

given by *May*; when we learn that you, Mr. Speaker, disagree with *May* and with the Constitution Act, I am obliged, out of sheer respect for Parliamentary institutions, to vote against your ruling. Much as my courtesy and respect for you and your position would induce me to vote in support of your ruling, I should be lacking in courage and wanting in my duty if I voted for your ruling in a case of this kind; because we are getting so loose and positively disgraceful in the way we manage public business in this House, we dispense with the Standing Orders just according to the mood of the moment, we are drifting no one knows where, and committing the suicide of this institution of which we are members. If this kind of thing goes on there will be an excuse for abolishing local legislation altogether, because we are not respecting our privileges or acting up to our highest sense of duty, and we are carelessly doing the duty of the country. It is to prevent that I formally and now dissent from the Chair, purely with the view of getting some kind of systematic work and the government of this body by orderly rule and law, and on that account alone and for that purpose, and with no intent to wound you, Sir, I have moved my motion to-night and intend to have a division upon it.

Mr. Speaker: With regard to the motion now before the House, which is one of dissent against my ruling, I ruled that the financial clauses of the Bill were not before the House and that if they were the matter did not come within the scope of Section 67 of the Constitution Act. I desire only to say that if I had felt for one moment that I was in any doubt, or that I was wrong, I should not have given the decision I did, but I felt sure according to my interpretation of the clauses that there was no appropriation, hence I gave my ruling.

Motion (dissent from ruling) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	18
Noes	..	..	..	24
				—
Majority against	..	..	..	6

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Bath	Mr. Swan
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Courley	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Heltmann	Mr. Walker
Mr. Holman	Mr. Ware
Mr. Johnson	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. McDowall	Mr. Troy
Mr. O'Loughlin	(Teller).
Mr. W. Price	

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Jacoby
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Keenan
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Male
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Davies	Mr. Monger
Mr. Draper	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. George	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Gordon	Mr. J. Price
Mr. Gregory	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Layman
Mr. Hayward	(Teller).
Mr. Horan	

Motion thus negatived.

On motion by Mr. Bath debate on second reading of Bill adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 13th October, 1909.

	PAGE
Papers presented	960
Questions: Mines Loan to R. Bertheaux	961
Estate Repurchase, Narna Tarra	961
Tramline project, Lennonville to Boogardie	961
Mall Contract, Albany as a port of call	961
Bill: Permanent Reserves Rededication (No. 2), 12.	961
Coal Mines Regulation Amendment, 22.	977
Motion: Sweating Committee, to adopt recommendations	961
Experimental Farm, Albany, to establish	972
Railway Project, Leonora-Lawlers	981

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Lands: 1, Papers relating to the forfeiture of Homestead

Farm owned by J. Fraser Graham. (Return ordered on motion by Mr. Johnson).
2, Report of the Caves Board for 1908-1909.

By the Premier: Report of the Zoological Gardens and Acclimatisation Committee, 1908-1909.

QUESTION—MINES LOAN TO R. BERTEAUX.

Mr. COLLIER (without notice) asked the Minister for Mines: When will the papers relating to the President Loubet lease be laid on the Table of the House, and has an inquiry yet been held?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: If the hon. member desires, the papers can be presented to-morrow, but I am holding them back for the purpose of adding the report of the investigation by the State Mining Engineer.

QUESTION—ESTATE REPURCHASE, NARRA TARRA.

Mr. UNDERWOOD asked the Minister for Lands: 1. Have the Government purchased the Narra Tarra estate? 2, If so, what amount was paid for it? 3, Who recommended the purchase? 4, What is the acreage of the estate? 5, What acreage of this estate originally passed from the Crown, and what amount was paid per acre to date—(a) as poison lease? (b) third-class land? (c.) second-class land? (d) first-class land? 6, What improvements have been made on the estate? 7, When were the improvements passed and by whom? 8, Was the whole of the estate held in the name of S. L. Burges, if not, who were the other holders?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes. 2, £26,133 16s. 3, The Agricultural Land Purchase Board. 4, 23,758 acres. 5, The whole area. The amounts paid per acre average—(a.) 11d. (b.) 3s. 9d. (c.) 6s. 3d. (d.) 9s. 11d. 6, A homestead, which comprises substantial dwelling house, out buildings, stables, shearing and machinery sheds and drafting yards. 1,000 acres are cleared and under cultivation; 3,000 acres ringbarked; 150 miles fencing; and eight good wells and windmills. 7, By different inspectors

at different dates. S, No. E. Waugh, F. B. Wittenoom, R. E. Bush, F. Moustaka, and Dalgety & Co.

QUESTION—TRAMLINE PROJECT, LENNONVILLE TO BOOGARDIE.

Mr. TROY asked the Minister for Mines: What was the cost of the survey of the proposed tramline from Lennonville to Boogardie?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: £94.

QUESTION—MAIL CONTRACT.

Albany as a port of call.

Mr. W. PRICE asked the Premier: In view of the inconvenience likely to be caused residents of this State, owing to the late arrival of mails from the Eastern States, under the proposed new mail contract between the Commonwealth Government and the Orient Steamship Coy., will the Government consider the advisability of recommending that Albany be made a port of call for the receiving and despatch of mails under the proposed contract?

The PREMIER replied: The suggestion that Albany should be substituted for Fremantle has been made, but it has not been shown that the inconvenience referred to would be obviated.

BILL—PERMANENT RESERVES REDEDICATION (No. 2).

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

MOTION—SWEATING COMMITTEE, TO ADOPT RECOMMENDATIONS.

Mr. TROY (Mount Magnet) moved—

That in the opinion of this House the recommendations contained in the report of the select committee on the alleged existence of sweating in Western Australian industries, as presented on the 4th December, 1906, are deserving of the earnest consideration of the Government.

He said: This was the second occasion on which he had been called upon to ask

that the recommendations of the select committee on the alleged existence of sweating in Western Australian industries should be adopted by the House, and it was with regret that he had to complain regarding the neglect of the Government in not doing something concerning those recommendations. More than 12 months had elapsed, nearly two years in fact, since the first resolution was moved in the House, and although the Government were adequately represented on that select committee—they had three of their members on it, and those members were all in agreement regarding the recommendations—nothing had been done. As a matter of fact the Government had been most neglectful concerning the subject, and the position at the present time with regard to the inspection of factories was infinitely worse than it had been at any time since the Factories Act had become law in the State. The report embodying the recommendations of the select committee was presented to the House on the 4th December, 1906, and the first motion asking for the adoption of the recommendations was moved by himself on the 16th October, 1907. The debate was adjourned on the motion of the Minister for Mines, who desired, possibly, to make some inquiries regarding the manner in which tributes were being conducted, and as to the allegation regarding the amount of sweating in connection with these tributes. The representatives on the select committee were Mr. Eddy, Mr. Veryard, and Mr. Male from the Ministerial side of the House, and Mr. Johnson and himself from the Opposition side of the House. The whole matter was gone into very fully; in fact as fully as the committee were capable of doing, and the committee, who signed the recommendations, were in general agreement regarding the fact that there was a considerable amount of sweating existing in the State, and they urged upon the Government that certain steps should be taken in order to do away with the evil. The committee found that sweating existed to a valent in the State, but that it was growing, and unless steps were taken to prevent that growth many unfortunate peo-

ple would be subjected to conditions which no one in a civilised community should be called upon to bear. The committee found that sweating existed to a greater degree in the clothing trade than in any other industry, and it was pointed out that in some of the largest warehouses and the retail shops in the City, a great majority of the workers employed were submitted to sweating conditions. He, himself, had pointed out that the evil was encouraged by reputable firms, such as Messrs. Foy & Gibson, at which establishment the conditions were such that the committee could only characterise them as sweating. Tradeswomen were being employed there and were earning not more than 10s. a week, and in many cases much less. This was not the case of a few; it was the position in which a large majority of the workers employed by that particular firm found themselves. Did the Government want further proof regarding the existence of sweating of women who had learnt their trade, and who were not able to earn a higher rate of wages than 10s. a week? Did any Minister or any hon. member consider the conditions under which women were compelled to work for 10s. a week were such as should continue to exist? Such conditions should not obtain in a civilised community, and, therefore, the present Parliament should take steps which would prevent these conditions from obtaining further. The select committee had laid down certain recommendations, and if these were adopted the evil conditions existing would be abolished for a time. There was no need to quote the remarks he made when he last addressed the House on the subject; but if hon. members would look up the debate on that occasion they would find that he gave numerous instances where numbers of workers in the State were being sweated. Particularly in the clothing trade it was pointed out that a great majority of the workers were in receipt of sweating wages. He would not refer further to that fact, because it was embodied in the evidence and in the remarks he had made on a previous occasion. So far as sweating was concerned, unfortunately the majority of

the workers who were being sweated were female workers, those who did not or had not at that time come under the jurisdiction of the Factories Act. They numbered nearly 7,000, and they represented a large body who, for want of organisation, were unable to avail themselves of the provisions of the Arbitration Act. Nor had this state of affairs since been rectified, for the same conditions obtained to-day. The Factories Act provided that no building should be deemed a factory unless it accommodated at least six employees. Since there were many small tailoring shops and places where clothing was made up, it was a very easy matter for unscrupulous employers to carry on sweating methods in these places. For the protection of the women and girls employed in such places, the committee had recommended the provision of a wages board similar to those obtaining in Victoria. Nor was the committee alone in this, for many of the witnesses, including several reputable employers, had expressed the opinion that a wages board would suffice to provide decent working conditions for the persons employed in the various industries. In Victoria the system had done a good deal in the way of securing better conditions for the workers. The committee had also found that a system known as "out-working" was responsible for a great deal of sweating. The out-worker was generally a woman compelled to take work from the shops and factories to her home in order to make a livelihood. Sometimes she happened to be a married woman who took the work with the view of making a little extra money for herself. As a result, the pinch of competition was rendered keener, and the rate of wage was cut down. The committee had discovered sad cases of women whose husbands were ill, and of other women who had been deprived of their husbands by death. These women were compelled to take work at a rate which did not permit of earning a decent livelihood. One woman, whose husband was a confirmed consumptive, had been in the practice of taking work to her home, where she sat in the room in which her husband lay. In this instance, of course, the work was

being carried out under most insanitary conditions, and was highly dangerous to the people who had subsequently to handle it. The committee had asked that this out-working system should be abolished or, at least, regulated by the inspector of factories. Another system found to be largely in vogue was the table system; this had obtained throughout the tailoring trade. Under it a number of girls were employed who had just left school; these were put in the charge of one competent worker who sat at the head of the table, while the girls sat round the table. The duty of these girls was to make various portions of one garment. None of them was learning a trade; all she was doing was becoming a specialist in one particular piece of work. These girls, it had been found, were being paid a paltry wage of from 2s. 6d. to 5s. a week. They rarely got an increase. If they asked for an increase they had no chance, for they knew nothing about the trade. As a result, a large number of these workers had been found to be drifting about from one establishment to another, never earning a decent livelihood and never learning a trade. The committee had found that properly qualified tradesmen were being subjected to sweating conditions because of the unfair competition engendered by this table system. Not only was it injurious to the persons employed under it by reason of the small wages paid, and because no trade was being learned, but it was also injurious to the qualified tradesman who had to enter into competition with that particular system. Furthermore, the people who bought the garments were deceived, because they were paying for a good article whereas an article made under such conditions was anything but good. The committee had asked that this table system should be abolished. In this respect the committee's findings had been upheld by the president of the Arbitration Court, Mr. Justice Burnside, who, in giving an award in the latest tailoring dispute, had said that the table system must go. In furtherance of this His Honour had provided for a system of indentured apprenticeships. Owing, however, to Messrs. Freize & Company's action against that

ruling the award had been upset by the Full Court, which held that the Arbitration Court had exceeded its jurisdiction in making regulations regarding apprenticeships. Again, in this connection, the committee had found the need for apprenticeship and had concluded that the time was coming when there would be no competent tradesmen in the State, because owing to this table system, and to the methods adopted by employers to get their work done cheaply no opportunities were being afforded for learning a trade. No apprentices were being brought on, and the result was that very soon there would be a dearth of competent workmen in the various industries. In the interests of all concerned, it was necessary to arrange for a system of apprenticeships. He desired to say that the Registrar of Friendly Societies had made some very pertinent remarks in his last report as to the lack of apprentices. The registrar had devoted four or five pages of his report to this subject, and had urged on Parliament the necessity of doing something towards securing apprenticeships if we were to have competent workmen in the State in the future. The registrar had said—

"In my report for 1907 I referred to the new provisions inserted in recent awards by the Court of Arbitration having for their object the regulation and encouragement of apprenticeship in the coachbuilding, tailoring, and bookbinding industries. The leading principles embodied in these awards were:—The limitation of the number of apprentices in proportion to the number of journeymen, and the providing for periodical tests or examinations, to ensure that apprentices are being properly taught their trade."

The registrar had gone on to point out that the president of the Arbitration Court in delivering the first award of the nature had said—

"It will be observed that we have made a departure by providing for apprentices. I think that if we are to have a succession of good skilled tradesmen in this business, or in any trade, it is necessary that the boys should be ap-

prenticed and properly learn their trade."

Unfortunately, owing to the court's award having been upset by the Full Court, that provision would now be inoperative so far as awards were concerned in these various industries. Mr. Justice McMillan, during the time the appeal was being heard, had said—

"It may be that the award is a very fair and reasonable one, and if the Arbitration Court had any power to say what ought to be done, it may be in the interests of the tailoring trade and in the interests of the public at large. There is a good deal in it with which I sympathise, but it seems to me that these matters upon which the Court is dealing were not matters within their jurisdiction at all. They were matters which, if they are to be dealt with, must be dealt with by the Legislature, and not by a tribunal which sits simply as a court to deal with matters which are properly brought before it."

The Minister for Mines: What was that appeal about?

Mr. TROY: It was an appeal by Mr. Freize, a master tailor, against the award of the Arbitration Court in regard to the system of indentured apprenticeships. Mr. Freize had appealed, with the result that the appeal was upheld, and the judges had pointed out that the Legislature had a duty to attend to in providing something of the kind. The Registrar had gone on to report what had been done in New Zealand under the arbitration laws and what had been done in other countries, particularly in America. He had pointed out that in America the chief of the bureau of Statistics of Labour in Massachusetts had published in 1906 a report on the apprenticeship system in America in which the following statements had appeared:—

"Up to the present day the need of apprentices has not been felt to any apparent extent, but now on all sides is heard the statement that skilled labour is difficult to obtain, and the introduction of laws and resolutions in State Legislatures looking toward a technical or trade education for the young persons who are growing up in our midst indicates a desire to return to

old conditions, varied according to the differences in trade life as it is to-day." Commenting on that the registrar had said—

"It would certainly appear that the public has been a long time in discovering that the only good workman is the one who has learned his trade and learned it thoroughly; that only the regularly trained artisan is the one to be relied upon; and that few practical men of the present day will deny that there are advantages in apprenticeship."

The report further pointed out that in America the States recognised the necessity for arranging a system of indentured apprenticeships, because the industrial life of the States was at stake owing to the fact that there was a dearth of skilled workmen. The same obtained here and since the Arbitration Court had not the power to move in this regard, it was the duty of Parliament to see that something was done in connection with it. If we were to have competent tradesmen in the State we must give them an opportunity of learning the trade thoroughly; otherwise the State must go backward. In concluding his report the Registrar of Friendly Societies said—

"It is clear that unless apprenticeship is made compulsory by statute it will not become general."

The Premier: You would limit the number of apprentices.

Mr. TROY: After having the fullest opportunity for inquiry, the Arbitration Court had laid down a system which was deemed satisfactory, and the Government could not do better than follow what the court had laid down in making its award.

The Premier: The great trouble in the bootmaking trade is the number of apprentices allowed in Victoria as against New South Wales.

Mr. TROY: We need not be guided by either New South Wales or Victoria. The first thing to do was to recognise the necessity for such a system. It had not been recognised so far, and there was no provision for the system, though all the authorities went to show that the absence of such a system was detrimental to the State. Therefore, the Government and

Parliament should take action with a view to having a system of indentured apprenticeships arranged in those industries which could not otherwise be provided for by the Arbitration Court or some industrial law. The various decisions given showed that the matter could not be fully arranged under the Arbitration Court or some industrial law. The Registrar of Friendly Societies in concluding his report said—

"There is no question but that a sufficient supply of skilled workers cannot be maintained in any community unless young workers are apprenticed and are made to serve for a number of years and further required to obtain a technical education connected with their calling in a technical or other night-school. . . . At present the Court of Arbitration has to treat all the members of a trade union who are governed by any particular award, except those that are deemed incompetent through some disability, as qualified tradesmen and entitled to the minimum wage. The recent judgment of the Full Court in the Freize case shows that as the law stands at present the court in this State has no power to deal effectively with the question of apprentices and by so doing protect the youths and girls who are employed in the various industries."

That was a report of an officer of the Government whose duty it was to inquire into such matters. The final remarks of the registrar were full of meaning because it was the youth and girls of the State who were being sweated, and in large numbers. Though efforts were being made to alleviate the conditions in other industries of people well able to look after themselves, no consideration had been given towards alleviating the conditions in these trades of those who were being sweated to a large degree. The tributing conditions in the various mines also came under the notice of the select committee on Sweating, and when the Minister for Mines secured the adjournment of the debate on the last occasion that matter was before the Parliament, it was understood the Minister intended to make some inquiry with regard

to the conditions of tributing on the mines. It was on that occasion that the Minister, after his attention had been drawn to the disgraceful condition of affairs in connection with the sweating of tributers, made the remark "Had I been in your place, I would have taken action"; but after two years the Minister was apparently taking no action even now.

The Minister for Mines: I did not find the conditions as they were represented to be.

Mr. TROY: Did the Minister make personal inquiry?

The Minister for Mines: No.

Mr. TROY: The Minister was doubting the evidence given before the committee, though it was proved up to the hilt that the tributing conditions were a disgrace to the mining laws, and that the people engaged in the tributes were being sweated.

The Minister for Mines: The report does not say so.

Mr. TROY: The report did say so, and if the report of the committee embracing three members from the Government side, was not to be believed the sooner select committees were abolished the better. For the benefit of the Minister for Mines he would read the remarks he (Mr. Troy) had made in dealing with this subject two years ago. [Extract read.] This tributing system was what the Minister for Mines told the Prospectors' Conference he did not desire to interfere with. The Minister in replying to the Prospectors' Conference said—

"The Minister considers that the question of imposing conditions regarding tributing should be approached very carefully, and that the arrangement of tributes should as far as possible, be a matter of mutual arrangement between the parties concerned."

The committee found at Kalgoorlie there were a number of workers who could not secure employment, and as a result were compelled to take tributes. Their unfortunate position was taken advantage of by people who held leases while not fulfilling the labour conditions. They compelled these tributers to take the work at £2 per week instead of £3 10s. The

tributers were sweated in order to secure a living wage, while, at the same time they fulfilled the labour conditions for the leases. They had to take these tributes because there was an excess of supply on the labour market, they had no option in the matter, yet the Minister for Mines was still desirous of leaving these unfortunate persons to the tender mercies of those holding leases in the district. At the Prospectors' Conference the Minister went on also to say—

"It will be remembered in Victoria legislative action was taken to regulate tributes, with the result that the miners as a whole took strong exception to the interference and the provisions were abandoned. The Minister will, however, give consideration to the preparation of a sample tribute agreement embodying the principal points that should be clearly defined in such agreements."

The Committee made recommendations in this respect, which were in the report brought before the House. The Minister should take some action for if he were desirous of seeing to the wellbeing of a large number of people engaged in mining pursuits he would see that conditions were provided by which they would not be subjected to the treatment they had received in the past in tributing from the various companies on the Eastern Goldfields generally. In regard to Government contracts, the committee found that sweating conditions were allowed. On a previous occasion he had given instances of employers in the State who had taken contracts to provide the railway and police uniforms, and although they had a fair rate from the Government they were carrying on their business and making the uniforms under conditions which could not be characterised by any other word than sweating. On that occasion the Premier had interjected that such a condition of affairs did not obtain then. Little by little the contract price for these uniforms had been cut down, and if they were so low as to allow sweating conditions at the time of the report referred to, and the price was lower now, it could not be expected that the conditions were better now

than they were then. If the Government wanted to prevent sweating they should deal only with reputable employers who would give good conditions, and they should also see that the contracts contained a prescribed rate of wages, and that the rate recognised by the particular union which looked after the interests of the workers employed. That could easily be done, and if so there would be no possibility of sweating in connection with Government contracts, and the Government in power for the time being would alone be held responsible. In regard to Chinese competition, the committee found that there was an interference with the white labour, particularly in regard to the manufacture of furniture. Although the Factories Act provided that all Chinese furniture must be stamped before being sold, we found that this provision had no effect whatever in securing the desired result. The Factories Act set out that Chinese should not be allowed to work in the factories longer than certain hours, the clause being as follows:—

"No person of the Chinese or other Asiatic race shall be employed in any factory for longer hours than women may be employed therein under this Act; nor shall he be employed before 8 o'clock in the morning nor after 5 o'clock in the evening."

That held good, for it was the law of the country, but later on he would show how it was being carried out. It really could not be carried out when there was no one responsible for seeing that the law was obeyed. The Chinese succeeded in the furniture trade because they worked longer hours and paid lower wages. Mr. Locke, a large furniture manufacturer at Fremantle, told the committee he could compete with any firm in any of the States: he was not afraid of competition from the Eastern States, but he could not compete with the Chinese who paid lower wages and used inferior material. A great deal of Chinese furniture was being sold here, and allegedly by members of Parliament—not members of this Chamber—in their warehouses. The furniture was made under most insanitary conditions, and under what would be sweating wages if applied to white labour.

With regard to the stamping of furniture, that law was easily evaded for the furniture only needed to be stamped before the material was sold. In the Chinese factories articles of furniture were exposed for sale, but that furniture was not finished off for it was wanting a knob or a lock or a lattice. Consequently at that stage it was not stamped; but immediately after it had been sold, without being stamped, the work could be completed by some shop outside a Chinese shop and thus the law was evaded. We found that the provision was inoperative because it could be so easily evaded, and we demanded that there should be greater inspection in regard to Chinese manufactories, and that no article should be exposed for sale unless it was stamped as being made by Chinese labour. All knew from experience that Chinese would evade even the strictest regulations. They did it in every case, but as there was no inspection here worth speaking of, and as the regulation was easily evaded, the committee thought that in order to help the white manufacturer there must be stricter supervision. We could not appeal to the patriotism of our own citizens, even of those representing the people in Parliament, because it was found that some of the latter had been selling and buying Chinese-made furniture. Now, as to the question of administration, and first as to the sanitary condition of work rooms. The report of the committee stated—

"While the general conditions of the factories and work rooms are fairly satisfactory, and many firms deserve the compliments of the committee on the manner in which they are kept, there are some points which there is a tendency to overlook. Special attention is drawn to the absolute necessity for greater privacy in the arrangements for retiring rooms for females. Your committee are also of opinion that provision should in all cases be made for lunch being taken away from the workroom."

We found that besides a number of females being kept in a room all day working they were also compelled to eat their lunch there; with the result that they had

to submit to most insanitary conditions even during their luncheon hour. We found that in one large shop, doing a big business, the air provided in the room was pumped up from the back yard in which there was a stable, and we were assured that the conditions were quite sanitary and the air pure; also that there had been no sickness up to date. Any reasonable person must admit that it was unhealthy to have meals where one had been working all day. In this House we adjourned at the dinner hour because we did not consider it healthy to have meals in the Chamber.

Mr. Foulkes: We would not be able to eat them in peace here.

Mr. TROY: The only objectionable character about might be the member for Claremont, but there was sufficient power here to prevent his interference. The only possible place for the women to get their meals in, other than the work room, was in the parks, and in many cases the parks were too far off. It was only a reasonable thing that in regard to the shops and factories there should be a room where the employees could retire to eat their meals in comfort and under fair conditions. We found that such a place did not exist in the City generally. No Parliament was doing its duty if it allowed that sort of thing to continue. In conclusion he would say a few words as to the administration of the Shops and Factories Act. At the time the committee were sitting, there was a Chief Inspector of Factories, three assistants, and a lady inspector; but even then there was not sufficient supervision nor was there the power to prevent people being worked and boarded under insanitary conditions, and subjected to sweating rates of pay. The position had not been improved by the amalgamation of the health and factories departments. The condition must be worse, for there was no chief inspector to-day while at the time the committee sat there was an efficient one who saw to the bettering of conditions. So far as the Factories Act was concerned there was no inspection worth mentioning, and the Act itself was as dead as Julius Cæsar. We had no inspector now, and the work was put in the hands of the health

inspectors whose other duties left them very little time to attend to the factories. Those inspectors were consequently unable to safeguard the interests of the workers engaged in the shops in the metropolitan area and other parts. The Chief Inspector was compelled to leave his position on account of the unsympathetic attitude of the Government. Since then the factories and health departments had been amalgamated, and the latter was alleged to be doing the work previously done by the factories inspectors. The committee asked for a lady inspector to be appointed. There had been one previously, but at the time the committee sat the position was vacant. Despite the fact that there were thousands of women and girls employed in the shops in the City, there was now not even a woman inspector who could look after their interests. There were many things which women folk could not tell men, and it was essential that a lady inspector should be appointed. A health officer was not the man to make these inspections, and particularly did this remark apply to the goldfields districts, because up there health officers were the servants of those whose premises they were compelled to inspect. In the report of the department it was claimed that there had been made more inspections of factories last year than during the previous one. Inspections by whom? By the health inspectors who were elected and appointed by the very people whose premises they had to inspect. Did any reasonable man think there would be a fair inspection, or that those men would take the trouble to report adversely when they had to report in such a manner against their own employers. It was unreasonable to expect them to do so. There was a Factories Act for looking after the interests of the people in industrial establishments, but the administration of that Act was a disgrace to the Government and Parliament. There was no administration, no regulation, no inspection at the present time worth speaking about. This condition did not exist when there was a competent staff and there was certainly not one to-day. It could be said

without fear of contradiction, that the conditions to-day with regard to the wages paid were worse than they had ever been previously, or certainly during the past twelve years, and it was a disgrace to the Government to allow this kind of thing to continue. The Government had two years in which to take action; if action had been taken, it had been in an opposite direction. The Government had discharged the chief inspector and they had taken away any protection that these people might have had. That was the only thing the Government had done with regard to the factory laws of the State. The time had arrived when Parliament should speak in no uncertain voice and demand that the Government should do something to secure better conditions for the people employed under such bad circumstances in our shops and factories and in various industries. If the Chamber of Mines wanted anything done, how quickly did the Minister for Mines respond and seek a conference or receive a deputation. If the Chamber of Manufactures complained, how quick were the Government to lend an ear to that complaint; if any person who was a large employer in the State complained, he could easily get his complaint rectified, but here were thousands of our people in the State, boys and girls just left school, who were not getting a fair deal, and who had to submit to the worst conditions—conditions which had been proved to exist by a select committee appointed by the House and largely representative of the Ministerial side. This position should not be allowed to obtain any longer. We had a duty to perform to these people and that duty was to see that the recommendations of the select committee were given effect to.

Mr. Jacoby: You mean the last part of the report.

Mr. TROY: Yes, the last part of it. It had been said that the evidence was not printed and letters had been published in the newspapers charging the select committee with being sympathetic towards those employers of labour who were responsible for the sweating conditions. When the matter was previously

before the House in 1907 it was made very clear why the evidence was not printed. The evidence was not printed because several witnesses made accusations which could not be proved, and although those accusations were made before the select committee, it was found on the advice of the Solicitor General and the Attorney General that protection could not be afforded to those people who made them. It was found that if the evidence was printed and made known to the country, and an action were taken against the witnesses making the serious allegations, they could have been prosecuted for criminal libel; and it was also at the request of the witnesses themselves that the committee determined not to print the evidence. Unfortunately none of those witnesses had come forward and given the reasons why the evidence was not printed. Nothing would have pleased the committee better than to have secured the printing of the evidence and to have given to the country, and to the House, the names of all the witnesses, all the employers, and particularly the names of that disreputable class of employer who had been guilty of continually sweating employees. Nothing would have given him (Mr. Troy) greater satisfaction than to have been allowed to circulate throughout the State the medical evidence with regard to the conditions obtaining in our various factories and industries, because if that had been published it would have compelled such urgent attention on the part of the Government that it would not have been necessary to move the motion a second time for the taking into consideration of the select committee's report. Because of the reasons which had been given, and because the committee had promised protection to the witnesses who had given evidence and who were afraid if their names were known they would be black-balled—and they would certainly have been black-balled because it was known that such a thing was done—the committee resolved to protect these witnesses, and promised that publicity would not be given to their names and statements. The evidence was available to hon. members and if perused would show that a condition of affairs

existed in the State at that time which demanded urgent attention—and existing at the present time, still demanded urgent attention. In concluding his remarks he desired to ask the Government not to adjourn the debate on the motion. The Government had two years to think the matter over, and those two years had been years of neglect. In that time the position had become worse and there were thousands of our citizens at the present time working and living under the worst possible conditions; it was, therefore the duty of hon. members to ask that Parliament should adopt the recommendations of the select committee and provide means for better administration and better legislation which would enable the unfortunate workers to secure a rate of wage which would be in keeping with their labour, and which would have the effect generally of uplifting the conditions of a large number of people in the State. An appeal to the House should not be in vain, because hon. members, no matter what their opinions might be, could not for one moment permit the position of affairs which had been proved to be existing, to continue. We had more than a personal duty in this respect to perform, and therefore hon. members should remember this, and take action, and see that the Government adopted the recommendation so as to improve the conditions of a large number of workers in the State.

The PREMIER (*Hon. N. J. Moore*): The hon. member for Mount Magnet had asked that this matter should not be postponed. As far as the Government were concerned it was not proposed to offer any objection to the motion, but the hon. member should be reminded that while he might be in earnest in connection with this matter, and he had undoubtedly gone to a considerable amount of trouble to make himself acquainted with the conditions of the various industries, at the same time he should get out of the habit of claiming all the virtues for his side of the House. There was a certain amount of human nature in the breasts of the members on the treasury bench, and it would be admitted they had given evidence on several occasions that their sympathies were not only with the

bodies the hon. member had referred to, the Chamber of Mines and others, but that they were prepared to do justice to all classes of the community. The hon. member laid stress on the fact that a majority of the members of the select committee were chosen from the Government side of the House. As a matter of fact the members were pretty equally divided, and in dealing with a matter of this kind, surely it was not necessary to make it a party question. There were four members on that select committee—Mr. Troy was chairman, Mr. Veryard, Mr. Eddy, and Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Troy: You made it a party question.

The PREMIER: How was that?

Mr. Troy: You took Mr. Ware off the committee and put Mr. Male on.

The PREMIER: Mr. Male's name is not in this report.

Mr. Taylor: You gave your casting vote in favour of Mr. Male.

The PREMIER: In connection with the matters which the hon. member had brought under notice he (the Premier) agreed to a great extent with what had been said, more especially with regard to the question of branding furniture; but one could go almost a step further and put a tag on vegetables, because we found that many of those people who objected strongly to Chinese furniture consumed a fair amount of vegetables grown by Chinese. Personally speaking he went further and never allowed Chinese vegetables to be consumed in his house. Some of the members of the Government, in a private capacity, had endeavoured to make investigations with regard to the question of Chinese labour having been informed that if they made a tour during the late hours of the evening, Chinese would be found working at the furniture trade in different parts of the City. The Premier duly sallied forth supported by one member of the Cabinet. Wearing slouch hats and big coats and sticks, they were prepared to investigate the matter and to find Chinese making furniture. What they found however was a number of Chinese playing fan-tan and other games, and the Chinese were very anxious to initiate the visitors into

the mysteries of them. However, information had reached the Government that there was a good deal of this work going on, but as far as the investigations were concerned, his colleague and he were not successful in unearthing anything. The hon. member had complained that thousands of our fellow citizens were living in the worst possible conditions. That statement seemed to be somewhat contradictory when compared with one of the clauses in the report of the select committee, which stated—

“As a main result of their investigations, your committee have pleasure in reporting that the existence of sweating—so far as their opportunities have enabled them to discover—does not exist to the alarming extent that was commonly believed. The allegations which gave rise to this enquiry were in some instances based on a misconception of one or two circumstances, which admit of a different explanation. For example, the small earnings of out-workers in the clothing industry are due to the fact that many women take work to their homes, not from necessity, but in order to supplement the already sufficient incomes of their breadwinners. Being already well provided with necessities, they are content with small remuneration for their spare time, in order to supply themselves with objects of luxury or refinement.”

So that with all due respect to the hon. member, he had been guilty of some slight exaggeration in saying that thousands of our citizens were living under these very unfortunate conditions. The report had also pointed out that the price paid per dozen for making shirts and other articles appeared far more reasonable when it was remembered that those articles were in a stage of advancement when handed to the out-worker, and were by no means completed when returned. He was not going to argue against the report, because he recognised that the gentlemen serving on the committee had been anxious to ascertain, as far as possible, the true conditions in the City. He could not see that it would be of any advantage to them to exaggerate; as a matter of

fact the report was reasonable, and he maintained that the Government had taken steps to carry out some of the recommendations.

Mr. Johnson: In what way?

The PREMIER: The first recommendation made was to the effect that the staff should comprise at least three male and one female inspector, together with one clerk. It could be maintained that by the amalgamation of the two departments due provision had been made for all inspection and clerical work, and also that the duplication of inspection had been prevented, with the result that economy had been secured. It had been pointed out that there was no female inspector in the service at the present time; he would say that the Government had no objection to that appointment being made. He realised that, as the hon. member had pointed out, there were occasions when employees would be more likely to make a confidant of a lady inspector than of a male official.

Mr. Osborn: Not if it were a lady she was inspecting.

The PREMIER: Personally he would have no objection to a lady inspector of members of Parliament. The next recommendation was to the effect that all matters affecting the factories and requiring attention under the Health Act should be left in the hands of the factory inspectors, thus preventing the duplication of inspection and effecting economy. He understood that these records were now provided and were exhibited in a conspicuous place in each factory in accordance with the Early Closing Act.

Mr. Angwin: They were entered up in a record book.

The PREMIER: Was not that book available for factory inspectors, or anybody else?

Mr. Angwin: No; it was available only to the factory inspector.

Mr. Troy: But thousands do not come under the Act at all, for the reason that they are in shops and places employing less than six hands.

The PREMIER: But surely the hon. member in his remarks had alluded to the larger factories as well. Less than six

hands seemed a very small number to have incorporated as a factory. A further recommendation was that the powers of factory inspectors should be enlarged to enable them to see that the awards of the Arbitration Court were observed. If that were to be carried out it would be necessary to give the factory inspector much greater power than he had at the present time; and at the same time such a course would create rather an expensive precedent. It would mean that the Government would have to prosecute in all cases. At the present time this was practically left in the hands of the employees. He was not aware that the employees had declined to take the necessary steps to bring before the Arbitration Court any breaches of the awards. At all events to carry out this recommendation it would be necessary first to secure an amendment of the Arbitration Act, and also of the Factories Act, after which it might be practicable to give the inspectors power to enter in and inspect. As hon. members were aware, a Commonwealth proposal had been made to secure uniform legislation so far as wages boards were concerned. He had been rather surprised on seeing in a recent issue of a newspaper news from Adelaide to the effect that the workers there were protesting against the wages board, and indicating that they preferred the Arbitration Court.

Mr. Bath: That was a motion carried at the annual conference of the labour organisations.

The PREMIER: He had been curious to know the reason for the carrying of such a motion. As hon. members were aware he and his colleagues, at the recent Conference, had indicated that they were prepared to adopt legislation similar to that existing in the Eastern States, in order that if the proposal were carried into effect for an Interstate Commission, that Commission might have referred to them any questions which might arise in respect to differential treatment meted out to the employees in the various States. In New South Wales it had been contended that in Victoria there was a much larger number of apprentices employed than was the case in New South Wales.

Mr. Johnson: That is accounted for by the greater number of manufactories there in existence.

The PREMIER: Apparently that was not so; for it had been said to be due to the percentage of apprentices to adults varying. Thus whereas in New South Wales the apprentices were in the proportion of, say, three to twelve tradesmen, in Victoria there were almost as many apprentices as tradesmen employed. Because of this it had been argued that they had secured all the boot trade, while on the other hand, the Victorian people had declared that in New South Wales a much larger number of women employees were engaged, with the result that that State had an advantage in that respect. With the exception of Tasmania, all the Eastern States had wages boards, while Western Australia had the Arbitration Court. The Premier of Tasmania had undertaken to introduce similar legislation in order to place the whole of the various States on the same lines in this respect, so that in the case of varying conditions an appeal might be made to the Interstate Commission. A Bill providing for this was now in the Senate, and he had no doubt that it would become law. He did not wish to speak at any great length on the matter. Probably the Minister for Mines would have something to say in respect to the tributing of mines. In the meantime the Government did not wish to offer any real objection to the motion.

Mr. Bath: Well, let it go on the voices.
Question put and passed.

MOTION — EXPERIMENTAL FARM ALBANY, TO ESTABLISH.

Mr. W. PRICE (Albany) moved—

That in the opinion of this House an experimental farm should be established in the Albany district for the purpose of determining the most profitable use the present vacant lands in that district may be put to.

Any proposition calculated to develop the agricultural industry ought to receive every consideration in the House. Day after people were being assisted on the land, and the Legislature was doing all possible to make the agricultural indus-

try successful. The State had now reached a forward stage in its agricultural development; a stage where the possibility of its becoming an export State on a large scale was well within the bounds of practicability. In quite recent years a large portion of the State had been looked upon as practically a desert. To-day, those very same lands were counted among the richest grain-producing areas of the State. Might it not, therefore, reasonably be argued that other portions of the State which to-day were looked upon as practically desert might also, in a very short time—if only we could discover the best uses to which such portions might be put—become a valuable asset in assisting us to develop the agricultural industry? Within a radius of 30 miles of Albany there were many thousands of acres of land lying idle, and looked upon as practically waste lands. Efforts had been made to use these lands and develop them, but, unfortunately, the efforts had ended in failure. The ordinary settler could not stand repeated failures. Continued failures meant that the ordinary settler must give up and seek an outlet for his labour elsewhere. Those acquainted with the Albany district would know that along the King river road and Kalgan river district, and towards the Torbay district, and on the road to Mt. Barker, there were lands which at some time or other had been cultivated but which to-day were thrown up and were in their wild state. But land which was prolific in producing scrub and undergrowth must be useful for producing payable crops, if it were only possible to discover the best crops for which the land could be used. It was mostly peaty land. In some parts, if set afire, it would smoulder away. In the lower lands it was heavy peat; on the higher lands it was lighter peat to sandy. It was his desire to have this type of land experimented on, because he believed it could produce other than scrub. Where it had been cultivated in small garden areas it had been proved payable, and not only payable, for in the best portions there were larger areas, particularly in the Torbay district, the holders of which

individually produced several hundred tons per annum of potatoes and onions. After spending five years in trying to discover the best use to which to put his land, and after five years of failure, one settler had given up experimenting and extended a small garden area on which he had already spent 20 years, and to-day that garden area was producing hundreds of tons of potatoes and onions per annum. But, unfortunately, the ordinary settler could not afford to wait 20 years to secure a return from his land, so the instance mentioned could not be taken as an example to be followed by others. At any rate, it was proved that by extensive manuring the land was productive, but here again was the obstacle that the average settler could not go to the enormous expense involved in fertilising the land to the standard necessary before being in a position to obtain payable crops from the land. It had already been proved by the settlers in the district that once the land produced grass, the cultivation of wheat or root crops proved payable, but the trouble was to get the land into such a state that it would produce grass. Wherever potatoes and onions were grown—and they were grown fairly extensively in the Torbay district—a kind of natural grass sprang up, and the land subsequently proved to be good for the production of other crops. The experiment should not be carried out particularly for the small holders, it should be carried out for the holders of larger areas, for the men desirous to become bona fide settlers and to live upon the land on which they settled. The ordinary settler could not be expected to develop a large area of land sufficient to provide himself with an income unless he had considerable capital behind him before he started. At Powell's Eastwood estate the endeavour had been made on a large scale to cultivate the land, but all that was done was to plough up the land and cut it up into small holdings and try to get rid of them. The anxiety was rather to get settlers on the land after ploughing it up, with no regard for the ultimate result. It was more a desire to get rid of the land than to encourage bona fide settling. It would be

unjust to encourage people to go into the district to take up land generally recognised by the old settlers to be such that it could not be profitably used. The Government had so far seen fit to experiment in other parts of the State while sadly neglecting this very old-settled portion of the State around Albany. Had it been a new section it would, perhaps, have received more consideration, but because it was an old district, and because the settlers could not make their land pay and had followed the line of least resistance and gone to other districts rather than waste time in agitating for Government assistance and aid in discovering the best means of improving their land, the Government had neglected the district; but with very little expenditure it would be possible for the experts of the Agricultural Department to discover the method whereby the land could be cultivated and put to good use. Along the King river road there were several holdings taken up within the last five or six years by working men, but, unfortunately, the holders could not find that particular crop which would prove profitable to produce, and although the land to all appearances was rich and the soil such as should prove productive, there was something in it that proved it was not so productive as it appeared to be. The motion must appeal to members, because, by the expenditure of the very small sum, if any, which would be required to experiment in connection with this land—

The Premier: What do you mean by "if any"?

Mr. W. PRICE: Although there might be some initial expenditure, eventually the return from an experimental farm such as was proposed would be sufficient to more than recoup the original outlay; there could not possibly be any loss in connection with it. Wherever Ministers could see a possibility of laying out a small sum of money, which would eventually lead to the introduction of a large number of settlers in any district, in the interests of the State generally they should be prepared to allow the outlay. If not, then it was only beating the wind and wasting the time of the House in bringing forward the motion. That was

not his object. His motion was for a project that if entered on must eventually redound to the benefit of the State. It certainly applied only to the Albany district, but there was no other portion of the State with such a peculiar nature of soil, and there was no reason why we should allow this land to lie idle when, by the expenditure of a very small sum of money, which might, and would, be believed, eventually be returned to the State a thousand-fold—

The Minister for Lands: Hear, hear!

Mr. W. PRICE: The Minister believed in outlay when there was a possibility of recouping later on. That was the object with which the motion was moved. If we proved the capabilities of this land there would probably be room for hundreds and thousands of settlers in that district.

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

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): It was with a certain amount of diffidence that one rose to discuss this question after having heard from the hon. member the varying conditions and qualities of the soil in the Albany district. As a matter of fact, the case the member had put up for the establishment of an experimental farm in that district could hardly be characterized as a very strong one, and it was to be hoped that, if motions were coming forward from representatives of various districts, something more tangible in the way of argument would be provided than that used by the hon. member. It was said by the mover that to some extent the district had been neglected, and that if it had been a newer district, it would have received more attention. As a matter of fact the district had very little to complain of in that respect. As members were aware, up to a year or two ago very little indeed was done in the way of cultivation in the neighbourhood of Albany, but some twelve or eighteen months ago, the Government, with a view of encouraging closer settlement in that district, brought forward a proposition to secure the purchase of the railway line which had been lying idle for

many years. As the result of that proposition Parliamentary approval was obtained to the expenditure of £50,000 in the purchase of the railway and some 20,000 acres of land. Of this area 4,000 acres were in the Torbay district, and the balance in the Denmark district. Since then a very large sum had been spent in Denmark in connection with the improvement of the land acquired.

Mr. Hayward: How much?

The PREMIER: About £10,000, although he could not give the exact figures off-hand, while in addition a considerable sum was spent in the purchase of grass seeds, which had been planted in various portions of the Denmark district. He was glad to say that as a result of what had been done, clearing and scrubbing, it had been amply demonstrated that Denmark was extremely suitable for closer settlement, and for carrying on dairying and other operations of that nature. That was clearly evidence that the Government had recognised that it was necessary to do all they could in the direction of encouraging closer settlement there. Adjoining the existing Torbay line ample evidence had been given to the fertility of the soil for root crops, but the member was slightly out in his facts when he said that individuals had produced hundreds of tons of potatoes and onions in that district. Assuredly not one settler there had produced in one season a hundred tons of potatoes. Could the hon. member name one?

Mr. W. Price: Mr. North.

The PREMIER: How many acres did he possess? He knew Mr. North, and it was news to him that his land had produced hundreds of tons annually. He had been of the opinion that the man who had achieved the greatest success in growing potatoes was located some six or seven miles on the left hand side of the Denmark line, about eight miles from Torbay Junction.

Mr. Jacoby: Mr. Johnson.

The PREMIER: That district was well known to him, for he had spent five years in the scrub and swamps in the vicinity of Albany, and the estate the mover referred to, the Eastwood estate, he was well acquainted with, for he had been there during the operations of working it and

could form a pretty fair conclusion that the money spent was wasted. All that was done in connection with the operations attempted on behalf of Mr. Powell was waste money. A huge sum was spent in importing steam ploughs and other modern machinery, excellent for coping with the huge open areas such as existed in the prairies of America and Canada, but absolutely unsuitable for the sandy soil on the estate. It was to be regretted that the money was not expended in draining and clearing some of the richer swamps. Instead of that the owners took the flats, which appeared to be very suitable for cultivation, but which on being turned up were found to be nothing but sand with a few roots in it. It looked rich soil at first, but after being turned over and exposed to the weather it proved to be anything but fertile. As far as fruit culture in the neighbourhood of Albany was concerned it had been amply demonstrated that there was not a district in Western Australia which had shown a better return or was more suitable for fruit growing than the Mount Barker district, situated some 30 miles from Albany. Some of the orchards were a good deal closer than that. As to experiments in the way of fruit cultivation the necessity for further demonstration did not exist, and the district was recognised as one of the best in the State. One of the largest orchards in the State was situated at Mount Barker, no less an area than 200 acres being under trees at the present time. One gentleman in that district made a practice of planting 10 acres of orchard on the advent of every new arrival in his family. That was a very laudable example which the member for Albany might well copy. So far as the proposal was concerned there seemed to be no special reason why a State farm should be established in the district. There was no special feature in connection with the cultivation of the soil that required illustration. As a matter of fact the mover had proved to his own satisfaction that there were numerous settlers in the district who were producing hundreds of tons of potatoes a year. We could accept it as a fact that the district could produce potatoes.

Mr. W. Price: Do not put words in my mouth that I did not use. I did not say there were a number of selectors producing hundreds of tons of potatoes.

The PREMIER: The hon. member said that several selectors were producing several hundreds of tons of potatoes per annum.

Mr. W. Price: In the aggregate, not each one.

The PREMIER: On hearing the statement he had asked, "Does each produce 100 tons?" and the answer was in the affirmative.

Mr. W. Price: I said that one man produced over 100 tons.

The PREMIER: That was getting away from the argument. The member must be convinced first of all that potatoes could be grown there. Was he satisfied as to that? He was now giving the member reasons why an experimental farm was unnecessary. The fact was established that potatoes and onions could be grown there and this was absolutely demonstrated from the member's own words. Again, there was no disputing the fact that apples could be grown at Mount Barker, and on the King River, seven or eight miles from Albany, equal to those from any part of Australia. At the latter place there was an excellent orchard owned by a gentleman named Neumann. He had seen apples grown there equal to any grown in any other part of the State. It was hard to say what other form of produce it was suggested the Government should experiment with down there, and unless the member could put forward some stronger arguments he was not prepared to support the proposition. The statement that the district had been neglected was not well founded inasmuch as he had already said the Government had spent something like £50,000 in the Denmark purchase, and then £10,000 in clearing and preparing the land for cultivation and in demonstrating that it was possible to grow good pasture in the district, and that it was suitable for closer settlement. In those circumstances we would not be justified at the present time in giving ex-

ceptional treatment to that particular district.

Mr. ANGWIN (East Fremantle): It was a well known fact that any person visiting Albany could not fail to observe the large areas of land which surrounded the town, and which were not under cultivation.

Mr. Gordon: You can see the same at Fremantle.

Mr. ANGWIN: If the circumstances were such as the member for Albany had explained, there was something the matter with the soil which prevented people who occupied a small area from cultivating the land. Then the Government should step in and show these people how they should treat the soil. The member for Canning had stated that it would be possible to see similar areas of land at Fremantle, but at Fremantle there was not a mountain like that at Albany, from the top of which a view of the surrounding vacant areas could be obtained. Seeing that a great number of over-sea vessels put in at Albany, and that many people visiting that port climbed to the top of Mount Clarence, the advertisement for the State was certainly a bad one. If people saw these big areas of uncultivated land they would be bound to come to the conclusion that all the country was useless, and they would leave Western Australia with the belief that the State consisted of other areas similar to those a view of which had been obtained from the top of Mount Clarence. If it was at all possible to show those people who lived around Albany how to treat this land, it should be done, and also from a business point of view it would be wise for the Government to do something in the direction suggested by the member for Albany. Without posing as one who knew very much about the cultivation of land, he could say that it had come to his knowledge that around Albany if a person took up land and kept a cow, unless he went into Albany to buy his wheat and chaff there was a possibility of the cow dying. The member for Albany had shown that attempts had been made to cultivate areas around the town, and that those who had made these attempts had

failed. The matter was certainly one that deserved the consideration of the Government, and in the interests of the settlers around there it would be wise to establish an experimental farm to show settlers how to go about their work.

Debate unfinished.

Motions interrupted by Standing Orders.

BILL—COAL MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Mr. A. A. WILSON (Collie) in moving the second reading said: I desire to be as brief and as lucid as possible in explaining to the House the objects of this measure. The very fact of the ever increasing volume of trade in connection with Collie coal makes it necessary that there should be some alteration in the present law pertaining to coal mining. As one who has had considerable experience of coal mining in the old country and the other States I claim to have a knowledge of some of the needs of the mining community, and also of some of the remedies that should be applied to meet those needs. In the year 1902 a measure was passed dealing with the coal mines. In 1901 the House appointed a Commission to inquire into the industry, consisting of Messrs. Ewing, Butcher, Rason, Reid, and Hicks. They collected data, and called evidence in order that a Bill might be formulated to meet the requirements of that time. The Bill was introduced and subsequently became an Act, and while I am prepared to admit that that Act had admirable qualities, I regret to say that many of its sections were very imperfectly framed, and have been the cause of irritation to the workers, the companies, and to the Mines Department. Continuous disputes have arisen between the miners and the mining inspectors in the matter of the definition of several sections, and in dealing with the Act I shall attempt to prove that the allegation I made just now is entirely well founded. In the body of the Act it is stated that the hours of labour shall be eight hours bank to bank. I find there is a wrong impression as to what the Act really

means. At the present time Section 6 of the Act states that a person shall be employed for not more than eight consecutive hours nor more than forty-eight hours a week. I took it for granted that when the Legislature passed that, it was intended that the hours to be worked should be eight out of the 24. The interpretation put on that section by the Mines Department is that the men can work eight hours below, go on top for ten minutes for a smoke, and then work for another eight hours. That never was the intention of the Act.

The Minister for Works: Surely that is not so.

Mr. WILSON: Yes, it is so. In the Bill which I am introducing I shall deal with this and several other defects. Section 4 of the principal Act I desire to amend by adding the word "winze." I shall also seek to add a new paragraph to the definition clause to provide that "pit-head" shall mean and include "pit-brace, pit-brow, pit-bank, surface-elevated-tramway-landing or gantry." Boys have been working in the coal mines on a pit top for 16 hours at a stretch, and no action can be taken simply because the inspector has considered that the brace or the gantry is not a pit-bank. In the old Act it says that no person shall be employed as a lander or bracedman for more than eight hours in every 24 nor more than 48 hours in any week, except in cases of emergency. That is in operation, but in actual practice the inspector says that the gantry which is the new name for the pit-bank does not mean a pit-brace or a pit-bank. The men employed on the surface-elevated-tramway-landings on the goldfields are called banksmen or bracedmen, but at Collie they are not called bracedmen or banksmen, consequently the boys working on the top are compelled to work at the sweet will of the employer for as long as 16 hours. I have quoted instances to the Mines Department, who stated that pit-bank does not mean a gantry in connection with coal mines. I have here a letter from the Inspector of Mines in connection with this matter. I wrote to Inspector Briggs, on the 15th December 1908, and I asked him for a definition

in the matter of landers or bracemen in the coal mines, and Mr. Briggs replied:

"Section 5 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act—In my opinion the persons employed on the gantry are not landers or bracemen as meant by the Act. However, if you like I will ask the Department to obtain the Solicitor General's opinion on this section."

The inspector did not get the information, but at the same time those lads are compelled to work the hours I have stated.

The Minister for Works: Do you say 16 hours a day?

Mr. WILSON: That is so, and I will supply the names and the dates when those people worked, at any time the Minister wants the information. Then I come to Section 6 of the principal Act. That states:

"No person shall be employed below in any mine for more than eight consecutive hours at any time, nor for more than 48 hours in a week except in cases of emergency."

And the marginal note to that section reads—

"Persons not to be employed below ground more than eight hours on any day."

I took it for granted that when the marginal reference said no person should be so employed for more than eight hours a day that was also the meaning of the Act. Unfortunately the Minister disagrees to a certain extent with his inspector. Finally, through the courtesy of Mr. Ewing I asked certain questions in the House. One question I asked was—

"Clause 6: Does the marginal reference that persons are not to be employed more than eight hours on any day indicate the true intention and meaning of Section 6?"

To that the Minister replied, No. It is on record, and I shall supply dates and the names of the men who have gone down at eight in the morning, come up at four in the afternoon, taken an hour's spell, and gone down again and worked for another eight hours and so on. That is the effect of the Act which is operating at the present time and it is with the object of remedying this state of affairs

that I am introducing the amending Bill. I propose to add after the words "eight hours," in Section 6 Subsection 1, the words "in any twenty-four." My object is to give the people to understand the position clearly so that the Mines Department and the mine owners and the men may work in unison. Then I propose to move a clause to provide that the owners of mines should indicate when working hours commence and when working hours cease. For example, there is nothing to prevent a person who so desires from going down a mine early in the morning, say at 3 o'clock, and working on till all hours. There is no check kept on the time. In Engand, under the latest Coal Mining Act, the inspector posts a notice stating that the shift shall start at, say, six o'clock in the morning, and will cease at a given time. I think this alteration essential if we want to see the provisions of the Act carried out. I have also added that in the case of the mine managers, every coal mine should have a manager to itself. At the present time, although the intention of the Act is one mine, one manager, that is not being carried out. What is the use of putting in the Act provisions whereby young men may pass examination and so better their positions, if, after the passing of the examination, no employment is to be had for them? At the present time some of the managers in Collie are managing at least two mines. I have made a provision under which, except in special circumstances, each mine shall be under the control of one manager. In Clause 8, dealing with Section 72 of the principal Act, I desire to amend the regulation governing the relief fund. Certain trouble has arisen, into which I shall not go just now. Sufficient for me to state that I believe the persons who contribute the money should be responsible for the distribution of such money. Although the miners contribute more than half that fund, yet they have little or no say in respect to its distribution.

The Minister for Works: They have a committee.

Mr. A. A. WILSON: Yes. I happen to be secretary of that committee. But, under the old Act, the money has to be

paid on the recommendations of the committee. There are three trustees, one of whom is nominated by the Mines Department, one by the mine owners, and one by the miners. The result is that there are two votes against the worker's representative every time, and the recommendations of the committee are useless. That is the existing state of affairs. I do not want to labour the question in respect to the accident fund. I have certain information in my possession which would make the House wonder that such things could occur in a civilised community. Coming to the matter of the ventilation clauses, I ask that certain words should be inserted. It is understood that in coal mining there is a certain element of danger arising from the gases in the coal, and the legislation in England, in New South Wales, and in New Zealand provides that air shall be forced in as far as each and every working place. The present Act of Western Australia also makes that provision, but the air in many cases does not get that far. Consequently I have asked that certain words should be put in, to the effect that there shall be a perceptible current of air sufficient to distinctly deflect the flame of a lamp from the vertical. There is a provision like that in the Gold Mines Act, and owing to the presence of gases in the coal mines I think it is necessary here. In respect to Rule 51, this is a sore point with the miners at Collie at the present time. The old Act says that persons employed about a mine may appoint two of their number, who are practical working miners, to go down and inspect the places for ventilation. But after the Act had been working very satisfactorily up till two years ago, a flaw occurred, and some old Act from England was unearthed, in the light of which this Act is of no use. For example, I was general secretary to the Collie Coal Miners' Association and as such was appointed check inspector for a number of years. This system acted very well, in so far that I was above suspicion of being capable of getting the sack from the companies, and could give a fair report. At no time did I make a report not in accordance with facts. However, I went down one

morning to one of the mines, and was told that I could not go below. I asked the reason, and they said, "you are not a working miner." I answered that I was a practical miner, and the reply was, "Oh, yes, but you are not a working miner."

The Minister for Mines: That was an English ruling.

Mr. A. A. WILSON: Yes, and it was never appealed against in the old country. Our conditions here were good enough to last for four years, but at the expiration of that time the owners went to England to upset it.

The Minister for Mines: It was a question of dispute.

Mr. A. A. WILSON: Yes; but the matter could have been amended by one stroke of the pen in getting the regulation altered. The same provision is now in operation in New South Wales, where the word "working" has been struck out. I have here the latest Mining Act of New South Wales, and the Government of the day have decided that the interpretation to be placed upon it should be at least fair and conscientious, and that men who had been working in the mines for a period of years would be the most likely people for the task of going down and inspecting. I have had 30 years' experience, yet they stopped me, simply because I was not at that time working in a coal mine. In passing I want to state that in New South Wales the miners' union appoint an inspector who goes round the whole district and takes one mine after the other; and the Government of the day are a party to it. The miners at Collie do not want the Government to pay for the inspection. They only ask that their check inspectors shall have free power to go down and make reports. That system has been in operation at Collie for four years, and it was only by the introduction of some decision of a magistrate in the old country that the system was upset. I also want to get at the matter of experience and inexperience. In the old country and in New South Wales and New Zealand, and in nearly every other place where coal mining exists, it is provided that at least one man should have experience at the face where workmen are employed. It is laid down in

our Act that no person not employed as a coal getter shall be allowed to work alone as a coal getter in the face of the workings. But while one man who has had no experience is not allowed to work at the face 50 inexperienced men can work to the danger of themselves and others. That is the law as applied to Collie, and I shall give the opinion of the inspector on that matter. I wrote to Mr. Inspector Briggs and asked him these questions:—"Re schedule, Rule 51: A. Can one inexperienced person work alone as a coal getter under the Act? B. Can 10 or 50 inexperienced persons, over the age of 14 years, work together at the face of the workings under the Act?" His replies were:—"A. No. B. Two or more inexperienced persons can work together at the face as coal getters, and one could work alone provided he was not employed as a coal getter."

The Minister for Works: Did you include the fillers in that?

Mr. A. A. WILSON: I included all workers.

The Minister for Works: What danger is there in filling?

Mr. A. A. WILSON: I am afraid that, although the hon. gentleman knows something about finance, he knows nothing of coal mining.

The Minister for Works: I think I showed you something about coal mining once.

Mr. A. A. WILSON: You showed me something in points in the Arbitration Court, I will admit; but I showed you a point afterwards, did I not? Here is the point: Fillers work at the face the same as ordinary coal cutters.

The Minister for Works: Oh, no.

Mr. A. A. WILSON: I beg your pardon. They work just the same. If the coal cutting machines cut the coal the shooter comes along and shoots the coal down. Then the filler comes along and fills the coal. He is under just the same danger as the man who fills the coal cut by picks. If an inexperienced filler is working under a bad roof there is nothing to save him; and if 50 inexperienced fillers are working together the danger is just the same. This much I will say: My only

intention in introducing the Bill is to try to make the work easier for the department, for the mine managers, and for the men. We have an Act, and that Act is not working smoothly. Day after day friction is occurring, and when we see decisions given to the effect that one inexperienced man cannot work alone, yet 50 such can work together, we wonder what interpretation should be put upon the Act. In another breath we are told that landers and bracemen do not occur in coal mining, although they are recognised on the goldfields under exactly the same conditions. It is my desire to remedy this state of affairs, and to make the matter easier for the Mines Department, for the managers, and for the workers. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. F. Wilson) moved—

That the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	22
Noes	..	..	..	18

Majority for .. 4

AYES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Monger
Mr. Davies	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Draper	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Gregory	Mr. J. Price
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hayward	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Layman	(Teller).
Mr. Male	

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. W. Price
Mr. Bath	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Swan
Mr. Collier	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gourley	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Holman	Mr. Walker
Mr. Horan	Mr. Ware
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Helmann
Mr. McDowall	(Teller).
Mr. O'Loghlen	

Motion thus passed; the debate adjourned.

MOTION—RAILWAY PROJECT, LEONORA-LAWLERS.

Debate resumed from the 22nd September on the motion of Mr. Gourley: "That in the opinion of this House the present railway line should be extended to Lawlers from Leonora at the earliest possible date."

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet): I regret that on a question of this importance and that is so worthy of the attention of the House, I find myself opposed to the motion as it stands on the Notice Paper, and that before I conclude my remarks I shall find it essential in the best interests of the State to move an amendment to it. I do this not with any desire to deny Lawlers railway communication, because I hold it is absolutely necessary, if that district is to progress, and if we are to do justice to it, we must give it railway communication. The only thing I have to cavil at is the fact that Lawlers has not had railway communication earlier, that in the earlier days when all the talk was of the construction of a railway from Mount Magnet to Lawlers, and when several Governments promised the construction, the line was not then put in execution. My objection to the route from Leonora to Lawlers is not with any intention of objecting to Lawlers getting railway communication, but because I hold that our duty in Parliament, our only duty to the country and our constituents, is to give justice to every portion of the State, no matter where it may be; and in order to have justice done to every part of the State, I hold the railway should not be constructed from Leonora, but should be constructed so that Lawlers may be brought into closer touch with its natural port, Geraldton. If the State is to be developed to its greatest capacity, if we are going to give the people in the remote portions of the State an opportunity of developing their districts, we can only do it by giving them reasonable and cheap facilities for communication with the seaboard. I hold that no matter what opinion may be expressed by those in favour of the Leonora route, they are utterly misguided in their intentions, and that by advocating the exten-

sion from Leonora they are doing an injustice to their own people, because they are saddling for all time a burden on those people that they should not be called upon to bear. The member for Leonora, to his own way of thinking, has possibly done the right thing in moving the motion, but when we are asked to build a railway it is for all time and not for any one year or two. We are now asked to build for all time a railway whose purpose must be the development of the State, and particularly the development of the East Murchison goldfields, in which Lawlers is included. If we are going to pursue the policy of centralisation in draining every portion of the State into one or two ports, then we are going to do something that I hold in the end will not be in the best interests of the State. It may be all right for a day or two, it may serve the particular interests of a section for a day or a year, but in the end it will be a bad thing for the State, and Parliament should not allow it for one moment. By the construction of the railway line proposed in the motion we would saddle the people of the Lawlers goldfield with a burden of additional taxation if we compel them for all time to pay freight for the whole of their produce right from Perth via Leonora.

Mr. Gourley: But the people are prepared to pay it.

Mr. TROY: Whatever a handful of the people may say to-day is not to be considered; we must consider what is in the interests of the majority and of those who will be in the district in years to come. We do not build this line for the benefit of a few individuals to-day, we build it for the development of the State and for the benefit of the people who are to come in the future, and it is a fair thing we should give every reasonable consideration to those and give them the cheapest and best facilities. Again, this advocacy of the extension from Leonora by a few people, if not due to a misguided view, must be due to their outlook, because for some years past Lawlers has been served from Leonora, which is the nearest point of railway communication to-day, and, naturally,

when the outlook of the people is towards a certain centre, the thoughts of the people run in that direction, and as a result of the number of people travelling via Leonora and receiving their produce from that direction, their minds naturally incline towards having railway communication from Leonora. But there was a time not long since when the outlook was in an entirely contrary direction, because before the construction of the railway line from Menzies to Leonora the people of Lawlers were served by railway communication at Mt. Magnet, and in the mouths of everybody in the State the railway that was always mentioned to connect Lawlers with the railway system was the Mt. Magnet-Lawlers railway. In fact, the matter was brought before Sir John Forrest, and later on it was brought before Sir Walter James when Premier, and both these Premiers recognised the claims for railway communication between Lawlers and Mt. Magnet, in order to bring the East Murchison goldfield in touch with its natural port, Geraldton. There was no other route suggested in those days, and there would not have been any other route suggested to-day but for the fact that the Eastern Goldfields line was extended to Leonora, and Lawlers was brought into nearer touch with railway communication at Leonora than at Mt. Magnet. I have already intimated my intention of moving an amendment to this motion before I have concluded my remarks, and that amendment will be one that I think will meet with the approval of the great majority of the members. I had not the pleasure of hearing the speech of the member for Leonora when he introduced this motion, but I have had the opportunity of reading his speech in *Hansard*, and I will say that he put forward every argument he could possibly secure in support of his particular contention. I have no objection to his doing that, for I deem it to be his place to do so, but I shall endeavour to show later on that many of his arguments were extravagant and had no particular bearing on the railway line to Lawlers, or more particularly the railway from Leonora to Lawlers. The major portion of his speech did not deal

with Lawlers, but Wiluna, a locality which is 120 miles from Lawlers, and which, if a railway were constructed from Leonora to Lawlers, would be no nearer railway communication than served as it is to-day from Nannine. I shall ask members to look up the hon. member's speech and they will find that the major portion of it has reference to Wiluna, and that his remarks are in regard to the great possibilities of that district, the production of that field, the disadvantages under which it labours, and its isolation. It is one of the great arguments used in support of the line to Lawlers going via Leonora.

Mr. Gourley: The State Mining Engineer recommends a railway from Lawlers to Wiluna.

Mr. TROY: The member must remember that Lawlers has not a railway to-day, and before Wiluna can get a line from there, Lawlers itself must be connected. What have the possibilities of Wiluna to do with a line from Leonora to Lawlers? Wiluna is not served from Lawlers to-day. It is in the East Murchison district just as Black Range is, 95 miles away, and Yonanine, 60 miles away. Wiluna is now served from Nannine, all the commodities it needs being obtained from that place. Therefore, I contend that on this question of a railway route to Lawlers the district of Wiluna should be set aside. Any argument used with regard to that district in support of the construction of a line from Leonora to Lawlers applies in exactly the same manner in support of any other route. Wiluna is about the same distance from Lawlers as from Nannine, and it is nearer to Sandstone, being only 100 miles from there, and yet we find the greater portion of the member's speech taken up by references to Wiluna.

Mr. S. F. Moore: He does not know the country.

Mr. TROY: To the uninitiated his arguments may have appeared plausible, but what must be the poverty of his argument when he found it necessary to drag in a locality 120 miles away in order to make out a case for his particular railway. I have been told, though I do not know whether it is true, that in the

Kingdom of Heaven, the streets are paved with gold. I wonder whether the hon. member will mention this particular Kingdom as an argument in support of his railway. Let us get down to the legitimate arguments as to the routes without having regard to localities away off the line, and which have no bearing upon the question. All arguments in favour of the line running from Leonora to Lawlers can be dealt with in the same manner as I have just dealt with the speech of the mover. The advocates of the Leonora extension quoted the State Mining Engineer and the greater portion of their advocacy is based upon the report of that official. The State Mining Engineer is their foundation, for without him they would have no case whatever. Because he happened to have gone through and reported favourably on that particular route, their whole hope is centred in his report. Mr. Montgomery reported on Lake Way, Darlot, Sir Samuel, and other districts, from Wiluna 120 miles away right to Lawlers, and all the localities were quoted in support of the contention that the line should run from Leonora. None of these places would be served by railway communication, such as is desired by the State Mining Engineer, or recommended by him, from Leonora to Lawlers, nor by a railway from Sandstone to Lawlers. I do not claim that, although it was claimed by the advocates of the Leonora extension. Lake Darlot, Mount Sir Samuel, and Kathleen Valley are right away from Lawlers, and could be used just as well in support of the route from Sandstone to Lawlers as in support of the Leonora route. Let us get down to arguments as to the rival routes and as to what should be put forward on behalf of both. We heard, in support of the Leonora extension, that there is a belt of auriferous country right from that place to Lawlers, and the hon. member, who was not the only one who referred to them, spoke of various mines which would be served by the proposed railway. In the course of his remarks the mover said—

“How different it is from Leonora to Lawlers where we have first the

Trump, then the Gold Blocks, State Mill, Mount George, Diorite, King of the Hills, Mount Stirling, Mount Clifford, Wilson's Patch, and Bannockburn, which provide a total of 25 leases and are responsible for no less than 65 head of stamps.”

The Trump is put forward as a mine to be served by the railway from Leonora to Lawlers, and this argument is one of the principal ones used. I have stood in the streets of Leonora, and have seen the popper legs of the Trump mine.

Mr. Gourley: You may have a good eyesight.

Mr. Taylor: More imagination than eyesight.

Mr. TROY: The Trump mine would not obtain any more advantage from the extension of the railway from Leonora to Lawlers than it does to-day with Leonora as the terminus. Anything desired in connection with the supplies for that mine comes from Leonora which will be the nearest place to it no matter how far north the railway goes. The Gold Blocks is another mine in the vicinity of Leonora. It could not be better served by a railway to Lawlers from Leonora than by the present Leonora railway. Then reference is made to the State mill. One marvels at the poverty of such an argument. The mill is a public battery erected by the State to crush the Leonora stone. It is the Leonora State battery. I may just as well ask for railway extension from Black Range to Lawlers because the Black Range State mill is four miles towards Lawlers. I will refrain from doing that; I will not expose myself to the ridicule of the House by bringing forward an argument of that nature. I merely mention these cases in order to expose the fallacy of the arguments used by the member for Leonora. I do not object to a railway to Lawlers, for I am in favour of one. Then mention is made of the Mount George, the Diorite, the King of the Hills, Mount Stirling, Mount Clifford, Wilson's Patch, and Bannockburn. On paper that looks all very well, but what is the gold production of these particular localities, and how many years have they been in course

of exploitation? How many years have they been held, and what does the State Mining Engineer say about these mines? What is the population of these districts? For it must be borne in mind that the question of population is a very important one in connection with a proposal of this kind. We are not going to build a railway to serve holes in the ground, we are going to build a railway to serve population. The State Mining Engineer is not silent on the question of population, why not give his remarks? I hope this information will be given by the hon. member when replying. Let me give the gold production. My figures are supplied by the Mines Department. The total production to the 31st July, 1909, in the Mount Malcolm district is as follows:—Mount Clifford, 7,000 ounces; Wilson's Patch, 9,000 ounces; Bannockburn—a weighty argument—63 ounces.

Mr. Gourley: The mines there are just opened up.

Mr. TROY: And the State Mining Engineer reported on them many years ago. To-day the total production is 63 ounces. Then how old are the King of the Hills and the Diorite King mines? They were established in 1898, and they have produced a total of 986 ounces.

Mr. Gourley: It is a total of over 20,000 ounces.

Mr. TROY: I have here the return signed by the Under Secretary for Mines.

Mr. Gourley: You have very bad information. The Diorite King district has produced a very great quantity of gold.

Mr. TROY: I am not referring to the Diorite district, but to the mine, and the figures I give are published in returns by the Mines Department.

Mr. Collier: That is the information you prepared for the deputation.

Mr. TROY: I am not so foolish as to imagine that if I make an erroneous statement a member has not the opportunity of finding it out. These figures may not be correct, but they were supplied to me by the Mines Department. It would be absurd to go with a deputation and state that these were my own figures. The figures are those of the Mines De-

partment, and must be correct, and being correct all I can say is that there must be a lot of duffer shows there. I am referring to Mount Clifford, Wilson's Patch, Bannockburn, King of the Hills, and Diorite.

Mr. Taylor: Have you got the Little Wonder there. It has produced more gold than any of those you have spoken of.

Mr. TROY: No, I have not that mine included, but I hope it has produced all the gold the hon. member states. Apart from that, there is nothing particularly wonderful in this return, but I do not want to deprecate these mines; I want to deprecate the arguments the hon. member for Leonora used in connection with the districts that I have referred to. With regard to all the other localities, the figures that I have here have been obtained from the Mines Department and they can be vouched for.

Mr. Gourley: You have been a member of Parliament for a number of years and you should yourself be better acquainted with the gold output.

Mr. TROY: At any rate I would not use such absurd arguments as have been used here in connection with the mines in the districts that I have named. Another argument used in favour of the construction of the line from Leonora was the prohibitive cost of firewood and timber in the Lawlers district, people having to go out 80 miles for it; but I would point out that Lawlers is 80 miles from Leonora, and if Leonora has not sufficient mining timber where is Lawlers to get it from? We are told that these people have to go 80 miles away for their timber because there is no mining timber at Lawlers.

The Premier: There is sawn timber.

Mr. TROY: Of course, but a great proportion of mining timber is not sawn; it is round. I have seen very little sawn timber on mines unless it be in the shafts. If the railway were built from Sandstone any amount of timber could be obtained from the Midland line or around Geraldton. The localities which were mentioned by the hon. member as being between Leonora and Lawlers, and which were spoken of as requiring railway com-

munication, will also need mining timber and fuel, and if they are as promising as we have been told they are, then whatever firewood supplies they may have will belong to them and no Government should be asked to construct a railway to those localities to take that firewood from them. If these localities are as prosperous as we have been told they are, and if their possibilities are so great they will naturally want all the timber and firewood for themselves, for the only firewood there is mulga. The whole of the district is mulga country. It strikes me that there is something wrong either with these localities, or with the arguments used by the hon. member regarding firewood. There are a few other statements that I want to combat, and which I deem to be inaccurate in connection with the proposed Leonora-Lawlers route. I have already pointed out that Wiluna will not be affected by this railway. Wiluna is 120 miles away, and it cannot be served better to-day than from Nannine. It would be impossible to carry goods all the way round from Kalgoorlie to Leonora and Lawlers to serve Wiluna. It would be far cheaper to convey them from Nannine.

The Minister for Mines: Presuming the railway went from Black Range to Lawlers, it would be an advantage to Wiluna.

Mr. TROY: I am pointing out that Wiluna can have no definite advantage unless it has railway communication of its own. When the Black Range line is completed, the terminus will be as close to Wiluna as the line would be if completed to Lawlers. Reference has been made to Kathleen Valley, Mount Sir Samuel, and Darlot, and we have been told that there are great possibilities regarding copper at Kathleen Valley. I hope that may be so, and far be it from me to deprecate the mining industry anywhere. I want to deprecate the remarks of the hon. member however, because they are not logical when we test them. Kathleen Valley is a locality which has possibilities of copper production, and the member for Leonora states that it will be seen from the Mining Engineer's report that there are mines of

great promise yielding thousands of ounces in that district. Then he goes on to say that there is trouble with regard to firewood at Kathleen Valley, and that the smelters at Fremantle would also improve the prospects a great deal, but not enough to enable the mines to be profitably worked, and that local smelting would really afford the only hope of permanent success, but until there is railway communication this also gives little promise on account of the want of good fuel. It will be seen therefore that the State Mining Engineer holds that in order to develop the Kathleen Valley copper lodes railway communication is essential to that district. It would not pay it is said to take ore to Fremantle to have it smelted there. Since Kathleen Valley is 35 miles from Lawlers towards Wiluna, how can a railway from Leonora to Lawlers affect the fuel supply of Kathleen Valley? It cannot do it. We should have to build the railway to Kathleen Valley. It is not on the route; it is on another route. It is an absurd argument to use, and it appears to me that the State Mining Engineer's report is taken almost as written, for argument.

Mr. Gourley: Would you not take the State Mining Engineer's report? I would prefer to take it.

Mr. TROY: I am not cavilling at the report, but the State Mining Engineer is no more infallible than any other man. I have known mining men before deprecate a field which subsequently turned out to be a very valuable one. A well known mining man spoke deprecatingly of the Meekatharra field eight or ten years ago, and to-day that field is one of the most prosperous in the State. We are told with regard to Mount Sir Samuel, and the State Mining Engineer is again quoted, that mining timber and firewood are getting scarce in the neighbourhood of the Belle Vue mine, and that teams have to go out 30 miles East for gum mining timber, and firewood is being cut out for about eight miles to the south and east. The State Mining Engineer is quoted further—

"The lake and sandy country yield next to no timber, but there is good firewood about nine miles to the north-

west. To the north the wood cutters are getting to within three miles of Kathleen Valley, but can go a long distance to the north-east without interfering with any other mines. Large mining timbers have to be carted 80 miles."

Here again the Belle Vue mine near Mount Sir Samuel would not be affected as far as the fuel supply is concerned by the railway from Leonora to Lawlers. In order to have any bearing the railway would have to run through Lawlers to Mount Sir Samuel. Since it cannot affect it, how on earth can the fuel supply for Sir Samuel have any bearing on the railway from Leonora to Lawlers. If Lawlers is to be the terminus of this railway, pining timber will have to be brought all the way from the timber mills, deposited at Lawlers, and carted from there to Mount Sir Samuel.

The Minister for Mines: If the railway is constructed from the other direction what effect will it have on the mines there?

Mr. TROY: If the railway is carried on from Sandstone they will be able to get their goods and mining timber at much cheaper rates than *via* Leonora. And that fact can only be a beneficial one. If I can get my goods, my mining timber, and all requirements cheaper, then there will be more money in my pocket than if I have to pay dearer for them. There is still another inaccuracy. The member for Leonora said that according to the figures there are working in the Lawlers district 1,500 men. Are there?

Mr. Seaddan: Yes.

Mr. TROY: Where?

Mr. Seaddan: In the district.

Mr. TROY: The number of electors on the Leonora roll is but little over 3,000, and since it embraces Leonora, Gwalia, Murrin Murrin, Malcolm, Kathleen Valley, Mt. Sir Samuel, Darlot, and the rest, it must have 10,000 people in it. How then are there 1,500 people working at Lawlers? I hope there are. I am only pointing out that these remarks are full of inaccuracies, and I want to explode them. If the hon. member's calculations be correct, the population of Lawlers is 6,000 adults, and the electoral roll does

not show it. That roll needs revision. I really hope the hon. member is correct. Again, I do not think this can be correct. He stated that the estimated value of the stated that the estimated value of the machinery was £2,800. I think that must be a mistake.

Mr. Gourley: Yes; it is a mistake. I said close on £200,000.

Mr. TROY: The hon. member put forward another argument, and in support of his contention quoted the State Mining Engineer. The State Mining Engineer must have been desperately anxious for an argument in favour of Leonora if he made any such statement. Speaking of Kalgoorlie being the centre of the mining industry the hon. member said that at the present time we have at Kalgoorlie large foundries turning out a great deal of machinery; and he averred that the State Mining Engineer had reported as to Wiluna, in regard to sending broken parts to Perth, that it took ten weeks before such parts could be returned. Then the hon. member went on to say that if the line were constructed it would only be a matter of a few days in sending to Kalgoorlie. How could that be? In the first place the machinery would have to come by team.

Mr. Gourley: That is incorrect.

Mr. TROY: I hope it will be noted because I do not want any more of these incorrect statements. Even when the railway is through to Lawlers, Wiluna will still be 120 miles away. I hope it is not correct; because a person who, to make an argument for a railway, would cart his material from Wiluna to Leonora and then again to Sandstone would be a fit inmate for Claremont.

The Minister for Works: Would he not cart to Lawlers if the railway went to Lawlers?

Mr. TROY: I have pointed out that Sandstone will be the nearest town to Wiluna: about 110 miles.

The Minister for Works: But a bad road.

Mr. TROY: The Black Range roads board sent a man out recently to cut a road, and they are quite satisfied they can get a really good road. When a railway reaches Lawlers it will be a similar

distance from Wiluna. Then Sandstone, a few months hence will be as close to Wiluna as Lawlers will be by railway communication. What difference will a railway to Lawlers make to Wiluna?

The Minister for Works: It will be nearer the foundries of Kalgoorlie.

Mr. TROY: This railway is not to serve the foundries of Kalgoorlie to-day; it is to serve the State for all time.

Mr. Taylor: It will not serve Black Range.

Mr. TROY: It is to develop this State; to open up the State. It is not for a few years, but for all time, and, therefore, we can make no argument in regard to any foundry at Kalgoorlie. Let me say a word in regard to my own position. The hon. member for Mt. Margaret has said it will not serve Black Range. Let me say I am making this speech with no parochial intention. I can quite understand that the member for Mt. Margaret would be amazed at any one being able to do anything except with parochial intention; but I want it to be understood that Sandstone to-day will be better served by being the terminus than by having any continuation.

The Premier: That is what Leonora thinks.

Mr. TROY: Leonora is the same. Since my boundary is outside Sandstone what does it matter to me where the railway goes? It does not matter in the slightest. The terminus of my electorate will lose a certain amount of trade, because this railway is going through, but I am exerting myself because I wish it to be understood that I am fighting for a portion of this State, not in my own electorate, but which is deserving of reasonable consideration and which can only get that reasonable consideration by being given its natural trade. I want to say that if a railway were brought forward whose rightful terminus was the port of Albany, hon. members would not accuse another member of parochialism if he got up and advocated Albany.

Mr. Scaddan: What about Esperance?

Mr. TROY: Well, advocate Esperance; bring it forward. Although you pretend to want Esperance no definite action is taken in regard to bringing it forward. The

people who talk Esperance are the people who have been talking Esperance in regard to this railway. Certain Eastern Goldfields newspapers admit that Geraldton is the natural port, but they say, "So is Esperance." The *West Australian* says the same. Well, why not bring forward a resolution for Esperance? Do not let us pretend that the intention is to have the port at Fremantle if Esperance is intended. We say Geraldton should be the port, but we are not pretending that we want Fremantle. We have the suggestion already that Esperance is the natural port. Now we have heard the main arguments for the Leonora extension—the mines en route. What is to be said for the Sandstone extension? I hold that I am speaking without any personal interest in this connection. As a member of the House I want to say that the arguments in favour of the extension from Sandstone are overwhelming. In the first place Geraldton is about 200 miles closer to Lawlers than is Fremantle or even Esperance. The distance respectively is, Geraldton to Lawlers, 409 miles; Fremantle to Lawlers, 628 miles. Therefore, the distance to Lawlers from its natural port, Geraldton, is shorter by over 200 miles than is the distance from Lawlers to any other port.

Mr. Scaddan: Why do you not advocate that the line should go right through to connect there?

Mr. TROY: The argument in regard to cheapness is overwhelming also. And, after all, that is what we must note, and that must be the only argument in regard to railway communication to open up any locality. Lawlers cannot be developed by any false sentiment in regard to Leonora. It can only be opened up by giving it cheap railway communication; and I want to point out that in order to have cheap railway communication it must have a railway shorter by 200 miles than that advocated by the member for Leonora. Let us take some commodities and show the difference in regard to freight. Mining machinery, five tons, from Geraldton to Lawlers will cost £3 11s. 2d., whereas from Fremantle via Leonora the cost will be £4 18s. 6d., or a difference in favour of

Geraldton of £1 7s. 4d. Grain shows a difference in favour of Geraldton of 4s. 4d.; while sawn timber shows a difference in favour of Geraldton of 9s. 1d. Will the hon. member deny that the corporation in this State which enjoys almost a monopoly of the sawn timber trade has an agency in Geraldton, a distributing agency for the whole district?

The Minister for Works: What does it cost to take timber to Geraldton?

Mr. TROY: Much less by sea travel than by railway to Leonora.

Mr. Scaddan: Yes; but a private company gets the benefit.

Mr. TROY: No; there is a great deal too much said on behalf of that company. Geraldton must necessarily become an important port. Anybody who looks ahead must recognise this. And, being an important port of an important district, it is bound to have all the great commercial concerns which are to be found in every port for the distribution of various commodities; and as we are building this railway not for a few years but for all time, we have to consider the advantage to the Lawlers district of being brought into direct communication with its natural port. I contemplate that in a few years' time Geraldton will be a big place of 20,000 people, when we take into consideration the land settlement that has progressed in the district and the production of its outlying centres. For galvanised iron the difference in favour of the Geraldton route is £1 16s. 6d. per ton, and for tea, drapery, and clothing the difference is £2 19s. 7d. per ton in favour of Geraldton, while for cyanide the difference is £2 9s. 3d. per ton in favour of Geraldton. In fact, the difference right through is in favour of Geraldton to a large extent.

Mr. Scaddan: What is the difference on Rangoon candles?

Mr. TROY: On candles the difference is £2 8s. 1d. On groceries generally it is £2 8s. 1d. These are all things required in the Lawlers district and which, if that locality is to be developed in a proper manner, must be obtained cheaply. It should also be understood that many of

the steamers that call at Fremantle from the Eastern States call at Geraldton also, and vessels come from Europe to Geraldton direct. Geraldton is no paltry port. All these facts cannot be combated, and all go to show—

Mr. Scaddan: That you are interested.

Mr. TROY: All go to show that Geraldton is a port that will serve the Lawlers field, and if we are going to view this railway from a practical standpoint, leaving out the sentimental standpoint of Leonora and the Eastern Goldfields, we have to admit that Lawlers should be brought into communication with Geraldton, and that any railway from Lawlers to Geraldton should be via Sandstone. There is another fact to be considered. In order to construct the railway the Government must make importation of the material, and that material will not be conveyed along the Midland Railway but will be taken straight to Geraldton, as in the case of the Black Range railway material, and the saving in this respect to the Government should be £2,000. If we are going to view the railway from a practical standpoint, and to construct it with the view to giving cheap facilities, there is only one argument with regard to the railway, and that is that it should be constructed from Geraldton via Sandstone. In regard to interjections, I may say that I have no interest in the matter other than that it is my duty as a representative of the people in the House, and I approach it from that standpoint alone. I have not twopence worth of property interested in it; I have no property interest, but I have an interest in the district and in the State; and in order to give the people cheap and effective facilities for transit. I am advocating the best possible route and the cheapest route. It appears to me there are some very simple folk in this House. They are apparently led by the nose in regard to their particular advocacy of the route from Leonora because a few individuals yell out for Leonora.

Mr. Scaddan: What about Mr. Cochrane?

Mr. TROY: I do not associate myself with Mr. Cochrane; but, at the same time, Mr. Cochrane has his own opinion and is

entitled to it. He is a worthy exponent of his opinion; and because he expresses it well, and with considerable ability, there is no reason why he should be made the subject of comment in the House. I am perfectly sure he has no personal consideration in the matter.

Mr. Gourley: He will be the next member for Geraldton.

Mr. TROY: He is not advocating it because he will be the next member for Geraldton. The present member for Geraldton is advocating it; and I am advocating it as the member for Mt. Magnet; and others advocate it, not because they are members for Geraldton or because they have any interest in the district, but because they want to see justice done to every portion of the State and the best interests of the State looked after as a whole. That is why they attended the recent deputation. I have no remarks to make in regard to the gentlemen who attended the deputation; they have their own opinions, and can express them: I simply express my own opinion as to the best route for the railway. We are told there is no auriferous country between Sandstone and Lawlers. I shall refrain from quoting the district known as Hancock's, four miles east of Sandstone: it would be absurd and ridiculous to quote it; but those who advocate the other route quote every tiddly-winking property along the route. I shall not even refer to the Indomitable lease; I only quote Maninga Marley, 19 miles from Sandstone, which, although in existence only a few years, has produced 27,000 ounces of gold, and has a population of 200 souls. We cannot find 200 souls between Leonora and Lawlers.

Mr. Gourley: If we get the line going we might have a thousand.

Mr. TROY: I hope so; but in the other case we have the people there without a line; yet this is a locality they claim is not auriferous. There are other localities in the immediate vicinity I shall not speak about, but I want to make a reference to another report which was circulated in the *West Australian* by a reporter who went up there recently to make inquiries, and if ever there was an innocent

abroad there was an innocent abroad in this connection. The report says—

"On the Sandstone route, however, there is nothing being worked beyond the Maninga Marley, 19 miles from Sandstone. Most of the intervening strip of 76 miles is considered not even auriferous by practical miners. The fact that a large area is held under pastoral lease also strengthens that conclusion."

Just imagine letting any man like that go out on a goldfield! Long before gold was heard of or known to exist in this State some of the people who were mind-ing sheep sat on the reefs. A shepherd sat hundreds of times on the reef of the Emerald Mine at Yalgoo, which proved wonderfully rich, and did not know there was any gold on it. The whole of the Murchison was peopled by pastoralists years before any gold was discovered. In fact, the early prospectors who went there got their supplies from the pastoralists; and this statement that the fact that a large area is held under pastoral lease strengthens the conclusion that it is not even auriferous is absolute balderdash.

The Minister for Works: Who says that?

Mr. TROY: The reporter sent up by the *West Australian* to make out a case for the Leonora route, and he largely quotes from the report of the State Mining Engineer. At any rate, that argument will not stand good; it is a most ridiculous one. He also says—

"It would also be strange if, out of the 2,000 miners who visited the old alluvial field at Black Range, many enterprising men left this tract of country unprospected."

The majority of these 2,000 men found sufficient for their wants at Black Range, and stayed there. This also is no argument. Years ago thousands of prospectors left Cue and found Lawlers, but left Black Range in between, and thousands of prospectors have come down from Pilbara to Cue and passed Peak Hill, and have then gone back from Cue to Peak Hill and left Meekatharra unprospected. Twelve years ago I went through Meekatharra to Abbots and Peak Hill, where

there were thousands of men, while there were only ten at Meekatharra. The person who would use this argument as a proof that there is no gold between Lawlers and Sandstone knows nothing about auriferous country or the possibilities of a goldfield. Not only was Black Range left neglected for years, but for some years there was a battery at the south end of Black Range, and even that was left idle. It was years after that the prospectors came back and rediscovered Black Range. Even while the teams from Mount Magnet to Lawlers, when Lawlers was being served from Mount Magnet, went across the district, and hundreds of passengers and travellers crossed over, Black Range was also left untouched and not found by them. Yet this individual says that one of the proofs that there is no auriferous country between Lawlers and Black Range is that people have gone across it and found nothing. They may go on doing that for hundreds of years, but it proves nothing. Again, there is another argument this reporter uses—

“Mr. Finch, a miner all his life, and a resident of the Lawlers district for the past 14 years, states:—‘I do not know of any auriferous country until you get 60 miles between Lawlers and Sandstone, for I have been over it dozens of times.’”

Mr. Finch has been such an enterprising man that he remained in Lawlers for all these years in spite of the fact that the Black range district broke out. The report goes on to say—

“Other miners also spoke in the same tone.”

These men who had been 14 years at Lawlers were satisfied there was nothing in between Lawlers and Mount Magnet, and they left Black Range to be found by others. And now on the strength of the assertion of these men who have been 14 years in Lawlers, and neglected Black Range, we are asked to accept it as proof that there is no auriferous country between Black Range and Lawlers. I do not know whether there is any auriferous country between Maninga Marley and Lawlers. I have been twice across from Leonora to Mount Magnet, and I know the route. I have never prospected it, and

I do not know whether there is very much there. Neither will any other man until it is prospected.

Mr. Gourley: You have told us what there is between Lawlers and Leonora, why not tell us about this district?

Mr. TROY: I have criticised what was said by the member for Leonora. After reading the speech of that hon. member, and the quotations in it from the reports of the State Mining Engineer, it would be difficult if one did not know a good deal of the country between Leonora and Lawlers. I make bold to say that there are very few goldfields in this State where one cannot find signs of gold every few miles. I am sure there will be gold found between Maninga Marley and Lawlers in the future, as there has between Mount Magnet and Lawlers. We heard a great deal about mining timber, but if it is possible that there is no gold between Maninga Marley and Lawlers, all that huge belt of valuable fuel, which is now intact, will be of the utmost value to Lawlers. It is to that district Lawlers will have to look for its future supply. There is a belt of 70 miles of uncut timber country there. That is the only place from which Lawlers will be able to obtain an adequate supply for years to come, unless other gold mines are found there. One other remark with regard to the plan of the proposed route and the article that appeared in the *Western Mail*. I find on the back of the map a large advertisement, occupying nearly the whole page, of G. W. White, general storekeeper of Lawlers. He is the chairman of this particular proposal for a railway from Leonora to Lawlers. Then Mr. H. Pool, the proprietor of the Cinderella battery at Lawlers, also advertises and states in the advertisement that he crushes for 10s. 6d. per ton. Prospectors in that district will be pleased to see this advertisement. I want to refer to this statement which appears in his advertisement—

“Mr. J. C. Richards (Richards and Pool) in the course of a chat on mining matters said, ‘There will be plenty of gold here when I am dead and gone. There is also some very promising country for prospecting 40 miles north of Lawlers, known as Birrigrin. I was

over this country 18 months ago, and although there was visible from the road a line of reefs on both sides, I saw no evidences of prospecting. I have been engaged in mining for the past 50 years and have seen nothing better anywhere from a prospecting point of view. I traversed it for 24 miles and was still in the same promising country."

Birrigrin is 25 miles north of Sandstone and is in the Cue electorate. It could not be served even by a railway from Sandstone to Lawlers. That argument is put forward in favour of a line from Leonora to Lawlers. It is amusing to think that even a reporter should be so simple, or that any man could put such balderdash in his paper and ask people to believe it. It is absurd to think that people who know anything about the geography of the country, and the position of the districts mentioned, could be taken in by a paragraph of that sort. I shall conclude my remarks by raising another argument in favour of Geraldton. It is this: The Government have been pursuing a policy of land settlement and have cut up a great deal of land round Geraldton, running even so far as my electorate. They are throwing open millions of acres of land east of the Midland railway line for settlement.

Mr. Scaddan: Millions of acres?

Mr. TROY: Yes: the whole of the land east of the Midland is being thrown open for settlement right up so far as Pindar on the Murchison.

Mr. Monger: Have you got much more to give us?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. Members must not interject.

Mr. TROY: It would be of no advantage if I had as the hon. member is too dense to understand it. My remarks are made to the intelligent members of this Chamber and not to any other persons. In order to give the farmers who have settled and are settling on the land in the locality I have mentioned a market for their produce it is essential that they should have the market which it theirs naturally. The farmers around Geraldton and east of the Midland railway, now

on Government land, must be served with a railway some day or other, so as to be given their natural outlet—the Murchison fields. It is the duty of the Government to give these people their natural market. If the Government did not intend to give the people there a proper market for their produce, they had no right whatever to put them on the land. This position must be considered by the Government. The member for Albany would feel very aggrieved if a railway were to be built which would deprive Albany of its natural country, and so would the people of Bunbury. In the same way the people of Geraldton will be more than aggrieved if they are robbed of the trade which should go to that town. I am making this speech on behalf of the people whose interests must be considered, and in order to serve the best interests of the State. The Government should not allow any great wrong to be done such as will be done if the line is constructed from Leonora to Lawlers. If this is done the result will be to cut off all these farmers from their natural outlet. Parliament should never allow this to be done, and my suggestion is that the motion should be amended so that it will be left to the Government to make the fullest inquiry, to take into consideration the conditions, the localities, and the people to be served, and then say which route the line should follow. This Parliament cannot judge. I do not want members to take my statements any more than those of the member for Leonora or the Minister for Mines. They have not the opportunity of seeing the country for themselves. All I want is that there shall be the fullest inquiry. I desire the interests of Geraldton, the natural port, to be served, and the fairest consideration given not only to the East Murchison people, by providing them with cheap facilities for the development of the country, but also the farmers in the various districts I have mentioned by giving to them their natural market. I move an amendment—

That all the words after "Lawlers" be struck out.

Mr BATH (Brown Hill): I second the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): Before dealing with the question before the House I desire to congratulate the member who has just sat down upon the length of his remarks. Certainly, he has submitted one or two very good arguments, and has given good reasons why the railway should be built from Sandstone to Lawlers, but I think those arguments could have been given voice to in a much shorter time. The main question for us to consider is whether at the present time the developments which have taken place in that northern field justify the construction of a railway. To a very great extent it appears to have been taken for granted that the developments which have occurred, fully justify the expenditure of money for the purpose of giving to Lawlers district railway facilities. Probably considering the number of people at present in that district it might be held that the Government would not be justified in bringing forward a Bill for the construction of the line, but when one carefully peruses the mining statistics of the field, and remembers the difficulties under which the properties have been worked, remembers the various districts that a railway will travel through between Leonora and Lawlers, the rich possibilities of these districts which are now semi-abandoned. I think, taking all these circumstances into consideration, we can justly claim that a railway to the Lawlers district is in every sense justified. As to where the railway should start from there is no doubt there is a great deal in the arguments brought forward by both sides. As far as the Belle Vue, Kathleen Valley, and Mount Sir Samuel, and the New England districts, and Wiluna are concerned, I do not think it matters much to the people in those places whether the railway be constructed from Sandstone or from Leonora. No greater advantage would be given to them. If the railway were constructed from Sandstone there is no doubt, as statistics prove so clearly, that the railway charges for the carriage of goods and mining timber would be less than if the railway were constructed from Leonora. That ground,

and the further ground brought forward by the member for Mount Magnet that if the railway were constructed from the Geraldton end it would give an advantage to the farmers in that district are very good arguments to bring forward in support of the construction from that end. On the other hand we have heard arguments brought forward by the member for Leonora. As far as the people of Leonora are concerned I do not believe they want this railway constructed at all. They would prefer to continue to have the railway terminus, and the people of the north would have to convey their goods from that terminus as has been done for some time past. I hardly think that the member for Leonora was justified in advancing as an argument the gold yield of mines such as the Trump and others adjacent to Leonora. Such an argument must weaken his case, for under no circumstances would the construction of the railway be of any assistance to those mines in any shape or form. We have several mining districts to the north, such as Darlot, which the construction of this railway would bring within closer reach than at the present time to the extent of some 30 or 40 miles. Darlot is a district with big possibilities. There have been good mines opened up there, mines which have been exceedingly rich: but without expenditure of large capital it is impossible for that place to develop in the future. That district has returned up to the present time gold of the value of over £220,000. Some 57,000 tons of ore have been crushed for a return of over 45,000 ounces; yet I do not believe at the present time there are over 100 men employed there, in fact I think the number is considerably less. It should be our aim to induce investors to take an interest in that field, and taking the rich stone won there in the past as a guide there should be a really good future in store for the district. Then there is the Wilson's Patch district. That place has turned out £40,000 worth of gold. The Diorite King has turned out £120,000 worth of gold. This is all the gold which has been won in the districts between Leonora and Lawlers, and districts which would be served by the railway, and which have been

proved to be auriferous almost the entire length between the present terminus and the proposed terminus. On the other hand east of Sandstone, as the member for Mount Magnet has mentioned, we have the Maninga Marley district which is returning a very fair proportion of gold up to the present time: in fact it is a prosperous little district, but it is not a great distance from Sandstone, being only 18 or 19 miles away, and it will be served by the railway which is at the present time being extended to the Black Range district. From Maninga Marley to Lawlers there are no mining operations, and although there are one or two places that might be worth prospecting it can be said that there is but little auriferous country between those two places, and the construction of the railway from Sandstone to Lawlers via Maninga Marley would pass through desert country the whole way. The fact that gold has not been discovered between those two districts I think would justify us in assuming that the probabilities are that gold will not be discovered there. There is a little auriferous country there, but whether it will ever be found to be gold producing or not, it is hard to say. As far as the Lawlers district is concerned that has turned out an enormous quantity of gold. Some 872,000 tons have been crushed for a yield of 370,000 ounces. I want hon. members to note the figures because they show the low nature of the yield. I have not worked out the average, but it would be less than 8 dwts. The Northern Gold Mines at Leonora have been working gold of a value of 15s. or 16s. a ton, and in that district there is little firewood, in fact it is almost devoid of mining timber and yet they have been able to struggle along for years even under present conditions. The Vivien is another mine with stone of almost similar value to that being treated at the Northern Gold Mines, and it will probably mean that unless some assistance is given to that district by means of a railway these two mines which at present employ a large number of men may close down. If we give them railway communication, and thus afford them facilities for obtaining fuel and mining sup-

plies at considerably less cost than at present, there should be a big future for Lawlers.

Mr. Collier: Where will they get fuel?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am trying to point out that there are arguments in favour of the construction of the line both from Sandstone and from Leonora, and I want to put a fair case before the House. Geographically the railway should start from Sandstone. On the other hand, if we build it from Leonora we shall go through a great deal of auriferous country. I am putting this question fairly before hon. members so that on coming to a decision they may know whether the value to the State will be greater by constructing the railway from Leonora or starting it from Sandstone. I think that is the fairest way of putting the question, and I do not think we need take notice of what some person may have written to the newspapers. From what I can judge the Lawlers people consider that the best route would be from Leonora. I think we should be able to judge for ourselves with regard to the mining conditions, and which would be the most profitable to the State. If we do not decide upon the construction of the railway it may mean a great loss to the State, because we may have these mines which at the present time are working in some instances at a loss, and in no instances at any very great profit, closing down. There is something more to be considered than the construction of this line to Lawlers; there is the district to the north of Lawlers which is one of very great promise indeed; I refer to Mount Sir Samuel. The Belle Vue mine there has had many vicissitudes; it is known not to be rich, but it is a mine which requires smelters and furnaces for the purpose of treating the ores. The ores cannot be treated there except at very great expense. Then there is Kathleen Valley, which at the present time is almost deserted, but there are a few mines there which have been proved to be exceedingly rich in the past, and I am sure if a railway were constructed close to these districts it would put fresh vim and energy into mining people and probably that district would take a new lease of life. In addition to

Mount Sir Samuel and Belle Vue there are a number of mining propositions which until recently were abandoned, but the promise of a five-head State mill renewed energy there and I believe there are 15 or 16 shows working in addition to the Belle Vue mine. Then further east we have the New England district of which reports have appeared in the Press lately. There are a number of big lodes carrying gold, and some are of fair value, and I am looking forward to diligent prospecting, and to the crushing plants which are already going up there, resulting in some fair mining propositions being opened up. Wiluna itself is a district which requires careful consideration indeed. It is a mining district which must have railway facilities given to it. The lodes there are of enormous size, carrying fair values. Mining timber is exceedingly scarce, and although up to the present the values won have been fairly large there has been nothing in the nature of reasonable profits from the work that has taken place. That is the case as far as I can judge. To my mind the railway to Lawlers is justified and I think it will repay the State if we build a light and cheap line. A question which requires the gravest consideration is where the railway should start from. As I have stated, geographically, if we are going to study the people of Lawlers, I think it should start from Sandstone; on the other hand we have a mineral belt the whole way from Leonora, and if we construct the railway from Leonora to Lawlers we are bound to reopen many of those good mines which were worked in the old days at Wilson's Patch, Mount Clifford, Diorite King, and in the Darlot districts. After carefully considering the merits of both of these routes, I feel inclined to urge the claim for the construction of the railway from Leonora in preference to the other end, but further information will be available should a Bill be brought down for the construction of the line. I hope the time will not be far distant when we will be able to get the whole railway system connected, that is the Murchison field connected with the Eastern field. Whether such a railway would pay at the present

time is problematical. But when we have the stock route open from the Kimberleys to Wiluna; and when we have those mines north of Lawlers also being developed, the question may take on a different aspect. I had almost forgotten to mention the fact that we have several copper lodes at Kathleen Valley; lodes exceedingly rich in copper. When I was there, the shaft of one of these properties was down to 60 feet, and the lode was from 4ft. 6in. to 5ft. wide; while the ore ranged from 17 per cent. up to 25 or 27 per cent. So the prospects of the copper lodes in the Kathleen district are exceedingly good. Still, of course, without a railway within reasonable distance, those lodes, even with 25 per cent. copper, could not be profitably developed. Taking all things into consideration, I think the railway to Lawlers is fully justified, and on the grounds that the railway from Leonora would open up auriferous country for the greater part of the distance I think it would prove a great advantage to the State, and I would support a railway from that end.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): The debate which has taken place on this question of a railway to Lawlers, while it gives evidence of a consensus of opinion as to the claims which Lawlers has for railway construction, is certainly not very convincing to hon. members who are looking for information as to which route should be adopted when the construction is decided upon. There has been so much talk of what is only problematical and vague, as to the prospects of this field or of that centre; and that vagueness has so characterised even the remarks of the Minister for Mines, who, as head of the Mines Department, should have a more intimate knowledge, perhaps, than any other member of the House, that I certainly think hon. members should hesitate before they express any opinion in favour of one route as against the other. In the past this action has been urged by hon. members in regard to other railway propositions. We have had proposals brought forward, in the shape of substantive motions, that railway communication should be given to some par-

particular centre or another; and the whole of the discussion has hinged, not on the claim of the particular centre to be served with communication, but rather on the claims of one centre as against another to be the starting point of the railway. What I would like to ask the Minister for Mines is as to whether this is a question of serving Lawlers with a railway, or a question of pandering to parochial instincts at one end or the other to the exclusion of any consideration of the interests of the centre we are asked to serve. That is the point we are asked to decide. We have never been asked to vote on any railway proposition but the battle has always been between centres of an existing railway system. We have only to take the spur lines on the Great Southern Railway to find that hon. members have been asked, not to vote on a resolution, but to commit themselves to a railway proposition itself; and later on we have had Ministers who supported that railway proposition, after visiting the district admitting that a great mistake had been made. That was the admission of the present Minister for Lands in regard to one of the railways on the Great Southern.

The Premier: Which railway was that?

Mr. BATH: From Katanning to Kojonup. The Minister for Lands stated that the best route had not been selected; that was after personal survey. The time for caution is not after, but before, the railway has been constructed, and Ministers should be the first to exercise that caution in recommending any railway proposition to the House. I look on this question from the point of view of Lawlers. That is the centre to be served; those are the consumers of food stuffs, the users of machinery and other mining requisites which will have to be carried over the railway. And it seems to me that the question to be decided is as to which route is going to supply them with those necessities at the cheapest possible rate. Under those circumstances I commend the modesty of the member for Mt. Magnet, who, while being desirous of affirming that Lawlers should be given railway communication leaves it, not to

hon. members who are unacquainted with the claims of either alternative route, but rather to be decided by responsible officers who can view the question from the various aspects which have to be taken into consideration. The debate we have had is an added argument in favour of what has been advanced by hon. members, what I myself have advocated in regard to previous propositions, namely, that before we are asked to pledge ourselves to any particular route we should be placed in the possession, not of mere generalities, not of vague anticipations that possibly this or that field may blossom out into prosperity, that some copper lode, to-day undeveloped, is going to produce a large amount of copper in the future, or that some other centre is going to be converted from an abandoned field into one of busy life. These are not the facts, this is not the evidence on which hon. members should be asked to give a decision. Let us have a report from those who are not interested in urging parochial claims, but who approach the question from an impartial standpoint.

Mr. Seaddan: Where are you to get them?

Mr. BATH: We have the officers of the Crown.

Mr. Taylor: The member for Mount Magnet refused to take the report of the State Mining Engineer.

Mr. BATH: The State Mining Engineer looks at it from only one point of view. There is the question of the cost of material, the question of advantage of one route over another. These are not to be determined by the State Mining Engineer; they are for an officer versed in railway construction. Then there is the question of a report of an officer who has experience in regard to freights, in regard to traffic. That, I submit, is the only information of value to hon. members. We have had repeatedly in the House, railway propositions that to-day are running us into a loss of £11,000; railways that have been urged with airy statements, with so-called optimism.

The Premier: If you had depended on the officer's report you would never have had the Norseman railway built to-day.

Mr. BATH: That is wrong. The report of the officers of the department on the railway proposition was first on the position of the field as it stood at that time.

The Premier: They submitted an estimate which has been doubled.

Mr. BATH: But they went further, and gave information as to what it was likely to be with railway communication; and I say that that report was favourable and not that it was of such a nature that if it had been acted upon the line would never have been built.

The Premier: The actual receipts are double the amount of the receipts estimated by the officers who prepared the report.

Mr. BATH: All the more to the credit of those who submitted the report. If it has proved even better than their report led us to expect it is to the greater advantage of the State, but it is in no sense an argument that their report was against the construction of the line. As a matter of fact we were prepared to construct the railway on that report.

The Premier: Who was?

Mr. BATH: The Government of which I was a member.

The Premier: There was nothing but reports for six years, and you did nothing.

Mr. BATH: At that time the proposition was scouted by members supporting the Ministry, but who afterwards turned round and supported the proposition.

The Premier: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. BATH: I say it was so.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member must not discuss the Norseman railway.

Mr. BATH: But the Premier—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Premier must not discuss it either.

Mr. BATH: The Premier is continually interjecting; how, then, can one avoid discussing it? What I wish to say is that on any railway proposition we have had we have been supplied with the scantiest of information. We have been asked to take it on trust, and we have afterwards had the admission of those who supported it that a mistake

had been made. These are costly mistakes, and we want the information before we are involved in the expenditure. That is why I say the House, while it may consider it advisable—and I believe it is—to recommend or give favourable consideration to the proposition for railway communication for Lawlers, should leave the route to be determined after mature consideration, and after more accurate information has been furnished, and more concrete facts adduced, in favour of one route or the other.

Mr. TROY: With the permission of the House I would like to alter my amendment to read, "That the words 'from Leonora' be struck out" instead of "all the words after Lawlers."

Leave given; amendment accordingly amended.

On motion by Mr. Keenan, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.11 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 11th October, 1909.

	PAGE.
Papers presented	996
Questions: Asiatic Hawkers	997
Schools, Timber Landings	997
Savings Bank, Coolgardie	997
Sanatorium, Coolgardie	997
Public Service Appointments	997
Railways, Financial results	997
Personal explanation, Port of Call for Mail steamers	998
Bill: Early Closing Act Amendment, 1b.	998
Coolgardie Recreation Reserve, Re-vestment, 2r., Con.	1023
Agricultural Bank Act Amendment, 2r.	1023
Annual Estimates, general debate concluded, Votes and Items discussed	998
Fire Brigades Bill, Select Committee, Member to give evidence	1024

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: By-laws Beverley Local Board of Health.