reason for believing that it will ever be possible to export coal. That being so I cannot understand why the people of Collie do not work up a private trade. I cannot understand why the Government should use 79 per cent. of the coal that is mined at Collie, and that the Government should be the only milch cow. To put it in other words, why is it that a bigger percentage of this coal cannot be used outside the Government service if the coal is so good? I am not saying it is, and I am not going to say it is not. I have used Collie coal exclusively for ten months on the South-Western traffic, when practically there was no Newcastle coal used. I

used this coal on my locomotive, and it gave satisfaction to myself as a driver, although the hon. member will say that the drivers opposed the use of Collie coal, and were the greatest enemies of it.

MR. EWING: So they did.

MR. BOLTON: I used it, and I am not going to say that Collie coal is as good as Newcastle coal, or that it ever will be. But if the coal is so good as the hon. member says, and on which the hon. member asks the Government to adopt the report of Dr. Jack, why cannot he convince the people outside the Railway Department that it is so good?

MR. EWING: The private trade is increasing every day.

MR. BOLTON: Then I am quite satisfied that up to the present time the Government have given every chance to this coal, and that no farther concessions should be sought by the Collie coal proprietors, or those interested in the industry.

MR. EWING: We are not asking for concessions.

MR. TEY: What are you asking for?

MR. BOLTON: I do not know what the hon. member is asking for. The Government have treated the Collie coal fairly up till now, and provided the coal owners are increasing their private trade, I believe the industry will advance at Collie. The hon. member said according to the calorific value—he was then dealing with a remark of the member for Ivanhoe on the different grades of ore according to the different rates of freight—said Newcastle coal being equal to 14,000 units roughly, and Collie coal to my knowledge being 9,000 units to 11,000 units, which I think a fair and liberal estimate, for it does not exceed 11,000 units, he would claim that Newcastle coal should pay a higher freight than Collie coal. I cannot quite agree with him. I do not want to openly oppose the member altogether, but I do not see how it would pay the Commissioner of Railways to carry, say, 15 trucks of Collie coal loaded to their full capacity, cheaper or as cheap as it would pay him to carry 11 trucks of Newcastle coal, when he can get the same results from 11 trucks of Newcastle coal as from 12 to 15 trucks of Collie coal. It would cost the Commissioner more to haul 15 wagons from Collie than to haul 12 trucks

of Newcastle coal from Fremantle, taking it from the ship's side to the pit's mouth; and I think that explains a good deal of the opposition or antagonism between the Commissioner of Railways and the member for Collie. The Commissioner for Railways looks at it from a commercial point of view. He says, "If I can get Newcastle coal to generate sufficient steam for a certain number of engines and so many wagons for so many tons, it pays me to do that rather than to have to double the wagons and the hauling power to the fields from the pit's mouth." I do not blame the hon. member for endeavouring to get this Government or any other Government to adopt the report of Dr. Jack; but the motion does not go far enough. It is not sufficiently explanatory of what he means to adopt. I should not have taken this line in my concluding remarks, but for the fact that I do not know exactly what the member for Collie wants.

MR. EWING: Have you not read the report?

MR. BOLTON: I have read some portions of the report. I have picked out what interests me; and I expected the gentleman representing that industry and that centre, knowing he would deal with the subject, to put the matter more clearly. I have carefully listened to him and have since read the speech. I thought at first that he had put it clearly, but by his interjection I find I am on the wrong track. I do not know what he wants by this motion, except that Dr. Jack's report be adopted by this Government. That is very easy; but if the adoption means a reduction of freights or preferential rates, this Government has not the power to grant them.

MR. EWING: Not preferential rates.

MR. BOLTON: If it means that the price of coal is to be increased and that the Government will have to pay more than they are doing now, the Government will have to think twice before adopting the suggestion. The only thing which has been put in consists of a quotation of a section or several sections of Dr. Jack's report. I want once more to explain why I speak on this occasion. This is not the first time a similar motion, perhaps not dealing with Dr. Jack's report but asking for a Royal Commission and dealing generally with

the Collie coal industry, has come before this House. I have refrained since I have been a member from speaking on the subject, but I deem it necessary to do so on this occasion with a view not necessarily of being in opposition to the motion, but of having both sides of the question presented, and hoping with the member for Collie to have some finality on the subject.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. Gregory): The motion before the House is one urging the Government to give effect to the report made by Dr. Jack; and no doubt that report was a most valuable one. There is no doubt, to my mind, that Dr. Jack entered most exhaustively into the question, and in dealing with every phase of it he has placed certain recommendations on record. In the early stages of his report he points out to us the great value of that coalfield. He tells us that, approximately, there are something like 310,000,000 tons of coal there, and if we were to consume one million tons per annum there would be sufficient to supply us for 310 years. The question that arose before the Government a little time ago was whether we were justified in assisting this industry. Collie is a thriving little township with a population of 2,500. There has been a good deal of Government expenditure with regard to railways, and a large amount of capital has been invested there. The average number employed in the last two years has been 377 miners, and the approximate wages sheet is something like £75,000 per annum. We have produced up to the present 905,000 tons, I may say nearly 1,000,000 tons, to the value of about £460,000. I think it was wise on our part to give some assistance to that industry, because there is not the slightest doubt that had we not done so the industry would have collapsed. That industry would have been ruined and those who had invested their capital there would have been ruined also. Dr. Jack in Clause 24 of his report says :—

That a coal mining industry is of the greatest importance to any country which either is, or aspires to be, a manufacturing centre is so obviously true that Governments invariably endeavour to encourage its development. The Government of Western Australia has been no exception to the rule. The Collie coal mines would probably have remained unopened to

this day had it not been for an undertaking on the part of the Government to use the output on the railways as far as possible. Even now, the railway consumption amounts to 79 per cent. of the whole. The withdrawal of the railway order would, therefore, involve the immediate closing of the mines, unless the outside consumption had, in the meantime, assumed much larger proportions. It must not be forgotten that a considerable amount of capital has been sunk on the faith of the Government's policy being adhered to.

I think that is a very interesting phase of the report, and that it to some extent exonerates the Government, not of to-day but the previous Government's, for the action they always took with a view to promoting that industry. We asked ourselves the question "Are we justified in trying to promote that industry?" I think it is worth while to consider for a few moments what is being done in Victoria. Only recently a commission was appointed there, and it gave a very exhaustive report in connection with the coal supplies. One of the most important paragraphs says :—

Over two million and a-half tons of coal has been raised in Gippsland. The freight on this quantity, calculated at 3s. per ton, the average rate paid, amounted to £400,000. The additional traffic arising from this production, estimated at not less than 2s. per ton on the coal carried, would amount to £250,000, making the total in freights £650,000. The reduction in the price of coal had in no small measure been due to the production of Victorian coal. The supplies cost the Railway Department for the five years prior to 1893 on the average 18s. 5d. per ton. Since then the average cost of the 3,378,600 tons supplied had been 13s. a ton, or a reduction of 5s. 5d. a ton, or £915,037.

I think that is a very important deduction made by the Victorian commission, and I am quite justified in saying that but for the Collie output the price of Newcastle coal here would have been considerably higher than it is to-day. Take the reports of that commission. We find the commission recommending a bonus of 6d. in addition to the previous bonus. I do not quite follow the Victorian report, which I have here. Mr. Hudson in his evidence before the commission stated that the Commissioner's subsidy on coal from the Outtrim mine was 3s. 1d. per ton; and I presume that, in addition, there was 1s. 8d. per ton as a Government subsidy. I am not certain whether the Government subsidy is in addition to what is termed the Commis-

sioner's subsidy, because another part of the report makes one think that the subsidy of the Commission is something like 2s.; so I find it very difficult to ascertain exactly the extent to which the Government or the Commissioner of Railways is subsidising the Victorian coal. There is no doubt at least that over 2s. per ton is being paid to the coal mines in Victoria. There are many other recommendations here in connection with the Victorian mines, which at the present time I do not think it necessary for us to take into consideration. But I would like to point out that in addition to the Commissioner's subsidy the commission recommend that there should be a bonus of 6d. per ton, and the price to be paid by the Commissioner in Victoria is 12s. 6d. per ton for the better quality of coal and 11s. 6d. per ton for the second-class coal. The report gives the following comparison of the values of coals :—

Best of New South Wales Coals	100
Average do.	93.45
Jumbanna coal	83.00
Outtrim coal	81.8
Coal Creek coal	76.8

I do not think the best of our coal can be much below the percentage of the Coal Creek coal. I think we can well say that the Western Australian coal would be equal to about 70 per cent. as against the Newcastle coal we receive here.

MR. EWING : Higher.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS :

I am putting it at 70 per cent. to be on the right side. The Royal Commission in Victoria state that for that coal they should receive 12s. 6d. per ton and 6d. per ton subsidy in addition for the better class of coal, and for the inferior class of coal 11s. 6d. with a subsidy of 6d. per ton. In Western Australia the prices we are paying average about 8s. 3d. to 8s. 9d. per ton. Members will remember that last year tenders were called for the supply of Collie coal. I do not want to deal in any sense with the action of the previous Government, but when this question came before us no settlement had been arrived at. There had been tenders received by the department, and these tenders were calculated upon the successful tenderer receiving the contract

for the whole of the coal; that is, only one colliery would be there. The prices tendered were: Cardiff, 7s. 9d.; Proprietary, 8s. 2d.; Collie Burn, 8s. 5½d.; and the Co-operative 8s. 10d. per ton. Our policy all along has been to try and have competition in connection with these mines. That is why the railway was extended to the Collie Burn and the Collie Cardiff. We desire to keep up this competition, because I feel satisfied that with a little protection for a few years, and encouraging people to use this coal, we shall have many manufactories in Western Australia, and it has been conclusively proved that this coal is almost equal to Newcastle coal for stationary engines. It has also done some excellent work in connection with locomotives, but for stationary engines it has been proved to be a pretty good coal, and I am hopeful that in the near future we shall have many more manufactories than we have at present, and that the output from that district will be considerably greater than it is now. We want if possible to have a cheap coal here, yet at the same time we want to assist in the development of that industry; therefore we told several of these collieries that we would give them a maximum price of 8s. 9d. for the coal for a period of three years. The coal has been paid for according to the calorific value, and the price paid to the Cardiff mine, owing to its lower calorific value, is less than that paid to the Co-operative, which I believe has a higher calorific value, and at the present time I take a fair and equitable value of the coal to be 8s. 9d. per ton. Dr. Jack does not agree with me in that. He bases the whole of his argument on another foundation entirely. We thought we would fix the best at 8s. 9d. per ton, which was to be the maximum price, deducting afterwards according to the calorific value, unless it was the maximum.

MR. LYNCH : What about royalties ?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS :

I will come to them. In addition to paying the 8s. 9d. per ton, we have decided to remit the royalties for the same period, no matter whether the coal is supplied to the railways or to private consumers. We wish to try to build up the trade. I explained last session that this remission will make the price of the coal equal to 9s. per ton; that is to say, for coal of a

calorific value of about 10,500 British thermal units, the actual price paid by us, including the royalty, is 9s. per ton, with deductions afterwards if the calorific value is lower than that specified. I am quite satisfied that if it were not for the Collie coal, we should be in a peculiar predicament. There are shipping combines; and there has recently been a strike at Newcastle. Very high prices have recently been charged for Newcastle coal; and I have not the slightest doubt that though the quantity of coal sent to Western Australia from Newcastle is infinitesimal compared with the total output of the Newcastle collieries, yet as we have to deal with shipping and other combines, were it not for our Collie coal instead of getting Newcastle coal at 15s. 4d. we should have to pay a much higher price. In Victoria, the price of Newcastle coal, since local coal mines were opened up, has been reduced by 5s. 5d. per ton. I have not a note of the average price which we pay for Newcastle coal; but I think I should be on the right side if I stated its average price to the West Australian railways at between 18s. and £1 per ton. [MR. EWING: 22s.] Lately we have been getting coal fairly cheap; but I remember the time when we paid for it 25s. per ton.

MR. LYNCH: The Victorian experience is not conclusive. When Victoria secured a reduction in price, there was a similar reduction at the pit's mouth in Newcastle.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Probably. The commission credit the Victorian coal with securing 50 per cent. of the reduction. The commission do not give it the full credit; but they add to the reduction the freights paid on Newcastle coal, and find that the Victorian railways have saved nearly a million pounds. I have just pointed out that there has been a strike at Newcastle. Presuming that through a strike no coal came to Western Australia and we had no coal mines here, what would be the position of our railways? [MR. TAYLOR: Burning wood.] That would not be a nice experience for the engine-drivers. The member for North Fremantle (Mr. Bolton) would find his position difficult. I know that one gold mine in Day Dawn is prepared to take from 1,000 to 2,000 tons per month of Collie coal, if it can be brought there at a reasonable rate. The

distance is great—over 600 miles; and this prevents the coal from being supplied as cheaply as wood. If the coal could be carried a little cheaper there would be a big demand for it in the Day Dawn district. In the event of a strike or in the event of war, we may find our railways without coal, unless we foster our local industry. When the tenders came before Cabinet, we considered that the industry had been started with a large amount of capital; that many miners have made Collie their home and are getting their living there; and that after reading Dr. Jack's report we were justified in giving the maximum price of 8s. 9d. per ton for that coal. I was pleased to-night to hear the recommendation of the member for North Fremantle as to the carriage of Collie coal, and his explanation of how it was allowed to deteriorate through not being promptly taken to its destination. A recommendation of that sort will be exceedingly valuable. As he points out, if special coal trains were provided for the conveyance of Collie coal, and it were taken promptly to the various depôts, the coal would be in a much better condition and far more valuable than it is at the present day; and the hon. member's recommendation is borne out by the various reports I have read. I wish to point out one thing. It has often been said that the Commissioner of Railways, in dealing with the Collie coal, has been exceedingly biased against it. The general instruction to the Commissioner has been to treat the railways as a commercial concern; and it is his duty as Commissioner to buy his goods in the cheapest market. On the other hand, the Government can determine the policy to be adopted. I say again, it is the duty of the Commissioner to buy his coal in the cheapest market; but the Government say, "We will take the responsibility for using this coal; we wish to keep this industry going; we recognise the necessity for such an industry within the State"; and the blame, if blame there be for the use of this coal, lies entirely on the Government. Dr. Jack points out clearly that there is no evidence that Mr. George is biased. I am quite satisfied that he is not biased; that his object has been to buy the cheapest coal obtainable. [MR. BOLTON: You tie him down.] We do

not tie him down. We take the responsibility. We say that during certain portions of the year the Commissioner is to use 80 per cent. of Collie coal on his railways, omitting certain sections. We do not ask him to take Collie coal up to Laverton or down to Albany; and we do not use any Collie coal whatever on the line from Geraldton to Nannine. There, Newcastle coal is used entirely, on account of the deterioration in Collie coal soon after it is mined. But in regard to this matter, the Government take the whole responsibility. And I wish to say that the Commissioner's action is the action of any ordinary common-sense man who had before him only one consideration—the best, the most effective, and cheapest method of working the railways. The Government, on the other hand, say it is essential to have coal mines within the State; and we recognise that there will be great disadvantage to the State if we do not try to foster that industry. I think it is our duty to try to foster, as far as we legitimately can, all our industries. Dr. Jack asks first for certain relief from labour covenants—that a certain amalgamation of areas be allowed. These are matters that can well be dealt with when on the subject of mining reform, and not so well on a motion such as this. Dr. Jack's third request is that for a period of ten years no royalty to private consumers shall be charged by the Government. I think we should be binding ourselves down too much if we asked the House to decide that for the next ten years no royalty be charged to private consumers. We say, and said last year—and no member of the House questioned or objected to the proposal—that for a period of three years we should remit the royalty on this coal. Another of Dr. Jack's recommendations is that the zone system be so far adopted as to make Collie the terminal section in respect of the coal raised in that district. In paragraph 120 of his report, Dr. Jack recommends that—

In plain figures, therefore, I think the Government should be prepared, if necessary, to pay a direct subsidy to the industry, limited to £23,000 in any period of ten years. The Treasury might be called on up to this amount, as required, at any time within any period of ten years, to raise the price payable to the producers of the coal (for railway use) to about

8s. per ton, if ever the "equitable price," with the addition of "insurance," should fall below that sum; and I recommend that it should, if necessary, be called on, in such event, to pay a direct subsidy (limited to £23,000 in each decennial period) up to 20 per cent. on the price paid by the railway.

I do not know whether we can agree to that. He recommends also a subsidy of 1s. 8d. per ton per year on all coal supplied to the railways, the price not to exceed 9s. 6d. per ton. In dealing with Dr. Jack's report, we have to remember that the whole of it is based on one foundation: that in Dr. Jack's opinion, Collie coal should be carried on our railways at a lower price than is charged for the carriage of Newcastle coal. For that he gives some very good reasons; and personally I can see no reason why we should not adopt his suggestion, without calling the lower price a preferential rate. I am not now speaking on behalf of the Government, because the matter has not yet been considered by Cabinet; but I cannot see why we should not assist the coal industry as well as other industries. We carry low-grade ore from the fields at a lower rate than we charge for high-grade; and the rate is increased according to the value of the ore. The whole of our tariff is based on a somewhat similar principle; and I do not see why we should not be justified in enacting that all coal of, say, over 11,500 British thermal units must pay a certain rate, and that inferior coal pay a lower rate. But it is on this foundation that Dr. Jack bases the whole of his arguments; and in the first place, we are not quite sure whether the lower charge would not be looked on as a preferential rate, and be contrary to the Commonwealth Constitution. It might not be allowed. And there is no doubt that this is the basis of Dr. Jack's most valuable report, in which he points out time after time how necessary it is to assist the industry. The Government have every desire to assist the industry. We recognise that a large sum of money has been spent at Collie; there is an average of 377 men directly employed in the industry. The coal is not bad. Dr. Jack says that with 75 per cent. of Collie coal and 25 of Newcastle, the very best results can be obtained—even better than with Newcastle only; and that 50 per cent. of Newcastle and 50 of Collie

will not give so good a result as 25 and 75 respectively. So, knowing that we have a coal which, though not so good as we should like, yet does efficient work, I think that the Government are justified in the action they have taken up to the present time. I do not think we can accept the motion in its entirety. I think it ought to be amended so as to read that we should give earnest and careful consideration to the suggestions of Dr. Jack. Because, in the first place, the Government will have to consider whether, under the Constitution, they can charge a higher rate for the carriage of Newcastle than for Collie coal; and in the second place we would have to consider whether it would be advisable. The point has not yet been considered. There are other findings which deal with the question of remitting royalties for a period of ten years. To my mind the member for Collie may rest satisfied with the assurance that the Government will try to follow out the policy adopted by the Victorian Government in connection with their coal mines, and will do all we possibly can in a legitimate and honest manner to promote this industry.

On motion by Mr. TROY, debate adjourned.

MOTION—RAILWAY FREIGHTS AND LOCAL INDUSTRIES.

Debate resumed from the 18th July, on Mr. A. J. Wilson's motion "That in the opinion of this House it is desirable to revise the existing railway freights, with a view to promoting the welfare of local industries."

MR. P. J. LYNCH (Mount Leonora): In speaking to this motion, I can only say I appear in the position of a bewildered spectator. When we bear in mind what has been said in evidence given before the Timber Inquiry Board and before the Arbitration Court, the several statements given to the public and the many things written on this subject, and that these appear so full of contradictions, a person desirous of finding out the true position of the timber industry must come to the conclusion that, after all, he has a formidable task before him. I am not here to defend the existing railway rates. I believe that the problem of reducing the railway rates, not only to assist the timber industry but also to encourage other indus-

tries, is one to which the House could very profitably apply itself. I must necessarily direct my remarks to the timber industry, since the mover of the motion occupied nearly all his time in referring to it, although the words used in the motion are in the plural; but before doing so I should like to direct attention to the remark of the member for Collie that it was a matter for congratulation that other timber companies—I presume he meant other companies than the Combine—had at last made up their minds to come forward in a concerted fashion to seek assistance from the State. That reminds me of a character in Dickens. They had almost to be encouraged in the belief that they were labouring under a disability. I believe that character in Dickens was a demagogue, who said: "Before I came amongst you, you did not know you were slaves; now you all know it." This action of the member for Collie savours of an inclination to prompt these companies to come along apart from their own volition. I think that is rather uncalled for, to give any encouragement to companies or corporate bodies to swarm down on this Government for concessions. If they felt the pinch, they would come along spontaneously and would need no encouragement. So the action of the hon. member reveals a condition between himself and these companies that should not exist. [MR. EWING: You quite misunderstand the position.] The timber industry has been inquired into more than any other industry in this State. In fact, it may be because of these repeated inquiries that it is in such a parlous condition at present. That may or may not be the case. At any rate, it has not been for want of effort on the part of previous Governments that the timber industry is not on a sounder basis. As far as the occupants of the Opposition benches are concerned, I am sure they will receive the proposals embodied in the recommendations of the Timber Inquiry Board with that liberality of view to which we lay claim. We are just as anxious to give encouragement to fair employers of labour as members on the Ministerial side of the House. In fact, I believe that the fair employer of labour has more genuine supporters and admirers on the Opposition side of the

House than on the Government side. Therefore the recommendations that come from the Timber Inquiry Board, I believe, will have most liberal consideration from this side of the House. In regard to the effort made before the Arbitration Court to assess the wages of the workers—and this was a means resorted to to put the timber industry on a fair basis—I was rather surprised and somewhat pained to think that Mr. Teesdale Smith, the leading mouthpiece of the Combine, went out of his way to give expression to a very cold-blooded sentiment when he said in his evidence that he was not going to concern himself about considering the families of the men. I think that if Mr. Smith was given a chance he would have seen what a cold-blooded statement that was. I believe that he does not entertain for a moment the notion that the natural resources of this country, its gold resources, or its timber resources, or any other resources within its limits, exist solely for the purpose of providing dividends for foreign or local companies. I believe that the very first call on the natural resources of this country should be to support families according to a decent standard of comfortable existence; and a statement of the kind made before the Arbitration Court certainly does bespeak an unnatural desire—if Mr. Smith fairly represents the feelings of his principals—and an unbecoming anxiety to exploit the natural resources of this country for their purpose and their gain alone. An attempt has been made repeatedly, both in the Press and otherwise, to let the public of this State know that the timber industry is in a languishing condition, that it is going down-hill fast, and that those who have invested their money in it see no hope of a return—in fact, to put it briefly, that the industry is one that is waning. One of two things is happening: either the industry, as the records show, is in a flourishing condition year by year, or those engaged in its exploitation are continuing to put the finished article on the markets of the world at a continuous loss, which is rather improbable. Now, what do the records show? So far from this industry being a languishing one, the records prove otherwise. According to the figures of the statistical branch of the departments of this State, the number

of superficial feet exported in 1903, the first year for which these statistics are available, was 83,000,000; next year, in 1904, it was the same; and in 1905 it was 90,000,000—that is to places beyond Australasia. During the same three years the output from the sawmills of the State of sawn and hewn timber was as follows:—In 1903, 126,000,000 super. feet; in 1904, 143,000,000 super. feet; and in 1905, 137,000,000 super. feet; showing certainly a decline, which is solely accounted for by the fact that the local consumption in this State fell off considerably. The export to the Australasian States, including New Zealand, has been on the up grade—remarkably so. In 1903 it was 7,000,000 super. ft., in 1904 it was 12,000,000 super. ft.; and in 1905, 14,000,000 super. ft. So we see that the foreign or export trade to places beyond Australasia has increased during these three years by 8·3 per cent., and the trade to the Commonwealth and New Zealand by 77·8 per cent. Of course I am not taking into consideration the local consumption, which has been admitted on all hands to be most profitable; but on the particular section of the sale of timber beyond the State the increase has been very encouraging, especially in relation to the Commonwealth, and also, but in a lesser degree, in relation to places outside Australasia, the latter increase being 8·3 per cent. as I have shown. So, notwithstanding what is said to the contrary, the timber industry is not declining so far as the output is concerned, and the only alternative conclusion that can be arrived at is that those engaged in the industry are still pursuing it at a loss. [MR. HAYWARD: So they are.] That remains to be proved later on, and I shall make some attempt on my part to prove it. It does not show the very unsatisfactory condition that the public of this country are being repeatedly and industriously reminded of. It is stated that under the fierce competition of the Eastern States the selling of the produce from this State has become unprofitable; but the Timber Inquiry Board has placed us in possession of facts that show very clearly that, so far as transport charges are concerned, the timber companies in this State have unquestionably the best of the deal, so far as their Eastern competitors are

concerned. In New South Wales, according to the finding of the Timber Inquiry Board, the cost of freight from the mill to the nearest port of shipment is 15s.; and in Queensland, which is considered to be another fierce competitor, the cost is as high as 21s.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Those figures do not deal with hewn timber, but only with sawn timber. The board say themselves that they have no information at all in regard to hewn timber.

MR. LYNCH: Special reference is made to the sawmilling trade. They give also the average cost of freight from the mill to the nearest port of the several companies operating in this State, and it is from 13s. 4d. to 9s. in the case of the Combine, who have been the most persistent section of the timber companies in this State in seeking a reduction in freights from the Government. So we see, as far as the finding of the board is concerned, these companies have nothing to complain of when a comparison is made with the charges in New South Wales and Queensland, the States which are admittedly our fiercest competitors in the export trade. As far as Queensland is concerned, and it has been referred to as the fiercest competitor we have in the timber export trade, and it has been said that unless something happens in the shape of a severe reduction, Queensland will "collar" the trade of the world, there has come into my possession an advertisement from Mr. Pratten, the secretary to the Railway Commissioners in Queensland. Those Commissioners are asking for tenders for 30,000 squared sleepers required for the Roma district, 7 feet long, 9 inches wide, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, delivery to be taken and sleepers paid for as follow:—"In station yards between Dalby and Roma, £10 per 100; on line between above stations, £9 15s. per 100; and traction engine road within 10 miles of Baking Board, 8s. per 100; on traction engine road within 20 miles of Baking Board, £7 10s. per 100." These are the prices offered by the Railway Commissioners of Queensland, and I say they form a more than remarkable contrast with the price paid by the Commissioner here; and the price, I may say, is more or less governed by the rate paid for the class of timber used in this State and exported. The

bewers on the South-West line at the present time are not receiving what was fixed by the arbitration award, 1s. 3d. passed at the stump. That award has long since expired, and they have drifted into a condition that they are cutting much cheaper now. At all events the price paid by the Commissioner of Railways in this State at the present time is as low as £6 17s. 6d., and when we compare that price with the £10 paid for sleepers at Dalby and Roma in Queensland it puzzles any inquirer to think how, after all, Queensland is going to become the fierce competitor of this State which it is supposed to be.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Is that for 7 by 10 by $4\frac{1}{2}$?

MR. LYNCH: Yes; 7 by 10 by $4\frac{1}{2}$. The advertisement is culled from an Eastern paper, and the percentage of increase is enormous. I know the Dalby and Roma district well. There are ironbark ridges there interspersing the country at moderate intervals and comparatively easy to be got at. I mention this to show that we must take the prophecy that is being made on behalf of Queensland, as the fiercest competitor of this State, with a high degree of caution.

MR. A. J. WILSON: That is not a proper comparison, unless you are prepared to show what distances the sleepers have to be carted by bullock teams.

MR. LYNCH: They have given varying prices, according to this advertisement, on the line side £9 15s. between Dalby and Roma, and then they go out 10 miles of Baking Board and the price is £8 per hundred. There is no going behind this as exposing the real condition of things in Queensland, which is supposed to be the fiercest competitor of this State. Now we come to the kernel of the whole trouble, and that is to find out or attempt to find what profit is really being made in this State by the companies operating here. It is, as I said at the outset, a formidable task for any inquirer to find out the true position in regard to this industry, if the contradictory statements made from time to time are to be given any credence. In the first place, we find that the Combine gives its profits, according to the balance-sheet for 1903, as £90,000; yet when Mr. Teesdale Smith was before the Arbitration Court he gave evidence which, if it was not at variance with that balance-

sheet, yet is enough to set any inquirer thinking, after reading it, what is the true position in regard to the industry? The balance-sheet disclosed a profit of £90,750 for the year 1903; and then we have Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Smith, in the Arbitration Court, giving somewhat contradictory versions of how this £90,000 was arrived at. Mr. Teesdale Smith, in giving evidence before the Court, said, in reply to the question, "Do you agree with Mr. Shackleton when he says that—" by the way I myself was cross-examining Mr. Smith at the time, and I asked him "Do you agree with Mr. Shackleton when he sets up a calculation that your profits were £223,000?" Mr. Smith replied, "No. I think he must be mad when he says that, because it is not so. The whole profit is £123,000. That is the total profit for the whole of the world." In reply to a question by the president of the Arbitration Court, Mr. Smith said, "The gross profits are the profits arrived at after allowing for all expenses as far as we are concerned, but not before London debits it with £32,000 for interest." So, you will see that there is £32,000, according to this rendering, deducted in London before the £123,000 is arrived at; that is the gross profit, and which, as I have already said, makes any person puzzled in trying to arrive at the true position of this company as to its profits. [MR. A. J. WILSON interjected.] A balance-sheet is always a beautiful mechanical production upon which farther light can be thrown. Mr. Gardiner says in regard to this:—

The trading account shows a profit of £123,416 12s. 6d. That is the gross profit for the company's dealings all over the world. All the vouchers and particulars are sent from the various branches to London, where the balance-sheet is made up.

So that £123,000 is given as the gross profit, after the admission made by Mr. Teesdale Smith that £32,000 had been deducted previously as interest. Apparently it is not stated where that interest went to, but at 4 per cent. they could pay interest on a very respectable amount with £32,000. However, the Arbitration Court, or those who were there—and I may say I had a share in the inquiry before the Arbitration Court—did not go to the length of finding out exactly how

or why the £123,000 did not reconcile itself with the £90,000 profit. So much for the unsatisfactory description of the true profits of the Combine before the Arbitration Court. With regard to Mr. Brown, who represents the Timber Corporation at Greenbushes, although he painted a rather gloomy picture of the condition of the timber industry of this State when appearing before the Premier, yet his company in England, according to the latest advices, does not seem after all to be in such a sorry plight. I cull the following from the *Timber Trade Journal* of June 2nd. The chairman of this particular company, of which Mr. Brown was the spokesman at the deputation to the Premier, said:—

You will notice that we passed the preference dividend, though we have carried forward more than sufficient to pay it twice over . . . in order to keep our company on a perfectly satisfactory and solid basis. You will be gratified to learn that we are at present in the happy position of having sufficient orders in hand to keep our mills going for the next twelve months at a profit.

At a profit, mark you:—

There is every indication that the improved state of the trade which we have been experiencing during the last few months will continue, and if only we could get somewhat more generous treatment and better working conditions in Australia we should, I think, do very well. There is reason to hope for this, as the Royal Commission has already recommended the reduction of railway freights and wharfage. I, of course, premise that those will not be thrown away by unnecessary cutting of prices.

There you see the position disclosed as much as it can be disclosed by the only individual connected with the company who knows all the ins and outs of it, and who has a thorough grasp of it in all its bearings. There it is disclosed that at least that company which lately approached the Premier is not quite in that sorry position which it was endeavoured to lead the Premier to believe. So much for Mr. Brown; and at the same time I believe that Mr. Brown's company is very much less favourably situated than the Combine is—that is patent on the surface. With regard now to the contradictory statements of the prices of products during the last five years; in the first place, we have Mr. Teesdale Smith stating before the Timber

Inquiry Board, on page 52, as follows :—

I should say that prices in 1900 were, if anything, lower than at present. It was the time the companies were cutting each other's throats, both in the local and export trades.

That is Mr. Smith's statement about the position in 1900. Now we come to Mr. Brown, who must be also regarded as a person of equal authority and veracity as Mr. Teesdale Smith; and this is what he stated at the deputation before the Premier :—

First of all he would compare the conditions that prevailed prior to 1902—[That is just about the time referred to by Mr. Smith]—with those that existed to-day, and it would be at once seen that previous to 1902 there was a very different state of things altogether.

Jarrah was the fashionable wood, especially for paving (it had a very great vogue in London), the selling price was higher, orders were plentiful, and even dividends were not unknown, and the future of the trade seemed bright, and fairly justified the investment of capital.

Those two statements, almost directly contradictory, from two leading and important authorities in the timber industry lead one again to be fairly bewildered as to what is the position of this trade, and what is the price of the products during the time when so many changes have taken place. As far as the inquiry of the Timber Board is concerned, they have gone to considerable pains to discover how prices have been during the last five years; and this is the conclusion that the board has come to on that head; it is found on page 12 of the report :—

The table attached (appendix H) shows the c.i.f. prices received for sleepers of various sizes by Western Australian timber exporting companies during the period from 1900 to 1905, from which it will be seen that there were great fluctuations, but on the whole no serious increase or decrease in prices.

This is a finding of a very important nature by this impartial tribunal as to the cost of the product for the last five years, during which something has happened to justify the reductions which are now sought. Of the two it seems to me that this finding favoured Mr. Brown.

THE PREMIER : The freights are higher now than they were five years ago.

MR. LYNCH : That is so. I will come to that aspect of the case afterwards. At

present we are concerned in finding out if we can how the prices have ranged during the past five years, during which something special has happened to justify a reduction. The appendix H shows in a style peculiar, but incidentally correct, that the price for sleepers delivered c.i.f. in Colombo in 1900 was 5s. 10d. each, in 1901 6s. 2d.; and 1903 7s. The comparison does not extend farther for sleepers of the same kind delivered at the same point, so one must necessarily get, so to speak, a piece argument to show what has taken place in the two years which followed 1903 when sleepers were delivered in South Africa. In 1903 the highest price which obtained in South Africa was 4s. 7½d. In 1904 it ranged from 4s. 7½d. to 5s. 1¼d. In 1905 delivered in the same place it was 4s. 9¼d., or in other words 2d. and a fraction more than in 1903; so that in looking at this collection it is plainly shown that as far as the sleepers that were delivered in Colombo in 1903 were concerned, and those which were delivered in South Africa for the balance of the term of five years, there has been no reduction, but rather there has been much fluctuation, and no increase or decrease in the price. That brings me farther to say, in the face of this finding, that it puzzles one to know the true position. We have here statements of two leading authorities in the industry, and also the statement of an impartial authority on the other hand, showing that so far as their findings are concerned no decrease has taken place. It is very plain to the most casual observer in this State that the Millars' Karri and Jarrah Company since 1902 have been loudest in their complaint against the existing conditions. In fact they have been the only people amongst the timber merchants in this State who have been incessant in giving well-marshalled arguments in favour of reduction. So one is forced to suspect, without inquiry, that they must, taking all into consideration, be much worse situated than other competitors in the trade. Let us try to find out if it be really so. In the first place as far as railway freights are concerned, the Inquiry Board shows very clearly that the rates of the various companies operating in this State run to a scale from 13s. 4d. down to 9s., the rates of the Combine product. In other words,

there is a gradual declination from 54 per cent. down to 8 per cent. in the various companies, or to put it the other way the increase of the various companies ranges from 8 per cent. in the company next to the Combine, the West Australian Jarrah Sawmills Coy., to 54, showing clearly that Millars' Karri and Jarrah Coy., at the bottom of the list, enjoys the great advantage shown by the gradation of 8 per cent. to 54 per cent. as compared with other companies. So much for railway freights alone. Now as to the question of royalties, it is shown also as far as their holdings are concerned that they enjoy an equally advantageous position. The Combine, I believe, were operating between 800,000 and 900,000 acres. First they had the Jarrahdale concession, 250,000 acres, by way of concession for £50. They have the Quindalup lease, 51,000 acres, £75; Karridale, 46,000 acres, £150; Canning concession, 95,000 acres, £380, showing a total acreage for those four properties of 442,000 acres held at a rental or concession value of £655. That is the charge made for those concessions. If these huge concessions were charged for at the rate in existence for other timber leases, they would be paying about £14,000 per annum, showing clearly that as far as the tenure of the property is concerned it stands to the Combine's favour in a marked degree, as indicated by the difference between £650 and £14,000. As to the balance of the holding, I presume they hold it according to the £20 per mile charge. According to the evidence before the Arbitration Court, of Mr. Jobson, who represented the Timber Corporation, the timber from the corporation operating their leases in Greenbushes averaged 3s. 7d. per load of output, whereas in the case of the Combine, taking on the evidence of Mr. Smith £12,000 as the sum total of his rent, it averages 1s. 4½d. per load, showing a remarkable difference between the charges which the Timber Corporation has to pay on the one hand, 3s. 7d., and the charges which the Combine are paying on the other hand, 1s. 4½d. per load, according to their own evidence. As far as the cost of production is concerned the Premier was anxious to find out what was happening in that respect. We find that Mr. Teesdale Smith gave evidence

on this point before the commission. On page 51 he states:—

I give you £2 10s. as my f.o.b. cost, including all charges, cost of management, and everything. When we took over the other companies, the f.o.b. cost was £3 5s., showing a saving of 15s. on f.o.b. cost per load. The cost has been reduced just about 2s. 6d. a load since I gave the cost in the Arbitration Court; whether it will be maintained is another question. I would put it down distinctly that our present f.o.b. cost is £2 10s.

According to this evidence he has effected a reduction of 15s. per load, and according to the inquiry of the Timber Board the cost of the product has not materially altered during the last five years. I do not think there is any need to go far to show that a saving has been effected in the cost of production on the one hand, and as far as the inquiry of the Timber Board is concerned the cost of the product has remained practically the same. We want to know what has happened since, on the evidence given by Mr. Teesdale Smith and the finding of the Inquiry Board, to justify the demand now made on the part of the Combine. There is another feature of the Combine's position which shows it enjoys another advantage over other competitors, and that is in trading with their men, giving stores to them, what he called the trading account. According to the evidence given by Mr. Teesdale Smith before the Arbitration Court, the trading account shows a very gratifying profit indeed. He was asked, "What profit did you make in 1904 on the stores?" and he replied, "On a turnover of £112,000 we made a net profit of £9,940." Practically a net profit of £10,000 on this part of the business alone. That is no mean advantage when we come to consider that the other competitors in the trade, the Timber Corporation for instance, have the traders of Greenbushes right alongside, and the Kirrup Company, the other considerable competitor in the trade, have also stores in the neighbourhood to compete against them, whereas in the case of the Combine in nearly every instance they have their own customers, and they charge practically their own prices. In fact I have seen some prices lately that are fairly startling, which are charged at the present day by the Combine, as much as 1s. 3d. for bacon delivered; and as far as charges are concerned for parcels

and the railway fare by way of going up to the station, which is a small matter, the fares range from 100 to 200 and 300 per cent. higher than the amount charged on the Government railways. I mention the stores account to show that it is sufficient to pay almost 1 per cent. on the legitimate capital value of the company, leaving out altogether, of course, the fictitious value that is attached to the capital value of the company, which I will refer to later on. As a farther instance of the advantage this company enjoys, it is not even paying the same rates of wages as others but it is paying the lowest rate at present obtaining in the industry, and here is my proof of it. The Kirrup Company, on its own admission, is largely dependent on the export trade; and the export trade is set down as being the least profitable portion of the trade. That company depends for its very existence upon the export trade, the small fraction that is disposed of locally being a negligible quantity; and the rates of wages paid by this Kirrup Company are higher in 31 divisions of labour callings on the Kirrup premises. In all these cases the rates of wages are in excess of those obtaining on the Combine property, and in some instances the difference is as high as 2s. per day. The difference ranges from 6d. up to 2s. a day in regard to the men employed in 31 divisions of labour in relation to the Kirrup Company. That is the last advantage I am pointing out which is enjoyed by the Combine over the other competitors in the trade. There is one matter I must not forget to refer to, namely the present condition of timber-hewers. Timber hewers, as members are aware, are at present having a holiday time. I do not know where they are employed. They are at all events scattered all over the country. They would not come to terms with the Combine's proposal to accept 2s. for passing alongside the railway line, and this is the evidence given by Mr. Teesdale Smith before the Timber Board. In question No. 3139. Mr. Atkins asked Mr. Teesdale Smith what were the average earnings of the timber hewers who were working on their own. Mr. Smith replied:—

Take all the hewers in this country: I suppose there are 500. I believe they do not exceed 7s. or 7s. 6d. per day.

It will have to be borne in mind that when Mr. Smith gave this evidence before the Timber Board, the men were getting 2s. 3d. at the stump, under an award. And when we reflect that this same Mr. Teesdale Smith wishes to reduce the hewers to 1s. 9d. in the first instance, and to 1s. 6d. later on according to his public declaration, we may imagine what will then be the position of these men. It is simply summed up thus. If, according to Mr. Teesdale Smith, an excellent authority, they were getting only 7s. 6d. per day working on their own, and if he intends to reduce them by another 9d., the result will be to take off one-third of 7s. 6d., equal to 5s. and on Mr. Smith's own showing, if the men in the hewing industry are reduced to the rate he desires, they will be working in this State at 5s. per day. Members will see how puzzled anyone must be who has followed the mazy track which must be trod in order to find out the true position of this industry and those engaged in it. I now come to the question of the Combine's capital; and here I feel that I am dealing with a subject in which I am not so well versed as I should like to be. But there are sufficient statements on record to warrant my asserting that the present alleged capital of the Combine stands at much too high a figure; and that really forms the essence of all the trouble, for Mr. Teesdale Smith expects the industry to pay on a capital which has never reached this country in cash for actual investment. Mr. Smith has stated in his evidence in the Arbitration Court that before the eight amalgamating companies were brought into one Combine the ordinary shares were written down by £800,000. But he said also that the present capital of the Combine is £1,600,000, a little over £100,000 being held in reserve for the purpose of increasing the capital. Let us consider how it was, when those companies were brought together and fused into one, that he concluded to stop at the limit of £1,700,000. Had he come somewhat lower and cut down the share list to £1,000,000 I venture to say no quarrel would be in existence there to-day. This is really the crux of the whole trouble—the over-capitalisation of the Combine; and over-capitalisation is not

a grievance in this State only, but is general in other countries, and especially in America. Members may have noticed the cabled opinion of President Roosevelt, that legislative enactments must soon be brought to bear on the iniquity of over-capitalisation; and the cablegram states that he referred to the need for legislation in respect of large estates passing at death from one man to another. That is beside the question; but he was emphatic in stating that by legislative enactments the United States would have to reduce within reasonable bounds the capital of the companies operating in that country. I believe that in this case the same trouble is evidenced. The over-capitalisation of the Combine forms the crux of the whole trouble. Let me refer to the items that have already puzzled me. In the first place we find that the Imperial Jarrah Company, formerly controlled by Mr. Yelverton, is one of the amalgamating companies. Its capital is set down at 27,500 ordinary shares. It would certainly appear that the company was not of much account when the amalgamation was brought about. But what was Mr. Teesdale Smith's opinion of the same company when he gave evidence before the Timber Inquiry Board, as appears on page 59 of the report? He says:—

I could not tell at what price the Imperial Jarrah Company was taken over. My valuation was £14,000. I do not know what value I would put on it now. It just depends upon how much timber there is at Quindalup, and the machinery and horses they have there.

There we have Mr. Smith's estimate of the value of this estate at £14,000; and yet the same concern figures in the amalgamation at £27,500, upon which capital it is at the present day sought to pay interest, and on account of which it is sought either to reduce the wages or the railway freights in order to pay on what certainly appears to be a fictitious value given to this estate when the amalgamation into the Combine was brought about. That estate is one portion of the Combine. Another is the M. C. Davies Company, Karridale, which was floated in I think 1894, at £28,000. Certainly the nominal capital was £60,000, but the called-up capital amounted to £28,000 only. Operations were carried on till 1898, when the con-

cern was refloated into a London company, the size of which I do not know. But at all events, the M. C. Davies or Karridale Company now figures in the Combine at the huge value of £229,000. So we see what has taken place with regard to the Imperial Jarrah Company, and that something of a kindred nature has taken place regarding this company—a greatly inflated value is given to the proposition, by changing £28,000 of called-up capital into £229,000 in the Combine. As to Millars' Karri and Jarrah Company, the records in the Supreme Court show that it was formed of 350,000 shares divided into 100,000 cumulative six-per-cent. preference shares of £1 each, fully paid up, and 250,000 ordinary shares of £1 each. The capital was increased later on by £150,000, in 150,000 second or B cumulative preference shares, making in all a nominal capital value of £500,000, at which the company stood before the amalgamation. What happened then? We find the self-same company figuring in the amalgamation at £655,000, or in other words an increase of £155,000 on the figure shown when it was an individual unit operating in the timber areas. I think I have said enough to show that, at all events in the case of these three companies, something shady has happened, which may perhaps have been perfectly lawful according to stock exchange practice; but something has certainly happened which shows that a fictitious value at present attaches to the capital of the Combine, which capital stands in the world's market at £1,600,000, with a certain number of shares held in reserve; and as we find that in the case of at least these three companies some very questionable tactics have been employed to inflate their value, it is not after all extravagant to surmise that something has happened in connection with the balance of the amalgamation, the five other companies. I have stated what has happened to three companies, to show that we must be particularly on our guard against considering this £1,700,000 as anything in the nature of a legitimate capital now seeking a reward from the State. Just an example of how this stock-watering, as it is called in stock-exchange language, is done so ingeniously that none but a keen observer can notice anything wrong or anything questionable. I refer

to the case of the Adelaide Steamship Company, which was formed originally of £10 shares; and the profits were found to be so enormous that it would not do to let the public know of them, otherwise labour troubles, or some other form of pest, would arise to disturb the equanimity of the company. The company, therefore, called in all the £10 shares, tore them up, and issued for each £10 share five shares carrying a face value of £5 each. In other words, the company was appreciated or written up to the extend of 150 per cent. On the original capital it was paying 25 per cent. dividends; but by the process of stock-watering, it reduced the apparent profits to 10 per cent., at which no one could grumble loudly. This shows the tactics adopted; and these tactics have succeeded up to the present in Millars' Karri and Jarrah Company. The £10 shares to which I have referred stand at the present day on the Adelaide stock exchange at £37 10s., and there was not a single shilling subscribed towards the stock-watering; showing the methods employed first to deceive the public, and secondly to enhance the value of the company in order to show ultimately that it was not so very prosperous a concern, and that its operations were not of a nature to excite any undue suspicion in labour bodies. That was the only possible excuse; and this may be one reason that prompted the founders of Millars' Karri and Jarrah Company. So much for stock-watering. I come to the last item—the railways. The present proposal is that the railways of this State should come to the rescue of the timber companies here, by way of a reduction of freights. I may say that I am not in favour of continuing the present rates, which are altogether disproportionate to those of the Eastern States. And although I recognise the need for keeping our railway rates at a proportionate level, in view of the very heavy expenditure here, still I believe it is not necessary to retain them at the high level at which they have hitherto stood. But viewing the proposal as a whole, viewing it in perspective, we have before our eyes that the railway system of this State has a capital value of £9,808,454, whilst the interest on the capital employed, according to the 1905 report, was

£331,382, and the profit shown for the same year was £100,957, a total of £432,329. Those were the profits on the working of the system for the year. According to the latest statements in the Arbitration Court, the Combine made £96,000 profit in 1904. Mr. Teesdale Smith's evidence was to the effect that a cable had come to hand announcing that. By simple proportion it shows that the profits of the Combine in that particular year, though not the identical year I am comparing in regard to the railways, were £576,000. In other words, if the railways of this State were to earn profits on the same basis as the Combine did, they should have earned during that particular year £143,800 more; and the question reduces itself to this: are we justified in farther penalising the railway system of this State that is at present not paying so well as the Combine, according to their own figures, and at the same time in perhaps encouraging the timber companies to indulge in that cut-throat competition foreshadowed by the chairman of the Timber Corporation? We are inclined to look at our railway system from a commercial standpoint, and members on the Government side figure largely in their desire to put that enterprise on a commercial basis. I would ask: Is it fair, considering that the capital invested in our railways is £9,800,000, that the railways should be farther penalised to assist a Combine whose capital is made up in a great degree of fictitious values? I leave the subject in the hands of the House, by saying that it is an unfair and unreasonable proposition, while admitting that it is necessary that some reduction should be made. The last thing to which I desire to draw attention is the statement made by the Combine through their mouthpiece, Mr. Teesdale Smith, when he was urging on the Lands Department of this State some relaxation in the conditions that apply to timber leases. One of the arguments he employed was that the Combine had approximately one million pounds worth of plant, railways and rolling stock, live stock, buildings, and water supply. According to Mr. Smith, there is no more than a million pounds invested by the Combine in the shape of improvements, from a two-inch nail to a locomotive, on the properties of the Combine; and I

think we can rely that in this case the amount was not understated—rather perhaps a little overstated—when the object was to induce Mr. Hopkins, the then Minister for Lands, to adopt some relaxation in the conditions applying to the timber leases at that time. So we get down to bedrock. A Combine with a capital value of one million pounds is paying better than our railway system, yet a movement is made to ask the railway system, through this House, to stand a farther impost or to be farther impoverished in order that the profits of the Combine should be increased. That is an unwarranted proposition. It is worthy of note that Mr. Teesdale Smith also stated in the Press that the relief given by the abolition of the wharfage dues and the reduction on the export trade would give them a quarter of the relief sought from the Arbitration Court. He left out of calculation altogether the benefits that would accrue to his company from dispatching timber to the goldfields or to the metropolis from the stations to the South. That would certainly increase the £5,000 mentioned as representing one-fourth of the relief sought. Mr. Teesdale Smith only mentioned the export trade, which is certainly but a small proportion on which actual benefit would accrue to the Combine. As a last word on this subject, I need only mention that at present the popularity of the timbers of this State is undergoing a passing cloud in the opinion of its users in the distance, and that is largely attributable to the tactics of the operators here in the past. The leader of the Opposition asked a question, and it was shown that the unpopularity of the hardwoods of this State has been due to the very reprehensible methods of some companies here in substituting karri for jarrah, and by that means bringing jarrah into disfavour. So if the timber is undergoing some temporary unpopularity, it is largely attributable to the companies themselves; and the fault in a measure, be it large or small, rests on their own shoulders. Let me say in conclusion that I do not believe that the present prices upon which the competitors in New South Wales and Queensland have tendered are anything representing prices that will be maintained in the future; and I think it is altogether un-

fair to take what, after all, may be the depressed prices offering, though they are the prices that certainly secure the trade from this State, as a factor in deciding the rate of wages to be paid here, or to use them as a lever or a means of bringing pressure to bear in order to get a reduction in our railway rates. The Commissioner of Railways in Queensland cannot get sleepers on anything like the favourable terms the Commissioner of Railways gets them in this State, according to the percentage I have worked out. I am favourable to the recommendations of the Timber Inquiry Board. At the same time I believe that the Combine, who have been loud and clamorous in their attempt to influence the Arbitration Court and this Government for a reduction, enjoy four or five advantages that the other competitors do not enjoy, and these other competitors, from all appearances, would be perfectly satisfied with an adoption of the recommendations of the Timber Inquiry Board, to lead to fair competition in the future and not be a source of encroachment on the avenue of the State at the same time. For my part, I am prepared to support the recommendations of the Inquiry Board, but no farther will I go.

THE PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): The debate on this question has practically resolved itself into a discussion in regard to the position of the timber industry, and I have rarely listened to two speeches which have dealt more exhaustively with the question than those delivered by the member for Forrest the other evening and now by the member who has just sat down. There is not the least doubt in my mind that this question is deserving of the greatest possible consideration at the present time. The Government desire as far as possible to assist the various local industries, more especially the timber industry, as it is in what may be called a very critical position. Last year, this House recognised that it was so, and on a motion by the member for Forrest that a Royal Commission be appointed, the Government of the day decided that a board of inquiry should make inquiries in connection with the industry. It was stated that the industry was languishing then; but the prices realised for the product to-day are not nearly as high as they were then; so,

critical as the position was considered then, it is infinitely more critical at present. It is critical in this sense, that it is not only a question of a reduction of railway freights and the loss that might be entailed, but we have to realise that the industry is now employing something like 4,000 men; and if, as we are assured by the timber owners, the timber mills must be closed down if the rates are not reduced, the position will become serious, with 3,000 or 4,000 men put on to what is practically an overcrowded labour market. It is essential that this question should receive most careful consideration by the Government. If there were avenues of employment open to these men at present, I should say, "Let the mills close down," because I realise that at present one of our best assets is being practically given away in the markets of the world; and I should say, allow the mills to close down now, because I am sure, as the sun rises to-morrow, the time is not far distant when the hardwood timbers of Western Australia will take their place in the markets of the world which should be theirs by virtue of their commercial value. While, on the one hand, we must look at the question from the aspect raised by the member for West Perth (Mr. Illingworth), the Railway Department of this State being the carriers of the State, and while we are desirous of showing a profit on the operations, still I maintain that such profit should not be shown at the expense of any one industry. The member for West Perth has pointed out that, in addition to the working expenses in connection with our railways, we have to find something like £450,000 for interest and sinking fund—and I take it that no member would advocate that the freights should be reduced to such an extent that we should have to dip into the ordinary revenue to provide interest and sinking fund on the railways—at the same time I realise that it is possible to remove some of the anomalies that exist now, more particularly some referred to by the member for Coolgardie in the course of his speech. The member for Forrest, who brought this question forward, practically confined his remarks to how the timber industry was affected by the railway rates; and he certainly brought forward some very interesting com-

parisons in regard to the existing freights in Western Australia and the freights in force in Queensland and other places. Although these instances quoted were actually correct as regards particulars, still the fact that, as far as Queensland is concerned, only 6,182 loads were exported in 1904, out of a total production of 118,823 loads, makes the comparison of very little value. And the fact that the harbour dues on steamers, say 2,500 tons the average size, are approximately 1s. 8d. in Brisbane as against 9d. at Bunbury, where the principal export trade is done, is another matter to be considered. The hon. member, in making a comparison in regard to the freights, added 2s. 6d. wharfage to the freight. He mentioned the fact that in Queensland there are no export charges in regard to timber exported.

MR. A. J. WILSON: That is why I added it here to the railway freights, because there is no wharfage charged there.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member, in dealing with the prices, admitted that they were considerably lower in Queensland than in Western Australia, and no doubt that to a large extent is due to the higher cost of living here. According to his statement, as far as the hewing is concerned the men were paid for 9 x 10 x 5 sleepers 1s. 6d., as against 2s. to 2s. 3d., or a difference per load at the lower rate of something like 10s. There are something like 4,000 men employed in the industry, and, in my opinion, quite 12,000 people are dependent on the timber industry for their living. One hon. member (Mr. Lynch) dealt very exhaustively with the question of a reduction and the position of the timber industry and the companies generally, and he certainly quoted some statements which, on the face of them, appear to be rather contradictory. In regard to Mr. Brown's statement, made in the course of a speech on a deputation when he referred to the fact that his company was in such a very awkward position at the present time, the member (Mr. Lynch) quoted a statement made by Mr. Brown's directors in London, from which I understand they have twelve months' orders in hand at the present time. That is certainly rather contradictory.

MR. A. J. WILSON: He was on the deputation when the report was read.

THE PREMIER: I think I shall refer that question to the gentleman mentioned. In regard to the f.o.b. cost referred to by the member for Leonora, when the commission was suggested, I did not think there was any necessity for an inquiry; and after three or four months it practically has resolved itself into this, that the f.o.b. cost quoted by me in speaking to the motion of the member for Forrest is approximately the same. I then stated that in my opinion the f.o.b. cost at Bunbury would amount to £2 12s. After this very exhaustive inquiry has been made, we find the board report that the f.o.b. cost, including mill cost, railage, wharfage, water carriage, and any charges incidental to placing timber on board ship, is as follows:—Millars' Karri and Jarrah Company Ltd. (average at all the mills), £2 10s.; Western Australia Jarrah Saw Mills Ltd., £2 16s.; Timber Corporation Ltd., £3 4s.; Sexton and Drysdale, £2 12s. 4d.; South-West Timber Hewers' Co-operative Society, £2 17s. 3d., so that the price stated by me then was approximately correct. There is one point in connection with the industry I would like to refer to; that practically the whole of the money we receive for the sale of timber is spent in Western Australia in wages, railway freights, and for produce, money paid to farmers and others interested in supplying the mills with horse fodder and the necessities of life; this being another reason why we should do all we possibly can to keep the industry alive. The agitation for the reduction of freights has not been confined only to the employers, because the Trades and Labour Council, which is representative of a large body of workers, has asked that the recommendations of the Timber Inquiry Board should be given effect to. In addition to that, the timber employees generally of Greenbushes have written to me as follows:—

That in view of the serious falling off in the jarrah export trade owing to the increasing competition in the hardwoods of the Eastern States, whose success is largely due to the increased burden placed on the jarrah industry by the Government of Western Australia in the form of rail and wharfage charges, the Government be urged, in order that the various jarrah producing companies may successfully compete in the world's hardwood markets

without farther reduction in the already low rate of pay of their employees, to give their favourable consideration to the recommendations of the Timber Inquiry Board's report.

So that we see in this case apparently the employers and the employees are at one. The member for Leonora, in the course of his speech, has referred to the fact that according to the evidence given before the board in many instances they were getting higher prices for timber a little time ago than is the case at present. I think I may quote from information supplied to me in this connection in regard to tenders as giving an instance where the prices have considerably dropped since last year. These are actual tenders, and I think it a better basis to go on than the basis that the member referred to in connection with the advertisement calling for prices in Queensland. Paving timbers: In 1903 we were selling paving at £6 10s. per load; in London to-day it is difficult to get £4 10s. per load, cargo lots. In Ceylon in 1903 contracts were secured by the Timber Corporation of Greenbushes at £5 12s. per load for sleepers, and for Ceylon in 1905 a contract for the same class of sleepers was placed in New South Wales at £4 5s. per load; there is a difference of £1 7s. per load. In South Africa the Baxter contract price in 1903 for half a million sleepers was 5s. 1d. per sleeper; last year a contract for the same sized sleepers was obtained by New South Wales at 4s. 5d. per sleeper. At Manila the lowest jarrah quote was £4 18s. 9d., the order was secured by New South Wales at £4 10s.; while for India in January, 1905 for 9ft. 6in. by 10in. by 5in. jarrah sleepers, the quote was 6s. 11d.; New South Wales got an order at 5s. 11d., a reduction of something like 16 per cent. It is thus evident the price of jarrah has gone down considerably. As I stated in my opening remarks, if there were employment available in other ways for those now engaged in the timber industry, I should say let the mills close down for a year or two until we can get the real commercial value for our timber. At present we have forest areas suitable for milling of something like two million acres, and on the present basis of cutting that will mean something like 32 years' supply; so that if we pay due attention to the conservation of our forests there is

every possibility we shall have cutting ahead of us for a good many years. To give some idea of the value of the timber trade to the State I may mention that during the last eleven years timber to the value of £4,600,000 has been exported, and as the member for Forrest remarked, practically the whole of that money has been spent in the State. My colleague the Minister for Railways, who is more intimately connected with the general subject, will refer at a later period to the question from other standpoints than timber. I confine my remarks to the question of the reduction of freights on timber. No other industry in the State at the present time is in such a serious condition as the timber industry. I have already stated, in replying to a deputation, that the Government have realised the necessity for doing something in the direction indicated by the Board of Inquiry's report. We propose to reduce the wharfage which is in force to what it was three years ago; that will mean a reduction of something like £3,000 per annum for our wharfage, but this wharfage rate in most cases is absorbed in the railway revenue. The railways are doing very little to earn that particular money for the simple reason they get 2s. 6d. a load for hauling the timber from the station yard to the wharf, while they will bring the same amount of timber in 15 miles for the same price. So that we can make a reduction on that charge, and still pay the railway authorities good value for the work done in that connection. There were other suggestions as to bush haulage, demurrage charges, storage, and other matters in which no doubt an improvement can be made. In Queensland timber shippers have on more than one occasion arranged for trains to be stopped on the main line and sleepers loaded there. At present we only load our timber at the sidings; so possibly some alteration can be effected in that direction. Possibly some relief can be given there without any cost to the Railway Department. There is a certain amount of red tape that has to be got over before that innovation can be brought about, but I am satisfied that if it is brought about it will mean a considerable reduction in the cost of handling the timber. The other recommendation is that the

proposals of the Inquiry Board should be adopted. The Government intend to give this matter every possible consideration. While we are willing to give relief where it is considered necessary in other industries, we realise that relief is most necessary at present in regard to the timber industry. The Government are prepared to meet not only the wishes of the timber employers and the employees, but at the same time to meet the wishes of the House by giving effect to some of the recommendations of the Timber Inquiry Board.

MR. T. HAYWARD (Wellington): After what has fallen from the Premier I think there is very little more to be said on this question, because I am satisfied that the Government intend to go as far as they can to support the recommendations, especially in regard to items of wharfage and storage. There is also another matter which has not been mentioned, what is called the bush haulage. With regard to what has been said by the member for Leonora, I could give the names of the companies that have been in business and have failed, and have lost thousands of pounds, and I believe at the present time none of the companies in existence are paying dividends or are likely to pay any. As to the Combine being over-capitalised, that argument does not apply to the Timber Corporation at Greenbushes and the Kurrup Company. The manager of the Timber Corporation, when attending the deputation which waited on the Premier, stated that his company had not paid any dividend this year, nor were they likely to pay any. As to orders on hand, I believe there are very few indeed at present, especially in regard to sleepers. In regard to sleepers, when the strike was on the Combine stated that it did not matter much to them for they had no orders, and I do not think they have had any in since. There is one other matter I would like to mention in regard to the member for Leonora. The hon. member said Mr. Smith had stated the average earnings of the sleeper hewers were something like 5s. or 6s. per day.

MR. LYNCH: I said they would reduce them to that.

MR. HAYWARD: I know that good men have been earning £4 per week. The industry is one in which some little

skill is required, and beginners would not earn half of that amount; but men have earned £1 a day.

MR. TAYLOR: Skilled and hard work, and long hours.

MR. HAYWARD: If a man can earn £1 a day, it is not so bad.

MR. LYNCH: I have only taken Mr. Smith's evidence before the Royal Commission.

MR. HAYWARD: I speak from my own knowledge. I have been to one of the mills, and have often heard of men earning over £1 a day. I do not think it is fair to say the employers are going to bring the wages down to 5s. or 6s. a day, or anything like that. There is another matter. It came to my knowledge a few days ago that they are sending a great quantity of very large beams, 12 x 12 and so on, and it is proved that they can cut them by the mill cheaper than paying the usual rate of wages for hewing. The men by striking have lost all this work, and they are not likely to go on at the present time. I am satisfied that the Government intend to do all they possibly can to assist the industry, and therefore I shall not go into the subject as I otherwise should have done.

On motion by MR. EWING, debate adjourned.

BILL—VACCINATION ACT AMENDMENT.

NO COMPELSION.

SECOND READING MOVED.

MR. A. J. WILSON (Forrest), in moving the second reading, said: In introducing this innocent little measure it is not my intention to delay the House more than a few moments, and it is certainly not my intention to traverse the ground which one might be inclined or induced to traverse when dealing with the vaccination laws of our State. Suffice it to say that since the year when the parent Act was placed on the statute-book of this State in 1878, there has been no endeavour to bring our laws in this connection in any degree into keeping with the more modern thought respecting the vaccination laws. The proposals that are embodied in the little measure I have introduced exist in New Zealand at the present time. In that Act is a conscience clause providing for exemption from the

operation of the principal Act of those who are conscientiously of opinion that vaccination would be prejudicial to the child's health. It provides that they may secure a certain certificate which shall exempt them from the ordinary provisions of compulsory vaccination. Not only has this measure been adopted in New Zealand, from which I have copied the measure I am explaining, but it has also been introduced in New South Wales, also in South Australia, and since the year 1898 it has been the law in England itself. In England what is known as the conscience clause was inserted in the Act of 1898, and it was to run for a period of five years, expiring in 1903. There was a great deal of controversy in regard to the wisdom of introducing this innovation in England, and although it was successfully negotiated in the House of Commons it was thrown out in the House of Lords and sent back. The Commons again sent it to the House of Lords, and it was eventually passed through. As I have stated, the conscience clause has been in existence in England since 1898, and the latest and most reliable authorities dealing with its operation speak of it in the following terms:—

The working of the so-called "conscience clause" also has by no means justified the somewhat gloomy forebodings expressed, both in Parliament and elsewhere, at the time of its incorporation in the Act of 1898. On the contrary, its operation has undoubtedly tended to the more harmonious working of the Vaccination Acts, by affording a legal method of relief to such parents and guardians as are prepared to affirm their conscientious belief that the performance of the operation might, in any particular instance, be prejudicial to the health of the child.

That is quite an unbiased and unprejudiced statement as to the effective operation of the clause which I propose to introduce into our statute here as it has been found to work in England. Everybody who has made a study of the question of vaccination knows that it is one of those vexed questions on which doctors differ to an alarming extent. The only thing about which there appears to be any unanimity at all is the admission that vaccination guarantees an immunity or minimises the liability of infection from smallpox. At the same time everybody who is prepared to admit

that is also prepared to admit that it only guarantees such immunity for a period of seven years, and that after a period of seven years the protection which may have existed during that first seven years practically ceases to exist. In those circumstances the utility of the vaccination in itself is to a very large extent minimised, and if people really believe in the principle of vaccination it ought to be necessary to repeat the operation once in every seven years. But we know the wide world over this is not the fact, and consequently it would seem that whilst we think it is a good thing in the earlier stages of our existence, it is not so necessary in the later periods of life. In the Act introduced in South Australia we have a very complete and very comprehensive section, very short and very concise. It provides that—

No parent or other person shall be liable to any penalty under section 21 of "The Vaccination Act, 1882," if within six months from the birth of the child he makes a declaration before a Justice of the Peace, in the form of the Schedule hereto, that he conscientiously believes that vaccination would be prejudicial to the health of the child, and within seven days thereafter delivers to the vaccination officer such declaration.

Section 2 of the South Australian Act contains a provision which seems to me more practical than anything else I have noticed in any Vaccination Act:—

The Governor may, on the breaking out of smallpox in the State, by proclamation render Section 1 inoperative for a specified time in the whole or any portion of the State, and may order persons who have been in contact with a case of small pox to be vaccinated or revaccinated within a specified time.

That would seem to be doing what ought to be done by those who really have faith in the doctrine that this practice secures immunity from infection. I have not inserted a similar clause in this Bill, because such a section does not appear in the New Zealand Act; and as I am one of those who have little confidence in the value or virtue of vaccination, I have not deemed it necessary to copy the section from the South Australian Act. By the Bill, a certificate of exemption shall, within a municipality, be granted by a police magistrate or resident magistrate. In places beyond the limits of a municipal district the application for exemption may be made to, and the certificate

granted by, a justice of the peace. The object of that proviso will be at once apparent—to minimise the inconvenience to the parent or custodian, and to remove a disability from people who are more or less isolated. My strongest claim for the favourable consideration of the House, in order to place this measure on the statute-book, is that in so doing we are only following, though at some distance in the rear, the excellent example set us by other States of the Commonwealth, by New Zealand, by Canada, and by the United Kingdom; and in the circumstances I think we cannot go far wide of the mark when we give this privilege, not to any small section of the community, but to a very large and influential section, consisting of people who believe honestly and conscientiously that in many cases the practice of vaccination is most injurious to the health of their children. And I think we ought to have some regard to the conscientious scruples of these people, in view of the fact that the same principle has been adopted in so many other portions of the globe, without any of the calamities which it was predicted would follow its adoption. I have therefore much pleasure in moving the second reading.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. N. Keenan): I regret that personally I cannot fall in with the views of the member for Forrest. It seems to me that we can reduce the whole matter into a very small compass. If vaccination is a good thing, if it is a preventive, then by all means let it be enforced on every member of the community. Because it is no use vaccination being effected on one, two, or three persons, if a fourth is allowed under any species of excuse to remain unvaccinated. On the other hand, if vaccination is not a preventive, if it is not a good thing, let us face the question properly, and repeal the principal Act, thus leaving the matter optional, so that anyone who likes vaccination can have it. The Bill proposes that those who are prepared to go before a magistrate and make a certain form of declaration to the effect that they have conscientious scruples, shall be exempt. Is not that inviting people to use that form for evasion merely?

MR. BOLTON: Not those who believe in vaccination.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: That I admit. In some cases the declaration might be absolutely genuine; but in many cases it would not be genuine.

MR. BATH: But those who believed in vaccination would have their children vaccinated.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I admit that they would. But let me put the case the hon. member suggests. Suppose he believes in vaccination, and suppose we repeal the principal Act; would that prevent him and those who thought with him from having their children vaccinated? The Bill, therefore, appears to me to be wholly illogical. If we are to arrive at this point, let us arrive at it in an open manner. Let us say that the Vaccination Act is no longer necessary on our statute-book; and when we have taken it off, the hon. member, or any other person, will not be debarred from having himself or his family vaccinated, if he thinks vaccination a good thing. But this Bill is simply an evasion, and instead of meeting the real issue it attempts to gain support by avoiding that issue.

MR. A. J. WILSON: That evasion has been practised in a great many countries.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: In more countries than one, I admit; but is that any reason for adopting it here? If the hon. member has to take refuge in an argument of that kind, he has not much to say for his Bill.

MR. BATH: That is precisely the argument you used in favour of the Second-hand Dealers Bill.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Did I not put before the House the merits of the Bill? [MR. BATH: No.] Then it is very extraordinary indeed that the hon. member allowed the Bill to go through without using every possible effort to oppose it. I submitted that Bill on two grounds: first, that it was the law elsewhere; secondly, that it had merits which warranted its adoption here. And if the second ground was not recognised by the Opposition, it was somewhat extraordinary that they allowed the Bill to pass.

MR. BATH: What about your majority?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: A majority is nothing if the minority is in the right. Majorities are powerful only

when they have right on their side. Of course, such a sentiment does not at present appeal to the Opposition. However, to return to the question before the House, surely the member for Forrest must give us some reason against our leaving the principal Act on the statute-book, before he asks us to vote for this amending Bill. I have not sufficient audacity to give an opinion as to whether vaccination is or is not a success. But until I am convinced that it is not a success, I am not prepared to join with those who would indulge in this form of legislation, or who were prepared to wipe out from our statute-book measures put there only after considerable thought, care, and investigation. I have myself no doubt that vaccination is a preventive; and if it is a preventive, I am determined to secure its benefit by compelling every person, not myself only, to be vaccinated. It is no use at all as a preventive unless it is universal; because even a single member of the community, if he contracts the disease, will spread it all round. True, if vaccination is a preventive he will not be able to do that; but if it is a preventive, why allow him to shirk his duty to the State, and not only to shirk it in his own person, but in the persons of his children whose actions he controls? If the hon. member brought in a Bill simply to repeal the principal Act, and if he supported that Bill with reasons showing that vaccination has not been a success, that it is not a preventive, and if those reasons were sufficient, I should support him; but when he brings in a Bill of this character, which is merely an evasion, and which if adopted would be used undoubtedly by some absolutely *bona fide*, but by a number without any *bona fides* at all, it appears to me that he is asking us to take a dangerous step, and for no reason save that elsewhere those who are behind the anti-vaccination movement have had sufficient influence to enable the measure he now suggests to be placed upon the statute-book.

MR. H. E. BOLTON (North Fremantle): I regret that one of the leading members of the Cabinet has opposed the passage of this amending Bill; because I had hoped that at least the Government would do with this as they did with the application for a Royal Commission on

the Government Printing Office. If the Government will do that, I am thoroughly convinced that this amendment will be carried, because last year and the year before in the previous Parliament, I brought this matter up on the Address-in-Reply, and this year also I mentioned it, and prior to this session I asked several members if they would support me in such an amendment. As a matter of fact, the amendment was introduced in the last Parliament by Mr. Needham, the then member for Fremantle, but owing to the dissolution, it lapsed. The member for Forrest, in explaining the measure, said that anybody who made a study of the matter would agree that it was a necessary measure. I have made a study of the matter, for I was once fined. The cost of my experience was 15s. 6d. I have a conscientious objection to having my children vaccinated; and when I was summoned before the police court for not having one of my children vaccinated, I could have availed myself of one of the sections in the Act by producing a doctor's certificate which would have exempted me from being responsible for having the child vaccinated. I refused to do so. I had always advocated that a conscience clause should be included in the Act; and for that reason I appeared at the court and stated my conscientious objection to vaccination. I may tell the House that the only child in my family that has been vaccinated is the one for which I was fined for not having it vaccinated. The others are not vaccinated. They are past the compulsory age. This one, as I told the magistrate, would not have been vaccinated had I not been a law-maker. Had I not been a law-maker I should have been a law-breaker, and I would rather have gone to gaol than have the child vaccinated, only that my public position demanded that I should set an example in keeping the law. At that time the Act was badly administered. I was fined 1s. and the costs were 14s. 6d. There is an antiquated old gentleman as inspector under the Act who is supposed to call at houses to see that children are vaccinated. He evidently does not know his duty or where it stops, because not only did he exceed his duty because he was insulting when he called, but in addition to the salary he received costs at the court. I think that is wrong

altogether. I am not using this argument in favour of this Bill, but because I believe people should have the right, if they have conscientious scruples, to say that their children shall not be vaccinated. The Attorney General said that no argument had been advanced as to whether vaccination had been a success or not; but the member for Forrest said it was proved beyond all doubt that vaccination only lasts seven years. If it is necessary to have children vaccinated, why is it not compulsory that they should be vaccinated every seven years? I make this statement, that out of the 50 members of this Assembly, not five have been vaccinated each seven years. It shows that if people have a right to say whether they should be vaccinated or not, they do not believe in the efficacy of vaccination. If it only lasts seven years, why should it be necessary to hold the parents liable for the vaccination of their infants when we do not hold them responsible for the vaccination of their children who are advanced beyond the age of seven years? I think one of the arguments against vaccination is this term of seven years. The Attorney General evidently forgot that in the old country and in South Australia a similar clause to this appertains, and that there they have the right, if they have conscientious scruples, to say that they do not want their children vaccinated. It is all very well for the Attorney General to use the old argument that has been advanced so often, that when one takes a contagious disease, it is through the conscientious scruples of the one who first gets the disease. I do not believe in that. I think we would have opposition to that theory from the medical fraternity; but I do believe there are cases where healthy children have been absolutely ruined constitutionally from vaccination, and no member will say there has been no such case. In and out of the State there have been numerous cases; and if there were only a few cases of healthy children being ruined constitutionally through vaccination, it would be justification for this clause. In my opinion, fewer people will avail themselves of this clause than the Attorney General thinks. And is it giving too much privilege to parents to allow them to say that they do not desire their children to be vaccinated? Surely

it is not right to force parents to take such a step. They can evade the Act by sending their children out of the State; and I could have evaded the Act in my case, but I desired to emphasise my objection in the police court, and it cost me 15s. 6d. I will emphasise my objection as long as I have breath in my bony. I do not believe in compulsory vaccination, and if the Government are not prepared to support this amendment, I hope they will allow this to be a non-party question, for I am sure of the result. I took the trouble last year to speak to most of the members in this House, and I am absolutely certain of a majority to support the amendment now introduced by the member for Forrest; also in another place. I felt so keenly on this subject that I spoke to a great many members on it; and there are many who sympathise with the amendment. While they are not going to enter into the question of the success or nonsuccess of vaccination, they do not think it is too much to give the right to parents to say whether their children should be vaccinated or not. Are the Government, if they are not prepared to support this Bill, prepared to go farther and say that once a child is vaccinated, it shall be vaccinated every seven years through life? Surely the success or nonsuccess of vaccination should not apply; but I am prepared to let it apply if the Attorney General wants to introduce the subject, and I am prepared to ask the Government to enforce vaccination every seven years. If they are not prepared to go that far, I hope at least they will allow this Bill to be carried. It is not asking too much. It is not a question that when this antiquated individual, who does not know his duty, knocks at the door you may say, "I do not believe in it," you have to go before a magistrate and say you have conscientious scruples. Few people would do this unless they have these scruples. I would be sorry to think that such an amendment would lead to fraud. Are there people who will declare for the sake of the trouble that they have conscientious scruples? because vaccination can be obtained free. It is not a matter of cost or expense, it is a matter of scruples; people do not believe in it in some instances. If the Government will not

support this amendment let it be a non-party question, and allow members who believe in it, and I know that there are a majority of members in this Chamber who believe in it, to decide the question, and then we have nothing to fear as to the result.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Price): On this question I personally have doubts whether any body of laymen is competent to deal with it. It appears to me this is peculiarly a medical question. If, for instance, any one of us is suffering from a severe illness or sickness, we have no hesitation in taking the advice of the medical man we may call in; but when it comes to a question of the prevention of certain diseases, then every layman in the community thinks he has the right to set himself up as an authority. A member says doctors differ on this question. I suppose doctors do differ on almost any medical question that anyone likes to mention, but I have yet to learn that the consensus of opinion amongst the medical fraternity is not distinctly and emphatically in favour of vaccination. I believe the consensus of medical opinion, not only in Great Britain and Australia but also in Germany, the home of science, is distinctly in favour of vaccination; and as a layman I would not presume to set up my opinion on a technical question against the vast majority of medical men. There is one reason that particularly unfits the Australasian Legislatures for dealing with the question, and that is, fortunately for us, no community in Australia has yet known what it is to suffer from the severe ravages of smallpox. Occasional and isolated cases have happened, but we have never had a determined and bitter epidemic raging amongst us. If we go to Germany where vaccination is enforced most rigidly, not only vaccination at the stage of infancy, but revaccination from time to time.

MR. HORAN: That is caused by the density of the population.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: We find in that country a greater freedom from the ravages of this particular disease than in any other European country. I think evidence of that sort speaks for itself, and I appeal to the House to exercise its proper function, and its proper function is not to express an opinion on a medical question,

but in my humble opinion to be guided by the opinions of men who are competent to express an opinion on this particular question, and whose judgment on this matter is considerably better than ours.

MR. BATH: Which opinion will you take?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will take the consensus of opinion amongst medical men, the vast majority of whom are absolutely in favour of vaccination. For that reason it is my intention to oppose the Bill.

MR. T. WALKER (Kanowna): It is a very strange doctrine to lay down that this House is not competent to deal with a matter of this kind. It is extraordinary. If we are not capable of dealing with a measure of this kind, how comes it we have an Act at all on the subject? How comes it we are capable of amending an Act which this Legislature has passed? We have dealt with it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was passed because the consensus of medical opinion was in its favour. Once the consensus of opinion is against it, then is the time to repeal the Act.

MR. WALKER: Take the statement of the Minister for Works. There was a time when the consensus of medical opinion was that the best way to cure sickness of any kind was to visit the shrine of the saints or sprinkle holy water on them: that was the opinion of medical men in one stage of thought in the progress of humanity. At the time when Dr. Jenner, for instance, either invented or discovered the efficacy of vaccination, what was the outcry or consensus of medical opinion on Dr. Jenner. The whole medical world was against him. He may have been right or he may have been wrong, but he was one man amongst all the medical men, the rest of them being against him. What was the opinion of the medical world when Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood? They reckoned he had gone insane; they treated him as mad. Supposing there had been some great modern philosopher in the Legislature of that time and he had used the argument: "Do not believe this man, do not listen to him; the consensus of medical opinion is against him;" for that is the argument of my honourable friend. But does it

not come with bad grace from the hon. member, for he has in hand one of the most technical of all modern subjects, the sewage question.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: And expert advice.

MR. WALKER: Of course, but he knows when experts are right and other experts are wrong. Here is a layman who knows the habitat and habits of microbes, who has been in office a few weeks and offers his opinion, as standing right amongst the tip-top of the consensus people. He is going to ask us to deal with, I believe, this sewage question. The presumption of the member! We laymen, just think of it! The member for Mt. Margaret to give us a discourse on microbes! We are not to deal forsooth with the question because we are laymen. What are we to do? We are to ask the member's opinion what the consensus of the experts is on every subject with which this House has to deal. It is an absurd position. Let me tell the member he does not know the consensus of the medical opinion on it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: You do.

MR. WALKER: I do. Jestings apart, does he not know that the medical world is very much indeed divided on this subject, and that some of the ablest physicians have criticised the effect of vaccination as a preventive? There are hospitals in London where experiments have been tried on this subject. The amendment brought forward by the member for Forrest is due to the agitation not only of the ordinary people of England, but is due to the championship of some of the leading medical men of England. Does he not know that in *The Lancet*, the leading British medical journal, there have been years of controversy amongst modern medical men upon this subject? It is not a thing which is to be settled by the doctors living among ourselves; it is not a matter of consensus of their opinion; it is not a matter to be settled in that manner. I have a great respect for the knowledge, for the advancement of the Legislature of England. It is, I admit, mostly conservative; but even in a conservative place like the House of Commons, where the general mind is tainted with the old Tory notions that have deep root in English convictions, they have passed a conscience clause. It

is in places like England that the evil effects of vaccination have been most noticed. The agitation has not sprung up from mere sentiment; it does not come from mere whimsicality. It arises from the observed effects of vaccination upon the children of England, and the children, for that matter, of other countries. It is no fancy when it is stated and proved, and must be admitted on the Government side of the House—although I know it is not a party question—that there are people going about now with ruined constitutions, in perpetual ill-health, living a life, so to speak, in death, if that is not a contradiction of terms, owing to vaccination. And now I want to know, if there be any force in the argument that sometimes vaccination is a preventive, why we confine it to smallpox vaccination, vaccine? We know there are contagious diseases just as deadly as is smallpox. Why not have a law, then, to compel us to be vaccinated against plague, for instance, or typhoid, or for other diseases which afflict humanity?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is done against plague.

MR. WALKER: It is not done by law in this form. I question whether the hon. member was vaccinated for plague: if he was, then he has got it yet. It is a serious question, and I know families who would prefer that their children should risk the smallpox rather than risk those other diseases they are likely to get in consequence of being vaccinated. It is a serious thing to undertake the responsibility of putting poison into their children's blood.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Impure lymph.

MR. WALKER: The hon. member speaks of impure lymph. Is there any pure lymph? It is an active poison, a disease at the very best, and there is no medical man in the world who can really judge when the lymph is absolutely pure. For what does it depend on? Lymph is simply the active form, the microscopic form, the basis of that disease, the germ of its existence, microscopic in its character. To know whether that lymph is pure or not you must know whether every germ of that little substance which you put in the child's arm is in itself healthy. How can we get at the genesis of this?

If we take it from the cow, we are not sure that the cow is healthy, or what may happen in communicating that microscopic point of life that is to start the disease in a mild form within one's body. We cannot detect it. I have known instances where the doctor has sworn that he had got pure lymph, believing that he had; but disease has broken out in the child, sores which would not heal have followed as a consequence of vaccination. We cannot test it. Science has not got to that stage yet in which it can examine the genesis and healthfulness of this kind of life.

MR. HUDSON: Cannot the bacteriologist do that?

MR. WALKER: No; bacteriologists, medical men, cannot even tell our diseases.

MR. HUDSON: That is a broader and wider question.

MR. WALKER: Not at all.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think they could tell you what you have got.

MR. WALKER: They cannot even tell the sicknesses and weaknesses or ailments of humanity; and this is a minuter form of life. The pathway open to us in a discussion of this kind is almost infinite, it is immense. Who is to know all about that little creature, that tiny existence, that basic form of life? We cannot. I say it is impossible to tell when lymph is pure or not. But that is not exactly the question. The point is, if men or women believe that this form of vaccination is injurious and likely to ruin the health of their child, to make the life of that child for all future miserable, are we to compel them to immolate the child? Are we to compel them to sacrifice their faith in the child's health, to practically break their hearts over it? There is scarcely a family, I should say, but knows of an instance amongst their near neighbours of a child having been injured by undergoing this operation. Are we, in spite of all that, to compel them? [**MEMBER:** Do you think that Jenner lived in vain?} I do not know that Jenner lived in vain, but I know that some of his vaccine has lived in some people's veins. In my opinion this is a matter which should be left to the consciences of people; or, otherwise, we should be consistent and enforce inoculation for every disease under the sun, in

which case we should be doing nothing but feeding doctors all our lives.

On motion by the TREASURER, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at eleven minutes to 11 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 31st July, 1906.

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THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR MINES AND RAILWAYS: 1, Comparative Statement of Railway Timber Freights in Western Australia and Eastern States.

By the MINISTER FOR WORKS: 1, Return of Moneys expended on the Metropolitan Sewerage Scheme. 2, Plan of Reticalation of the Metropolitan Sewerage Scheme.

By the TREASURER: Report of the Education Department, 1905.

GOLD STEALING, A CORRECTION.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES mentioned that in the typing of Detective Kavanagh's report on gold stealing, an error occurred, the word "ounces" appear-

ing instead of "pounds," after the words "many thousands."

QUESTION—AFGHANS EMPLOYED, WHY.

MR. HOLMAN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that Afghans are employed carting material, stores, etc., also repairing saddles, on Tulloch's section of the rabbit-proof fence? 2, Will the Minister issue immediate instructions that their services are to be dispensed with, and the work given to white men who are available and anxious for the work? 3, Is it his intention to issue general instructions that, under no consideration, are Asiatic aliens to be given employment while white workers are available?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. The transport of fencing material is carried out by Government and contract teams, the owners of the latter being paid at per ton and employing their own drivers, some of whom are Afghans. The latest Government pay-sheets show that two Afghans are on wages, one Zereen has been continuously in employ of the department since 12th January, 1905, the other, Sultan, has been in the employ of the department since 18th March, 1906, engaged on special repairs to saddles. 2 and 3, Owing to the distance from the nearest base to the head of the fence (300 miles from the north coast) it is necessary to employ all available means of transport at Government rates. The foremen in charge have explicit instructions that, wherever possible, white labour only is to be employed.

QUESTION—MINE ACCIDENT, MURRIN.

MR. LYNCH asked the Premier: 1, Was an inquest held on the body of Peter Touhy, who was killed at the Princess Alex mine, Murrin, on 23rd June last? 2, If not, why not?

THE PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, Because, when considering all the circumstances of the case, the Resident Magistrate was of opinion that an inquest was unnecessary.

QUESTION—LABOUR BUREAU, PERTH.

MR. TROY asked the Premier: 1, What is the salary of the correspondence