

case for several days before it was discovered that he was deaf.

The Minister for Lands: You know that the jury list has to go before the court.

Mr. MANN: Yes; but that does not do away with the fact that a man unable to hear evidence may be put on the jury list. Again, men in ill health are empanelled, and such men may get on to a case that lasts several days, and be unable to apply themselves to the case.

The Minister for Railways: Jurors are always let off if they say that.

Mr. MANN: But, owing to ignorance, jurymen frequently do not ask to be excused. They take their seats in the jury box, and later it is found that owing to ill health or some other cause, they are incapable of acting as jurymen. Better provision should be made in that respect. I am with the Minister in his attempt to prevent persons from foreseeing which jurymen will be called. Persons so interested will say to themselves: "Last session it was the B's. This time it will be the C's. It will commence with Ca." Then they begin to wonder whether they know a man whose name commences with those two letters. And so on. Thus people are able to lay themselves out to ascertain which men will be on the jury.

Mr. Panton: You don't agree with the member for West Perth that there is no jury-squaring in Western Australia?

Mr. MANN: I do not.

Mr. Davy: There is very little.

Mr. MANN: There is not by any manner of means as much as there is in the Eastern States. In Melbourne and Sydney are to be found recognised jury-squarers, men who follow that profession, if profession it can be called. By paying sufficient money the assistance of jury-squarers can be secured. I may tell a little story of an episode well known among the legal fraternity of Melbourne. A man was indicted on a charge of unlawful wounding, and the evidence was thought to be very strong. The defending solicitor told the accused man's friends that he saw very little chance of his getting out of it, but that if there was a sympathetic jury there would be a chance of a verdict of common assault. The friends looked through the jury list and found someone they knew. He was interviewed, and was told, "Don't argue with the other jurymen, if you are on the jury, but stick out for a verdict of common assault." He agreed. The trial took place, and the Crown case was somewhat weak, and the accused's solicitor put up a brilliant defence. When the jury had retired, the foreman said, "I am going to take a vote in favour of acquittal." All the jurors were for an acquittal except one, and he stuck out for a verdict of common assault; and as the others could not shift him by argument or persuasion they eventually came round to his way of thinking and brought in a verdict accordingly. After the trial was over, the prisoner's

friends went to congratulate the juror, and they asked, "Did you have to put up much of a fight with them?" He replied, "Yes. All were in favour of acquittal, but I stuck out for common assault." Jury-squaring is not of frequent occurrence in this country, but I have known men who had friends in the jury list exhaust their challenges with a view to securing the presence of friends in the jury box. I remember a man being asked to show cause for his challenge. His reply was, "I don't like the look of that jurymen; I think he would be against me." That was not considered justifiable cause, and the juror was allowed to go into the box. I certainly agree with that part of the Bill which will prevent people from ascertaining what jurors will be summoned for certain sessions. It will, I consider, serve a good purpose. Another point I desire to make is that there should be a closer examination of jurors as to their ability to apply themselves to cases, in point of health, hearing, mentality, and so forth. I commend the Bill.

On motion by Mr. Marshall debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.25 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 3rd September, 1924.*

	PAGE
Questions: Agricultural machinery, hire purchase system	594
Mining: 1, Alunite; 2, Freight on ore and concentrates	595
Railway Workshops, apprentices	595
Belmont-Maida Vale-road	595
Bills: Private Savings Bank, 3A.	595
Inspection of Scaffolding, Report	595
Fremantle Municipal Tramways	595
Legal Practitioners Act Amendment, 2A.	600
Papers: Police Department, Inspector Johnston	595
Return: Collier Coal, Bunkering Trade, Fremantle and Albany	598
Motions: Perth Markets, to inquire by Select Committee	607
Police Department Administration, to inquire by Select Committee	619

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

### QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY, HIRE PURCHASE SYSTEM.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Will the Government go into the matter of the Act relating to the hire purchase of machinery? 2, Is he aware that a purchaser, after having almost paid for an implement, may then have it taken from him, and that the seller will thus get

the cash and the implement? 3, Will he endeavour to right the wrong?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: 1, This matter has been brought under the notice of the Government by deputation, and is receiving attention. 2, Yes; when the hire purchase agreement so provides. 3, See No. 1.

## QUESTION (2)—MINING.

### *Value of Alunite.*

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Has any finality been arrived at with the experiments made in connection with the treatment of alunite for the extraction of its potash contents? 2, Has any serious attempt been made to prove whether our alunite deposits are of commercial value?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Yes. The treatment for alunite by roasting was successful in rendering the potash contents soluble in water and therefore available as a fertiliser, but the cost of roasting was prohibitive of commercial production in competition with imported potash. Further experiments have shown that unroasted alunite mixed with lime yields its potash freely as a fertiliser, but imported potash of high grade is so cheap that it is preferred to bulky low grade alunite. 2, Yes. At present they cannot compete with imported potash though they might be commercially utilisable for manufacture of potash alum if seriously taken in hand by a competent manufacturer.

### *Freight on Ore and Concentrates.*

Mr. PANTON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that the freight on ore and concentrates, when back-loading, has been increased by 6d. a ton? 2, If so, does the department consider this a means of assisting the mining industry?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, It was found that certain rates for ore conflicted, creating an anomaly, inasmuch as rates to the mines sidings from Paddington, Broad Arrow, and Bardoc provided for a minimum of 4s. 6d. per ton, while the rates to Coolgardie (a longer distance) only called for a minimum of 4s. per ton. To remove this anomaly the latter minimum was raised to 4s. 6d. 2, Pending further inquiry the previous rates have been restored.

## QUESTION—RAILWAY WORKSHOPS, APPRENTICES.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What number of apprentices is it competent to employ in the Government railway workshops? 2, What is the number employed to-day? 3, What are the conditions that will ensure employment as an apprentice?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, 359 in Government railway workshops at West Midland and Midland Junction. 2, 216. 3, Age: Minimum 15 years; maximum 16 years. Education: Fitters' apprentices, not less than Seventh standard; apprentices for other trades, not less than Sixth standard. Application for positions are invited periodically through the Press. Applicants, who must be of good physique, are examined by Departmental Selection Board, on which the trades union concerned is represented. Candidates approved by the Board, before being employed, must pass an examination by the Railway Medical Officer; this examination includes vision and hearing tests.

## QUESTION—BELMONT-MAIDA VALE ROAD.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that settlers and others in the Maida Vale district provided portion of the funds for the construction of the Belmont-Maida Vale road? 2, What action is it proposed to take in respect to the closing of this road, a course that has been necessitated owing to the formation having been so seriously damaged by heavy motor traffic as to render the road impassable? 3, Will he take action to include this road in the list of those roads receiving funds from the motor traffic license pool?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. Land owners contributed £250 of the £2,640 expended. Of the balance, £500 came from traffic fees and £1,940 from State funds. 2, The road in question is under the control of the local authorities concerned, and it is for them to decide the appropriate action to be taken in the circumstances. 3, No. It is not intended to include such short roads as main roads upon which traffic fees can be expended.

## BILL—PRIVATE SAVINGS BANK.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

## BILL—INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING.

Report of Committee adopted.

## BILL—FREMANTLE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS.

Introduced by the Minister for Lands and read a first time.

## PAPERS—POLICE DEPARTMENT, INSPECTOR JOHNSTON.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [4.40]: I move—

*That all papers in connection with the disrating of Inspector Johnston, of the Police Force, be laid upon the Table of the House.*

Before proceeding with the motion I would like to know whether the Minister in charge of the Police Department intends to oppose it.

The Minister for Justice: No, I have the papers here.

Mr. TAYLOR: That being so, there is no justification or necessity for me to give reasons for the papers being tabled. It is necessary, however, that I should give some explanation as to why I have submitted the motion. I will do that as briefly as possible. I remember the regulations governing the Police Force many years ago, and I do not know whether those regulations hold good to-day. In those days, however, the disrating of a police officer was a form of punishment. I am anxious to ascertain what crime was committed by Inspector Johnston that necessitated that form of punishment, and whether any provision relating to it exists in the regulations to-day. Without even any knowledge of the Police Force, one would naturally realise that by being disrated, an officer could not be more degraded in the eyes of the staff. No fine or penalty could be so serious as the punishment of disrating. That is the reason for the motion. As the Minister is not opposing the tabling of the papers, I will reserve any further remarks I may desire to make until I have perused the papers. I will have a further opportunity during the discussion on the Estimates.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [4.42]: I have the papers, which I will place upon the Table of the House. While the mover of the motion said that Inspector Johnston had been disrated, the facts are that he was not disrated, but was regressed. That step was taken in the interests of the economical administration of the department. The reasons and the recommendations relating to the matter are recorded on the files, so that every hon. member will be able to ascertain what took place.

Mr. Taylor: I am pleased to hear the Minister make those remarks.

Question put and passed.

#### RETURN—COLLIE COAL.

*Bunkering Trade, Fremantle and Albany.*

Mr. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [4.43]: I move—

*That a return be laid upon the Table of the House showing: (1), The number of tons of Collie coal bunkered for the periods (a), 1st January to 30th June, 1922; (b), 1st January to 30th June, 1923; (c), 1st January to 30th June, 1924, at Fremantle and Albany respectively. (2), The quantity of Newcastle coal bunkered at Fremantle and Albany for the periods as indicated above.*

Some members may not understand exactly the reason for such a motion. The member for Albany (Mr. A. Wansbrough) recognises that nothing derogatory to the port of Albany is suggested. Rumours have been afloat in the Fremantle district for some considerable time that the explanation of the diminution of the bunkering trade there is to be found in a letter supposed to have been sent from Western Australia to London. It reads as follows:—

I do not think owners are generally aware of the very great advantage to their vessels by using the port of Albany as against Fremantle for their bunkering. The port charges at Albany are very light as compared with Fremantle. I have therefore had prepared a statement, copy of which I attach, setting out the charges made in those two ports, which shows tremendously in favour of Albany. You will observe that in the case of a 4/5,000 tons gross steamer the saving in these charges alone amounts to from £60 to £68 per ship, which in the case of a vessel taking only, say, 2/300 tons of bunkers, amounts to a saving of from 4s. 7d. to 6s. 11d. per ton bunkered. In the case of a vessel with a gross tonnage of 7/8,000 tons, the saving would amount to from £67 to £79 per ship, equal for a like quantity of bunkers to from 5s. 4d. to 7s. 9d. per ton bunkered. At Albany labourers are not on hourly payment, but work on a flat rate or contract system, and they receive the same pay any hour of the day or night, Sunday or holidays. Consequently owners are not mulcted in the difference between ordinary and overtime rates when working overtime or on Sundays and holidays. Also, labour at Albany does not work any prescribed hours, but can be called out any hour of the day or night, Sunday or holiday. The immense advantage to an owner of having his ship bunkered immediately on arrival at a port which can be entered any hour of the day or night, is obvious. In fact, the excellent despatch afforded to vessels at Albany has always been favourably commented upon by masters. There are at times vessels which deviate up to Bunbury or Fremantle to obtain supplies of other coal when, I am sure, if the owners were aware of the great saving in port dues at Albany, and taking into consideration the saving of deviation, the despatch they get at Albany, and also the relative values of the imported and local coals, which they understand is something like 33 per cent. in favour of the imported, they would not pass the port, of Albany. This is all set out in the statement, and I shall be glad if you will have it carefully disseminated amongst owners. I do not know that we want altogether to offend the susceptibilities of the port authorities of Fremantle, but I have no doubt that you can communicate all this information quietly to anyone interested.

It has been stated that in consequence of this letter having been forwarded to London, ships have been purposely deviated from Fremantle to Albany to bunker. It the return, when we get it, confirms this, it is a very serious thing for Fremantle and for Collie coal.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [4.50]:** I am not going to oppose the motion, but it is only fair that members should know what is at the bottom of this. It is not the coaling but an endeavour to force a reduction of harbour charges at Fremantle. The Government have been put to very great expense in maintaining the Fremantle harbour. In 1912 or 1913 it was found necessary to rebuild portion of the wharf, and to-day again that work has become necessary, and at immense cost owing to the use of cement piles instead of jarrah, as in the past. From the time the Fremantle Harbour Trust was constituted, the harbour has not shown any profit, the whole of the moneys paid into Consolidated Revenue from the harbour having had to be paid out again for repairs and reconstruction. In some years Consolidated Revenue benefits considerably from the harbour returns, but in other years Consolidated Revenue has to pay it all out again in meeting the cost of repairs and renewals. The predecessors of the last Labour Government agreed to pay £20,000 per annum out of the Suspense Account for the rebuilding of the Fremantle wharf. That sum had to be provided every year of the last Labour Government's regime. Consequently the general impression that the Fremantle harbour shows an immense profit is erroneous. This year the harbour shows a large profit, but when allowance is made for the rebuilding of the wharves, it will be found that the profit virtually disappears. Another thing underlying the letter quoted by the hon. member is Collie coal. Any ship bunkering Collie coal at Albany has to pay heavy rail-age charges. In all probability a ship wanting Collie coal would go, not to Albany, but to Bunbury. Consequently the authors of that letter were trying to mislead ship owners. Unquestionably a ship wanting Collie coal and having no cargo to discharge or pick up, will find Bunbury the best and cheapest port at which to obtain that commodity; for Bunbury is quite close to the coal mines, and therefore the railway freight on the coal is very much less than it would be to either Albany or Fremantle. So, as I say, the ship owners responsible for that letter are trying to deceive ship owners in the Old World. Some 12 months ago I made inquiries into the position respecting coal. Of late, coaling has fallen off considerably, not only at Fremantle, but also at Albany and Bunbury. The reason given to me is that when the ship owners could get in the Eastern States large freights at high rates to take overseas, it paid them better to fill up their bunkers as

far as was practicable with freight instead of with coal. However, now that the freight rates have been lowered, it pays them better when leaving Newcastle to fill their bunkers right up with coal. That is the reason why coaling in Western Australia has fallen off. I got this from a shipping man who knew something about the position. One or two persons are doing everything possible to force a reduction of the harbour charges of Fremantle. Now let us consider the position from another angle. Most of the coaling done at Albany is done out in the open roadstead. Any ship owner desiring to coal his vessel in Gage Roads would not require to come into Fremantle harbour at all. It is the effective appliances for quick despatch provided within the harbour that encourages ships to come into Fremantle harbour when coaling. Moreover, now that normal conditions are again prevailing, most of the ships coming to Fremantle come for cargo as well as coal, and consequently the coal they take is just so much as they require to carry them on to the next port. We all sincerely regret that not all steamers bunker Collie coal. But we must not lose sight of the fact that if a fire breaks out in a ship carrying Collie coal, it is advertised throughout the world; whereas if she carries coal from any other source we never hear a word in the Press about the fire.

**Mr. Teesdale:** Who does the advertising?

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** I cannot say, but I have known ship after ship with foreign coal in her bunkers take fire at Fremantle, and nothing whatever has been said about it in the Press; whereas if a ship afire has Collie coal in her bunkers, the news is broadcasted all over the world. Shipowners do not care much about advancing Western Australian interests by using Collie coal. Now that the combination has been arranged, the position may be a little different, because a number of the shipowners have interests in Collie. We all hope that the Collie bunkering trade will improve. Everything possible should be done to assist Collie coal by providing bunkering facilities at the lowest possible rate. Still, we have to be careful that a harbour like that at Fremantle, upon which huge sums of money have been expended, does not become a charge on Consolidated Revenue merely to suit a few wealthy shipowners overseas. We provide at Fremantle shipping facilities second to none in Australia, and the shipowners ought to pay for those facilities. I have no objection to the motion. If it be possible to get the information, we will endeavour to secure it.

**Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.58]:** Of course we can all understand that Albany harbour, being a natural one, is very cheap to work. May it always be so. But when we provide shipping facilities at immense cost, the ships using those facilities must bear their share of that cost. No one would like to see the harbour

charges at Fremantle reduced more than would the producers of the State. We all want the charges to be kept as low as possible. But, of course, when we have spent a huge sum in the construction of a harbour and have to provide immense further sums for maintenance and renewal, it is impossible to have low charges. What the ships do get at Fremantle and at Bunbury, what makes those ports attractive, is the quick despatch afforded by the appliances installed, and there is some compensation in comparison with many other ports. One knows from having visited the Eastern States how satisfactory are our ports compared with theirs. I do not know much about the quantity of coal being shipped at the moment, but with the Minister I regret that Collie coal for bunkering purposes is not required in large quantities at present. Necessarily, with the decline in trade, space that otherwise would be devoted to cargo is used for carrying coal from cheap coal ports. I remember travelling on a boat in which some of the bunkers were laden with tea; the boat carried only sufficient coal to take her to the next port. When the return is produced I hope it will be found that Collie coal is being used for bunkering purposes. I have often wondered whether it would not be possible to collect the best of the Collie coal and use it for bunkering. Coal is carried over the railways at a low rate, and it does not pay the department to haul it to a distant port. Bunbury has shipping facilities, and vessels requiring a reasonable quantity of coal should be encouraged to call there. Fremantle, of course, serves a great back country and coal is probably required in larger quantities there than at Albany. However, Albany has received a good advertisement out of this discussion, and the world will now know that there is a port called Albany where charges are light and despatch is quick. I congratulate the member for Albany (Mr. A. Wansbrough) on having secured this advertisement for his port. It does not matter much to the State whence the coal is shipped so long as it is taken from our coal mines. The mere transference of coal from a hulk into a ship at Albany means very little to the State. I am glad the Minister has agreed to the request for a return, and I hope he is wrong in suggesting that it has been moved in the interests of big shipping companies, who want the charges reduced.

The Minister for Lands: They wanted you to reduce them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister is always letting the cat out of the bag. Of course they wanted me to reduce charges. I do not know of any section of the community that did not want additional service from the Government and lower charges for it. I have no quarrel with the people who make such requests, but the Government have a duty to per-

form, and in the course of that duty they have found it necessary to increase the charges at Fremantle. In return for those charges, however, extremely good handling facilities are given, especially when we consider the small population of the State. It is really wonderful that a State with so few people can maintain three great ports. I hope the compilation of the return will be followed by an increase in the quantity of Collie coal shipped from Fremantle, Bunbury, and Albany.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH (Albany) [5.5]. I welcome the motion, and I must say it is one of the most glorious advertisements Albany has ever had. I think I could supply the member for Fremantle (Mr. Slesman) with the approximate quantities of coal shipped at Albany. It is true that ships have been calling for bunkering lately, but not to any considerable extent. They are ships that have called owing to distress, or have taken coal while loading cargo. During the 12 months 19 vessels have bunkered at Albany, so Fremantle has not much to complain about. Those vessels took Newcastle coal; no Collie coal at all was shipped. The Minister's statement regarding Newcastle coal is correct; ships are taking additional quantities of Newcastle coal on account of their not being fully loaded with cargo. I am glad that letter was read, because it contains information for which I have been looking for some time.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.7]: I am pleased that Albany has received such a good advertisement. In view of the desire expressed by the Leader of the Opposition and others that more Collie coal might be used, I suggest that the Government consider the advisableness of constructing a short line from Mumballup to link up with the Collie-Cardiff line. That would bring the port of Albany very much nearer to Collie.

Mr. Wilson: Collie-Cardiff would be of no use owing to the grades.

Mr. THOMSON: I know there is a difficulty on account of the grades, but it was suggested that the building of the short length of line I have indicated would permit of Collie coal being railed to Albany.

Mr. Wilson: The Commissioner of Railways has suggested a better route than that.

Mr. THOMSON: I believe the route I have mentioned would effect a saving of something like 100 miles. As the Government are sincere in their desire to encourage the use of Collie coal, I suggest that the members for Bunbury and Collie endeavour to urge the necessity for constructing this railway, which should lead to an increased output of coal for bunkering purposes.

Mr. WITHERS (Bunbury) [5.9]: I do not agree with the Leader of the Opposition when he says it does not matter whence the coal is shipped. Naturally the coal should be shipped from the cheapest port—

Mr. Thomson: That is Albany.

Mr. WITHERS: And I think Bunbury can compare favourably with other ports because the railway freight rates are not so high. This comparison, of course, is made not with Bunbury and Fremantle but with Albany and Fremantle. I do not know the exact figures for Bunbury and Albany—

Mr. Taylor: Bunbury is the natural port for Collie coal.

Mr. WITHERS: Yes. If there is any possibility of providing additional railways from Collie to give shorter routes to the seaboard, those railways should go to the port of Bunbury, which already is carrying on the bunkering trade. When the Wilga coalfields are developed, they will be much nearer to Albany than are the Collie fields. Then, perhaps, Albany may be able to advance a better claim to the bunkering trade. We realise that ships do not call at Bunbury for bunkering only; usually they call because they are in need of coal to carry them to their next port. Collie coal has been well advertised in connection with the fires that have occurred, but it has been said that on two or three occasions the fires were started purposely, because Collie coal required a little more shovelling by the firemen than did the coal from overseas. I know that boats trading from Bunbury to South Africa have bunkered Collie coal and have found it satisfactory. If the bunkering business were established at Albany, I do not think ships would call there solely for bunkering. If Bunbury were given improved facilities, it would command the bulk of the bunkering trade.

Mr. WILSON (Collie) [5.12]: What affects the Collie bunkering trade is the cost of transport over the railways. We produce best coal at a cost of 17s. to 18s. to the buyer, but to take it to Fremantle costs about 14s. per ton.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Because it costs so much at Collie.

Mr. WILSON: Talk sense! It costs nearly as much to carry it over the railways as to produce it. Just imagine what farmers would say if the railways charged as much for carrying a bushel of wheat as is cost to grow it! What would be said if the same applied to a load of sleepers? In other States the cost of transport on coal is not one-half of what it is here. It is the cost of transport over the railways that is killing the bunkering trade. We had a freight rate of a halfpenny per ton per mile—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: At that time the coal was 9s. a ton.

Mr. WILSON: No, it was 11s.

Mr. George: In my time it was 8s. 9d.

Mr. WILSON: And the hon. member wanted it for 7s. 9d. and threatened that if he did not get it for that he would not take it and would stop the mines at Collie.

Mr. George: I did not.

Mr. WILSON: I will tell the House what the hon. member did.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You cannot under this motion.

Mr. WILSON: The hon. member put the pistol to the coal companies' heads and said they could take the 7s. 9d. per ton or leave it. The men were working only two or three days a week at 10s. per day. That was in 1905 and the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) scandalised Mr. Frank Wilson in those days.

Mr. George: I did not.

Mr. WILSON: You did.

Mr. George: That is incorrect and I demand its withdrawal.

Mr. WILSON: I saw a letter to that effect. I know it is correct.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member objects to the statement, and says it is incorrect. The member for Collie must, therefore, withdraw it.

Mr. WILSON: I am not telling a lie, but I will withdraw it.

Mr. George: You are mistaken, that is all.

Mr. WILSON: I am not mistaken.

Mr. George: You are.

Mr. WILSON: I can bring the hon. member evidence of what I say, and I will do it yet. I hope the Government will do their best to disabuse the minds of people of the impression that we have only third or fourth-class coal in this State. A letter was sent to the Old Country setting out that the value of our coal was about two-thirds of the value of Newcastle coal. That is not true. Even if it were true, it is up to the Government to assist the industry as much as possible instead of still further embarrassing it by the railway freights that are imposed upon it. In Victoria the Government used to charge less than 1½d. a ton for coal that came from the Wonthaggi mine.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That was years ago. The position is different to-day.

Mr. WILSON: The wages of the coal miner have not increased 200 per cent. since those days. We are now paying about 1¼d. per mile for the transport of our coal over the railways, which works out at about 14s. a ton landed at Fremantle. Then the coal has to be put on board the ship. Collie coal fetches merely between 17s. 9d. and 19s. per ton at the pit's mouth. If the transport charges are kept up to the present figures, Collie coal must of necessity lose business in the bunkering trade. It also has another competitor in the shape of oil driven

vessels. The industry will certainly not gain ground by the disabilities placed upon Collie coal being stressed. Both Albany and Fremantle are each entitled to their natural advantages. If it costs £2 per ton to get Collie coal in Albany, as against £2 5s. in the case of imported coal, we may be sure that the shipping man will use the £2 5s. coal. The Minister might take into consideration the question of reducing the cost of transport over our railways, so that Collie coal may be given a chance of coming into its own. The loss of Collie coal in the bunkering trade represents a clear 100,000 tons per annum for the past three years. This means that a good many of the miners have to find other employment, and lumpers also get less work.

Mr. Thomson: Has it gone back to that extent?

Mr. WILSON: Yes. As I said it means the loss of a great deal of money in wages for those men. If we can get that 100,000 tons back we shall be doing some good for the industry. I support the motion.

Mr. SLEEMAN (Fremantle—in reply) [5.20]: One would think from the tone of the debate that I had been nobbled by the big shipping companies. Of course I am new at this game, and when I have been here for a few years—that is, if I am permitted to remain here—I shall no doubt be used to this kind of thing. I am surprised that the Minister should tell the House it ought to know what is at the bottom of it.

Mr. Taylor: They do not like it.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Collie coal industry and the port of Fremantle are at stake. While I am in this House and can do anything for the betterment of the industry and the port, I can assure members that my voice will be heard in that direction. If I find after the figures have been laid on the Table that the port charges at Fremantle are acting detrimentally to that port, I shall fight for a reduction. There is no ulterior motive on my part other than to serve the interests of the electorate I represent, and of our coal industry.

Mr. Taylor: You should be careful when you talk of fight on that side of the House.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Minister and I understand each other. He asked what was the use of boats going to Albany for Collie coal. The people of Fremantle have not raised that point, but they do claim that boats are going there and taking Newcastle coal and passing Fremantle by. I do not believe many of the statements that have been made, and that is why I am asking for this return. I told the conference in Fremantle, in unmistakable terms, that, in my opinion, because freights were scarce steamers were bringing coal from the Eastern States and overseas and passing Fremantle. If the facts are as stated, and the letter that has been referred to as having

been sent to the Old Country is acting detrimentally to Fremantle, the House will hear me again on the subject.

Question put and passed.

## BILL—LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

Mr. HUGHES (East Perth) [5.25] in moving the second reading said: Last session the House agreed unanimously that the method by which people were at present enabled to enter the different professions was not all that it might be. We decided that a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into the question of arbitration, and that of persons articulated in the various professions. Some of our professional laws have not been touched for many years. The time is now ripe for an investigation to be made into these laws with the object of bringing to light knowledge that will be useful to the public. Unfortunately the Commission was not continued, so that we have not the advantage of the searching examination into this question that would doubtless have been made by it. It is difficult to make an exhaustive investigation into the conditions applying to the professions in the other States without first visiting those States. This Bill has necessitated a good deal of inquiry on my part into the laws and regulations existing in the other States. It is but little use endeavouring to obtain by post the information required. One would need to visit the Eastern States and spend a considerable time there investigating the conditions governing the professions. I hope the Government will see their way to reopen that Commission, insofar as it applies to the professions. In the case of industrial arbitration, we now have the power to put an amended law through this House.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You cannot put any sort of Bill through this House.

Mr. HUGHES: I do not know.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You have the independent members to deal with.

Mr. HUGHES: Of course the Government can call on the member for Northam (Hon. Sir James Mitchell) whenever they desire, so that they may have the benefit of his vote to pull them out of a hole. He promised they would have his whole-hearted support, and I hope he is not going back on his word.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you want this Bill to go through?

Mr. HUGHES: Last session I might have been inclined, on an occasion like this, to cultivate the vote of the hon. member, but to-day I am independent of it.

Mr. Teesdale: You can be generous at any rate.

Mr. HUGHES: I am generous. I hope the member for Northam will not go back on his promise.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I will support the Government to the full extent of any promise that I have made, but that does not cover this Bill of yours.

Mr. HUGHES: In the laws governing legal practitioners in this State there are many anomalies. They work out in such a way that certain people are favoured, whilst others are not. In the first place there is no chair of law at our University. At the Eastern States universities there is in every case a chair of law, at which any citizen can attend for the purpose of studying the subject; and if he passes the examination he can get a diploma and put it in his pocket and walk away.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A lawyer generally puts fees in his pocket.

Mr. HUGHES: In the Eastern States one can study law without any intention of practising law. Many people here consider that we should have a chair of law at the Western Australian University, and it has been stated that such a chair could be established at a cost of £1,600 for the first year and £1,300 a year afterwards. In view of the condition of the finances I do not think such an extension of the University will be regarded as warranted. However, we ought to afford our people the facilities, as far as possible, which they would have if our University included a chair of law. Under the Legal Practitioners Act the Barristers' Board set examinations, but they set them only for persons who are articled to members of the legal profession. A citizen of this State who wished to take the intermediate law examination merely for his own benefit, without intending to practise law, could not be examined here, because our Barristers' Board refuses to examine persons other than articled clerks and managing clerks. I consider that any person who wishes to do so should be enabled to study law and, if he passes the examination, obtain a certificate of competency. The first thing this Bill proposes is that the Barristers' Board shall become an examining body, to supply, as far as may be, the want of a chair of law at our University. I do not know what objection there can be to that proposal. The Bill requires the Barristers' Board to examine any person who presents himself for their law examinations, provided he pays the entrance fee. Entrance fees are charged to cover the expense of the examination, and thus the Barristers' Board, or rather the examiners appointed by them, will be paid for the work which this measure proposes to require them to do. Further, if a candidate succeeds in passing the examination, the board will be obliged to give him a certificate to that effect; and he will be able to put the certificate in his pocket and do what he likes with it. The objection may be raised that the adoption

of this proposal will throw more work on the Barristers' Board than the original Act intends. However, the work will be paid for, as I have stated; and this disposes of that objection. Making the Barristers' Board an examining body does not mean that the moment one passes the examination, one will be allowed to practise law, or go into the courts and plead. One would still have to be admitted by the Supreme Court, and there are certain conditions attaching to such admission after one has passed the law examinations. Two other vital alterations are proposed by the Bill. One is an alteration in the present condition that before being articled a candidate for law must have passed a preliminary examination, with regard to which he is allowed the first two years of his articles to pass it in. There is also a provision that people over 30 years of age, having passed the law examinations, shall neither be obliged to serve articles nor to pass any preliminary examination. A good deal of objection has been raised in some quarters to that proposal; but, after all, it is not a new idea. Indeed, the Bill contains nothing original. Everything that the measure proposes is to be found in the statutes of the Eastern States, or in the regulations under one or other of those enactments. As to the preliminary examination, it is specified by regulations made under the Legal Practitioners Act, which was passed in 1893, and it includes the following subjects, which, hon. members will note, constitute an elementary examination: arithmetic and algebra up to and including quadratic equations; English grammar, analysis, and composition; Euclid, the first two books; outlines of English history from the Norman Conquest to the present time; Latin—candidates to be prepared to be examined in Cicero's "De Amicitia" or Virgil's "Aeneid," Book VI., or such other works as the board may from time to time direct. It will readily be perceived that the examination is not up to the standard of the junior examination, except as regards the Latin section. Since 1916 the standard of the preliminary examination has been raised considerably. If in the interests of the practice of the law it is necessary to have a much higher standard, it would naturally follow that those lawyers who became admitted as the result of passing the old preliminary examination are inferior lawyers. But we know that that is not so. If one wants a lawyer, one does not inquire whether he knows the first two books of Euclid, or can work out a quadratic equation: one inquires whether he has a good knowledge of the law and can plead the law. I do not think it would help a lawyer much if he were able to work out problems in the binomial theorem or by the differential calculus, so long as he could not give good,



sound advice on questions of law. In the year 1916, however, the standard of the preliminary examination was raised from what I have specified to the matriculation examination prescribed by the University of Western Australia for candidates entering upon the University course for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, with Latin and history as compulsory subjects. I do not think the experience of the Barristers' Board was such as to lead them to believe that the lawyers who had come in under the easy preliminary examination were not practising their profession satisfactorily or were not successful lawyers, and that therefore it was necessary to raise the standard of the preliminary examination. That was not by any means the object aimed at. Upon the advent of a Labour Government in 1911, education in this State was considerably liberalised.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, it was not.

Mr. HUGHES: I can inform the hon. member that I had the pleasure of attending the Boulder Technical School on its opening night as one of the students, but that I had to pay 15s. per quarter for every subject I took. In those days 15s. meant a little more than a week's wages to me. With the advent of Labour into power the fees were abolished, and the consequence was that higher education was made available even to the poorest sections of the community. This meant that the preliminary examination became no bar whatever to entering the legal profession. If the preliminary examination had been allowed to remain as it was, practically any boy who had left school would have been able to pass it. Accordingly we find the standard of the examination raised considerably, so that only the boy who could pass the senior examination would be admitted to articles for the law. I suggest that the object in raising the standard was to put another brick wall around the legal profession, and to keep out, as far as possible, the common tribe. Although the lawyers of to-day may be generally superior to the lawyers of yesterday, some very able lawyers were admitted under the inferior standard of examination. In 1916 the Barristers' Board issued a regulation to the effect that the University course for matriculation with a view to the degree of Bachelor of Arts should be the standard of the preliminary examination, Latin and history to be included. Although that regulation may have been obeyed, it was in part *ultra vires*, and no one need have taken any notice of it. Latin is made compulsory, but the Act of 1919 provides—

No person who has matriculated or graduated at or passed the matriculation examination of any University of

Great Britain or Ireland or the Continent of Australia or the Dominion of New Zealand shall be required to pass the preliminary examination required by the rules framed under the principal Act to be passed by articulated clerks.

So that any person who has passed his matriculation examination cannot be required to pass any further preliminary. That knocks out completely the contention that Latin is an essential subject, because the preliminary examination for the University of Western Australia is English and another language, and two other subjects. Any candidate may therefore pass in English and French, or English and Greek, or English and German, and two other subjects, not including Latin, and succeed in getting his matriculation certificate. The Act, of course, is superior to a regulation, and the regulation which endeavoured to provide that Latin was an essential subject was, of course, *ultra vires*. I am surprised to find the Barristers' Board, composed of people who are supposed to be amongst the best trained in the State, passing a regulation that was *ultra vires*.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are attacking the Barristers' Board now.

Mr. HUGHES: No; I am only expressing surprise at the board working under such a regulation.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I am not surprised at anything lawyers do; are you?

Mr. HUGHES: No, nor even what the hon. member would do.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I could never surprise you.

Mr. HUGHES: Whilst it is contended that Latin is an essential subject, we find that under the provisions of our own law, a candidate can be admitted to articles without passing in Latin at all. For some reason that I am not aware of the Barristers' Board in 1919 again amended their preliminary and provided that the examination should be in English, Latin, mathematics, history, and one other subject selected from the following list:—Greek, French, German, geography, applied mathematics, chemistry, biology, geology, and agricultural science. Of these, the candidate had to pass in three subjects, one of which had to be English and another language. The board to-day compel any candidate to pass in English and another language, but whether he passes or not, he must at least pass in Latin and the junior standard. With regard to the preliminary examination, its object appears to be to satisfy the board that before anyone is admitted to study law, he should have sufficient general education to enable him to undertake the course. There must be an examination in order to learn something of the ability of a candidate, but I say advisedly—and many people who occupy high positions in connection with our educational system are of the same opinion—that a school leaving certificate cannot be depended upon as proof of the ability and intelligence of the person holding it. In order

to ascertain just what degree of reliance can be placed on the certificate it is necessary to learn the circumstances in which it was obtained. We know that many youths in the community are fortunate enough to have parents who are in a position to keep them at school until they are 25 or 26 years of age. There are also boys who go to school until they are 14, and then are transferred to a college and remain there until they are 21 or 22, and who are able to pass only the senior examination. To me that certificate is no guarantee of intelligence. Indeed, it is proof to me that the individual is a "dud." It is a better achievement for the lad who leaves school at 13 or 14 and starts to earn his own living, and in his spare time pursues a course of study without the assistance of highly trained teachers, and who, in this way, secures his junior certificate. Imagine a young man having nothing to do except to remain at school until he is 20 or 21 years of age, and is able only then to get his leaving certificate, and then coming along and declaring, "I have my leaving certificate; it is proof that I am a person of superior intelligence." As I said before, we should ascertain the circumstances in which such a certificate was obtained. In Queensland we find that there is still the retention of the distinction between a solicitor and a barrister. We find that for barristers there is prescribed a preliminary examination, and where a person desires to be entered as a student of law, he can go before the authorities, and if he satisfies them that he has sufficient general knowledge to undertake the course, they can exempt him from the necessity for passing the preliminary. The same thing applies with regard to the application for articles under a solicitor. The board there has the right to say that a man, although he has not had the privilege of attending a college and has not passed the prescribed examinations, if he has had a sufficiently general education that will enable him to undertake the required course of study, the preliminary can be dispensed with. It is there recognised that the preliminary is not an essential part of the qualification. In Queensland also they prescribe in a much inferior form—perhaps not inferior, but say an easier preliminary examination—than is the case in the other States. We prescribe that the preliminary examination shall be of the matriculation standard—for solicitors, not for barristers. In Queensland they prescribe the following preliminary exam which, it will be admitted, is of an elementary nature. Here it is: 1. (a) Writing from dictation; (b) writing a short English composition; 2. Arithmetic. 3. Algebra—to quadratic equations involving one unknown quantity. 4. Geometry—Euclid, books i., ii., and iii., and easy deduction; 5. geography; 6. history of England; 7. Latin (a) grammar (elementary) and prose composition; (b) translation from author; 8. one of the following languages: Greek, French or German, to be selected by

the candidate. It will thus be seen that Queensland is satisfied to have an elementary examination for entrance to the profession. It will not be contended that the legal profession in Queensland is in any way inferior to that of any other State. In Victoria they are fortunate in having a university which provides for the preliminary to the university course in law. In New South Wales they again recognise the principle that it is not essential to pass a preliminary examination where the candidate has an equivalent knowledge in another direction which will permit him to undertake the course. They go further in New South Wales; they recognise what we should recognise here; they dispense with the preliminary in certain circumstances. They have added this new subclause to their rules:—

Officers in the public service who have passed the examinations prescribed under the Public Service Act, 1902, by Regulations 105c, 116, 119, 127a, and 127b, or equivalent examinations under that Act: provided (I.) that such officers have been in the public service for 15 years and are over 30 years of age, and (II.) that in the case of officers who were in the public service on the 1st day of September, 1919, it shall not be necessary for them to have passed the examination prescribed by Regulation 105c.

There they dispense with the preliminary examination. In Western Australia before a person can be articled he must pass the preliminary examination. One of the clauses of the Bill I am introducing is designed, not to abolish the preliminary examination, nor to in any way reduce the standard of the examination prescribed by the board. Our system of education enables a boy on leaving the James-street school, where he has passed his junior examination, to go to the Modern School. In order to attend that institution he must go there in the day time. Moreover, the youth must have parents who can afford to keep him at school until he is about 18 years of age. Having passed the junior examination at about 16 years of age while attending the State school, the lad is able to go to the Modern School for at least two years. It has to be remembered that the University authorities will not allow a lad to sit for the senior examination until two years after he has passed the junior examination. Even though a boy may be a genius, and quite capable of passing the senior examination a month or so after the junior, he is not allowed to do so. I make no complaint on that score, because I know that good arguments can be advanced in support of the lapse of two years. The contention is that if a boy were allowed to take the higher examination earlier, he would simply cram up for the test and would not undergo a proper course of study. While that system may adversely affect youths in special instances, I think the general principle is sound enough. A lad, however, cannot be

articled to the law until he has passed the senior examination. This means that his parents have to keep him at the Modern School until he is 18 years of age, and in many instances, parents cannot do it. Last year 43 pupils passed the junior examination from the James-street school. All were eligible to go to the Modern School for the succeeding two years. In October last, however, only 20 of those who passed were able to continue their studies. The parents of the remaining 23 were unable to keep them for two years without earning anything for themselves, with the result that, should any of those boys desire to take up the law, the legal profession, under existing circumstances, is closed to them. It is not proposed to abolish the preliminary examination where such boys are concerned. No person who complies with the existing conditions under which he has to pass the various law examinations, and is required to be articled for a period of five years, should be deprived of admission to the bar. The Barristers' Board are not asked to give away one iota of their conditions regarding examinations, nor would I suggest any reduction in the standard of those examinations. The amendment sought will mean that a boy having passed the junior examination, may be articled to a legal practitioner, but before passing the intermediate law examination he must pass the senior examination at the University. This will give those boys whose parents are too poor to send them to the Modern School for two years, an opportunity to become articled to a solicitor, and all necessary safeguards required by the Barristers' Board will be observed. The only relief to those boys will be that the preliminary examination will not be a condition precedent to the articles. I do not know what objection there can be to such an amendment. It will not mean the lowering of the standard of the profession, because the great test is the final examination in law; that is the test that takes the youth to the bar and it is his knowledge and ability to pass that test that brings him work in the future. It may be argued that the task of sitting for the various examinations within the five-year period would be too much for such youths. The answer to that contention is simple. Until the candidate passes his final law examination he cannot be admitted to the bar and should he fail to pass it at the end of five years, he has to wait for another year. If, however, the candidate has sufficient knowledge, industry and ability to pass the test, I cannot see what objection there should be to giving him the opportunity to do so. I am sorry that our new parliamentary Lord Halsbury is not in his seat as representative of the West Perth electors at the present moment, to give us his views, but I do not think it is asking too much of the Barristers' Board, when we propose to give those unfortunate boys who have not been able to attend college, a chance to enter the legal

profession. The Bill goes slightly further than that, however, with reference to people over 30 years of age. The Bill contains an exemption that will wipe out the necessity for the preliminary examination and articles. The object of the preliminary examination is to ascertain whether a candidate has sufficient knowledge to undertake a course in law. Many men have no opportunity to study law until they reach the mature age of 30 years or more. Under the present system the preliminary examination is not a bar to keep them out, but it means that, with the five-year period he has to serve, there is a delay of two or three years more before he can be admitted to the bar. It really means that such men have to serve their articles for seven years instead of five years. Generally speaking, it may be said that people who to-day are over 30 years of age had no opportunity of attending the University of Western Australia. Many had not even the opportunity to attend a college. Many sections of the community are possessed of a good general education although they may not have attended universities. They have more general education than youths who have just passed their leaving examination. Accountants, for instance, who sit for their diploma, have to undertake a course in commercial and common law. Such men, who have earned their own living until they are 30 years of age, and have gained a wide general knowledge, are surely in a position to undertake a legal training! Such accountants have more general and more special knowledge than can be acquired by a schoolboy who has been swatting at college until he is 21 years of age. Then we can take a large number of the civil servants, who have earned their living in the public service until they have reached 20 years of age. It would not be contended that such officers had not more general knowledge than a boy just leaving college. Many commercial men acquire much general knowledge and a much broader education than is obtained by schoolboys, because education is not merely knowledge required to enable a student to pass an examination. We know that examiners set certain standards and prescribe certain text-books for the test. Anyone capable of cramming those books can pass the examination and then promptly forget all they have learnt. Journalists, too, ought not to be compelled to pass preliminary examinations prior to entering the legal profession. In carrying out his ordinary duties, a pressman, in the course of 15 or 16 years' experience, acquires a very sound general knowledge, and in many instances is much more qualified to undertake a study of the law than is a boy just emerged from the university, where he has been engaged in cramming. Of necessity, journalists acquire a wide general knowledge on general affairs.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. HUGHES: Before tea I was dealing with the question of articles in the profession and pointing out that the Bill proposed in certain cases to dispense with the service of articles. That is one step forward from what has already been done by legislation. At present, irrespective of the qualifications of the applicant, every person desiring to be admitted to the bar must serve five years in articles in addition to passing his law examination. It will be said that to dispense with service in articles is to dispense with the practical training. A number of persons in the State to-day are not obliged to serve any articles whatever. Our parent Act provides that among the persons who shall be eligible for admission to the Bar are barristers admitted to and entitled to practise in the High Courts of Justice of England and of Ireland. Such a man merely passes his law examinations and eats a number of dinners at the Inns of Court. Those are the qualifications admitting him to the Bar of barristers in Great Britain. He does not work in an office, nor does he serve any apprenticeship whatever. The supreme test is his knowledge of law and ability to plead. A boy in this State whose parents can afford to send him to London or Dublin is entitled to remain there without any practical work and pass his law examination, after which without any service in an office he can return to this State, reside here for six months, and then be eligible for admission to the Bar. A number of our leading lawyers have served no articles, for the reason that they were fortunate enough to be able to go Home and study, and so their service of articles was dispensed with. Is it too much, then, to ask the same privilege for the local man who passes his law examinations, but who cannot afford to go to London for the purpose? What is sufficient in London or in Dublin should be sufficient in Perth. After all is said, it is more difficult to pass an examination in Western Australia than in London or in Dublin, because at those larger centres there are available expert teaching authorities not to be found in this State.

Mr. Latham: A solicitor at Home is not admitted under those conditions, although a barrister may be.

Mr. HUGHES: In this State a solicitor is admitted, for there is no distinction between the solicitor and the barrister. It simply amounts to this: if one can afford to travel 16,000 miles, there is no necessity for his serving articles. A man who has his living to earn in this State is not afforded the same privilege as is a man who has nothing to do but study. The Bill asks for the extension to other citizens of Western Australia of the privilege accorded to those who can afford to travel 16,000 miles. If this be un-

reasonable, then every English barrister practising here ought to be stopped until he serves his articles. We have but to go to Victoria to see what value the profession there places on articles. In the first place articles there are four years instead of five. It must be admitted that over there certain examinations have to be taken before articles instead of, as in this State, afterwards. Any person taking the degree of Bachelor of Laws at the Melbourne University has to serve but one year in articles. Has that resulted in a lowering of the standard of the legal profession in Victoria? I venture to say it has not, that the standard in Victoria is quite equal to that in Western Australia. But it is realised in Victoria that articles are by no means essential. A barrister who is admitted in Queensland or in New South Wales can move down to Victoria and start practising without serving any articles whatever. So, it is recognised throughout the profession in Australia that service in articles is not required. In Queensland also a barrister can be admitted to the Bar without service of articles, and after three years' practice as a barrister he can be admitted as a solicitor. So it will be seen that in Queensland solicitors are admitted to the Bar without any service in articles. In New South Wales also it is recognised that five years service in articles is not required. There a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Laws has to serve but three years in articles before practising. In Tasmania they go even a step further. The usual term is five years, but if the candidate has passed the B.A. degree before admission his articles are reduced to four years, while if he passes the Bachelor of Laws degree before being admitted his articles are reduced to three years; and if he passes the Bachelor of Laws degree before being articulated, he has to serve but two years in articles. In South Australia, if the candidate passes the degree of Bachelor of Laws or Bachelor of Arts before or during his articles, his service in articles is reduced to three years; and if he has taken his degree in New South Wales or in Queensland he can practise in South Australia without serving any articles whatever. In our own State there are similar reductions for those having the B.A. degree. So, while we compel our local residents to serve five years in articles, a numerous section of the community who can afford to go to another State or to the Old Country for their study are not required to serve any articles. Yet it has never been contended that the legal profession in other Australian States or in England is inferior to our own. Seeing that these experiments have proved successful in other States, it is not too much to ask the House to

give equal opportunity to our own people. The Bill contains a provision for the benefit of managing clerks. After 10 years service in a solicitors' office a managing clerk may be admitted by passing a final examination in law. Managing clerks are required to pass the whole of their subjects at the one examination, and they have a legitimate grievance. I am assured that when they sit for examination and are not included in the list of passes, they are given no information as to the subjects in which they fail. Therefore they have no indication as to their weak subjects, and may give special attention to subjects in which they have done well. Managing clerks have to serve 10 years in a solicitor's office before being permitted to sit for the examination. For an articulated clerk five years is considered sufficient if he has passed his examination in law. The Bill proposes that where a candidate has been successful in at least two subjects, he shall not be again required to pass in those subjects. That is taken from the regulations of the Council of Legal Education in Victoria. I am of opinion that a man can get a better grip of subjects if he specialises in one and then gives his whole attention to another, rather than by trying to cram a little of several subjects each year. There is room for differences of opinion on this point. In New South Wales, candidates instead of taking the final examination in law in two parts, sit for examination every six months. There are six subjects, and a graduate may take the first and second sections six months after his articles. Having passed in those he takes the third and fourth sections in another six months and so on. Thus he has four different examinations for the whole of his sections. Instead of acquiring a smattering of five or six subjects for each examination he is able to specialise in each subject in turn, and at the end of his course is able to claim that he has made an exhaustive study of each subject. The supreme test is that the candidate has a sound knowledge of law. When a client consults a solicitor he wants good, sound legal advice, and when a party goes to the court he wants a barrister who possesses a knowledge of the law and is capable pleading his case.

Mr. North: Do you think the present market will stand a large influx of lawyers?

Mr. HUGHES: If the Bill be passed, in two years time I think there will be a decided exodus of the present legal practitioners.

Mr. Davy: To make room for the new ones?

Mr. HUGHES: Yes.

Mr. Davy: Have you anyone in mind?

Mr. HUGHES: I think many of them would be generous enough to go out and give the new ones a chance.

Mr. Taylor: That is the only chance some of you will have.

Mr. HUGHES: If members adopted the principle that they were not prepared to give all sections of the community an equal opportunity simply because a particular calling was already well filled, it would lead to an absurd state of affairs.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We would have only 49 members in Parliament.

Mr. HUGHES: It would be a serious interference with the liberty of the subject.

Mr. Davy: We shall not take up that attitude.

Mr. HUGHES: If we said there were sufficient carpenters in the State, and refused to admit any more, the member for Claremont would be one of the first to protest.

Mr. George interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: I know of no trades union that excludes members. The legal profession, the medical profession, the dentists and the architects have set a standard of unionism which, if adopted by the trades unions, would save a lot of trouble. Therefore I have no quarrel with them on that score. One object of the Bill is to make the Barristers' Board the examining board and supply one thing that is lacking at our University—a chair of law. In this way we can supply that want without any cost to the country. Why should not any citizen be permitted to study for a law examination or for any other examination, and put his certificate in his pocket and do what he likes with it?

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Why should not anyone be a doctor?

Mr. HUGHES: Why should not the professions be liberalised all round? Why should not the sons of working men have an equal opportunity with the sons of the wealthy men? Why not break down all the barriers that tend to keep the profession exclusive to all who can afford to live without work until they reach the age of 25? Why should we say, "Unless your father can keep you until you are 25 or 26, you cannot enter this profession"? Why should we make talent the one consideration? Why can we not place all our citizens on the same footing? If 2,000 persons have passed the examination, so much the better, for the people can then pick and choose whom to employ.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: You restricted the number of apprentices in some trades.

Mr. HUGHES: I remember, when it was stated that there were 197 fewer apprentices in the Midland Junction workshops than were allowed by law, that the hon. member did not raise his voice in protest against it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What has all this to do with the Bill?

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member wishes to let that painful subject die.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not at all, but I want you to keep to the Bill. We shall not know what is in it soon.

Mr. HUGHES: If the hon. member will keep members on his side in order, I will not have to rake up these painful subjects.

Mr. Taylor: You should not stonewall your own Bill.

Mr. HUGHES: I will make out my case as I choose. The features of the Bill are well defined. There is nothing in it that is not already in operation in this State, or one of the other States. I commend it to the House, and will have no objection to any amendment that will improve it. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

#### MOTION—PERTH MARKETS.

*To inquire by Select Committee.*

Debate resumed from the 27th August on motion by Mr. Mann—

*That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the establishment of markets for the better sale and distribution of produce, including the conditions governing transport, sale and distribution of meat within the metropolitan area.*

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [8.4]: I think the House might well agree to the motion. It must be admitted that Perth is the one city in Australia that does not enjoy the facilities of up-to-date markets. It is remarkable that so many years have elapsed in the progress of the country without some provision being made to overcome this position. During the last Parliament the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) introduced a measure to give the Perth City Council the right to establish markets. The Bill was so lacking in moderation that it was incontinently thrown out by this Chamber. Had it been more moderate in tone, and had it considered the interests of the producers to a greater degree, I have no doubt it would have met with general acceptance. The present method of marketing produce in this country is very unsatisfactory. The markets are distributed all over the city, with the result that the handling charges, as well as the overhead charges, are high and impose a heavy burden upon the chief sufferers, the producers. The salesmen do not suffer, because they work upon fixed charges. Whether the commodity is 2s. or £2 they take their percentage, and the producers bear the loss.

Mr. Mann: Likewise the carrier.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: When a deputation waited upon me a few months ago, representative of a certain section of the market auctioneers, I said I thought the question of marketing was the

particular function of the municipality of Perth, and that if the municipality were prepared to make reasonable overtures to the Government, I would submit them to Cabinet. Councillor Simper agreed to approach the council, but nothing has been done, for I have heard no more of the matter. The provision of up-to-date markets has for some years been an accomplished fact in the capitals of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia, but I cannot speak for Tasmania. These markets are under municipal control, and the whole business is arranged under that authority. This is what should be done in Perth. Up-to-date markets must of necessity be provided with cold storage facilities. No market would be complete without those facilities. The refrigerating space in the city is in the Wellington-street markets, which are owned by the Government, and are leased to the Public Works Department and the Agricultural Department. It is not an attractive place, and is completely out of date. Were it not that it offers facilities to the people where no others exist, the market would not be occupied to-day. The rentals are not high; in fact, we are making a loss on them; but we are providing much needed accommodation for the storage of meat, fruit, eggs, and other commodities, for which storage accommodation has not been provided elsewhere in the city. We have there accommodation for 6,000 cases of fruit. I am glad to say that most of the time the accommodation is fully taxed. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) referred to the necessity for storage for meat supplies. There are times when, peculiar as it may seem, there is a shortage of meat in Perth, as there is now. I am afraid we shall have another shortage next year.

Mr. Mann: We have had it for the last four years.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Probably so. The Government, however, have taken every possible step to relieve that shortage. Had it not been for our efforts in this direction, meat would to-day be standing at a prohibitive price to the consumer. The Government have not been able to do all that might have been done, for there are insurmountable obstacles to be overcome. The whole of the Wyndham meat supplies had been sold to Belgian buyers before this Government came into office. This contract has to be fulfilled, otherwise the Belgian people will buy against the meat works. I am inclined to think the works cannot supply the contract in full, because of the shortage of meat in the Kimberleys consequent upon bad seasons. Furthermore, we have been unable to bring cattle down, because the previous Government entered into contracts for the whole of the shipping space. A few firms now hold all the space, and can monopolise the market. The Government are now supplying a great quantity of meat from the cold store to local butchers. The arrangement is that wholesalers undertake to supply the retail

butchers at  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb. above the prices at which they purchase from the Government, these to include storage and cost of delivery, and they also have to take the risk of bad debts. The firms that are supplied by the Government with frozen meat are Messrs. Baker Bros., and the Anchorage Butchers, Fremantle; McIntosh, Fry, and Mawley, Claremont; Lange & Co., Midland Junction; Phillips & Co., Perth City Markets; Warner, Fremantle; Clancy, Perth; Painter, Mundaring; Clarke & Phillips, Northam; Donald & Co., Northam; Honisett & Co., Albany; Dundas, Midland Junction; and Anderson Bros., Perth. These are the firms that supply the whole of the retail butchers in the metropolitan area. They also have numerous clients in the country districts, and quite a fair quantity of meat has been sent down the line. I am glad to say the beef has been received with universal satisfaction on the market. On the gold-fields, however, the butchers apparently have some objection to frozen meat. In Perth a few years ago the butchers would not handle it, and notices were posted in their shops that no Wyndham meat was sold there. To-day, however, they are quite ready to take in supplies of frozen meat.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Because there is a shortage.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We have proved conclusively that frozen meat is acceptable to the public, and that there is no objection to it. Those of us who have tasted it know what a good commodity it is. The prices charged by the retailers to the consumers are as follows: With the exception of rump steak and fillet, which are 1s. and 1s. 2d. a lb. respectively, the prices range from 5d. to 9d. This meat has been stored at Fremantle where there are cold storage facilities, and this year we have been instrumental in placing on the market approximately 950 tons of frozen meat.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What do you have to give for this meat?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We buy the frozen meat from Wyndham. To-day, however, we are buying beef from Queensland. We have to do that, and pay a higher price, because Queensland beef is of much better quality than the Western Australian this year. The strongest reason, however, is that the Wyndham contract must be kept up. The Government are not responsible for the short supply from Wyndham.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What are you paying for the Queensland meat?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have not the figures here.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Less than a half-penny more than the Wyndham meat costs.

Mr. Teesdale: Whose opinion is it that the Queensland beef is better than ours?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The experts consider that on account of the drought here the Queensland meat is better than this year's supply from Wyndham.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The people here would not have frozen meat last year.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not know about that, but this year they had to have it. If the butchers had not taken the frozen meat this year, thus relieving the community in the metropolitan area, the Government would have taken steps to place frozen meat on the market. The butchers were faced with that alternative. We are not going to allow the community at large to be exploited by a few persons here. That is the reason why we brought meat across from Brisbane. Had the Government not done that, thousands of people would not have been able to buy beef, which would have been at a prohibitive price. I presume that next year the Government will have to do the very same thing. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) is not quite correct in saying that there is no cold storage for meat here. At the Westralian Meat Works' premises at Owen's Anchorage, there is accommodation for large supplies of meat and fruit, if only that accommodation is made use of; and I am hopeful that the present Government will make the necessary contracts for meat next year, and that the same accommodation will be used for the full requirements of the people as the Government made use of this year.

Member: The Fremantle freezers should be fully used.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They will be, for this reason, that the Government have entered into a 10-years' agreement for a part of those premises. I have told delegation after delegation who have asked the Government to erect cold storage premises at Fremantle, that they should make use of those premises, in which the Government have a large amount of money invested, and that it is wrong to ask the Government practically to waste public money in putting up additional premises a few miles away. When in Melbourne I made inquiries into the question of cold storage in Victoria, and I found that all the cold storage accommodation is in Melbourne. We have these fine premises at Fremantle, and the country should be saved from the expenditure of money on buildings which for the present could be only ornamental. I have no objection to the motion. The time is ripe for something to be done in the direction indicated. Apart from the consumer, who must be considered, and apart from the auctioneer, who has a business interest in the matter, the producers of this country are entitled to the best facilities for the marketing of their products. As that is in keeping with the policy and principles of the present Government, I hope the result of the select committee's labours will be to put up a proposition either to this Parliament, or for preference to the Perth City Council, for the provision here in the city of Perth of as up-to-date marketing facilities for all classes of people as can be found in any city in Australia.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [8.20]: I am glad the Minister has raised no objection to the appointment of the proposed select committee to inquire into the vexed question of marketing. That question has been considered by this House on many occasions. I have a lively recollection of the opposition offered to the Bill submitted two or three years ago by the Perth City Council through the member for Perth (Mr. Mann).

Mr. Lambert: That was a beautiful Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We do want facilities for the sale of produce in Perth, both in the growers' interests and the consumers' interests. The Minister dealt specially with the meat question. Had he not done so, I would not be taking up the time of the House, because all I want is the proposed inquiry. The Minister referred to the sale of meat from Wyndham, and apparently he censured the late Government for having sold Wyndham meat. His statement was that we had sold all the output of the Wyndham Meat Works to the Belgians. We sold 4,000 tons to the Belgians.

The Minister for Agriculture: The meat cannot be supplied.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is not the fault of the late Government or of the present Government that the stock which was expected to be available is not available. However, the sale to the Belgians is very satisfactory, the price being nearly 4d. per lb. Moreover, 4,000 tons of meat is a very small quantity indeed to be sold from the Wyndham works. There has been a drought from Wyndham to the Leeuwin, and the drought at Wyndham has resulted in a shortage of fat cattle. The works there were capable of killing all the beef required by the people of Western Australia—every ounce of it—over and above the 4,000 tons sold to the Belgians. The present Government may be, and no doubt are, a very clever and wise and far-seeing Government. They may be able to call upon the heavens to give down their moisture whenever it is needed. But, even if they can do those things, they will have to sell shiploads of meat from the Wyndham works. I hope that next year they will be able to sell four times the quantity sold this year.

The Minister for Agriculture: The supplies will not be available.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There are nearly 800,000 head of cattle in the Kimberleys. Of course the cattle are not fat. Strange to say, it was expected that in addition to the 4,000 tons sold to the Belgians, 900 tons of Wyndham meat would be available for our own market. However, the fat cattle are not there. The Colonial Secretary referred to this matter, and said the previous Government had sold all the Wyndham meat, and so the poor people of Perth, who a year ago would not look at frozen meat, had been denied the right to

buy frozen meat from Wyndham. The truth is, simply, that the rains did not come and that the cattle are not fat. People are not going to eat frozen meat if they can get fresh, and they would be very unwise if they did. Fresh meat is very much better than frozen.

Mr. Teesdale: No, it is not.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Undoubtedly it is.

The Minister for Agriculture: If frozen meat is properly thawed out, it is just as good as fresh.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Those who know say it is not.

The Minister for Agriculture: Those who have tasted say it is.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I dare say frozen meat is very nice to eat. I like it very much myself. But it is not as good for people as fresh meat.

Mr. Lutey: Good frozen meat is better than bad fresh. Fresh meat is not too good when it has travelled from the North-West, and been knocked about, and lost weight.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But good fresh meat is better than bad frozen meat. We expected to bring down 900 tons of meat from Wyndham. The Minister says the Government bought in Queensland 950 tons at a very moderate price, the Queensland meat being of better quality this year than the Wyndham frozen meat. I am glad, therefore, that the Belgians have got our meat while we are getting better meat from Queensland on advantageous terms. Ministers need not worry about what they would have done; if they had been in office at the time, they would have sold the 4,000 tons to the Belgians. They will have to sell meat from Wyndham next year.

The Minister for Agriculture: But we are making provision to supply our people in the South.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Any Government would do so if they knew of the necessity. But there was no means of knowing that there would be a drought. I admit wisdom is on the Treasury bench.

The Minister for Agriculture: There was a drought last year in the Murchison and in the North. There has not been a good season for three years in the whole of the North-West.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Kimberley season was very good last year. We brought down 300 tons of meat last year from Wyndham.

Mr. Heron: And it was put on the market this year.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: No, it was not.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Honorary Minister made a row about that frozen meat. Where is that speech of his?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I shall make a row again if frozen meat is again put into Government institutions at the fresh meat price



of 5d. instead of the frozen meat price of 3d.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Last year the people here did not want Wyndham frozen meat, and so it was available for them this year.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The people wanted it, but the butchers would not have it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: A fearful row was made by the Honorary Minister about the sale of frozen meat last year, and so the people would have fresh meat. The Minister for Mines spoke about thawing frozen meat properly. There are no facilities for thawing here. The frozen meat has to be taken to the homes, and cannot be thawed properly.

The Minister for Lands: It is good meat, as good as the fresh.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Not as good as the fresh.

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes, it is. I have had it this year myself.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have had it too, and it is very nice to eat; but it is not as good for the people as fresh meat.

The Minister for Railways: One gets nothing but frozen meat on board ship.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am glad the select committee is to be appointed, and I hope the inquiry will lead to the establishment of adequate markets in Perth. It will be a very happy day for the growers of produce when they have a central place in which to sell their produce, and it will be a very good thing for the people of Perth to have a central market to which they may go to procure all their requirements. The grower of fruit, at any rate, has difficulty in marketing his produce. Probably the establishment of central, convenient, and properly equipped markets would lead to an ample supply of fruit for the people, and if the people of this State had all the fruit they want to have, there would be very little to spare from the 25,000 acres we have under orchards. But one-half of our people never see fruit, and it is only the other half who buy fruit, and so the supply is far more than the requirements. I repeat, I am indeed glad that the Government have seen fit to agree to the motion moved by the member for Perth.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [8.30]: I am pleased that the motion before the House has been moved by the member for Perth (Mr. Mann). It has been stated that the science of distribution as we know it is clumsy and costly. It is the consumer who has to pay for that system. Reference was made by the Leader of the Opposition to the Bill introduced last session by the member for Perth. That Bill sought to confer arbitrary and comprehensive powers on the Perth Municipal Council which were not acceptable to the House. In no sense should that decision convey the idea that Parliament was unmindful of the need for better

organisation of the distribution of food-stuffs and perishable products required in the city. The American Congress appointed a joint committee to inquire into the question of distribution, dealing with the problem purely as a science. The committee was not biased in any way. It is pleasing to see those holding political views different from the views of members sitting on the Government side of the House, beginning to realise that there is something underlying the theories that have been for so long preached by Government supporters. The idea of allowing promiscuous distribution to remain in the hands of those desirous of profiting by it, should not be tolerated.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Well, the member for Perth has moved the motion!

Mr. LAMBERT: But that hon. member is just as crusty and hide-bound respecting his political opinions as are many others associated with him.

Mr. North: Like the Americans you referred to just now?

Mr. LAMBERT: It may be conceded that the Americans, when they endeavour to lay down some basis for scientific research, respecting the distribution of production or of anything else, will attempt to secure a solution along scientific lines. With some people, however, it would appear that they desire to adhere to obsolete political ideas—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are rather rough on your friends.

Mr. LAMBERT: —and outlive the theories they prate about so often.

Mr. George: You are the most hide-bound man in this Chamber!

Mr. North: And you are a business man at that.

Mr. LAMBERT: I hope I am not so hide-bound as the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George). In their report the American joint committee said—

Cities grew and became market places of agriculture. Inventive genius perfected machines to relieve more and more hand labour and to produce goods in greater volume—

This is a general summary which is remarkable in its way—

—Working days became shorter and time and opportunity for recreation became greater—

That would not please the member for Murray-Wellington—

—Education and travel created a desire for comfort, convenience and refinement not dreamed of in earlier generations—That would meet with violent conflict on the part of some of those holding the hide-bound political ideas I referred to just now—

—Invention after invention revolutionised habits and customs. Electricity added to the length of the day by lighting cities and providing means of rapid, comfortable locomotion. Telephone and telegraph extended communication and nationalised industry, commerce and finance.

Mr. Teesdale: What are you quoting from? "Tit-Bits."

Mr. Withers: No; "Answers."

Mr. LAMBERT: At any rate, I am not likely to inflict upon the House any dissertation indulged in by the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale). The Committee in their report proceeded—

Refrigeration revolutionised the transportation and storage of food products and changed the living habits of the Nation. Fruits, vegetables and fresh meats were transported to distant markets, the production of the whole country was made available to the large consuming centres and crops of seasonable production were offered to consumers throughout the greater portion of the year. The consumer came to accept unusual service and convenience as a matter of course, and finally to demand more. Each new service and convenience drew additional people into the activities of distribution. Time saving, convenience, comfort and satisfaction became the determining factors in the excellency of service.

In a general way the report of the joint committee proceeds to summarise the position in order to draw certain basic conclusions relating to the science of distribution. We find in our comparatively small village to-day, the same problem confronting us. Those who are engaged in the science of distribution merely for monetary gain, have not carried out their functions as might have been expected of them. It is essential that Parliament shall realise the necessities of the position, no less in the interests of the producer than of the consumer, by creating some legislative means whereby those engaged in our present unscientific, clumsy and costly system of distribution shall be done away with. I know the member for Perth has given considerable attention to this important subject. That may be said to his credit. He is peculiarly interested in the subject because he is the representative of the metropolitan area. We are all interested in the question, however, as representing the producers of Western Australia. On all hands we hear producers stating that they are convinced that the existing system of marketing should not be tolerated by Parliament or by the people for any longer than is necessary to enable public men to realise their responsibilities. Clumsy efforts have been made at distribution.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are complimentary to the people who have gone before. You were a municipal councillor yourself at one time.

Mr. LAMBERT: With all due respect to them, I do not know that I have any particular objection to councillors.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They will be very much obliged to you for that admission.

Mr. Taylor: You have changed your views since last year.

Mr. LAMBERT: If kept within the four corners of the Municipal Corporations Act,

I do not know that it may not be conceded that municipal councillors are carrying out duties unselfishly and worthily.

Mr. George: This is your apology for your former speeches.

Mr. LAMBERT: When they seek to take part in larger spheres of public activities, they are apt to be described as bumbles by some people.

The Minister for Lands: They make mistakes because they are tied up by legislation provided by Parliament.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know that it would be a good idea if we took away the hobbles and fetters from municipal councillors and enabled them to embark upon wider spheres of usefulness. Perhaps Parliament might be unnecessary then. I will draw swords with the Minister on that question at some future date. For the present we are considering the necessity for providing cheaper and less clumsy but more scientific means for distribution of foodstuffs. It is pleasing to know that hon. members are prepared to take the motion seriously. I do not know that we regarded last session's Bill seriously.

Mr. Thomson: Indeed we did. We chuckled it out!

Mr. Mann: You did not understand it.

Mr. LAMBERT: I hope the select committee to be appointed will realise to the full the great importance of this question. I trust they will endeavour to lay down basic principles upon which we may build a system of distribution equally satisfactory and acceptable to the consumer as to the producer. It is essential that both interests shall be safeguarded. We must have a clear and logical review of the position as it obtains to-day and as it should obtain under altered conditions. I hardly like to quote the full text of the report of the joint committee appointed by the American Congress, but if one can understand language concretely presented and technically and scientifically correct, one must appreciate the significance of the findings. I have pleasure in supporting the motion and I hope that as an outcome of the deliberations of the select committee, their work will not be shelved, but that Parliament will have ample opportunity to consider the recommendations. I hope we shall be able to reconcile the conflicting views of the consumer and of the producer. I trust we shall arrive at a fair decision which may not, however, allow the City Council to completely control the distribution of foodstuffs within the metropolitan area. I hope that the ultimate result will be to safeguard the interests of all parties in such a way that we shall no longer have the existing shameful, clumsy and unscientific method of distribution.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [8.43]: I congratulate the member for Perth (Mr.

Mann) upon profiting by his experience during the last Parliament. The Bill he introduced then was promptly turned down by the House because it practically vested in the City Council control over the whole of the produce that came into the metropolitan area. That may not have been the intention of the framers of the Bill, but that would have been the effect of it. We considered that measure would have been detrimental to the producers. I trust the committee to be appointed will consider every phase of the problem as set out in the motion. One aspect relates to the better sale and distribution of produce. If the committee accomplish something beneficial to the producers in that respect, they will have done something of importance. The same thing applies to the second object, namely, better conditions governing the transport, sale and distribution of meat within the metropolitan area. I trust the select committee will go into this question from two viewpoints: One to see that the consumers get their requirements at a reasonable price, and the other to see that the producer gets a reasonable price for his produce.

The Minister for Lands: The only way you can do that is through the State.

Mr. THOMSON: I hope the State will materially assist by reducing the cost of transport to the metropolitan market. That is the only way in which the State can assist. If the Minister suggests that the control of distribution should be placed in the hands of the State, I cannot agree with him.

Mr. Clydesdale: You couldn't be expected to.

Mr. THOMSON: No, we are building up too many State departments as it is; we should leave a little to private enterprise. I commend to the consideration of the select committee the co-operative movement.

Mr. Heron: That is not wholly successful.

Mr. THOMSON: Only for lack of efficient management. That is one of the difficulties confronting the State trading concerns. Nevertheless if we are to supply consumers with cheap produce, and at the same time give the producers reasonable prices for their products, it can only be done through the co-operative movement. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [8.48]: I am pleased to see that members, as they change from one side of the House to the other, change also their views on important non-party questions. Last year, when we were discussing the Bill giving to the City Council power to handle all produce coming into the metropolitan area, the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) had something to say. To-night we have heard his remarks

on a similar subject. It needs no comment from me to point out the changed opinion. Last year the hon. member said:—

The clause gives the City Council full and absolute power to handle certain specified goods. Power is sought to frame regulations whereby any merchandise can be brought under the authority of the City Council. We have heard the big drum beaten by our eloquent friend the member for East Perth, and we have heard of the desires of the City Council for central markets; but we have heard nothing as to the protection of the producer who will send his produce to the markets and hand it over to a band of bungling bumbles whose power should be carefully and properly scrutinised before they are given any more.

To-night, apparently, the motion does not go far enough for the member for Coolgardie. The hon. member feels there is nobody more capable of handling anything than are those capable men of to-day who were bungling bumbles last year. What is the value of statements made by members on great and important questions that have no bearing upon parties? One year we are told that certain men are not fit to do anything, while next year it is impressed upon us that they are capable of anything and everything. I merely rose to point out to new members the value of the eloquence of the member for Coolgardie. I will support the motion.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE (Honorary Minister—Hannans) [8.51]: I would not have said anything on the motion but for two statements that have been made: One by the mover of the motion the other day, and the other by the Leader of the Opposition to-night. Let me take the last one first. The Leader of the Opposition conveyed the impression that, last year or the year before, I and Mr. McCallum, now Minister for Works, were responsible for the difficulty the then Premier had in getting rid of some frozen meat he had brought down from the North-West. The plaint was that we had opposed the use of frozen meat. In giving such an impression the Leader of the Opposition was not justified. I challenge him or any other member to find in "Hansard" one word from me or from the Minister for Works condemnatory of frozen meat. In point of fact we spoke in the highest terms of the quality of frozen meat. What we objected to was the supplying of frozen meat to Government institutions by a contractor under a contract distinctly specifying fresh meat. If my memory be not at fault, the contract price was 5½d. per lb., taking half a bullock at a time. Instead of supplying fresh meat to the institutions, that contractor was purchasing frozen meat from the Government at 3d. per lb. and supplying it to the institutions at 5d. per lb., in some instances without even handling it.

Mr. Mann: You suggested that frozen meat was not good enough for sick people in the asylum.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Nothing of the kind. If the hon. member will consult "Hansard" he will find that I suggested the same contractor was supplying to the institution so-called mince that contained liver, lights and heart, with a thin veneer of real mince over the top. We certainly did complain that that was not a suitable food to supply to sick patients.

Mr. Taylor: The hon. member said that frozen meat was no good, and that chilled meat was not much better. He said he would not have frozen meat on his mind.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: You can turn up "Hansard" and see exactly what I did say. That is as far as I want to go with the statement of the Leader of the Opposition. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) also gave a wrong impression. He said the first lot of frozen meat put on the metropolitan market this year by the present Government—

Mr. Mann: I did not say the present Government.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE:—was imported by the Mitchell Government and held in cold storage for 12 months.

Mr. Mann: Well, that is correct.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It is entirely incorrect. I can see now that the hon. member did mean what he said. At least five weeks prior to election day the Government did not have a single pound of frozen meat in cold storage in this State.

Mr. Mann: The words "this Government" are your own. I said the first frozen meat put on the metropolitan market this year came down from Wyndham last year.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The hon. member is quite wrong. I went so far as to get the actual figures, and I can let the hon. member have them. The first frozen meat put on the metropolitan market this year by the present Government was imported by the Government. Not a single pound was held over from last year. The Leader of the Opposition complained that my attitude and that of the Minister for Works was responsible for his not being able to get rid of the frozen meat last year.

Mr. Teesdale: He did not say that straight out.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No, but he implied it. My experience has taught me this: Had we not taken a firmer stand than did the late Government, there would have been no frozen meat on the market this year other than what was sold to the people as fresh meat. Of the first shipment landed here this year at least 95 per cent. was sold to the people as fresh meat at fresh meat prices. I repeat that. When the second shipment arrived, we entered into negotiations to secure a benefit, not to the wholesale butcher, but to the general public.

Mr. Mann: How much did you get from Wyndham altogether?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The Minister gave you the figures to-night.

Mr. Mann: You have not brought down enough to keep one wholesale butcher going for a week.

Mr. Lutley: They have brought down 900 tons.

Mr. Mann: Not from Wyndham.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: We have brought down from Wyndham more frozen meat than any metropolitan wholesale butcher, save one, has disposed of this season up to date. We have imported into the metropolitan area frozen meat equal to more than one-eighth of the total consumption of beef and mutton. We have had two shipments from Queensland.

Mr. Mann: You brought a larger quantity from Queensland than from Wyndham.

The Minister for Lands: We could not get it from Wyndham.

The Minister for Agriculture: Your party sold it to Belgium, and we could not get it.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: When frozen meat was being retailed, we discovered that the consumer was not getting any advantage. One man went to three different suburban shops and bought frozen meat. In one instance he paid 1s. 2d., and in the other two instances 1s. per lb. Another man got meat at two different shops and paid 1s. per lb. and 10d. per lb.—the price ruling for fresh meat at that time. We said, "That is no good." We got the wholesalers in again and told them that while we were satisfied with the deal given the Government—they were distributing it at a cost much less than would have been possible had the Government organised the distribution—we were going to enforce the Health Act and compel every butcher selling frozen meat to post a notice in his shop that frozen meat was sold there and stipulating the price to the public. The wholesale butchers replied, "That is no good to us. We could not sell a pound of frozen meat under those conditions. The butchers would not take it from us." We said, "Very well, we shall open shops of our own." We gave them 24 hours in which to give a decision whether they would continue the wholesale distribution under the conditions we had laid down. Within 24 hours a reply was received, "All right, we shall get rid of it." The result was the butchers' shops displayed notices that frozen meat was sold and the price at which it was being sold. But we went still further. We got into communication with the health inspector of each local governing body in the metropolitan area and arranged with him to inspect the shops supplied with frozen meat to ensure that the notices were posted. In spite of all the precautions taken, I still say that at least 25 per cent. of the Queensland frozen meat has been purchased by the public at fresh meat prices, and the public did not know it. We have done all we can. A fair number of butchers have given us a square deal; they have stuck to the price

and have treated the public fairly. But there are others who have not done so. The place where we experienced the greatest difficulty in disposing of frozen meat was the goldfields. The public were eager enough to get frozen meat, provided it could be delivered in a reasonably good state. We went so far as to rent cold storage accommodation in Kalgoorlie to ensure that the meat was thawed out properly. Still, there is a big exception taken to frozen meat to-day, the same exception that is taken by the butchers in Perth, although the latter do not state it publicly. The reason they do not want frozen meat is not that they consider it inferior to fresh meat; it is because the public know the price at which it is to be sold. The public do not know what profits the butchers make on fresh meat. However, we fix a price that should be acceptable to any reasonable man. A retailer of frozen meat in the metropolitan area, who gave us a fair deal and assisted us to get rid of a large quantity, had his supplies cut down in the second month. We have now put that man on a wholesale basis and he is taking at least 20 tons a week. The other night I said that probably the member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) had eaten frozen meat without being aware of it, and he replied that he had not. I have had frozen meat, and though I do not profess to be a judge of meat, I venture to say that if frozen meat were served at dinner to-morrow, not three members of the House would know it from fresh.

Mr. Teesdale: Are the public institutions getting frozen meat now?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes.

Mr. Teesdale: A very proper thing, too.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: We see that it is supplied in good order. We have altered the system, and it is no longer obligatory upon tenderers to supply fresh meat. They tender for frozen and for fresh.

Mr. Teesdale: You objected to it before. You wanted chilled meat.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No, I objected to contractors supplying frozen meat as fresh meat.

Mr. Taylor: That is not borne out by "Hansard."

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I did not object to frozen meat as frozen meat, but I objected to its going into the institutions as fresh meat. A statement was made that the first shipment of frozen meat distributed in the metropolitan area this season was actually brought down by the previous Government, held in cold store for 12 months, and distributed by us. That is not so. Long before the elections there was not a pound of frozen meat held by the Government in cold storage. Consequently the meat we put on the market could not have been held for 12 months. Another statement was that I personally objected to frozen meat. As I have stated, I objected to frozen meat being supplied to the institutions as fresh

meat. That was my only objection. I believe a select committee will be granted and I hope some good will come of its inquiries. The consumer as well as the producer should derive considerable benefit from an investigation. I believe the cost of distribution could be reduced considerably if proper methods were adopted, and that is one of the objects the member for Perth had in view in moving his motion.

Mr. Teesdale: It starts off cheap enough at 63s. per carcase. It is not the producer that is getting the money.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I agree with that. Most of the commodities consumed in the metropolitan area should be obtainable at 10 per cent. below ruling prices, and the producers should be getting at least 10 per cent. more.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course, the cost of delivery is considerable.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: And the profits of the middlemen who squeeze both parties are still greater. I hope the inquiry will lead to cutting out the middleman to a large extent and bringing the producer and the consumer closer together. That is the only hope they have of obtaining relief.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We have heard that for 20 years.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: But you never tried to do anything to rectify it.

Mr. COVERLEY (Kimberley) [9.12]: I rise with pleasure in defence of the Wyndham Meat Works. The Minister for Agriculture said the quality of beef imported from Queensland was superior to that obtained from Wyndham. I believe that is correct, but there is a good reason for it. The beef being sent from Wyndham is second grade beef. The Wyndham Meat Works are exporting the prime beef overseas for 3d. or 3½d. per lb., and people in the metropolitan area are receiving the second grade beef and are paying 7d. per lb. for it. I hope the Honorary Minister will take a note of that and see that the metropolitan area in future is supplied with prime beef.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [9.13]: I regret that on this motion reference has been made to the action of the previous Parliament in regard to the City of Perth Municipal Markets Bill introduced by the member for Perth (Mr. Mann). The member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) pointed out what a great change had taken place since members moved to the opposite side of the House.

Mr. Taylor: I referred only to the member for Coolgardie.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That makes no difference.

Mr. Taylor: So long as you all did it, all right.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Mt. Margaret did not know what was taking place because he had no occasion to pay the close attention to measures that other members had. He did not have to scrutinise the details of Bills as had members who desired to discuss them. It was his duty to see that order was maintained, and that the discussion was carried on in a proper manner, which duty he carried out during his term as Speaker. The remark of the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) last year regarding bungling bumbles was made consequent upon an interjection from me. It was a hit at me.

Mr. Taylor: Of course you did not resent it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I took no notice of it, because I know him too well. I expected some such remark when I made the interjection. This motion deals with an entirely different subject from that dealt with in the Bill last session. The Bill was designed to give power to the Perth City Council to prescribe the articles of merchandise to which the Act would apply.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It levied a toll on everything.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Upon anything that was sold over £1 in value, a toll could be levied. Before any article could be sold it had to be brought to the markets. That is what called for the criticism of members. The council also wished to take away the rights of owners of property in the city to say whether the markets should be established or not. The council desired to amend the Municipalities Act so that the owners who mortgaged properties, in order to erect the markets, should have no say as to whether they should be erected or not. The council also desired to have power to raise the money itself without reference to the taxpayers. Members on the cross benches contended that when it came to a question of selling produce, the producer must have a hand in the management. If the City Council borrow money on behalf of the ratepayers, and invest it in markets, no one outside the City Council can have any say in their management. The council alone is responsible to the property owners of the city. That caused me to make the interjection I did. If it is necessary to establish a central market for fruit, and if the producers are to have representation on the board of management, it must be under the control of the Government. It cannot be done under municipal control unless the law is altered. The ratepayers would not agree to invest their money if it was to be handled by a body on which they had no representation, and when they would have no control over the markets. I hope the select committee when appointed will deal

with that phase of the question. The last Labour Government intended to build markets at West Perth. The ground was purchased, but when the war broke out the work was held in abeyance. It was intended to establish State markets, but the management and control were left over for further consideration. The Government of the day could not go on with the matter until the land was purchased, and provision was made for the railways to connect with them.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That was in 1912, was it not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was in 1913 or 1914. The selling of produce must be a State matter. We are growing fruit, vegetables and other kinds of produce in excess of the local consumption. The high prices that prevail to-day are generally caused by private people storing the produce in their own cool stores until a suitable market arrives, when they release it. Neither the producer nor the consumer obtains any benefit from that action. Most people cannot afford to pay the high prices that are asked for fruit. We have thousands of acres of apples in this country, and yet we cannot buy apples under 6d. or 7d. a lb., although they can be bought in London at that price. The ex-Minister for Works stated that he obtained 1d. per lb. for apples that were offered by a retailer at his own house for 6d. a lb. This matter, too, the select committee will have to take into consideration. I stated that there were 60 tons of unsaleable raisins in this State up to a few weeks ago.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They were table raisins.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Council of Industrial Development had to go to the assistance of the growers so that the raisins could be used locally, for a purpose for which they had not hitherto been used, to start some new works. Our population is so small that we have to rely in the future upon the overseas markets. Unfortunately the bottom has fallen out of the fruit market. According to all I can learn, an increased acreage of raisins and currants has been planted throughout the world. As a rule there is a ready market for dried raisins and currants, but to-day the market is flat.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: America has multiplied its output by three.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The growers are now unable to get a sufficient return for their labour. I do not think a select committee would do any harm, but I fear it will not do much good. It will deal only with the sale of produce in Western Australia. In 1913 we felt it was the duty of the State to provide proper markets for the people who grow produce adjacent to the metropolitan area. Even then they required a proper place for the sale of their produce.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That would be the duty of the City Council.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The City Council cannot undertake it if representation is to be given to the growers.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The law could be altered.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The ratepayers would not care to put their money into the venture if they had no say in its control. The State, however, represents everybody.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It would be the same thing if the Government did it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Government also represent everybody. If the State builds the markets, all people would have representation in their management. If the council build them, they alone can claim representation on the board of control. It is the duty of the State to take up this work.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It will be costly if the State does it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am not so sure about that. We are just on the threshold of State enterprises.

Mr. Thomson: God forbid!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They cannot be avoided. The State is running enterprises that members know nothing about.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What are you running?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We have to do it. In one instance we have had to maintain those we put on the land to grow fruit. Goods were dumped here from the Eastern States in an effort to wipe these people out of existence; they were buying the fruit themselves.

Mr. Thomson: We are importing a terrible lot of stuff.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Because the Eastern States are dumping it here at lower prices, and the local people have to reduce their price below that at which pays them to sell. The States is standing the loss.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is a jolly scandal.

Mr. Thomson: That is one of the benefits of Federation.

Mr. Clydesdale: It is one of the benefits of State enterprises.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No doubt some people have laid themselves out to kill secondary industries in this State. In cases like this every citizen should stick to the local enterprise, even if the State exchequer has to assist. It is necessary at times to establish a State enterprise to protect the producer. I trust the select committee will be able to render some service to the Government, but I am afraid it will not do so.

Mr. Mann: Why not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Previous Governments have gone into the matter very fully, and know what the position is, and the select committee cannot tell us what we do not already know.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then why agree to its appointment?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have no objection to it. Mention has been made of the competition of motor buses with State enterprise.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not in Fremantle.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We are not worrying about Fremantle, for we shall set to work ourselves before they start. We are not going to spend money on roads so that other people may get the benefit. We are going to get the advantage ourselves, and will provide the buses.

Mr. Mann: What about the losses?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We will get the trade. When it comes to a question of regulating the distribution of produce, and altering the present machinery, someone will have to go out of business.

Mr. Thomson: And there will be other large public meetings.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Only the establishment of more secondary industries in this State can rectify the position. We want more people to consume the produce that is grown here. The only way to establish secondary industries of any account in this country is for the State to make the beginning. The people have been warned times without number. I do not want to go back to ancient history, but the present Leader of the Opposition realised the situation in 1907. He then said, and expressed it in an Act of Parliament, that the Agricultural Bank could advance money for agricultural machinery manufactured in Western Australia. No person or firm took advantage of that opportunity. The farmers would sooner pay 10 per cent. more for machinery imported from the East. When the warning was not heeded, it was necessary for the Government to take action; and the Labour Government did so. The only way to establish secondary industries in Western Australia, and thus increase our population substantially—for secondary industries induce far more immigration than the primary industries, with the exception of mining—

Mr. Thomson: You want to bring people with capital into the State, and you can, do that by reducing taxation.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: People are not so fond of bringing capital into the State. In any case, no Government will enter into competition with a secondary industry established in the State that is treating the consumers fairly. As I said to a gentleman the other day, Western Australia is now suffering from too many brass plates and too few chimneys. We do not get the population we require, because the whole of our money is going out of Western Australia. Let us be honest with regard to this. What a cry we get

about State trading, and especially the State Implement Works. I said to a gentleman the other day, "What a pity it would be if we wiped out State trading in Western Australia, because then the President of the (Chamber of Commerce would have nothing to talk about at the annual meeting; he would become barren." What is the position with regard to the State Implement Works? We are manufacturing here about £80,000 worth of implements a year. At the same time we are sending out of the State, to Victoria, over £300,000 annually to buy agricultural machinery there.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Over £400,000.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The amount is between £300,000 and £400,000. Much of that machinery could be manufactured in Western Australia. However, the producers who want markets for their products send money for machinery to the Eastern States, thus providing markets for the producers there.

Mr. Teesdale: Do you let I.A.B. clients purchase imported machinery?

Mr. Thomson: Of course.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: So far as I am concerned, there will never be any money advanced by the Government to be sent out of Western Australia, if equal quality and price are obtainable locally.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Ah, that is it!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There are in Western Australia workmen equal to any workmen elsewhere.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But you have not the patents.

Mr. Latham: You cannot make spring steel here. It has to be imported.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Spring steel is always imported. However, we have the pick of the world's workmen here. And then people talk about quality! The price of our products, too, should be such as would enable the things to be produced here, so that our other producers may benefit.

Mr. Latham: The farmers gave the State Implement Works a fair spin in the beginning, but they did not get the article.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They did get the article. It is a matter of prejudice. Recently I was speaking to one of the largest farmers in your electorate, Mr. Speaker, an engineer by profession; and he told me that on his farm he used nothing but State implements, which he said were the best obtainable in Australia. He has tried the others, and thrown them on one side.

Mr. Thomson: He is an exception.

Mr. Latham: I hope Mr. Speaker will give me an introduction to him.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Isn't the Minister coming back to the motion?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have seen articles which had been manufactured in Perth, in Kalgoorlie, in Fremantle, eatable goods, of which the labels had been printed in London; and those labels asserted that the packages on which they were pasted had been manufactured in London.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Fremantle ought to be more honest.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have the labels at home now. The goods were all right, but the prejudice was there. So long as the public were told that the goods had been manufactured in London, they were quite satisfied with them. Nine times out of ten it is a matter of prejudice against Western Australian goods. I would not have taken so long had it not been for the interjection. I trust the select committee will be able to assist towards providing better conditions for the sale of produce, and better prices for the producers, and cheaper prices for the consumers.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [9.38]: The previous Minister for Lands has suggested to my mind that possibly I could get the mover of the motion to add to it words applying it to oversea markets as well. The notice of motion I have on the Notice Paper looks rather formidable, as if it would mean a lot of trouble and expense; but the information is obtainable at the minimum of expense, and without anyone going out of Perth. I was rung up to-day with regard to certain associations in this State. The people of the Upper Swan, having learnt that I had a motion coming on, rang me up to say that they were very much concerned as to the remarks about raisins by the Minister for Lands, and that those remarks justified their concern regarding what the future held for them relatively to markets. A meeting has been called in Upper Swan for this week-end, and I have been asked to attend, with other members interested in the district. One Upper Swan representative has paid a visit to the Eastern States, and as a result has many suggestions to offer. It is with the object of co-ordinating, and giving sequence to, the information gathered in this State, that I have given notice of my motion. If the mover of the motion before the Chair is agreeable, I wish to add to his motion the words, "oversea markets."

Mr. Thomson: Better keep it separate.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It has been intimated to me that the Minister for Agriculture would not be agreeable to my motion.

Mr. Taylor: The hon. member cannot anticipate his motion.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I am not discussing my motion at all. Let the member for Mt.



Margaret speak in his turn. I wish to shorten discussion on my motion, or cut it out altogether. The Minister for Lands just now indicated that in his opinion the proposed inquiry was not sufficiently extensive, and that it must include oversea markets.

Mr. LATHAM (York) [9.41]: I sincerely trust that the mover will not agree to the last speaker's suggestion, which moreover is quite out of place coming from the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths), in view of the fact that the other motion was already on the Notice Paper when he gave notice of his motion.

Mr. Marshall: Brotherly love!

Mr. LATHAM: There is no brotherly love about it; I am simply stating facts. The motion of the member for Perth is clear and distinct, and so much cannot be said of the motion of the member for Avon. It would be a pity to spoil the motion of the member for Perth, which the general feeling of this House supports. Let us not cloud the issue. When the motion of the member for Avon is reached let us discuss that on its merits.

Mr. Griffiths: By way of explanation, I believe I have a chance of getting my motion carried.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must inform the hon. member that he cannot anticipate a notice of motion on the Notice Paper.

Mr. LUTEY (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [9.43]: I sincerely trust the House will agree to the addition of the words "oversea markets" to the motion. The notice of motion given by the member for Avon will shortly be before the House. I fail to see why the proposed select committee should not go into this all-important question of oversea markets, perhaps the greatest question—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss a question already on the Notice Paper.

Mr. LUTEY: I think it would be competent for me to move the addition to this motion of words which would dispose of the notice of motion by the member for Avon. If such an amendment were carried, presumably the member for Avon would be willing to withdraw his notice of motion. It would be a common-sense course to extend the scope of the proposed select committee by adding those words to the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is distinctly out of order. They are two entirely separate matters. I cannot allow a discussion of a later matter at this juncture.

Mr. LUTEY: Would I be in order if I moved an amendment to add to the motion the words "and overseas"?

Mr. SPEAKER: No. The motion deals with the metropolitan area and has nothing to do with overseas markets.

Mr. Taylor: You cannot get a trip to Canada out of this!

Mr. MANN (Perth—in reply) [9.46]: I am pleased that the Minister for Agriculture has agreed to support the motion, and that hon. members who have spoken are in favour of the appointment of a select committee. Much good will result from the investigation and a great mass of information will be gathered to be placed before the House. The meat question is important. One matter we will have to investigate is the reason why the number of bullocks brought down from the Kimberleys has dropped from 25,000 or 30,000 head 10 years ago, to 13,000 head now. Is it that the cattle are not grown now, or is it that transport is not available? It may be that the present being a drought year accounts for the latest shortage, but that cannot account for the decrease during the last four consecutive years. The Honorary Minister (Hon. S. W. Munsie) read into my speech, when introducing the motion, the words "this Government." That gave a meaning I never intended to convey. I said that the first frozen meat distributed this year was some that had been brought down by the late Government last year, and that it was then still in good condition. The Honorary Minister seemed to suggest that I desired to cast some reflection upon the present Government. That was not so. He went on to say that he was in favour of frozen meat, and that it was good. That is not what he said last year. The "Hansard" report of his speech on the 16th August, 1923, contained the following:—

Chilled meat from Wyndham is preferable to much of the fresh meat sold in Perth. But I would not have frozen meat.

The Minister for Agriculture: You would have frozen meat if it were properly thawed out.

Mr. Munsie: I do not profess to be an expert, but men of experience have told me that no matter how it be cooked, frozen meat is not the same. It has not the substance in it.

On that occasion he did raise an objection to the quality of frozen meat.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I am pleased that the hon. member read that extract because he has neglected to read that I quoted someone else's opinion, not my own.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You should not borrow other people's opinion.

Mr. MANN: But I read the Honorary Minister's own statement.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I have had experience since then and I have tasted frozen meat. I say it is as good.

Mr. MANN: I am glad that the House realises the necessity for such an inquiry.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken and a select committee appointed consisting of Messrs. Clydesdale, Brown, Millington, North, and the mover, with power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, and to report on the 24th September.

# MOTION—POLICE DEPARTMENT, ADMINISTRATION.

*To inquire by Select Committee.*

Debate resumed from 27th August on the motion by Mr. Hughes—

*That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the administration of the Police Department.*

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [9.59]: As Minister controlling the Police Department I have no grave objection to the inquiry sought by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes). If the statements made can be borne out by evidence before the select committee, everyone will admit that an inquiry is necessary. In common with other members I have been told that there is discontent in the Police Department, particularly regarding promotions. The trouble is that everyone within reasonable reach of appointment to higher positions consider they are the men for the jobs, and naturally if they do not get the promotion they seek, they become discontented. During the past week or so representatives of the Police Association waited upon me as a deputation and their representations indicated they were dissatisfied with the present position, because they suggested the appointment of an appeal board which would go into such matters as promotions.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is not a matter for inquiry by select committee.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am merely pointing out that apparently there is some discontent existing in the Police Force regarding the methods adopted in deciding upon promotions. If that is so, possibly a select committee would ascertain whether there is any serious cause for discontent, or whether it is merely the resentment of disappointed applicants for promotion. If the select committee does so much, it will be doing a service, not only to the force, but to the community generally. As for the suggested appeal board, there is such a body in New South Wales. If the select committee were to recommend the appointment of an appeal board in this State, no doubt the House would agree to legislation giving effect to that proposal. It has been said that the Commissioner of Police has used his influence to debar the promotion of certain officers recommended by the inspectorial board. Of course, the Commissioner would certainly deny such a charge. That, also, would be inquired into by the select committee.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You will have no discipline at all.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: We will have discipline, but we want justice also. I am not taking up an attitude one way or the other. Still, it cannot be denied that if, as the mover of the motion said, senior men, recommended on two occasions for promotion, have suddenly found themselves supplanted, they should have an opportunity to learn why

they were turned down. No member would say that seniority should be the only factor in respect to promotion. If there be one thing necessary in the police force it is that men in the higher positions should be men of capacity and intelligence, men who have won promotion on merit. A man who with long, unblemished service has been recommended for promotion should be told distinctly why promotion is not allowed to come his way.

Mr. Thomson: Could not you, as Minister, deal with that?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The whole position in respect of promotion has been causing discontent in the force. The mover of the motion said that officers were encouraged to obtain convictions, and that to this end evidence had been manufactured.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Such a statement should be treated with the contempt it deserves.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: But it a man occupying a seat in the House makes such a statement, and the House considers there should be an inquiry, I am not going to burke the House in its desire.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Well, let the House vote on non-party lines.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Certainly. This is not a party measure. I have not had the whip cracked. As Minister controlling the department I know that the Commissioner himself has no desire to burke the inquiry if the House wishes it. Every member on this side will be free to vote as he likes. If the inquiry be held, the mover of the motion will have opportunity to justify his statements. He said, amongst other things, that evidence was got by the employment of women of ill repute. I know from the Commissioner himself and also by official documents that the Commissioner is not favourable to that sort of thing.

Mr. Teesdale: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There is on the file a minute published on the 10th June, a long time before there was any thought of the proposed inquiry. The Commissioner, referring to a case similar to that alluded to by the mover of the motion, wrote this minute—

No member of the force, either married or single, should be placed in such a compromising position, and constables—and—are very much to blame for their action. The method adopted was a despicable way of getting a case, and if either constable thinks he will get support or commendation from me for such work he is very much mistaken. I thought my views on this subject were very well known. Only a few months ago I took exception to constables—and—acting similarly. There are other ways of dealing with such cases.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then you don't want an inquiry into that.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I do not say there is any need for it on that point. I am informing the House of the

Commissioner's views and showing that, on that point, the mover of the motion has no cause for complaint. I thought that in fairness to the Commissioner this document should be read to hon. members before they vote on the motion.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Well, you have read it to us now.

Mr. Thomson: Yes, it was quite right to give it to us.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If hon. members think the inquiry necessary, they have only to say so. The police are in a peculiar position in the community, inasmuch as in the performance of their duty frequently they come into conflict with various members of the public. Because of that, in an inquiry such as is proposed, persons making statements should be sworn. Then if their statements are subsequently proved to be false, they have to take full responsibility for them.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The mover of the motion ought to have to take full responsibility.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The motion is very broad, covering the general administration of the police. If the inquiry results in recommendations calculated to improve the force, those recommendations will have the serious attention of the Government. Generally the conditions of the force are fairly satisfactory to the members of the force, but in some instances there is discontent.

Mr. Mann: You get that in every department.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There is some of it here.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, amongst the Opposition. Police officers who think they ought to have promotion are dissatisfied at not getting it. All members on this side will be free to vote as they like on this motion except, of course, the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) who, as mover of the motion, will have to vote for it. The inquiry would clear the air and give satisfaction, not only to the Commissioner of Police, but also to members of the force. I have no objection to the motion.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [10.11]: I am gratified that this motion is to be dealt with on non-party lines, but I am sorry the Minister did not resist it altogether. There never has been submitted to the House a proposal supported by so little evidence as is this motion.

Mr. Hughes: We have not taken any evidence yet.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The statements made by the hon. member do not justify the slightest inquiry. The most serious charge made by the member for East Perth has been satisfactorily met by the Commissioner's minute, read to us by the Minister. Nothing suggested by the member for East Perth would

justify in the slightest degree the proposed inquiry. I am disappointed in finding that the Minister has agreed to the inquiry.

The Minister for Railways: I have not agreed; I have left it to the House.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Every question raised by the member for East Perth could be dealt with by the Minister. In moving the motion the member for East Perth said, "I do not propose to say much in support of the motion." Actually he said nothing in support of it. He dealt with promotions, but what did he say on that point to justify inquiry? Nothing at all that the Minister could not deal with. There always will be trouble about promotion. Even when a Ministry is formed there is trouble about promotion.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You have had personal experience of that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister has dealt with the statement that the police are encouraged to get convictions, and has shown that there was no truth whatever in the statement. Something was said about men being sent to out-stations. But does that require a select committee? Of course, it not infrequently happens that married men sent to out-stations would prefer to be in the city near schools for their children. But the requirements of the service make it impossible for all to be in the city. The out country has to be looked after as well as the city. There is no justification for a select committee to inquire into the appointment of men to positions in the out-stations. The administration can deal with that. We have to congratulate ourselves upon our police force. If there is a branch of the service of which we should be proud, it is the police force. I had opportunities to discuss matters affecting the police with representatives of other States, and I am certain there is no better force in Australia than ours. It is well officered and well manned, and the police are doing their duty well. Their's is not a pleasant task, but they carry out their duties tactfully and altogether a high state of efficiency is displayed. The House would be justified in granting an inquiry only into a serious charge that the Government were not capable of dealing with, a serious charge sustained by evidence.

Mr. Taylor: And not on bald statements.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Some definite charge should be made and the statements should be substantiated. The House should be satisfied that there is grave need for an inquiry, that there is something wrong with the force or some member of it, or that there is some defect in administration before entertaining a

proposal for an inquiry. The House must realise that the very lives and property of the people would be jeopardised if the force were other than what it is. If we look back over the crimes that have been committed and the arrests that have been effected for serious offences in this State, we must realise that very few criminals have escaped. It is in consequence of this that we are fairly free from crime—much freer than any other State. People can leave their homes in perfect safety, knowing that the control of the police is effective. Has any word been said against the behaviour of any member of the force? If an inquiry were granted, the select committee would gather information on all sorts of questions, information that had been communicated to the police only on the assurance that it would be treated as confidential. But for this assurance, the police would be unable to get necessary information for the prevention of crime, and what would happen then?

The Minister for Justice: No one suggests that should be done.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Would the police be assisted in the discharge of their duty if certain facts became known? Members should endeavour to realise what will happen if an inquiry be held.

The Minister for Justice: Do you think there will be on the inquiry anyone so foolish as to publish such information for fun?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Does not the Minister know what happens when such inquiries are held?

The Minister for Justice: I know that most members have a fair sense of responsibility and would not do anything of that description.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister is not so green as he would have me believe. He knows what happens at these inquiries; we have had so much experience of them. When a select committee has been asked for in the past, the Minister has said that anybody could go along and request to give evidence.

The Minister for Justice: That evidence is not published. Unless it is substantiated, no notice would be taken of it.

Mr. Taylor: The evidence is submitted to the House.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Every detail of the evidence is published.

The Premier: The evidence of select committees is not published in the Press; only that of Royal Commissions is published.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But the evidence must be recorded and printed and presented to Parliament. It becomes public whether it is published day by day or at the termination of the inquiry. It

is not wise in the interests of the community to hold an inquiry on the statements advanced by the member for East Perth. He did not utter a word in justification of an inquiry. I cannot understand why the Minister did not object to the motion. I have sufficient confidence in the Government to believe they can manage the Police Department. Nothing has happened that is beyond their power to control, and anything that does happen they will be able to set right. Ministers enjoy the confidence of the people, and it is for them to take any action that may be necessary. This is too serious a matter; we cannot play battledore and shuttlecock with the police force without having to pay for it. We should not waste time in considering the motion. If an inquiry were held no good could come of it, but much harm might result, the effects of which would probably be felt for years. If the hon. member knows of anything that is wrong, let him go to the Minister, who will set it right.

Mr. Hughes: It is a question of principles in administration.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Administration be hanged! What do you know about the administration of the police force?

Mr. Hughes: A good deal.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: You know nothing about it.

Mr. Lambert: You are very emphatic.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If it is merely a matter of administration, I am in a better position to speak than is any member of the House. I was closely in touch with the administration for years, and the present Premier was in touch with it prior to that for a period of five years.

The Premier: I was in touch with it once or twice.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We do not want a select committee to inquire into petty grievances.

Mr. Lambert: It would not do any harm to try to better a good force.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is not the right way to approach the question. I do not think the force would be bettered by anything a select committee could do. I hope the House will reject the motion. It is scandalous for a member to come here and ask for an inquiry without justifying his statement in any way.

Mr. Hughes: You know the inside of the police force; tell us about it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have not yet found the inside of the hon. member, and I suppose I never shall.

Mr. Hughes: We want to see the inside of the police force.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I know the work of the police force is highly satisfactory.

Mr. Lambert: It is the best police force in Australia, anyhow.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: An inquiry will do harm. The hon. member has not justified his request and the House should reject the motion.

On motion by Mr. Lambert, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.26 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 4th September, 1924.*

	PAGE
Questions: Fruit Marketing Legislation	622
Kangaroo Pest	622
Leave of Absence	622
Bills: Trust Funds Investment, 1R.	622
Bunbury Road Board Rates, 1R.	622
Inspection of Scaffolding, 3R.	622
Road Districts Rates, Com., Report	622
Jury Act Amendment, 2R., Com.	622
Noxious Weeds, 2R., Com.	636

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

### QUESTION—FRUIT MARKETING LEGISLATION.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, In view of the importance of correct data being available in connection with the proposed introduction of an Act on the lines of the Queensland Fruit Marketing Organisation Act, and for other purposes, have the Government decided to proceed with the taking of a census of fruit trees, including particulars of varieties, acreage, etc., as recommended at a conference of inter-State representative fruitgrowers? 2, Have the growers been supplied with the necessary forms? 3, If not, when will this be done?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, 2, and 3, The matter is now under consideration.

### QUESTION—KANGAROO PEST.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH asked the Honorary Minister (Hon. S. W. Munsie): That in view of the serious depredations and loss to settlers by kangaroos, will the Minister put into effect Clause 7 of "The Game Act, 1912," which vests in the Governor power to proclaim part or parts of the State into districts for a period of, say, twelve months, to enable the pest to

be dealt with, such districts to be proclaimed at the requests of the local governing bodies concerned?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE replied: No request for this to be done has yet been made, but when the necessity arises, careful consideration will be given the matter.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. C. P. Wansbrough, leave of absence for one week granted to the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) on the ground of ill-health.

### BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Trust Funds Investment.
  - 2, Bunbury Road Board Rates Validation.
- Introduced by the Minister for Works.

### BILL—INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

### BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS RATES.

*In Committee.*

Resumed from 2nd September.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Extension of time for registration of transfers:

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Murray-Wellington at a previous sitting, submitted the following amendment—

*That the following words be added to the clause:—"but subject, as regards any registration after the commencement of this Act, to the payment by the transferee, before the registration of the transfer, of any rates for the time being due in respect of the land, including rates and charges due and payable under any Act relating to water supply, sewerage, or drainage."*

I have considered the amendment and decided that it is out of order, on the ground that it is not relevant to the subject-matter of the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

### BILL—JURY ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from 2nd September.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.40]: We have heard a good deal concerning the iniquity of special juries, and the iniquity of the special qualifications for