

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 16th October, 1901.

Petitions (4): Coupon Trading—Papers presented—Blackmailing (alleged): Letter of Denial by Mr. Justice Parker—Question: Dam at Mungari, Cost—Question: Stock Imported over Northern Border, Duty—Question: Railways, Chief Inspector of Locomotives—Question: Swan River, as to Sinking up—Question: Bushmen Contingent, Furlough Pay—Question: Loan, Net Sum Received—Question: Royal Visit, Cost of Refreshments—Question: Railway Fatality, Lion Mill, Compassionate Allowance—Question: Railway Administration Inquiry (Mr. J. Davies), Prejudice—Question: Accident Assurance Business, Deposit—Question: Roadster Stallion, to Travel—Returns ordered: 1, Railway Engines Imported, Particulars; 2, Customs Duties, Australian Imports—Papers ordered: Excess Items, Copies of Printed Matter—Returns ordered: 1, Goods Indented through Agent General's Office; 2, Stock Imported by Government—Motion: Fremantle Harbour Works: Dismissal of Officers, to Inquire—Motion: Stock Imported over Northern Border; to Inquire as to Duty Paid—Motion: Government Advertisements in Sunday Papers, to Prohibit; Division (negative) First Readings: 1, Land Act Amendment Bill; 2, Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Amendment Bill—Motion: Trades Hall Land Grant, Fremantle—Third Readings: 1, Excess Bill (1900-1); 2, Prawa Fishing Act Repeal Bill; 3, Fourth Judge Appointment Bill—Motion: Winery and Storage Cellars, State Aid—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PETITIONS (4)—COUPON TRADING.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (East Fremantle) presented a petition from residents of the State, praying for the introduction of a measure dealing with the suppression of the coupon system.

MR. A. E. MORGANS (Coolgardie) presented a similar petition.

MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco) presented a petition against the Trade Stamps Abolition and Discount Stamps Issue Bill.

DR. MCWILLIAMS (North Perth) presented a similar petition.

Petitions received and read.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: 1, Evidence at inquest on death of Daniel Flynn (moved for by Mr. Hopkins); 2, Retirement of Police Detective McCartney (moved for by Mr. Moorhead).

Ordered to lie on the table.

BLACKMAILING (ALLEGED)—LETTER OF DENIAL BY MR. JUSTICE PARKER.

THE PREMIER (Hon. G. Leake) said: Before the business of the day is

proceeded with, I desire to inform the House that I have received a letter from Mr. Justice Parker, with regard to the episode of yesterday. I will read the letter:—

Perth, 16th October, 1901.

Dear Mr. Leake,—

I gather from a debate in the Legislative Assembly last evening, as reported in the *West Australian*, that Mr. George accused me of having been blackmailed. This appears clearly from the speech of Mr. Nanson, who explicitly formulated the charge, which apparently was accepted by Mr. George as correctly stated. In these circumstances, I feel it my duty to inform you: (1) That no attempt was ever made to blackmail me; (2) That I never acceded to the terms of any blackmail; (3) That I never paid any money whatever in order to prevent the publication of any article in any newspaper; (4) That I have never seen the article referred to in the debate as having been published in the *Spectator*, nor the proof of any article proposed to be published in the *Sunday Times*, nor did I ever revise any such proof or pay anything for its alteration, revision, or suppression; and I may add that I have never even been approached on the subject.

Faithfully yours,

S. H. PARKER.

[MEMBERS: Hear, hear.]

QUESTION—DAM AT MUNGARI, COST.

MR. F. REID asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the cost of construction of the dam at or near Mungari. 2, When the said dam was constructed. 3, Whether a caretaker has been appointed to look after the dam, and to sell the water from same. 4, What revenue has been derived by Government since the construction of said dam to the present. 5, Whether the Minister is aware that no supervision has been exercised for years by the Government over this dam, although a large demand exists for the water that could be conserved. 6, If this is so, why?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, £1,847. 2, 1894. 3, A caretaker had charge of this tank up to the time the railway to Kalgoorlie was constructed, but since the advent of the railway there has been little or no road traffic, and practically no demand for water at this place, so that the continuance of a caretaker there has not been considered justifiable. 4, There is no separate record of any revenue that may have been received from this tank, as in former

years receipts were merged in the general water supply receipts. 5 and 6, Yes. Please see answer to No. 3.

QUESTION—STOCK IMPORTED OVER NORTHERN BORDER, DUTY.

MR. G. TAYLOR asked the Premier: 1, Whether the statement made in last week's issue of the *Sunday Times*, that the firm of Connor, Doherty, & Co. have imported cattle into this State without the payment of duty, is true. 2, If so, what amount is owing to the Treasury for such unpaid duty? 3, Are any steps being taken to recover the amount?

THE PREMIER replied: The Auditor General is making the necessary investigation with a view to ascertaining whether any duty is due to the Consolidated Revenue Fund on cattle imported by the firm of Connor, Doherty, & Co.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, CHIEF INSPECTOR OF LOCOMOTIVES.

MR. G. TAYLOR asked the Commissioner of Railways: 1, What applications were received in answer to the advertisement of May last for a Chief Locomotive Inspector. 2, If any such appointment has been made, who has been appointed.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS replied: 1, Forty-eight applications were received as per the attached list. [List printed in Votes and Proceedings, No. 32.] 2, No appointment has been made.

QUESTION—SWAN RIVER, AS TO SILTING UP.

MR. C. H. RASON asked the Minister for Works: 1, Whether the Government is in receipt of a report from any departmental officer as to the silting up of the Swan River between Perth and Midland Junction, especially in the vicinity of Claisebrook. 2, Whether the Chief Inspector of Fisheries has called attention to this matter. 3, If any report has been received to this effect, whether the Government (seeing the importance of the question to the river traffic and the fishing industry) intends immediately to apply a remedy by dredging.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, There are some reports in the department about this matter, but they have not yet been submitted to the

Government. 2, The Chief Inspector of Fisheries has not drawn the attention of the Public Works Department to the matter. 3, The Government will give full consideration to the requirements of the river traffic and also to the best interests of the fishing industry, before the Loan Estimates are submitted, and it is hoped will be able to make provision for the dredging most necessary to be taken in hand.

QUESTION—BUSHMEN CONTINGENT, FURLOUGH PAY.

MR. C. H. RASON asked the Colonial Treasurer: Whether provision had been made upon the Estimates for the furlough pay of the members of the West Australian Bushmen Contingent, in accordance with the Premier's promise of Wednesday, 28th August.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER replied: Yes; on page 30 of 1901-1902 Estimates, under head of "Expenses of South African Contingents."

QUESTION—LOAN, NET SUM RECEIVED.

MR. C. H. RASON asked the Colonial Treasurer: What was the actual amount received (after payment of commission and all other charges) for each £100 stock of the last loan.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER replied: Until final instalment is paid in November, the Agent General is unable to furnish this information.

QUESTION—ROYAL VISIT, COST OF REFRESHMENTS.

Referring to question asked by MR. RASON, 18th September, as to whether the Celebrations Committee had supplied any information in regard to the items of expenditure in connection with refreshments supplied at the King's Park and Zoological Gardens:

THE COLONIAL TREASURER now replied:

<i>King's Park—</i>			
6,000 children, refreshments	£125	0	0
<i>Zoological Gardens—</i>			
3,000 guests, 3s. per head ...	450	0	0
Special allowance, Royal Tent	25	0	0
Waiters ...	25	0	0
Breakages ...	3	11	6
Wines, etc. ...	166	15	4
Total ...	£670	6	10

I regret to say that this answer is not as the question was asked. I have only just received the particulars. With regard to question No. 3 (asking for explanation of the items), I hope the answer I have read to the House is satisfactory to the hon. member. It certainly is not satisfactory to me.

QUESTION—RAILWAY FATALITY, LION MILL, COMPASSIONATE ALLOWANCE.

MR. C. H. RASON asked the Commissioner of Railways: 1, When the papers moved for by him on the 25th September in connection with the fatal accident to Mr. Hoad, late station-master at Lion Mill, will be laid upon the table. 2, Whether it is the intention of the Government to grant any compassionate allowance to Mr. Hoad's widow.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS replied: 1, The papers will be laid on the table to-morrow evening. 2, This is now under consideration.

QUESTION—RAILWAY ADMINISTRATION INQUIRY (MR. J. DAVIES), PREJUDICE.

MR. M. H. JACOBY asked the Premier: Whether the Government is aware that Mr. Shaw, a member of the John Davies Inquiry Board, has in his public utterances evidenced a strong prejudice against Mr. John Davies. If so, whether the Government is prepared to require him to retire from the board. If not, whether the Government intends to make inquiry whether he has expressed such prejudice.

THE PREMIER replied: The Government is not aware that Mr. Shaw has evidenced a strong prejudice against Mr. Davies. If there are any just grounds for objecting to the appointment of Mr. Shaw, they will no doubt be taken by Mr. Davies or his counsel. The Government would not offer an affront to Mr. Shaw by making the inquiry suggested by the hon. member.

QUESTION—ACCIDENT ASSURANCE BUSINESS, DEPOSIT.

MR. H. J. YELVERTON asked the Colonial Treasurer: 1, Whether the Government is aware of any company doing accident assurance business in this State which has not lodged the deposit required by Statute? 2, If so, whether

the Government will take action against such company?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER replied: An answer was given to a similar question yesterday (in reply to Mr. Wilson).

QUESTION—ROADSTER STALLION, TO TRAVEL.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS asked the Premier: 1, Whether it is the intention of the Government to exhibit the imported roadster stallion "Kinrara" at the various agricultural shows being held within those districts connected by rail. 2, Whether it is the intention of the Government to travel this stallion through the agricultural and pastoral portions of the State during the "season."

THE PREMIER replied: 1, Yes, as far as possible, without interfering with his engagements. 2, Yes, through the Swan and part of the Eastern districts.

RETURN—RAILWAY ENGINES IMPORTED, PARTICULARS.

MR. HIGHAM (Fremantle) moved:—

That a return be laid on the table of the House showing—1, The cost of the Martin engines imported from South Australia. 2, The mileage effected. 3, The maintenance charges per mile. 4, The cost of repairs. 5, A comparative statement on points 1, 2, 3, and 4, as between the above engines and those imported from Great Britain and the United States of America.

The object of the motion was to ascertain the comparative cost of engines made in South Australia for use in this State, as against the cost of engines imported from Great Britain and America.

Question put and passed.

RETURN—CUSTOM DUTIES, AUSTRALIAN IMPORTS.

On motion by MR. R. HASTIE, ordered: That a return be laid on the table of the House, showing the total amount of Customs Duties expected this financial year from imports from other Australian States; also, the amounts expected from each of the chief articles of import.

PAPERS—EXCESS ITEMS, COPIES OF PRINTED MATTER.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) moved:

That there be laid upon the table of the House a copy of a publication entitled *The*

Golden Gate of Western Australia, if such book is still extant.

MR. W. J. GEORGE moved, as an amendment, that a copy of the *Review of Reviews* magazine, containing a certain article relating to Western Australia, be also laid on the table. It would be well that members should see what reason there was for excess expenditure on these items.

Amendment put and passed, and the motion as amended agreed to.

RETURN—GOODS INDENTED THROUGH AGENT GENERAL'S OFFICE.

On motion by MR. F. WILSON (Perth), ordered: That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the nature and value of goods indented through the Agent General's office since the 30th June, 1899.

RETURN—STUD STOCK IMPORTED BY GOVERNMENT.

On motion by MR. W. J. BUTCHER (Gascoyne), ordered: That there be laid a return on the table, showing—1, The total number of stock imported by the W.A. Government as stud stock. 2, The full particulars of each animal so imported, breed, age, sex, and by whom bred. 3, (a.) The price given for each animal; (b.) The amount paid as commission for purchasing; (c.) The total cost (excluding commission) of each animal landed in West Australia. 4, The fees received up to date for the services of any horse, bull, or boar pig. 5, The present weekly cost of feeding and attendance for the stock so imported. 6, The names of all those who have had the use of such Government stock, and the amount of fees paid by each individual. 7, The names and addresses of all those in whose hands the said stock are at the present date, and the amount they are paying or being paid for looking after the stock.

MOTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR WORKS, DISMISSAL OF OFFICERS, TO INQUIRE.

MR. HIGHAM (Fremantle) moved:—

That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the question of the summary dismissal of certain certificated officers, engineers, and navigators employed by the Harbour Works Department at Fremantle.

A serious grievance had been caused by

the dismissal, at a day's notice, of several professional men who had been employed for a considerable time on the harbour works at Fremantle. These professional men believed themselves to be under a grievance, and desired that their case should be inquired into by a select committee.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Kingsmill): There was not the slightest objection on his part to the passing of the motion; but the hon. member might have said a little more in justification of it. It was a matter for regret that circumstances should have arisen to deprive these worthy navigators of their employment at short notice. He thought the hon. member was aware of the fact that instructions had been issued to the effect that, wherever practicable, longer notice should be given in future; and the hon. member might have mentioned the fact. Possibly the hon. member would take advantage of his right of reply to explain the position more fully to the House.

THE PREMIER (Hon. G. Leake): Except for one or two hints dropped by the Minister for Works, he was quite in the dark as to this matter. He presumed the hon. member was asking for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into a certain alleged grievance. It was usually required that the appointment of a select committee should be justified before that appointment was made, by showing that there had been some sort of abuse, and that there was something to remedy. As he understood the Minister for Works, no wrong had been done; though perhaps there had been a little hardship caused by reason of the services of these very worthy officers being dispensed with at short notice. The matter had been brought to the attention of the Minister for Works, who had promised to see that this kind of thing did not occur in the future, if it could possibly be avoided.

MR. HIGHAM: That did not affect the case of these men.

THE PREMIER: The House, as he took it, should not appoint a select committee to inquire into matters purely of departmental administration. Unless the hon. member was prepared to show that these men had been wrongfully treated, and that they really had a solid grievance,

he should rest satisfied with the assurance of the Minister for Works and not press the motion. The Government thanked the hon. member for drawing attention publicly to the fact that hardship had been occasioned in this particular instance. For his part, he indorsed the promise of the Minister for Works.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was not a promise, but a definite instruction.

THE PREMIER: It appeared that the Minister had not merely given a promise, but had issued definite instruction.

MR. HIGHAM: That did not affect the past.

THE PREMIER: Surely the hon. member did not wish a select committee to inquire whether these men should be taken back into the service?

MR. HIGHAM: The men were entitled to some recompense.

THE PREMIER: If the hon. member said that, the motion would be opposed by him. If the Minister had work for these gentlemen, they would no doubt be taken back. The assurance of the Minister ought to be sufficient for the hon. member, unless he was in a position to show the House emphatically and clearly that some grievous wrong had been done to the men discharged.

HON. F. H. PIESSE (Williams): The motion in its present form should not be passed, as it would create a dangerous precedent, tending to hamper all administration. No doubt there was good ground for tabling the motion, because frequent applications had been made to the Minister for Works in regard to the matter, and no redress had been forthcoming. He knew that the Minister for Works had received the men rather sympathetically—[laughter]—and had promised to look into the matter. But there it ended. Good old "consideration" came to the rescue, and the business was shelved; and these men, who thought they had a grievance, still continued to think so. Therefore it devolved on the Government to look into the matter and see whether there was, in fact, any just cause for complaint.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The matter had been looked into.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Some aspects of the case were known to him, and it did appear to him that there had been

undue haste in dispensing with the services of the men.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Quite so.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Under the circumstances the men should receive some consideration: they should receive an equivalent payment in lieu of notice. It was to be hoped that now the matter had been ventilated, the Minister would look into it and see what could be done for the men, who, though if they had received legal notice had no legal claim, might nevertheless have a moral claim. Occasionally there were circumstances justifying the Government in acting more liberally than usual.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Would the hon. member suggest a scheme?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The matter would be dealt with by him if he were on the Treasury bench.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Would the hon. gentleman make work for the men?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Even if the Minister supported his departmental heads, and said that they had done right to dispense with the men, and that the latter had neither a legal nor a moral claim to consideration, still regard might be paid to the equities of the case.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Let the hon. member suggest a scheme.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The motion, he repeated, was not one which should be passed as it stood; because it amounted to a demand for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into a mere matter of departmental administration.

MR. F. WILSON (Perth): The House would be going too far in adopting the motion. It was to be presumed that these men were engaged on the same terms as other men.

MR. HIGHAM: These were not labouring men.

MR. WILSON: No; they were officers: he was aware of that. The terms of engagement would control the terms of dismissal. These officers, if paid monthly, were entitled to a month's notice, or in lieu of notice to a month's salary; if paid weekly, they were entitled to a week's notice, or to a week's pay in lieu of notice. Surely it did not matter whether the men were officers or labourers! They were, in either case, subject to the terms of their engagement. No doubt

if the Minister had not already inquired into these dismissals, he would now inquire into them. Of course, if the men had been dismissed on a charge of neglect of duty, the matter was altogether different. He trusted the hon. member would not press the motion, which, if passed, would establish a precedent under which every civil servant whose services were dispensed with, would come to some member of the House with a request for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into his dismissal. The matter was one to be dealt with, and promptly dealt with, by the Minister himself.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS (Boulder): Select committees of the Legislative Assembly would soon become as common as rabbits around Eucla. There were now select committees sitting all over the place. The present select committee certainly should not be appointed. If the mover (Mr. Higham) had called for papers, and in the perusal of them had discovered *bona fide* reasons for asking for the appointment of a select committee, such a motion as this would merit support. The member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse) had said that the men, while having no legal claim, might have a moral claim; but moral claims had been the curse of this country, and he hoped no farther regard would be paid to them. The member for the Williams had also said that possibly the men had a claim in equity; but a claim in equity was a legal claim, and should therefore be prosecuted in the ordinary way. No doubt the Minister for Works would deal fairly with the men. Possibly, if the motion were proposed in a different form on some future date, he would be able to support it.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH (Wellington): It would be a mistake to appoint this select committee. He, for one, had constantly upbraided the Government on the score of the excessive cost of their work. If such actions as the dismissal of these men were to be brought into question and inquired into by a select committee, the Government would have a very good excuse to give for the high cost of works carried out departmentally.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. F. Illingworth): It would be an exceedingly undesirable thing for the House to take on itself to review the action of the

Government in dismissing public servants. The adoption of the present motion would involve a very serious departure. He did not know a great deal of the matter; but from the statements of the Minister for Works he judged that certain work came suddenly to an end, and that thus there was no farther use for the services of these gentlemen. The Minister admitted that the heads of the department might have looked ahead a little, and told the men in question that their services would not be required after a certain date; in fact, that the heads might have given the men longer notice. But whether notice was given or not, the services of these men would have had to be dispensed with at the time they were dispensed with. Possibly there was an oversight in regard to the insufficiency of the notice given. If men's services were suddenly dispensed with, they might have some claim to consideration in the shape of salary, but one hoped the House would not follow the hon. member, and appoint a committee. Perhaps the hon. member had done quite wisely in calling attention to this matter, but he ought to be satisfied with that, especially as the Minister had given an assurance that these matters would be looked into. If notice had been given, the services of the men must have been dispensed with at the time they were. The Minister had promised that as soon as there was other work these men should be considered. He moved that all the words after "consider" be struck out, with a view to inserting "the method of employment and dismissal of certificated officers, engineers, and navigators employed by the Harbour Works Department at Fremantle."

MEMBER: That was nearly as bad as the present motion.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: It might be, but he was supposing the House might be disposed to pass some motion, and that it would be better in this form than the other. He would rather the hon. member withdrew the motion altogether.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kanoona): If a member asked the House to pass a motion of this kind, he should explain the matter. He did not think the hon. member thought the House prepared to appoint a select committee on every case of a civil servant's dismissal. If the motion were

passed in anything like its present shape, there would be a dozen or twenty similar applications within the next week, and it would be impossible to accede to them all. If the hon. member withdrew the motion, perhaps he could bring it forward in another form, and explain the position of affairs. Then the House would be able to consider the matter.

MR. W. J. GEORGE (Murray): All were aware from the public prints there had been a certain amount of feeling that certain officers had been discharged, he would hardly say unfairly, but perhaps without due consideration being given to their claims. He took it the House was not asked, and he hoped never would be, to take on itself to interfere with the administration of any particular department, but he also took it that the hon. member, being a representative of Fremantle, was desirous that the matter should be gone into, once for all; not with the idea of carping at the Administration, but of seeing whether statements which had been bandied about and printed in the Press were true or untrue; those statements being that certain favoured people had been kept in the service, whose length of service had not been so great as that of those discharged.

MINISTER FOR WORKS: Where?

MR. GEORGE: In the Press.

THE PREMIER: Something was said yesterday about statements.

MR. GEORGE asked the Premier not to interject; not to bring into this subject matters which, he could assure the hon. member, would be fairly dealt with by him at the proper time. Certain statements had appeared in the Press, and might be true or untrue. He did not say the Press misrepresented, but there had been a deputation, he believed, in connection with this matter. [**MEMBER: Four.**] Then that showed most forcibly there were certain men dismissed from the service who believed they had a grievance. The men contended that length of service should determine the keeping of employment when the question of retrenchment came about, that was to say, that men who had been longest in the service should be kept there, and the men who had been the shortest time, should have their services dispensed with. People had in their employment men who

had been with them some considerable time, and whose services were of value; but there were others possibly who had been employed only a little time, and who showed that they possessed greater ability and greater skill. In the Government service, the same as in private employment, the men who had the best abilities should have the best chances. This committee should be appointed for the purpose of showing right away what were the reasons which actuated those responsible to the Minister. If it were shown absolutely the best men were kept, the person responsible had risen to his duty. It was very hard for any man to fall back in the march of life, and be elbowed out by younger and perhaps better instructed men; but all had to suffer it. He took it that what was asked for in connection with this committee was that we should see whether the claims of ability had been fairly dealt with.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for the Murray (Mr. George) ought to support the amendment, at that rate.

MR. HIGHAM: That would deal with the future; but what about the past?

MR. HOPKINS: Evidence could be brought.

MR. DAGLISH (Subiaco): The advice he would give the member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham), if the hon. member wished any proposition carried, was that he should withdraw his motion in favour of the amendment. If the motion were carried, only the individual cases of these men could be considered, but if the whole system of administration of the public department were considered, then necessarily any individual cases must come within the scope of it.

MR. HIGHAM: What about past cases?

MR. DAGLISH: These men would come within the scope of the committee. If the hon. member would withdraw the motion, one would be willing to support the amendment of the Colonial Treasurer.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Kingsmill): When the member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham) spoke on one of the numerous occasions on which he waited on him in connection with these men, he understood the hon. member desired a select committee to inquire into the employment of the men, and not to act as

a court of award for the men who had been dismissed.

MR. HIGHAM : Justice should be done to the men who had been summarily dismissed.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS : No injustice had been done them. There had been a certain amount of hardship, but the Fremantle Harbour Works were loan works, and no one employed on them should expect employment for the rest of his life.

MR. HIGHAM : But a professional man did not expect to get dismissed on Monday morning at a day's notice.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS : One did not see why a professional man should not get dismissal on Monday as well as Tuesday morning. He supposed the hon. member meant that a professional man should get longer notice. He agreed that this should be done; but in the case of these men, although they had suffered hardship, he had done his best for those who could work in other positions; and where work was obtainable they always got it. He had no doubt the leader of the Opposition (Hon. F. H. Piesse) had received letters from one gentleman, who was the most persistent, and as a matter of fact the gentleman had told him he had written to the hon. member. Unfortunately, that person was a sea-faring man, and a sea-faring man, pure and simple. Of course a seafaring man, removed from the sea, was rather out of place; and unfortunately we could not find employment for him as a professional man on the harbour works. This man wished to have employment in his professional capacity, and it could not be provided for him. The amendment might be accepted, and the committee might inquire whether dismissal should go by seniority in grade or seniority in service. While the committee might inquire into this, it was not desirable that the committee should be made a court for awarding damages to these men. There was no objection to a select committee inquiring into the system of employing men in connection with the harbour works at Fremantle.

MR. HIGHAM (in reply): The amendment would apply only to the future, whereas he wanted the inquiry to embrace the cases of these men. The

amendment would meet the requirement to a certain extent, but it would not apply to the grievances of those who had been summarily dismissed. He had interviewed the Minister for Works many times on this subject, and after various discussions the Engineer-in-Chief had admitted that the summary dismissal of professional men was unjust. The Engineer-in-Chief went so far as to say that he would apply the same principle to the labouring men at the Rocky Bay quarries: that they should not be dismissed without reasonable notice. In the cases of the men referred to in the motion, they received a casual report on a Saturday morning that their services were about to be dispensed with, and when they went to work on the Monday morning following, they were told they were no longer required. In all communities it was recognised that a professional man was entitled to fair notice before his services could be dispensed with. These men had made their homes in Fremantle, and it was an absolute injustice to dispense with their services without reasonable notice. The amendment hardly covered what was wanted. The Minister for Works had said these works were being carried out with loan money, and that it was not practicable for any consideration to be given in dismissing men from employment on the works.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER : If the committee decided that a wrong had been done, surely the hon. member could trust the Government to put the matter right.

MR. W. J. GEORGE : Would the mover of the amendment insert the word "recently," to cover the cases of these men?

MR. HIGHAM : That would do. Would the Government agree to it?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER : Let the hon. member withdraw his motion, and trust the Government to do justice in the matter.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS : If the system was wrong, and if wrong had been done in the past, the committee might inquire into that, and the Government would endeavour to rectify any wrong done.

MR. HIGHAM : It should be understood clearly before the question was

put, whether, if the amendment were carried, it would apply to the cases of those men who had grievances.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: An assurance had been given once. Did the hon. member doubt it?

Amendment put and passed, and the motion as amended agreed to.

Ballot taken and committee appointed, comprising Mr. Hastie, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. McDonald, Mr. Wallace, with Mr. Higham as mover; with power to call for persons and papers, and to sit during any adjournment of the House; to report on 23rd October.

MR. JACOBY: It was a physical impossibility for him to sit on this committee, unless the committee sat on Saturdays. He was already on other committees.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member could ask for longer time.

MR. HASTIE said he was in the same position as the member for the Swan.

MOTION—STOCK IMPORTED OVER NORTHERN BORDER.

TO INQUIRE AS TO DUTY PAID.

MR. F. CONNOR (East Kimberley) moved:

That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the question of the importation of stock from South Australia to Northern portion of this State—the papers relating to which were ordered to be laid upon the table of the House on Thursday, 10th October.

He said: It will be remembered that the question which I wish to have solved to the bottom has been brought before members of this House on different occasions. It has been implied by some members who sit here that an injustice has been done, a wrong committed, in which I have the honour to be one of the participants. It will be remembered that a member on the Government cross-benches asked the same questions in reference to the papers which were supposed to be laid on the table of the House. One question was: "Whether the statement made in last week's issue of the *Sunday Times*, that the firm of Connor, Doherty, and Co. have imported cattle into this State without the payment of duty, is true." Before that question was asked, I had intended to move that a select committee be appointed, because it had been inferred that some wrong had been done to the

revenue of this State. I wish to have a committee appointed to clear the matter up. Personally I am absolutely confident that there is nothing at all in the charge which has been made, or which is implied, rather. I have sufficient documents here to satisfy hon. members and even satisfy the Premier that there is nothing in the charge. I move for a select committee to inquire into a question as to papers which should have been laid upon the table of the House, and which to this moment are not on the table. I asked the Premier, without notice, why they are not there, and I could not get an answer. I will not labour this question, but will go straight to the point, and I am going to speak very strongly upon it. I will, I say, go straight to the point, and I charge either the Premier or the Minister for Lands (Hon. C. Sommers) with the fact of having given information to the gutter Press of this State, which should have been in their charge, and which should not have been given. The article appeared in a paper called the *Sunday Times*, with three columns of vituperation directed against myself, which I do not care about. That does not matter, but there is a principle involved in the fact that those people got that information.

MEMBER: Whom from?

MR. CONNOR: Wait a bit. The fact is that those people got that information, and the only place they had a right to get it from was from the table of the House. That information has not been placed upon the table of the House; therefore I ask, where did the information come from? It is a serious charge, and I now make the charge against the Premier in his capacity as leader of the Government of the day, as to why that information was given to that Press.

THE PREMIER: By me?

MR. CONNOR: I say it was given to them. I ask for a select committee to prove whether there is any truth in the statements made. If there be, I am satisfied to go down, and I shall be wrong; but I have posed as an honest man all my time in this State and in other places where I have lived, and I am going to continue in that position or fall. I will not allow any political subterfuge or meanness, by the leader of any political party or any Government I

may be connected with, to besmirch my character. I challenge the Premier to say how that information got out, when it was not taken from papers which were supposed to be laid on the table of the House, but which are not there. I am very much in earnest in this, because it affects my character for honesty. All the purity and all the honesty, according to the debates we have had for the last couple of days, belong to hon. members sitting there (Government side). We had a homily about honesty and honour—about honour! honour! honour! if you please—directed to our poor selves from the Goliaths, the men of all purity and of all the political honesty we hear about, directed from that end of the House to poor unfortunate people like us, who want to pay our debts and live honourably, if we are allowed to act fairly. This is a serious charge—this is no party question. I make this charge as an individual member of the Legislature here. I have been returned to this House, and have a right to express my opinion; and I say the Premier, in my opinion, for political purposes—I say it is my opinion, but I have some proofs; not some proofs, but reasons—I say that in my opinion either the Premier for political reasons, or the Minister for Lands for political reasons and other reasons—I will not say that about the Premier, but I will about the other hon. gentleman, if it can be proved—gave information to a paper called the *Sunday Times*, which enabled it to publish an article it had no possible means of getting information for, unless given by some person in connection with the Government of this country.

MR. GEORGE: It is a serious charge to make.

MR. CONNOR: I make that charge. I asked that question this evening. In all honesty and conscience, I move that a select committee be appointed to inquire into the question embodied in the papers asked for by the member for Kanowna (Mr. Hastie). I found when I handed in the notice of motion, it was not correctly drawn, for the reason that although I believed the papers were there, and thought this information which has been published and which I want a select committee to inquire into was upon the table of the House, the papers were not there; and so I had to alter my motion. That

is the position. Where did that information come from? Where did the *Sunday Times*, which has so many advocates on the other side of the House—

MEMBER: No; not many.

MR. CONNOR: Oh, yes! well, some—where did the information leak from, that they were able to publish this article with details? I am sorry I have left a copy of the paper behind, because I did not anticipate that the motion would come on to-night, or else I should have been better prepared to give my facts. Where, I ask, did the information come from that this paper obtained, which no other portion of the Press of this State could possibly have obtained? Where, I ask, did it leak from? Did it come from the Premier or a gentleman whom he supplies with information? It came from somewhere, and my opinion is that it went through a source from that (Government) side of the House to the *Sunday Times*. If that be so, it is time we should snuff out the possibility of such a thing occurring again. This question of cattle coming across from the Northern Territory of South Australia to Western Australia has been discussed before. When we have the report of the select committee (which I am positive must now be appointed), upon the evidence that will be brought before it, with these documents which I hold in my hand, authorising these cattle to come in here, signed by Clayton T. Mason, that will do away with the possibility of political motives being made the means of trying to injure a political opponent. I want to move that this select committee be appointed.

Motion seconded.

THE PREMIER: What is the information required? What is the document?

MR. CONNOR: You have a select committee, and you will get it.

THE PREMIER (Hon. G. Leake): I am rather at a loss to know what all this turmoil and personal attack is about. Of course it is nothing strange to have the hon. member on his legs making personal attacks against me. I do not know, I am sure, what I have done to the hon. member. If I have annoyed him, I dare say it will give me more trouble than himself. The hon. member charges me, as the Premier, with supplying information to the *Sunday Times*. I tell the House I

have done nothing of the kind. I have not even seen the article in the *Sunday Times* of which he complains. I did not as a matter of fact get the last *Sunday Times*. It was rather early in the forenoon. I generally read it, because there are usually one or two witticisms against me, and whenever there is abuse round about myself, I always read it. [MR. TAYLOR: Hear, hear.] Somehow or other, I did not get last Sunday's issue, and I do not know altogether—

MR. TAYLOR: You missed a treat!

THE PREMIER: Was it good?

MR. TAYLOR: Yes; first-rate.

THE PREMIER: I will buy a copy, then. All I can say is that I have not been interviewed by any member of the *Sunday Times* staff in reference to this matter, and that I have not given any information with a view to publication. I am perfectly certain that the hon. member will not accept that assurance from me; but I believe other members will accept it. As to whether the Minister for Lands has done anything of the kind, I cannot say; but I will ask him at the earliest possible opportunity. The hon. member has lashed himself into a fury, however, over the publication of certain information which, he says, could only have been obtained from the file referred to. If the information be correct, what is the hon. member's grievance? Judging from what he says, the information is all correct; for he states that it could only have been gathered from the file which is to be laid on the table. Had the hon. member pursued what is the more courteous practice, and the practice generally adopted towards myself by other hon. members, and asked me quietly where the papers are and why I did not bring them down, I should have taken the trouble to make inquiries and to bring the papers down this afternoon, if possible. I am not now speaking from altogether the fullest information; but I believe that this very file is at the present moment in the hands of the Auditor General, who is making inquiries into the question of whether or not the firm of which the mover is a member has evaded the payment of certain customs duties, and whether or not the Government have a claim against the mover and his partner. The hon. member appears

particularly anxious as to this claim; and I give him my assurance that I will pursue it with all possible speed, and that I shall be only too pleased to receive from him and his partner to-day moneys which perhaps they ought to have paid months ago. If there be nothing in the claim, of course no more will be said. But these papers will certainly be laid on the table of the House. Now that there has been all this rumpus about the matter, I shall take care that they are brought down as quickly as possible. If any inquiry be proceeding at present, I shall suspend that inquiry in order that hon. members may have an opportunity of perusing the papers. I shall ask hon. members generally to believe that I have no motive whatever in withholding the papers from the House. They were asked for only on Thursday last; and if the hon. member had adopted the more courteous practice, and instead of indulging in violent abuse had asked me quietly for them, I would have been only too ready to busy myself and get the papers promptly. However, as I say, I shall get them as soon as possible. Again I must protest against the unfounded, malicious, and vulgar attacks which are made on me personally by a certain section of this Chamber. [MINISTERIAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] I think it more becoming to the dignity of hon. members to forget their little personal grievances, or, if they must air personal grievances, to air them in the proper way. Goodness knows I do not object to anybody entertaining certain opinions about myself! I do not object to anyone coming to me and accusing me of doing anything wrong, as long as I am given an opportunity of replying. I like everything to be fair; I hate being stabbed in the back, or shot at from behind a hedge, or hit below the belt. I do not adopt those tactics very often myself—[OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Not very often! Hear, hear!—and I like a little fair dealing and gentlemanly conduct. But I can always defend myself against attack. [MR. GEORGE: Hear, hear.] I generally try to talk a man's language: if he talks to me in a strain of civility, I can be civil; but if he likes to abuse me, I am always ready to try a little abuse in reply.

MR. GEORGE: You suit your talk to the occasion.

THE PREMIER: For an hon. member—or rather, I will say, a member who is entitled to be called “honourable”—to make an unfounded charge like this against me is unmanly and unfair, to say the least of it.

MR. CONNOR: Where did the information come from?

THE PREMIER: I do not know. If the hon. member had come to me quietly, and asked me to make inquiries, I would have done so. If I can find out now where the information came from I will let him know. But there is the information available to members. I have never yet, so far as I can remember, refused to any member of the House a perusal of interesting files dealing with public matters. I am not one of those who advocate secrecy in public matters: I believe in ventilating them, if possible. [**MR. CONNOR:** Hear, hear.] If the member for East Kimberley, or a gentleman of similar character, were to come to me and ask me to give him information from the files, whether he happened to be a supporter or an opponent of the present Government, I would give him the information, unless there were some valid objection to doing so; and if there were a valid objection, I would state the nature of that valid objection. There is no reason that I am aware of for keeping the information now in question back from the hon. member, or any other member; and I intend to lay the papers on the table. But I repudiate with a certain amount of scorn as well as contempt the attack made on me, and the accusation that I have gone about in an underhand way to procure the publication of information. I assure hon. members, on the word of a man, that I did not do it; and I hope that they will accept that assurance. [**SEVERAL MEMBERS:** Hear, hear.] I cannot be fairer than that. But again I deprecate these utterly stupid and childish attacks on me, because I happen to be a political opponent. I do not care, really; it is like pouring water on a duck's back to shower this vulgar abuse on me; but I am not going to sit quietly under it and submit to it as though I liked it. I observe a certain degree of indifference in all these matters. Abuse never hurts; and nothing pays better than civility. [Interjections and laughter.] I intend always to pay gentlemen in the

House in the coin which they tender me; and if I fight with bare knuckles sometimes, I hope I fight with clean hands. [**SEVERAL MEMBERS:** Hear, hear.] At any rate, I will not descend to the level of some hon. members whom I will not name. I repeat, I did not give this information to the *Sunday Times*. I do not know what information was published, and I have not had any request from any person for these papers. I shall, however, make inquiry; and I will lay the papers on the table as soon as possible, so that everybody can read them. Moreover, I will find out whether we cannot get a little something for the public chest out of the hon. member and his partner, if possible. [**MR. CONNOR:** Hear, hear. That is right.] The hon. member has been making a great song about what is owing, or not owing, to the Treasury. All I know is this, that with regard to the importation into Fremantle of bullocks from Kimberley, a very funny practice has been in vogue for a few years past. Of that practice the hon. member's firm, and another firm as well, have had the benefit. The benefit is that cattle coming over the South Australian border into Wyndham do not pay duty when they enter West Australian territory, but are shipped from Wyndham in bond.

MR. NANSON: That is what the article in the *Sunday Times* says.

THE PREMIER: Oh, is it? And they do not pay duty till they come to Fremantle. The reason given for not paying duty immediately is that these animals sometimes die on the voyage. But they are liable to duty as soon as they cross the border.

MR. TAYLOR: The non-payment of duty is what makes meat so cheap.

THE PREMIER: I see. Now, this is one of the matters which is being inquired into by the Auditor General. I think the practice a wrong one. It was adopted owing to representations made by some gentlemen. Of course, I could not guess who those gentlemen are. [**MR. TAYLOR:** Oh, no!] Whether they are inside the House or not would be difficult to divine. However, the late Administration allowed this practice. The letter which the hon. member flourished just now, and which he says bears the signature of Mr. Clayton Mason, is the authority for bringing those cattle into Fremantle. But I say if that

be true, then there has been a clear evasion of the Customs law. I say, farther, that the privilege has been granted to somebody or other, for some reason or other which nobody knows.

MR. W. J. GEORGE (Murray): I wish to refer to one remark which fell from the Premier. It is that the files bearing on this motion were open to the Press. That is correct, when files are on the table of the House. But the complaint of the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) is that the files have not been laid on the table, and therefore have not been open to the Press. I think the Premier will agree with me that if this article contained information which could have been obtained only from the files, then it is for the benefit of the civil service, and certainly it will tend to good government, to discover if possible who betrayed the secrets of the department.

THE PREMIER: I can give any information I like to the Press.

MR. GEORGE: Certainly; I will not dispute that.

THE PREMIER: I simply say I did not give information in this case.

MR. GEORGE: I do not dispute that the Premier has a right to do whatever he thinks fit. The only point is that whatever he may think fit to do, he may be called to account for by this House in his position as Premier.

THE PREMIER: Certainly.

MR. GEORGE: The Premier told us he had not given any information to the Press, and we all believe him. Personally, I do not doubt his statement for a moment. But the member for East Kimberley states that the article which appeared in the *Sunday Times* contained information which it is apparent to the ordinary reader could only have been obtained by an inspection of the departmental files. Therefore, as the files have not been laid on the table of the House, and are thus not open to the Press—

THE PREMIER: Yes; they are. At least it does not follow that they are not, for Ministers can publish what they like.

MR. GEORGE: I only wish to have a clear understanding in the matter. The Premier tells us he has not disclosed this information. [THE PREMIER: Certainly.] Therefore, if the information disclosed in the paper is not from him—and, of course, we believe him—it must have been

disclosed by another Minister. [THE PREMIER: Very likely.] And any other Minister can disclose what he likes to the Press? Is that the position taken up by the Premier?

THE PREMIER: I did not say that.

MR. GEORGE: The Premier says he has authority to give any information he likes, but that other Ministers are not entitled to do it.

THE PREMIER: They may or may not have the right. It depends on the particular circumstances.

MR. CONNOR: It depends on the political aspect.

MR. GEORGE: It comes to this, that if the information has been given to the Press by a Minister, then the Minister stands or falls on that. If it has been given by a member of the civil service, then I say it is the duty of the Minister, if he does not care for the practice of giving official secrets away, to deal with that public servant. I suggest that, because I think it is only right. I am not going to accuse any Minister of giving this information: I should be very sorry to think that any Minister, present, past, or to come, would stoop to so low a way of striking at a political opponent as to disclose the business transactions of that opponent with the idea of casting opprobrium on him. If the information has been given by any member of the civil service, I ask the House and the Premier whether that is the right way for such matters to be dealt with?

THE PREMIER: No.

MR. GEORGE: The result will be this.

THE PREMIER: No civil servant is entitled to give information, unless by authority.

MR. GEORGE: If the information has not been given by a civil servant or by a Minister, is there not sufficient ground for the Premier and his Ministers to inquire how this official information has found its way into the columns of the *Sunday Times*?

THE PREMIER: I say I will make inquiries. That is what I say I will do. I was accused of having given the information myself.

MR. GEORGE: So far as I am concerned I am not accusing the Premier of having given the information. If I want to make an accusation I make it straight

out; but I say positively that if the hon. gentleman will go through the columns of the *Sunday Times* and *Sun*, he will find in almost every issue articles which are quite sufficient to convince any reasonable man that access to the private files of the departments is given to some person or other who discloses their contents. That is not right: that is not as it should be.

THE PREMIER: I regret to say it has been the practice for months and months past for information to creep out.

MR. GEORGE: Out of the department?

THE PREMIER: It is very hard to find how it gets out. If I can find the fellow who discloses information, he will get something; I can tell you.

MR. GEORGE: I do not blame Ministers or the former Government; but I say it is detrimental to the discipline of any department for the officers who are practically sworn—I do not know whether actually sworn, but who at any rate are in honour bound—to keep the secrets of the department, should betray these secrets to other people. I am certain the Premier will agree with me as to that.

At 6-30, the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7-30, Chair resumed.

MR. J. RESIDE (Hannans): I do not think that the mover has satisfied the House on the matter which he apparently desired to bring forward. In his speech he seems to have merely contented himself with abusing the Premier and the Government generally. The question of how certain information was disclosed has nothing to do with the motion before the House. Personally, I consider that this is not a proper matter for a select committee to inquire into, although I have not much objection to the appointment of a select committee. I maintain that if the Government do their duty, the question will be decided in the law courts. The Premier himself admitted that when the stock crossed the border they became liable to duty. We have it on good authority that hundreds of bullocks belonging to Forrest, Emanuel, & Co. and Connor, Doherty, & Durack, crossed the border without paying duty. Of course, I am not a lawyer; but I certainly

think those cattle were liable to duty. There are some legal points in connection with the matter; and I therefore consider the first thing for the Government to do is to test their rights in the law courts, and so have it settled whether or not the hon. member and his partner will have to pay the duty. I repeat, this is not a proper matter to be inquired into by a select committee.

MR. F. CONNOR (in reply as mover): There is, perhaps, some reason in what the hon. member who has just resumed his seat has stated. This is a nice change; and I am sure the House will be pleased that something which might possibly be considered practical has emanated from the hon. member. Personally, I will be very pleased if the Government will carry any claim they think they have into the law courts. But the principle I have risen here to champion—if I may put it in that way—does not affect the liability of any particular person or corporation in connection with this matter: the principle is involved in the disclosure of information published in that article in the *Sunday Times*, which I will read if hon. members desire to hear it. [Several MEMBERS: No, no.] It appears from that article that information has been given to the *Sunday Times* by some person—I do not know who it is—information contained in files which I in this House have asked for and have not yet had placed on the table. It is a very serious matter. If the government of the State is to be conducted on these lines, then I say it is time for every man of principle to revolt against the Ministry and the party who will descend—

THE PREMIER: To what?

MR. CONNOR: Subterfuges, politically.

THE PREMIER: Where is the subterfuge?

MR. CONNOR: Because you gave—

THE PREMIER: No.

MR. CONNOR: Or some other person gave information—

MINISTERS: No.

MR. CONNOR: Did you give the information?

THE PREMIER: Have I not said that I did not give it?

MR. CONNOR: Well, it is there, in the paper.

THE PREMIER : I did not give it.

MR. CONNOR : Well, who did ?

THE PREMIER : I do not know.

MR. CONNOR : Then you are not capable of controlling the affairs of the country.

THE PREMIER : You have only accused me of this business this afternoon.

MR. CONNOR : I say you are not capable of controlling the affairs of the country.

THE SPEAKER : Will the hon. member address the Speaker, and not any member ?

MR. CONNOR : I will, sir. But I have been baited by the Premier. It is like a red rag to a bull when I rise. Every time I get up, the Premier introduces some sectarian cry or other scandalous matter—

THE PREMIER : I have not introduced sectarianism into this.

MR. CONNOR : I assure you, sir, that I am, as a general rule, a meek and humble man ; but if the temper, or perhaps the conscience, of the Premier pricks him—only politically, of course, I mean—if his conscience stirs him up when I rise to speak, it is my misfortune and not my fault. It is the misfortune of other members to have to listen ; but I must protect myself. As a member of this House, and as the representative though not, perhaps, of a numerically strong proportion of the people, still of a certain proportion, I have, under the Constitution Act, the right to be here and to speak ; and the Premier has not the right to stop me from expressing myself as long as I have any ideas about me, however nasty they may be.

THE PREMIER : I have not stopped you. I am only asking you not to make unfounded personal accusations against me.

MR. CONNOR : I question you respectfully, through the Chair. You say you did not give the information to the paper ; and, of course, I believe you.

THE PREMIER : I am sorry I cannot pay you the compliment.

MR. CONNOR : Is that in order ?

THE PREMIER : I am sorry that I cannot pay you the compliment of saying that I believe you.

MR. CONNOR : Is that in order ?

THE PREMIER : Well, I do not think you are genuine. I really do not think so.

MR. CONNOR : Is that in order, sir ? I really must ask for your ruling.

THE SPEAKER : If the hon. member would address himself to the Speaker, as I desired him to do, there would be none of these interjections.

MR. CONNOR : I was asking the Premier a question through you, sir.

THE SPEAKER : You were not in order in doing it.

MR. CONNOR : I will read this article.

Several MEMBERS : No, no ; don't !

MR. TAYLOR : Oh, take it as read !

MR. CONNOR : Perhaps hon. members are tired.

MEMBER : Very tired.

MR. CONNOR : I desire to know whether it is possible to find out by any means how the information contained in this article came into the hands of the *Sunday Times*. I will only read the headings of the article :—

Cheating the Customs.

Satrap's Smuggling Strategy.

Connor's Contraband Cattle.

Fraud, Figures, and Facts.

Now the information which should be on the table, which was called for by me, is not there yet ; and, notwithstanding that, the *Sunday Times* has all the information which could be obtained from the file, and that information is published here.

HON. W. H. JAMES : Does the information justify the head-lines ?

MR. CONNOR : No. Nothing that the hon. gentleman who has interjected could suggest—

HON. W. H. JAMES : I am only asking the question.

MR. CONNOR : Let the hon. gentleman who has interjected make the most vile suggestion that he can. I maintain that nothing in this matter, so far as I know, besmirches me. I will prove that, or else I will fall by it. But articles like this cannot be published in the State unless by inspiration drawn from a Government source. The information cannot come from any other source. I say it is too bad of any Government to allow an article such as this to emanate from them ; and I say this article must have emanated from them : it must have emanated from the Cabinet. No such article should appear in reference to any member of the House.

MR. GEORGE: Who is the jackal for them?

MR. CONNOR: I believe there is a jackal. I believe there is an hon. gentleman—I must call him an hon. gentleman—connected, not with this House but with another place, who has access to those papers and who does not hesitate to use his position to give information to the gutter Press, in which I believe him to be personally and directly interested.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Do not try to blacken any man's character. You were bad enough last night.

MR. CONNOR: I am not afraid to stand here and defy any member of the present Government, or any member of either House of Parliament, to say anything that will make me ashamed or afraid. [Ministerial laughter.] I think there are not many members—I will not say on this side, but on the side from which the interjections mainly come—who can say as much. There are not many, I repeat, who can say as much. I defy the Minister for Mines to bring up anything in my career—

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I am not saying anything against you.

MR. CONNOR: The hon. member implied something against me. I defy anyone on the Government side, from the Premier down to the lowest member of his party, to bring up anything in my career that will make me ashamed or afraid. If any man can bring up anything of the kind, I will admit I am wrong. If I am wrong, I will admit it; but I may say that I have never yet, in all my life, had to admit myself in the wrong in a large matter, or in a small matter either. [Ministerial laughter.]

THE SPEAKER: Will the hon. member confine himself to the matter before the House?

MR. CONNOR: Certain hon. members must have very bad consciences; because, as soon as I begin to speak, they try to stop me. I ask that a select committee be appointed to inquire into the matter contained in the papers asked for by the member for Kanowna.

MEMBER: You want to find out how the information got there.

MR. CONNOR: When the hon. member has finished I will proceed; but if he wishes to go on, I am prepared to go on too. I insist that this select committee

should be appointed, and I want this thing proved. I do not want motions to come from members on that (Government) side of the House, on impertinent questions such as this—insinuations against the name and good character of people who have been here longer possibly than the people who ask the questions.

MEMBER: Read it (the article). Do not be frightened.

MR. CONNOR: I move that a select committee be appointed to inquire into this question.

Question put and passed.

MR. RESIDE: Can the mover of the motion be a member of this select committee?

MR. CONNOR: He does not want to be.

THE SPEAKER: He is obliged to be.

MR. HASTIE: The method of appointing select committees up to the present is rather unsatisfactory. Many members have been appointed on select committees, and it is desirable to ask members, before electing them, whether they are willing to act.

MR. CONNOR: How many members are to be balloted for? I am interested in the matter.

THE SPEAKER: Four members.

MR. CONNOR: I cannot sit.

THE SPEAKER: The same difficulty arose the other day.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: Can five be balloted for, in view of the hon. member's statement that he is interested?

THE SPEAKER: I think we must ignore the Standing Orders on this occasion, as the hon. member says he is personally interested in this matter, and ballot for five members.

Ballot taken and committee appointed, comprising Mr. Daglish, Mr. Higham, Dr. Hicks, Mr. Hutchinson, and Mr. Hassell; with power to call for persons and papers, and to sit during any adjournment of the House; the committee to report this day three weeks.

MOTION — GOVERNMENT ADVERTISEMENTS IN SUNDAY PAPERS, TO PROHIBIT.

MR. F. MONGER (York) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the Government should at once refrain from advertising in the newspapers known as the *Kalgoorlie Sun* and *Perth Sunday Times*.

I have pleasure in submitting this motion; but I do regret that I am on this occasion giving an unnecessarily cheap advertisement to papers which I am desirous of doing an injury to instead of assisting. During the past forty-eight hours, this House has been filled with volumes from the *Kalgoorlie Sun* and the *Perth Sunday Times*; and I regret that it falls to my lot this evening to have once more to bring under the notice of hon. members the subject of this motion. It is worded in a very mild form, in a form which I believe every member will say is desirable in the best interests of the community; and that is that the Government should no longer advertise in these two newspapers. Personally, I am almost unacquainted with any individual connected with either of those papers. There is one person connected with them who is known to me in a way; and when we meet we simply glare at one another. No conversation or opportunity for conversation has ever occurred; and I will hail with pleasure the time when the opportunity may come. However, it has been the fate of those two papers to attack me in an unfair way, and on one occasion they went so far as to threaten me and say I was afraid. I want them to point out any mistakes I may make, and of course we all are liable to make mistakes; but I know no man, or I should say no creature, connected with those papers that I am afraid of. I have been surprised that the Government should have given occasion for a motion like this. I trust that the present Government, who have so far attempted to modify any little mistakes which have been made in the past in the direction to which I am referring, will take this motion in the way I intend, and give it their support. I have no desire to refer to the very pertinent articles which have appeared in other portions of the Press during the past few weeks, in connection with the papers to which I am referring. I have no desire to refer, as my privilege as a member of this honourable House would permit me to do, in such a manner as would seem to be against any individual connected with either of those papers. I am only desirous of doing what I consider is in the best interests of this State and in the best interests of hon. members, in asking the Government and hon.

members to support the motion which I beg to submit.

DR. HICKS (Roebourne): I second the motion.

[Pause ensued. The SPEAKER rose to put the question.]

MR. J. M. HOPKINS (Boulder): I regret that I cannot see my way clear to support the motion. We have been asked to pass a motion saying the Government should not advertise in certain journals. For what reasons? Are they the reasons given by the member for York (Mr. Monger)? Is it because those papers, according to his own words, have thought fit to attack him and criticise him in his public actions? We find the motion is seconded by the member for Roebourne; and probably it is done from the same motive. How far are we going in this matter? Are we to say we will send no more Government work to the Black Swan Foundry, because one hon. member last evening thought fit to say things in this House which those papers would not publish? If we are to pass this motion, to what extremity shall we go in this direction? I for one will not support a motion directed against two journals, no matter what journals they may be, unless we have better reasons put before us than the mover has yet stated. If any person likes to look through those two newspapers, he will see that the leading firms of Perth, who are just as good as any member of this House, have their advertisements in those journals. If the hon. member had made out a definite case in favour of the motion, it would be quite a different thing. But he has given one reason only why this motion is before us, and his reason is that those papers have attacked him. To-morrow we may have another member coming forward with a motion because the *West Australian* has attacked him; and so on *ad infinitum*.

MR. MONGER: Or the Boulder *Star*.

MR. HOPKINS: Yes; or the Boulder *Star*. Those papers have good reasons sometimes for attacking persons; and seeing the things that have been done in this country, I think it advisable to allow the journals to expose that which is not in the best interests of the country. If the hon. member had given good solid reasons for this motion, I was prepared to listen to him. I did expect to have

heard some discussion ; but I will not sit still while a motion of this kind is treated in silence, to be passed without debate. I intend to divide the House on it, rather than see it carried.

MR. F. WALLACE (Mount Magnet) : I intend to follow in the steps of the member for Boulder (Mr. Hopkins) and oppose the motion, for one reason which has been furnished by the member for York (Mr. Monger). It appears to me, and I think it is well known to all members, that the hon. member, in being attacked by those papers, has received from them a beautiful advertisement. Now let hon. members observe the way in which he shows his gratitude! I had expected that there would be some farther debate on this question. I do not understand why the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) and the member for the Murray (Mr. George) have not defended the gutter Press, which they were championing last evening. It does seem to me that the House is full of inconsistencies. I would like to support the member for York if he would add to his motion, after the words *Sunday Times*, "and all other papers which write unpleasant things about members of Parliament." (Laughter.) I believe I am alone in this House in one respect—I am not the subject of advertisements. If anything is said about me, it is not to my good : it is always something unpleasant. I glory in that sort of thing, and I only hope these papers will some day make me as notorious as they have made the members for the Murray, York, and East Kimberley. I trust the Government will divide the House on the question—[MR. HOPKINS: If they do not, I will]—and not allow any hon. member to dictate to them what papers they shall advertise in. I intend to oppose the motion.

MR. W. J. GEORGE (Murray) : Perhaps the terms of the motion are rather more drastic than hon. members care about. If the member for York had chosen, he might have given good reasons why at any rate one of the papers referred to by him should be considered by the Government unworthy of support. I do not believe there is a member on the Treasury benches, with the possible exception of the Minister for Works, but has been held up to ridicule in that paper.

MR. TAYLOR : What about the *Spectator*?

MR. GEORGE : I wish the hon. member would allow me to speak quietly.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS : Please do not except me.

MR. GEORGE : I think there is hardly a member of the Government, with the exception of the Minister for Works, who has not been attacked by the *Sunday Times* and so held up to opprobrium throughout the State. However our opinions may vary about the Ministry as a whole, or the individuals composing it, we are not at variance on this point, that the Government of the day shall be treated with decent respect by the newspapers which write about them : at any rate it can scarcely be considered right that the funds the Government control should be disbursed in the support of a class of newspapers such as those referred to in the motion. I am quite aware, as the Minister for Mines has indicated by interjection, that the present Government are simply continuing the system they found in vogue when they entered office. If that be so—and I have no reason to doubt it—then the present Ministry, if they disapprove of the system, cannot grumble at being asked to discontinue it. But whether the motion be carried or not, in my opinion the subject is not one for discussion by Parliament.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) : I rise to oppose the motion, which I do not think has been moved in the interests of the State finances. If the advertisements in the papers referred to yield a sufficient return for the amounts paid, it is the duty of the Government to continue to advertise in those papers. My own experience of the *Sunday Times*, so far as Sunday reading is concerned, is that it is the most widely circulated paper in the State; and I rather admire the wisdom of the Government in advertising in so widely read a paper. If the State funds were always spent as judiciously as on advertisements in the *Sunday Times* there would not be so much to quarrel about in the House. I object, however, to Parliament being used by any member to gratify his spleen against any person or any newspaper. The dignity of the House is brought to a very low level by such tactics, and I will not sit here without entering my protest

against them. I have not been a member of the House very long; but I know that boycotting attempts of this kind have been repeatedly made during the last 10 years. I consider it a disgrace to the House that such endeavours should be made; and it is about time hon. members rose to the occasion and put a stop to them for good. I maintain that certain members last night and to-night have done more to besmirch the characters of individuals than the gutter Press, as they chose to call it, could do in a lifetime. I maintain that a much bigger advertisement was given last night in this House to low, scurrilous attacks on people, than those journals are capable of giving. For these reasons I say that the very men who, as they put it, wish to "kill the gutter Press," are doing the utmost possible to increase the circulation of that Press. There is a rumour circulating in Perth that some hon. members bring up these papers in the House only for the purpose of advertising them. I am not going to say that is so; but it is stated; and when I sit here and listen quietly to the speeches delivered, I am inclined to think it possible that there is some truth in the rumour. I should be sorry to believe that any hon. member would stoop to such conduct. However, I venture to say that very few people will be able to get a copy of the next issue of the *Sunday Times*, unless they get up about six o'clock in the morning to buy it, or unless the proprietary of the paper print three or four times the usual number of their issue. What is the cause of that? The advertisements which hon. members have given to the journal during the last week or two, and especially during the last two nights. It has been asserted that the *Sunday Times* is exceptionally scurrilous and untruthful; but that assertion is not borne out by what the Premier said to-night in his reply to the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor). That member stated a scurrilous, lying, libellous attack had been made on him by the *Sunday Times*. The Premier, however, tells us that the matter published is merely a reproduction of what is to be found in the files of his department, or some other department. I say that if the files contained that matter, the paper did a public service by publishing it, and was justified in publishing it. We ought to be glad

to have newspapers which confer on the country the benefit of bringing dark matters to light. I can understand that certain hon. members should be afraid of these papers. For my part, I have always believed in the absolute necessity for a scavenger. If I find a paper publishing three columns concerning an hon. member of this House, and I read those three columns and find that their contents gravely reflect on him, then I hope that the statements are untrue. But when I come to the House and discover from the hon. member himself, and from the Premier, that the published statements are true, then I say the paper has done a service. Where is the libel? What is wrong in a newspaper publishing the absolute truth? Are we to try and stop the Press from publishing the truth? I say, no. Moreover, I object to the House being used to force the Government to advertise or not advertise in particular journals. If I were selfish in the matter and thought of my individual advantage with reference to these publications, there would be no man in this House more disposed than myself to gag the Press. There is no member who has been written down more than myself; but still I shall never attempt to gag the Press. I believe that the Press should be free. When the Press has anything startling to communicate to the general public in connection with the Government, or in connection with a public man, then the Press has a right to make its communication in a—well, an elevated style. The style must be a little stilted in order to induce people to read such articles; and it is necessary that the people should read them. I maintain that one of the newspapers specially aimed at by the motion deserves credit for bringing to light deeds of dishonour. There are many things which the public should know, but would not have known, if it were not for the *Kalgoorlie Sun*, many things which would not have seen the light of day if it were not for that paper. Therefore I will not sit here and allow the motion to be passed without protest. Any man who wants to gag the Press must have something behind him—something which he is afraid may come to light. It is disgraceful to endeavour to gratify petty personal spite by black-balling a section of the Press, by telling

the Government, "You must not advertise in this paper," or, "You must advertise in that." The motion is ridiculous; and I trust it will not be carried.

MR. J. GARDINER (Albany): Probably no member of the House has more right to feel strongly on this question than I have. I intend to oppose the motion; not because I think it is a wise thing for the Government to advertise in papers of the class referred to, but simply because, as I said on the second reading of the Newspaper Libel and Registration Amendment Bill, this House is not to be made use of for the vindictive private purposes of members. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] I say that unhesitatingly.

MR. MONGER: What protection has a member against such papers?

MR. TAYLOR: Keeping straight!

MR. GARDINER: I possibly have some cause of complaint; because certain members of this House have been industriously circulating a rumour that I am connected with the *Sunday Times*. I wish that rumour to be arrested once for all. I am not now speaking to those hon. members whose goodwill I do not value, but to those members whose goodwill I do value, who have known me ever since I have been in this State. I am not going to protest about my honour: a man who protests about his honour cheapens it. I will leave my honour in the hands of the men who have known me ever since I have been here. Before I entered the House I was asked to negotiate with the old shareholders of the *Sunday Times* Newspaper Company for the sale of their paper to another company. My business being that of an auctioneer and commission agent, I negotiated. Before the transaction was completed, what happened? I was elected to this House. For my commission on the sale of the paper I received 200 shares in the new *Sunday Times* Newspaper Company. What was my first action after being elected? I wrote to the proprietors of the *Sunday Times* saying, "You can have those 200 shares of mine at practically your own price. I have been elected to Parliament and, there are in the House political enemies of mine who would be the first to accuse me, if I remained a shareholder in your company, of being connected with your journal and responsible for its

policy. I cannot allow that. Consequently you may have these shares at your own price and on your own terms." I ask those members who have such a keen sense of honour, whether I did not behave well and do an honourable thing? Now let them come at me with their accusations! The men in this State who know me, know that my word is my bond under all circumstances. Farther, I have been accused of contributing a column written in the *Sunday Times* as by an "M.L.A." I say unhesitatingly, never have I written one word for the *Sunday Times* since the death of Mr. Vosper. At his request I wrote one leading article on a subject of great interest, but nothing that would vilify any man. Since then never, directly or indirectly, have I contributed one word to the *Sunday Times*, nor have I intentionally given any information to that paper. I know now who has done it. Unfortunately I told three or four funny stories concerning members to a number of gentlemen; and one of those gentlemen wrote the whole of those four stories for publication in the next issue of the *Sunday Times*. I am not speaking with heat to-night. I am speaking as a man who is telling the truth: that is all. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] When we come to the question of advertising, I say there is a vast possibility of control of the Press by the Government in the distribution of Government advertisements. The whole system of advertising, from beginning to end, wants revising. I say unhesitatingly in this House, as a man who knows what he is talking about when he speaks, that the time has come when the papers should not be subsidised by Government advertisements; and only those papers that have a circulation which justifies it have a right to be used by the Government, the same as any private business firm uses an advertising medium. The object of an advertisement is to get the information to the greatest number, and it is not to subsidise those papers which support the Government when in power, and oppose persons when not in power. When we consider the matter of advertising, we have to see to two things. First of all, the Government should use the best medium to get to the people; and the next is they have a right to expect from papers the same consider-

ation and the same space, at the same value, as other people. I am not opposing this motion because I do not agree in some respects with it; but I am opposing it because I say the Government have no right to be dictated to, when they have information to give to the public, as to what means they shall use for conveying that information. It is all very well to say that certain reputable firms should not advertise in certain papers. I know that frequently I have had my clients in advertising say, "You must advertise in this paper and that paper," and I have no voice in it whatever: they are the judges of what means can be utilised to get that information to the public; and therefore I say that the Government, looking at it as a purely business concern, have a right to use the best means to get the information to the public. And if a journal which has received a great amount of advertising in this House—unnecessarily so to my mind—has attacked several members, those members have their remedy; and I am sure the Criminal Code we passed the other night is quite strong enough to give any member opportunity to bring retribution for any libel.

MR. CONNOR: It is not the law at the present time.

MR. GARDINER: It passed the second reading.

MR. HOPKINS: The Criminal Code is law.

MR. GARDINER: I say it gives ample means for the prosecution of any man who criminally libels another; and in addition to that I think it says there shall be an extra penalty for one who dares to defame a member of Parliament. I say unhesitatingly that if the Press had libelled me as it has libelled some members of the House, I would have felt my honour at stake, and if it had cost me the last penny I had in the world, I would have tried to clear it, feeling that I owed a duty to my children to leave my name clean and white, irrespective of who attacked it. Therefore, I shall oppose the motion, because I am sure there is an underlying current here to wipe out a paper, not because it is not a good advertising medium, but because it has dared to attack some members of this House.

MR. J. L. NANSON (Murchison): There is a saying with which probably

most members of this House are familiar, that "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." If I may modify that quotation in a manner so as to make it inoffensive, I would like to say that the member for Boulder (Mr. Hopkins) rushed in this evening where angels of the Treasury benches refused to tread. I always intended to speak on this subject, but I was in hope that the Premier would have spoken first. When I delivered the remarks I did in this House on the second reading of the Libel Act Amendment Bill, and asked the Premier for an explanation as to why the Government advertised in papers known as the Sunday Press, I was under the impression that the hon. gentleman, possibly in the innocence of his heart, thought, when the words "Sunday Press" were used, he was not advertising in a secular newspaper, but supporting religion and the religious Press of the State. I gave the hon. gentleman credit for the very best of intentions. I knew that, being the soul of honour himself, he would fear to have any commerce with the unclean things of this world; and I thought the hon. gentleman might be unaware of what appeared in papers of that sort. But this afternoon it was my fate to receive a cruel shock, a dreadful awakening. The hon. gentleman, when the motion of the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) was being discussed, told us he was in the habit of reading one of those newspapers. That grieved me excessively, for I thought that if the hon. gentleman had sinned by encouraging this class of newspaper he had at least sinned in ignorance; but we find that he is a constant student of those newspapers. And not only is he a student of them, but he reads them with a considerable amount of enjoyment. I should like to know, as the hon. gentleman is a student of this disgraceful class of journalism, whether on a certain occasion, before an event of great festivity in this State, he read a paragraph in the *Sunday Times* which made a charge of the basest and most grave description against a personage of the very highest stamp in this Empire. I want to know if the Premier read in that newspaper a paragraph accusing a person of the highest possible position of spending his time in Melbourne in the evenings in a disgraceful and immoral manner? because when that

paragraph appeared, almost "cheek by jowl" alongside of it there was a Government advertisement announcing a sale, or a tender, or something else. And I fancied to myself, what would be the opinion of some distinguished personages who visited these shores if some individual had sent to them two cuttings from that paper—if in one column they had placed this scurrilous, this disgraceful, this villainous paragraph, and in the other column they had placed this Government advertisement with the signature, possibly, of "George Leake, Premier of the Colony," or of some other member of the Government, at its foot? What would be thought of the public life of this country, what would be thought of the men directing the affairs of State in Western Australia, if it could be said in other parts of the world that these attacks were allowed on persons of the highest positions, on persons whose positions rendered them utterly incapable of replying to them, and that the Government of the State, who were entertaining these people and paying them every possible civility, and who would be glad to obtain a smile from them and to bask in their presence, were at the same time countenancing this gutter, this villainous—I was going to use a word which I will refrain from uttering. Although I do not welcome a motion of this description in one sense, I do welcome it in another. I welcome it inasmuch as it gives to the Premier of this country an opportunity which he did not seem willing to embrace in the earlier stages of this debate; it gives him an opportunity of explaining what he has not explained before—although I challenged him some weeks ago—why it is that the Government of this State give their support to papers of this description.

THE PREMIER: You frighten me!

MR. NANSON: I am glad I frighten the hon. member. (Laughter.) Conscience, it is said, makes cowards of us all. (General laughter.)

MINISTERIAL MEMBER: Speak for yourself.

MR. NANSON: I am voicing the experience of the Premier, apparently. It may be said when I refer to this particularly disgraceful paragraph—a paragraph not of very great length, but containing a considerable amount of con-

centrated dirt within a very small space—that I am quoting a single instance, which may, in spite of the Premier's diligent study of that paper, have escaped his notice. But if he is a reader of that paper—and he has told us he is—it can hardly have escaped his notice that a long article was published in that paper, an article exceeding over a column in length, republished from *The Irish People*; an article which not only caused the strongest condemnation in the British House of Parliament, but caused the strongest condemnation in one House of Parliament in this Commonwealth—a condemnation so strong that it drove an hon. member, who only in a partial degree was responsible for the publication of that article, out of public life. That article was published also in the *Sunday Times* of this State; and unless the Premier is a recent student of that paper, unless he has only been in the habit of reading it since a certain visit of Imperial importance (the article of which I speak was published on the eve of that visit), then it scarcely can have escaped the attention of the hon. gentleman. If the Premier will—and I presume that he will—give to this House an explanation as to his intentions with regard to this newspaper, I trust it will be an explanation of a satisfactory kind, because from some remarks he let fall earlier in the evening—perhaps I am placing a harsh construction on his words—it seemed to me that he practically favoured, if he did not actually allow, the giving of a sort of roving commission to the representatives of this class of paper to search the files of the Government departments.

THE PREMIER: Nothing of the kind.

MR. NANSON: The hon. gentleman's words created that impression.

THE PREMIER: Nothing of the kind: disordered intellect.

MR. NANSON: Possibly disordered intellect. I am glad the hon. gentleman gives to my impression a disavowal, because there can be no question that if you come to the article of which the hon. member for East Kimberley (Mr. F. Connor) complains, and you also compare the statement which the hon. member made with the gravamen of the charges in that article, you find the Premier was so conversant with the facts of the case that if one were uncharitably disposed,

and if one did not believe the hon. gentleman to be the soul of honour, one might imagine there was some sort of connection.

THE PREMIER: I have read the facts; I have read the file. They have been before me, and it was my duty to read them.

MR. NANSON: I see. The hon. gentleman has read the files. I express my views clumsily, no doubt.

THE PREMIER: Undoubtedly.

MR. NANSON: The point I wish to bring out is that not only has the Premier read those files, but apparently the individual who contributed that article to the *Sunday Times* had also read those files. What one would like to know, and what the member for East Kimberley endeavoured to extract, but apparently without success, is how it happens that contributors to that form of journalism are able to get access to those files, or to get information so closely answering to the information in those files, that it is almost impossible to our credence to imagine that journals of this type are not given privileges and means of access to official information denied to journals which, at least, have a more liberal stock of scruples.

MEMBER: And more than the House itself.

MR. NANSON: Possibly more than the House itself, as a member remarks.

MINISTERIAL MEMBER: Do not insinuate.

MR. NANSON: I am insinuating nothing. It seems to me that in this House, if one makes an innocent remark, some hon. members are far too quick and far too sensitive in applying it in a way that was not intended.

MR. HOPKINS: We should make due allowance.

MR. NANSON: But when we remember that this Government came into office, and I was one who supported the Government for this reason—

THE PREMIER: Oh, you supported them!

MR. NANSON: Remembering that they came into office to examine the files of the departments, and expose all those dark places and show all the abuses that have arisen, it is somewhat of a pity, though I do not say they do it, but it does appear that, especially to some extent, they delegate that duty to papers

like the *Sunday Times* and the *Kalgoorlie Sun*.

MR. HOPKINS: Or the *West Australian*.

MR. NANSON: The *West Australian* has a journalism of its own character, and we do not wish to poach on the preserves of the Premier. He was going to clear out all those pigeon-holes, and why does he not do it? Why does he leave it to someone not of the most reputable character, connected with journals that are not the most reputable? There is only one remark which it is necessary for me to make. The member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) mentioned that, in the interests of public morals, it was necessary to have a class of paper to act as a public scavenger. When you come to think of it, there is a good deal of common sense in that suggestion, as there usually is in the observations of the hon. member. There is nothing in regard to the political attacks of the *Sunday Times* to which I would take very strong exception, even when the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) is attacked in terms which I cannot approve of in any way. I have to consider also that it may be my fate next week, or the fate of any other member of this House, to be attacked by these papers; but none the less we should allow a great amount of latitude to newspapers when they merely attack public men. We in this House are put in a position where we are largely a target for attacks of this description; and when we consider that the men who come into this House are men whose characters are or should be well-known to the public, and when these attacks are made by anonymous individuals, and when the persons who conduct these journals are known not to be of the higher class of journalists, we may credit the public with discernment and common sense to distinguish between those who make these attacks and those who are attacked. The public will be likely to say, "Well, Jones, a member of the *West Australian* Parliament, is attacked by those papers;" and they will ask themselves what is the character of the people who run those papers; and the public having a fair amount of common sense, and knowing the class of newspaper, and knowing the class of men attacked, will form an estimate of the men who attack them, and will judge as between

them and the anonymous persons who make those attacks. But what I do object to is, not that they attack public men in terms even of extravagance, but that they attack the highest personages in the Empire, that they attack persons who are absolutely prevented from making a reply of any description; and not content with attacking those high personages whose position may give them some sort of indirect protection, they actually go into the home and attack defenceless women, and by their dirty insinuations and their contemptible innuendoes they vilify the sanctity of our homes and the sanctity of the domestic hearth. I say that although we may require a public scavenger to purge the politics of this country, and although it may be necessary to keep a scavenger in reserve, yet I deny that we want a scavenger to purge our homes and to drag those whom we love and endeavour to screen from the public gaze, into the contempt and familiarity of the gutter, and of every busybody and every scandal-monger who likes to come along.

THE PREMIER (Hon. G. Leake): I seem to be having a fairly lively time of it, this week. The hon. member who has just spoken said, in opening his remarks, that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." Well, he has had his rush; and now — [Laughter.]

MEMBER: The boot is on the wrong foot.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member has made an attack on me with regard to this motion. He has told me that I was not going to speak, and so forth. As a matter of fact, I was about to rise when the hon. member anticipated me; and in conformity with nice feeling and so forth, I allowed the hon. member to go first; and I am glad I did, because I have heard something that is altogether refreshing, and has enlivened the debate. So far as the hon. member's indignant protest against the policy of those journals is concerned, I heartily and honestly agree with every word he has said. I deprecate those wicked attacks which are made on private individuals in those particular papers; and it must not be thought that because I told the House, earlier this evening, that I sometimes read those papers, I thereby agree with the policy which they propound. Because I read a newspaper, it does not follow

that I agree with the policy of that paper. I read the newspaper which the hon. member subedits.

MR. NANSON: I do not subedit it.

THE PREMIER: The paper which the hon. member edits.

MR. NANSON: I do not edit it.

THE PREMIER: The paper which the hon. member is connected with; and I say I do not thereby agree with its policy. The hon. member has thought fit to attack me with regard to the policy of the *Sunday Times* and the *Kalgoorlie Sun*—I do not know why. He instanced many things those papers have done which he does not approve of, and which I do not approve of. There was the attack on the Duke, to which he referred, and I suppose the hon. member would blame me for not having criminally prosecuted the editor of that paper.

MR. NANSON: No.

THE PREMIER: I would not give those papers such an advertisement; and I may tell the hon. member that I had the approval of his respected editor, in that course. I was urged positively to prosecute those newspapers; but I said "No; I will not advertise them, because the scurrility is so great that it cannot do any harm, except to those who publish and those who write the articles."

MEMBER: Those who read them.

THE PREMIER: I do not know, if it comes to journalism, that the hon. member (Mr. Nanson) need be so very proud of what appears in his own columns. Take the advertisement column in his own newspaper, and what do you find there—everything clean? No. What about your betting, your consultations, and your chemical advertisements? Do not talk to me with all this humbugging and superiority. I do not feel disposed to stand it, either to-night or at any other time.

MR. HOPKINS: A few "angels" about those chemicals, sometimes.

THE PREMIER: Again I am wrongly accused by the hon. member, as I have been by other members, about having given certain privileges to persons representing those newspapers. I have already denied that, and I suppose I shall have to do it again. Neither of those newspapers has had any privileges from me, with regard to the particulars which were referred to this evening, or any other. I

merely told the House that I reserve to myself the right to give what I like to the Press—to the *West Australian*, the *Morning Herald*, the *Sunday Times*, or any other newspaper; and I am not going to be dictated to by this House, or the hon. member, or the newspapers themselves. I have no doubt the hon. member, when he goes away, will sit down and with venom in his pen make an attack upon me. He is at liberty to do it. I ask the hon. member to move over to the other side of the House, and not to act the part of a political traitor, and from this side of the House practically stab me in the back. I won't have it. I am not here to be supported in my position, either by the terrors of the Press or by the threats of my reputed supporters. I won't have them. The hon. member can go to the other side of the House! That is his proper place to attack me from.

MR. JACOBY: He can sit where he likes.

THE PREMIER: I do not ask the hon. member to sit on my side of the House, and make either personal or political attacks on me day after day.

MR. NANSON: When have I attacked you?

THE PREMIER: The hon. member has done it to-day. Since he has sat as a member during this session, he has not made a speech in support of this Government.

MR. NANSON: I attack the hon. member from the floor of the House; not from behind. The hon. member might take a lesson from me in that.

MR. JACOBY: Hear, hear. The Independent benches!

MEMBER: You attacked him.

THE PREMIER: I am not making any attack on the hon. member, that I am aware of.

SEVERAL MEMBERS: Oh! oh!

MR. NANSON: I did not attack the hon. member from behind.

THE PREMIER: Not behind my back—I never said you had. I do not know what you do behind my back.

MEMBER: You have given him a great insult!

THE PREMIER: No; I have the greatest respect for the hon. member. I think he is a little bit peculiar, sometimes; but I am not going to be bluffed or bounced by any hon. member, either in the House or in the Press. I hope the

hon. member will not think I am saying anything more than one public man is entitled to say to another. I do not expect to convert the hon. member, suddenly, to my way of thinking. He is entitled to say what he likes, just as I am. When I am attacked, I always think I am justified in defending myself. Now as for these libels and so forth, with regard to which I understand the hon. member to infer that I ought to take up the cudgels and prosecute —

MR. NANSON: May I explain that I did not infer that the Premier should prosecute the papers. I did not say he should advertise the papers. I said he should not advertise in them. That is the distinction.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

THE PREMIER: I am glad to learn the hon. member did not mean that. From the note I took, I thought he was attacking me on that score. The hon. member, however, says he did not attack me; and I am glad of it. With regard to the subject matter of the motion, I oppose it; because I think it wrong for Parliament to interfere in a question of pure administration such as this. [MINISTERIAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] Ministers have a perfect right to advertise just as they think proper, and where they think proper. But I have come to a certain determination on this question, and I intend to follow out that determination, whatever may happen. That is the position. I am not going to be dictated to by the House in a matter of this kind. It is not a question of want of confidence. If members do not like what I say, let them move a vote of no-confidence. [MEMBER: Not on this question.] It is not a question of no-confidence; and when the House divides, Ministers may possibly be found voting on opposite sides. I do not know. I have made up my mind as to what I am going to do, and I shall do it. I say emphatically it is not right for the House to interfere in a matter of this kind. I am not going to advertise in any newspaper in order to buy its support; and if I withdraw advertisements from a newspaper, I do not fear its opposition. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] I have had enough of newspaper criticism in my time to know that there is no risk of its causing me any sleeplessness. I have not had such a

great deal of support from any of these journals—from the Perth journals, at any rate—during the last few weeks; and I do not suppose we shall be any better or any worse friends after the result of this debate is known. I do not care about being attacked and being told that I am doing what are practically dishonourable actions, by hon. members who sit on this side of the House.

MR. NANSON: I never inferred anything of the kind.

THE PREMIER: I wish to make it clear that we have to come to a decision on this question. If the hon. member forces his motion to a division, I am going to vote against it; but that will not alter the decision which I and my colleagues have come to.

OPPOSITION MEMBER: I thought you said Ministers might be voting on opposite sides.

THE PREMIER: Questions of administration remain with me—[SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear]—whilst I am head of the Ministry. I do not intend to brook dictation at the hands of anybody, numerous as you are on the other side of the House.

MINISTERIAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kanowna): Whether it be true or not that the Sunday newspapers have a demoralising tendency on those who read them, they seem to have a very demoralising tendency on the House when we discuss them. We have now devoted the greater part of two nights to the discussion of the subject; and I feel convinced that at the present moment, at any rate, no one is satisfied with the turn the debate has taken. That is much to be regretted. The proposition brought before the House by the member for York was, as he said, a short and innocent one. To my mind, however, it would be wrong for us to pass it; though at the same time the hon. member was quite justified in bringing it forward. It is to be regretted that the hon. members who followed the mover did not follow his example and speak to the subject. The subject is not whether newspapers are justified in referring to public men or public matters: the question is, what papers Government advertisements should be published in. As I understand it, advertisements given to

the newspapers by the Government are given in proportion to their circulation. The Government do not, or ought not to, advertise in newspapers for the purpose of assisting those newspapers, but simply and solely for the purpose of reaching the greatest number of people. I admit it is not within the scope—

MR. NANSON: What about indecency?

MR. HASTIE: The question of indecent publications has come in. I submit the House is not a proper tribunal to consider the relative indecency of various newspapers. The decision on that point should surely rest with some competent executive authority. If we in this House are to consider the decency or indecency of various papers, we shall never be able to get through any business at all. It may safely be left to the Government to decide in what papers they will advertise for the future. The expressions of opinion given here to-night will, I take it, be considered by the Government. If the motion be put, I with some others shall certainly vote against it.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. F. Illingworth): I regret that hon. members should have given any advertisement to this peculiar class of newspaper. I think that the two nights' discussion on them has done more to promote their interests than anything else which possibly could have been done. I greatly regret that the member for York (Mr. Monger) and other members should deem it worth their while to perpetually advertise this kind of journalism.

MR. MONGER: Why do you advertise in it?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: The tendency of this discussion is simply to create matter for these papers to publish, and so to increase their notoriety. I do beg members to ask themselves calmly what they are doing. Have we come here to legislate at the dictation or direction of the people of the State? Is it part of the province of hon. members to tell the Government whether or not they are to put a shilling or five-shilling advertisement in a certain paper? Do hon. members consider that to be part of their vocation? I say, emphatically, I do not consider it so. If hon. members have no greater confidence in the Government than to suppose that we will accept the dictation of the House

as to how, when, and where we shall advertise, it is time that we were moved out of our seats—[MINISTERIAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear]—and that other hon. members capable of taking an independent stand, took our places.

MR. MONGER: That will be done in good time.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: The sooner the better, if that be the opinion. [MINISTERIAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] If it be the opinion of hon. members that the Government are not to be trusted with the business of inserting advertisements in the newspapers, I think it says very little for hon. members who have the power to put the Government out, that they do not exercise that power. [MINISTERIAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] I call attention to the fact that this House has now, notwithstanding the great pressure of business and the vast responsibilities that rest on us, spent two whole nights in advertising the very papers which have been condemned. I do hope the hon. member for York will see his way clear to withdraw the motion, and so let us get on with the proper business of the House.

MR. J. EWING (S.W. Mining District): The speech of the Premier, on which I certainly cannot congratulate the hon. gentleman, practically gives us to understand that it is the intention of the Government to refrain for the future from advertising in the publications referred to in this motion. Perhaps we should not attempt to dictate to the Government in a matter of this kind. I therefore think it would be well if the member for York were to withdraw the motion, which I may say is practically carried. I wish to protest, however, against the scandalous manner in which the member for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson) was treated to-night by the Premier. I came to this House, as has been said in another connection, with an open mind. [Interjections and laughter.] I came here untrammelled and unpledged; but I say unhesitatingly that I have not been treated in a manner in which a member representing a large and influential constituency should be treated.

MR. TAYLOR: The Government did not give you the railway.

MR. EWING: I challenge the Premier to say that I have been properly

treated; and I now inform the present Government that they may look on me for the future as a straight-out opponent.

THE PREMIER: How did I not treat you properly? Did I not let you come into my office and make complaints, although you had been to other Ministers and did not disclose the fact?

MR. EWING: Are you making a charge against me?

THE PREMIER: Oh, charge!

MR. EWING: I am quite satisfied in my own mind that I have not received from the Premier the consideration I deserve, or the consideration that I intend to demand.

MR. HOPKINS: I rise to a point of order. I desire to know whether the hon. member is in order.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member is not, at all events, addressing himself to the question before the House.

MR. EWING: I will endeavour to do so. In connection with this matter, without entering into it at any farther length, I desire to say in explanation of what I stated just now, that I feel—and I trust that every hon. member feels—that it is our duty to let no ill-feeling exist outside the doors of this Chamber on account of what may be said within its walls. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] I say unhesitatingly that such ill-feeling does exist; and I hope it will pass away. So far as I am concerned, it does not exist with me. No matter what political opinions I may hold, I shall ever be ready to extend the right hand of friendship to any member outside the doors of the Chamber. [THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.] I hope the hon. gentleman will do the same. [THE PREMIER: I will.] If I have done nothing else by rising, I have done some good by getting that promise from the Premier.

THE PREMIER: I shall be glad to shake you by both hands after this debate. [Laughter.]

HON. F. H. PIESSE (Williams): I do not think that anything too strong has been said to-night with regard to the class of literature under discussion.

THE SPEAKER: The member for the South-West Mining District has not concluded his speech.

HON. F. PIESSE: He had sat down and rose again.

MR. EWING: I sat down because I thought the leader of the Opposition rose to a point of order. Coming back to the subject matter of this debate, I say that the case made out by the member for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson) is one that should commend itself to the House; and I say unhesitatingly that if it come to a matter of voting, I shall vote for the motion. In New South Wales it has been the case in the past—though unfortunately it is not the case at present—that papers of this kind were not only refused advertisements by the Government, but were absolutely suppressed by the Government. I consider that papers of this kind should be suppressed.

MEMBER: What about John Norton?

MR. EWING: Mr. Norton unfortunately has not yet been suppressed; but his day will come. As public men we are prepared to submit to all sorts of criticism, and to bear whatever the papers may say about us. Perhaps the more they say about us to our disadvantage, the better it will be for us. I fear nothing of that kind. The debate, however, has taken a trend in the direction of the vilification of the private characters of men of high honour in this State by these newspapers. Only last night we were told—I am not prepared to say whether it is true or not—that the honour of a Judge of the Supreme Court was trampled in the dirt. If that be the case, the Government should in no way encourage these papers. I do trust they will withdraw their advertisements, and I think every right-thinking man should do the same, no matter what the consequences. I am prepared to suffer in the cause of justice. [MR. TAYLOR: So you ought.] I say it is only right that every member of the House should, so far as he can, express his opinion and not let these papers think we are afraid of any filth they can print about us. I am not afraid of it. I stand with other hon. members, I trust, well in the opinion of the people; and so long as we act straightforwardly and do our duty we need not be afraid.

HON. F. H. PIESSE (Williams): I do not think anything too strong has been said to-night with regard to the class of literature which has been published in these newspapers, and, in my opinion, the thanks of the country are

due to the member for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson) for the outspoken way in which he has dealt with this subject. I may say with regard to these papers that so far as I am concerned I do not fear anything they can say about me. The member for Kanowna (Mr. R. Hastie), when he met me recently in the precincts of the House, said, "I do not know what is going to happen. Your name ceases to appear in the last two issues of the *Sunday Times* and the *Sun*, which, I think, is quite an unusual thing." For years, ever since the existence of those papers, they have attacked me. I do not fear their attacks; I do not take any notice of them, because I never hesitate to be ready to be questioned on any point they have touched upon in their issues. With regard to advertisements, when I was Commissioner of Railways I declined to advertise in those papers. I have always been fearless in regard to advertising. Where I thought it necessary to advertise, I advertised; and in a measure I agree with what has been said by the member for Albany (Mr. Gardiner), that the medium of advertising is one the Government should consider. It is a question how far advertisements are to be made use of to reach the people for whom they are intended. Advertising, after all, is not a pleasure. It is not done for the pleasure of glorification, or any other purpose except that of disseminating information with regard to a particular subject, the object being to reach the people whom you intend to reach. Notwithstanding the fact that such papers as the *Sunday Times* and the *Sun* may have a large circulation, I considered they were not journals the Government at that time should patronise in any way by public advertisements.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: What did the Minister for Lands do?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: I have nothing to do with what the Minister for Lands did. I speak for myself, and I speak in a fearless way, because I have always decided upon my own responsibility to take the action I pleased with regard to advertising in these newspapers. At the same time there is a suggestion thrown out with regard to the general arrangement of advertising. I think that perhaps the advertising has not been carried out as it should have been, to

the best advantage of the country, and probably there should have been a change. I attempted to make that change some four years ago, and I think with satisfactory results for some little time, but ultimately it lapsed again into the same difficulty, that being, advertising in all parts of the country.

THE PREMIER: Is that when you gave the *Morning Herald* £4,000 a year?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: If I attempted to buy the support of the *Morning Herald*, I have not succeeded in doing it; but I have never attempted to do so. Even from the very day I came into office I never made any attempt whatever to buy the support of papers. I do not, as I know some public men have done, go so far as to say I do not read the newspapers and criticisms upon myself. I most studiously read them, because I think you can obtain probably from many matters which are referred to, something which may help you, and notwithstanding the fact that often they are unfair in their criticisms, still at the same time there may be something educative, and something also to assist you in arriving at a means of redressing a grievance, or to aid in some way in regard to administration, which would be satisfactory to the country. So, after all, there may be some good gained from it. At the same time, on the whole the criticisms of newspapers are from a political standpoint, and regarding political men; and notwithstanding the fact that they are sometimes severe—and severity is deserved probably at times—I think a public man should not be so thin-skinned as to take notice of every little thing that may be said about him in regard to his administration. If he does his duty to the country fairly and justly, that is all that can be expected of him; and I take it that every public man is desirous of doing that. But these papers have gone out of their way to be unduly insulting to public men in this country, and women also, as has been mentioned by the member for the Murchison. I think those who have made scandalous attacks such as have been made from time to time, by innuendo and also practical accusations against many an honourable name, should have had meted out to them long ago that punishment which no doubt was their

due. Allusion has been made to the criminal law. There have been attempts to reach those people by the criminal law, but up to the present persons have not succeeded in getting judgment against them. With regard to their personal property, you have only to take up the register of the bills of sales, and that publication which informs us as to business transactions, to find that the shares of these people are distributed amongst their wives and women friends and other people who are holding them nominally; and excepting the plant—some portions of it which may be got at—there is really no redress in the event of obtaining judgment against them for damages. I would like to say in regard to the question generally, from a broad-minded standpoint, I think that by the ventilation of this matter to-night much good has been done. We have had an opportunity of hearing to-night a speech in regard to this matter which I would not have missed for anything. I regret there has been occasion to do it, but no doubt it will do good. I think that any expression of opinion that may be made in regard to this matter condemning these people could not be too strong. As I said just now, there is this about it, there is a point that should not be lost sight of, and it is the question of directing a Government with regard to advertising; because, after all, we must not forget that we may change places, and if there is to be condemnation, it should be deserved, and probably will be deserved. But we should be careful as to the course we take. Of course, it is the province of a member on this side to condemn the actions of the Government and bring them to book if necessary; but we must look into the matter and see how far-reaching it is; that is to say, what is intended by this motion. Is it intended that the Government should not advertise in these papers? I think they should not do so; but for the House to say we should not do certain things sometimes is perhaps going a little too far. In regard to matters of this kind, I think that really the expression of opinion given here to-night should convince the Government that to continue the advertising after what has been said, and after what they know of two of the papers, would be in opposition to the general view of this

House; I do not say from this side only, but from the other side also—from a great many members of this House. It is not well and it is not wise to advertise in a paper which published such an article as has been referred to by the member for the Murchison in regard to the Duke, and which appeared about the time of his visit or shortly afterwards. These articles are most degrading. [A MEMBER: Before.] Before, was it? I may say with regard to this paper, that although it is thrown over my fence whenever anything appears about myself, I very rarely read it. There is nothing edifying in it or interesting. I do not want to read it. If they have anything very spicy for me, they throw it over my fence on Sunday mornings, and sometimes it comes into my house; oftener it does not. With regard to the article in one of these issues, last Sunday's, which the hon. member referred to, I did not read it. I saw the headline of it, but I did not read the paper. The photograph which is published of myself and which was evidently meant to perpetuate my memory, was doubtless put in from a lovable disposition on the part of the paper, with a view to enabling my friends to see what sort of a character I was. I may say that I needed an introduction to that photo. myself, and underneath appeared some words drawing attention to whom it was intended to represent. That is more amusing to me than otherwise. At the same time if they think they are going to hurt me by their doggerel, which is of course published about me, they have spent their time and wasted ink and paper for an object which they have not attained. They may have pleased themselves, and they have amused me, but not hurt me, and, as I said just now, I do not fear them. I think a very good result should be obtained from this discussion to-night. The Premier has not given a direct assurance that it is not the intention of the Government to advertise in this paper; but I take it that it is their intention not to advertise; and therefore if the member for York (Mr. Monger) is prepared to accept that assurance and withdraw his motion, perhaps the object may be attained. If the motion goes to a division, I shall vote with him. I repeat that I think probably much good has been accomplished to-night by the

motion. There should be an expression from the Government directly that they do not intend to farther advertise in the paper. There is nothing undignified in giving that assurance, because I believe that decision has been arrived at: there should be an end of the matter if we can get an assurance from the Government in that respect. I cannot say anything too strong against these papers. They can write me up till all is blue; I do not care how much they write me up; they can publish the whole paper about me; but I am not going to say that I would suppress the advertisements on that account. I say I would suppress the advertisements because it is a paper in which we should not advertise, it is a paper which is not worthy to receive the advertisements of this country, and the Government should discontinue its advertisements at any early date. Of course, as I said just now, it all depends on the action the member for York intends to take. If the matter goes to a division, I shall support the motion.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Kingsmill): I think I may claim to approach this question with an open mind. I do not think hon. members, because I use the phrase "open mind," which I believe has more or less of a copyright significance in this House, will be of opinion that I intend to attack the Premier from behind his back or from the position I occupy at this time. I use the expression because, in so far as the department over which I have the honour to preside is concerned, the motion brought forward by the member for York (Mr. Monger) has absolutely no significance for me. When I took charge of this department I found that this department was not in the habit of advertising in weekly papers; and though I have been approached on several occasions by weekly papers, I have always refused to give them any advertisements, and I have done so purely and solely because I thought that to give them these advertisements would be a bad business speculation.

MR. JACOBY: That is the point.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have claimed, and I think rightly, that sufficient publicity can be given to the advertisements that I wish to bring before

the public, by advertising in the daily papers of the metropolis; and it being my object not to increase but rather to decrease any possible cost of advertisements in the department, which I think is altogether out of proportion to the results obtained, instead of wishing to amplify my advertisements, I have striven my utmost to cut them down. But at the same time I do not recognise the right of the member for York to dictate to this Government in matters of administration, as he is now attempting to do—[MR. MONGER: Nothing of the sort!—] nor do I recognise the right of the leader of the Opposition to endeavour to extract—if I may use a vulgarism, to “bluff”—the Government out of an assurance. I do not recognise the right which either of those members has arrogated to himself; and for that reason it is my intention, if this motion goes to a division, to oppose it.

MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco): I am somewhat surprised at the amount of time this discussion has taken—[MEMBERS: Divide!—]—and I am surprised at the amount of heat it has caused; but as I am cool myself, there may be no harm if I say a few words on the subject. I am sorry this question is being looked at partly from the two sides of the House, as a question of Government *versus* Opposition. [MEMBER: Oh, no!] I would accept that assurance, but for what the member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse) has said; for he said that he disagreed with the policy of the motion because he recognised that it was interfering in a matter of administration, which should be left to the Government and he also said he intended to vote for the motion if it went to a division. It amounted to this, that if the hon member were leading the Government instead of leading the Opposition, he would resent a motion like this; but as he is leading the Opposition instead of the Government, he will support the motion.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: I would not give the opportunity for such a motion.

MR. DAGLISH: Then the hon. member admits it is a question of Government *versus* Opposition that is going to be determined by the vote to-night. This motion has produced a certain amount of good, because it has given us a knowledge of the number of members

in this House who disagree with the character of the literature provided by the Sunday papers, and who at the same time are diligent readers and patrons of those very papers. For instance, the member for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson), who tore a passion to tatters in so able a fashion, seemed not only to have read the *Sunday Times*, which he condemned so strongly, but had read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested so much of it that he was able to deliver a most eloquent sermon in regard to matters which that paper had published. I cannot understand the argument that those papers are degrading to other people, but that we members of this House can read them with perfect safety. The only thing we can assume is that those members who have spoken so eloquently about the Sunday papers have become demoralised by them. I am in a minority in this matter, because I do not read the Sunday papers as a rule, and I was not aware till to-night that they had published certain articles to which the member for the Murchison has so strongly alluded. I object to Sunday papers, not because of the contents which I happen not to have read, but because I think it is quite enough for the publication and the sale of newspapers on six days a week; and on that ground I do not support Sunday papers. Possibly I would support them if published on a Saturday night, so as not to compel news-agents to work on Sunday. I think Sunday should be a day of rest for news-vendors as well as for other workers in the State; and it is a shame that any class of people should be asked unnecessarily to work on a Sunday. But I am astonished that hon. members should tell us how strongly they disapprove of articles in those newspapers, and how regularly they devote their time to the study of them. I read that article in the last issue of the *Sunday Times* concerning the member for East Kimberley (Mr. F. Connor), who knows all about it; and although I did not read it with the same interest or pleasure as it afforded him, it did give me a certain amount of pleasure to read that article, and to hear also the comments of the hon. member on the subject. But we are not called on to give our opinions on the various newspapers. I might make scathing remarks about those newspapers

that published lengthy telegrams from Sydney, some time ago, about a certain divorce case that was before the courts there.

MEMBER: All the papers had telegrams about it.

MR. DAGLISH: The *West Australian* published very lengthy telegraphic reports on the subject. At the same time, we are not here as censors of the Press, and I think it is a pity these things should be entered into so much. It is to be regretted that as soon as certain newspapers are mentioned, some hon. members should fly into a passion. I would not like to suggest that the member for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson) was actuated by professional jealousy to-night — it would not be right to suggest such a thing—but those who do not know the hon. member might form that erroneous conclusion. This discussion, however it may result in the division, has had one very momentous effect, and that is that the member for the South-West Mining District (Mr. J. Ewing) has declared definite war against the Government. Surely, then, the time of the House is not being wasted; and farther than that, the member for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson) is in the proud and safe position of having a declared champion in the House, so that whatever fear the member for the Murchison might have felt with regard to criticisms that might be passed on him in the Press, the member for the South-West Mining District will defend him, for he has assured the House that he will protect and defend the member who has been treated in such a scandalous fashion by the Premier. The member for the Murchison may feel quite safe, his quakings may cease, and his mind be restored to its accustomed coolness and confidence. If this question be carried to a division, I hope members will object to being used for the purpose of recording a vote because of spite by certain hon. members on account of criticisms passed on them in certain papers. There is no doubt that if those papers had left certain hon. members alone this motion would not have been entered on. When the Duke was attacked, no member brought that matter before the House—[MEMBER: The House was not sitting then]—but when the member for York was attacked, the matter assumed very much larger and

more serious dimensions. I say the attention of this House was not called to it when the Duke was attacked; and I contend it is particularly absurd that this motion should have been brought forward now, and that a matter which had passed almost into ancient history should be brought forward.

MEMBER: The House was not sitting when the attack was made on the Duke.

MR. DAGLISH: No; but the House has been sitting for a fair number of weeks since, and it is only now that this matter is brought forward.

MR. NANSON: It was mentioned in the discussion on the Libel Bill.

MR. DAGLISH: I am aware of that, but there was a purpose to be served which one member recognised when he voted against the second reading of that Bill; and I hope the same member will to-night be able to cast as impartial a vote on this question as he did when the Libel Bill was before the House. If the matter is pressed to a division, I shall vote against the motion.

HON. G. THROSSELL (Northam): So far as my experience will allow me to judge, the Minister in charge of a department does not concern himself with the selection of newspapers in which the advertisements relating to his department may be published, unless his attention is called to it. I blame the Premier for the length of this debate to-night; for if he had treated the member for York with his usual tact, and had asked that the matter should be left in the hands of the Government, I think the mover and the House generally would have been satisfied, and the motion would have been withdrawn. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) has referred to advertisements for the Lands Department published in certain newspapers during a previous period. I confess there was a time, when the late lamented Mr. Vosper conducted the *Sunday Times*, that the paper was used to a small extent for advertising matters connected with the Lands Department. Personally I do not regret it, for whatever difference of opinion existed between me and the late member, he had my warmest admiration for many of his actions. The *Sunday Times* of to-day and the *Sunday Times* of the period when Mr. Vosper conducted it, are different things indeed. I can only say that had the Premier used

his usual tact and received the motion in a kindly spirit, giving a reasonable assurance to the House, the debate would have ended long ago. I should not have blamed Ministers one bit for what they have done, if that course had been taken. I trust that the debate will come to an end immediately, and that the Premier will see proper to make amends for any unnecessary heat he has introduced into this debate.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): Although I have been criticised in Sunday newspapers, I do not think any member of this House will say I have ever been a firm friend of either of those journals; and I do not think I should exhibit a friendly spirit towards them. I can indorse the remarks made by the Minister for Works (Hon. W. Kingsmill), in stating that at the present time no advertisement from my office is given to any of those papers; exactly on the same grounds as the Minister for Works stated—simply because we advertise in the daily Press, and see no necessity for advertising in any weekly issue. I want to refer to certain remarks made by the member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse), who told us in one breath that we should not pass such a motion, and then said the former Government had done nothing of this sort. But what about the columns of Government advertisements that used to appear in the *Sunday Times*?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: By the Works Department?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: No; by the Lands Department.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The former Minister for Lands has explained that.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I understand that advertisements which have been appearing lately have been simply a continuation of the old contracts.

MR. GEORGE: But you can reform.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: So far as I am concerned those papers have not received advertisements. But what shall I say about the insinuation thrown out here to-night, to the effect that Ministers have made use of those papers by getting reporters into their offices and allowing those reporters to go through the departmental records? I say it is a dirty insinuation. I now know some-

thing about the civil service; I know how many members of it have been appointed through political influence; and I know how all sorts of treacherous things can be done against the Government. It is only a fortnight since an article appeared against an officer of my department; and that article gave a lot of information which could not have reached the paper except through someone in the department. [MR. GEORGE: Quite so.] However, the information was easily traceable; and we had to get rid of a man in consequence.

MR. CONNOR: I wish you would find out who gave this information.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I have heard some despicable insinuations from the hon. member during the last few days; but I say it is a particularly dirty and low insinuation to impute to any Minister that he would throw open the records of his department to the gutter Press. We have an easy way of securing publicity for matters which we desire to make known. It only needs a request for papers to be laid on the table of the House. We have plenty of friends in the House, and we can get any papers we like moved for. If we wish to disclose anything disparaging to the late Government, we can do it without resorting to the dirty practices which the members for East Kimberley and the Murchison have laid to our charge. Insinuations have been cast against me—

MR. GEORGE: Have you been personally attacked?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The Minister for Lands was attacked to-night in his absence, and I think we should defend him.

MR. CONNOR: That is fair; that is right; hear, hear. But you cannot justify him all the same.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I trust that the member for York will withdraw his motion, which practically means an attempt at dictating to the Government in regard to the distribution of their advertisements. I do not think the motion, even if carried, will have much effect. Anyhow, if it be carried I shall be strongly inclined to give an advertisement to the papers in question very quickly. I think the hon. member may feel satisfied that some good will result from the discussion; but I do not think

the Government should be dictated to in the manner proposed by the motion.

MR. F. CONNOR (East Kimberley) : I did not intend to speak on the subject; but I see it is necessary that I should do so. I wish to reply to the gentleman who controls the Mines Department, with whom I have always been in accord on this subject until to-night. He has, however, just made a statement that if the motion be carried he will be very much inclined to give an advertisement to the papers mentioned in it. I hope the motion will be carried. It will go to a division, even if I have to call for the division myself. If the motion be carried, it will represent the opinion of the House; and under the circumstances it is not the place of any Minister of the Crown to threaten that if the motion be carried he will nevertheless advertise in the papers.

MINISTERIAL MEMBERS: Throw the Government out!

MR. CONNOR: It is not a question of throwing the Government out. We have a lot of rubbishy interjections—[Interjections and laughter]—from irresponsible babblers in this House—[“Hear, hear,” and laughter]—men whose proper vocation is agitating in the back blocks and dictating to “two-up” schools. [Interjections and laughter.] We do not want men of that kind here.

MR. TAYLOR: My character is clean, and that is more than can be said of the character of the member for East Kimberley. The papers do not attack me.

MR. CONNOR: I think such persons should not be allowed to take up the time of the House. I rose in good faith to reply to my friend the Minister for Mines. I wish to reply to him in a fair and manly way. I do not want these interjections—

MR. TAYLOR: You do not like them.

MR. CONNOR: I like interjections such as this, because they give me an opportunity of showing to the House the character of the man who makes them. I hope the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) will not interject without necessity. In case of necessity for interjection, the House will no doubt be glad to hear him. I certainly shall be glad to hear him, because his good nature overwhelms his judgment every time he speaks. But to return to the question, I am, of course, in absolute and entire

sympathy with the poor unfortunate papers attacked. They deserve all the consideration and sympathy that can possibly be shown them; but at the same time, I think they ought not to have all the coddling and pampering they have received from the present Government.

SEVERAL MEMBERS: And the late Government.

MR. TAYLOR: They do not want sympathy: they want only cash.

MR. CONNOR: The hon. member will interject. When he rises to speak he usually says a great deal with very little in it; but when he interjects, it is even worse. He takes up the time of the House to an extent which is positively unfair. I intend to support the motion, although I sympathise with the papers against which it is directed. I know that the mission of these papers is to bring all that is noble, and high, and elevating, and moral in literature before the people of this State. I know their efforts are directed to this end. I quoted some notable examples of their elevating style this evening. This is the kind of article the member for Mt. Margaret champions. I think it is better to stop advertising in papers such as these.

MR. TAYLOR: Why did you give them a chance against you?

MR. CONNOR: I will not support a Minister who rises to say that whether the House like it not he will advertise in certain papers. I shall call for a division on this motion, even if the mover does not do so.

MR. EWING (in explanation): It has been brought to my notice that in the few remarks I made on this motion, I said that I did not know whether the charges made by the *Sunday Times* against Mr. Justice Parker were true or not. I forgot for the moment the letter from that gentleman read here to-night; therefore my words did not convey my intention. I, of course, unreservedly accept the statement of his honour.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The statements were not published by the *Sunday Times*, but by the member for the Murray (Mr. George).

MR. GEORGE: Thank you!

MR. F. C. MONGER (in reply as mover): The Premier has said that he will not be dictated to by any member of the House, or by any section of the House.

I can assure the Premier that in bringing this motion forward I had no desire to attempt to dictate to him in any way whatever. Only a few days ago, in the course of conversation with the Premier, I mentioned to the hon. gentleman—

THE PREMIER: I was not referring to you, you know, when I talked about dictation.

MR. MONGER: It was only a few days ago, in the course of a conversation, that I mentioned to the Premier my intention of bringing this matter forward. He then said it would be advisable for me to do so in the form of a question rather than by motion. I asked the question, and the Premier replied that the matter of advertising was receiving consideration; and the result was a general titter of laughter all round the House. That reply induced me to bring forward this motion. No one regrets more than myself the dimensions which the debate has assumed. I did not for a moment think, when introducing the subject, that it would occupy the time of hon. members to this extent; but having placed my motion on the Notice Paper, it was my duty to advocate it with all my power, especially as there was practically a challenge from the papers to which I have referred, that I should carry the matter through as far as I could. [**SEVERAL MEMBERS:** Hear, hear.] Some few weeks ago, when Parliament first met and before the arrival of the Duke, I called the attention of the Premier at lunch one day to an article which had been copied from an Irish paper—[**MR. TAYLOR:** That is right]—and I asked the Premier whether he would answer a question without notice. The object of that question was to be, to ascertain whether the Premier proposed to mete out to the editor of that paper the treatment which was meted out to the editor of the Melbourne paper which republished the article. The Premier's reply to me was, "No; I will not give them what they are desirous of getting, a cheap advertisement."

THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.

MR. MONGER: In some way, the gist of the conversation which I had with the Premier and several other members leaked out beyond the precincts of the House, and found its way to the *Sunday Times*, with the result that the editor of that elevating paper—I can hardly find lan-

guage fitting to describe it—said that he held a rod in pickle for me if ever I dared attack him or his paper. I take up with the greatest freedom the challenge thrown out by the paper. I give the editor of that paper full liberty now and henceforward to vilify me in every possible way. If the people of Western Australia are content to accept the statements of a drunken assassin in preference to mine, I will let them do so.

MR. TAYLOR: You are wrong again.

MR. MONGER: I do not wish to weary the House any longer with the debate. As I said in introducing the motion, I have no desire to vent my spleen on some person or persons. With one exception, I do not know the people against whom my motion is directed. The member for Mt. Margaret said that my object was to gag the Press. I have no intention or desire to gag the Press. [**MR. GEORGE:** Hear, hear.] I say, let the Press enjoy perfect freedom, but do not let the Press besmirch any member of the House either in his political or private capacity. Let the Press refrain from adopting dirty tactics, and let it refrain from attacking people for whom we entertain feelings of kindness and respect.

MR. WALLACE: What about last night?

MR. MONGER: I am not going to refer to anything which took place last night; nor am I going to refer to any of the beautiful articles which appeared in the paper owned and run, as we are told, by the member for Boulder (Mr. Hopkins). I do not propose to refer to that paper.

MR. HOPKINS: Mr. Speaker, I personally decline to sit silent in this House and allow the member for York to utter concerning me a statement which is an infamous lie. I demand that it be withdrawn before he goes any farther.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member must himself first withdraw the words he has just used.

MR. HOPKINS: I regret the use of any improper words, and I withdraw them unreservedly. For all that, however, I say the member for York, if he were elsewhere, would not make the statement he has just made.

THE SPEAKER: The member for York ought to withdraw, after the denial of the member for Boulder.

MR. MONGER: At your dictation, sir, I withdraw the remark. I think we have laboured this question sufficiently to-night, and I can only express my deep regret that the debate should have taken an unpleasant turn on various occasions during the evening. I confirm the motion standing in my name.

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

Ayes	17
Noes	18

Majority against ... 1

AYES.

Mr. Butcher
Mr. Connor
Mr. Ewing
Mr. George
Mr. Hayward
Mr. Hicks
Mr. Higham
Mr. Jacoby
Mr. Monger
Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Flesse
Mr. Quinlan
Mr. Eason
Mr. Smith
Mr. Throssell
Mr. Yelverton (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Daglish
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Hassell
Mr. Hastie
Mr. Holmes
Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Illingworth
Mr. James
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Kingesmill
Mr. Leake
Mr. McDonald
Mr. Reid
Mr. Beside
Mr. Stone
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Wallace
Mr. Gardiner (Teller).

Question thus negatived

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and, on motion by the PREMIER, read a first time.

DIVORCE AND MATRIMONIAL CAUSES AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and, on motion by Mr. J. GARDINER, read a first time.

MOTION—TRADES HALL LAND GRANT, FREMANTLE.

MR. C. HARPER (Beverley) moved:

That this House refuses to sanction the proposed transfer [grant of land to Trades and Labour Council at Fremantle], and condemns the principle of land grants for purposes of that nature without the consent of Parliament.

He said: I called some little time ago for papers to be laid on the table of the House dealing with this matter, and I hope members who take an interest in the question have studied those papers, because the papers will afford them a good deal of interesting matter for reflection. To those members who have not read them, I will give a short sketch of the history of this, as far as it appears in those papers. It appears that in

September last, one Mr. Cook asked for a subsidy or for the old police court building to be granted to the Trades and Labour Council, for the purpose of building a hall. The then Premier, Sir John Forrest, replied that he could not advise that the old court-house at Fremantle should be alienated for this purpose, and that if a grant of money were asked for, Parliament would have to be consulted. Then they made an application for some other piece of land about Fremantle, and the Minister for Lands appears to have suggested that they might select some other site, and information was given to them of whatever sites there were in Fremantle belonging to the Government, from which to choose one, the Minister for Lands suggesting that if they could find a site suitable, the Government would grant it to them on a lease of 999 years, on condition of the building being put up within 12 months. They appear to have examined the sites and to have decided that they were not suitable. At any rate, they would not accept them, and they suggested as an alternative that a sum should be put on the Estimates to give them sufficient funds or some funds towards erecting a hall. Then it appears further communications took place between the Premier and these gentlemen, and finally the Surveyor General was sent down, and he was taken around Fremantle to examine various sites. He was feted there by those gentlemen, and they had a pleasant little afternoon, and paid one another compliments, the end being that the Surveyor General recommended that somewhere about half-an-acre of land on which the old Customs House stands should be granted for this purpose. The Collector of Customs had not been communicated with on the subject. He appears to have heard of it by accident, and immediately protested against it. This brought us somewhere up to about November last, and the matter again came before the then Premier, who replied to the communications finally: "The Ministers advise that the whole of the block be granted for 999 years." The whole block, I may say, is about three-quarters of an acre, facing the sea on one side, and there are two other frontages on the street. At that point they desired immediately to take possession. They wished to have

the ceremony of laying the foundation stone and proposed that the property should be transferred at once. It appears that when they arrived at that point it was found upon examination that there was a flaw in the title. The Government could not give a clear title, for a portion of the land stood in some other name in the Registrar's Office. Although the Government appear to have purchased it, it stood in the name of one James MacDermot, and therefore a clear title could not be given. At that period the then Premier left the Government and the present Premier came into office, and he appears to have promised that a Bill should be introduced into this House to give effect to it, without, I imagine, really knowing the circumstances.

THE PREMIER: To confirm the title.

MR. HARPER: Yes; to confirm the title. When we come to consider the object of this, and the promise given, we arrive at a rather startling position. If a body of men in Fremantle asked to be granted a site to build a hall, it is obvious that if the Government gave a grant in Fremantle, every other society of the same kind would have a perfect right, and it would be unjust not to give them the same in other parts of the State. When you realise that this three-quarters of an acre is in one of the most valuable situations in Fremantle, it appears to be a very serious thing as to whether the country is to be committed to giving away this land without consulting Parliament. Since this question has arisen, the present Ministry appear to have called on their land valuer to put a value on this land, which he has done, and his valuation as stated is that at a fair valuation the land is worth £6,500; for which sum I think it could be sold any day. The point I wish to raise is whether it is right that on a promise made—for what motive I know not, but it could not be with the idea of granting the same thing all over the country—whether, if the promise is not right, this Parliament should sanction it; because it must lead obviously to an immense amount of abuse. I was much pleased at hearing some words which fell from the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) in dealing with a subject of this kind (Perth Commonage), when he put the principle involved in more expressive words than I could use. The sense of

what he said, in dealing with the Commonage of Perth—and I think his remarks apply absolutely to this case—was that he wanted to see the principle affirmed that a promise made by the Government of the day would be an improper one if it meant the giving away of the public estate without the consent of Parliament; that if a promise had been made without the consent of Parliament a wrong had been done, and the hon. member argued that it opened the question as to whether a promise given under wrong circumstances should be fulfilled. Now, here is a case in which the public estate has been given away by a Minister, without consulting Parliament in the slightest; and it is given to a class. We often hear a great deal of objection to class legislation, and here is a class gift; therefore, if you establish the principle of giving an enormous area, or a valuable piece of land, to a class or a section of the community, without any right for other branches of the community to share in that benefit, a wrong has been done which this Parliament should carefully look into before sanctioning; and it depends upon this House, by passing a Bill to grant this, whether it can be done. I think it is desirable that this House should decide whether it is going to adhere to and support a wrong which has been done in this direction.

MR. DAGLISH: Why not make it apply to all societies, to agricultural societies as well as others? Have they not received similar grants?

MR. HARPER: Not to this extent.

MR. DAGLISH: They have received more than three-quarters of an acre.

MR. HARPER: But not of this value.

MR. DAGLISH: That is beside the question.

MR. HARPER: I do not think that touches the point at all. An agricultural society is one which any person in the community can join; whereas I think the hon. member (Mr. Daglish) will not say that I could be admitted as a member of this society to which certain land in Fremantle has been promised. This society is a class, and this is a class gift. If Parliament or a Minister give a grant to an agricultural society, or other such body, that society embraces all who like to join; but this body in Fremantle is a class association—[MR. DAGLISH: No]—and

if the principle is adopted that you may give away £6,500 in value to one class society, why should you not give £10,000 worth of land to a class society in Perth, and so on in all parts of the country? The hon. member must be with me in affirming that this is a wrong principle.

MR. DAGLISH: But if you apply it all round?

MR. HARPER: This is a question on which Parliament should express its opinion, as to whether the people who had this promise have acquired a right to due consideration under it—that is another point; but they knew very well that if this had to come before Parliament they would probably not have got it, and I assume that is the reason they urged that it should be done as promptly as possible. [MR. DAGLISH interjected a remark.] The hon. member says he does not know; but I know Parliament would not have sanctioned the granting of this site to any association in the country if Parliament had been consulted. I maintain this is a wrong principle, and is opening the door to an immense amount of abuse. Many members have come into this House pledged to do what they can to purify the administration of affairs, and see that the Government, whoever they may be, shall be as pure as possible in their administration; and to those members especially I say this case opens the door to an immense amount of abuse, and therefore Parliament should very carefully examine into it before this land is granted.

MR. W. J. GEORGE (Murray): I second the motion.

On motion by MR. HASTIE, debate adjourned.

EXCESS BILL (1900-1).

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

EARLY CLOSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

PRAWN FISHING ACT REPEAL BILL.

Read a third time, and passed.

FOURTH JUDGE APPOINTMENT BILL.

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

MOTION—WINERY AND STORAGE CELLARS, STATE AID.

Debate resumed from 11th September, on the motion by Mr. Harper: "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable, with the object of stimulating the wine industry in this State, that the Government should be authorised to give such assistance as may seem best, with the view of establishing a central winery and storage cellars."

MR. M. H. JACOBY (Swan): This question arose early last year, when the then Minister for Lands (Hon. G. Throssell) proposed to introduce a Bill which would give a guarantee to certain industries. However, it was discovered that the provisions of that Bill conflicted with those of the Commonwealth Act; and it had to be withdrawn. At that time, a syndicate of English capitalists made a certain offer to the Government in connection with the establishment of a central winery. Subsequently, the growers themselves held several conferences, resulting in their approaching the Minister with a request that if any guarantee of assistance to the industry were given, it should be granted through a co-operative association of the wine-growers themselves. Later on, the member for Beverley (Mr. Harper) carried a resolution in the House in favour of assistance being granted to co-operative wineries. Meetings of local wine-growers were held in various parts of the districts devoted to viticulture; and the negotiations resulted in the tentative formation of an association, which approached the Government with a request for assistance. After considerable discussion, the Minister for Lands offered to advance sufficient money to build a central winery in a convenient situation. I should like to say that the necessity for some assistance being granted to viticulture at the present time arises from the fact that we shall shortly be placed in open competition with the vignerons elsewhere; and unless some organisation can be established for the better control and management of wine-making in this State, we shall not be able to endure their competition. Viticulture would never have been established anywhere in Australia had not artificial aid been granted. The position of Western Australia to-day is the same as that of the Victorian and New South

Wales vigneron 50 years ago, when the industry was started in those States. Unless assistance had been given to the growers in those countries against European competition, the establishment of their industry would have been impossible. Artificial aid was necessary to secure the local markets. Planting bonuses were given in various colonies, export bonuses in Victoria, and in South Australia aid was given by the establishment of a *depôt* in London. As regards this State, the unfortunate position is that, under the provisions of the Commonwealth Act, any bonuses not in force before 1898 become invalid; and as there has been no bonus in force in this State, the Government are prevented from helping the industry directly by bonuses. The particular reason why the viticultural industry in this State requires assistance is owing to the fact that it cannot be successful unless conducted on a large scale. Not only must the individual plantations be large, but the whole industry must be considerably extended in order that wine may be produced at a rate sufficiently cheap to compete with the large and old-established concerns of the Eastern States. Moreover, unless the industry be large, the necessary skilled labour is difficult to get; the cooperages which large growers must have cannot be established unless there is a large demand for casks; and the other small industries contingent on the viticultural industry are not payable. These cooperages and other incidental industries are established in the other States; and the cost of bringing casks to this State practically means that we have to pay, for every gallon put into casks, 3d. more than is paid by our neighbours in the East. Not only is it necessary that the wine should be produced in large quantities, but it should be produced of a uniform quality, and unless wine is produced of a uniform quality it is impossible for us to hold out any hope of doing anything in connection with an export trade. It is impossible for the growers of this State to do anything at all without assistance or farther organisation so as to compete with the Eastern States, because they must produce cheaply, and in order to produce cheaply it is necessary that the production should be on a large scale. Wine requires to be grown in large

quantities and manufactured in large quantities to enable us to sell the product at a price sufficiently large to ensure a profit and compete in the world's market. I would point out that in order to permit of exportation being successfully opened up, a firm or corporation must be in a position to assure a London buyer that he can get at least 20,000 to 50,000 gallons of wine each year of uniform quality. There is not a grower in the State at present who could contract to supply more than 2,000 gallons of wine of a uniform quality in order to induce a London merchant to take up a line of Australian wine. The grower will have to assure the merchant that he will get a sufficient quantity of wine year after year of a uniform quality, so that when the merchant has gone to the expense of establishing a brand of Australian wine on the English market he may get year after year a sufficient quantity of wine of a similar quality to keep the brand before the market. The present position in Western Australia is that we have about 2,000 acres planted with vines, the bearing portion of which produce 100,000 gallons of wine. The extensions since 1897 have been comparatively rapid in this State because we have been planting. In 1897 we planted 360 acres, in 1898, 307 acres, and in 1899 294 acres, whereas last year, owing to the effect of the vote on federation, the return of the Registrar General shows that we only planted one acre of vines.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: I do not think that is correct.

MR. JACOBY: These are the figures.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: They are absolutely incorrect.

MR. JACOBY: I hope they are incorrect, but I know there has been practically no cultivation, but a small area planted with wine grapes has been uprooted and replanted with fruits and table grapes. If the figures are not correct, I do not know why the Registrar General should give us incorrect information, because we rely on him for our statistics; and if the figures are incorrect a notification should have been sent to members and to growers, letting them know a mistake had been made. But I presume planting was not to any great extent, for I do not know of any grower who planted. Nothing can speak more

eloquently than these figures, that the growers recognise that it is quite impossible in the present disorganised condition to compete with the Eastern States. Our total output from our bearing portion of vineyards is 100,000 gallons, and to show you how futile it is for us to attempt in the present disorganised state to initiate any competition with the Eastern States, I may say there are several firms in the Eastern States who produce in one year three or four times more wine than this State produces. I had an opportunity of looking over the magnificent cellars of Mr. Seppelt, of Angaston, a short time ago, and that gentleman is living in a district with 10,000 acres of vineyards surrounding him, with other growers in the district. Mr. Seppelt manufactures 300,000 gallons of wine per annum. It is impossible for us, each making a small quantity of wine, to compete with a grower of that size in the open market. Not only are we in practically the infant stage so far as the planting is concerned, but we do not yet possess the accumulated experience which would be of enormous benefit. In a new country the growers have to make many mistakes: they plant the wrong kinds, failures occur, and it takes years to find out the kind of vines to plant on the various soils, and the positions in which to plant. We are accumulating experience which will tell us the right vines to go in for. We have to compete with the people who have established themselves, who have all the experience, who have made their mistakes and have now reached a position to know what to do to attain the best results. We are still in our infant stage, and so far as that is concerned it is a considerable disadvantage to us, but one which cannot be helped. It is a disadvantage which has occurred in every country which has started viticulture. As it would have been impossible for Victoria and New South Wales to compete with France in the early stage of the industry in those States, so it is impossible for this country to compete with the Eastern States. The Eastern States are to us what France was to the Eastern States when the industry was started there. Nor would the other States have had any hope of starting the industry in Australia if they had had from the start to compete with France

without assistance. We have no hope, unless we are assisted to some extent, in establishing the industry against the Eastern States. We have about 300 planters in the State, who must extend their plantations, because it is absolutely necessary if this industry is to be carried on on a large scale, individuals must produce on a large scale. The viticulturists at the present time have plantations, which individually are small, yet if sufficient encouragement be given to them these people will extend. Anyone who wishes to make a success of viticulture cannot expect to do so unless he has 100 acres of vines; without that quantity he cannot make any headway. Viticulturists must be prepared to extend their vineyards; they must plant 100 acres each, which, without taking into account any fresh plantations, would give us, when the extensions are completed, about 300,000 acres of vines in this State. We have of late frequently seen references in the Press to the possibilities before Australia. I have here several quotations from writings of eminent experts dealing with the possibilities of Australia as a wine producer. No doubt most members will have seen these references, and therefore I do not propose to occupy the time of the House by reading them. Another reason why I think the House should carefully and favourably consider the proposal is, that federation must force many of the farmers who are not operating on a large scale, to adopt some more intense system of culture than the growing of hay or wheat. They must look to fruit growing or viticulture for the extension of their operations, in preference to continuing to grow hay and wheat. I feel sure we shall find that under federation it will not be profitable to farm small areas with hay or wheat, and that the attention of the owners of small farms will have to be turned in other directions. I think that if sufficient encouragement were given to the planters of vines, we might reasonably expect a large development in the direction of viticulture. We have an enormous extent of country which is adapted for viticulture alone. No other form of cultivation is likely to prove profitable in those areas. Though unsuitable for the growth of any other product, they are particularly and eminently suitable for the growth of

vines. These gravelly slopes and hill sides, of which we have millions of acres in this State, are eminently adapted for viticulture; and unless we utilise them for viticulture, I do not see how they can be or are likely to be utilised at all. A co-operative association of wine growers has been formed; and in this connection I desire to point out that any help which may be given by the Government will be given to the wine growers themselves—not to any syndicate, but to an association which consists purely of wine growers, and which any wine grower can join. The terms of the motion proposed by the member for Beverley practically leave the Government free to assist the industry in the way they may consider best, after making full inquiry. I desire to refer briefly to the report obtained from the Secretary of Agriculture, which report I must say was perused by me with considerable astonishment. Up to the present, or rather up to the issue of this report, the policy of the Agricultural Department has been to encourage the establishment of central wineries. I may quote from the handbook of Viticulture issued by the Department, a paragraph or two to show that something must have occurred to the officers of that Department to cause so sudden a reversal of policy with regard to this industry. In this handbook, issued a few years ago we find the following on pp. 234-5 :—

CENTRAL WINERIES.—Considering that we have here soil and climate that will react in a happy manner on the constituents of our choicer varieties of grapes, and that we can reckon on a good average annual yield of a must of high quality, there is no point I feel more strongly than that of the unmistakable advantage of centralisation of the manufacturing process of that grape must into a marketable wine. Through its agency the wine-makers would be brought into a united body for mutual benefit, the standard of Australian wine would be raised, and as a consequence the price would also be raised to a higher figure. The state of affairs that obtains at present in many vine-growing districts of Australia is nothing short of chaos and disorganisation.

That very accurately describes the state of affairs here at the present time.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: Is that the "Golden Gate" you are quoting from?

MR. JACOBY: No; the *Handbook on Horticulture and Viticulture*, issued

by the Department of Agriculture in this State. I had several quotations of a similar character to read to the House; but I think under the circumstances there is no need for me to do more than assure hon. members that I have frequently attended agricultural and viticultural conferences at which the same policy has been advocated with regard to this industry. Therefore I think we must look on this report with a good deal of suspicion. I could show many inaccuracies in it. Over-statements in some directions, and under-statements in other directions, are made in this report, for a particular purpose. I think hon. members will see that the change in opinion on the part of the Secretary for Agriculture may possibly be due to the fact that he is connected with a certain wine organisation here; or rather both he and Mr. Despeissis, the viticultural expert, are connected with a certain wine-growing concern here—the largest of its kind, I think, in the State, and the only concern of all approached in connection with the formation of the co-operative association that did not express sympathy or give some help. This was the only business that refused to have any concern with the formation of the co-operative association.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Did they not condemn it?

MR. JACOBY: They practically condemned a thing which they had been advocating for years past. I must ask hon. members, therefore, to make up their minds as to whether this is an honest report, and whether it has not been framed with the object of compelling small growers who, in the past, have sold their grapes to this large concern, to continue to do so, and thus prevent them from taking advantage of the facilities afforded by the co-operative association. The report erroneously states that the present cellar accommodation of Western Australia is 430,000 gallons. As a matter of fact, there is in this State only one cellar which is built as a cellar should be built. A large majority of the cellars here are, in point of fact, only sheds. For instance, the building used in the vineyard at Mundaring, with which I am connected, is practically only a shed. There are only one or two properly built and equipped cellars in the State.

Therefore, when the Secretary for Agriculture states that there is accommodation for 430,000 gallons of wine here, he is stating something which he must know to be absolutely far from the fact.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: Is he drawing on his imagination for his facts?

MR. JACOBY: Yes. He also suggests that the free distribution of rooted vines to growers would afford them some help; but I say that any grower can raise his own rooted vines at as cheap a rate as the Government are likely to raise them; so there is no advantage in the suggestion. At a cost of a few shillings per 1,000, vine growers can raise their own rooted vines, and there is no need whatever for Government assistance in that direction. The assistance would, in fact, be absolutely worthless. The Secretary in this report practically asks the Government to subsidise monopolies; whereas the wine growers ask the Government to assist a co-operative concern. That is the difference between the suggestion of the Secretary for Agriculture and the object which the co-operative association have in view. To sum up—I may say I have had to scamper through my notes in a most rapid manner, and perhaps have not done anything like justice to the figures, facts, and arguments that I hoped to place before the House—my contentions are: Practically the industry would never have been established in Australia without artificial aid of some sort, because Europe was too strong for the East; and so the East is too strong for us. They have bonuses in every direction in existence, which they can legally maintain by the Commonwealth Act; and we have no bonuses here. The industry must be on a large scale, otherwise we cannot compete with the East or develop an export market. There is an immense area of the public estate admirably suited for viticulture, and suited practically for nothing else. All progress in viticulture has been stopped, and, under the present disorganised state of the industry, cannot go on. It is impossible, as I would have pointed out if I had had time, for the growers, with the resources at their command, to establish a central winery, as it is a matter involving considerable expense. It would take from £40,000 to £50,000 to start a winery and properly equip it. It would be impossible for the growers

with their present resources to do that. The question I ask the House to decide is: Do the prospects of the future of this industry justify the country in spending some money in order to keep the industry in existence? There can be absolutely no doubt it would be impossible for more than one or two wine growers in this State to continue their industry under open competition with the East; and it is, I say, a question for the House whether the industry is of sufficient importance to the future of this country to justify some help being given by the Government. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco): Before the question is put, I would like to propose as an amendment that after the last word, "cellars," the following be added:

If upon inquiry it be proved that a reasonable living wage is paid to all workers employed in the industry.

MR. JACOBY: They get very good pay.

MR. DAGLISH: I do not see where harm can arise from putting those words in, if the workers are receiving good pay.

MR. JACOBY: They are the best-paid men in agriculture.

MR. DAGLISH: They may be, and still be comparatively poorly paid. I propose this amendment simply because I have seen in Victoria certain industries supported by Government assistance by means of protective duties, and I have seen some industries paying 25s. a week for 60 hours' work.

MEMBER: And their "board."

MR. DAGLISH: Twenty-five shillings without anything else. I object to that state of things. If you pass motions like this and get the Government to act on them, and make no stipulation with regard to pay, the effect frequently is that the industry does not get the benefit of the protection, because by the industry I take it we mean not only employers but employees as well.

MR. HARPER: I will accept the amendment.

MR. DAGLISH: I am quite satisfied with the assurance of my hon. friend that he will accept the amendment. I assure him it is not introduced with the object of in any way burking his motion. I propose it with the sole object that when assistance is given to an industry, it shall be given to every person engaged in that

industry, and I think it is a fair, reasonable, and legitimate proposal for any member to make.

Amendment put and passed, and the motion as amended agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

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

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 17th October, 1901.

Petition: Coupon Trading—Papers presented—Question: Railway Signalmen, Nine Hours—Question: Mining Exemption, Paddington Consols—Question: Railways Report, as to Delay—Question: Colonial Products, Exhibition in London—Question: Railway Rates, Kurrawang Syndicate, Loss—Motion: Coal Mines Bill Inquiry, Change of a Member—Annual Estimates, 1901-2: Debate on Financial Policy, second day (progress)—Trading Stamps Abolition and Discount Stamps Issue Bill, in Committee, reported—Mining Development Bill, second reading (resumed), in Committee, progress—Public Works Committee Bill, in Committee to Clause 17, progress—Carnarvon Tramway Bill, second reading, in Committee, reported—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PETITION—COUPON TRADING.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) presented a petition from residents of the State, praying for the introduction of a measure for the suppression of the coupon system of trading.

Petition received and read.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Papers (moved for by Mr. Hastie), Stock Imported over Northern border. He said: I desire to inform the House that Mr. Sommers, the Minister for Lands, tells me he did not give these papers to a certain journal for publication.

By the MINISTER FOR MINES: Return (moved for by Mr. Hastie), Terms of

Exemption and Protection granted on gold-mining leases on Eastern Goldfields.

By the COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: 1, Papers (moved for by Mr. Johnson), Accidents on Kalgoorlie-Boulder railway line; 2 (moved for by Mr. W. J. George), Minutes of evidence taken by, and papers presented to, the board appointed to inquire into charges preferred against Mr. G. W. Davies; 3, Papers (moved for by Mr. Rason), Fatal accident to Mr. Hoad, late Station-master at Lion Mill.

Ordered to lie on the table.

QUESTION—RAILWAY SIGNALMEN, NINE HOURS.

MR. QUINLAN asked the Commissioner of Railways, without notice, if he is aware that the Railway Department, since the motion in favour of eight hours per day relating to all branches of the Government service was passed in this House, has introduced nine hours in the case of signalmen employed on the railways, who previously worked eight hours.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS replied: No.

QUESTION—MINING EXEMPTION, PADDINGTON CONSOLS.

MR. R. HASTIE asked the Minister for Mines, without notice: Had he given further exemption to the Paddington Consols Gold Mine?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES replied: In answer to the hon. member, I would like to make a small explanation in regard to the application which has been made for exemption in relation to this property. The Standard Exploration Company have a large number of properties in this State, amongst them being the Paddington Consols lease. This company is in liquidation, and at the present time is protected by Regulation 152 of the Mines Act for non-compliance with the labour conditions. An application has been received for farther protection. I have sent the statement to the warden for his recommendation, and my reason for speaking to-night is that this application is a most important one. If the mineholder were to be refused protection at the present time it would, I am satisfied, do an enormous amount of injury with regard to investors in the old country.