

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 13th December, 1905.

	PAGE
Questions: As to Notice not sufficient	371
Commissioner of Railways, how engaged	371
Federal Information	371
Bills: Factories Act Amendment (as to register- ing), 1A., points of order	371
First Readings (3)	376
Eight Hours Day, 2A. moved	413
Secret Commissions, 3A.	417
Aborigines, 2A. concluded	417
Papers and Returns moved for—	
Democratic Club Appeal	376
Detmold & Co., industrial dispute	376
Rabbit-proof Fence	382
J. J. Harwood's Retirement	383
Boilers and Machinery Inspection	393
Machinery Inspection Certificates	393
Railway Passengers, Kalgoorlie Suburban Lines	394
Private Members' Business, Remarks	392
Motions: Unemployed in the State, to provide work and how	377
Telegraph Facilities for Isolated Centres	395
Railway Project, Mount Maquet to Lawlers	402
Railway Survey, Northampton to Geraldton— Cue Line	412

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 2:30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTIONS—AS TO NOTICE NOT SUFFICIENT.

THE PREMIER, referring to a question by Mr. Walker, which had to be postponed, took advantage of the opportunity to request members generally to give at least 48 hours' notice of questions unless the matter was extremely urgent. Until Ministers received the Notice Paper as printed they were not always aware of questions to be asked. It frequently happened that it was midday when Ministers saw the Notice Paper for that day, and as the House met at 2:30 there was very little time to obtain answers to the questions.

QUESTION—COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS, HOW ENGAGED.

MR. A. J. WILSON asked: 1, What was the date upon which the present Commissioner of Railways took office? 2, What was the period of his engagement? 3, In the terms of his engagement, is the Commissioner entitled to any notice of determination of his engagement? 4, What is the latest date upon which such notice will have to be given him? 5, Is it the intention of the present Government to renew the engagement?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The term of service started 1st July, 1902. The Commissioner entered upon his duties and commenced his service the day following his appointment, which is dated 3rd July, 1902. 2, Six years from 1st July, 1902, with a proviso that if agreement not renewed by Government for five years at least from the expiration of fifth year of service, Commissioner entitled, or may be required, to take one year's leave on full pay as from expiration of fifth year of service. 3, No. 4, See answer to question No. 3. 5, Not yet considered.

QUESTION—FEDERAL INFORMATION.

MR. WALKER, without notice, asked the Premier: Has there been any notification yet from the Commonwealth Department in reference to the passengers by the ship "Scharnhorst," referred to in a question on a previous day?

THE PREMIER replied: I applied to the Collector of Customs (Federal) for the information, and thought he would be able to supply it; but I found that even he cannot give me the information without the authority of the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth. I will telegraph to the Prime Minister.

BILL—FACTORIES ACT AMENDMENT. AS TO REGISTERING.

MR. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison) moved, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill for "An Act to amend the Factories Act 1904." It might be necessary to go into some little explanation of his reasons for this motion. He was of opinion that it was absolutely necessary something should be done in this direction this session. He was sorry the Government did not see fit to bring forward an amending measure for the Factories Act, seeing that during the past few months the intentions of the Factories Act passed in 1904 had been evaded.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member was hardly in order. He thought the hon. member was only going to say a word or two. It was not customary to speak on a motion for leave to introduce a Bill.

MR. HOLMAN: It was not customary to speak on a motion for leave to introduce a Bill; but he was perfectly in order

in giving his reasons for bringing the measure forward. In all probability the session was so far advanced that unless he explained the matter fully and got an expression of the opinion of members, there might not be another opportunity of bringing this subject forward.

MR. SPEAKER: It was not the rule to speak on the first reading. That was what he wished to point out.

MR. HOLMAN admitted that.

MR. SPEAKER: Did the hon. member wish to move the first reading?

MR. HOLMAN: Yes. He intended to make some remarks on the first reading. If he were sure that he would have an opportunity of dealing fully with this matter on the second reading—

POINT OF ORDER.

THE PREMIER, on a point of order, submitted that the hon. member was travelling altogether beyond the degree of latitude the Speaker had extended to him. His motion was for leave to introduce a Bill. To that bare motion he would offer no opposition, but he wanted to see what the Bill was before he could legitimately either support it or oppose it. But if the hon. member proceeded to give the reasons for bringing in a Bill and gave the House beforehand the contents of the measure, surely he must see that it would be perhaps necessary for him (the Premier) to oppose the motion for leave to introduce. The hon. member's proper course was to move for leave to introduce the Bill and let us see what the Bill was.

MR. WALKER submitted that it was perfectly in order to debate a measure at any stage, even on leave to introduce. And the hon. member was perfectly in order in stating his reasons in form for introducing this measure at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member was strictly in order in speaking, but, as already stated, it had been the custom in the past to speak only on the second reading. In all his experience in the House he had never heard a member speak before on the introduction of a Bill, and he hoped the hon. member would curtail his remarks as much as possible. He had no desire to interfere with the rights of any member; and the

Standing Orders did not show that the hon. member was really out of order.

MR. TAYLOR: On a previous occasion when the Minister for Mines was in charge of the House during the James Government, he (Mr. Taylor) moved for the first reading of a Bill, and the Minister with his usual majority moved that the Bill should not be introduced. Had he (Mr. Taylor) taken the opportunity which he could have done under the Standing Orders of giving reasons for his motion in the same manner as the member for Murchison desired to do, he might perhaps have convinced the House of the necessity of the first reading, and the Bill might to-day have been on the statute-book. He would like Mr. Speaker's ruling, not for this occasion but for the future, in the interests of new members. He was perfectly satisfied the member for Murchison was in order in making a speech in favour of the motion or at any stage of the Bill.

RESUMING.

MR. HOLMAN: Had the session not been so far advanced, and the stake at issue not been so vital, he would not have attempted to intrude this measure upon the House in otherwise than the ordinary course of procedure. His sole reason for dealing fully with the matter at the present time was the urgent position and dire necessity which existed if we desired that the Factories Act of Western Australia should not be null and void. The Government had decided to register a company, See Wah & Company, in West Perth. In the first place, when they applied to the Chief Inspector of Factories for registration, the company was composed solely of Chinese, who had been in business in Western Australia previous to the date specified in the Factories Act 1904. The intention of the Legislature, when the measure was introduced, was to prevent any Chinese or other Asiatics from becoming owners of or workers in a factory unless engaged in that pursuit previous to November, 1903. Section 46 of the Factories Act read:—

No person of the Chinese or other Asiatic race shall be—(a) Registered as the owner or occupier of a factory unless he satisfies the Minister that he carried on the business

which he proposes to carry on in such factory before the first day of November, One thousand nine hundred and three; or (b) Employed or engaged by the occupier of a factory in or about the factory, unless the occupier satisfies the inspector that such person was so employed or engaged in a factory on or immediately before the date last aforesaid.

Anybody could see by reading that section that the intention was to prevent any Asiatic or Chinese person who was not in Western Australia prior to November, 1903, and not engaged in any business previous to that date, from being registered as the owner of a factory. He intended to show that provision had been evaded, and to show that it was purely the intention of the Legislature of this country—

POINT OF ORDER.

THE PREMIER was sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but submitted with all respect that he was most unmistakably out of order. The motion before the House was for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Factories Act. The hon. member had given us no idea of the contents of the Bill that he wished to introduce. [MR. HOLMAN said he would come to that directly.] The hon. member was entitled to give us that, if anything, and no more than that.

MR. BATH: The hon. member was giving it now.

THE PREMIER: No; he was quoting the case against See Wah & Co.

MR. TAYLOR: To illustrate the need for the Bill.

THE PREMIER: This was a complete innovation. When had there ever been a speech on a motion for leave to introduce a Bill? The Bill itself was not before us. This was a bald motion for leave to introduce. Under the Standing Orders there could be no debate even on a motion for the first reading; and we had not yet reached the first reading. Let the hon. member introduce the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER hoped that the member for Murchison would confine himself strictly to the motion. To speak at all on such a motion was certainly an innovation. He (Mr. Speaker) was bound by the Standing Orders, and could not prevent the hon. member from speaking; but for the convenience of the House it was preferable that the hon. member

should not speak on the motion. There was not power under the Standing Orders to rule that the hon. member could not speak; but he might, as far as possible, confine himself to the motion.

MR. HOLMAN: The object of the speech was to show the necessity for passing the motion, and for passing the Bill at the earliest opportunity.

THE PREMIER: There was no opposition to the motion.

MR. HOLMAN: That was perfectly understood. He asked the Premier to extend to a younger member of the House the courtesy which the Premier requested for himself on similar occasions. He (Mr. Holman) would not speak to the motion if the Premier would promise him an opportunity to-morrow to move the second reading. In default of that assurance, he would stand on his rights as a representative of the people. Hon. members in Parliament when the Factories Act was passed knew that the intention of the Legislature was to prevent Chinese or other Asiatics from working at any trade at which they had not been engaged prior to November, 1903.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): There was no Bill before the House, but only a motion for leave to introduce a Bill. The hon. member was discussing the Factories Act, which was not before the House.

MR. BATH: Was the Minister in order? The member for Murchison had a perfect right, when moving for leave to introduce a Bill, to give reasons showing the necessity for the Bill. The Premier could easily prevent a discussion on the second reading.

THE PREMIER: Proceed with the motion for the first reading.

MR. BATH: Standing Order 265 prevented the member for Murchison from discussing the first reading. The order read as follows: "The question 'that this Bill be now read a first time' shall be decided without amendment or debate." The only opportunity to show the urgency of the Bill was on this motion for leave to introduce.

THE PREMIER: The speech was an evasion of the Standing Order.

MR. BATH: It was in perfect accordance with the Standing Order, and absolutely within the hon. member's rights.

MR. SPEAKER had already ruled that the member for Murchison was in order. Under the Standing Orders it was impossible to rule otherwise. But he again asked the hon. member, for the convenience of the House and for the sake of public business, to confine himself strictly to the motion, and not to go into any more details than were absolutely necessary in reference to the Factories Act.

MR. FOULKES: It was quite clear from *May* that the decision of the Speaker was perfectly correct.

MR. WALKER: The point of order having been decided, could anything new arise from it?

MR. SPEAKER: No; but the member for Claremont was surely in order in giving a quotation upholding the Speaker's ruling.

MR. FOULKES: *May*, on page 436, laid down that "in making this motion"—a motion for leave to introduce a Bill—"he (the mover) may explain the object of the Bill, and give reasons for its introduction; but this is not the proper time for any lengthy debate on its merits." *May* seemed to draw a distinction. The duty of the mover was to explain the object of the Bill. The hon. member should briefly mention the object of the Bill, omitting all arguments on its merits.

MR. WALKER: *May* did not say so; but said simply that this was not the proper time for a discussion of the merits.

RESUMING.

MR. HOLMAN: Reasons had already been given for taking this perhaps unprecedented action. It was necessary to show the intention of the parent Act; to show how the Act had been evaded; and to do that he would quote the opinion of our present Agent General, Mr. Walter James, given during a discussion in this House on Clause 51, dealing with registration of Asiatics. Mr. Pigott, then Leader of the Opposition, contended on the 27th October, 1903, that instead of doing good, this clause might do much harm; that as there was free intercourse between the States and between all classes of people, it was not obvious how workers could benefit by shutting out Chinese who came here from the Eastern States to make furniture; that if the clause

were passed there would be fewer Chinese employed in manufacturing, and the quantity of imported furniture made by Chinese would be doubled soon after the passing of the Bill; that evidence given before the select committee showed that for particular work Chinese earned as much as £5 or £6 per week, and they were specially adapted for the manufacture of furniture, which was sold at a low rate notwithstanding the high wages paid. Mr. Pigott said it was surprising that the Premier had not said anything on this point, because behind this matter was the question of the rights of these people now among us. Mr. James then remarked that we were protecting their rights. Mr. Pigott asked whether the Premier thought that these people should be prevented from earning a living here. Mr. James answered that we allowed them to do that, but did not want any more of them here. Mr. Pigott said that a law had been passed by which we prevented an increase by immigration of Chinese in this State; but there were many thousands in Australia, and he wanted the opinion of the Premier as to whether they should be debarred from obtaining employment, or if they were in certain employment whether they should be kept to it and not allowed to go to any other employment, or whether it would be wise on the part of Australian Governments to buy out these Chinamen and send them away; that as the Premier had never given his true opinion in the matter he should give it now. Mr. James replied that as to the remedy every man had his opinion. The hon. member was incorrect in saying that he (Mr. James) had not expressed an opinion on Chinamen once they were in the State; for last session he had said that while they were in the State and had employment, their right should be preserved; that the clause preserved their right and provided that any person carrying on business in a factory on 1st November, 1903, should be entitled to register, other qualifications being satisfactory; and by Subclause (b.) it was provided that any Chinaman employed in a factory on that date could continue to be so employed; that in other words the Government did not desire to increase the number of alien owners of factories, or Chinese workers in factories; that he

did not agree with the idea that because Chinamen were here they had no right to work, but it was because he desired to preserve their right that Clause 51 was worded as it was. The Factories Bill of 1903 passed both Chambers and was discussed in both; and the debates clearly showed the intention to prevent any Chinese or other Asiatics from registering in Western Australia, unless engaged in some industry prior to November, 1903. The Act had been evaded, and the object of this motion was to prevent similar evasions. When the Factories Act came into operation in January last, inspectors were sent out to get particulars and to register factories. In January or February some Chinese, See Wah and several others, found that Section 46 of the Act prevented them from registering as factory-owners. Messrs. Moss and Barsden, solicitors, advised them that they could register by forming a company. Members would surely agree that if it was unwise to allow one Chinaman to register as a factory-owner, it was equally unwise to allow 6 or 7 to register. A Chinese company was formed in January or February of this year. Mr. Barsden, who had previously made application for registration to the chief inspector of factories, who had raised the point, came to see him (Mr. Holman), then Minister for Labour. When asked for particulars Mr. Barsden had stated that there were seven Chinese in the company, and that none of them had carried on any trade in Western Australia previous to November, 1903; that they were registered as a company, but desired to be registered as owners of a factory. He (Mr. Holman), acting in accordance with the intention of the Act, and being determined to administer the Act as Parliament intended it should be done, had refused to countenance any registration of a company of Chinese; and Mr. Barsden, having found it impossible to have the company registered with all Chinese, had taken other means of doing so. He (Mr. Holman) had obtained advice from the Crown law authorities.

POINT OF ORDER.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member is now explaining the Bill. I submit, with all respect to your ruling, Mr. Speaker, to which I bow, that the hon. member is trespassing on your generosity

and on the generosity of this House. All he says now I presume he will say again if the Bill reaches the second reading; and if this practice is to be allowed, and members are going to take advantage of the opportunity afforded to them under the Standing Orders, the business of the House will be unduly prolonged. I do not for a moment wish to question your ruling; but I submit that the hon. member is taking an unworthy advantage of it.

MR. BATH: Is the Premier in order in imputing unworthy motives to the member for Murchison?

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think the Premier intended it in that way. I am bound to ask the member for Murchison again, in justice to the Assembly, to confine himself to the matter at issue, and not to go into detail. I am bound to say also that the hon. member is intruding on the liberty I have given; because I could have ruled otherwise. No provision being on the Standing Orders, I was bound to do the fairest thing and to give the hon. member every liberty; but I am bound to rule him out of order if he goes into details.

MR. BATH: I submit that the hon. member is perfectly within his rights, and is acting in accordance with the Standing Orders.

MR. SPEAKER: I have ruled that already. I do not know how often it is necessary to rule it. I ruled from the first that the hon. member is in order, and I do not think there is necessity to rise to other points of order.

RESUMING.

MR. HOLMAN promised that any remarks he made now would not be repeated on the second reading. The Premier imputed unworthy motives; but he asked him to extend the same courtesy on a matter which he considered of vital importance to the people of Western Australia that he would extend to him in a matter of a similar nature. As to registering under the Act, the advice of the Crown law authorities had upheld his opinion. It was on the 16th March that Mr. Barsden had waited upon him, and on the 28th March the company was augmented by three white men, one taken from the office of Messrs. Moss and Barsden, and each white man had been

allotted one share in the company in which the seven Chinese held 650 shares between them. These three registrations had been made on the 27th March, about a fortnight after Mr. Barsden had waited on him with the prior application. The case had been taken into court, but before the time for the hearing Mr. Ewing had advised the Government in a certain direction, which prevented the courts giving a decision on so important a question. It showed clearly that the Act was in some respects weak in not preventing a Chinaman from forming himself into a company by getting four dummies.

RULING.

MR. SPEAKER: I will quote for the hon. member from *May*, and insist upon his adhering to this ruling:—

In making a motion for leave to introduce a Bill, he may explain the objects of the Bill and give reasons for its introduction; but unless the motion be opposed, it is not a proper time for any lengthy discussion on its merits.

The hon. member has occupied the time of this House for nearly half an hour, and if he continues I must rule him out of order.

MR. HOLMAN: I submit that I am giving reasons for the absolute necessity for the early introduction of this Bill.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You are discussing the merits of the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not wish any farther authority than *May*.

MR. HOLMAN: I have not touched on the Bill itself; I do not intend to do so. I am giving reasons for the introduction of the Bill.

RESUMING.

MR. HOLMAN: The reason for the introduction of this Bill was that the provisions of the Factories Act had been disregarded and evaded. The fact of these Chinese being able to get registered showed that the Act was weak. His intention was to ask the Premier to give this measure a chance of being carried this session. Section 46 was so weak that it would allow any Chinese to come into Western Australia and effect registration, despite the provisions of the Act, now that Western Australia was part of the Commonwealth. The Bill would

provide that no company, co-operative society, or association of persons should be registered as the holders or occupiers of a factory if any shareholder or member of such company or association was of Chinese or other Asiatic race; and also that if any persons of Chinese or other Asiatic race became shareholders of any company, society, or association, the Minister would be empowered to cancel the registration of the company. He moved that leave be given to introduce the Bill.

Question passed, leave given.

Bill introduced, and read a first time.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

Land Act Amendment, introduced by the Minister for Lands.

Life Assurance Companies Act Amendment, received from the Legislative Council.

Fisheries, received from the Legislative Council.

PAPERS—DEMOCRATIC CLUB PROSECUTION.

MR. T. H. WALKER (Kanowna) moved: "That all papers and correspondence in connection with the withdrawal of the appeal of Hermann, one of the parties convicted at the police court in the police prosecution of the Democratic Club, be laid on the table of the House."

THE PREMIER: The papers were already on the table.

MR. SPEAKER: The laying of these papers on the table had already been the subject of a motion which had been passed.

. Motion withdrawn.

PAPERS—DETMOLD & CO., INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE.

MR. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison) moved:

That all papers and correspondence in connection with the dispute at Detmold's, Fremantle, be laid on the table of the House.

He understood that the question had already been agreed to; but on a point of personal explanation he desired to make a few remarks. Speaking a few days previously on the urgency motion, he had made some remarks concerning

the Hon. M. L. Moss, the Honorary Minister—

THE PREMIER regretted having to make himself objectionable to the hon. member, but this was a motion for the production of certain papers, and those papers had already been laid on the table.

MR. HOLMAN: Members could rise at any time to a point of explanation as he was now doing. He was perfectly well aware that the papers had been produced, but he was explaining that he had made certain remarks with reference to Mr. Moss, in which he had said that Mr. Moss had given an opinion in Detmold's case, and to prove that what he (Mr. Holman) had said was true, though it was denied by Mr. Moss, he had desired to move for the production of these papers. They were now produced; but he did not wish to miss the opportunity of making an explanation. Mr. Moss had, in an interview with the *Morning Herald*, dated the 8th inst., stated that he (Mr. Holman) had been inaccurate; but if any persons desired to go through the papers produced they would see that what he (Mr. Holman) had stated was true, and that Messrs. Moss and Barsden had given an opinion in the Detmold case.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member must make an explanation only, for the motion had been passed. The explanation must be brief.

MR. HOLMAN: Very briefly he could explain to the House the reason that Mr. Moss gave the opinion that proceedings could not be taken, as they would have to be instituted by the registrar or the union of employers. He asked members to read the papers themselves, and see if the remarks he made on the urgency question were correct. He was sorry the Premier had forestalled him in producing the papers, without giving an opportunity of placing the case before members.

Motion not pressed.

MOTION—UNEMPLOYED IN THE STATE.

TO PROVIDE WORK, AND HOW.

MR. WALKER (Kanowna) moved—

That in the opinion of this House, this session should not close without some provision being made to satisfactorily provide for the unemployed.

He said: I shall not apologise to the

House for introducing this motion. We listened with a great deal of pleasure to the eloquence of the Premier last night in making his Budget Speech. It is not my intention to deal with that matter now; but we did expect to hear the Premier, in a statement of such importance, make some announcement with regard to the unemployed of this State. We are told that the Government want to get into recess and attend to their offices. We are told that is for the purpose of economising, saving money. We are not told that the Government are anxious in any way to put into office, into employment, the citizens who in this city and on the goldfields are seeking for work, and have been out of work for some considerable time; who can find no avenues for their energies. I take it the very first duty of any Government is to see to the employment of its own citizens. Whether we believe in those doctrines that are daily becoming more popular and which are designated as socialistic, and believe it is the duty of the State to find employment for its own children, or not, this is certain, that in Western Australia, as in all the States of the Commonwealth, the State is the chief employer of labour. The citizens are employed, not only in such large undertakings as the State railways, not only in such important duties as in the Education Department, but in a manifold number of channels the citizens are the direct servants of the State. Therefore, the State becomes the pattern, so to speak, to other employers. We can never blame private employers for treating their employees carelessly or without any regard to humanity if the State itself is a harsh taskmaster, a slavedriver, if the State shows no regard whatever for the employment of the people. And yet I submit that wherever the State is employing men in this country it is showing the very worst example to citizen employers. On the railways the least possible wages are paid. The Premier knows, undoubtedly—

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The highest wages are paid.

MR. BATH: Six shillings a day are being paid in many cases.

MR. WALKER: Amongst some of the highest employees, like Mr. George

and Mr. Short, I admit the highest wages are being paid.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The highest wage in Australia is paid, taking it all round.

MR. WALKER: Is not the move of Mr. George now to get below the 7s. a day for the ordinary workman? Is it not a fact that, as the Leader of the Opposition interjects, some of the men are getting 6s. a day?

THE PREMIER: The highest wages in Australia are paid here.

MR. WALKER: Is 6s. a day the highest wage paid in Australia, or even 7s., for unskilled labour?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: How many are getting 7s. a day?

MR. WALKER: I would like to tell the hon. member and he knows it, that there are rules and regulations in force in the railway service to prevent a man getting beyond the stage at which he starts. There are men engaged as casual hands who, by virtue of their long service, would become permanent employees; but they are "sacked" for a day or two and then taken back again, so that they shall continue as casual hands and at a low rate of wage.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The railway men are the best paid in Australia.

MR. WALKER: It is a pity if that be the best that this State can do. It is not alone in the railways that they are underpaid, but wherever the State employs men. It is not alone in that respect. Wherever men can be "sacked" and sent about their business, in other words wherever the State can do without flesh and blood, it tries to do it. Not only, to my mind, is that a wrong example set to other employers, but it is wrong in this, that the State should be constantly on the alert to find avenues of employment for its citizens. If the State cannot find employment in the departments already open in the ordinary channels, it is the State's duty to create channels for labour. That is done now in some particulars. Is not the fact of owning the railways and working them as a State concern finding work for citizens? If the State can do this in one direction, why not in another? Why cannot it make provision in other channels? Why cannot the State, if it can own such railways, own State mines? Why should the mining

wealth of the country be given over to the rich capitalists of Europe or the speculators of our own country? We have had examples in the past of Governments paying all expenses from a monopoly in the mines. Some of the richest Governments in the past have been mine owners. I submit if it were necessary to find work, there is a source of employment for our own citizens; but there is a better way than that. Our State is advertising at the present moment for immigrants to come and settle on our lands whilst we have hundreds of men seeking employment in our own midst. I ask, why invite foreigners to settle on our lands while we have citizens to place on our lands if the State will exercise a little energy. What is to prevent our Government setting our unemployed to work clearing lands, making them fit to be occupied; dividing the country into agricultural areas and setting our citizens to work to make roads through them, to clear the timber from them, and if necessary to erect buildings on them; in fact, to create farms fit for people to live upon? What is to prevent our Government doing that, and then creating farms? What is to prevent the Government working these farms for the good of the State? I am suggesting no new thing. This experiment has been tried in Europe, and found to be successful. By these means we should establish amongst us labour colonies, taking all our surplus men who cannot find employment, as the times are, and place them where they could be not only a means of living to themselves, but of productiveness to the country generally. Are there not other sources of employment that the Government could find? Let me take one example, the fishing industry, if it can be called such; at the present time it is in the hands of foreigners. Very few of our race of people are engaged in the fishing trade. By virtue of the aliens having a monopoly in regard to this trade, that article of diet, which should be almost a staple article of diet, one of the most prolific of our foods, is the most costly. There are very few who can indulge in the luxury of a fish meal in the city of Perth, close to the ocean. What should prevent the Government of this State obtaining a monopoly of the fishing trade? The experiment has been tried in other

countries, and it requires very little management.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: What country?

MR. WALKER: I say it has been tried in the past, and it can be done here with very little trouble; and if this State can run a railway, why not run a fishery? Why not take that monopoly under its charge, and have its own fishing boats, its own fishermen? Why not let it have its own fish markets and its own means of distributing this article of diet? I am only suggesting one of the several things that could be done by the Government if they were anxious to find employment for their citizens, were the Government not actuated only by a spirit of private enterprise. What are the Government providing in the way of public works, undertakings to absorb our unemployed? I accuse the Government of inconsistency, in advertising for immigrants to come to this country whilst they are making no provision to absorb our citizens who are seeking for work and cannot find it. The Government may tell us that they have done something to find work. They have a Minister for Commerce and Labour, and under that Minister they have certain labour bureaux in the country, to which men may apply for work; and if the work is forthcoming they are sent to it. What are the labour bureaux, conducted by the Government? Nothing but cheap agencies to supply cheap labour to the private employers throughout the country. They are means of reducing wages. Men are sent from these labour bureaux to get just what a man in want of a servant likes to give to them. There is no attempt made to send men at the current rate of wages, no attempt to preserve the rights of men banded together in unionism at a certain rate of wages. They are simply a go-between in the interests chiefly of the employer of labour. But even then what do the Government do? For everyone they find a billet for, there are 20 to 40 on their hands. Day by day men go to labour bureaux to ask for a chance of earning their living in this country, whilst the Government are advertising for poor immigrants from the outside world. Day by day these people ask for a billet, and month after month they

return to find there is no opening for them, and every week the number of unemployed is increasing. Month by month their numbers are augmenting, and no attempts made to absorb these people. I ask members to recollect that for every man who applies for a billet, there are 20 who hesitate to do so, who need to do so, who are out of work but who cannot bring themselves to that state of humiliation to go to the labour bureau and ask for employment. It is only those who are reduced to the very lowest straits, who have tried every possible avenue to seek employment, who will visit the labour bureau, and yet there is not one step taken by the Government to provide for these people; not one suggestion that will enable these people to take hope. One hon. member seems to sneer at my figures. I have sent down to the labour bureau for a copy of the last return and I find as regards registrations in Perth that the total number of men who called during the month in search of work was 659, for one city. Of this number 345 were new registrations and 314 renewals, that is, men who called who had been registered during the year prior to the month of November. The trades or occupations of the 659 applicants were as follow:—Labourers, 255; handy men, 70; handy lads, 57; farm hands, 48; cooks, 28; carpenters, 21; hotel hands, 14; horse-drivers, 12; gardeners, 11; clerks, 10; butchers, 9; miners, 8; painters, 8; strikers, 7; kitchenmen, 7; blacksmiths, bricklayers, stonemasons, grooms, 5 of each; yardmen, fitters, dairymen, plumbers, 4 of each; and 58 miscellaneous. Out of the whole of that number those who found engagements for the month were only 206, that is not one-third of those who made application for work. Then the classification of work found was as follows:—Labourers, 78; farm hands, 47; bushmen, 11; handy boys, 10; quarrymen, 6; handy men, 5; cooks, 5; gardeners, 4; carpenters, 4; boys for farms, 4; woodcutters, 3; dairymen, 3; yardmen, 3; plumbers, 3; kitchenmen, 3; and 17 miscellaneous. That is one town, the town of Perth. Fremantle is almost as bad. There were 162 new registrations and 132 renewals, a total of 294; close upon 300 in the town of Fremantle in the month of November, and

the engagements numbered only 86 out of all that number. No one can dispute that these figures are somewhat serious. They tell more than the mere comparison which the numbers reveal. They are a revelation of extreme suffering in our community, a suffering that may be unknown to the sleek members of the Government, but which other members may possibly come into contact with, and in relation to which they may have some sympathy. In Kalgoorlie, where if anywhere prosperity should ring, where we are taking gold from the earth, and where we are supposed to be creating millionaires, the applications numbered 92. There were 52 new registrations and 40 renewals, and there were only 12 engagements, classified as follow :—Miners, 3; handy men, handy youths, labourers, and woodcutters, 2 of each; and fitters, 1. I may say that this is a very low registration for Kalgoorlie. In previous months I have certainly noticed the registration much higher.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: They are improving at Kalgoorlie.

MR. WALKER: On one month undoubtedly.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: What for the previous month?

MR. WALKER: I have not the figures, so that I cannot exactly say. I wish members to recollect that these figures by no means show the real state of the unemployed class.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: They are not so great in number.

MR. WALKER: The hon. member need not joke. It is not a matter for jesting.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not jesting.

MR. WALKER: To these people out of work it is no matter to make light of.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not making light of it.

MR. WALKER: I know men who have known better days who are compelled to starve or live upon one meal a day. There are men without shelter in this land of Western Australia, men who have to depend upon daily charity in order to live, and this too when we are asking the Agent General to send Scandinavian and other foreigners to work in our midst. This is the state the Government is bringing us to. We are swelling the ranks of the

unemployed by the policy of the Government. We are doing nothing to absorb these people, to give them the means to live. It so happens that in this century a man cannot live without work, unless he is a Minister. He is obliged, in order to secure his food, to work, and therefore is it not the duty of the Government to find means for these people to live as citizens, and obtain them work? Should not that be the very first policy of the Government? It is their first duty towards the citizens. Instead of that, what do we find? We find the Government proposing all kinds of concessions to private enterprise, all kinds of so-called spur lines, light railways, a railway from Port Hedland to Pilbarra—all to find means of speculation. ***[MEMBER:** To find work.] That is not Government employment of these men; it is not finding work for them. The Government can find any amount of room for capitalists and so-called enterprise in speculation, but for these people what do they propose? What do they propose immediately to do for some relief? Do they propose anything? Does not the cry of these people starving and dying in our very midst appeal to them?

MR. GULL: Will not the building of these railways give work for them?

MR. WALKER: It will give temporary work; but what are these spur lines for the population seeking work? What are we going to do for our vast army of undisciplined workmen; I mean those who have no particular trade, but are to be classified purely as labourers?

MR. GULL: And professional unemployed.

MR. WALKER: We have very few of those, I am happy to say, in West Australia. There are very few who are making any agitation with these men. These people who visit the labour bureau week in and week out, month after month, make no complaints. They go there week after week without any agitation. If a member has seen them waiting in this broiling weather, he will have some pity for these people who are forced to undergo not only the degradation and humiliation but starvation.

MR. GULL: I fully appreciate that.

MR. WALKER: Does the hon. member appreciate a Government that will do nothing for them, that will only find this

stone for them when they ask for bread? What is this labour bureau doing? Members laugh. They have had these problems in other States, in New Zealand in particular. In days gone by, when times were hard, they had vast numbers of people who were needy and required employment. What did Mr. Seddon do on occasions like this? He declared certain portions of New Zealand to be agricultural areas. He cut these places up into small farms. Whoever took up this land was immediately employed in making roads to the spot. He found work for the people in New Zealand, and that is the reason why Mr. Seddon is so beloved as he is, and so respected. He was not lacking in resources. He found work which was necessary to absorb the citizens of New Zealand, and I say it is the duty of the present Government to clear off that eyesore which we have in our labour bureau. In this State, with its enormous area, advertising for population, wanting immigrants, the spectacle every day in the week of a crowd of people waiting in the heat of the sun to get a chance of obtaining a billet is disgraceful. It is a humiliation to a country calling itself civilised, and it can only be through bad management and bad government that these people, strong enough to work, are out of work. We ought to hear from the Premier what proposals he means to make to do away with our labour bureau and give a chance of work to men here, to enable them to live without being dependent upon the State or private charity. What is proposed? I submit that until we hear some definite proposal of this kind we ought not to allow the Ministry to go into recess to make these regulations and provide for these spur lines and private enterprise.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is right. Do not allow them to do anything.

MR. WALKER: I move the motion standing in my name.

MR. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison): I second the motion.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): This motion I believe is in order, but I think it sails very closely to the wind and is almost out of order. I should like to know how the hon. member suggests that employment should be

found for the unemployed without the expenditure of public money; and the expenditure of public money does not rest with the hon. member. But if there had been anything in the point of order, I should not have raised it, nor did I, because it is such a pleasure to listen to the hon. member. One envies him his eloquence, and one envies him still more his wonderful power of imagination. The hon. member finds fault with the Government—he is very particular in emphasising the “existing Government”—for having such an iniquitous office as the Labour Bureau. But other Governments besides this Government have had a Labour Bureau; and it has certainly not become more sinful during the last two or three months than it was previously. The object of the Labour Bureau in this State is to render it easy for persons out of work to secure employment. They are not charged any fees for registration, as such persons were prior to the establishment of the Government bureau; so I think the hon. member is drawing rather more strongly than usual on his wonderful imagination, when he says that these bureaux were established solely in the interest of the employer. The hon. member finds fault because the Labour Bureau does not fix a scale of wages, does not say to the man who goes there starving, the man anxious to obtain a crust of bread, “Although you are starving, you shall not work for less than 7s. a day.” That is the complaint against the Labour Bureau. The hon. member allows himself to be carried away by his eloquence; and—shall I put it thus—by a desire to say something which will advance his interests in the eyes of a section of the public?

MR. TAYLOR: That is hardly a fair statement.

THE PREMIER: If it is not fair, the hon. member (Mr. Walker) has said things much more unfair. He has insinuated that members on this side of the House, and especially the Ministry, have no sympathy with the poor.

MR. WALKER: That was in answer to interjections.

THE PREMIER: He has referred to “sleek members of the Government,” and has said it is impossible for anyone in this State, except Ministers, to live without working. That is a most ungene-

rous remark; for every member of this Ministry works as hard as any labouring man works, and a great deal harder than does the hon. member himself. I venture to say that our sympathy takes a much more practical turn than does the sympathy of the hon. member. Sympathy is all very well. When it is expressed in words only, it does not cost much. A good many of us on this side could turn out such sympathy by the ream. That would not affect our pockets. Sympathy of that kind does little good to the person sympathised with. Had the hon. member been practical, had he suggested some means by which work could be found for the unemployed, that would have been more to his credit. But he says, "The Government intend to build spur lines, agricultural railways: why not give employment to men instead?" But will not the building of those lines in itself give employment, always assuming that the men are prepared to do an honest day's work for an honest day's pay? But if the hon. member suggests that it is the duty of this or any other Government day by day to employ anyone who happens to be out of work, I would ask him to reflect for a moment on what would be the consequences. Unfortunately, this is not the only State—and no one regrets it more than I—in which there are some unemployed. In the other Australian States there is an unemployed difficulty. Here, at all events, the problem has not reached such an acute stage as to be described by that term. If all unemployed men could go to a paternal Government, who would say "You are out of work? We are sorry. Take this pair of gloves, dust the furniture, and you will get 10s. a day"—if that were once known, we should very shortly have an exodus of the unemployed from the other States to this, and the unemployed would be, like the poor, always with us.

MR. SCADDAN: You would not accuse the Minister for Works of doing anything of that sort.

THE PREMIER: He has too much common sense. But dealing with the statement of the member for Kanowna, that we are actually advertising for more poor people to come here, whilst we have unemployed with us, the hon. member surely knows—I will not say that he

surely knows, because if he had known he would not have contradicted the fact—but he ought to have known that the immigration we are encouraging is that of men of at least small capital; and the mere introduction of those men, even though their capital be small, means the employment of other men. I object strongly to the statement that the Government have no sympathy with the poor, and no desire to find work for the honest worker. We have; but it is not part of the duty of this or of any Government to make work for what are called the unemployed. I hope we shall never have to do so. That has never been necessary in Western Australia, and I hope it never will be. And though I regret that men should be seeking work, still I believe that in the vast majority of cases, men prepared to take honest work at an honest rate of pay, though they may have some difficulty in securing employment at once, can secure it more readily in this State than they can anywhere else. Anything that the Government can do legitimately to assist these unemployed whom we have amongst us will be done. But it is no use the hon. member's wandering away into the realms of fancy, and saying it is the depth of humiliation for a man to have to go to the Labour Bureau to register his name for employment. Is it the depth of humiliation for a man to go to a private registry office? Is it the depth of humiliation for a man to apply for work anywhere? Then I submit that conversely, it is the depth of humiliation for an employer to go about seeking the employee. If it is humiliating for a man to have to ask for work, surely it is humiliating for an employer to ask a man to work for him. The argument must cut both ways; and with due respect to the hon. member, I say that such an argument is all fudge. The honest man who wants an honest day's work is not ashamed to ask for it; and the only reason for his going to the Labour Bureau is that it costs him nothing to be registered there.

MR. TAYLOR: Because he has failed everywhere else.

THE PREMIER: Then that shows the advantage of the Labour Bureau. Having failed everywhere else, having failed at registry offices where he has had to pay

fees, he goes to the Labour Bureau where he has to pay nothing. That proves at once the utility of the Labour Bureau. But is it a fact that the ranks of the unemployed are daily increasing? On the contrary, they are diminishing. But what does the hon. member say? That there is a vast army of unemployed waiting daily outside the bureau. [MR. WALKER: 659.] His own figures show that in one month there were 340 fresh applications. [MR. WALKER: In addition to the old ones.] The others may have extended over a year. But even if the whole 650 came in that one month, 600 spread over a month is hardly a vast army per day. And it is this exaggeration of the position that does harm to the people whom the hon. member, I honestly believe, wishes to benefit. If he would content himself by stating the true position, and not exaggerating, not laying sin at the door of those who are just as anxious as he to do good, the result would be better for the workers, and more to the hon. member's own credit.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): It is somewhat amusing to hear one sinner admonishing an alleged sinner on the other side of the House. If the member for Kanowna has exercised his imagination, I can compliment the Premier on the possession of a still greater power of imagination exhibited in his remarks this evening. I wish to say at the outset that I do not agree with the remarks of the member for Kanowna as to the inutility of the Labour Bureau in this State. In connection with a trade union on the goldfields, I have had practical knowledge of an attempt to assist men to secure employment without subjecting them to the rapacity of the proprietors of private registry offices. I believe that the innovation of the Government Labour Bureau has been of great benefit, by giving men an opportunity of meeting employers without the mediation of the employment brokers and the consequent payment of large fees for their services. While, perhaps, we may not regard the Labour Bureau as a solution of the labour problem, I would say that the attempt on the part of the State to facilitate the securing of employment by the unemployed is worthy of commendation from members of this

House. The Premier has been pleased to wax facetious as to some of the remarks of the member for Kanowna; but even supposing there are but 690 unemployed registered in the metropolitan area, I say that is 690 too many. We know that there is a large number of people who are willing and able to work, but find it difficult, and in some cases impossible, to secure employment; and I do not think that any Government could devote itself to a worthier object than to endeavour to provide permanent employment for those men. But we cannot hope, from the policy of the present Administration as outlined by them, that any of their proposals will have such a beneficial result. I remember—and probably some of my colleagues on this (front Opposition) bench know—that during the recent election the emissaries of the National Political League were very active in telling the electors of this State that as a result of the work of the Labour Government, the amount of money expended from revenue on public works and buildings had been reduced, and that if the electors would only return the Opposition to power, and give them an opportunity of administering the affairs of the State, that condition of things would be altered; that instead of the miserable sum provided by the Labour Government for public works and public buildings, the Opposition would provide a large sum from revenue to secure work for the people, and to make them all jolly and fat. Well, whatever reduction in public works expenditure may have been necessitated by the financial situation at the beginning of 1904, or at least when the Labour Government took control of the affairs of State, that reduction has been made still greater by the fact that in the policy as outlined last night, the amount provided for public works is smaller still. And the only alternative we have presented to us as the means of providing work for these people who so blindly and implicitly trusted what they were told by these election emissaries, is that we are to have the expenditure of loan moneys on public works. So far as Australian experience is concerned, we know that the expenditure of loan money on public works of this description has only resulted in brief periods of prosperity and plentiful employment, and that the ultimate result,

when the borrowing capacity of the State has reached a reasonable limit for the time being, is that people are thrown on the labour market and the resultant depression is ten times keener. In New Zealand for instance, in 1890, prior to the advent of the Liberal-Labour Administration, a precisely similar state of things obtained. They had had a very riotous taste of joyous expenditure, and for the time being had enjoyed a brief prosperity; but instead of that prosperity continuing to shed light, and instead of gaining population, the colony found that the number of departures considerably exceeded the number of arrivals; and the depression became so intense that the people looked for a change of Government. They returned an Administration that tackled the question in a manner which I am afraid will not be emulated by my friends opposite. They decided that before they would indulge in the luxury of building branch or spur railways which would be unprofitable for years, they would utilise the lands lying along the existing railways; and so they increased the earnings of those railways without incurring any expenditure on new lines; and they gained additional expenditure for public works without any recourse to the foreign money. In every case it had the effect of increasing the prosperity of the people. The statement of Mr. Ballance when introducing his first Budget has been realised ten times more than was anticipated by him. To-day we find an administration carrying out the policy initiated by Mr. Ballance with such great success that they were returned from the polls at the recent election stronger than ever. By taxing unimproved values of land and by purchasing areas only previously utilised for pastoral purposes, in New Zealand they were enabled to settle large areas of land along existing railways; and year after year, as the result of the increased revenue accruing from their policy, they were able to make startling reductions in railway rates; and the farmers and pastoralists engaged in the export trade of New Zealand have had a continuous prosperity, and in their turn, by the expenditure of money, they have been able to give employment to carpenters, stonemasons, bricklayers, and different kinds of artisans. It is a policy which, if the

hon. gentlemen on the Government side of the House had any statesmanlike qualities, would commend itself to them. It is not by any policy of paring down expenditure from revenue on public works and buildings with a view to making it up by having recourse to loan money that we can make Western Australia prosperous. The member for Kanowna is to be commended for giving us the opportunity for discussing this matter; but if he hopes for any good result to accrue from the administration of our friends opposite and that their efforts will provide a solution of the problem he has presented to us, I can only say he is of an infinitely more hopeful disposition than myself.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. Frank Wilson): It is almost too hot this afternoon to reply with any degree of warmth to the arguments of some members opposite. I listened with a great amount of pleasure to the eloquence of the member for Kanowna. He is always worth listening to, even if you do not learn much from what he says. I believe he is serious and deeply in earnest in his desire to see that we should have no unemployed in Western Australia. He is certainly unjust to the members of the Cabinet in accusing them of having no sympathy with the unemployed workers in this State. We have every sympathy with the honest worker who wants work and cannot get it, and the hon. member ought to know, perhaps as well as most men in Western Australia, that individual Ministers are always anxious and seek to find employment for those who lack it. The hon. member overlooks this fact: I do not care what country you go to in the civilised world, or what degree of prosperity you may have—and I have had a pretty wide experience in the old country before I saw Australia—you will have a certain amount of unemployed in our midst. I venture to say that my friend the member for Leonora (Mr. Lynch), who knows something about the great engineering trade in the old country, will bear me out when I say that, even in the most prosperous times, they have a larger percentage of unemployed than the member for Kanowna has drawn attention to as being the case in this State—600 names registered in Perth. The hon. member admits that 340 are new names,

the balance being those who had applied previously to the bureau for employment during the term of the present year. It does not say that those persons have not had employment during the whole of the year. They have applied and possibly have been unsuccessful in getting the employment they wished and for which they were adapted, and have gone elsewhere. Perhaps they had several months' employment and were thrown out, then came back again to the bureau and registered their names once more in case there might be openings that would suit them. It is idle to say that every person who registers his name at the labour bureau takes the work that is available. I have applied myself several times as an employer for different classes of labour, and I have not been able to get the class I require. [MR. SCADDEN: For Collie?] I have been unable to get the class I wanted because the men were not available, or the men available did not have the skill for the class of work. The number of unemployed registered is about one per cent. of the population of Perth and suburbs; and I guarantee there is no manufacturing centre in the old country where you will have less than one per cent. of unemployed in your midst. It is not a very serious state of affairs. I admit I would sooner see them all employed. We wish to see everyone employed in Western Australia, and well employed, and at work fairly remunerative; but it is no use saying that all the men who apply to the Labour Bureau are only too anxious to get work, and that they do not refuse the jobs that are going at times. We are doing all in our power; and we intend, notwithstanding the unfair criticism of hon. members opposite, to go on the road we have marked out for ourselves. It is not the road which hon. members followed during the twelve months they were in power when the unemployed problem was more difficult; but it is the road of prosperity that we have marked out, and which we intend to follow without any dictation from members opposite. Why was this bureau established? Not to degrade workers. There is no degradation in going anywhere to seek honest employment. It was established because there was an outcry against the charges the registry offices made to those seeking employment.

[MR. ILLINGWORTH: Mr. Vosper had something to do with it.] Yes; I believe he had. It was to do away with the sweating amongst those who established themselves as proprietors of those registry offices. I know that certain girls complained that they used to lose as much as a week's or two weeks' wages for the benefit of having their names put down so that they might be sent by a registry-office keeper to some lady who wanted their services; and the same thing applied to other classes of labour. The Government stepped in and said they would make it easier to obtain employment, and would establish a Government office which would bring the employer and employee together. If there is a vacancy and an employer wants workers, we try to bring him in contact with those who need the work; and surely that is commendable? Surely the hon. member does not wish to take exception to that? Yet he would have this House and the people of Western Australia believe that it is a degradation and disgrace to the Government. This Government did not establish the Labour Bureau, but is prepared to father it and to take the responsibility of it.

MR. WALKER: I said "this country" and not "this Government." I said distinctly that it was a disgrace to this country.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Then I will join issue with the hon. member in that respect. Is it a disgrace if the country provides for the unemployed and makes easier the channels of employment? Can any hon. member say it is a disgrace to try and find employment at works? The hon. member comes from Lancashire, and he knows that at the gates of every factory every morning in the week he will find a large number of persons seeking employment. It is the ordinary course of events. A man goes there perfectly independent; he goes to the boss and asks "Have you got a job to-day," and the boss tells him "yes" or "no." That man does not lose his manhood because he goes with his labour to the best market he can find. He is absolutely independent. I maintain that the Government and country are to be congratulated on the fact that they have established a thing of this sort, which is endeavouring to bring the

employers and employees together. Does the hon. member wish us to do away with this bureau? Would you have us abolish it because it is a disgrace?

MR. WALKER: Undoubtedly, by finding openings for the surplus labour.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Then, whenever a person came to the Government saying that he was out of work and could not find it, I suppose it would be the bounden duty of the Minister approached, to find employment for the man. Surely the member is not in earnest in suggesting that?

MR. WALKER: I do not suggest that, but I suggest finding the work.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member suggested that the Government should be responsible for finding work for every man unemployed in the State, that we should do away with the registry offices and with the Labour Bureau, and that the Government should act in that capacity by saying, "Register your name, and take what work there is at so much per day." He suggests that the Government should create work. I never knew anyone advance that argument. If the hon. member thinks he is going to bring up a free and independent people—terms Labour members are fond of using when electioneering—under such a system as that, he is absolutely mistaken. It is absolutely impossible. We must not demoralise our workers in that way. We must give some freedom to the individual and to the ambition of the individual, and to his energy; and a man shows just as much energy in finding work as in faithfully carrying it out when found. I have found in my long experience that a good many of these men who are always sitting on the kerbstone and at the gates of works looking for employment, if they get it are soon back again at their old seat: they do not want work. They look around for the sake of appearance, and when they get a day or two's work, they get tired of the job and soon shift. That does not apply to only one class of workers. We find it amongst clerks, shop assistants, and even amongst the managers themselves—you find good men, and indifferent men, and bad men, men who simply want to look at the work and not do it. It simply amounts to this: some men are made for great

things, others are made for small things, and some for heaven only knows what. There are some men who inquire for work, and if you ask them if they can do any navvying, any pick and shovel work, they say they have never done any of it: if you ask them if they can chop firewood, they say they have never done splitting. But perhaps they can run errands down the street; and perhaps they cannot do that. Western Australia is no exception to the rule. There are amongst the unemployed a great number of wasters who do not want work at any price. The hon. member found fault with the Government suggestion that we should build spur railways. He asks how this is going to find work for our vast army of unemployed? And he draws on his vivid imagination as usual, that one would imagine that in Pier Street one would see 10,000 men clamouring for work or bread. Such a thing is unheard of in this State of Western Australia. The hon. member says that men have starved in Western Australia. I have yet to hear that that is a fact. [MR. WALKER: It is.] The hon. member knows that men may be very hard up; but a man has not to go very far to get a meal in Western Australia. I think I am voicing the opinion of all members of the Assembly when I say that there is not a man who would turn a person away from his door if he came hungry and wanted food. All that is asked is that the person should do a little bit of work for the tucker he has consumed. As a rule anyone wanting work can go to almost any house in Perth, in the suburbs or in the State, and always find employment splitting wood or doing a bit of gardening for a bit of tucker. There ought to be no such thing as starvation in Western Australia, for as much good food is wasted in Western Australia as would feed double the population that we have. It has been a crying shame in Western Australia for 50 years that so much waste goes on. The people are taught to be extravagant instead of saving. Half the food that is placed on the table is wasted. Perhaps that is due to some extent to our climate: food will not keep. But I say without fear of contradiction that from the average table of any citizen in Perth sufficient food goes

away to the pig-barrel as would feed the two or three starving people the hon. member refers to. These spur lines, members will agree with me when I say, are intended to increase employment in Western Australia; and they are intended to attract population to settle on our lands and open up avenues for the farther employment of those not in a position to settle on the land. Every family that comes to this country and takes up land and cultivates it must sooner or later require assistance, if not directly, indirectly. If they do not want to engage labour on their own farms, at any rate they must consume, and by consuming they give employment. Any person coming to this State and settling down and earning anything you like, even the paltry sum such as the hon. member referred to, 6s. a day, must provide something for some other person to make a living out of. Any man coming here and earning 30s. to £2 or £3 a week distributes that money and provides, through the butcher, the baker, and the storekeeper, employment for somebody else. The expenditure of loan moneys in this direction is fully warranted; and it is the intention of the Government to carry out the policy they have outlined so that we may open the vast tracts of country which are unsettled, to give every facility to the settlers who have gone out on our lands and borne the heat and burden of the day, and who up to the present have not successfully cultivated the land for want of facilities. We now wish to provide for them, and we hope that this policy will have the effect of attracting people to our shores and provide a legitimate investment for capital; and provide legitimate avenues for the energies of those who have not the money capital, but who have just as good, capital in their industry to help them. I hope that members will not give heed to the argument that any section of our great civil service is being underpaid or badly treated at the hands of the present Government. If they are, all I can say is that they have been badly treated at the hands of previous Governments without any effort being made to remedy the state of affairs. We have been in office some paltry three months, and we have been half that time electioneering; yet we are charged with

caring nothing for the civil service of the country, for winking at something which is not true; that our railway employees are badly underpaid, receiving less than a similar class of people in the other States. Let me remind the member for Kanowna that this is absolutely untrue. Our railway men at the present time are the best paid railway men in the whole of the Commonwealth, averaging from 10 to 20 per cent. higher, and in some cases 30 per cent. higher wages than similar men in the other States. [MR. BATH: Not in New South Wales.] Is it right that public men, occupying the positions these hon. members occupy, public men whose words are listened to and whose sentiments are read in the public Press and which carry weight outside, not only within our borders but outside, is it right that they should traduce the country? In making these statements they are traducing the country we belong to. [MR. BATH: Nonsense!] The Leader of the Opposition says, "Nonsense." I wish he would put some sense into his expressions and advice. [MR. BATH: Not traducing the country.] We get these interjections from men who ought to recognise their responsibility and assist the Government by some sensible proposition, which would at all times be welcomed by the Government and receive due consideration. But instead of this, what do we get? Protest. We protest against this, and we protest against the other; this is nonsense, and the other is absurd. The hon. member, I think, used the term "asinine" the other night—interjections that carry no weight, and give nothing that members can consider as being of utility in the advancement of our country. It is not necessary for me to remind the hon. gentleman that if he wants to indulge in these ill-mannered expressions, he ought to keep them for the meetings of his caucus outside, and not ventilate them here. I am jealous of the dignity of this House. I am jealous of the welfare of the State, and I am jealous above all things of the welfare and prosperity of this country, as much if not more so than the member who has raised this question.

MR. J. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): I desire to say very little on the question; but I cannot allow some of the remarks of the Minister for Works and also of the

Premier to go unchallenged. I want to say that, after all, it is not a quarrel on this side of the House with the Labour Bureau. We have every faith in the utility of the Labour Bureau, and the good that has been done to the citizens of the State. At the same time, we want members, and the Minister for Works in particular, to bear in mind that the men registered in the Labour Bureau are not the only unemployed in this State. We have hundreds of men on the goldfields particularly, who never go near the Labour Bureau; and it is just as well that they do not go, because they would never get employment, and they would only be wearing out their shoeleather in a futile endeavour. We cannot lose sight of the fact that the unemployed in this State are increasing. The Premier has said that is not so. I ask the Minister for Mines, is that not true? The Minister for Mines stated at Menzies only the other day that the unemployed were increasing daily. I am sure that is correct, for I have his statement before me at the present moment; and he said that the unemployed in this State were increasing daily. If that be so, he should try to bring it under the notice of the Premier, and try at least to persuade the Premier to do something to prevent the increase. It may be through the bad administration of previous Governments; but this wail about previous Governments carries no weight with me, or with the country. I think we have heard too much of the actions of previous Ministries. We want to know the attitude of the present Government, and we want to know what the Government intend to do. I have not discovered yet what they intend to do for the unemployed. They appear to be encouraging immigrants from foreign countries, not from the British Isles, to come here in competition with the already over-stocked labour market. The Minister for Works said that the fact of a person coming to the State and earning £2 or £3 a week assists some other person to live. I fail to see that. I was once unemployed myself, and I could not live on the other fellow's earnings. I found that if I ran up a bill at my grocer's or my butcher's, I had to pay it from my earnings when I got work again. It was no use going to the other fellow who had come from the

other States, and saying to him that this was an honourable debt, that he had to pay. You can bring these people here, and it does not make our unemployed richer, nor does it find employment. Many of the immigrants who are being introduced are not being employed on the land, nor are they working on the land for their own benefit. They are being found employment by the Government, and competing with the farm labourers we have here. Some of these immigrants have been found employment at Northam; and in other agricultural districts. What benefit is that to the unemployed in this State? Is it any benefit whatever to them? What we want in this State is agricultural development. I know members on the other side will say we are getting it. Yet we find from a statement made by the Minister for Lands only a short time ago, that he is not satisfied that we are getting it. The Minister for Lands, in replying to a toast at Subiaco, stated that about 11,000,000 acres had been alienated, but that only some 360,000 acres were in cultivation, so that something serious was wrong, and that he would make it his duty to see that the conditions under which the lands were alienated were carried out. We find to-day that while we have a considerable amount of land in our agricultural districts alienated and supposed to be under cultivation, yet it is not so. We find people settled on the land, and more especially immigrants being introduced, without sufficient capital to tide over the initial difficulties. Take a person settling in the Great Southern district, where he has heavy timber and inefficient water supply to cope with. For the first three years a man finds it is all outlay and no income. A man requires, I say, a considerable amount of capital to tide him over the initial difficulties. We are inducing these immigrants to come here to settle on the land, and are making no provision for them when they arrive. I believe the suggestion by the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) may yet be carried out by the Government; that is, we could find employment for men out of work by engaging them to clear land and make provision for immigrants, so that they might get some early return for the outlay of capital. I believe that an effort of this kind was made by the previous

Minister for Lands, in the direction of throwing open some land at Nangeenan; and this has been to an extent a success. I believe we could settle a considerable number of the unemployed under this system, and bring much agricultural land into use by it in some other more valuable district. Nangeenan is too far out, and it is rather a dry district. I think we could try the system in some more favoured districts of agriculture, and thereby utilise the unemployed in our midst. With regard to building spur lines, I agree with the Premier and the Minister for Works that they will find some employment for those at present out of work; but this is only meeting the difficulty for the moment. The building of spur lines does not after all find very much employment. It may last a few months; and the men would then be thrown out of employment. These spur lines would to a great extent be going through land unimproved at present; and it is so locked up that it is impossible for men to occupy the land in the vicinity where they have been working, and to take up the land. This Government will have to do something to meet the unemployed difficulty, and at an early date. We know that the unemployed are always with us; there is always a certain number of men out of work. The probability is that the Minister for Works has not had the experience of being out of work and having to look, week after week, for employment; otherwise he would not have made the statement that if one finds a man waiting at his gate week after week, that man does not want work. Such an assertion is nonsense. A man may be out of work and may follow up one mine for six or eight weeks at a stretch in the hope that probably someone may be leaving and other hands will be wanted. We have had from 100 to 500 men following up a mine, day after day, and shift after shift, in the hope of getting employment. This assertion can be verified by the secretaries of unions. Some have 300 and 400 men on their books registered as unemployed. This is a state of things which cannot exist much longer. The Premier says we have not so many to-day. Probably we have not, because many men out of work go for a trip to the Eastern States or stop about Perth, and others have obtained positions; but

we shall have these men back again, and what provision are we making for them when they are again thrown out of work? I believe it is the intention of the Government to do everything possible to cause capital to come in and develop the mining. I think it would be better if the Government did something to keep in capital which is going out. The Premier made a boast that although less men were being employed in the gold-mining industry, the profits were growing each year. I do not think that is anything to boast about, because those dividends, instead of remaining in this State providing for the citizens, are going out of it.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The number of men has been the same for years.

MR. SCADDAN: I know it has, in reef mining; but the Minister knows that in alluvial mining it is nothing like the same. I do not think there are half as many employed now as three years ago in alluvial mining.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Not half, but the alluvial has been worked out.

MR. SCADDAN: It does not prove that the alluvial has been worked out. I am satisfied that we have still many alluvial fields which could be opened up if sufficient inducements were given in this matter; but we find these men attempting week after week to find some little employment. They are battling with their dry-blower; but they hope to find some job, and at last they are starved out and have to leave the district. The Minister for Mines knows that. Many alluvial men are not following the work to obtain a livelihood, but only to fill in time, in the hope of obtaining constant employment. The Minister for Mines knows that in Western Australia employment is not so steady as it might be. We know that men are afraid of their lives they are going to be out of work to-morrow, and when they once get out of work they will go. I was out of work on one occasion myself for no less than five months, and I had difficulty to find employment. I had to follow up one mine day after day in the hope of getting a job through somebody leaving or an increased number of men being required. It is no disgrace for a man to have to do it; and the observation made by the Minister for Works this afternoon that

the men do not desire work is incorrect. The unemployed in this State are probably more anxious to get work than some people in the other States, because they are new arrivals who have come with the hope of getting a rise in life. It is nothing to the credit of the Minister for Works to say what he has said this afternoon, and to write down the unemployed of this State as being people who are not fit to be registered at a labour bureau, but rather at Fremantle prison. I believe the Government will have to do something in the near future to meet the difficulty that faces us to-day.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): Now that the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) has had an opportunity of ventilating his views, I hope he will withdraw the motion. We are pleased indeed to get any suggestions which may improve the condition of the workers in this State. I am sure members opposite can rest quite satisfied that an effort will be made by the Government to do all they possibly can to improve the conditions of all classes of the community. If there are any schemes that will be of advantage to the State, these schemes will have to be well thought out. We have under consideration certain matters in connection with the settlement of people on the land. Therefore that will be a question requiring serious consideration. Money utilised simply for the purpose of finding work is wasted. I think that now the hon. member has been able to ventilate his ideas, it will be just as well for him to withdraw the motion rather than go to a division; because if we passed the motion it would be looked upon as a reflection on the action of the Government, so far, in connection with the unemployed of the State. I only wish to make one comment in regard to the member for Ivanhoe (Mr. Scaddan). In dealing with the miners, he said that the number of alluvial miners was less than some few years ago. I believe the number is about half the number that used to be employed on alluvial three years ago; but I am sure many are aware that the alluvial deposits are being worked out; otherwise we should still have men working on alluvial. If the hon. member opposite does know of many places which it would be worth the while

of alluvial miners to go to, and he will give me the information, I will be only too pleased to assist prospectors to go to those places, so as to enable that alluvial to be worked and to give the greatest facility to those people, so that we shall be able to employ those men. It does seem passing strange to me that the hon. member has not made the knowledge public in the interests of those men about Kalgoorlie who are out of employment. For my part, if I had any knowledge which would be of advantage to those workmen, if I could get any reports to show that alluvial exists, I should be only too pleased to make it public, and follow it up by giving water supplies, and in that way assisting the development of the industry. I do not wish to pursue the subject farther. I hope the hon. member will see the advisability of withdrawing the motion.

MR. WALKER (in reply): I intend to withdraw the motion; but before I do so I would like to offer a few comments on the remarks that have been made by the Premier and the Minister for Works. It seems to me that an effort was made to make light of this matter, as if it were entirely an unnecessary one. My effort was described as exaggeration and imagination; and some of the facts adduced, strictly facts, were designated by the Premier as fudge. I was amused at the childish efforts of the Premier to so twist my remarks as to justify an expression of that kind. In the first place, both he and the Minister for Works either wilfully misunderstood me or they very seriously misrepresented me when it was made to appear that I characterised the existence of the labour bureau as a disgrace, merely the existence of it. I went to some trouble to draw attention to what happened at this labour bureau almost daily—it can be seen by anyone to-morrow—that was, the presence of a crowd of people, I do not say an enormous assembly, but a crowd of people, woebegone in expression, wretched in appearance, waiting for a chance to get work. I say that phenomenon in this capital city, with untold acres of unexplored land, with our wealth beyond measurement, beyond guess, is a disgrace to this country. [MR. BUTCHER: Disgrace to the men.]

Ah; listen to the hon. member's inter-

jection, "disgrace to the men." The Premier said it was no disgrace.

MR. BUTCHER: He did not know as much about them as I do.

MR. WALKER: It is no disgrace to those men; it is pitiable that those men should have the necessity to do it. The hon. member would infer, as other speakers have wished to infer, that because a man happens to be reduced to that dire necessity of having to stand in the street waiting and hoping to get a possible call for work, he is an outcast, a wretched man unfit to be classified with decent citizens. That is the imputation. I am well aware that there are a large number of men in every country, as well as in the Commonwealth, who are so reduced in spirit and in hope that, compared with the rest of the citizens, they are worthless. All heart has gone out of them. This is no new subject to me. I have been amongst the unemployed; I have for years past studied the conditions that have produced them. I have known men who at one stage of their lives were vigorous, energetic citizens, men with some substance to back them up in the battle of life. Misfortune has overtaken them; hope has been crushed in their breasts; the nerve is palsied within their frames; and from that time forth they are not capable of competing with their fellows in the struggle for existence. They may then drift into the army of unemployed. They are really fit inmates for the charitable asylums of any State. They are diseased; their nerves are gone; their hearts are broken. They cannot be considered blamable. The stress of life has been too much for them. They are, if I may use a scarcely justifiable metaphor, shipwrecks in life. These cases are not to be taken as excuses for censuring men who are honestly trying to get work. The conditions of life in this State are bringing these men to that condition; taking the sap and nerve from them, making them unfit for life. The hon. member would kick them as he would a mangey dog, unfit to be fed. Such are the rules that society has made, the conditions that the hon. member is supporting. It is to those conditions that I object. The very fact that we have a Government which is a large employer of labour setting the example of paying low wages, and without the slightest excuse

sacking men wholesale and throwing them upon the labour market—it is such acts, whether committed by a previous Government or by any Government I care not—it is such conditions that produce those specimens of humanity; and it is in that sense that the phenomenon I have described is a disgrace to a country with the hope that this country possesses. There should be no need for a man to beg in this State. The Minister for Works says it is no disgrace for a man to ask for work. I do not say it is; but I say it is a disgrace that we should have 600 men registered at the Perth Labour Bureau; because these represent only a few of the vast number in need of employment in this city. Those who go to the bureau go as a last resort. The member for Ivanhoe (Mr. Scaddan) has told us that in Kalgoorlie there are men waiting at every shift, asking for a chance of employment; and there is not a union in the whole of the goldfields which has not a large list of unemployed of its own. These are being assisted or supported by their fellow workers, being kept from week to week waiting for a chance of a job. These people do not trouble the Government Labour Bureau; but they are honest people, seeking work and unable to find it. Any secretary of a large goldfields union will bear out the absolute truthfulness of what I say. Then in addition to those on the union books and those who visit the bureau, we have, I am thankful to say, a large number of brave, sturdy men who go right out into the wilds, into the unexplored regions of this country; men who are our prospectors, who may, for aught I know, be the discoverers of future goldfields; men who go out almost without a penny in their pockets, trusting to chance, to nature, to their good luck, though almost destitute of means. Then I am thankful to say also that there is, especially on the goldfields, a large number of men who club together to form funds for the purpose of helping the unemployed to go out prospecting; and in this way we are relieved from the stress experienced in the other States. The Premier made something of a proud boast of the fact that we have not the unemployed agitation here that is found in the Eastern States. He told us that in the East the lack of employment

is a genuine grievance, a question pressing and urgent. I admit it. But why have we not the problem here in that form? Because private people in this State are too generous to allow the evil to become so acute. Hundreds of people are kept by the unions while waiting for work. If those unions were unable to keep them, the people would very soon be actually crying against the Government. We have private prospecting companies. We have even individuals assisting men to go out in search for gold. We have men who go out unassisted. Every avenue in which a man can get a living in this country is explored. Hence the evil has not become so acute. But that does not at all relieve the Government from its obligations. I say it is the duty of a Government to provide work for its people—not in the senseless manner which the Premier suggested that I meant. I do not and could not mean that there should be an hour's job of dusting this or that, or that work should be made for the purpose of charitably obliging the unemployed. That is not the duty of a Government. I will object to that kind of charity, to that kind of condescension, as strongly as the Premier or any member of the Ministry would object to it. But I say the Government should set a proper example as an employer of labour, and should so regulate the hours of labour that more men can work than are now employed, say on our Government railways, the hours being strictly limited to eight, if necessary even to fewer; and then the Government should take over some of those monopolies now in the possession of private syndicates and companies, and should thus employ other workers. More particularly do I say that the Government should make use of the unemployed to improve the country, and make it fit to live in. There are some parts of our State otherwise fit for agriculture, but so encumbered by forest growths and undergrowths that almost a small fortune would be needed by a private man who would clear the land and make it fit for cultivation. I submit, that is part of the duty of the State. Make our land fit to dwell upon, and we shall not need to assist any immigrants to this country. Make our country fit to live in, and we shall not need even to advertise for im-

migrants. They will come of their own volition. They will seek means of getting here; and that, I submit, is the duty of the Government, to utilise in permanent and reproductive works all the unemployed men in the community. That is no difficult task, no Utopian dream. It is the plain duty that the Government owes to the country. I cannot perceive that the Government are making any provision of this kind; but having drawn attention this afternoon to the need for such provision, I now have pleasure, having heard the matter debated, in asking leave to withdraw the motion.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: A stonewall!

MR. WALKER: I beg to draw your attention, sir, to the hon. member's interjection as I was resuming my seat. What am I stonewalling? This is private members' day.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister interjecting was not in order.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS.

MR. SPEAKER: I desire to call members' attention to the fact that two hours have elapsed since the commencement of the discussion on Notices of Motion; and according to the Standing Orders, we cannot exceed that time without a motion to continue. I did not like to interrupt the debate, expecting it to finish at any moment.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES moved that notices of motion be continued until half-past six.

MR. WALKER: I thought this was private members' night.

MR. BATH: We can make a farther motion.

Question put and passed.

PAPERS—RABBIT-PROOF FENCE.

MR. H. BROWN (Perth) moved:

That the report of late Boundary Rider Angel to Mr. I. T. Crawford, and all correspondence relating thereto, be laid on the table of the House.

If the facts were as represented in the report, possibly a select committee or a Royal Commission would be needed.

Question put and passed.

PAPERS—RETIREMENT OF MR. J. J. HARWOOD.

MR. H. BROWN moved :

That all papers with reference to the retirement of Mr. J. J. Harwood be laid on the table of the House.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The Government desired that some reason should be given when members moved for such papers. During this session the urgency for reasons was not so great; but next session, which might extend over four or five months, the laying of many papers on the table would be very awkward, and would give much trouble to the departments.

Question put and passed.

RETURN—BOILERS AND MACHINERY INSPECTION.

MR. J. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe) moved:

That a return be laid on the table of the House, showing the number of actual inspections made by the Chief Inspector and each other inspector under the Steam Boilers and Machinery Inspection Acts, for the year ending 30th June, 1905.

Question passed.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES laid the return on the table.

RETURN—MACHINERY INSPECTION, CERTIFICATES.

MR. J. SCADDAN moved :

That there be laid on the table of the House a return showing the number of certificates of service granted by the present board of examiners under the Inspection of Machinery Act to persons who have not appeared before that board.

The motion was necessary owing to his failing to obtain the desired information by a question to the Minister for Mines. The granting of such certificates without the applicants' appearing before the board was in accordance with the Act and regulations; but he (Mr. Scaddan) had his own opinion as to the advisableness of granting such certificates, and wished to learn the Minister's opinion on that subject. At a later period he would use the return. Throughout the country there was considerable feeling on this question, especially among engine-drivers and those employed under the Machinery Act. Recently the *West Australian* reported a person as saying that no effect had been given to the Act, which provided that all engines should be in

charge of certificated drivers; that at the present time very many engines were controlled by incompetent men, and this state of affairs was very undesirable; that the matter had been brought under the notice of the responsible Minister, and had been referred to in the Press, but without effect, and had been made the means of spreading broadcast throughout the State certificates to men who were not qualified to hold them; that certificates had been granted to men minus either an arm or a leg, and to others whose eye-sight was defective. His association desired the co-operation of the council in an endeavour to have the present unsatisfactory state of affairs altered. Another person at the same time said that he knew from his own knowledge that the statements were correct. If these things were true it was time the Minister for Mines went into the matter and attempted to have some alteration made. Before any person was granted a certificate of service he should appear before the board in person, so that the board could judge for themselves whether the applicant was a fit and proper person to hold a certificate. We must bear in mind that since the Machinery Act came into force provision was made for the holding of certificates by engine-drivers in factories or elsewhere, and these men by the mere fact of having had previous experience of engines of little or no concern, small oil engines etc., could by applying to the board of examiners obtain a certificate which would give them permission to drive an engine in any district. He (Mr. Scaddan) pointed out at the time that that was doing an injustice to men employed on the better class of engines, those who had had to pass a severe examination to obtain their certificates. Seeing that such a provision was in existence it was the duty of the department and the Minister to ascertain, when granting the certificates, that they were granted to persons who were fit and proper to hold them, and not, as stated, by the persons he quoted, that they were granted to persons minus an arm or a leg. He could not understand how such could be the case, but certificates were granted to persons on the production of a reference. That was not sufficient evidence to say that a person was fit and proper to hold such a certificate. This was

what was done at the present time. [MR. PRICE: No.] The hon. member said "no," but he (Mr. Scaddan) was in a position to know that these certificates were granted without the persons appearing before the board, and on references which were of a doubtful character at times. The board had not attempted to find out if the references were falsified or not. It was necessary that the board should ascertain if the certificates were being granted to persons who had previously had charge of engines. He desired to have a return prepared showing the number of certificates granted, and, if possible, to have the present unsatisfactory state of affairs remedied. When one considered the amount of time and energy that a man had to put in to obtain a certificate of competency, it was unjust to grant certificates without some supervision. It was known that men who obtained certificates of competency had to be employed under a certificated driver for a period of 12 or 18 months, practising on an engine as well as obtaining theoretical knowledge by studying for some time at the School of Mines, or under some other person. That was the regulation which had been in force for a considerable number of years. Now we found that these men were brought into competition with persons who had done nothing to prove their qualifications, except to send in a reference, perhaps in some cases of a doubtful nature.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): There was no objection whatever to the motion, in fact he had the return desired, and would lay it on the table; but he hardly thought the member was quite fair in the statements he had made. He protested against the reading of newspaper cuttings or the making of statements without proof that they were correct. He hardly credited the statement that the board had granted certificates to people of defective eyesight; it would be dangerous to do so and he hardly credited the statement. Moreover the member some time ago made this statement to him, the Minister, and he then asked for some proof. If the member had that information and if he knew the person who had made the statements quoted—the secretary of the association—he would have given the hon. member full par-

ticulars, so that proper charges could be made against the head of the department. But he (the Minister) told the member that he would not take notice of wild statements coming from the man in the street unless he could give the fullest particulars, and if the member did that the matter would be sifted. One would think from the remarks of the member that he (the Minister) was to blame, but who framed these regulations? The hon. member opposite (Mr. Lynch), a former secretary of the Engine Drivers' Association. He (the Minister) intended to amend the regulations because he thought that any person applying for a certificate should go personally before the board. The regulations were bad. The late Government framed the regulations, and whilst the late Government were in power most of the certificates had been granted. He proposed to amend the regulations because he thought that it was wise that whenever a man made an application for a certificate of service he should personally appear before the board. That and many other regulations, when time was available, would be amended. He hoped the member would tell the people on the fields who were responsible for the regulations and who framed them.

Question put and passed.

RETURN—RAILWAY PASSENGERS, KALGOORLIE SUBURBAN LINES.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill) moved:

That a return be laid upon the table of the House, showing,—1. The average weekly number of passengers carried on the Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Kamballie, and Kalgoorlie, Brown Hill-Kamballie railway lines during the 12 months ended June 30th, 1905. 2. The receipts from passenger and goods traffic on these lines for the 12 months ending June 30th, 1905. 3. The amount of profit or loss shown for the same period.

In the Kalgoorlie and Boulder district there was at first the line from Boulder to Lakeside, and afterwards a loop line which went round the Brown Hill and Trafalgar districts. When the Boulder tramline was constructed the traffic had reached great proportions, so great that it justified the Government in embarking on a large expenditure in the provision of platforms and station accommodation. Prior to the expenditure of this money the Government granted a concession to

a tramway company to run lines in direct opposition to the railway line on which it was proposed to expend such a large sum of money; with the result that the trams entered into competition and contributed to spoil a paying proposition. The Brown Hill line was now serving several very important centres of population, and these centres were growing. Owing to the fact that living on the leases was becoming unfavourable owing to the encroachment of the tailings dumps and mining paraphernalia, the residents were shifting their camps into residential areas, with the result that there was a larger traffic on the lines. He (Mr. Bath) had made representation to those in authority for platform accommodation along the line and had failed to secure it. Those who had travelled along the line would have seen on many occasions women with children in arms, who used the line as their only means of communication with town, being compelled to clamber into the carriages from the ground, with the result that it was dangerous to life and limb. No provision was made for lighting the stations, and the Commissioner had stated that the reason why no lights were supplied was that the people stole the lights. He had a much higher opinion of the electors in his constituency, and it was more the neglect of those responsible for placing lights there and had not done so. Dangerous as the stopping places were in the day time they were infinitely more dangerous at night. Twelve months ago a deputation representing the progress committees of Brown Hill and Trafalgar waited on the local authorities to urge the request for platform accommodation, and certain figures were produced showing the number of passengers carried along that line. Those figures were disputed, and when the authorities were asked whether the passengers for Sunday and Saturday were placed in the total they stated that they were not. Those travelling round the loop were not credited to that line either. Where such a large number of persons used these lines they were entitled to platform accommodation. It would only be necessary to take the Minister for Railways along that line and allow him to see for himself the way in which women had to clamber into the carriages, to prove the necessity for platform accom-

modation. It was not asked that any elaborate expenditure should be made, but the people were entitled to demand platform accommodation. At Brown Hill and Trafalgar, during the general election, he (Mr. Bath) had many opportunities of travelling out to Kamballie, and he had no hesitation in saying that the passenger returns on that line justified the provision of the accommodation asked for. He might say that not only was there an increase of population owing to the number of people settling there, but the objection he had urged to the present condition of things in regard to the disabilities of women who lived along that line had become truer every day; and he would ask the Minister for Railways not only not to place objections in the way of securing this return, but to give serious consideration to this question, and see if he could grant the desires of the residents in that district.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES would do all he could to facilitate the providing of the return.

Question put and passed.

MOTIONS—TELEGRAPH FACILITIES FOR ISOLATED CENTRES.

Mr. P. J. LYNCH (Mount Leonora) moved—

That in order to help in encouraging the settlement of population in the interior, and removing the present hardships and disadvantages of residents in isolated centres, this House is of opinion (a.) that a sum should be set aside annually by way of a guarantee, if necessary, to the Federal Government, for the extension of the telegraphic system to distant centres which might otherwise be deemed unpayable. (b.) That the sum required should be regulated from year to year according to the importance and requirements of the localities concerned, as the Minister for Works for the time being may decide.

He said: The reason for the appearance of this motion is to give an opportunity to members of this House of recording what amount of practical sympathy they have with people who are living in isolated positions, and are not yet connected with the telegraph system. It will also give an opportunity to the present Government, who have on several occasions placed on record their steadfast intention of helping the genuine prospector wherever he can be found, since those centres to which I will refer are solely the work of the prospec-

tors, are in fact made up of prospectors, together with a few trades-people who attend to their wants. I feel it will be a very good opportunity indeed for giving them some practical assistance in the shape of the terms of this resolution when agreed to. Many members of this House who have travelled the back country know the many disadvantages and hardships that are borne by the dwellers there. I know from my own knowledge several centres, important centres too, that are situated up to 50 and 100 and 150 miles from the nearest telegraph station; and it amounts to a kind of perpetual disadvantage to be cut off as they have been in the past from telegraphic communication. It is plain that every delay that occurs to-day in connection with the official business of the country, wardens' offices, etc., and the offices of private companies and people throughout the country, and what occurs by reason of this delay, add to the cost of living in those places and to the disadvantages of living there. In order to remove, or to mitigate as far as possible, this hardship, the intention of this motion is to ask the House to agree to an annual sum being set aside in order that it may serve as a guarantee to the Federal Government for the erection of these lines. I feel certain this proposal will have the hearty and unstinted support of the Minister for Mines, knowing as he does from his long experience of the back country that there are centres there which, had it been their good fortune to be in existence at the time of the Forrest Ministry, or even Ministries of a later date, would long since have been connected with the telegraph system of the State; but their importance has been attained, unfortunately for them, after the consummation of Federation, with the result that to this day they are cut off from communication with the inside world; and there is the consequent loss and detriment to all who are living the hardy life of a pioneer in those centres. I realise that this proposal will be met with some strong arguments, because it involves a definition of the relations between the State and the Commonwealth of Australia, and perhaps a lengthy discussion on the compact that was entered into by the people of Western Australia with the other colonies as self-governing

States. But when we view the position squarely we find that these centres and the people therein are handicapped to the extent they are, and there is no help to be depended upon to come from the quarter that undertook to give relief and give help according to the compact entered into. I feel that this House will recognise in this matter at least some way out of the difficulty. I may mention one instance of hardship that those men who are finding a livelihood in these centres have to undergo. There is a friend of mine who, in the case of a mining accident, had to ride a distance of some 70 miles on his bicycle in the night time, the only means he had of lighting the track in front of him being a candle in a pickle bottle. It was owing to the heroic and praiseworthy action of this man that the life of a valuable citizen was saved. That will give this House an instance of the hardships that these people undergo in these distant centres. I do not know whether it is altogether associated with the subject, but it cannot be ignored that it is our duty to give such facilities as will minimise the risk to life in those centres that are solely dependent upon mining as an occupation. And when we reflect upon the accidents which are incidental to the mining industry it is a kind of super-added reason why we should make some special move, either in the direction indicated in the motion or otherwise, to bring immediate relief to those centres. The instance referred to also gives rise to the question of the capital value of that particular life in danger. Some authorities—I cannot recollect which—assess the value of a citizen at between £300 to £400. We have to record the saving of that life through the action of this man in riding during the dead hours of the night 70 or 80 miles; and by his action a value of three or four hundred pounds was saved to this country. [MEMBER: It is worth more than that.] Yes, if we calculate the value of an able-bodied man of 21 years of age at that sum. My point is that in other centres that are farther removed and on worse tracts, there may not be the same generous spirits to be found to undertake the very humane action this man was found to perform with such credit to himself. In order to supply a want which is evident

it is desired to bring the telegraph system within reasonable call of these people in those centres. It is plain that the system of telegraphic lines which would be required would be the simplest conducted in the State. From inquiries made I find that a line at £50 a mile would be quite sufficient to bring these centres into touch with the other centres of population in the State as well as the inside world. There would be no offices required of any kind, and the terminal centres, if they are connected, will be worked in much the same way as are several centres at the present time, such as Waverley and a few other places I know of, where no officers of the State are employed, but messages are received and distributed by means of the telephone. By that means there is no extra expense incurred, so that the cost of connecting these centres with the telegraph system would be reduced to a minimum. Had those centres to which I refer been in existence during the prosperous years of a former administration, they would have long since been connected. That is clearly shown by the fact that in a number of centres in the back country at the present time there are abandoned post and telegraph offices which I know of my own knowledge were erected during the boom times; but owing to the shifting of population and the subsidence of the boom of 1896 and the years that followed, those centres where offices were erected are now found almost deserted. But still the offices are there, clearly pointing to the zeal and determination and the very laudable statesmanship of the Forrest Administration in keeping pace with the times. They point to what was done by the Administration when it was solely under State control. Coming to the question of how this matter has to be done, the terms of the motion may perhaps not be the most apt or practicable that could be found, but still for my purpose they express clearly enough my meaning. Coming to the question of how assistance should be made, and why it should be given, it is necessary for members of this House to recollect that in the past the telegraph system in this State was a work which was looked upon as one that should be constructed out of loan money. It was looked upon as essentially loan policy work. And I think that nothing more

clearly proves that statement than the return that was laid on the table of the House yesterday, where it is set forth in page 113, under the heading of telegraphs, that a sum of £269,000 was spent between 1872 and 1894. But in addition to that, there was also a farther sum. Members will notice in the appendices a sum of £62,000, which appears in "Development of Goldfields and Mineral Resources." This sum of £62,000, added to the other, brings the total amount spent out of loan moneys up to £333,000, expended during the years 1872 to 1894 inclusive. The return unfortunately does not give any information that shows how the amount of loan money was spent from 1894 to 1900, when the entire service was handed over to the Commonwealth. But I am willing, in order to secure an average, to allow that six years to come in with the other 23; and thus we find that out of the Treasury no less than an average of £12,000 a year was spent out of loan money for the 29 years that ended in 1900, when the service was handed over to the Commonwealth; independently of post offices or any other adjuncts necessary to carry on the services, but purely telegraph lines. Being satisfied that this work was largely, if not essentially, a work to be carried out by means of loan moneys, members must now consider the question as to where the money ought to come from in the future. We have these centres to which I have referred still in a state of isolation. We have also the reply of the Commonwealth Government to at least one of them, and the most important, namely Black Range, that the Commonwealth Government will not in future make any extension of the telegraph system of this or any other State unless it can be guaranteed. I have not the letter amongst my papers at present, but the following are the substantial terms of the reply: that unless the Commonwealth Government can be guaranteed the expenses of operation and management, as well as 10 per cent. on the cost of construction, no extensions will be undertaken by the Commonwealth Government. In reference to such an ultimatum, I am credibly informed that their decision is irrevocable in this direction; that they will not construct any farther extensions unless given a special

guarantee. The question now arises, how is it to be done? Acknowledged that in the past under the State Government this class of work has largely been constructed with loan moneys, yet the Commonwealth Government are determined not to borrow, at least for several years. I noticed at the Premiers' Conference, Sir George Turner gave his opinion as follows:—

Probably it will be some considerable time before the Commonwealth borrows on its own account.

Whether or not Sir George Turner correctly expressed the intention of the Commonwealth, it is on record later that the Minister for Customs (Mr. McLean) thought that, even if the Braddon clause period should terminate, there was a tendency on the part of the Commonwealth Government to expend whatever available surplus there was in works of a far different character from that of telegraphic extension. He was speaking in reference to the question of the several State Treasurers handing over the State debts, and he was urging the wisdom of handing them over to avoid the following:—

My great fear was, and would be still if we fail to come to any satisfactory arrangement, that the Commonwealth would allow the States to retain their debts, and on the expiration of the Braddon clause the Commonwealth would proceed to spend a great deal of the money that is now handed back to the States, and which I think we all desire to see hypothecated to the payment of interest on our loans. I am perfectly satisfied, from what I know of the views of the Commonwealth Parliament, that if they are not saddled with the debts of the States, they will at least reduce the amount that is handed back by the amount of an old-age pension scheme. They will also, so far as I know their feelings, go in for a penny postage and, I believe, for the nucleus of an Australian navy.

Then there is the statement of Sir George Turner on page 145 of the report of the Premier's Conference, where he spoke of the amount allotted under the Braddon clause for the exclusive purpose of the Commonwealth. He said:—

If the Federal Treasurer has more than he requires, he will, as has been done for the past four years, return it to the States.

In view of that it is plain that we have on the one hand the Commonwealth Government, with cash at their disposal that they are entitled to use, at the same

time handing back a balance to the States and refusing to construct these very necessary works referred to in the motion. It shows the dilemma we are in. On the one hand we have the Commonwealth with the cash at their disposal, which it was lawful for them to use for a work of this nature, namely a telegraph line to Black Range, yet preferring to hand back that balance which they were entitled to spend to the several States on a *per capita* distribution. It is plain that the districts I have already referred to are in the hopeless position that they will not get assistance from the Commonwealth Government, and that they have not in the past had any promise that any assistance would come from the State Government. I do not think it is necessary to labour this subject. I hope the sympathy of the whole House will be with the motion. Members will recognise that even on the part of the Commonwealth Government there is probably some justification for their disinclination to help these settlers by means of extending the telegraph system; because if we recall the arguments used at the various Conventions held at Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, we find that the nucleus of the Braddon clause was intended to actually bind the Commonwealth Treasurer down to a stated sum for the maintenance of the Commonwealth departments. It was suggested at Adelaide that a sum of £300,000 should be set aside out of revenue to defray the expenses of the original powers of the Commonwealth; and there was also an additional sum of £1,250,000 set aside to defray the cost of the transferred services. The intention at the Adelaide Convention was clear—to so bind down the Commonwealth that no more than these two sums stated should be spent on their behalf. At the Conventions that followed, both in Melbourne and Sydney, that provision was made more elastic, not for the purpose of meeting contingencies of the kind referred to in this motion, but merely for the purpose of recording a more unlimited degree of trust in the Federal Parliament and Federal Government. We now come, after several modifications were made to that particular Braddon clause, to the time when it was finally adopted at Melbourne; and there we find

that it was clearly set forth in explicit language that no more than one-fourth of the net revenue of the Commonwealth should be devoted by the Commonwealth Government to defraying the cost of both the original powers and the transferred services. So the position is now briefly that we have on the one hand the Commonwealth Government unwilling to help the settlers with a telegraph system, and on the other hand the State Government who think they are acting within the limits of their bargain in not coming to the assistance of these settlers; and in the meantime these districts are languishing, and people in an isolated position are obliged to stand the consequences that come their way by reason of their isolation. The motion simply states that some consideration be given to them by a guarantee that will not bear very heavily on the exchequer of Western Australia. It may be argued by those who pretend to discern, that in the Federal Constitution arrived at it is the sole province of the Commonwealth to build these services without any interference from the States; but while that may be worthy of mention or worthy of inquiry, where is the Commonwealth Government to find the funds with which to construct these services? It must be necessarily either from revenue or from loans. If, following the practice of this State and other States in the past, the Commonwealth Government have recourse to loans to carry out these works, the loan funds raised for the purpose of constructing works within this State will certainly be repaid—and the Commonwealth Government will see to it—by the people of this State. Therefore, if the Commonwealth Government agree, even at later date, to construct these services out of loan moneys, failing appeals that may in the meantime be made to them by private agencies and perhaps by the Government of this State, they will defray the cost of these services out of loan money; and the result will be that they will call upon the people of this State to repay the loan by a sinking fund and to pay interest. If that be the *modus operandi*, is it not our duty now to assist these settlers, instead of waiting till a later date for the repayment of the loan? That idea is expressed in this motion, that a guarantee be agreed upon

by the Parliament of this State to help in the construction of these telegraph lines; and by that means we will be forestalling the action of the Commonwealth in resorting to borrowing for the purpose of constructing these services. The difference is only that whereas on the one hand it is postponing the necessary work by taking no action now, on the other hand the terms of the motion are to take action now and so bear that portion of the loan which the State will necessarily have to take upon itself later if action is not taken by the State. I hope the motion will have the hearty and practical sympathy of every member who wishes to help those who are so far afield, and who have no possible means of communicating with the outside world except by a mail service once a week. It will give them a chance of improving their lot and of improving the conditions under which they live. We can all imagine how isolated a community must be which is dependent on one mail a week, especially where the population is about 250. If it had been during the Forrest Administration their requirements would have had immediate attention. In giving practical help to these men we will be helping the most worthy citizens of this country; because if there is any measure that I feel should be the most reliable one of a citizen's worth, it is that distance which a person chooses to place between himself and the most settled portions of the State, especially the busy cities. I believe the person who goes far afield and turns his back upon the seacoast and congested centres of population, is worthy of being followed, and worthy at all times of more generous consideration than those in populous centres who can waylay members of Parliament and Ministers at will. I believe that the terms of the motion will not compromise the relations of the State with the Commonwealth, and that if we take early action to bring these people in touch with the outside world, it will simply be anticipating later action which, being deferred, will prevent the development of the interior of this State by those hardy persons now engaged in it. I have much pleasure in moving this motion, and in also asking the support of members of the Government who have asserted on many occasions that they are only too

anxious and willing to help the progress of those struggling in remote and isolated places.

[MR. ILLINGWORTH took the Chair.]

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): I do not think I need assure the hon. member how deeply I sympathise with his motion. Last year when the Estimates were under consideration I drew attention to the necessity of doing something for these people in the outback districts. The member for Leonora has pointed out that since the advent of Federation we have had very little consideration in regard to our telegraphic service. In fact I do not know of a single extension since then. A lot of money has been wasted. We have heard of large expenditure for phonophores where they have telegraph lines, but if you ask for telegraph connection costing only a few pounds, great difficulties are raised by the Federal authorities. I agree with everything the member has said with regard to the necessity of helping those people who are game enough to go into the back parts to do something for this country. No matter whether they are on the fields or agricultural centres we ought to do what we can to assist them. I hardly know, however, whether the motion brought before the House by the hon. member is the best that could have been brought forward with a view of getting the best work done. In the first place, I think that the motion is slightly out of order, as it proposes to expend money. The hon. member does not say where he thinks the money should come from, whether from revenue or loan. I am not quite sure whether that is in order, because it means the expenditure of money, and because such a measure, I think, could not be carried without a Message from the Governor. Still I do not want to submit any point in regard to it. Then the hon. member goes on to say a certain sum of money should be set aside each year for the purpose of carrying this work out by way of guarantee or otherwise. I would like to say that recently the people of Black Range wrote to me to ask me to do what I could for the extension of the service to Black Range. I communicated with the Premier, who in turn communicated with

the Federal authorities. We are now negotiating with the Federal authorities in connection with an extension of the telegraphic system to Black Range. There are many other places that ought to receive assistance. For the last two years we have been urging this extension to Black Range, but so far we have not been able to come to any terms with them. I would suggest that the hon. member should either withdraw this motion or adjourn it, so that we may be in a position to give the House a good deal more information than at the present time. The Prime Minister has promised to reconsider the question as to extension of these telegraphic lines, and also the question of guarantee. But we would like to have the fullest information, because it would be impossible without that information before us to know what the Government of the Commonwealth would demand, and it would be impossible for us to specify any money for this purpose; in fact, by putting a large sum on the Estimates we might find the Federal Government would do considerably less for us than they otherwise would. I can assure the hon. member that the Government will be prepared to take a good deal of responsibility in connection with work of this sort, and they intend to do all they possibly can to try and give the facilities which the hon. member so graphically pointed out should be given to these people in the back country. Therefore, while I am in fullest sympathy with the motion, I would ask him to withdraw it or adjourn it, so that at a later date during the session we can give him much fuller information than we possess at present.

MR. LYNCH: Will there be an opportunity of discussing it a fortnight hence?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: We will give you an opportunity of discussing it.

MR. J. IDELL (Pilbarra): I have great pleasure in supporting the motion. I have had long experience in trying to get both telegraphic and mail communication from the Federal Government. I should like the hon. member to have added the words "mail assistance." We know that in the early days of the gold-fields such assistance could not but help to reduce the cost of living and to get

business people on to the fields. The same applies to capitalists. No man cares about investing money in a place unless he has quick communication with the outer world, and the people who are supplying the money. Then again, there is another point of view. The men who carry on operations at those places are the backbone of the country, and they should be treated as well as other people. They are entitled to be recognised by the Commonwealth and to be placed into telegraphic communication with other portions of the State. Correspondence has been going on for eight months with a view to getting mail assistance from the Commonwealth Government; and I do not think there is any question which has turned so many people in the back country against Federation as the fact that mail communication in the North is not supplied to them. I applied for a mail service over eight months ago, the distance being seventy miles. The matter is not quite settled, but it is getting nearer being settled. I hope so, anyhow. There has been as much money spent over correspondence as would have paid for the service for six months. I am informed that although there is no communication there they are obtaining a profit of £110 a year. They are getting that out of the people there, and yet they will not give us a service. They have made requests to the State Government to guarantee them against any loss. I think that is rather unjust. I do not think that when we entered the Commonwealth we expected to get treatment of this sort. Many people found fault with our late Postmaster-General, Mr. Sholl, but I would rather have Mr. Sholl to deal with than any of the Commonwealth officers. That is my own experience. I have great pleasure in supporting the hon. member's motion. I am sure that when the Premier comes to look at the matter in a proper light he will see he is not bound to find a large sum of money, and possibly he may not have to find any, and he may only be asked to assist people if the Commonwealth Government want a guarantee, by giving it. If they ask for a telegraph line 20 or 30 miles, all the Commonwealth Government want is to be guaranteed against any loss in regard to the salaries of their officers. If

the money earned does not come up to that amount, they want the State Government to pay the difference. That is what I understand from the Government. Surely it is not asking the Government too much to request them to guarantee that small amount, whatever it may be, to give people in the back country telegraphic and postal communication. It is a reasonable offer, an offer which does not bind the colony to the payment of any vast sum of money. It is in fact nothing beyond a promise. I hope in that spirit the Premier will consider the matter.

MR. M. F. TROY (Mount Magnet): I hope the Government will see their way clear to provide this sum of money to give telegraphic communication between the residents of those portions of the State where these facilities are so much desired, and where they are necessary for the development of those parts of the State. I have had experience in connection with the matter mentioned by the Minister for Mines. For some time the people of that progressive district at Black Range have been endeavouring to secure telegraphic communication, but they have been unable to do so because the Commonwealth Government have laid down a certain system by which they conduct these matters; and they will not depart from that particular system.

MR. A. J. WILSON: If we do this, we will not be able to complete that railway for you. We cannot do too much.

MR. TROY: I am aware that the member for Forrest knows very little about that country; therefore it is not necessary to attach much weight to the remarks he makes on this matter. The Commonwealth Government have laid down this system, that they will not construct any telegraph line unless it will pay from the outset cost of upkeep, maintenance, and 10 per cent. on the cost of construction. That is the reply I received on several occasions from the Commonwealth Postmaster General, and because this particular district of Black Range cannot meet the requirements of the Commonwealth Government in connection with that particular matter, the people are denied this particular facility. I had the same experience in connection with Boogardie. I desired a telephone and I

could not get it unless the system in vogue in connection with the service was complied with; but the State Government came to my assistance in this matter. The telephone service from Mount Magnet to Boogardie could not come up to expectations, and the Commonwealth Government wanted security for any loss that might be incurred. I hope that the Government now in power, following on the lines of the previous Government, will accede to the proposal of my friend the member for Leonora. We know that if in the past we had adopted the lines which the Commonwealth Government desire to be adopted in relation to their services, the people in many portions of this State would not have possessed the facilities which were granted to them; because none from the beginning paid their upkeep and management, nor in many instances did they pay 10 per cent. on the cost of construction. I hope the Government who gave those facilities to those people who went out to the remote portions of our State, and who do more than any other class of people to develop the resources of the State, will provide the sum for the purpose of making up any amount which may be deficient in connection with these services; that they will give to the people in this State, and particularly those in the remote places, facilities which are necessary for the progress of those places. Again, I agree with the remarks of the member for Pilbarra in connection with the mail service. I know it is a very difficult matter indeed to procure a mail service. The Federal Government has introduced the same system in connection with the mail service, and I have endeavoured on four different occasions to procure such service, but have been unsuccessful, because this service will not pay from the onset for the cost, upkeep, and maintenance. It will be impossible for every service to do that, and I think it is a bad and very unfortunate thing for the Commonwealth Government to have such a rigid system. I repeat that I hope the State Government, recognising the disabilities of the people in those parts of the State, will come to their assistance, and provide a sum on the Estimates so that they may have the facilities which are necessary for the progress of those localities.

THE PREMIER: Like the Minister for Mines, I assure the member for Leonora that the Government is entirely in sympathy with his motion. Already endeavours are being made to convince the Federal authorities that their action is not correct; and the attitude they have taken up is being considered. I can assure the hon. member that if possible his wishes will undoubtedly be met. Beyond question it is to the advantage of far-back mining and far-back agricultural communities that they should have telegraphic and postal communication; but I am not quite certain that the method he suggests will be the best to adopt. I should infinitely prefer to deal with each case on its merits, rather than to set aside a specific sum, which might be an invitation to the Commonwealth to spend the money, perhaps lavishly. The Minister for Works has suggested that he could hardly have control over such a matter as that suggested in the second paragraph of the motion. I hope that the hon. member will see the advisableness of letting the debate be adjourned; and I assure him that before the session closes, an opportunity shall be given him for discussion.

On motion by MR. TAYLOR debate adjourned.

[MR. SPEAKER resumed the Chair.]

MOTION—RAILWAY PROJECT, MOUNT MAGNET TO LAWLERS.

MR. M. F. TROY (Mount Magnet) moved:

That in the opinion of this House it would be in the best interests of the State, and especially of the mining and agricultural industries, if a railway were constructed from Mount Magnet *via* Black Range to Lawlers.

He said: In making this motion, I fear that in my few remarks I shall not be able to present the claims of Black Range and Lawlers to railway communication with Mount Magnet in that fullness of detail and with that weight of argument so necessary in a matter of this importance. If I err in this respect, I hope I shall have the indulgence of members, because this is the first occasion on which I have undertaken such a task; and I hope that if I fail it will be recognised that the fault is mine, and does not result from any lack of arguments in favour of my proposal. I shall endeavour, to the

best of my ability, and with the facts at my disposal, to prove to members that the railway is absolutely necessary if we are to develop our mineral resources, and the agricultural and pastoral resources in the northern portion of our State. The proposal is not new. There is nothing original about it. It has for a great number of years been before the people of the State. In the first place, Sir John Forrest was desirous that the railway systems of the Murchison Goldfields and of the Eastern Goldfields should be connected by a line from Mount Magnet to Lawlers, and connecting with the Eastern Goldfields system at Leonora. And I hope, though I do not ask it on this occasion, that in the very near future such communication will be established. Again, Mr. James, when Premier of this State, speaking in Perth on the 22nd March, 1904, advocated the construction of this railway. He advocated a line from Mount Magnet to Lawlers, thence communicating with the Eastern Goldfields system at Leonora; and later, speaking at Mount Magnet on the 22nd April of that year, he was even more definite; because he said that the chief desire of his Government was to see railway communication established between Mount Magnet and Lawlers, and that if developments continued as they were progressing at Black Range, he was hopeful that the desire of his Government would be gratified in the near future. On that occasion his Government comprised the present Premier (Hon. C. H. Rason), and the present Minister for Mines and Railways (Hon. H. Gregory); and I am speaking truthfully when I say that Mr. James on that occasion undoubtedly voiced the opinions of these, his fellow Ministers. Again, later on, in the policy speech of Mr. Daglish on the 22nd March, 1904, at Subiaco, delivered after that gentleman was raised to the dignity of Premier, he touched on the necessity for the construction of this line, and laid it down that, "when funds permit, this will be one of the first works which will be undertaken." And later on, the present Premier, speaking in September at Midland Junction, gave an outline of the policy of his Government: that they were seized with the necessity for establishing railway communication between the Murchison and the Eastern Goldfields, and

that this work would receive their earnest consideration. When I recognise that all the Premiers of this State, from the time of Sir John Forrest, have advocated the construction of this railway, I am only surprised that there should be any necessity for my bringing in this motion. I am surprised that the communication which all desire has not become long ago an established fact; I regret that it has been so long delayed, and that I find it necessary to make this motion. Just at present we, the people of the Murchison and the East Murchison districts, do not require the whole of that railway; we do not require a railway starting from Mount Magnet and ending at Leonora; but we desire the construction of that portion starting at Mount Magnet and ending at Lawlers, in the East Murchison district. And if years ago, in the time of Sir John Forrest, and in the time of Mr. James, the construction of that railway was warranted, I say it is better warranted to-day, because of the developments in what is known as the Black Range goldfield. Developments in that goldfield alone are of such importance as to warrant the immediate construction of a railway thereto. And if the construction of a line from Mount Magnet to Lawlers was warranted before the Black Range Goldfield existed, then to-day it is warranted in a greater degree. Last night, in the Premier's Budget Speech, some mention was made of the need for development work on the Murchison Goldfields. We heard much of the necessity for constructing spur lines in agricultural areas. Not only did we hear it on this occasion, but on every similar occasion since I have occupied a seat in this House, I have heard from every part of the House of the need for constructing spur lines to develop the agricultural portion of our State. And I agree with the intention of the Government, providing that such railways are constructed legitimately, providing there is any possibility of their being made to pay in the near future. But I wish it to be recognised, not only by goldfields members but by members representing agricultural constituencies, that not only are spur lines necessary in the agricultural portions of the State, but that they are absolutely necessary in our auriferous areas, to develop the mining industry. Side by side with agricultural

development must go the development of the mining industry; because one industry cannot very well get on without the other. The miner needs the agriculturist to provide him with the necessaries of life; the agriculturist must have the miner to provide him with a market for his produce; and I hope that when members talk about and consider the need for agricultural lines, they will recognise that it is no use whatever building agricultural lines and putting people on the land, unless at the same time we provide for those people a market; and the best means of providing that market is to open up our goldfields, develop our mineral resources, and give our agriculturists a market at their very doors. If this motion be agreed to, the agriculturists of this State, and particularly those resident in the northern portion of the State—in the Geraldton, Irwin, Northampton, and Greenough districts—will have a natural market at their very doors, a market to which they are entitled because of their geographical position, and which to a great extent they have been robbed of by the cursed centralisation during the last seven or eight years. I hold that the best market which our farmers can have in this State is the goldfields market. The farmers enjoy a monopoly of that market, and should enjoy a monopoly; and I want to see them enjoy it, because I hold that the goldfields market is the natural inheritance of the farmers of this State; and I am sure I shall not appeal in vain to representatives of agricultural constituencies when I ask them to support this proposal, when I ask them to assist in developing the mineral resources of the State, so that we may employ a larger population on the goldfields, make the cost of living less, and the conditions of life better, and therefore in every sense improve the position of the inhabitants of this State. Again, the port of Geraldton is entitled to the trade of the East Murchison and Murchison goldfields. Because of its geographical position, the traders residing at Geraldton should have the advantage of the markets afforded by these goldfields. But they do not now have these advantages, because the people on the East Murchison Goldfield are absolutely cut off from communication with Geraldton, owing to

the lack of railway facilities. At the present time, almost the whole of the trade of the East Murchison Goldfield is diverted to Fremantle instead of to Geraldton; and as a result of the high cost of carriage from Fremantle to Leonora and on to Lawlers, the cost of living and of everything else in that particular locality is made much higher than it would be were the goods brought by rail from Geraldton. I wish to show what a vast difference this makes in the cost of living; and I intend to refer members to a table which will support my contention. The distance from Geraldton to Mount Magnet by rail is 216 miles, and from Mount Magnet to Lawlers 150 miles. Black Range, I wish it to be understood, lies 84 miles from Mount Magnet, in a direct line between Mount Magnet and Lawlers; therefore the distance from Geraldton—the natural port of the Murchison and East Murchison fields—to Lawlers, is 306 miles; whereas the distance from Fremantle to Leonora is 544 miles, and from Leonora to Lawlers 88 miles, making a total of 632 miles. So whereas in the first place the distance from Geraldton to Lawlers is only 366 miles, the distance from Fremantle to Lawlers is 632 miles—double the distance, double the carriage, and almost double the cost as I shall later on explain. So every member must recognise that what we ask is what we are justified in asking: that the markets of the East Murchison be opened to the people resident in and around Geraldton, and that communication shall be given so that the trade of the East Murchison field shall be diverted to its natural port. And owing to being shut off from our natural port, the cost of living on the East Murchison field is increased. This table will prove my contention. The freight on agricultural produce from Geraldton to Mount Magnet is 19s. 4d. per ton. The cost of carrying agricultural produce from Mount Magnet to Black Range and Lawlers is now about £5 per ton, making a total of about £5 19s. 4d. The cost of taking produce from Geraldton to Leonora—remember, the East Murchison field is the natural market of the agriculturists around Geraldton—is £1 16s. 6d. a ton, or twice as much as the cost of taking such produce from Mount Magnet to Lawlers. The carriage per ton from Mount Magnet

to Lawlers and from Leonora to Lawlers is exactly similar. Therefore, in favour of Mount Magnet, there is a decreased cost amounting to considerably over £1 per ton. But the cost of mining machinery is considerably greater by the Fremantle-Leonora route than it would be by the Geraldton *via* Magnet to Lawlers route. If we want to encourage people to invest in our mining industry and to purchase mines in the State and to develop our mineral resources, we cannot do it better than by giving them cheap railway facilities. The distance by rail from Fremantle to Leonora is 547 miles, and the distance from Leonora to Lawlers is 90 miles. The railage charge for mining machinery Class C from Fremantle to Leonora is £4 8s. 5d. per ton, and the cartage from Leonora to Lawlers is £5 per ton, making a total of £9 8s. 5d. per ton. The figures for other classes of mining machinery are—Class A, railage to Leonora £2 4s. 3d., cartage to Lawlers £5, total cost £7 4s. 3d. per ton; Class B, railage to Leonora £2 18s. 11d., cartage to Lawlers, £5, total cost £7 18s. 11d.; Class 1, railage to Leonora £6 7s. 10d., cartage to Lawlers £5, total cost, £11 7s. 10d.; Class 2, railage to Leonora £8 7s. 11d., cartage to Lawlers £5, total cost £13 7s. 11d.; Class 3, railage to Leonora £10 7s. 10d., cartage to Lawlers £5, total cost £15 7s. 10d. The transport charges on goods from Geraldton by rail *via* Magnet to Lawlers, a distance of 365 miles, on mining machinery would be as follows: Class C, £3 5s. 9d., as against £9 8s. 5d. by the Leonora route from Fremantle; Class A, £1 12s. 11d., as against £7 4s. 3d.; Class B, £2 3s. 10d., as against £7 18s. 11d.; Class 1, £4 16s. 7d., as against £11 7s. 10d.; Class 2, £6 6s. 11d., as against £13 7s. 11d.; and Class 3, £7 16s. 11d., as against £15 7s. 10d. It shows that the cost of the carriage of mining machinery from Fremantle to Lawlers *via* Leonora is in some cases twice as much and in other cases nearly four times as much as it would be were a railway constructed from Magnet to Lawlers and if the machinery were taken from Geraldton to Lawlers. It makes a material difference in connection with the development of our mining industry if the money expended in the carriage of mining material could be expended in the development of the

mines. If the money spent in cartage of machinery to the East Murchison gold-fields, amounting to some hundreds of thousands, had been spent in the mining industry, Western Australia would to-day be producing more gold, and the development in that portion of the State would have been much farther ahead. The following figures will show the saving that would be made by an extension of the railway from Magnet to Lawlers in the carriage of mining machinery. The saving would be on Class C, £6 2s. 8d.; Class A, £5 11s. 4d.; Class B, £5 15s. 1d.; Class 1, £6 11s. 3d.; Class 2, £7 1s.; Class 3, £7 10s. 11d. Mining machinery under five tons from Fremantle to Leonora costs £9 4s. 9d. railage. This, *plus* the cartage at £5 per ton from Leonora to Lawlers, makes the cost of this material from Fremantle to Lawlers £14 4s. 9d. per ton. The railage on the same tonnage from Geraldton to Lawlers *via* Mt. Magnet would amount to £6 19s. 8d., making a difference of £7 5s. 1d. per ton. I hope members will give earnest consideration to these figures, and that they will recognise what a difference such an expenditure would make in the development of our mining industry. If the money were expended in the development of our mines, instead of in the carriage of machinery, the mining industry in East Murchison would be more progressive than now. Because the cost of carriage of machinery is so great investors are influenced against investing in these particular localities. Some time ago, at Black Range, I met a representative of one of the largest firms in the State in search of mining properties, and he asked me whether in the near future there was any possibility of a railway being constructed from Magnet to Black Range and, later on, to the East Murchison Goldfield. I assured him that I believed it was the intention of the Government to construct a line; and he assured me that if his company thought the construction of the railway would be an accomplished fact in the near future, they were prepared to invest a good deal of money in the Black Range district, but that they were influenced against investing money there because they would need to pay a considerable amount for the transport of their machinery, and that if by a railway

system they could save the extra expenditure on the transport of machinery, the money saved would be expended in the development of the mines they purchased. This has retarded the development of the East Murchison Goldfield, and it is to-day retarding the development of Black Range. I hope the House will recognise this fact, and that members will agree to the necessity for the construction of this railway to assist the persons engaged in mining in the localities to be served by it. There is also the question of food stuffs. We all know that the high cost of mining in the back country is due to the fact that food stuffs are costly. If people on the East Murchison Goldfield could procure their foodstuffs at half the present cost, undoubtedly they would be better able to develop the industries in which they are so much concerned. If people in the Geraldton, Greenough, Irwin, and Northampton districts were able to have that market at their doors, and if they were given facilities by which they could dispose of their surplus produce, it would greatly assist in the agricultural development of the districts around Geraldton. At present the people in those districts have no market, except the Murchison market, and agriculture about Geraldton is not so progressive as it has been in the southern portions of the State. The East Murchison Goldfield bears the same relation to agriculturists around Geraldton as the Eastern Goldfields bear to the southern and eastern agricultural districts, and the agricultural industry in the northern portion of the State will never make any progress unless the districts around Geraldton, by means of a railway from Mount Magnet to Lawlers, are given the market which is theirs from their geographical position. Not only would it give greater facilities to those engaged in the mining industry, but it would serve the agricultural industry also and give greater facilities to the farmers in the northern portion of the State to dispose of their produce. I hope members representing those northern agricultural constituencies will recognise the fact. At the same time, the construction of this railway, besides being necessary for the success of these industries, is warranted by the results attained in the mining fields I have

mentioned at Black Range and in the East Murchison Goldfield. The East Murchison Goldfield is a very old field, comprising the districts of Lawlers, Kathleen Valley, Sir Samuel, Darlôt, and others. These have existed for many years past, and have produced a vast amount of gold, and have materially assisted in the gold production of the State. They have added to the wealth of the State whilst labouring under great difficulties. In the districts I have mentioned, many leases are being actively worked. In Lawlers there are 25 leases; Darlôt, 26; Kathleen Valley, 13; Sir Samuel, 19; Leinster, 5; McCaffrey's, 9; Ogilvie's, 21; Harriss's, 8; New England, 1; and in the group nine miles east of Lawlers there are 4. There are altogether 131 leases in the East Murchison Goldfield contributing to the gold production of this State, employing large numbers of men, and keeping a large population on that goldfield.

At 6-30, the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7-30, Chair resumed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS.

THE PREMIER moved:

That notices of motion be proceeded with until the hon. member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Troy) has concluded his speech.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Seeing that the member for Mount Magnet had one other motion standing in his name, and which was moved in the interests of a considerable portion of the goldfields population, and seeing that this was possibly the last occasion on which there would be an opportunity of bringing this matter forward, the Premier should allow the member for Mount Magnet to state his case in connection with notice of motion No. 13; and he was sure the member for Mount Magnet would be as concise as possible.

Motion put and passed.

RAILWAY DEBATE RESUMED.

MR. M. F. TROY (continuing): When we adjourned, I was referring to a number of leases on which work is being done in the East Murchison Goldfield and which to-day is contributing largely to the gold production of the State. The number of leases included in the Lawlers, Black Range, Darlôt, Kathleen Valley,

Sir Samuel, Leinster, McCaffrey's, Ogilvie's, Harris, New England, and the group nine miles east of Lawlers, total in all 131 leases; and on these leases in some instances there is a large number of men employed, and on others a smaller number. Still, the gold production from these leases is instrumental in keeping a population of about three thousand persons resident in the East Murchison Goldfield. I have not included Wiluna, where operations are carried on on 31 leases. If these operations were included in the East Murchison Goldfield it would make a grand total of 161 leases where active operations are being carried on. The Black Range Goldfield, stretching from a few miles south of Nunungana to within 60 miles north of Montagu Range district, to-day is employing many prospectors, and in some instances a large number of wages men. In the Black Range district there are more leases to-day in active operation than in the East Murchison Goldfield, which proves that the developments on the new goldfield are of a progressive character. I want to refer briefly to the total production of gold from the mining centres on these goldfields from their inception to the 31st October, 1905. It will be seen from the table which I have that the Black Range Goldfield is only one of recent birth, though some gold was produced there as far back as 1898, still it was only in a very small quantity—alluvial gold to the amount of 13ozs. A little later on mining operations were carried on, and a small battery of a few head was erected there in the year 1900. Although this battery did crush some stone, it ceased to operate in the year 1901; and from that date until about 1903 no developments worthy of serious mention have taken place in the Black Range district. The returns from Kathleen Valley are: 1900, 5,353·91ozs.; 1901, 8,023·94ozs.; 1902, 8,995·75ozs.; 1903, 7,681·21ozs.; 1904, 5,876·35ozs. This year there has been a falling-off, and to the 31st October the return from Kathleen Valley is 1,447·84ozs.; the total in all from the inception of the field in 1900, that is, for the past five years, being 37,379·04ozs. Lake Darlôt, another portion of the East Murchison field, has returned the following: 1897, 278·21ozs.; 1898, 5,029·87ozs.; 1899,

2,845·29ozs. In 1900 there was a falling-off to 812·19ozs.; in 1901 the output increased to 6,455·87ozs.; in 1902 the output was 7,762·50ozs.; and in 1903, 9,389·51ozs.; 1904, 4,441·42ozs.; and this year the return has been 3,616·20ozs. The total production from the Lake Darlôt district to date has been 40,631 ozs. I want to draw members' attention to the fact that whereas in this particular locality the output of gold was a very small quantity during the time that the railway was previously advocated, the output to-day is far greater, therefore the construction of the railway is warranted to a greater extent. In the Lawlers district the returns were: previous to 1897, 2,327·16ozs.; 1897, 16,137·15ozs.; 1898, 16,673·54ozs.; 1899, 22,925·77ozs.; 1900, 31,375·69ozs.; 1901, 33,412·85ozs. There was a slight falling-off in 1902, the total production being 30,415·50ozs.; in 1903 it had increased again very considerably and the production in that year was 39,766·19ozs. The production of gold in the Lawlers district had increased from 39,776ozs. in 1903, to 40,023ozs. in 1904; and for the first ten months of this year the production was 27,624·94ozs. In the Sir Samuel district the output was: 1897, 1,787·35ozs.; 1898, 6,453·63ozs.; 1899, 5,714·41ozs.; 1900, 7,585·45ozs.; 1901, 9,820·68ozs.; in 1902 it had increased very considerably, the production being 13,735·12ozs.; and in 1903 there was a farther increase to 15,912·15ozs. A farther increase was again recorded in 1904, the production being 16,175·76ozs.; and for the first ten months of this year the output was 14,416·73ozs. The total production from the Lawlers district since the inception of the goldfield has been 260,062ozs., and the total production of Sir Samuel 91,601ozs.; for Lake Darlôt, 40,631ozs.; Kathleen Valley, 37,379ozs.; which means a total production of gold amounting to almost 400,000ozs. On the Black Range goldfield, which I think has been in existence for about two years, developments have been of a more satisfactory nature and of a better character than can be recorded of any other goldfield in this State. I have no hesitation in saying that outside the Kalgoorlie Belt there does not exist in the State at the present time a goldfield with greater promise or greater pos-

sibilities than exist in regard to the Black Range goldfield; and the production of gold in the last two years has been of such a nature as to warrant my contention. In 1898, when Black Range was first discovered by a few prospectors crossing from Mt. Magnet to Lawlers, the production was 13·42oz., and in 1899 it was 62·37. In 1900 a small battery of a few heads and of a very obsolete character crushed in a few months 91·61oz. In 1901 a little alluvial was got there to the extent of 13·24oz. In 1902—and here we come to the Black Range goldfield as it now exists—alluvial prospecting in the locality procured 192·14oz. In 1903 (two years ago) the output of gold at Black Range was only 712·92oz. In 1904 the gold production had increased from 712oz. to 11,186oz., there being an increase of nearly 11,000oz. in one year. For the first 10 months of this year, despite the fact that the public battery at Black Range has not been pursuing active operations for some considerable time, the production has been, to date, 13,221·56oz. Every year shows a decided increase, and next year I have no doubt that the production of gold from Black Range will increase three-fold. The total production of gold from Black Range for the two years amounts to 25,494oz. The Black Range goldfield has had two years' existence, and has produced half as much gold as has the Lawlers district itself; and there does not exist at Black Range half the facilities for the production of gold that exist at Lawlers. [MR. HORAN: There is not half the gold there.] I think I have proved that up to date there is more gold there; that despite the disabilities under which the people labour, the gold production has been nothing less than extraordinary. If the development continues as it has continued during the past two years, I feel sure that the Ministry, before another year has passed, will actively commence the construction of a railway line to that particular district. In the Lawlers district lately there have been some very good mining developments. The Vivian mine, a few miles from Lawlers, is generally looked upon as being one of the best mines in the back country; and the developments which have taken place there during the past two years have

proved it to be a mine equal to any existing in the East Murchison district. When speaking to the manager of the mine some few months ago, he assured me that, having satisfied themselves of the satisfactory nature of the developments, within the next few years the Vivian mine at Lawlers will be one of the best gold producers in Western Australia. I have not the figures at my disposal, so will not prolong this discussion in regard to the Lawlers district; but in regard to Black Range, without any desire to pick out the best mines in that locality, I have had prepared for me a list of the crushings which have taken place during the past year, showing the nature of the development in that district. I want members to understand that I purposely left alone the names in that locality, but I asked the Statist of the Mines Department to take out a number of leases and to give me the production. This information has been supplied to me. Till recently only one mine at Black Range was in the hands of a company, and that mine, the Kingoonya, was purchased some two years ago by the Hans Irvine Company, who have made a substantial profit on their purchase. They paid £10,000 for several leases and erected machinery costing about £12,000, and in 18 months from the date of their purchase they not only repaid from the gold won the purchase money, but they paid the cost of machinery, cost of maintenance and upkeep, working expenses and £7,000 in dividends; and to-day that mine is still paying dividends. The developments have been proved to 200ft., and the reef, 6ft. in width, has an average value of nearly 2oz. I know of few places in Western Australia where one may point to a mine having such satisfactory results. On the Black Range mining lease there were crushed 637 tons for an output of 1,630oz., a return of over 2oz. to the ton. Another portion of that property is the Dulgite lease, which crushed 259 tons for a return of 328oz., considerably over 1oz. to the ton. Another reef, the Adelaide has crushed 530 tons for a return of 1,038oz. or 2oz. to the ton. This Black Range goldmine to-day is crushing just as satisfactorily as it did twelve months ago, and developments have proved that the holders of that property have a far better property than

they thought existed 18 months ago. I want to refer to a few other leases, and then I shall conclude as far as the production of Black Range is concerned. Another reef is the Sand Stone line of reef, which has recently been taken over by Mr. H. A. Hoover, and which that gentleman expects will become one of the best gold producers in Western Australia. That line of reef has crushed this year 1,035 tons of stone for a return of 1,532·58oz. of gold, considerably over 1oz. to the ton. Whilst upon this, I want to read a few words Mr. Hoover had to say on this property. He has an option of the lease, and in speaking in Perth, he made the following remarks :—

He had inspected the property, which, so far as developed at present, gave indications of becoming a great mine, possibly another Great Fingall. The lode, so far as traced on the surface, had a length of 3,000ft., and was probably the longest in Western Australia. On it about 30 shafts had been sunk, the greatest depth attained being 120ft. The lode averaged, according to sampling, an ounce to the ton. It was a free milling proposition, and could be worked very cheaply. The formation seemed to indicate that it was a series of chutes for the length previously stated, and when depth was attained it was probable they would all join together and make one strong lode.

I know this lease, and I know that nowhere in Western Australia—and I want to say I have visited all the goldfields portion of Western Australia, with the exception of the Pilbarra goldfields—does there exist such a line of reef with such hopeful prospects. And this is not the only one. There are many other lines of reef from which the returns have been good and on which to-day the owners are having machinery erected. There is the Undaunted East lease which crushed this year 493·25 tons for a return of 431·29oz., and the Wanderie reef is another line of reef situated about half a mile from the Sandstone, and owned by Griffiths and party. That reef, about 6ft. in width, has crushed this year 1,030 tons for a return of 1,380 ozs. The owners of this property have on several occasions refused certain offers for it, and to-day they are under negotiations for putting machinery there. With machinery, the output of gold from Black Range will be very materially increased. The Wirraminna lease has a very large lode formation 100yds. from

the town of Nunngarra, and has to date crushed 115 tons for a return of 68·05oz.; that is half an ounce to the ton. I want to assure members this is one of those low grade leases which will prove the mainstay of Western Australia when the rich reefs have been worked out. This is the kind of lease, the kind of lode, the kind of property, to which more attention is being given at the present time than any other properties. The Wirraminna lease at Black Range, which is of very large dimensions, will undoubtedly prove a great factor in the mineral development of that locality. Forty miles from Black Range there exists in the same goldfield another mining locality known as Berrigrin, and 10 miles from that there is the Montague Range district. The crushings from Berrigrin have exceeded an ounce to the ton, and that portion of the Black Range goldfields is one of the brightest spots there. The Montague Range district was only discovered within the last seven months, yet it has proved what it can put out in the way of gold production. I have received a letter to-day from a resident of that locality which has given the returns from several crushings that have recently taken place there. In that locality two batteries have been erected by private enterprise, and notwithstanding that the crushing charges are somewhat high, a deal of development work is being carried on, and the returns to-day have averaged over an ounce per ton. Again, 17 miles west of Black Range there exists another belt of auriferous country in which a very fine mine, the Maringa Marley, is situated, sunk to a depth of 170 feet. Mr. Greenham, of Perth, and Mr. Dwyer, of Kalgoorlie, are the owners; and to my knowledge they refused a little while ago a very substantial offer for the property. [MEMBER: How much?] I do not want to let you into peoples' private business. To-day a battery is being erected on that property, machinery is being conveyed there, and that mine will do much to increase the gold production of the locality. Taking all these facts into consideration, no member will deny that the Black Range Goldfield itself warrants railway facilities, even if the East Murchison Goldfield and the Lawlers Goldfield did not exist. The developments at Black Range during the past two years warrant rail-

way communication; and I hope its claims will be given favourable consideration by the House. At Black Range, Bewick, Moreing & Co. are erecting a 10-head battery. There is a Government battery of 11 head, which crushes considerably more than any other 11-head battery in this State. Another 10-head battery is being erected on the Maringa Marley, and an 8-head battery between the Montague Range and Berrigrin, and it has been arranged to put machinery on the Wanderie mine. During the last two months the number of men employed on the Black Range goldfield has considerably increased. I have to-day a letter from Black Range, assuring me that within the past month 75 more men have been employed than were employed a month ago, proving the fine developments in that locality. If the mines were not developing well we should not have so considerable an increase in the number of men employed. This increase, I feel sure, will continue when all the machinery has been erected, and as the owners of the Black Range mines have, a few months ago, purchased all the machinery which was at one time erected on the old Windsor Castle mine, at East Mount Magnet, and to-day that machinery is being shifted to Black Range for erection there—when all the machinery has been erected and all the batteries are in active operation, the gold output of Black Range will be within the next year four times greater than it has been during the past 10 months. Considering the developments in the district, I do not think any member will contradict my assertion. The population to be served by such a railway—and this is an important factor—is now from about 4,000 to 5,000 souls. I am not taking the population of Black Range only, but of the whole East Murchison goldfield and the Black Range district; and since the population is increasing, I think I can safely say that within the next six months there will be in these localities between 5,000 and 6,000 souls.

MR. HORAN: The Treasurer's map, exhibited last night, shows that the district has no population at all.

MR. TROY: Probably the Treasurer had not the figures which I possess; but since he has not supplied the House with these figures, I presume I have done the

House a service by going to this trouble. Not only do the mining developments in these localities warrant railway communication; but it is a fact that there does not exist in the State such a large population without a railway. This railway, if constructed, would serve another purpose. It would serve the pastoral industry; because between Mount Magnet and Lawlers there does exist a fine belt of country; that country not only exists, but it is to-day occupied by flocks and herds. I have had a return prepared for me showing the number of pastoral leases within a 15-mile radius of a direct line between Mount Magnet and Black Range. Had I taken the trouble to procure a table showing the number of pastoral leases within a radius of 40 miles—because 40 miles is not such a great distance from a railway, particularly when we are considering pastoral leases—I could have shown a considerably larger number of leases than I can in this return. But to be definite and not to mislead the House, I have taken a radius within 15 miles of a direct line between Mount Magnet and Lawlers; and within that radius the total number of pastoral leases is 51. These leases are now being occupied; flocks and herds are running there; and the total acreage of the 51 leases is 2,369,950. I know well that many members are under the impression that no pastoral land exists on our goldfields; but I wish to assure them that for sheep-raising purposes the Murchison district contains the finest pastoral land in this State; and I think that members on the Government side of the House who understand the industry will bear me out when I say that the finest quality of wool and of mutton is being produced in the Murchison district. This land is more valuable because a considerable area of it is being enclosed by the rabbit-proof fence, which will make the land not only more valuable but more productive. The railway, besides serving the agriculturists in the Victoria district and the other districts mentioned, and besides giving to the people of Geraldton the market which they ought to have because of their geographical situation, will serve the pastoral industry also. The pastoralists on those leases are at considerable expense to

convey their wool to market. They suffer severe losses in driving their sheep to the nearest railway station, and to Perth or some other station—to the nearest market. Every member who understands the industry knows that if sheep have to travel a considerable distance they lose weight; the mutton is of inferior quality; and this is especially true if the sheep have to travel hundreds of miles to the railway. Therefore this line would give pastoralists the facilities for which they have been waiting during many years. Those men have gone out into what was considered a desert portion of this State, have taken up land that other people would not look at at one time; have reared flocks and herds, have made homes for themselves; and to-day they are asking for that communication and those facilities which should not be denied them. Not only is this a good pastoral country; it is a good country for water, which can be procured without difficulty at a very shallow depth, at from 20 feet to 50 feet, at any place except in the mountainous country around Black Range. Water is procurable as stated in the whole country between Mount Magnet and Black Range.

MR. TAYLOR: The Premier knows the country well, because he at one time represented it.

MR. TROY: Since that time the country has become prosperous. I am sure that the Premier knows the country; and he knows that, since he had the honour of representing it, developments have made it a better country than it was. On the Murchison a great difficulty which faces mine-owners, and which will face all interested in mining developments, is that within a few years our present firewood supply will be non-existent, and we shall have to look about for fresh supplies. If this railway were built, it would open up a fine belt of firewood country, and would give the Great Fingall and other mines on the Murchison facilities for procuring fuel.

MR. HORAN: And for procuring Collie coal.

MR. TROY: The wood available in the Murchison district, if the Government would give us facilities for procuring it, would be much cheaper than Collie coal; and I doubt whether Collie coal would serve the same purpose as wood.

The wood supply would last for a considerable number of years; and that question must be considered by some Government in the very near future. In conclusion, the cost of constructing this railway would not be great. There are no engineering difficulties to surmount. I candidly confess that I do not know much about engineering difficulties, but I know that from Mount Magnet to within five miles of Black Range township—at Nungarra—the country is flat. A railway could be laid on the ground, and would cost very little. No culverts, no earthworks, no ballasting would be needed; and until it reached within five miles of Black Range township, the line would not traverse mountainous country. It would run over flat country for the first 84 miles. I say this knowing the country, because if I have been over it once I have been over it 20 times; and I know that there are not any engineering difficulties, so far as I understand engineering difficulties. At Black Range there are a few hills; but beyond that, between Black Range and Lawlers—and I have crossed that district twice—the country is almost flat. There are two ranges.

MR. HOLMES: What is the country like in wet weather?

MR. TROY: In wet weather the country is wet. We would not have any washaways. The country is too flat, and the water could not rush with sufficient speed.

MR. HOLMES: It would lie there, I suppose.

MR. TROY: Considering the poor rainfall we get, there is sufficient country to absorb all the water that would lie. The Government are considering the advisability of building spur lines in agricultural areas, and they consider that they can be built at a very low cost. I desire to assure them that they can build this railway from Mt. Magnet just as cheaply, or more cheaply. We do not want any up-to-date service. We want a service of about 14 miles an hour. We want a light railway. There are plenty of locomotives and rolling-stock lying useless at Midland Junction which could be utilised for it. The developments warrant a railway. We do not ask too much. I know that there is to be a deficit next year and that a

great many people want railway facilities, but people on the Murchison want recognition and want that which they should have been given long ago. We shall be content with a light line and a service of about 14 miles an hour; but if the goldfield develops, as it is developing, the service can be brought up to date. In the interests of the industries I have mentioned, and in the interests of the people who have gone out into remote portions of the State, and to give them facilities which they must have if they are going to develop the country successfully, let us build the railway. Let us build it in the interests of the agriculturists around Geraldton. The Government desire to bring about settlement of this land and increase the production. They can only do so by giving the people on the land the markets which they should possess. These goldfields are the natural markets for the people around Geraldton, and if the railway is constructed it will encourage the people about Geraldton to vigorously develop their land, and it will encourage settlement in the northern agricultural districts; and they in their turn will be able to supply the people on these goldfields with the foodstuffs they require at a much cheaper rate. Also the mining companies will be enabled to carry machinery at greatly reduced rates, and mining properties will be more cheaply worked. If we are anxious to assist the prospector and to encourage the investor and to insure the mineral development of the future and increased production, we cannot do better than give the facilities I am asking for. The people of Geraldton must also be considered. By the system of centralisation in past years, almost every market in the State was monopolised for the districts of Perth and Fremantle. Surely no member, no matter what constituency he represents, desires that condition of affairs to be maintained. Let us decentralise as much as possible, and let us give the different ports their natural markets; and let us give the people in those ports the right to trade in the markets contiguous to the ports. We can best serve the people of Geraldton, the agricultural industry and the mining industry, by building this railway I am advocating to-night. I thank the House for the patient attention given

to this somewhat tedious speech. I have given nothing but facts to-night, and I have taken some trouble to obtain them. I hope the House will recognise that in no other portion of the State are railway facilities so necessary than in the districts I have mentioned.

MR. P. COLLIER (Boulder): I second the motion.

On motion by MR. CARSON, debate adjourned.

MOTION—RAILWAY SURVEY, NORTH-AMPTON TO GERALDTON-CUE LINE.

Debate resumed from the 6th instant, on Mr. P. Stone's motion for a survey of a loop line.

MR. H. CARSON (Geraldton): I desire to support the motion moved by the member for Greenough (Mr. Stone). I would point out to the Government and to members that the claims of the northern portion of the State have been to a large extent disregarded by previous Governments, but I am sure it is not the desire of the present Government to treat unfairly any portion of the State. They will give, I am sure, favourable consideration to any project for which a good case can be made out. Several agricultural areas have been opened up in that district and selected, and the people are developing them. I may refer to the Mt. Erin Estate containing 64,000 acres, I believe. All of this has been disposed of, and the people are now tilling it, but they are finding that they are considerably handicapped by not having easy means of getting their produce to market. Between this country and Geraldton there is a large range of hills and also a considerable sand plain to traverse; so they find it difficult to compete in the markets with their produce. It may be argued that these people are not farther than 15 miles from the present railway service; but if this railway be constructed it will not only serve these people, but it will enable other people to go out and develop the country farther east; because I understand there is very good agricultural country farther back where there is a good rainfall, 14 or 15 inches, I believe. The railway would also serve the stock-breeder. At present it is impossible for the railway authorities to bring stock down on the present Northamp-

ton Railway on account of the great curves. They find it impossible to travel hovey wagons over the railway, and they refuse to carry stock over it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Let us straighten out the curves.

MR. CARSON: It would be a good thing for the Northampton district to do so. The stock-owners have at present to drive stock from Northampton to Geraldton before transhipping them, and this handicaps them considerably. I might also point out that the Government have made a considerable profit out of the Mt. Erin estate, some £5,000; and on that account they should give this project favourable consideration; or if they do not see their way clear to do so, they should give the district much larger grants for road construction. I do not wish to detain the House over this subject. I believe the Government will give the matter every consideration, and that they will grant a preliminary survey.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): I do not wish to oppose the motion, but I can hardly accept it in its present form. It would really be almost an instruction to have a survey made. The motion goes on, "with a view to having a line built at an early date." I submit that is going perhaps a little too far, and a little farther than the hon. member himself intends. If he would accept the suggestion to amend the motion to read as follows:—

That in the opinion of this House the Government will be serving the interests of the agricultural industry by having a report made upon a loop line from Northampton to a point on the Geraldton-Cue railway, a distance of about 30 miles, with a view to ascertaining the necessity or otherwise of its construction,

I think it would meet with the hon. member's wishes; and if he will accept such an amendment, I shall offer no opposition to the motion as amended. I move an amendment:

That the words "survey made of" be struck out "and report made upon" inserted in lieu, and that the words "having the line built at an early date" be struck out and "ascertaining the necessity or otherwise of its construction" inserted in lieu.

MR. P. STONE: I accept the amendment. I feel certain that the Government are in earnest in making inquiries, and I am hopeful as to the result.

Amendment put and passed.

Motion as amended agreed to.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR LANDS: Report of Acclimatisation Committee of Western Australia for 1904-5.

BILL—EIGHT HOURS DAY.

SECOND READING.

MR. A. J. WILSON (Forrest): In rising to move the second reading of this Bill entitled "An Act to provide for a Maximum Eight Hours Day in Industries," I have first of all to express regret at the possibility of the time for dealing with this measure being so seriously curtailed that in all probability there will be no opportunity of disposing of the measure unless it is disposed of in a summary fashion by members on the Government side of the House. It may be asked by some, what is the necessity for the introduction of a proposal such as is embodied in the Bill now before the House. I have only to remind members that a similar measure, if I may be pardoned for saying so—perhaps a better measure—was introduced in the Parliament of Queensland in 1889, and a similar measure was introduced in the New Zealand Parliament about a year later. In both cases these measures successfully negotiated the Lower Houses, but somehow or other when the measure went to another place in these colonies something happened which was most unfortunate for the particular measures. If there is one thing more than another that at the present time justifies the passing of a Bill that has for its object the legalisation of a standard eight hours day in this State, it is the judgment recently given by the President of the Arbitration Court in connection with the operation of the Early Closing Act, a judgment that I should say does not seem to be in exact harmony with the intentions of the Early Closing Act, as dealt with in that particular judgment. It was ruled by the honourable president of the court that because the Early Closing Act said that, in connection with certain employments, the maximum number of hours during which any employee could be employed in certain particular businesses, 56 hours or 60 hours or any number of hours, because the Act laid it down that the maximum number was not

to be in excess of that number, therefore the Arbitration Court was entirely powerless to concede any lesser number of hours in connection with any industry coming under the operations of that Act. Whilst I can understand the Legislature saying in its wisdom that not more than a certain number of hours shall be worked in a week by any class of employee, I cannot conceive that the measure contemplated giving certain powers to a certain tribunal for the purpose of dealing with questions affecting wages, etcetera, and that the tribunal is consequently to be deprived of settling the number of hours to be worked in any other industry—because the Act says that no more than a certain number of hours shall be worked in connection with some industries. It will be observed that I have drafted in the schedule the exemption of two trades, the dairying and milk industry, and the butchering and meat-purveying industry. And it is also proposed that the Act shall not apply to certain rural employments. In the interpretation clause I have described the word “industry” to mean—

Any business, trade, manufacture, undertaking, calling, or employment in which workers are employed; but does not include employment in or about a house in doing the necessary daily work of the household, or in attending to horses, cows, or other animals kept for the purposes of the household, or in driving carriages or other vehicles kept for such purposes, or in other similar avocations, or the employment of persons in work of an intermittent character in connection with agricultural or pastoral pursuits.

I have, I think, included these exemptions from a motive that will be easily apparent to members who may not hold precisely the same view as I do myself in regard to industrial questions in this State. Not that I do not personally think that in some of these industries the principle of a legal eight hours day for the purpose of the computation of the remuneration could not be adopted, but simply because I believe there would be considerable difficulty in convincing some members that it would be possible to adopt this principle in connection with some industries, and it is to avoid the necessity of having to do so—to do practically what would be an impossible task—I have adopted the wider medium of exempting these particular avocations

which in the ordinary nature of things are not commonly expected to be included in a measure of this nature. But there are some employments in connection with the industrial affairs of our State in which I think an unduly long number of hours are being worked by employees; and in the cases where it has been recognised almost throughout the whole of the Australian Commonwealth, that on account of the trying nature of the climate and a variety of other circumstances—shall I say almost too numerous to mention—it has been generally conceded that the principle of an eight hours legal working day has been readily and justly granted in most of the industrial departments in the Commonwealth of Australia. But unfortunately it is only too true that in some departments that principle has not been incorporated, very largely because of the peculiar nature of the employment, and largely because of the class of people engaged in those particular employments. For instance, if you take the workers engaged in the mining industry; they have always been in the habit of having very strong organisations or combinations which have been able to materially affect the position in regard to regulating the hours of labour in their industry. But there are other employments in which the principle of industrial organisation has not been able to operate to the same extent or with satisfactory results, and because of some peculiarities associated with the avocations it has not been found possible for them to enjoy the same privileges and advantages which are enjoyed by many of their fellow organisations. And it is in the interests of such as these that we should move in the direction that I purpose moving by the adoption of the measure before the House. I need only refer particularly to that employment or class of industry which I have the honour to represent in this Chamber. Anyone who has seen the men working in the timber mills in this State, anyone who has had the opportunity as I have—I see the Minister for Works turning round as if he had some interest in the matter at any rate, as if he had some experience; and possibly I am correct in saying that if the Minister for Works only had the opportunity of following the dictates of his

conscience and the desire of his heart, I do not believe there would be a man working in the timber industry in Western Australia longer than forty-eight hours per week. I hope he will, free and untrammelled by former associations, be able to give utterance and effect to the desires of his heart. Of recent years, particularly in the timber industry, it has been urged that the laboriousness of the work has been materially curtailed by the improvement of the machinery associated with that particular industry. I have only to remind members that whilst it is true to a certain extent that the laboriousness of the work has been minimised by the improved machinery imported into the industry, it is also true that the improvement of the machinery and of the plans brought to bear in connection with the industry has made it possible for a greater quantity of material to be handled by the employees, and if you remove in one sense the laboriousness of the employment and only throw on to the shoulders of those employees the necessity for handling a greater quantity, you are, in my opinion, in no way minimising or affecting the laboriousness of the employment in which they are engaged. [MEMBER: Would you have a six hours' day?] I daresay that if my friend, the member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) wanted a six hours day he could have it, but if his unfortunate employees wanted a six hours day they could not have it, and whether they were entitled to it or not it would not be a question of very much concern as far as he was concerned. He would be quite content to look after his own interests, and see that he got as much as he could out of those employees. [Interjection.] I do not want to insinuate that the hon. member deals in flesh. I have heard rumours of a six hours day, and even of a two hours day. I have even heard of a desire on the part of some members of this House to work two months out of twelve, and leave the rest of the administration of the affairs of the country to six Ministers of the Crown. I have no objection to working more than two months out of the year, and I would like to see the same spirit on the part of some members sitting on the other side of the House. [Interjection.] I recognise there is a

necessary difference between working and talking, and I can assure the member for East Fremantle I always find it a considerable difficulty and hardship to do the latter portion of the work—the talking.

THE PREMIER: One would never have guessed it.

MR. A. J. WILSON: This innocent little measure which I submit to the House deals with and regulates, and I think rightly so, the number of hours in which workers should be engaged in the timber industry, which in addition to being a very laborious class of work is also a highly dangerous class of work. Unfortunately only recently a great number of very serious accidents has taken place in some of the mills in the South-Western district. In addition to providing for this, I personally see no reason why, for instance, the employees in a big shop like Boan Bros. or Foy & Gibson's should be compelled to work and carry on their avocation for a longer period than 48 hours a week. I see no reason why they should not be entitled to enjoy the same boon, the same privilege, the same pleasure, the same leisure, as anyone working at a carpenter's bench, boot-maker's bench, or in fact any other departments enjoying a particular privilege. Whatever may be the sins of workers in regard to this particular matter, we find in regard to the curtailment of the trading hours in connection with the early closing of shops, not only in Western Australia but in other portions of Australia, it is very much like the drinking question. Members know that, if we gave people the license to have a drink at one or two o'clock in the morning, instead of closing at 11 o'clock at night, the probability is we should find people taking advantage of the opportunity of consuming liquor at that unearthly hour. So it was in connection with the shops in Melbourne, for instance. When it used to be the custom or practice for people to be able to go out there and do their shopping till 8, 9, and 10 o'clock on any or every day of the week, and be as late as 12 o'clock on Saturdays, we found people doing business up to those hours; but when in the interests of the purchasing community and business community, it was thought wise to reduce the number of hours, the experience was not that they did less business, but they

did as much business as before, only they did it on a less expensive basis, because they had not so much expense in the matter of lighting their shops, and they were able to crowd the same volume of trade into a smaller number of hours. That has been the experience all the world over. There is no reason why a reasonable curtailment would not act precisely in the same way even now. For instance, it is the purpose of this Bill, if carried, to do away with what I consider at the present time one of the most obnoxious features of our business community in Perth and Fremantle and large populous centres—the necessity for keeping shop employees attending on some more or less fractious customers from an early hour in the morning, in a hot and trying climate, until ten o'clock in the evening. If the purpose of this Bill were to be adopted it would be provided that in those cases at all events there should be one hour less in regard to the convenience of the public in the matter of shopping, and instead of shops closing at ten o'clock on Saturday night provision would have to be made to close at nine. That is not a very large concession in one sense, as far as the sacrifice of time is concerned, but I respectfully submit it is a most material concession so far as the convenience and health of the employees at those shops is concerned. If one passes along Hay Street on a Saturday evening and takes a glance at the people doing shopping, say at Foy & Gibson's, he will see an enormous crowd of people at that shop between seven and ten in the evening. He will find all the lights blazing, and there is the heat from the light, and he will find a large number of customers and a large number of attendants attending to the wants of those customers. The atmosphere is certainly far from being healthy or congenial, and I think that if we could cut one hour off we should curtail a horrible existence under those circumstances, and we should be conferring a great boon upon the unfortunate customers and those who wait upon the customers under those circumstances. I cannot see any reason why if these employees have only to work say 48 hours a week, in accord with the purpose of this Bill, the same volume of business cannot be done in those 48

hours. The evidence we have dealing with this matter proves conclusively that a limitation of the number of hours of trading has always been in the direction of proving that it has no prejudicial effect on the volume of business done. I recognise, and I think everyone must do so, that occasions are bound to arise from time to time in which there might be accidents to machinery or other circumstances over which the employers have absolutely no control, which may necessitate the employment of employees for a longer period than what would ordinarily be considered fair and reasonable. In those circumstances provision is made in the proposed measure for the purpose of meeting contingencies of that nature. Of course there is the necessary provision that under such circumstances some additional compensation should be provided for those employees who may be called upon to work for a longer period of time. Just here, if permitted, I would like to remove what I think is another delusion so far as this particular proposal is concerned. Personally I do not suggest that employees shall be paid additional after certain hours because of the fact that they are capable of doing more service after working a certain period of time and are consequently entitled to an increase of remuneration. We only ask that the additional rate shall be paid for such overtime as an inducement in a persuasive, agreeable, sort of way, to prevent the possibility of an employer working his employees an unduly long period of time, because if he pursues that policy he will be called upon to pay a heavier indemnity for the privilege. Provision is also made in this Bill in relation to other cases. Take for instance the building trade, where employees who start work at half-past seven in the morning, have three-quarters of an hour for dinner, and knock off at five o'clock or ten minutes past five as the case may be. Provision is made in order that one may have the privilege of having half a day on Saturday afternoon, ceasing work at 12 o'clock, which throughout the whole of the Commonwealth has been an established custom for some considerable time. In fact in connection with some trades the custom has been adopted whereby the total number of hours worked during any week is limited to 44, this being four hours per

weak below the number contemplated in this particular measure. It may be said by some that there is no occasion to introduce a Bill to legalise eight hours, because of the fact that there are few industries in which this principle does not already apply. The fact that we have an eight hours day in many industries at present has, I submit, only been made possible by the fact that very strong industrial organisations have been able to exercise such power and influence in the community as to make this proposal practicable; but it does not necessarily follow that because we have it to-day, some proposal may not arise in the future by which employers may be in a stronger position, and having an opportunity they may be willing and desirous of taking advantage of their position and may ask their employees to work more than has long been considered a reasonable limit for a day's work. I think that for the purpose of protecting the privileges which those engaged in many industrial employments already enjoy, a measure of this nature is absolutely essential. Clause 8 provides exemptions in cases affected by any Arbitration Court award which may be in existence at the time of the passing of the Bill. I recognise that we cannot reasonably say, if an award of the Arbitration Court is in operation, and extends over a period of 12 or 18 months, that immediately on the passing of the Act the conditions of the award shall be altered. We must have regard to the fact that certain arrangements have been entered into, in pursuance of an award of the court with regard to the hours in that industry; and it would be manifestly unfair, and in my opinion unjust, to pass an enactment which would interfere with the position of affairs during the currency of that award. Provision, of course, has also been made whereby inspection shall be carried out on the same basis as the inspection under the Early Closing Act. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: Who will be the inspectors?] The inspectors of factories, who are already in existence under the Factories Act, and who are charged with the administration not only of that Act, but also, I understand, with that of the Early Closing Act, and who are supposed to be responsible, or if not, who ought to be responsible, for seeing to the due

observance of Arbitration Court awards. The definition clauses provide that "inspector" means an inspector under the Factories Act of 1904. My reason for specially exempting the dairying and milk-purveying industries was largely because of the discussions on similar measures in the Parliaments of Queensland and New Zealand. The objection to the Eight Hours Bill in those Parliaments was raised mainly because members thought its effect would be very prejudicial and dangerous to those industries, particularly to the dairying industry in New Zealand. Hence I concluded that these industries ought to be exempted, so that those who may be called agricultural representatives in this House should have no excuse for opposing the measure on the ground that it would prejudicially affect an industry which we all desire to see established at the earliest possible date on a thoroughly sound basis, so that we may not again hear the unfortunate tale told the other evening by the Premier, as to the heavy importations to this State of butter and dairy produce. I do not think I need say anything else regarding this little Bill. I could say much more, but I do not wish unduly to try the patience of members. I shall, of course, at a later stage, have an opportunity of replying to any criticisms which members may feel it incumbent on them to make. I have pleasure in moving the second reading of a Bill to provide for a maximum eight hours day in industries.

On motion by the PREMIER, debate adjourned.

BILL—SECRET COMMISSIONS.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—ABORIGINES.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from the previous sitting.

MR. A. MALE (Kimberley): I should like to say a few words in support of the Bill. I think we must all admit that this, or, in fact, any Government, should be congratulated on introducing such a measure, to make provision for the better care and protection of the aboriginal inhabitants of Western Australia. In

dealing with the native question, which has been prominently before the country, I think it is a noticeable fact that the question has always been treated from a more or less pessimistic point of view. That is to say, people have heard of one or more crimes or cruelties committed; and these have been so exaggerated by the Press and by general talk that the opinion of the country has been based on those few instances. Representing one of the northern districts, I should like to give an emphatic denial to much that has been said of the residents in the North. I maintain that the people of the North have feelings as humane and as nice as have the people in the settled parts of this country. There are in the North men and women who have lived there for years, who have feelings as nice as those of the people in the civilised parts of the country; and I do not think for a moment that those people would live in the northern districts and allow to be perpetrated such atrocities and cruelties as are reported to be the general order of events in that part of the State. As to its general principles, the Bill must undoubtedly meet with the approval of every member—a Bill which will provide, or try to provide, for the better protection and care of the aborigines. In my opinion the Bill cannot be a final solution of what we know as the native question, and I do not think that any Bill introduced here can be a final solution of that question. The native question is continually altering. As civilisation extends into the distant parts of the country, so the native question and the condition of the natives must continually alter; hence this cannot be a final solution of the question; but let us hope it is a step in the right direction. In my opinion, one of the most important principles, perhaps the most important principle in the Bill, is in the clause providing that the Chief Protector shall be the legal representative and guardian of all the aborigines and half-castes under the age of 16. Hitherto the Chief Protector has been considerably handicapped in dealing with those whom we may call aboriginal infants. He has had no legal status enabling him to cope with that difficulty. The practice of indenturing children has been allowed; and the indentures are in

force till the children attain the age of 21 years. That principle is undoubtedly very bad, because, to all intents and purposes, a native arrives at maturity say at the age of 16 or 18, at which age the native is in a position to judge for himself or herself, and to make agreements without being tied up by indentures. The Bill provides that all indentures now existing shall be cancelled. As I have said, I consider that the most prominent point in the Bill is the fact that the Chief Protector will be the legal guardian of the aboriginal infants. We have heard considerable talk about forms of native slavery. In my opinion, making the Chief Protector the guardian of the infants will stop the whole discussion on slavery; because, if a child can be apprenticed or handed over to some squatter's wife or other good woman, to be looked after and brought up until 16 years of age, the agreement will be made as between the legal guardian of the child and the employer, and not as between the employer and an infant not capable of judging for itself. Should it be necessary for the Chief Protector, or a protector, to take away that child from the employer, he has power under the Act to cancel any agreement or articles of apprenticeship that may exist; hence there will be no more occasion for talk of aboriginal slavery. In looking through the Bill, I see that it devotes considerable attention to native education. I think it would have been as well had the Minister in charge (Hon. J. S. Hicks) given us a little information respecting the intention in this regard. There is nothing definite in the Bill to the effect that the natives must be educated, but only that certain regulations may be framed for that purpose. In my opinion, provision for the education of natives will have to be made very carefully, because a little knowledge may be a dangerous thing. There is doubt that a number of the natives can be and have been educated; but I think the dangerous point is in educating or semi-educating natives to the age of 16 years, and then leaving them to go forth and fight their own battles in the world. I think the experience of the past has been that such semi-educated natives have been more or less demoralised by the amount of education they have received, instead of

being bettered and improved. The Minister, or whoever has the regulating of it, should be very careful in dealing with this question of educating the natives. It may be necessary that certain neglected natives about the towns, who have no particular homes at times, should be taken in hand and dealt with. I say they should be taken in hand and educated; but provision must be made for them after they arrive at the age of 16 or 18 years, as well as before that age, that they must not be turned out on the country and let loose in the towns. There must be homes or mission stations, or places to which they can go while employment is being found for them, employment perhaps of a domestic nature or some other nature. There should be some hold kept over them and some system of registering them, or some system by which they can be looked after and cared for; and they should not be allowed to get adrift in towns and places where they may become demoralised and go back to their natural native state. The Bill provides for a Chief Protector. It also states that protectors may be appointed for the different districts. It is evident, on reading through this Bill, that it will be absolutely necessary for protectors to be appointed before the Act can be administered. Personally I should very much like to see provision made for the appointment of two protectors for Kimberley; because Kimberley has been one of the districts very adversely criticised. I think very little satisfaction can be obtained from the denial through the Press or otherwise of the charges made. I think the best answer to these charges would be made by the appointment of two protectors for Kimberley, one to look after the Broome district, which includes the pearling, and one to look after the squatting districts. If they were instructed to forward quarterly reports to the Chief Protector, these quarterly reports would very quickly answer the charges made in the past concerning Kimberley and other districts, and in my opinion it would be the best and the only way to meet these charges. Another change adopted in the Bill is in the matter of permits. In the past it has not been necessary for an employer to get a permit to engage natives. He could either engage them

on agreement or without an agreement at all. I think this new provision is a very good one, and a very necessary one. It protects the natives from being employed by undesirable persons, and it gives to the protector the right of saying who may or may not employ natives. There is one feature in the question of permits which seems to me hardly necessary, that is, that permits are limited to twelve months for land and eight months for sea. This may bear unjustly on some squatters or persons living a long way from the coast. A man may be living two or three hundred miles inland; and there may be difficulty in getting in touch with the protector. If a person is a fit and proper person to hold a permit, I fail to see why it is necessary to limit the term to any particular period of time. The protector is amply safeguarded by the fact that he can cancel a permit at any time, whenever he may find it necessary. If an employer violates the Act in any form, or makes himself an unfit person to employ natives, the protector has the right to cancel his permit at once. Therefore, I think it is hardly necessary to limit the term to any particular time. Again, I may want to engage say 12 natives, and I get a general permit to engage them for twelve months. In six months' time I may want to engage another twelve natives. Am I to get another permit which will extend for another twelve months; or do I engage them under the general permit I have, and therefore only be able to obtain their services for six months? If I get another permit for another twelve months, will that hold good for the first twelve natives I engaged? In my opinion it would be better not to have a time limit, but to leave the permit as a general permit for a person to employ natives. The old system of indentures is to be abolished; but I notice in the regulations that provision will be made for the apprenticeship of aboriginal children. In this connection, in the North, female aboriginal children are usually employed for domestic purposes about the stations. We know that in these days when immigration from outside is very restricted, it is difficult for the squatters in the Far North to get cooks or domestics for house purposes; and on the stations it is the usual thing

for the squatter's wife, or the woman about the house, to take two or three native children and bring them up for domestic purposes. If the permit is to be limited to twelve months, it seems to me that it will be very little inducement to offer a woman to take one of these children and try to bring it up carefully and well for domestic purposes and then to find at the end of twelve months that the child may be going to somebody else. In my opinion it would be better to leave in the Bill something, some form of agreement or apprenticeship, by which they might have the charge of the child till, say, the age of 16, at which age the child is able to judge for itself whether it wants to make an agreement or not. To that age, as I said before, the child is well protected by having the protector as its legal guardian; and an agreement would be made between the employer and the legal guardian, so that the child might be amply protected. Again, native boys are generally used on the stations as horse-boys. They are also taught to milk and do other useful things about a station. To train native boys as horse-boys you must get them young, and you want them about the station as long as possible, extending over several years; and I say the same should be done to them as with the girls for domestic purposes—the squatter should be able to engage the lad up to the age of 16, at which age the lad would be able to judge for himself whether he wishes to remain or not. The matter of reserves always crops up in connection with the native question. In my opinion this question does not apply very seriously at the present stage. To have a reserve of two thousand acres in one district appears to me to be neither here nor there; and until the Bill has been passed and administered, it will be very difficult for us to know to what real purposes these reserves will be put. Until the Bill has been administered and we have found out the intention of the administration as to the purpose for which these reserves are more or less required, I think the matter of two thousand acres, or ten thousand acres, does not really apply; because I take it we can always grant a farther area if required. If, later on, it is found that we have a certain number of neglected

natives for whom it is necessary to provide some industrial or other pursuit, such as cotton-growing or tobacco-growing, or whatever it may be, and when we have determined that in a district we require land, then I imagine it would be a very easy matter to get the area required. The mere selecting of a couple of thousand acres in one district I really do not see the necessity for. I do not wish to conflict the reserve of two thousand acres with the area to be reserved for towns. That I take to be a different matter, and a very necessary thing. I think the towns of the North have been adversely criticised in the past because we had no legal power to put natives outside the townships. There were no reserves of any kind on which natives could be put outside the townships; and the fact that natives were residing in the towns has led to a lot of adverse criticism, which I trust will not be necessary in the future. The Bill provides for the establishment of reserves outside townships, to which reserves all local natives will have to go during the nights. These reserves will need careful supervision and watching. I consider that the law in that respect should be very stringent, in order to deal with people that are found anywhere on or near these reserves, except persons with a legal right to be there. It is necessary for the protection of the natives as well as for the sanitary and every good and well-being of the towns in the North. I notice another very necessary clause in the Bill, dealing with females frequenting creeks used by pearlers. That is a clause that will receive the sympathy and the support of the pearlers quite as much as that of the people farther South. It will be as much for the protection of the pearler as for the protection of the native; and I trust that clause will be rigorously carried out. The pearlers are not anxious to have their boats lying in creeks idle; they are anxious to get their boats out, and they want as little inducement as possible put in the way of keeping their boats in the creeks. The clause referring to the employment of natives on boats and ships is not really required now so much as in years gone by. The old system of native pearling has practically fallen off, and very few natives are now employed in the industry;

in fact, at the present time there are no native divers engaged. I notice the clauses in reference to that are rather strict. It is an offence against the Bill for a native to be in or about any ship. I think that perhaps is carrying it a little too far. If you want to train natives for diving or pearling purposes, it would be necessary to take them in hand before they arrive at the age of 16 years. A native requires to learn to swim and handle a boat at an early age, and if, as according to the Act, one is not allowed to get a permit for the employment of a native until that native is of the age of 16 years, practically it amounts to this: you will never be able to get a native for employment on boats at all. Still I do not think that a very serious matter, because the native diver is almost a thing of the past. Another very necessary clause that has been introduced is that prohibiting the use of firearms and weapons to the natives, except where they have licenses to carry them. Another clause in connection with the same is the prohibition of the sale of firearms to natives, which is quite as important as the clause prohibiting the use of firearms. In any Bill of this kind it is quite right that the Government should consider the protection of the squatter as well as of the native, and I think this measure will protect the squatter. I notice in connection with this question that a native may be called on to produce his license at any time. To a person who has any knowledge of natives, that sounds a little absurd; but I take it that the person administering the Bill will not make an arbitrary rule, but will deal with the matter in a practical manner. Again, I see it is an offence for a native to sell blankets or clothing supplied to them by the Government. There again, as we all know, if you give a native a suit of clothes to-day, you will find it on somebody else's native to-morrow; and the same thing will apply to the blankets or clothing given by the Government. It would be better if it were made an offence for any person not being an aboriginal being found in possession of natives' blankets or clothing. It would be a great difficulty to make a native realise that he has committed an offence by giving his blanket to somebody else. There is very little more in the Bill

with which I wish to deal, but I must say I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the measure. Although I do not consider that this is by any means a final solution of the native question, yet I consider it is a good Bill; a Bill that is brought in with good intentions and which is undoubtedly a step in the right direction towards solving the native question and putting us straight in the eyes of the public, not only in this State, but of people abroad.

MR. J. P. McLARTY (Murray): This Bill has been dealt with in another place where I have no doubt it was carefully considered; and moreover, I am informed it is based on the Queensland Act. I trust, at the same time, this Bill will be carefully considered in this Chamber. I consider I am qualified to speak on the native question as far as knowledge of the subject is concerned, for I spent the greater part of my life in the South-Western district, where I learned to speak the native language fluently; and I was one of the pioneers of Kimberley. I was one of the first to go there with stock, and I remained in that district for 11 years, and learned to speak the language there very well. I have always taken the greatest interest in the habits and customs and superstitions of the natives, and probably I have forgotten more about the natives than Dr. Roth ever knew. He may have studied the question; but I have lived a life among the natives. But it is not about natives that I intend to speak. I want to brush away a few of the cobwebs which have got around this subject. I want to speak on Dr. Roth's report, and I want to say a little of that much abused class, the squatters, that class of men who are said to be so unjust, and who have been so much villified. It seems that any scallywag who goes along a road can write a letter to the papers, and the matter is taken up by the Press, licked into shape, and generally put in the paper with flaring and sensational headlines, "The black North again." The Press seizes these letters with avidity, and it is practically a safe thing for them to do; because these letters mostly affect persons who are living from 500 to 1,500 miles away, and it is weeks or months before they hear of what is going on. To the credit of the

Press I must say that after this has been going on for some time, it seems to dawn on them that there is another side to the question, and they make inquiries; but this is the most amusing part of the business. To whom do they go to make inquiries? Not to the men who know something about the subject, such as Mr. Walter McKenzie Grant, of the North, Mr. Wedge, or Mr. Alex. Edward Wellard, or the Richardson Brothers; men whose characters are above reproach. They do not go to these men; they generally rush off to a bishop; and more recently they have gone to the Governor of the State. I must say the Governor displayed some commonsense. He did not know much about the native question, but so far as he could learn they were well treated; and if they were not well treated, what was to prevent them running away into the bush? I would like to ask members what a bishop is likely to know about this question? A bishop's visits to the North are usually like angels' visits, in some respects, few and far between. When a bishop goes to the North, he goes as a first saloon passenger, and when he lands he is taken in hand by a leading squatter of the district. He is the guest of the squatter, and remains in the parlour or drawing-room until he goes away again. He knows nothing about the subject. This is the class of men to whom the Press go for information; and the Press appear to act on the principle that Pope gave in those lines:—

High characters from high life are drawn:
A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn;
A judge is just, a chancellor juster still;
A gownman learned—a bishop, what you will;

Wise is a minister, but then a king's
More wise, more learn'd, more just, more everything.

It has been the custom to look on the settlers as a lot of monsters who have natives indentured to them; and the natives are said to be in slavery. It is said frequently that the natives are ill-fed and cruelly treated. Yet when Dr. Roth was up North examining the natives, he put the question in nearly every case to the witnesses how the natives were treated on the stations, were they unfairly treated? He was told they were well treated. We find that out of 2,000 natives working for settlers less than 300

were under agreement at all, and that the settlers were perfectly indifferent whether they hired natives at all. And finding that (all prejudices seem to die hard) Dr. Roth seems to suggest penalising the settlers, and he says, "Make them hire natives under agreement." He suggests that one able-bodied man should be employed and one weakly man, and that they be paid wages. Dr. Roth says, if the squatters object to hire the natives, take the runs away from them. This is a highly practical suggestion, to take the runs away. The Government could not do that without paying compensation; and if they paid the squatters compensation, it would take as much as to buy the Midland railway. As a matter of fact, so far as natives being detained on stations against their wills is concerned, you could not kick them off if you would. They are used to the white man's food and tobacco, and they will remain on the station. I would like to remark that no settler employs natives except those born on the runs leased from the Government; and it is a point of honour amongst the settlers that no man thinks of employing a native who is born on any other squatter's run. Therefore they are on their own runs and are satisfied. Before I left the Kimberley, we had 90 natives on our station. The rain had fallen and we had plenty of grass. We called the natives together and told them that they could have two months holiday. We gave each a new pipe, a supply of tobacco, tea and sugar, clothing and blankets, and they went off to the wilderness rejoicing. But they were soon back again saying they did not want the holiday. In the interval they had met with friends in the bush and had given away their blankets, and many came back without clothing at all. When Dr. Roth was appointed, he got instructions that he was to get information apart from the settlers, and he seems to have attended to his instructions. [MR. TAYLOR: Are you sure about that statement? Are you sure those were his instructions?] I suppose there is no harm in saying the member for Pilbarra told me. Keeping away from the settlers may account for the statements Dr. Roth has made.

MR. TAYLOR: On a point of explanation, I desire to contradict the state-

ment made by the member for Murray with reference to the instructions issued by the Government to Dr. Roth. I say it is untrue. Certainly the hon. member's authority is the member for Pilbarra, and perhaps that hon. member may substantiate the assertion.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not use the expression "it is not true."

MR. McLARTY: I have no authority except hearsay, but the facts of the case give strong confirmation to the report. I know he never went to a station in Kimberley nor any other station. I may as well say here that I never saw anything to gush about in Dr. Roth's report. I never had any admiration for it.

MR. TAYLOR: Nor did any squatters.

MR. McLARTY: If the Government had had the sense to send local men, such as Mr. Fairbairn, of Fremantle, or had sent out Mr. Troy, they would have got a more reliable report.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Fairbairn's report twenty years ago was equally if not more condemnatory than Dr. Roth's. But for his being a strong man, he would have been hounded out of the country.

MR. McLARTY: There is no fear of Mr. Fairbairn favouring the squatters. When he was sent years ago they would have crucified him if they could have got at him. Dr. Roth said amongst other things that the food of the natives was diminishing. Members can see that in the report. That is quite contrary, however, to the fact. For several years the House has voted a thousand pounds for the destruction of marsupials, and the settlers supplemented it by another thousand pounds or rather more, but kangaroos are increasing to such an extent in the country that they are becoming a positive menace, a nuisance to the settlers. There are 100 men at the present time making a living in the Northern district by shooting kangaroos. By the money they receive as a capitation grant, and the price they get for the skins up to a certain weight, they are making a good living. When I went to Kimberley in 1881 there were no kangaroos in the Fitzroy Valley except at Udeila or Palm Springs. Now there are thousands of them down the Fitzroy, and on the station I am interested in in Kimberley there had been 120,000 scalps brought in

in 18 months. This will show how the food is diminishing. The commonsense of members will tell them that if you destroy the dingo and the eaglehawks, the natural enemies of the native food, and feed the natives with rations at the stations, their natural food must increase. Moreover, I am told by a crack shot down there that natives sometimes come round his camp. He shot 13 kangaroos, thinking he was giving them a treat, but with some trouble he got them to take three, and he had no doubt that when they got from the station they threw them away. They have got used to food from the stations and will not eat kangaroos. That is one misstatement, at all events, by Dr. Roth. As far as the police are concerned I do not think that is part of the native question, and we need not trouble much about it. That is a departmental matter to be settled by the Commissioner of Police. As far as I saw, the police were a fine body of men, energetic and trustworthy. It was sometimes thought they were not good bushmen as we required, but in other respects they seemed good men for the place. As to the question of putting chains round the natives' necks, that is a matter of opinion; but I know perfectly well that if you gave the native the choice whether he would have a light chain round his neck or his wrists manacled, he would infinitely prefer to have the chain round his neck. It is said that the settlers make the police a present of perhaps a quarter of beef when they are bringing prisoners in to prison. The police have to feed the natives, and I do not think it is a very great crime for them to charge the Government. I may be wrong, my moral instincts may be a bit astray, but when men go to that climate, not a desirable place to live in, they want to make money as quickly as possible, and no objection can be made if honestly earned. As to the question of morality or immorality, I am not going to deal with it. I must admit that along the coast it exists to a great extent, but I deny that it exists on the stations to any great extent at all. The other night the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) read an extract of some evidence given before Dr. Roth. If he knew as much of that man as I know, he would not give much for his evidence. Another thing, and I

say this most emphatically: You could not find ten half-castes on any station in Kimberley. After all, what good has Dr. Roth done in holding up this immorality? He has only made this place stink in the nostrils of other places, and has done no good to the natives. Do members mean to say they are ignorant of all this? Surely anyone knowing the history of Western Australia knows this sort of thing is going on, and as far as my reading or knowledge goes it seems to me that wherever races are mixed it has been the same ever since the dawn of history. We know that in the Southern States of America, where the planters were high-minded, chivalrous people, there was still great immorality on their plantations, and it is only a few years since Mr. Stead wrote his "Modern Babylon," and showed London to be one of the wickedest places on the face of the earth, and that the wickedness was not confined to any particular class, but existed from the highest to the lowest. It was admitted that it might be so, but no one gave Mr. Stead any credit for that; he had better have kept this information away, and he brought himself within the meshes of the law, and got into prison. Not so long since charges were made against the British Government with regard to pandering to the lusts of the troops in India. There is no good in Dr. Roth putting these things in his report. Only children can be shown naked in company. Then there is the question of reserves which the member for Kimberley has alluded to. As far as reserving certain spots for the natives to go on is concerned, that is a good idea, but as to putting men into a paddock, as it were, anyone who holds it ought to have a wooden sword. Anyone who knows anything of the Australian natives knows that we could not keep them there. It would be doing violence to their habits and customs, because it is a matter connected with localities and they go to certain places to perform ceremonies, notably circumcision by old men. Another thing is that you would mix the races. When Mr. Nanson was a member of this House he said that if we wanted to effectually settle the native question the way to do it was to put them on a reserve. He was perfectly right. You never could keep them on a reserve. If they went on reserves they

would simply kill each other. They would be debarred from their runs, and there is no reason as far as I can see why natives should be taken from their runs. They are a vanishing race. If we treat them well by legislating for them, so much the better, but it is only a question of years when the natives will disappear. It is not generally known but it is nevertheless a fact that the natives of Australia all through are divided into four castes or divisions. I read a book on the aborigines between 20 and 30 years ago by Mr. Brough Smith, of Victoria. I do not know where he got his information from, but he was accurate in it. He said there were four tribes or castes, or whatever you call them, and Messrs. Spencer and Gollars, the explorers, who had been in the Gulf country and came back a year or two ago, made the same statement. Sir John Forrest has also told me the same thing; so has Mr. Robert Sholl, of Perth. A lady lecturer in Perth said there were six sects. I never heard of six, but I know well there are four. They were known as Bulgarray, Kiamera, Borranah, and Bannagah. A Bulgarray marries a Kiamera. The old men strictly keep the records from memory. If a Bulgarray native married within certain degrees, he would be promptly killed. If we mix the natives higgledy-piggledy on reserves, I do not know what we can expect. In the United States of America and Canada, when the whites begin to encroach on the natives' country, the Government form fresh reserves for the natives, into which they must go, or, if not, they must move farther out. Well, the natives go through the form of voting as to whether they will remain in the country which they regard as their own, or go into the new place. There is any amount of bribery and corruption to get natives to vote on this question. On a certain day they vote aye or no, and if there be a majority of only one, they give way and nearly always leave their own part of the country. Dickens mentions that on one occasion there was a tie, and one of the natives walked over from the noes to the ayes. But there is no comparison between the natives of this country and the natives of Canada or America: they are not at all similar. I am perfectly sure that the proposal in regard to native reserves is a very good feature in this

Bill. Another thing is that the natives have an idea that the spirits of their ancestors are watching them, that they must visit the place where they were born at regular intervals or at intervals not too far apart, or else the spirits become angry. If you put them far away they will not have the opportunity of going to their native places. The present Bill, as far as I have read it, is in the right direction. The provision of permits is a very good idea, and so is that of licensing guns; but that is a thing we shall have to be very careful about. If you give a native a license he will lose it the very first day unless you fasten it on somewhere. The idea is good, and so is the idea of proclaiming reserves. As I shall have an opportunity of speaking in Committee I shall not occupy more time, having detained the House longer than I intended.

MR. J. ISDELL (Pilbarra): I wish to say a few words on this question, concerning which I have had considerable experience. Like the preceding speaker I am intimately acquainted with the natives, their habits and customs, and the state in which they have been living with respect to employers on stations and elsewhere. I can fully indorse the hon. member's remarks regarding native customs; but I cannot speak of the state of the natives in his portion of the country (Murray), which I have not visited for a number of years. I can speak, however, of their condition in the Nor'-West. As to Dr. Roth, I may say that I never believed in him. I should defy the cleverest man in Australia to come to this State, spend six months in travelling through 2,000 miles of country, and give on the native question an opinion that is worth twopence. To give an opinion on that question, knowledge and experience are needed; and they cannot be acquired save by one who resides amongst the natives. To give a fair opinion a man must look at both sides, hear both sides, and then he may give an opinion worth listening to; not otherwise. The member for Murray (Mr. McLarty) mentioned just now about Dr. Roth's getting instructions from the Government not to interview any squatters. When Dr. Roth was in Perth, I happened to meet several squatters from the Nor'-West, and suggested to them that they

should lay their claims before Dr. Roth, as he might not have an opportunity of seeing them during his visit. With that end in view I made the same suggestion to a Government officer. He told me it was no use; because Dr. Roth did not intend to interview settlers. I asked why, and he gave me to understand that he had received instructions to that effect.

MR. HORAN: From the Government of the day?

MR. ISDELL: From the Government of the day. He mentioned no names.

MR. G. TAYLOR: On a point of explanation, I desire emphatically to contradict the statement that Dr. Roth received his instructions from me as Colonial Secretary.

MR. ISDELL: That is my version of the matter; and anything farther I do not know. I do not think it would be fair or just to mention the name of the officer of whom I speak; and there is no need to do so. Dr. Roth has gone; he has left a very bad odour behind him; he has done little good for this country, and less for himself so far as I can see. We can get no man in Western Australia better fitted than Warden Troy to investigate the native question. As to Mr. Fairbairn, I know him well. I knew him in the Kimberleys as a magistrate; and so far from his being favourable to the squatters, he was quite the contrary; because at that time a large number of stations employed natives for pearling purposes, and Mr. Fairbairn, as a magistrate, was the first to stop that practice. That did not show much favour towards station-owners. I have listened with pleasure to the speech from the member for Kimberley (Mr. Male); but I say at once I do not agree with this Bill. Many of its provisions are practically unworkable; and many are not properly defined. There are clauses under which people can, without any wrongful intention, get into trouble, and there is no clause to show them how to get out of that trouble. The first fault I have to find with the Bill is the method of dealing with the native question. I say that the present system is totally wrong, and until it is altered we shall never get satisfaction. It seems to be simply absurd to have a Chief Protector living in Perth to manage 10,000 natives 2,000

miles away; and still more absurd to appoint to that position a man who has never lived amongst the natives, and does not understand their habits and traditions. How can he give directions to a subordinate on the spot? What experience, knowledge, or ability has the Chief Protector to enable him to give a decision on any matter affecting the natives? Would any member of this House who has never been in the Nor'-West buy a station in Kimberley and open an office in St. George's Terrace and sit down in it to manage the station? That is a parallel case. There should be two protectors appointed for the North—one in Kimberley and one in the Nor'-West; and these men should have full control of the native question. They should have the powers of magistrates, should be able to punish a native or a white man for any wrong done, and should travel the district—not live in an office and smoke cigars and write letters. They should travel continually, become acquainted with the employers and the natives, and with all native customs and habits; and then those officers would be able to use their own judgment. And, moreover, they should be responsible to the Minister alone. For that I have always contended. Mr. Walter James, when Premier of this State, asked me for a report on the native question. I wrote a report, and if its suggestions had been adopted we should never have needed Dr. Roth; for had there been inspectors on the spot to control the natives, none of the troubles would have arisen into which Dr. Roth inquired. As to Clause 3, respecting the half-castes, the member for Murray spoke regarding Kimberley. In the Nor'-West is a large number of half-castes; and it is wrong, unjust, and degrading to this State that half-caste children should be spread over hundreds of miles of country, not on stations only, but in the bush, and should be brought up in native camps, brought up in degradation and immorality. I say it is the duty of this Government to take away those half-castes from their present associations, and put them in an institution where they can be trained as useful citizens, as it is our moral duty to train them. There are even worse aspects of the half-caste problem. I know several cases of half-caste women in the blacks'

camps in the bush; and those women are bringing up families of white children. Is it right to have children who are almost white brought up with black-fellows? It is wrong and unjust, and a disgrace to the State. I wish to be thoroughly understood that in making this statement I am not blaming this Government or the late Government. We must blame all Governments. What is most to blame is the Act. I am sure that if the people of the State are asked for permission to borrow £20,000 to build an institution in which to put these half-castes, nobody would object. In New South Wales, thirty years ago, the Government took forcible possession of every half-caste child 12 months old. There is a great deal of maudlin sentiment about taking away a child from the native mother; but the man who sees it done will lose all that sentiment; because when you take a child away from a native woman she forgets all about it in 24 hours and, as a rule, is glad to get rid of it. In New South Wales all these half-castes are brought up as good and useful servants. I do not say that they are taught to sing songs and all that sort of thing, but they are useful on stations and they are profitable. I hope the Government will take this question into consideration during recess and try to do something for the half-castes. It seems to me to be a bad state of affairs that we are 30 years behind New South Wales in this matter. The Bill provides that the Chief Protector may appoint policemen and every Tom, Dick, and Harry as protectors. These protectors do not seem to require any qualifications. Anybody can be a protector; and the positions are only honorary. I think that is wrong; because, if it is an honorary position, the protectors will not bother their heads about things and look after anything. We cannot expect a man to give up a lot of his time to carry out an Act of Parliament, which in many cases causes trouble if a man has anything to do with it. We cannot expect a man to do things for nothing. The proper way is to pay inspectors, and let them do the work properly. Surely to goodness we have taken the land from the natives, and we ought not to stop at the expenditure of a few thousand pounds to see that they get proper treatment, and

that the people on whose runs they are are treating them properly. There are one or two other questions of considerable importance that are likely to clash with many people in the North-West. There is one regarding reserves. I am quite in accordance with the Government regarding reserves for camping purposes; but in many places where there are towns there is only one well, and if we wish to put the natives away from the townships we will need to secure wells for them. Some people talk about the size of reserves. It is absurd. I defy all the volunteers in the State to keep the natives on small reserves if they want to go away. As the member for Murray knows, the same customs are not carried out in the North-West as are carried out in Kimberley. The natives of the two districts will not inter-marry; and if you put natives from the two districts together, it would be like putting strange cattle together: in a few hours they would be all gone and no tails left behind. Another question is an important one regarding gun licenses. I am not in favour of allowing natives to carry guns. They should not have licenses to carry guns. If we want to give a license, let us give it to a white man, making him responsible for it; and let him allow the native to carry the gun and return it between sunrise and sunset. I do not look at this question from the point of view that the natives will try to murder white people. They have sufficient sense and gumption not to shoot a man—unless he is sleeping. The harm they do is when two or three of these natives with guns go to a camp 30 miles away at night time and take away two or three of the young girls. The unfortunate natives in the camp can do nothing, because the intruders are armed, and that is what causes all the trouble. In the bush I would never allow a native to carry arms. I have smashed half-a-dozen guns myself that I have taken away from natives in the bush. Most members will agree with me that there is another matter which should not be allowed to pass as it stands. Clause 42 provides that no marriage of a female aborigine with any person other than an aboriginal shall be celebrated without the permission of the Chief Protector. I do not believe in inter-marriages with aliens. They should

only be allowed to marry according to their own customs. I have seen great evil in connection with this inter-marriage with aliens, and it is disgraceful. I can give several instances to show the force of my argument. About 18 months ago, before I had the pleasure of being returned to this House, I saw at Nullagine a Chinaman, who came from the Murchison with a black woman. They were married at Peak Hill, and had the marriage lines. They were Mr. and Mrs. Ah Ling. Mr. Ah Ling was had up before me as justice of the peace and I gave him six months' hard labour. I am sorry I could not give him more, because he deserved it; but what was to become of his unfortunate wife, Mrs. Ah Ling? She dared not go among the natives there, because they would have killed her. She was 700 miles from her own tribe. The consequence was that she had to camp outside the wall of the goal for six months, and the State had not only to feed and clothe the Chinaman, but also the wife outside. I consider it wrong to allow such a state of things. I know of two other instances of Chinamen both married to black women, but both these black women showed a lot of commonsense, for they ran away. The Chinamen went straight to the police station and asked the sergeant to go out after their wives and bring them back. This is the sort of thing that comes with inter-marriages. I have not been to Broome for years, but I know there are a great many marriages there. I know several Chinamen and a couple of Maillamen who have just come from that district overland, and who have admitted that they are married to blackwomen there. I hope the Government will see their way to stop these inter-marriages. We are talking about a White Australia, and we are cultivating a piebald one. Clause 46 deals with bedding and clothing given to the natives. It says these natives are liable to fine or imprisonment or something of that sort if they part with their clothes to another native. That is absurd. Can you find anyone in Western Australia who will prevent that? You give two or three black boys clothing to-day, and you go straight to their camp to-morrow, and find somebody else wearing it. It is an absurd clause. A clause to prevent

them giving their clothing to white men would be all right, but it is absurd to have a clause to prevent a blackfellow from giving his shirt to his brother Jim. On the wages question, I believe in paying a blackfellow according to his work, but I do not believe in giving him any money. I know many stations at the present time where they have 20 or 30 natives. There are 10 or 12 good, able-bodied men; the rest are old people. These old people are fed because they are the parents of the men employed. The evil of giving wages is this: there may be 20 natives, but if a man has to pay wages, he will pick out six of the best and say he does not want the rest. The manager cannot hunt them off the run, because it is the blacks' own country, and they will not starve. They simply will go for the stock. When we have clauses like this, it does not seem as if the Bill had been studied. It looks as if the clauses had been framed by a new chum. As to agreements, the Bill adheres to the old system, and I cannot see the force of having agreements as well as permits. I believe in permits. I believe they do a lot of good. There is a question hanging to these agreements. Looking at it from one point of view it may be a hardship to do away with the agreement. Most of the natives in the North are not honest. That is a certainty. It is not the fault of their education, but it is their nature. A native will come to you with no clothes. He will tell you he is hungry, and wants work, and you say, "All right. How long will you stay?" And he replies, "For a long time." First he wants clothing, tobacco, and pipe. You give him these. The man stops a week, looks after your horses and cuts your wood. Then he takes his blankets and his clothing and he is away. He gets £3 or £4 worth of clothing for a week's work. You cannot prosecute him for stealing, because you have given him the clothing. If the man was under agreement to serve for a period and went away, you could bring him back. When you look at it in that way, you want some remedy. The only remedy is to pick out competent people to make the agreements. Do not give the power to everyone to make agreements. I do not think I have much more to say about the Bill. At the same

time, I would rather see a Bill founded on a very different system, because the present system will not bring finality to the native question. I intend to support the second reading, and I do not intend to support any amendments to the Bill, not because I believe in it, but because I reckon the Bill is not a good one. If the Bill is put in force it will prove to the country in course of time that it requires changing. It is no use amending the Bill. You cannot make a good Bill out of a bad foundation. For that reason I shall support the measure as it stands.

MR. W. J. BUTCHER (Gascoyne): After the able addresses delivered on this Bill by the member for Pilbarra and the member for Murray, there is little left for me to add. I will say I think the primary object of the Bill is to improve as far as possible the conditions under which our natives at the present time have to live, and also to provide as far as possible for the aged and infirm, and for the education or protection of the half-caste children. Such being the case, I must confess this Bill goes as far in that direction as we may expect any measure to go, without having a little more experience as to the working of the Bill. I would like to say before going farther with reference to Dr. Roth's report, which I have read and gone through carefully, that I fail to see in that report where he has on any one occasion attacked the settlers and squatters, or their treatment of the aborigines. I want to be fair to Dr. Roth in that respect, although I do not approve of his report generally. I have not seen one paragraph in which he accused the settlers of ill-treating the natives in one instance. I think this Bill will have the effect of protecting the old and infirm to a certain extent, providing some of the provisions are slightly altered. The principle of reserves to my mind is one of the most absurd things that could possibly be instituted—reserves in the sense they are intended here. The member for Pilbarra has shown the absurdity of attempting to keep the natives on reserves. I can only add this, that if you want to settle the native question thoroughly—as I think Mr. Nanson once said in this House—you can take all the natives and put them on a reserve, which would have

to be an island, because otherwise you could not make a reserve that would accommodate the whole of the natives. [MEMBER: The suggestion is absurd.] It is absurd. I think it remains to us to watch the Bill through as carefully as possible, so that we may provide for the old and infirm, and allow as far as possible the natives to remain with the settlers, and do our utmost to prevent their coming into contact with the Asiatic and coloured races in the Far North and round about the permanent settlements on the goldfields. If we want to create reserves we should make reserves upon which natives are not allowed to go, reserves around the goldfields centres, the pearling centres, and some of the coastal towns, natives being prohibited from going on these reserves at all. That we should find to be the most useful class of reserve we could possibly have. The idea of making schools to educate the black children is I think an absurdity. It is an absolute absurdity to think that we can Christianise the native children; but we may be able to do something of the sort with the half-caste children. And, with that object, I think some institution should be established throughout the State at different places, with separate school teachers, so as not to have the half-caste children mixing with the white children at the various centres. The proposal of permits to employ is, I think, very fair indeed, notwithstanding that my friend the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) disapproves of it, and considers it a matter of slavery. If it comes to a question of slavery, after all is said and done, in any agreement one makes with a white man or any other person, while one of the parties to that agreement is subservient to another, he is a slave, if we like to stretch the point as far as that. If we want to protect the natives from being taken away by ordinary passers-by, for immoral purposes, we must give somebody control of them. We must either take them away altogether and shut them up in reserves or prisons, or allow the squatter, the farmer, or whoever it may be, the power and privilege of protecting these natives. He has no way of doing so unless he is allowed to make an agreement with them and unless they can be compelled to remain there under that agreement. We can protect them

against being badly used by that settler, whoever he may be, because this permit can be cancelled at any time if the protector of natives thinks that they are not being treated satisfactorily. Taking the Bill as a whole, I think it is a very fair measure indeed. There are a few clauses that I would like to be altered, but they can be dealt with in Committee. It is not my intention to occupy the time of the House in discussing the matter any farther, because better work can be done in Committee. I shall thus end by saying that I shall support this measure with the greatest pleasure.

[MR. ILLINGWORTH took the Chair.]

MR. C. A. HUDSON (Dundas): I do not wish to take up the time of the House by entering upon a lengthy discussion of the merits or demerits of this very important measure, but I desire to express my pleasure at having had an opportunity of making a few remarks in regard to the Bill. When this Bill was before the House on the last occasion, there was an attempt made to have the debate finished in a very short space of time. A strenuous effort was made by the Opposition to enable the Bill to be read, to be considered, and to be adopted. That action was very severely criticised by members now sitting on the Government side of the House. I think the members of this Assembly will agree with me, after having heard the speeches this evening—and, without making invidious distinction, that very lucid and exhaustive speech by the member for Kimberley (Mr. Male)—that the action of the Opposition in forcing the adjournment of the debate was perfectly justified. One reason why I voted so persistently for the adjournment of the debate was that I wanted to have an opportunity of reading the measure. The Bill may, or may not, have been on my table, or on my file on last Friday afternoon. I am not prepared to say that it was not there. If so, I did not see it, and I did not have an opportunity between Friday and Tuesday of reading the Bill. When it came before me on Tuesday, I, representing the South-Eastern portion of the State, where there is a large number of aborigines, concerning whom no inquiry so far as I know has been made, deemed it my duty to consider the measure and see how far these natives were affected by

its provisions. It is clear from the remarks that have been made on the introduction of the Bill, and by the members who have spoken on the second reading, that this measure is intended to deal more particularly with the aborigines in the North-Western part of the State. As I say, representing the South-Eastern portion it was my duty to examine it and consider how far it would affect the natives in the South-East before I consented to its passing the second reading. Having made that examination, I am prepared to accept the Bill in most of its provisions; but there may be some details which I hope to be able to rectify when it comes into Committee. With regard to the principles of the Bill, the one to which I take most exception is that referring to reserves. I agree with the members who have spoken on the measure this evening, that it is impracticable and will be unworkable, and it is not a provision which should be included in the Bill. It is all very well to talk about making reserves, but as far as my experience extends, I think it would be impossible to fence in reserves—either rabbit-proof or otherwise—or to make enclosures and reserves nigger-proof. On the other hand I commend the provisions to keep natives out, which is much more easily done—to keep them out of towns where they come into contact with undesirable people. The only other matter that I object to on principle is one that was touched upon just now by the hon. member who has just resumed his seat; that is with regard to agreements. The clauses relating to permits seem to be in order; they seem to be proper provisions to make, that the squatter or other employer of aboriginal labour should obtain a permit to engage the aboriginal. The other provision appears to me to be an alternative of a permit and an agreement. It is possible, then, for an employer to employ an aboriginal without agreement; but when there is an agreement it is enforceable; and here is a principle to which I take exception. An agreement is made by two parties—the white employer and the aboriginal; and it has the sanction of the Chief Protector, or of the protector for the district. But the Bill provides that if the aboriginal fails to perform his part

of the contract he shall be liable to be sent to gaol for three months. I do not think that is a proper provision to make for the enforcement of a civil contract. It is contrary to all principles, contrary to the apparent intention of the framers of the Bill for the emancipation and protection of the aborigines. When the native makes an agreement which he perhaps does not fully understand, and which as he is not educated he is not so likely to understand as is the other party, the agreement is enforced against him by incarcerating him in gaol. That is not the emancipation of the native. The law is held over his head, and he is told that if he does not do his work, does not fulfil the letter of the agreement, the employer can send him to gaol. But if the employer does not choose to keep the native, he can kick him off his station or other place of employment, and the authorities have to prove that it was the employer's fault before they can fine the employer—not send him to gaol. I do not think that is a fair contract, and I will not support it. Generally speaking, I will vote for the second reading; but I intend when in Committee to criticise those portions of the measure to which I have referred.

[MR. SPEAKER resumed the Chair].

MR. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet): I intend to make only a few remarks on this Bill; and whilst I make them I think that members on this (Opposition) side of the House, and those members on the other side who support them, can congratulate themselves that the adjournment of this debate was secured, because the adjournment has resulted in throwing more light on this particular matter than could have been granted us by a dozen Cabinets. I hold that the members for Murray (Mr. McLarty) and Pilbarra (Mr. Isdell) gave us more information regarding this Bill and the manner in which it will effect the natives of this State than was given by the Minister who brought in the Bill. To use an expression by no means original, that Minister galloped down the marginal notes, and endeavoured to put the Bill through the House at the earliest possible moment. To-night we have had a long debate, and there is one point which I wish to raise. Before raising that

point, however, I wish to refer to some of the provisions of the measure. On this side of the House there are probably not so many members conversant with the native question as there are on the Government side. On that side are gentlemen who have had close association with the natives, and have employed them for a considerable number of years. But on this side also are some members who have had some experience of the natives. I personally wish to claim that experience. In New South Wales, I lived in a district where a reserve was created for the protection of aborigines, and despite what members may say about the absurdity of putting natives on reserves, that reserve answered very well. It was situated on several islands in a river, which islands were set apart for the natives; and every native in that district was allotted a portion of land on an island. The natives grew tropical products, and were not given very much assistance by the Government. I believe that once a year they were given blankets. They were not given any clothes; and as for foodstuffs, they grew their own, and grew enough to supply their wants. In that district, long before the reserves were created, all the natural game in the country had been killed; hence the natives could not secure any game similar to that which is procurable in this State. But they grew products of the soil in sufficient quantities to sell, and to purchase clothes for themselves with the proceeds; and to show that they can be educated, I may state that the Government provided a school for them, and I taught in that school for six months. Though I do not know so much about the natives as the member for Murray knows, I know enough of the natives in that portion of Australia to be sure that they can be educated and can attain a high degree of civilization. The Bill provides that reserves shall be created. But while I agree that reserves should be set apart, I do not think that the reserves proposed in the Bill are sufficiently large to suit the requirements of the natives to be placed on them. Two thousand natives on a reserve in a magisterial district in this State will overcrowd that reserve; and we must recognise that in many portions of the State 2,000 acres is not sufficient to support decently a few

inhabitants. It would be more desirable if the Government were to get a very large tract of land in the tropical portion of the State, and congregate the natives there in habitations, and with the assistance of a director, teach them how to grow tropical products; and such districts would form experimental farms. We hear much about the need for coloured labour to grow cotton, tobacco, and sugar; and if the Government wish to encourage the growth of these products in the tropical portion of the State, how can they do it better than by employing the aborigines, and giving them portions of land on which they can set to work under the supervision of a director, so as to ascertain whether those products may be grown here. And if that is done, I have no doubt that the aboriginal races will, besides becoming civilised, prove of greater service to the State than any hon. member expects. In New South Wales, in the district I have mentioned, the natives grew a large quantity of sugar, which they sold to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. They disposed of it under agreements similar to those made by white people, and conducted the business with the company just as intelligently or nearly as intelligently as did the white people in that locality. I mention this merely because it has been said here that the natives would not agree among themselves; that there are several tribes which are at variance, and they cannot and will not live on a common reserve. One member said that if they were put on a reserve, they would wipe one another out. I know that at first the natives, when brought together, do disagree with one another; that for a time there are tribal fights; that for a time, in fact, they look for fight. Sometimes a tribe will leave one portion of the State and go to another, for the purpose of fighting a tribe residing there; but that cannot be helped. Just as our ancestors had tribal fights, so have the natives. So it was in New South Wales. The natives of the Clarence River district were always at war with the natives in the Richmond River district. But later on those tribes became reconciled, and lived together in one reserve, and intermarried. If the natives in this State have not yet attained that degree of civilisation, they

may attain it in the future. Then as to the question of marriage with aborigines, the member for Pilbara (Mr. Isdell) said they should be prohibited from marrying Chinese and other people who are generally considered as aliens. I agree with him; because it must be recognised that not only do we thus secure an undesirable race of people, but that the Chinese, even if legally married, do not recognise the marriage after they leave the State. Even when a Chinaman marries a white woman, he does not recognise the marriage; hence marriages of that sort are most undesirable. Regarding the half-castes, I think it very undesirable that they should be put on the same reserves with aborigines. I think that the half-castes should be set apart, because I have always seen that they have attained a higher degree of civilisation than the full-blooded aborigines. Half-castes, if bred with white people, become in some respects almost as expert as the whites; but once they marry with aborigines, they become even more depraved than the aborigines themselves. If we have reserves, we should try to put the half-castes on reserves by themselves; because I firmly believe that they are a grade higher than the aborigines. This Bill, it seems, is the result of Dr. Roth's report; and though all that Dr. Roth has said will not be taken in good faith by members, and meets with hostile remarks from members on the Government side, undoubtedly there may have been something in the charges made by Dr. Roth against the people in the Northern parts of this State. I happen to represent a constituency where a good many natives reside. They are employed by the squatters; but I have never heard a complaint regarding their treatment. In some parts the natives are taken at a very early stage and trained. I regret that provision is not made that wives of squatters cannot take girls at an early age and train them in household duties. On several stations it has been done to advantage; and these girls can do the work required of them and domestic duties quite as well as girls of other races. I think that the Chief Protector should reside amongst the aborigines. It is absurd to keep him in Perth. I believe the fact that he has resided in

Perth has done more than anything else to create the bad feeling in regard to the natives in the North-West. Had he lived among the people he was supposed to be protecting, we would have heard less about the abuses supposed to exist in the North-West. I desire to draw the attention of members to Clause 65, by which it is proposed to declare valid what is undoubtedly invalid in law. Clause 70 of the Constitution Act provides that one per cent. of the revenue shall be set aside for the use of the aborigines when the revenue exceeds £100,000. In 1895 it did, and Sir John Forrest brought in a Bill providing that a sum of £5,000 should be set aside yearly to assist the aborigines. The then Governor, Sir Gerard Smith, reserved the Bill for the assent of the Crown; and as far as can be judged, and I have it on very good authority, the assent of the Crown was never given to that Bill.

THE PREMIER: It was.

MR. TROY: I have it on good authority that it was not.

THE PREMIER: I can assure the hon. member that the assent of the Crown was given.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member must accept that assurance.

MR. TROY: I accept the assurance, but later on I shall read from a very high authority an opinion on this particular matter.

THE PREMIER: You cannot give a higher authority than the Crown itself.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Your opinion is that of Mr. Lyon Weiss.

MR. TROY: No. It is the authority of one of the most capable men in the State. The Premier may bring in the opinion of Mr. Moss regarding the matter. If the Act of Sir John Forrest was not valid, the aborigines of this State have been deprived of thousands of pounds, because of the operation of a law which is not valid, and which was not assented to. I take the Premier's assurance, but I hope the Premier will allow me to give the opinion of a legal gentleman.

MR. HORAN: It is not a matter of opinion, it is a matter of fact. If the Act was assented to, that is sufficient,

MR. TROY: I accept the Premier's assurance, but I shall read this opinion, which says:—

Under the Constitution Act of 1889, Clause 70, the amount that should be set apart out of the revenue for the benefit of the aborigines was one per cent. of the revenue after reaching £100,000; and in Clause 73 of the same Act, any Bill which interferes with the operation of Clause 70 must be reserved for the Royal assent. It follows, therefore, that if Clause 70 is repealed, Clause 73, so far as it relates to Clause 70, would become inoperative. Similarly the Aborigines Act of 1889, which established an Aborigines Protection Board, contained a provision in Clause 10 that any Bill amending or repealing it, should be reserved for the Royal assent. These facts should be carefully kept in mind in considering what was afterwards done in connection with the above-mentioned Clause 70 and the Aborigines Act of 1889. In 1887 Sir John Forrest brought in a Bill to repeal the above-mentioned Clause 70 and the Aborigines Act of 1889, a Bill which required the royal assent. It was, in my opinion, an iniquitous Bill; but in some extraordinary manner it passed both Houses without question. In that Bill the sum provided for the aborigines was reduced from 1 per cent. of the revenue to £5,000 a year, the Aborigines Protection Board was abolished, and by it the aborigines of this State have been deprived of many thousands of pounds every year. Considering that the aborigines of Western Australia are said to number something like 70,000, and that they have been, and are being, deprived of their lands and of their means of food by the settlers on the land, and considering the grave charges that have been made by Dr. Roth against those who have been brought in contact with them, there can be no doubt that the only method of dealing justly by them is to set apart a fair share of the revenue for their proper administration, and since they number from one-quarter to one-fifth of the whole population of Western Australia, it can hardly be said that 1 per cent. of the revenue is too much for such share.

MR. HORAN: Whose name is at the bottom of that?

MR. TROY: I shall not give the name. There is no necessity for me to do so. Let me assure the member for Yilgarn that the gentleman giving the information is well qualified to do so.

THE PREMIER: This is an innovation.

MR. TROY: The Premier may say this is a waste of time; but if this matter were debated it would be very awkward for the Government.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is the opinion of Mr. Lyon Weiss.

MR. TROY: It is not.

MR. A. A. HORAN (Yilgarn): I have listened to the remarks made by members in the course of this debate, and I do not wish to trespass much on their time in asking them to listen to me. Representing a goldfields constituency, I should like to make a few remarks on this Bill. I hope we shall not rush extravagantly into any attempt to administer for the wants of people in the North, and members are well aware that the contest is really a contest between barbarians and civilisation in this State. That feature has not yet been touched on. It is really a contest of the survival of the fittest. Let us compare the aborigines with those in other portions of the Commonwealth. Particularly I may point to the experience of Tasmania, my native State, where we had for years to fight in what was called the Black War, very similar to that which afterwards occurred in New Zealand, in order to adopt some methods of civilisation, and to develop countries which had been secured under the British flag. Here in Western Australia I suppose we have to do something of a similar nature. I do not wish members to be led away by the extraordinary articles which have appeared from time to time in the daily Press of the State, articles published for no other reason than to accentuate political differences that may have occurred at the time. I do not wish members to be guided by the instructions given to us by the member for Pilbarra, the member for Murray, and the members for the north-western districts generally. I think this question of the aborigines should be placed on a higher plain than that. It is a contest of the survival of the fittest. If these people cannot become civilised, and science and biology, and all the information we got in our student researches incline us to the belief that these people cannot be civilised—we have thousands of instances of that—why attempt to establish reserves for a nomadic race who will not stop within that reserve. Members for the North-West have told us these people will not stop in the reserves, then why try to restrain their liberties? It is quite impossible for any Government to civilise and bring the aborigines into much use. I have had consultations recently with people connected with the

missions at Beagle Bay and New Norcia, and while it is recognised from time to time that you can divert these peoples' wild notions in the matters of commerce and in a general way, you cannot succeed in making them citizens of the State in the ordinary sense of the word. Why go to so much trouble over the report of Dr. Roth, which has been exaggerated by the Press of the day to secure political ends, and Dr. Roth does not stand altogether clear of suspicion, not only in this State, but in his own State. I am not a champion for Dr. Roth, whom I have never seen; I am not a champion of the squatters in the Nor'-West, a portion of the State I am profoundly ignorant of. It would be absurd for some of us to try and legislate for the people who exist in the Nor'-West just as it would be inconsistent for us to legislate for people in China, of whose customs and manners we know nothing. In this instance I ask members not to be guided so much by the sweeping provisions of the Bill, not to be led by the Press of the day, when they say we that have robbed these people of their country; that is utter twaddle. Shall we say that Columbus, when he discovered America, robbed the Indians of their country. It would be absurd to utter such nonsense in this Chamber, where we claim to be deliberative and sensible. If these people cannot conform to the advancing reforms of civilisation, then under the inevitable law of the survival of the fittest, they must give way. I do not wish them to be unjustly treated. Let us do as they did in Tasmania and as they do in New Zealand, although there they have a different and more intelligent type to deal with. What did they do in Tasmania when the remnant of a dying race passed out, when Truiggannie, the queen of the last tribe there expired she was treated to almost a State funeral—the last of a race which fought so valiantly in times past for what they deemed the rights of their country, but which were inconsistent with the rights of civilisation. If it comes to something of the same kind here, it is simply the carrying out of the law of the survival of the fittest. I hope no extraordinary course will be taken, but that members will recognise they are treating the remaining portion of the aboriginal race in as kindly a fashion as possible,

and that they will not go out of their way to be unduly sympathetic on the one side, or unduly forgiving on the other, or unduly cruel on the side of the squatters, who are well represented in this House. I think members will agree with me that a legitimate view should be taken of the situation and no harsh measures adopted on one side or the other.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at six minutes past 11 o'clock, until the next afternoon.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 14th December, 1905.

	PAGE
Question: Pilbarra Railway Project, how advertised ...	434
Bills: (3) read a first time ...	435
Metropolitan Waterworks Act Amendment, 3a.	437
Banking Companies Act Amendment, 2a., Com., reported ...	437
Municipal Institutions Act Amendment, 3a. ...	438
Roads and Streets Closure (William Street Bridge, etc.), Com., reported ...	438
Motion: Perth Town Hall New Site, to disapprove of gift ...	435

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

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Western Australian Government Railways—By-law No. 34, Classification, Rates, and General Regulations for the conveyance of Merchandise and Live Stock; also Jetty Regulations, Wharfage Charges, etc., operating from the 17th July, 1905.

QUESTION—PILBARRA RAILWAY PROJECT, HOW ADVERTISED.

HON. J. W. LANGSFORD asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Have offers been invited outside the State by newspaper advertisement for building the Port Hed-