

much more. If one were to go into the many provisions of the Bill it would only be wearying hon. members. I do not propose to do that, because it seems to me the Minister must necessarily be impressed with the fact that whilst members desire to pass a Bill dealing with main roads, they wish to see a measure worthy of Parliament, and one that will not give dissatisfaction. As a representative of the Metropolitan Province I would point out that the City Council have expended large sums on the construction of bitumenous roads, an expenditure that no other local authority has had to incur.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: And they have guaranteed the maintenance of those roads for some years.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes. If, under some legislative enactment, property or any rights be resumed, it is only fair that the owner of that property or rights should receive compensation for the loss sustained through the resumption. If the rights of the City Council in respect of those bitumenous roads are to be taken away, it will be only just if consideration be given to the expenditure that has been incurred on those roads. Having been a member of the Good Roads Association for quite a long time, I am particularly interested in this question of roads. I will support the second reading of the Bill, but under the reservation that the Bill be referred to a select committee.

On motion by Hon. J. R. Brown, debate adjourned.

### BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

- 1, Ministers' Titles;
- 2, Public Education Endowment Amendment.

Without amendment.

### BILL—JURY ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from Assembly and, on motion by the Honorary Minister, read a first time.

*House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 10th September, 1925.*

	PAGE
Privilege: Incorrect Press Report, Mr. Hughes and the "West Australian" ... ..	821
Question: Duty on Oils ... ..	827
Bills: W.A. Trustee, Executor, and Agency Co., Ltd. ... ..	827
Act Amendment (Private), 1A. ... ..	827
Forests Act Amendment, 1A. ... ..	827
Ministers' Titles, 3A., passed ... ..	827
Public Education Endowment, 3A., passed ... ..	827
Jury Act Amendment, 3A. ... ..	827
Roman Catholic Geraldton Church Property, 2A., Com. Report ... ..	827
City of Perth, 2A., Com. Report ... ..	828
Electoral Act Amendment, 2A. ... ..	838

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

### PRIVILEGE—INCORRECT PRESS REPORT.

*Mr. Hughes and the "West Australian."*

MR. HUGHES (East Perth) [4.32]: I rise on a question of privilege. I desire to direct the attention of the House to a breach of privilege contained in a Press report of the proceedings last night. I refer to a newspaper printed and published by Samuel Thomas Williams at the "West Australian" office, St. George's Terrace, Perth. The paragraph appears under the heading "News and Notes," and reads—

"Change your solicitor."—When all of the clauses of the Jury Act Amendment Bill had been dealt with in Committee in the Legislative Assembly yesterday, Mr. Sleeman sought to have inserted a provision giving women the optional right of sitting on juries. The amendment was ruled out of order by the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Lutey), who said that it was irrelevant to the subject matter of the Bill, which only dealt with the appointment of special jurors and the fixing of jurymen's fees. Mr. Sleeman moved to disagree with the ruling and consulted with Mr. Hughes, who has legal aspirations. The Speaker (Mr. T. Walker) upheld the ruling of the Chairman of Committees, and said that the title of the Bill could not be altered to cover the desired amendment. Thereupon Mr. Teesdale's deep voice boomed across the Chamber: "You will have to change your solicitor; I can see that."

I contend the paragraph is a breach of privilege on the following grounds:—(1.) It is not a correct and faithful report; (2.) The report is made mala fide; (3.) It is not fair and accurate; (4.) It is made with

malice. On the first point, Mr. Sleeman did not move to disagree with the Chairman's ruling after consulting me. Mr. Sleeman never consulted me as to whether he should move to disagree with the Chairman's ruling. The member for Fremantle is responsible for himself and does not need to consult other people. The first I heard of his intention to move to disagree with the ruling was when he told me he proposed to do so. The use of the word "consulted" is particularly unhappy, because it states very definitely and clearly that the hon. member acted on my advice. When I entered the Chamber Mr. Sleeman already had before him a copy of May's "Parliamentary Practice" opened at a certain place, and a copy of the Standing Orders in readiness to support his contention. It is not true that the hon. member moved to disagree with the Chairman's ruling, and consulted me. He did not consult me after he had moved to disagree with the ruling. The report is made mala fide because the matter is not printed under the proceedings of Parliament in the ordinary way, but is taken out and specially featured in a column headed "News and Notes."

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You were given a star position.

Mr. HUGHES: The remark of the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) appears in inverted commas. If it had been an ordinary report included in the ordinary proceedings, one could not claim that it was done mala fide, but the people responsible for the paragraph have gone to the trouble of giving it the most prominent position they could in the newspaper. Reports of proceedings, in order to be within privilege, must be fair and accurate. Is it fair for reporters seated in the Press gallery to make a definite statement of fact that Mr. Sleeman consulted with me?

Mr. Latham: They do not say that it was on any particular item.

Mr. HUGHES: From the reporters' position in the Press gallery how can they say whether he consulted with me or not? Is the privilege of reporting the proceedings of this Parliament to be so utterly disregarded that a pressman in the gallery seeing two hon. members in conversation is to be at liberty to construe what he likes from it? Is he to be at liberty to say that because two members were in conversation, he knows what took place between them? It is impossible for the pressmen to know what

takes place in private conversation between two members in their places in the Chamber. Surely they are not at liberty to put whatever words they like into the mouths of hon. members. It was impossible for the representatives of the Press to know whether the member for Fremantle consulted me. Through their disregard, their abuse, I may say, of privilege, they have misconstrued. Now I come to the most important feature: the question of malice. I take it I shall be permitted to digress a little in order to prove the malice that has been shown by this newspaper towards me.

Mr. George: But you are not the only one; I get a share of it.

Mr. HUGHES: If the hon. member gets his share, I hope he will join with me in protecting the rights and privileges of the House. I do not for one moment think that there was any venom or malice in the interjection made by the member for Roebourne. I regard it as just a thought that flashed across his mind, and he flung it across the Chamber.

Mr. Teesdale: That is so.

Mr. HUGHES: I absolutely exonerate the hon. member for the interjection, to which I take no exception.

Mr. Davy: It made us all laugh.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You are easily amused.

Mr. Davy: But you laughed, too.

Mr. HUGHES: The member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) is one of the children of this newspaper, and of course it can do no wrong.

Mr. Davy: I do not know what you mean by that.

Mr. HUGHES: Surely the hon. member is not going to be a party to an abuse of the privileges of members of this House! I want to show how this newspaper has been guilty of malice. Going back to November, 1922, the employees of this and other newspapers went on strike.

Mr. Latham: I do not think you should discuss that.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in discussing that.

Mr. HUGHES: Am I not at liberty to show where malice comes in?

Mr. SPEAKER: Until I have heard the hon. member's motion, I cannot say what he is speaking to. Matters of privilege involve fair comment, but it would not be right on a motion of privilege to introduce a matter that occurred years ago.

Mr. HUGHES: That will rather limit my opportunity to show the House where malice occurs.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know what form the hon. member's motion will take.

Mr. HUGHES: My motion will be—"That the printer and publisher of the 'West Australian' be censured for a breach of privilege in the publication of this paragraph."

Mr. SPEAKER: It is unnecessary to show any malice or motive whatsoever. Provided the hon. member can show that the publication is a breach of the rules, a reflection upon members or any member of this Chamber in his legislative capacity that is quite sufficient to prove a breach of privilege. The hon. member need not go to the extent of demonstrating any malicious motive. This House may be misrepresented or slandered, or a breach of privilege may be committed, even with the very best of motives.

Mr. HUGHES: I thought that the showing of malice would strengthen the position. As you have ruled that it is not necessary to show malice, I shall leave it at that. The innocent interjection of the member for Roebourne has been turned maliciously into a grave reflection, a reflection that must affect me seriously, apart from the House. I am sorry that I am forced to take this step because in the hurly-burly of public life I am quite capable of taking the rough with the smooth, and I invariably take whatever is going. But there is a limit to misrepresentation and this sort of thing.

Mr. Thomson: You are a bit thin-skinned.

Mr. HUGHES: There is a doctrine that public men should not be thin-skinned. I think public men require to be pretty thick-skinned.

Hon. G. Taylor: They need to be while you are here.

Mr. HUGHES: There is some limit to which newspapers should go, and I consider it my duty as a member of the House and for the protection of members' privileges to bring this matter before the House. I move—

That the publisher of the "West Australian" newspaper be censured for a breach of privilege in the publication of this paragraph.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle): I second the motion.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Nor-  
tham) [446]: Can we have a copy of the newspaper?

Mr. George: We do not know what this is about.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for East Perth himself read the article, but if hon. members desire to hear it again, the Clerk can read it.

The Clerk Assistant read the article.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know what the member for East Perth complains about.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If you would only keep your supporters quiet, we would not be run into this kind of trouble.

Mr. Latham: It is a free advertisement.

Hon. Sir James MITCHELL: I do not see that there has been a breach of privilege. I do not know how the interjection came to be made, unless something was said about the member for Fremantle having consulted the member for East Perth. If we are expected to take exception to everything printed with which we do not quite agree, the whole time of this Chamber will be taken up in listening to such complaints.

Mr. George: We should need a special session.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. What we say is reported in every paper, fairly accurately. As the result of abbreviated reports there must from time to time be something to which exception can be taken, as the sense may be altered by the omission of words. However, the sense is never altered by the introduction of words that were not used. Are the words, "You will have to change your solicitor" those to which the member for East Perth objects, or does he object to the words implying that the member for Fremantle consulted him? If it be a question of changing a solicitor, the member for East Perth cannot even be referred to. Of course we all hope that some day he will succeed in his ambition to become a solicitor, but he still has a long way to go. Every day and all day, whenever we take up a newspaper, we see far more serious lapses than this one, if this be a lapse. I do not think the member for East Perth can make a speech without going a good deal further than this article goes. Certainly I have never heard the hon. member make a speech without going further.

Mr. Hughes: On a point of order, I wish the hon. member to withdraw the statement

that I accuse people of something they have never done.

Mr. SPEAKER: A withdrawal of that statement is asked for.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I withdraw the remark, Sir. Even in his last speech the member for East Perth accused a member sitting on this side of the House of being one of the children of the "West Australian"—a much more serious accusation and calculated to do much more harm than the simple statement to which the member for East Perth draws attention to-day. If the member referred to should take exception to the publication of that statement in to-morrow's "West Australian," would that also be a breach of privilege? If ever there was a storm in a teacup, it is this motion. Probably the "West Australian" was merely anticipating an event when advising the member for Fremantle to change his solicitor. I have no doubt the member for Fremantle will do that when the member for East Perth has been admitted. If the member for East Perth had a right to feel aggrieved, if the matter were in any way serious, if a member had been misrepresented deliberately with the idea of doing him an injury, I would be the first to support a motion of this kind. But I cannot for the life of me see that the member for East Perth has the slightest justification for the action he has taken this afternoon.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.55]: At the first glance it might be considered that no serious grounds for complaint existed, but in my opinion the member for East Perth has reason to complain of the wording of the paragraph. The House should, I consider, resist any attempt to hold its members up to ridicule in the columns of the public Press. The whole substance of the paragraph, to my mind, is that the member for Fremantle took certain steps to disagree with a ruling of the Chairman of Committees, that the matter was referred to the Speaker, and that the contention of the member for Fremantle was not upheld. In other words, the member for Fremantle took steps which were without justification, steps in which he was not supported by the Standing Orders or the rules of the House. It could be held that he made a foolish move in attempting to disagree with the Chairman of Committees. Comment upon the action of the member for

Fremantle in this connection would be all right, but the paragraph places the responsibility for that action upon the member for East Perth.

Hon. G. Taylor: Not a bad place to put it, either.

The PREMIER: I do not know that. I do not think any member is entitled to ask that some other member shall carry his sins. It is entirely wrong to hold up the member for East Perth as the adviser of the member for Fremantle in doing something for which there was no justification. Has a newspaper reporter the right to divine the thoughts of hon. members because he sees them engaged in conversation? Even though he saw the member for Fremantle and the member for East Perth engaged in conversation with each other, what right had the newspaper reporter to conclude that the member for East Perth was advising the member for Fremantle on this particular point? It was an unwarranted assumption. It is perfectly right to report what is said in this House, and to draw conclusions from what is said; but to assert, as this paragraph does, that the member for East Perth advised the member for Fremantle, is wrong. No newspaper man has the right to assert such a thing. First of all the paragraph states that the member for Fremantle took steps for which he had no grounds, and then it implies that no blame is attachable to that hon. member because he acted on the advice of the member for East Perth.

Mr. Latham: The paragraph only says that the member for Fremantle consulted the member for East Perth. It does not say that the member for East Perth advised the member for Fremantle.

The PREMIER: That is mere subterfuge. The whole paragraph deals with the question of the motion to disagree with the Chairman's ruling. The motion is rejected, and the newspaper reporter speaks of "Mr. Sleeman, who had consulted with Mr. Hughes." The only inference to be drawn from that, the only interpretation to be placed upon it, is that the member for Fremantle had consulted the member for East Perth as to the motion to disagree with the Chairman's ruling.

Mr. George: Do we not consult one another? What harm is there in consulting?

The PREMIER: No harm at all; but is a newspaper reporter entitled to say that a member of this House takes a certain ac-

tion, with which the Speaker disagrees, on the advice of another member? I may consult with the member for Murray-Wellington, but is anybody entitled to say what I am consulting him about?

Mr. George: No.

The PREMIER: This paragraph does say that, and that is the offence. The paragraph says the member for Fremantle consulted with the member for East Perth on this particular matter.

Mr. Sampson: You might read that into it.

The PREMIER: That is nonsense. Nothing else is sought to be conveyed in the paragraph than that the member for Fremantle acted on the advice of the member for East Perth. Surely hon. members will not try to deny that.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: And that he had been misadvised.

The PREMIER: The hon. member now says it is not true and that untruth is based upon an assumption by the reporter. Apparently the only justification for the assumption is the fact that the reporter saw two members in conversation.

Mr. Hughes: Two members who were sitting beside each other.

The PREMIER: Things have come to a pretty pass if an hon. member cannot converse with the one sitting next to him, without a newspaper reporter drawing such an assumption. The member for East Perth has something to complain of and I do not think we should pass lightly over any attempt to hold any hon. member up to ridicule. It looks nice because the member for East Perth is a law student, to work in the fact that he has legal aspirations. The impression sought to be conveyed by the paragraph is that the member for East Perth is a law student, that he advised the member for Fremantle and gave him foolish advice.

Mr. Taylor: A hush lawyer!

The PREMIER: We are justified in passing the motion and the member for East Perth is entitled to complain of the tone of the paragraph.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [5.2]: I support the motion. I am in the best position of any hon. member to say whether the paragraph in the "West Australian" is right or wrong. I did not consult the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes), nor did I tell him I intended to move to disagree

with the ruling of the Chairman of Committees until a couple of minutes before I did so. I did not ask him for any advice, nor did he advise me. There is a certain amount of malice in the statement in the "West Australian," in that reference is made to the member for East Perth as a law student. I think that reference was one, the effect of which was to criticise him regarding his ability to advise me. It suggested making me endeavour to do something and that his advice was wrong. I am prepared to accept the blame for any action I take. I assure the House that I did not consult the member for East Perth and I acted on my own initiative.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [5.4]: No one can accuse me of being a great advocate of the Press. I have condemned the Press on occasions for the way they have abused their privileges. In this instance, however, it seems to me that the paragraph deals merely with a simple jocular remark. I heard the remark from across the Chamber and looked across at the time. There was, in a way, justification for saying there was a conversation taking place at the time. I do not say, in legal phraseology, that the member for East Perth was being consulted. The only objection that I can see arises out of that word is that the member for East Perth is a law student and the word "consulting" is always used when reference is made to a conversation with the solicitor whose advice is sought. The wording of the paragraph contained the following:—

When all the clauses of the Jury Act Amendment Bill had been dealt with in Committee in the Legislative Assembly yesterday, Mr. Sleeman sought to have inserted a provision giving women the optional right of sitting on juries. The amendment was ruled out of order by the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Lutey), who said that it was irrelevant to the subject matter of the Bill, which only dealt with the appointment of special jurors and the fixing of jurymen's fees. Mr. Sleeman moved to disagree with the ruling, and consulted with Mr. Hughes, who has legal aspirations.

The paragraph does not say that he consulted with the member for East Perth before taking action. The paragraph also contained the following concluding sentence:—

Thereupon Mr. Teesdale's deep voice boomed across the Chamber: "You will have to change your solicitor, I can see that."

We all heard that interjection and it caused a laugh. It would cause a laugh under similar circumstances again.

Mr. Thomson: It was only a jocular remark.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Yes, and I am sorry to hear that the feelings of the member for East Perth have been wounded and lacerated by the paragraph. If the hon. member feels that way, he should have regard for the feelings of other people outside Parliament, who are not here to defend themselves. If he were to amend his actions in that direction, it would a great feather in his cap. I can give absolute proof to demonstrate that he has tried by innuendo to injure people.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I will not go any further. I have said sufficient. I am sorry that so much importance has been attached to this simple jocular paragraph. It has been magnified into an article! It is most remarkable what we can do in this Chamber when we desire. This paragraph has emanated from an innocent mind possessing a sense of humour. There is not one particle of malice in it. I oppose the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have had the motion altered so as to make it conform to our Standing Orders. The motion now reads—

That Samuel Thomas Williams, of the "West Australian" office, in St. George's-terrace, Perth, in publishing the article entitled "Change Your Solicitor," in the issue of the 10th September, 1925, has been guilty of contempt.

MR. DAVY: (West Perth) [5.7]: I find it extremely difficult to know how to vote on the motion. As a newly arrived member in the House I have no idea as to what obtains in the House regarding breaches of privilege, contempt, and so on. I would have preferred to leave the matter in the hands of members more experienced and wise in Parliamentary procedure than myself. When I find, however, that some of the most experienced members differ amongst themselves, it is difficult for me to decide which way to vote. I must confess that when I read the paragraph in the "West Australian" this morning, it did not occur to me that there was any suggestion of malice or anything offensive in it. Having listened to the Premier, however, I

feel my previous views must be amended as to how we are to be treated outside the House. Not so long ago I was reported in the "West Australian" as having said here that starving women and children to death was an honest attempt to get rid of industrial troubles. Of course one sentence had been run into another and I was wrongly attributed with having made that statement.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: They misrepresented you, too.

Mr. DAVY: It did not occur to me that I should take measures to have the reporter censured and punished because of the mistake. I do not feel inclined to vote on the motion at all because I do not think what has been done merits the censuring of an individual outside the House. I would have been prepared to leave the matter in the hands of more experienced members and would have preferred it to be left to you, Mr. Speaker, to decide whether a breach of privilege had been committed.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.10]: I am amazed to think that the House should be asked to waste its time over such a trumpery matter. To think that an hon. member could, in all seriousness, move that the publisher of the leading journal in the State was guilty of contempt because of a purely jocular paragraph, is amazing.

Mr. Latham: It was based on an interjection.

Mr. THOMSON: Yes, on a purely jocular remark. I am surprised that the member for East Perth should move such a motion in such serious tones. I trust the House will not waste any more time. We are sent here to discuss matters of much greater importance to the State than this tuppenny-ha'penny matter. Surely to goodness we have not descended to the level of children that we should seriously take up the time of Parliament with such a matter, merely because a reporter wrote a paragraph on the statement made by an hon. member that another should change his solicitor. More bitter interjections have been made than this jocular one and I trust the hon. member will not proceed with his absurd motion and will not hold Parliament and this House in particular up to the ridicule of the people outside.

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

Ayes .. .. .	23
Noes .. .. .	19
Majority for .. ..	4

## AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Luty
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Collier	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Heron	Mr. Troy
Miss Holman	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Willcock
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Millington
Mr. Lamond	(Teller.)

## NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Barnard	Mr. North
Mr. Brown	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Davy	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Denton	Mr. Taylor
Mr. George	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Latham	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Mann	(Teller.)

Mr. SPEAKER: The question thus passes in the affirmative.

Mr. Thomson: In the absurdity!

Mr. Stubbs: Are you going to hang him?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Thomson: I am sorry. I should not have said that.

The Premier: Is that not a reflection upon the House?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: On a point of order. What the Leader of the Country Party says amounts to a reflection on the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, it is a reflection on the House.

Mr. THOMSON: I withdraw, Mr. Speaker; I had no intention whatever of reflecting on the House.

### QUESTION—DUTY ON OILS.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that the Federal Government are imposing a duty of 3½d. per gallon, approximately £3 10s. per ton, on crude and residual oils? 2, Is he aware that these oils are extensively used in Western Australia? 3, Is he aware that this duty will have a very serious effect on proposed new mining

developments in this State, particularly at Wiluna? 4, Is he aware that if this tax is imposed, the Wiluna claims, which are on the verge of flotation, will be saddled with an estimated increased burden of £70,000? 5, Is he aware that the Wyndham Meat Works use some hundreds of tons of these oils per annum? 6, As the tax would operate detrimentally to the development of Western Australia, does he intend to oppose strongly its imposition?

The PREMIER: replied: 1, I am aware of the proposal. 2, Yes. 3, Yes. 4, It appears probable. 5, Yes. 6, This matter has been actively prosecuted with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition and Western Australian representatives in the Federal Houses since 12th August, 1925.

### BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, West Australian Trustee, Executor and Agency Co., Ltd. Act Amendment (Private).

Received from the Council and, on motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, read a first time.

2, Forests Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

### BILLS (3)—THIRD READING.

1, Ministers' Titles.

2, Public Education Endowment Amendment.

*Passed.*

3, Jury Act Amendment.

Transmitted to the Council.

### BILL—ROMAN CATHOLIC GERALDTON CHURCH PROPERTY.

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.25]: I have no objection to offer to the Bill. It only gives the same power to the Roman Catholic Church at Geraldton as we have given to other churches in the State. It is necessary that the church should have this power in addition to the powers we gave to the Roman Catholic Archbishop by passing a similar Bill previously.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

**BILL—CITY OF PERTH.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL** (Northam) [5.29]: This is a very important measure. My friend the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George), who has had experience as a city father for many years, and has also had charge of the Department of Public Works, will no doubt discuss the measure in some detail. The Bill is intended to give the City Council power to acquire land for the purpose of opening up new streets. It will also give them power to close, alter, widen, extend or divert any existing public roads. It will give them power to do many things in addition to opening up new public streets. The power is undoubtedly necessary. When the city was first laid out those responsible had very little regard for the future of the country or of Perth itself. The result is that the busiest part of the town, such as Hay-street, has a very narrow thoroughfare. I believe that years ago St. George's-terrace extended right away to the river, but that it was reduced in width at Lord-street where it became Adelaide-terrace. I understand that Hay-street was intended to be a much broader street.

The Minister for Lands: The oldest map provides for 75 links for Hay-street.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I understand it was intended, in the early days of settlement, to have a wider street than that.

The Minister for Lands: I refer to the first map of the Lands Department.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Whatever happened we have a narrow street there to-day. The authorities at the moment are now looking further ahead. They realise that before long Perth must be a big city. Its geographical situation makes it a very important town in the Commonwealth, and no doubt before many years have passed it will be a big city. I think the civic authori-

ties have a perfect right to ask for authority to make provision for the future. One power they seek is the right to acquire land not only for the purpose of a street. For public purposes land can be acquired to-day, but the municipal authorities seek to acquire a greater width of land than is needed for a new street. They wish to acquire land abutting on that street. The idea is quite clear. If the City Council expend a considerable sum of money in opening up a new street and creating valuable frontages, they consider they have a perfect right to the added value given to the land by reason of its being opened up, and they wish, I suppose, to cover the cost of putting in the new street. No great exception can be taken to that. The Bill gives the Council power to acquire land for the purpose of widening a thoroughfare. That, too, will probably be necessary. If streets were made for the running of motor traffic I think they would need to be three chains in width. I do not know that the widening of any street in Perth by a few feet will mean that motor traffic can be carried conveniently in the future.

The Minister for Lands: It would relieve the situation.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: A little perhaps. That power is necessary also. There is power to extend streets and to close thoroughfares. It is provided that nothing can be done in the way of expending money on this work until the ratepayers have been consulted. The Minister has told us that extended powers of borrowing will be given to provide for the acquisition of land taken for the purposes of this Bill. That is perfectly reasonable. It is also provided that, having acquired land, other than land required for a street, the City Council may sell or lease that land. That is a proper provision. I have nothing to say against the Bill so far as it gives authority to the City Council to do those things that are necessary. As the Council is elected by the ratepayers it will naturally do only those things that are necessary and right for the ratepayers. I am not quite clear that the Minister has provided all that is necessary by way of compensation to land owners for the loss of their land, and probably for loss of business. Loss must follow in some cases where people have been established for many years, and where good-will has become an important factor. I do not think that side



of the question has received sufficient consideration at the hands of the Minister.

The Minister for Lands: You will find it there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I cannot read into what I find in the Bill sufficient safeguards in this respect.

The Minister for Lands: There is fair compensation provided for the value of the land.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And for loss of business?

The Minister for Lands: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We can see whether that is so when we are in Committee. There is provision for the payment of compensation for the value of the land. It means that the owner will be paid for the loss of the land. If a street is put in from Hay-street to Murray-street, the whole of the blocks included in the frontage to Hay-street, as well as those included in the frontage to the new street, will greatly increase in value. I understand that compensation for the land is provided, but we want to be sure that this is so. We cannot offer any serious objection to the passing of the Bill, because it is a necessary measure. No doubt some people will object to their land being taken, but this cannot be helped when it is being done in the public interest. I do not think any objection can be taken to acquiring land that is abutting a thoroughfare. That land is only valuable by reason of its frontage to Murray-street and Hay-street, and it will become much more valuable if provided with another street frontage. I suppose the authority that provides the new street ought to reap some advantage from the added value given to the land abutting it. I do not know whether it would be possible to give the owner of the land an opportunity to pay the added value given by reason of the new street, and of being allowed to retain it. I do not know why a clause of that sort should not meet the case. The City Council only want to recover the added value that is given to the land abutting on the new street they make. It seems to me this is really a private Bill although it has been adopted by the Minister.

The Minister for Lands: That is necessary according to Standing Orders.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The measure did not originate from the Min-

ister and it is not his idea. It was prepared for the City Council.

The Minister for Lands: I altered it, but very little.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I daresay the Minister altered part of it, but made no material alteration such as would interfere with the achievement of the wishes of the City Council. The Bill is in every respect a private Bill, and I hope the Minister will not put it through for a few days.

The Minister for Lands: It is urgently needed.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It cannot be wanted so very urgently. The people concerned, the land owners and probably the ratepayers, ought to have the Bill before them for a few days so that they may know what is proposed.

The Minister for Lands: It will have to go to another place after it leaves here.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I know the Minister has a wholesome respect for another place. This Bill vitally affects the people of the city. It is not a Government measure, and ought either to be referred to a select committee or left before the public for a few days before being passed. It cannot be passed into law until it receives the assent of both Houses. The Minister knows that every private Bill has to be referred to a select committee.

The Minister for Lands: A local authority Bill is not a private Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is practically the same thing. It was never contemplated that a local authority would enter upon the business of buying and selling land.

The Minister for Lands: Yes. It has been done for years, even before we were born.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: For public use. That may have been the case in the Old Country, but our local authorities have not been given the right to acquire land for other than public purposes. When this Bill passes, the City Council will be empowered to acquire land. It will give the city authorities power they did not possess before. They will be able to deal in land, buy and sell it, lease it, own shops, and let shops, when the Bill passes.

The Minister for Lands: They can own and let shops now.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Not by compulsory purchase. There is no power

to compulsorily acquire land for such purposes.

The Minister for Lands: What about the shops in the Town Hall?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They did not acquire the land on which the Town Hall stands. It was vested in them by the Government.

The Minister for Works: They had to get the consent of the Minister before they leased the shops.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose that is because of the trust.

The Minister for Works: They had no power to let the shops on rental.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then we are doing something entirely new. They could not let the Town Hall shops without the approval of the Minister.

The Minister for Works: It is time they were given the power.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not object to it. At any rate, I do not intend to oppose the second reading.

**MR. GEORGE** (Murray-Wellington) [5.48]: I rather welcome the Bill. It is a march towards progress, and the powers are sought by those who are responsible for looking after the interests of the people. One of the things that would strike a member of this House on visiting the Old Country would be the old cities and old towns, and the manner in which they were laid out. The general appearance of those places would cause one to comment on the short-sightedness of the town builders in years gone by. There one can also see narrow streets, curved streets, dead-ends, and all sorts of things. The old idea, of course, was that people liked to be close together so that in case of attack they should be able to defend themselves. That does not strike us to-day. The conduct of traffic is altering so much, and conditions are changing to such an extent that those who are in charge of municipalities have been obliged to take heed and to see what they can do to meet the situation. When Joseph Chamberlain was Mayor of Birmingham, the municipal council of that city conceived the idea of putting in a new street. This was done, and it immediately proved to be of the greatest convenience by giving access to different parts of the city. The point that was taken was just what the Bill now before us provides, that they should acquire land

and buildings. The Birmingham Council did that and held the properties. They hold those properties to-day, and the buildings erected along that particular street are bringing in a big revenue. It took comparatively few years before the returns that came from that property extinguished the debt that was upon it. So far as the streets of Perth are concerned, I am not concerned as to how some came to be made narrow, and some wide. Those who laid out the streets, I suppose, had their reasons at the time. Hay-street particularly, and Murray-street now require to be widened if they are to carry the present day and future traffic. Believing that to be so, we should be prepared to help those who are in the position and are prepared to make the alterations required. Someone yesterday made a remark about business being confined to one particular part of the town, and asked the reason for it. It is the people who create the business in a particular locality. We find that the streets that are narrow are the best for retail businesses. The reason is obvious. If there are narrow streets the people who are on the footpaths can see the windows on both sides. There can be no question that steps must shortly be taken to remedy the difficulties that are now facing the municipal council because of the growth of the city in size and importance. The Perth City Council who are charged with the responsibility of looking after the city's affairs, must be granted necessary powers to enable them to deal with matters as they arise, and if necessary, to deal with them promptly, and perhaps generously. The Bill describes the powers it is proposed to give, and I intend to support the proposals. There are two provisions which probably will be debated. The first gives the municipal body power to lease land. I contend that once the land has been acquired, it is the duty of the City Council to hold it as a heritage for generations to come. Areas of this description, if properly managed, will help to materially reduce the city rates. When we see how values of land are increasing and how rentals are rising, then if the city acquires any of the main street frontages it will necessarily have to pay compensation. But I see no reason why the municipal council should not act as trustees for the councils that are to follow, and so on all the time. In this way not only the present generation will benefit, but future

generations as well. Then it is provided that in addition to leasing, the municipal council may sell. I would like to see that provision excised. I see no reason why, once having acquired valuable property, it should be sold; I can see a number of reasons why it should be held in trust for generations to come. I notice also that provision is made with regard to the alignment of buildings. I should like to see some stipulation with regard to the height of buildings. We see in places palatial structures and close by buildings of reasonable height, perhaps three or four storeys. Then again we may see adjoining, sky-scrappers, and so on. The height should be fixed to which the buildings should reach. This would be better not only from the aesthetic point of view but also for health reasons. Sir James Mitchell referred to the making up of loss for the disturbance of an individual's business by reason of its being taken away. I think that is covered in one of the clauses. If it is not, it should be. If a man's business is disturbed and he has to go elsewhere to start, he should be entitled to compensation. Then comes the question of depreciation. If something is to be allowed for depreciation, there should also be an allowance for appreciation, as a result of the widening of a street and the construction of buildings by the municipal council which would have the effect of improving the values of other properties. That is a point that might receive the consideration of the Minister before we get to the Committee stage. The Perth City Council will be granted the right to borrow money. I am under the impression that they can do that without consulting the rate-payers.

The Minister for Lands: The powers are there.

MR. GEORGE: The Bill will receive my cordial assistance, but in Committee it may be necessary to make some amendments. The Bill is a step in the right direction and I intend to support it.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [6.0]: I support the Bill which is long overdue. Still, I cannot see why the Municipal Corporations Act could not have been amended so that the powers proposed to be conferred on the Perth City Council by this Bill would have extended to other municipalities such as Fremantle and even Claremont-Cottes-

loe, where there are reasons and needs for widening certain streets before the trouble now being experienced in Perth reaches the acute stage there. The Bill even refers to the Municipal Corporations Act and obviously is more than half related to the parent Act. In Fremantle there are several narrow streets and the same applies to Claremont-Cottesloe and Leederville. As far as the Bill goes, however, I approve of it.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [6.2]: Every citizen will acknowledge the good work done by the Perth City Council, particularly in respect to the making of good roads. There has been a distinct advance in the last few years, and the ratepayers have reason to appreciate the work of the mayor and council. At the same time, I question the wisdom of the principle of widening streets. In some cities it may be desirable but in Perth there is not the necessity for it. It is claimed that it is essential to widen Hay-street and to construct certain new streets. I do not agree with that; the city should be allowed to expand naturally. All cities of any magnitude, Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney, have their congested streets.

The Minister for Lands: Have you been in Sydney?

MR. SAMPSON: Yes.

The Minister for Lands: Do you know they have widened streets there?

MR. SAMPSON: I was in Sydney when Oxford-street was being widened. No matter how streets like George, Pitt or Castle-reagh were widened, there would still be great congestion. In Adelaide the most popular shopping street is Rundle-street, and some years ago the tramlines were removed from that thoroughfare. It was feared that this would affect the popularity of the street, but experience has shown that it is still the most favoured shopping centre and traffic in it is still greatly congested. Involved in this question is the unearned increment, and I doubt the wisdom of confining all traffic to one or more streets in the centre of the capital.

MR. Latham: It is proposed to open new streets.

MR. SAMPSON: Yes. That is generally regarded as a wise step, but I question the wisdom of it, because no matter how many new streets were opened up in the centre of the city, they would immediately become congested. Let business expand. Let the outer

sections of the metropolis and the suburban centres receive their share. Suppose the city fathers of Melbourne decided that because Swanston, Collins or Bourke Streets, were congested, it was necessary to widen them, would the congestion be any less? I do not think it would. It would simply mean that traffic that is now diverted to Collingwood and other suburbs would return to the city proper. If the widening of our streets be carried out, we shall have experience of the unearned increment passing not to the ratepayers, but to property owners. However, I wish to speak specially in the interests of the suburbs, which have a difficult row to hoe.

The Minister for Lands: What difference does the widening of streets make to them?

Mr. SAMPSON: It does make a difference. The greater the consideration given to the centre of Perth, the heavier is the burden imposed upon the people endeavouring to make a living from shops in the suburbs. The Factories and Shops Act bears heavily upon suburban shopkeepers who are not permitted the right to trade beyond a certain hour.

The Minister for Lands: There is nothing about shopping in this Bill.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Speaker will check me if I refer to anything that is irrelevant to the Bill. My remarks have a reference to the Bill. I question the wisdom of widening Hay-street, making new streets or taking extreme measures in order to create a position that I submit will not relieve the congestion, but will have the effect of attracting a greater volume of traffic than ever into the centre of the city. If it is suggested that Hay-street is not sufficiently wide to cope with the traffic, let us do what was done in Rundle-street, Adelaide—take the trams out of the main street and leave it clear for other traffic. I admit the Bill has some good points, but I regard it as the outcome of an obsession amongst certain people in Perth. I am doubtful whether it will accomplish what it desired, and I am certain it will operate unfairly to shopkeepers whose business premises are located in the suburbs.

MR. MANN (Perth) [6.9]: I support the Bill. Anyone who has considered the conditions prevailing in the centre of Perth during the last year or two will be convinced of its necessity. The opening up of Forrest-place is evidence of the relief that would be

afforded to traffic if the narrow streets in the more congested parts of the city were widened.

Mr. Sampson: The William-street people do not say so.

Mr. MANN: We were suffering from the disadvantages arising from the bottle-neck at Beaufort-street bridge until the Minister for Railways decided to carry some of the tramway traffic over the Horseshoe bridge. There was great opposition to his proposal. Some people said the Horseshoe Bridge would become suicide bridge. The trams, however, are running over the bridge, no one has been killed, and the diversion has relieved the Beaufort-street bridge and taken the traffic due to William-street in that direction.

Mr. George: Some people would grumble at anything.

Mr. Thomson: They even grumbled at you when you shifted a footbridge.

Mr. George: But I did it.

Mr. MANN: The City of Perth has the Swan River as a barrier on the south side, and the railway as the barrier on the north side, and there will always be congestion in the city until trade extends to the north of the railway.

The Minister for Lands: Or across the river. When we get the Trans-line there, that will be the time.

Mr. MANN: This Bill is necessary to make provision for the better control of traffic brought about by motor transport and to make trading more convenient than it is at present.

MR. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [6.12]: I support the Bill, but I do not think any particular kudos is due to the people responsible for bringing it forward. The need for something of this kind has been apparent to the veriest new chum arriving in Hay-street, and the authorities I consider have been remiss in not having given people, who have erected expensive buildings during the last two or three years, some intimation of their intention, so that the new alignment could be conformed to. It is absurd to have allowed large firms to put up expensive glass fronts on an alignment that is now to be set farther back. One firm paid £9,000 for its island windows. It is appalling that the councils, not necessarily the present council, should not have intimated their intention, because the public will now have to pay for the demolition of £9,000 worth of

glass in that one shop alone. Instead of certain people taking credit to themselves that this Bill has been introduced, I think it should be remarked upon with bowed heads and a certain amount of shame that no action has been taken previously to save the people from being mulcted in this heavy loss. Still, it is better late than never, and I suppose the public will cheerfully pay as usual. I support the Bill, although it is somewhat late.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle—in reply) [6.13]: It appears that the provisions of the Bill are acceptable to members. The measure is urgent. In St. George's-terrace there is a proposal to put up a very large building and a deputation has waited upon me since notice was given of the Bill to ascertain whether it was likely to receive the approval of Parliament and how long it would be before it would take effect. The deputationists were about to commence building immediately, and the building would come in the centre of any extension of Forrest-place to St. George's-terrace. That is why I ask members to deal with the Bill right away. There is no necessity for delay because the council cannot do anything without taking a vote of the property owners of Perth. Every matter of extension must be referred to property owners before money can be raised for the purpose. Any 20 property owners can demand a vote on the question of any expenditure for such improvements. There is no occasion to delay the Bill because the question will come up for consideration by the ratepayers every time any work of the kind is contemplated.

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

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** Before the tea adjournment I was pointing out the urgency of the Bill. It makes provision for compensation, to which the Leader of the Opposition referred. It states that the City Council shall pay reasonable compensation for damages, or injuries caused in the exercise of their powers. If the parties concerned cannot come to a mutual arrangement, the matter will be referred to arbitration under the Arbitration Act of 1895. The position is, therefore, safeguarded. The member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) would like to see struck out the words giving the City Council power to sell.

That is our policy, but there would be great risk if this were done in a Bill of this kind.

**Hon. Sir James Mitchell:** It is not your work this time.

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** In Fremantle tenders were called by the local authority for the leasing of a property, as provided under the Act, but the ratepayers turned down the proposition. We are not the deciding factor in this matter. The decision rests entirely in the hands of the property owners in the city. If these dual powers were not given, it might be the means of preventing the widening or opening up of the city streets. Under the Bill the ratepayers will have it in their power to turn down any loan that may be asked for in connection with work of this description. I am surprised at the remark of the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson). He appears to have been suffering from the stories he heard in his young days. The streets in some parts of Cornwall are very narrow, and when a man wishes to kiss his sweetheart, who may live on the other side of the street from him, there is no need for him to cross the street to do so. Apparently the hon. member would like to preserve the old streets.

**Mr. Sampson:** It is not very generous on your part to endeavour to widen the breach.

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** I cannot agree with the hon. member. Almost everywhere in Australia it has been found necessary to widen the city streets. Hay-street was first laid down as a road 75 links in width, and it is that to-day. I heard that it had been reduced in width, but when I called for the old plan I found that it is to-day the same width as it was originally. Portion of St. George's-terrace was 100 links wide, Murray-street was 100 links wide, and Francis-street was 50 links wide. The last named street has since been widened. According to the old plan, many of the streets are now wider than when first laid out.

**Mr. George:** High-street, Fremantle, was once wider.

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** I do not know. We do not give the final word in regard to the carrying out of these works. The finality rests entirely with the property owners of the city.

**Mr. Teesdale:** And you have no financial responsibility?

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** No. In any proposal under this Bill for the raising

of a loan 20 owners of property in the city can demand that a vote shall be taken before the loan is raised. The Bill has been under discussion for some time. Deputations have waited upon the Minister for Works in regard to it, and it has been discussed in the City Council, and resolutions have been carried there and published in the Press. It is not a new thing to the ratepayers. No doubt they have refrained from raising any question because they knew by what had been done that they would have the final say in the matter.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee.*

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Acquisition of land:

Mr. GEORGE: The words "extended or widened street for such a depth as the Council may think fit" are rather ambiguous, and I suggest that the following should be substituted, "Not exceeding a point midway to an adjacent street." There is at present nothing to prevent the Council widening Hay-street to within a foot of St. George's-terrace.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This would apply only to lots fronting Hay-street, and not to lots fronting other streets. If the Council wish to widen Hay-street by 20ft., they can take all the lots fronting that street, but cannot go into another lot facing another street. If a lot was 110ft. deep, and the Council wanted 10ft. of its frontage, it could go to the whole depth of the lot, but I do not think that would be attempted. Those who have to vote on the question would hardly allow the Council to extend the width into another street.

Mr. George: They would not need to consult the ratepayers in respect of every piece of land they wanted to buy.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Before a loan can be raised, plans and specifications have to be prepared, and the Council have to show what they intend to do.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—Dealing with land when acquired:

Mr. GEORGE: Paragraph (e) refers to storm water and sewerage. These questions can be dealt with only after consultation and agreement with the Water Supply and Sewerage Department. Whatever loan is required under paragraph (g) should, I think, be held in trust. No one should be able to engage in trafficking in land.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4: Power to widen streets:

Mr. GEORGE: Paragraph (e) of the clause sets out that the Council shall pay reasonable compensation for damage or injury caused by the exercise of the powers of this section. I would like to know whether this will provide for compensation for injury done to a man's business, by way of damages owing to interference.

Th MINISTER FOR LANDS: The clause does not deal with any of the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act, but merely with those of the Bill itself. It refers to compensation for injury as the hon. member suggests. Unless an agreement can be arrived at, the parties can go to arbitration.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—Power to prescribe new building lines:

Mr. GEORGE: The clause provides, among other things, that compensation shall be paid only when land taken has been cleared of buildings and obstructions. I think the payment should take place within a reasonable date after the Council has signified its intention of taking over the land. If people have to wait until the land to be taken is cleared before they can receive their compensation, it may be a matter of years.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The position is quite clear. It means that the owners or occupiers will have the use of the buildings until such time as the Council is ready to take over the land, and clear the buildings away. Then the compensation will be paid.

Mr. George: But the Council get the land.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Not until the buildings and obstructions are removed.

Mr. SAMPSON: There is a possibility of an unfair condition of affairs arising. If a new building line is declared, it is conceivable that a person desirous of building will be compelled to carry out the work so that the building will be 10ft. or 15ft. back from the old alignment. That would be unfair un-

less a definite time were prescribed so that such a building would not be left in that position for an indefinite period.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If it were the intention of the Council to immediately purchase the full width of land required for the purpose of widening a road, there would be no necessity for prescribing the new alignment. All that would be necessary would be to resume the land and the buildings would be altered accordingly. The clause merely sets out that new buildings will have to be constructed on the new alignment and the Council will pay compensation when the land is cleared of buildings and obstructions.

Mr. Sampson: There is nothing to say when that will be done.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A definite date need not possibly be fixed.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: There need not be any anxiety regarding compensation because the clause sets out the position clearly. Surely no hon. member could conceive that the Perth City Council would be in a position to resume all the land on one side of Hay-street and pay for it straight away.

The Minister for Lands: Or any other street.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is so. It will have to be done as funds permit, and as new buildings and alterations are carried out. I regret that the City Council did not show their earnestness regarding the widening of Hay-street when alterations were carried out to the Town Hall building. The municipal authorities had an opportunity to set an example to the citizens generally, for they could then have set back the alignment without the necessity for any Bill for that particular purpose.

Mr. SAMPSON: It seems to me that any person erecting a building along the new alignment may find it located in an alcove as it were, for a considerable period.

The Minister for Lands: You will see that in Wellington-street now.

Mr. SAMPSON: I recognise there must be a start, but there should be a limit regarding the time during which the two alignments will be in existence.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6 to 9—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

## BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 1st September.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [8.1]: One approaches any amendment of the Electoral Act with a good deal of diffidence. Such a Bill ought to be a non-party measure, because of course if it be dealt with on party lines members of the stronger party are likely to carry it too far. What we want is legislation under which our elections may be conducted in the fairest possible way. I do not think any exception can be taken to the handing over of our rolls to the Federal Electoral Department. It should result in purer rolls than the State Department can possibly secure. If it were proposed that the Federal Department were to interfere with the conduct of our elections or with the laying down of our electoral boundaries, I should strenuously object. Nothing would induce me to support a measure that would give them any right of interference at all.

The Minister for Justice: They have no say whatever except in point of sub-divisions.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What the Minister proposes is very easy to provide for, because when our divisions are within their boundaries they can and will make such divisions the sub-divisions of their bigger areas. Their five seats embrace our 50 seats, and certainly they will have a good many well within their boundaries. In respect of that there is no difficulty, for they will make our boundaries the boundaries of their sub-divisions. Then the Minister explained that where their boundary cut one of our divisions in two there will be two sub-divisions. I was concerned about that until we got the Minister's explanation, which satisfied me that the thing can be worked quite well, notwithstanding that our boundaries are not co-terminous with theirs, and never will be, unless indeed they make their boundaries fit ours. When the State has to be cut into 50 electorates it is not possible to fit our work in with the work of the Federal Department, which cuts the State into five electorates. We adopted compulsory enrolment largely because people are careless about applying to have their names put on the roll, and in a measure because of the expense involved in bringing our rolls up to

date. There seemed to be no reason why we should undertake the cost of sending out canvassers to ask the electors to get their names on the roll, and so compulsory enrolment was introduced. The Federal Government, of course, have all their postal officials to help them in this work. I have no objection to the rolls being prepared by the Federal Department. However, there are some other provisions to which I take strong exception. I do not think it right that we should exempt certain people from the necessity for keeping their addresses up to date. We provide in our law that a man applying to be enrolled must give his name and address. Without that information, obviously the electoral registrar could not keep the rolls in order. Then we say that if a man changes his address he must notify the department of the change. We say, too, that a man who moves from one electorate to another must apply for a transfer or be fined. Unless that be done the roll cannot be kept in order. Under the Federal law also this has to be done, so under the Federal law all these men whom it is now proposed to exempt would have to notify their change of address. Since under that law the notification of change of address will be in the hands of the Federal Electoral Department, and since that department has to make up our rolls, it is very wrong of us to exempt boundary riders, commercial travellers and others of roving avocation from the necessity for notifying changes of address.

The Minister for Justice: Otherwise probably we should disfranchise a number of them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But under the Federal law they have to notify the change of address, and they are all quite well able to do it.

The Minister for Justice: Some of them do not work in one place for more than a few weeks at a time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: While others of them work for years in the one place. In any event they are all well able to write a notification to the department.

The Minister for Justice: But they change their address every four or five weeks.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Not many of them. Anyhow, a great many other people frequently change their address and yet have to notify the department of the change. There is no need for this clause,

and it is a very wrong provision to have in the Bill, because under it the rolls cannot be kept in order. Moreover, by this provision you make it certain that a man will vote where he thinks his vote will be most effective.

The Minister for Justice: He can be enrolled only for one electorate.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is said that in a district somewhat to the north of Perth, one man voted a dozen times at one election.

Mr. Panton: And it was officially declared that he was dead.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Whether or not he voted a dozen times, I daresay there are some who vote more than once.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: A member of another place voted twice at one election.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But that was entirely in error. He had a vote for the Legislative Council in each of two provinces. Having voted at one polling place he drove away and, coming to another polling place, erroneously thought that that was where he should cast his second vote. It was entirely a mistake.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I did not suggest that he did it wilfully. Still he did it. If anybody else had done it you would have said it was wilfully done.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, not in those circumstances. However, why should we exempt anybody from the obligation to keep his name on the roll? The prospector probably is moving about a good deal in one electorate, but the station hand certainly is not, nor is the farm hand. No electoral officer would expect a prospector to notify him every time he shifted his peg; it never has been expected. Let us keep our rolls as pure as possible; let us face our responsibilities, and let the man who changes his address notify the Department of that change.

Mr. Chesson: Out in some of these stations a man cannot get a claim card.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am not going to agree to a provision of that sort which will lead to votes being cast where the elector thinks they will be of most use.

The Minister for Justice: These men wander from one station to another wherever they can get a job.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose few single men have any fixed address, and many married men in the country transfer from one place to another fre-



quently, but that cannot be avoided. They must register. It is no hardship; it costs nothing. I view that provision with alarm, and shall do my best to have it eliminated. Why make an exemption under the State law, since the Minister is asking that the Federal department shall prepare the roll? The sleeper hewer is not exempted; he has to register.

Mr. Marshall: He travels over no great distances.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I think this will lead to fraud. Once a man gets on the roll, he may live where he pleases. He may be in the electorate or out of it.

Mr. Chesson: If he went out of it, he would be struck off the roll.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The electoral officer would not know of his movements, so how could he be struck off the roll? To-day he registers for some electorate, and in six months' time the electoral officer cannot find where he is. The electoral officer, however, is not permitted to strike him off until he ascertains that the man is outside the electorate.

Mr. Heron: But such a man is struck off.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Because to-day he has a fixed address, but under this provision he will not have a fixed address. He will be able to wander about as he pleases. The object of this amendment is to give men an opportunity to move about without notifying the electoral officer. They will be able to go into other electorates for six months or 12 months without the electoral officer being able to trace them. The electoral officer would not know whether they were entitled to vote in the division or not. Let us keep the rolls as clean as we can. This provision will merely offer an invitation to people to become very careless at any rate, if not to do wrong. I have often thought that a married man having a home and family might well be allowed to vote for the district in which his home is, unless he is permanently established somewhere else. There are many people who are away from home a good deal, though not altogether, men employed on Government construction work. They probably have a home in Perth or some other centre where the wife and family live, and they should be allowed to remain on the roll in the district where the home is. That would be fair. I suppose, as a rule, they do register and remain registered for the place where the

wife and family live. The Bill contains only four alterations of importance. The third one is the provision for compulsory voting. The Minister said that compulsory enrolment ought to be followed by provision for compulsory voting. Compulsory enrolment means that a man gets his name in a book—an electoral roll. That entitles him to vote. Nothing happens because of compulsory enrolment. But under compulsory voting members are selected for Parliament and something does happen. That something might be good or bad for the people. The Minister considers it would be good for the people if everyone on the roll were compelled to vote. At the last general election only about 62½ per cent. of the people recorded their votes. That was a very discreditable percentage. It is wrong of people to be so careless as to neglect the opportunity to choose their representatives in Parliament and the Government to control the affairs of the country. When they are so careless, one wonders why they should have been so insistent about getting the right to vote. I do not like compulsion, but I find it very difficult to contend that compulsory voting is wrong. It ought to be possible to avoid compulsion, but when the recorded votes are so few as compared with the total votes, I suppose something must be done. Compulsory voting will mean a good deal more work for members of Parliament and their committees during election time, because we shall have to see that everyone is informed of the responsibility to cast his vote. I do not know whether compulsory voting will be good for one party or another party; I am not concerned about that. If all the electors recorded their votes voluntarily, it would be possible to say that whatever the House decided was the desire of the people.

Mr. Marshall: Compulsory voting would not alter the people's political views.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I would say that at the last general elections 38 per cent. of the people had no political views at all.

The Minister for Justice: They were not very enthusiastic.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The 38 per cent. were not enthusiastic, and of the 62 per cent., I suppose we might as well admit that probably 30 per cent. were persuaded to go to the poll. My electorate always does its duty fairly.

Mr. Marshall: You will confess you are slipping a little.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am not slipping at all, but some of my electors slipped a bit, which is a very different thing. Apart from the district of Menzies, where there were only a handful of votes, the highest percentage of votes recorded—in any decent-sized electorate—was at Northam, where the percentage was nearly 76.

Mr. Heron: They are well organised there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Well, a lot of promises were made by the opposite party, and that no doubt helped to swell the percentage of voters. During that election, too, another matter caused people to go to the poll to vote against me and support my opponent. That was the prohibition issue.

Mr. Marshall: An issue outside of politics altogether.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It certainly cost me a good many votes, and I suppose it helped to swell the percentage of voters. There are so many factors that influence electors, and one might well wonder how much work will have to be done when compulsory voting becomes the law. Certainly members will have to address a far larger number of meetings, and they will need to have done for them a great deal more work than is done for them now. There are a large number of people who have a considerable interest in the country, and yet who are careless about voting; in fact, many of them frequently do not record their votes. Some contend that the party opposite are so well organised as to poll every possible vote at each election. I do not think that is so. No political organisation is perfect, or ever will be perfect. I can only hope that when all the people do vote, they will make a wise choice. I think they should be left to exercise a free choice. There ought to be no connection between politics and any other question. However, they are not always allowed to exercise a free choice. Elections are often decided on small side issues instead of on main questions.

The Minister for Justice: A little bit of mud in the water at North Perth causes dissatisfaction and people vote against the Government.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is so. It does not take very much to draw a red herring across the trail. Small issues

play too big a part at elections, so we shall see what the result of compulsory voting will be.

Hon. G. Taylor: Sandalwood was the issue up my way at the last election.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: While I do not like compulsion, I am not going to oppose compulsory voting in view of the unfortunate results of the past. There is another clause of the Bill which needs some consideration. Of course members opposite have considered this measure in detail. It is not a Government measure at all; it is a caucus measure.

Mr. Heron: You are wrong there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am not wrong.

Mr. Teesdale: Printed instructions.

The Minister for Justice: It would not have been brought here at all but for the proposal for the amalgamation of the rolls.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This is not a Government measure. There is another alteration to which I would like to refer. It is necessary now that a man shall reside in Western Australia for six months before he has the right to enrol. If a man is six months in Australia he can enrol after three months residence in Western Australia, under this Bill. That is not desirable. A man who comes to a new country should feel his feet before he is permitted to take part in determining who is to govern the country. A six months residence is not too long for him. A three months residence in the State may be merely a temporary sojourn. Anyone who has lived in Australia for three months before coming here can after staying here for three months take part in an election, about which he is not concerned. I do not know why the law is being altered, and I hope this clause will not be carried.

The Minister for Justice: This is one of the amendments we require to make the qualifications uniform.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is another proposal to which I hope the House will devote some attention. There is an amendment dealing with disqualifications. Aborigines of Australia are not permitted to vote.

Mr. Teesdale: This is one of the worst blots in the Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The blacks of South Africa and of the islands of the Pacific are not allowed to vote. Up

to the present half-bloods have not been allowed to vote.

Mr. Teesdale: In any country. I hope they will not be allowed to vote here either.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The great races of the world are not all white people. Ours is a white country, in which the children are entitled to be born white. There are other races for which one can have profound respect so long as they stay in their own country. I refer to such races as the Chinese and the Japanese; the yellow and the brown and the dark races. We have a respect for them, but their country is for them and ours is for us. We have nothing to say against the Japanese or Chinese. We respect them, but we say that Australia is a white man's country, and we believe in a white Australia. The countries I speak of are very little removed from us in many respects. The inhabitants are highly educated and intelligent, scientific and capable people, but they are not permitted to vote in this country.

The Premier: Except for another place.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In that respect we are superior to that place.

The Premier: It is a pretty nice Constitution that provides for Asiatics voting for the Council.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We will alter that.

Mr. Latham: It is not much worse than is proposed under the Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: While the blacks from Africa cannot vote, the child of an African black would be permitted to vote under this Bill.

The Minister for Justice: He would be an Australian citizen under the naturalisation laws.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He would be disqualified under the Act now.

The Minister for Justice: If he is born in Australia he is an Australian.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister says the child of an African and a white parent should be entitled to vote.

The Minister for Justice: That is part of the law now.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The half blood cannot vote under the law, but the Minister is amending it. The half blood is a disqualified person. It is proposed to wipe out this disqualification and allow him to vote. Such a proposal should never have been submitted to the House. Does the Min-

ister wish to encourage the building up of this unfortunate class?

Mr. Teesdale: It is a mistake. It must have slipped in.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Does he wish us to ignore the laws that we say should be respected? The white man is not allowed by law to marry an aboriginal woman, except by permission of the Governor, and yet the Minister says that the child of such a union shall have a vote. I confess there are some people of half-blood who are leading the lives of ordinary white people.

Mr. Teesdale: And others are not.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The great bulk of the people to whom this will refer will be found in the sparsely populated parts of the State, really in the North. It is of the people who live the lives of these persons that one must think in passing this law. We must have regard to the fact that we are going to make it possible for the child of a half-caste in the North, who is living the life a native leads, to get upon the roll.

Mr. Teesdale: And living in camps, too.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We are asked to agree that a child brought up in this way is the equal of a white child, with equal responsibilities, with equal ability and with equal rights to select the people who are to govern this country.

The Premier: The Home authorities are pressing for the franchise to be extended to British Indians who are resident here. Have they a greater claim to the franchise than our half-bloods?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In their country they have every right to vote. They are well educated and intelligent people, who are living a civilised life.

The Premier: I do not know that those who come to Australia are so highly educated.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have met many who are.

The Premier: They are not more highly educated than many of our half-bloods. The Australian half-blood is more entitled to a vote than is the Indian.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They are not entitled to vote. It is wrong to say that the half-caste in the North, who is living the life of a blackfellow, shall be entitled to be enrolled. Is the half-caste of the North to determine what our social system shall be?

The Premier: Is an Indian hawker who comes here to decide what our citizenship shall be?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If the Premier wishes it he will put it into this Bill.

The Premier: I do not.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He must take the responsibility for this Bill.

The Premier: I am being pressed by the Home Government to do this.

The Minister for Justice: It is not in the Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Is the Minister going to resist the pressure? If he is going to say that the half-blood is the equal of those he may refuse to enfranchise he ought to be logical and refuse to enfranchise the half-caste.

The Premier: The British Government think it ought to be done.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We do our own thinking in this country?

The Premier: What if it creates international complications?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is no comparison between the educated people of India and our half-castes.

The Premier: The Indian hawker is not an educated man.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have met many intelligent men amongst them. This is a white man's country, and white men should determine how it shall be governed. These people are not justified in expecting that we shall let them say how justice is to be administered in this country.

The Premier: They have a say in the making of the Commonwealth laws.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: A limited few.

The Premier: All of them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No.

The Premier: Yes. They can decide to deport a white Australian. They can vote on that question.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: No Australian can be deported.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have known of white men in this country being declared black.

The Premier: Only temporarily.

Mr. Panton: The declaration does not make a man black.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Apparently it is easy to declare a man black in this country.

The Premier: A half-caste in Australia can vote to deport an Australian citizen.

The Minister for Lands: That is why I am so quiet.

The Premier: They cannot deport me, but they can deport one of my colleagues.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Ministers can exercise their right to compel people to leave this State. The Minister for Works had a round with a gentleman who was glad to leave the State after the Minister had finished with him.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: I think he drove him away and deported him.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We are asked to say that these half castes of the North shall have the right to determine elections to this House.

Mr. Teesdale: Not only the North.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They have a right to sit in this House.

Mr. Teesdale: Oh!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They may become members of this Chamber.

The Premier: In New Zealand natives become Ministers of the Crown.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Maoris are very different from the natives in this country. We cannot compare the two.

Mr. Lamond: Do you object to Tom Noble?

The Premier: A half caste Chinese sat in our Federal Senate for many years.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Under the Bill there will be nothing to prevent some dark lady from Pilbara coming to this House, dressed in her National costume. No one seems to mind so long as the Minister approves. Pride of race is not limited to white people. The Chinese and Japanese despise each other, although both are civilised peoples, but they have some pride of race. The Hindoo pride of race is the real thing. Mixed blood is not wanted in India, China, Japan, or anywhere else except in Australia. This House is asked to agree to the mixture of the whites with the half-bloods under the Bill.

Mr. Teesdale: They don't mean it. It has only slipped in.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Surely the Minister has read something of history. It has never been the custom of British men

to marry the women of coloured races in countries they have conquered. On the other hand it has always been the custom of the Latin races to intermarry. We know the history of South America. First the Spaniards conquered the country, but later they were turned out by the half-bloods, who are now in charge of the countries there. So unfitted have those people been to rule, that countries that were prosperous are no longer in that happy condition. That is merely because the Government there has fallen into the hands of the half-bloods such as we are now asked to enfranchise. Certainly the half-bloods in South America have proved a scourge, although I do not suppose half-bloods would ever be a dominating influence in our country.

The Premier: One of the most prosperous countries in the world is in South America.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Which is that?

The Premier: The Argentine.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, and part of Brazil, which is largely governed by white people.

Mr. Teesdale: They have the "Greasers" there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Premier knows that there can be no stability or progress where such people exercise any considerable influence. Rich countries are impoverished under such rule. I hope the House will realise how easy it is for a few votes to decide the Parliamentary representation in some districts. At the last elections 113 votes determined the representation of five electorates in this Chamber.

Mr. Marshall: Some of you must have been scratching gravel to get in.

Mr. Teesdale: Some of you ought to be shovelling gravel.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If some had scratched gravel more, the results might have been different. In most of the instances I have in mind members opposite were returned with small majorities. However, it will be easy in some instances for a few votes to determine who the representative in Parliament shall be in some districts.

Mr. Marshall: How many of those people will be eligible to vote if the Bill be passed?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is for the Minister to say. We have agreed that all our white adult people shall be

given the right to elect representatives to this House and thus have, through their votes, a part in managing the affairs of the State.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Not under the present law.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Some of these people are taxpayers.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Does the hon. member argue that only people who pay taxes shall have the right to vote?

The Minister for Justice: People who pay taxes always argue that they should have the vote.

Mr. Teesdale: Afghans pay rates, but you would not give them the vote.

The Premier: They have a vote for the Council.

Mr. Teesdale: More's the pity.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Will members agree to giving these half-bloods the franchise? Are we to have no consideration for our standard of living and for our public education? Is our moral outlook to be lowered?

The Premier: Has the Commonwealth Parliament no regard for this?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What has the Commonwealth Parliament got to do with it?

The Premier: You think the present Commonwealth Government is the best we have had?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And we will have it for a long time yet.

The Premier: Well, they have taken the risk.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Are we to alter our moral outlook because of this?

The Premier: We will send a memorial to Mr. Bruce drawing attention to the moral effect of this provision in the Commonwealth laws.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Government ask the House to agree to give the vote to people who are not capable of exercising any responsibility. As to the position of the Federal Parliament we are doing what they have not done, yet it is now proposed to alter our laws so that we may give votes to people who are living the life of wild men in the North.

The Minister for Justice: Not at all.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Many of them are. They live just as the blacks do.

Mr. Davy: The Police Act recognises that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course it does. We do not expect them to respect all the laws of the country.

The Minister for Justice: Do you think the people you refer to will apply to be enrolled?

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They will be put on the roll and you will force them to vote.

The Premier: Will you get the three Senate candidates to move to repeal the provision in the Federal Electoral Act?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The people that I refer to would not try to get on the roll, unless they were driven to the electoral office in a motor car. We may be sure that the motor car will be there.

The Minister for Justice: And you can be sure which party will pay for it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Who is there that would know whether these people really exist in the Kimberleys, in Pilbara, Roebourne or other outlying districts? We know that in those electorates a great many postal votes are necessary. When one thinks of what could happen there, one shudders.

Mr. Chesson: Do you think the squatters would enrol their progeny in the North?

Mr. E. B. Johnston: That is not fair.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is a wise child in the North, so far as those to whom this Bill will refer are concerned, that knows its own father. The member for Cue (Mr. Chesson) has lived in those parts, and knows the position better than we do. Let the people who have the right to elect members of this Chamber be those who have respect for our laws. The Government are asking that that right shall be given to people without responsibility, and that all our best traditions, environment and so on, are to go by the board and that the uninformed are to be given the same opportunity as the well-informed. Cannot the Premier see the danger?

The Premier: I will ask the Federal Government and Federal Parliament what they think about it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What have they to do with this?

The Premier: The Federal Government are exposing all Australia to this risk, whereas we are exposing only one portion to this awful risk you picture.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What shall we do with them then? I know the Premier does not believe in this. The Bill is not a Government measure and it is no

use telling me that the Premier believes in it. The House has the responsibility of determining what shall be done and whether these people shall be enrolled? Do the members representing Northern constituencies claim that they believe in this provision?

Mr. Panton: I have the Pilbara roll here and it has the name of a half-caste on it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then the hon. member should protest and have it removed. I hope hon. members realise what they are doing. We are asked to set aside all sense of right and responsibility. Expediency is not enough. It may be expedient to enrol these people, but we should realise what the effect will be. To my mind it is a dreadful thing that this House should be asked to consider enrolling people who are living just as the blacks do in the far North. I know there are some half-caste people who live decent lives, clean and wholesome as the white people. We can only consider the question, however, from the standpoint of the whole. By agreeing to this provision we shall enrol a great many in the North who do not live under such conditions.

The Minister for Justice: I have looked through the Commonwealth roll and I do not see the names of "Jimmy the Pig," or any of those half-castes to whom you refer.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Probably the Federal member has not bothered about getting them enrolled. At any rate I do not think these people possess the wide right under the Federal Electoral Act that the Minister professes.

The Minister for Justice: Yes, they have.

The Premier: This is exactly similar. As a matter of fact it was because of the movement to secure the uniformity of the rolls that this provision got into the Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then it was a mistake?

The Premier: No.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Was it an accident?

The Premier: No, it was to bring our roll into conformity with the Federal roll.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Premier says in the Bill these half-castes ought to be enrolled. I say they ought not to be enrolled, ought not to have a hand in deciding questions of State.

The Premier: Send a protest to the Federal Government.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is for the Premier to do.

The Premier: I will ask them if the half-castes have had a prejudicial effect on elections.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And they will say it is indistinguishable, that when so many votes are cast in each Federal electorate, the half-castes cannot possibly count.

The Minister for Justice: Actually they are not on the roll.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There are nearly 40,000 electors in each of the Federal electorates, and so a few votes could not influence an election.

The Premier: Even in an electorate of 40,000 voters, an election might be determined by half-a-dozen votes. That happened in Ballarat, where the election was won by two or three votes—and I believe those two or three voters were half-castes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They would be warmly applauded by the Premier. Consider how few might influence an election in some of our electorates. In Kimberley there are only 1,054 on the roll, in Menzies 483, in Mt. Margaret 781, in Pilbara 798, and in Murchison 504.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: What about Roebourne?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Roebourne has 573 and Yilgarn 923. So, very few votes might determine an election where there are so few electors. The House is asked to approve the enrolment of the half-castes.

The Premier: It is the primary producers along the Great Southern that we have in mind.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: We don't want it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I entirely disapprove of the proposal. It is monstrous. Do you, Sir, realise that it is proposed that a half-caste shall be made eligible to become a member of this House, and take his place here in national costume? He could even occupy your position, Sir. Just imagine addressing as His Honour, the Speaker, Mr. Kookaburra from the bush. There is nothing to prevent a half-caste occupying the Speaker's Chair. As a matter of fact, if such a thing did happen, and a half-caste occupied your high and honourable position, he might ask "Glad-eye," the lady-member for Pilbara, to go out into the refreshment room. But having arrived there, he could not ask her to partake of a glass of cherry, because the law prohibits the sale of

liquor to natives. We are asked to give these people the right to fill any position in the House.

The Premier: That privilege was conferred on them by the Nationalist Government in the Federal Parliament. I must again remind you about that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What has that to do with me? I believe that law was passed by the Fisher Government.

The Premier: It was passed in 1918. I think that was the win-the-war Government.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They did win the war.

The Premier: And the half-castes went to the war, while the Asiatics stayed at home and voted for the Legislative Council. Now I understand the antics of another place.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This is not a Government measure, but a caucus measure. I can see in it the hand of the member for Kimberley, and the hand of the member for Pilbara.

Mr. Teesdale: Don't insult the North in that way.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose the member for Kimberley will get up and support the measure, as will certainly others who do not believe in it. The voice of the Bill may be the voice of the Government, but the words are the words of caucus, and will give the half-castes a vote. Speaking only in the political sense, I say that with some hon. members self-preservation seems to be a much stronger instinct than race preservation. I have nothing more to say. I am astounded that such a proposition should ever have come before the Chamber, and am even more astounded that it should come from my friends sitting opposite. We on this side hope to defeat that clause and to find at least half a dozen members who believe in a White Australia. All should object to this proposal. Nothing more iniquitous was ever inserted in any Electoral Bill ever introduced in any Parliament of Western Australia.

MR. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [9.10]: There are in the Bill two main principles, one being the amalgamation of the State and Federal rolls, and the other compulsory voting. I am sorry the Minister did not introduce them in two separate Bills, for I should have liked to help him as to the amalgamation of the rolls, while I do not wish to assist his proposal for compulsory voting. As to the amalgamation of the

two rolls, it is a reform that has been desired for many years. It has been advocated by practically all political parties as a very necessary reform. In the Country Party it has always been advocated, and I can congratulate the Ministry on having decided to put into operation a principle we have desired for a very long time. I believe that under it we shall get very much better rolls than we have had in the past. At every State election somebody comes along with a card in his hand and says, "Look at this. I have my receipt, and everything, yet am refused a vote." You look at his receipt and find that it is a Federal receipt. It is most confusing to people landed in a new district to realise that they have to fill in three separate forms if they wish to secure their full electoral rights, one for the Upper House, one for the Assembly, and one for the Federal Parliament. It has led to very great confusion and to an entire lack of efficiency in the preparation of the roll. We have had bad rolls because we have had so many rolls. Under the new arrangement we shall get better rolls because the Federal officers control the postal officials, who are closely in touch with the movements of population. So I say we shall get very much better rolls than the State officials have been able to produce.

Mr. Marshall: My State roll is better than any Federal roll.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Probably because of an energetic member busying himself about the district. The Minister for Justice, by way of interjection, said that he would scarcely have introduced the Bill but for the amalgamation of the State and Federal rolls. I regret that the efforts of the Government were not directed to this one section and that compulsory voting was included.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The Federal Government adopted it.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It was not a Government measure. It was introduced by a private member and I think it was a foolish thing for the Federal Parliament to do. I hope the time is not at hand when the people of this sovereign State will follow every innovation adopted by the Federal authority.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I believe this is one thing done by the Federal Government that was right.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I regret that we should follow that example, particularly be-

fore we have had experience of the results.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You can see the results in Queensland.

Mr. Lambert: You mean the political results?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, the general results—harassing a lot of people who may be in an electorate. Take a good, loyal, enthusiastic Labour man who has a farm in an electorate where the only candidates nominated are Country Party and Nationalist representatives.

The Premier: We should have no difficulty in choosing between the two.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I thank the Premier for that compliment to the Country Party; I appreciate it.

The Premier: I thought my interjection was non-committal.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Not in the least. It can have only one meaning and I shall have to take another illustration. Suppose that same good Labourite were living in a district where the only candidates were a Nationalist and a National-Labourite.

The Premier: Then we would have a difficulty.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Why make that good Labour man travel 10 or 12 miles from his farm to cast a vote in those circumstances.

The Premier: He could have the very great pleasure of striking out both of them and making his paper informal.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That is the reason why I object to compulsory voting. You can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink.

Mr. Pantou: But you can make him very sorry that he didn't drink.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: There is nothing of which we Australians are more proud than the secrecy of the ballot. If we are going to preserve, as I know the national sentiment of the country always will preserve, the secrecy of the ballot, it is of no use compelling a man to leave his employment and cast a vote when no one knows whether his vote will be effective.

Mr. Pantou: Let us have a national holiday on election day.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: At election after election when there has been no Labour candidate, people have been brought in to the poll by their friends, and I have afterwards seen the papers coming out of the boxes, some of them bearing no marks at all. I



have felt certain that those have been the papers of supporters of a party who had no candidate in the field, and that they really did not wish to vote.

Mr. Teesdale: What were you doing amongst the boxes?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I was a candidate, and I had a right to be present at the scrutiny.

Mr. Lambert: Were there any sliding panels in the boxes?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Certainly not. On other occasions when no Labour candidate has been standing, I have seen a ballot paper come out of the box bearing the words, "Don't want either of them; want a good Labour candidate."

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Good judgment, too.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Why compel an individual of that description to sacrifice a day's work in his garden and drive eight or 10 miles in and out when he is not going to cast an effective vote?

Mr. Lambert: Do not you consider that was an effective vote?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I object to this continued interference with the freedom of the people. Let the people please themselves to a reasonable extent. We shall not ensure good government if we force people with little knowledge of and no interest in politics to record votes when they are unwilling to do so.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Why force them to get their names on the roll?

Mr. Davy: Don't do it!

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That is a proper thing to do; I believe in compulsory enrolment entirely. Under that provision we compel everyone to be in a position to record a proper franchise.

Mr. Millington: You believe in a unified but not a uniform system.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It is right that every elector should be enrolled and have a right to record his franchise if the candidates and policies are worthy of it. If he considers them unworthy, he should not be compelled to go to the poll because, if he does not wish to vote for either candidate, he has the right to record an informal vote.

The Premier: You are a bit inconsistent there.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I object to Bill after Bill being introduced to interfere with our liberty and impose additional taxation.

It would be wise not to adopt compulsory voting at present. If we are going to have it, let us first see how it works at the Federal election. I am not considering the political result, but I am interested from the point of view of seeing how many people record their votes and how many are fined because of ignorance of or dereliction of the law of compulsory voting.

The Premier: Did the P.P.A. protest against the Federal Government adopting compulsory voting?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It was a non-party Bill introduced by a private member. It was a bad Bill, and an unnecessary Bill which interfered with the freedom of the subject. There is this to be said for it, though, that in the Federal arena the great political parties are almost always certain to be represented at every poll. To that extent there is a slight justification for compelling electors to exercise their franchise, but I can see no reason why a man should be compelled to vote for one of two candidates at a State election, both of whom may represent a policy of which he does not approve. In those circumstances we would get better results if we left electors free to vote or refrain from voting as they themselves determined according to their consciences and their ideas of what was right.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: What would you do with the man you mentioned who under the voluntary system made an informal vote?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I would leave him quite free to enjoy the secret ballot if he wished, and if he desired to refrain from voting he should be able to absent himself from the poll.

Mr. Davy: What would the Honorary Minister do with him?

The Minister for Justice: What if there were two of the same party, one a prohibitionist?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I do not think the Minister need ask me that; I should certainly attend that election and do what was right. If the Government determine to foist compulsory voting on the community, I suggest that they should first give it a trial in this House. Let us make it compulsory for every member to vote at every division for a month.

Mr. Panton: Hear, hear!

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I am afraid that if the Government adopted that innovation

during the agricultural show season, members of my party would be rather heavily fined, but at the same time I would urge the Government to give compulsory voting that trial in the House for a month.

Mr. Lambert: If there is one man in this House who should be silent on that, it is you.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: There is no reason why I should be silent upon it.

Mr. Lambert: I will give you instances if you like.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I am objecting to the principle of compulsory voting, of which I do not approve. Perhaps the members who from time to time were fined for absence from divisions in this House would realise how much inconvenience they were subjecting electors to in compelling them to vote at general elections when they did not desire to do so.

Mr. Lambert: You would be fined on one or two occasions.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I am opposed to putting the Government of the country into the hands of people who do not take sufficient interest in public affairs to do their duty on election day. The Bill provides in effect that the names of casual workers shall not be struck off the roll if the electoral officer does not know where they are.

The Minister for Lands: There is no right to strike them off for three months afterwards.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That is the law at present and that should be quite sufficient.

The Minister for Lands: We are doing that.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: If the casual workers indicated are to have the benefit of the provision, the employees in the building trade, who travel from building to building in different parts of an electorate, and hotel and restaurant employees, who move about a good deal, should be included. However, I object to the provision altogether, because I consider there is a much better way by which the Government can secure the right to the franchise for casual workers whose employment necessitates their moving from place to place. Practically all such workers are within reach of a post office and leave a postal address. If it were obligatory on the electoral officer, before striking an elector off the roll, to post him by registered post a form of objection and enclosing a claim

card for an altered address, I think it would be filled in and returned in every instance. To-day the notices are sent in the ordinary way without being registered. I have been in charge of an electoral office and I understand the difficulty. The notices are returned from the post offices. If the letters were registered, a good deal more care would be taken to see that they reached their destination. I commend this suggestion to the Minister, because I desire that everyone entitled to the franchise should have his vote preserved to him.

The Minister for Lands: You wanted economy just now; that would mean heavy expense.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It would mean small expense.

The Minister for Lands: It would mean heavy expense.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: But it would be worth while in order to preserve their right to vote, and it would be much preferable to leaving the names of such people on the roll indefinitely when their present addresses were not known. As regards the enrolment of half-castes, the Country Party, with other parties, have a platform containing a plank for the maintenance of a white Australia, and to give a vote to half-caste aborigines would be opposed to that as well as to national sentiment. Occasionally some of these people do get a good sphere, but generally speaking they are worse than are the aborigines. They seem to inherit the worst qualities of both races, and generally reside with the blacks, and I would not be a party to compelling them to enrol and to attend the booth on polling day to vote. This is a mistake. The Premier spoke about the Imperial Government desiring that Indians should be enrolled. If he gives half-castes a vote for this State House he will find himself in a far more difficult position to refuse the franchise to Asiatics.

The Premier: Not at all.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That will be used as a lever against him. He will be giving the vote to half-castes living amongst aborigines, and refusing it in the case of Asiatics.

The Premier: Not at all.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: He will be on better ground if he refuses the franchise to both. We, on these benches, oppose the proposal to give votes to half-castes.

**MR. TEESDALE** (Roebourne) [9.30]: My objections to this Bill are connected with two particular clauses. I do not know how the long list of exemptions contained in Clause 44 was arrived at. I have never had the slightest trouble with regard to the matter since I have been in the North. I have never heard about the difficulty of these men getting their notice cards. Since the aerial service was instituted mail deliveries have much improved.

The Minister for Lands: A deputation waited on us at Wyndham to show that men could not get their cards and returns, and could not be enrolled.

**MR. TEESDALE**: There have been occasions when the cards were not delivered in time.

The Premier: In connection with men who were inland.

**MR. TEESDALE**: There have been cases where the cards did not arrive at the stations. This was inexplicable. There is the boundary rider who lives at his hut within perhaps 20 miles of the station. These huts are within fortnightly communication of headquarters. Either a man goes out there with tucker, or the boundary rider goes in to the station for his tucker or mails. The commercial traveller usually confines himself to the coastal towns.

**MR. LAMOND**: There are boundary riders in your electorate who do not get away for six months at a stretch.

**MR. TEESDALE**: The commercial travellers are always in touch with telegrams, cables and telephones and with the aerial mail service. We need not consider them in the matter, and they are very few in number. The kangaroo hunters come in regularly either for their tucker, to bring in their skins, or to get their mails. I know the conditions of the stations in the North. The station bookkeeper is in charge of the mails. He receives them from the station hands or the mailman, and sends the mails away regularly. He lives within 50 feet of the head station. There is no question about such a man not being able to register his change of address or failing to get in his card. Storekeepers do not move about two or three times a year. They generally stay in one place for 12 months, and if they leave a district they usually come South, and register immediately they get here. I hope no one will question the fact that the shearer lives within 5 minutes' walk of the main station. He has no difficulty in getting his

mails. If he thinks he will be out of the Kimberleys within a certain time, he will register for the place to which he is going.

The Minister for Justice: He cannot do that.

**MR. TEESDALE**: A flat contradiction like that weakens my respect for the Minister.

The Minister for Lands: Is there not difficulty about getting his card in?

The Minister for Justice: By the time the card is in he has gone to some other place.

**MR. TEESDALE**: The aerial mail service has effected a wonderful improvement in this respect. I should like to have seen the money represented by the Commonwealth payments to the service devoted to the installation of telephones in order to bring people in the outback centres in closer touch with civilisation. There is no justification for putting the wool classer on the exemption list. He tucks in the homestead, and usually camps with the engineer.

The Minister for Lands: We met some people who thought they were on the roll but when they came down they could not be registered.

**MR. TEESDALE**: Most of the troubles have been caused by the non-arrival of the cards at the stations in time. This has not occurred to any great extent. It is due to some mishap to the packages of cards.

The Minister for Lands: Due to some person striking the names off the roll.

**MR. TEESDALE**: That is done on both sides.

The Minister for Lands: I am not dealing with sides. I do not know how they came to be taken off.

**MR. TEESDALE**: People who have no connection with an election do not take names off the roll. That is generally done by the candidate or by some zealous friend. I have never taken a dozen names off the roll in my life. Those I have taken off have been the names of dead men. I hope the Minister will adjust this extraordinary list of exemptions.

The Minister for Justice: You will have your opportunity in Committee.

**MR. TEESDALE**: I will tell my people what I have said on this matter. There has been no trouble of this kind in my electorate, and I do not think it has occurred in the other electorates of the North. Sometimes people get mixed up between the Federal and the State cards. The people in my electorate have complained about not being registered, but I have found that they have

contented themselves with signing the Federal cards, and taken it for granted that they would be on the State roll. I must take exception to the clause relating to half-castes. I hope the House will not be the first in Australia to make it possible for half-castes to sit here. The Minister does not realise the seriousness of the matter. These people are not capable of exercising the franchise. I was present on one occasion when a number of half-castes were recording their votes at a municipal election. It was deplorable to see the manner in which they mixed things up. They were driven in a mob to the polling booth.

Mr. Lambert: Where was this?

Mr. TEESDALE: In the North. They looked like brute beasts being driven along the street, and I am certain not 5 per cent. of them had the slightest idea what they were going in for. The moment a half-caste comes into this Chamber, or is registered for this House, I go out of it once and for all.

**MR. COVERLEY** (Kimberley) [9.43]: One would imagine from the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition that there were no half-castes in the State except in the North. He drew a vivid picture of these poor things being driven like cattle or sheep to the poll. He went so far as to say he could imagine them coming into this House wearing a loin cloth, which he said was their national dress.

The Minister for Justice: This Bill does not deal with the qualification of members of Parliament.

Mr. Teesdale: They will come in if they get a vote.

Mr. Lambert: What is wrong with them coming in?

Mr. COVERLEY: He referred to them as being ignorant persons who did not know what they were doing. He overlooked the fact that the Aborigines Act specifies that every half-caste child has to be taken charge of by the State, and educated at a mission or aboriginal station. I know many half-caste stockmen in the Kimberleys, who are earning their living like ordinary white men. They are a good class of people and have had a fair education, and are fully entitled to record their votes. I can assure the House that there are no half-castes living in blacks' camps up there.

Mr. Teesdale: What do you say?

Mr. COVERLEY: You know it, too.

Mr. Teesdale: You have never seen the North if you talk like that.

Mr. COVERLEY: The difference between the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) and myself is that he travelled by motor car along the main roads in the North to the central stations, while I walked some of the way and rode on horseback the rest.

Mr. Teesdale: You have never been on the 90-mile Beach in your life. Don't talk to me about the North.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Teesdale: I know what I am talking about.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must preserve order.

Mr. Teesdale: I will give you something about your district if you want it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must cease interjecting.

Mr. Teesdale: I did not hear you, Mr. Speaker. I beg your pardon.

Mr. COVERLEY: It is not necessary to go to the 90-mile Beach to know how the half-castes are treated. The hon. member must know that the half-castes are sent to the mission stations or to the aboriginal reserves. There are two of those reserves in the Kimberleys alone. I take exception to the remarks of the member for Roebourne in endeavouring to lead the House to believe that it was usual for men to get a weekly or fortnightly mail service in the Kimberleys. The only mail service available is by air and it ends at Derby. The only service apart from the aerial mail service for the back country is a monthly service by coach, apart from those that are catered for by boundary riders, and so on. From Fitzroy Crossing to Hall's Creek, which is the centre of many cattle stations, there is a monthly mail service. The mailman drops the mail along the main route at the central stations, and proceeds on his way. The majority of the mailmen never see the outer stations at all. They are 20 or 50 miles away from the central stations where the mails are dropped. Some of these outer stations may not be seen once in six months. It is ridiculous for the member for Roebourne to say that the men on those stations could get their electoral cards with one fortnightly delivery, and return them by the mail a fortnight later. From Hall's Creek to Wyndham there is no mail service. The distance between those centres is 240 miles.

Mr. Teesdale: No mail service between Wyndham and Derby?

**Mr. COVERLEY:** You know the position, too.

**Mr. Teesdale:** You know that the mail goes to Derby, through to Hall's Creek and down to Wyndham. I have been through the country more than you have.

**Mr. COVERLEY:** Yes, by motor car.

**Mr. Teesdale:** Is it a crime to travel by motor car?

**Mr. COVERLEY:** The mails are not taken into the back country except by drovers, who may happen to be calling at the outer stations on their trips. That will give an indication as to how much of a fortnightly mail service the people outback get. Under the existing conditions a man may leave a station or may be sacked. He may go to another station 40 or 50 miles further along. When it is ascertained that that man is not at his original address, a card is sent to him by the electoral authorities at his original address. The result is that it is returned to the post office as unclaimed. That man would not know until he came to vote that his name had been struck off the roll.

**Hon. G. Taylor:** That happens all over the State.

**Mr. COVERLEY:** That has happened with both State and Federal rolls. I support—

**Mr. Teesdale:** The half-castes, do you.

**Mr. COVERLEY:** I support the Bill as a means of affording a little protection to the men far inland, who have not the opportunities to attend to their enrolment, as have people in the city. Hon. members should realise the position of the men in the back country and give them this assistance.

**Mr. Teesdale:** You have not said anything about the half-castes.

**Mr. COVERLEY:** You have said enough for ten of us.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! This must cease.

**MR. ANGELO** (Gascoyne) [9.52]: I commend the Government for bringing forward a measure aiming at economy and efficiency in having joint Federal and State rolls. It has always been a regrettable fact that the taxpayers have been put to considerable expense because of the existence of the two electoral rolls. Apart from two or three clauses, there is nothing in the Bill to which anyone can take exception. Two clauses in particular deserve a good deal of criticism. There is provision for electors to

notify a change of address within 21 days. Certain exemptions are provided and these have been dealt with by the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale). I cannot help thinking that the exemptions have been included as a distinct compliment to the electors I represent. They are indeed very dangerous exemptions. I will illustrate this by indicating what took place during the last election. Adjoining my electorate is the Roebourne electorate, and it was known for months that there would be no election in that particular district.

The Minister for Justice: The hon. member did not think so.

**Mr. ANGELO:** South-east of the Gascoyne electorate are the Murchison and Mt. Magnet electorates, both having been represented by worthy Labour members for many years past. No serious opposition was anticipated in those electorates. What happened? For many months every man who came through my electorate was enrolled on the Gascoyne roll. So thoroughly was this done that something like 600 names were added to the roll within six months.

The Minister for Works: How many did you strike off?

**Mr. ANGELO:** The electoral registrar struck off the names of 400 people who had left the district.

The Minister for Works: At whose request?

**Mr. ANGELO:** At the request of the organisation that supported me.

The Minister for Lands: And they broke the law, because a person is entitled to vote within three months after he has left a district.

**Mr. ANGELO:** Those people should have been enrolled in other electorates where they resided.

The Minister for Works: You got them struck off.

**Mr. Lambert:** If you had not done that you would have been defeated by 200 or 300 votes.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. ANGELO:** So thorough was the canvass that in one instance the names of 12 men were put on the Gascoyne roll and the address given was a station in the Roebourne electorate. They forgot that it was not in the Gascoyne. I do not think that some of these men were ever in the Gascoyne district.

**Mr. Lambert:** You do not know much about your own boundaries.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ANGELO: It has been said that cards were not available at the stations. I know that several supplies were sent up to stations in my electorate at various times. The officers of the Electoral Department assured me three times that they sent up new supplies. Organisers representing both parties carried round with them supplies of plain cards and every person who could be enrolled was enrolled. I have always had a supply of cards with me and when I came to a station I asked the owner who were employed there. I got everyone enrolled, no matter whether they were station hands, or who they were, and I always left cards for the others.

Mr. Lambert: Wink the other eye.

Mr. ANGELO: As a matter of fact, I have been asked in some instances not to send the cards in because it was not desired that the Taxation Department should know the men were there.

Mr. Lambert interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have called upon the member for Coolgardie several times to keep order, and if he persists in ignoring the Chair, it will be necessary for me to take action.

Mr. ANGELO: Every opportunity was given to these men to be enrolled. Surely it is no great hardship if, on changing their address, they have to let it become known. Another objectionable feature of the Bill is that giving the half-caste a vote.

Mr. Lambert: Hear, hear!

Mr. ANGELO: I am glad to know the hon. member agrees with me.

Mr. Lambert: If there were no white men up there, there would be no half-castes.

Mr. ANGELO: Possibly that is true. We can know that the average half-caste in this State is about the lowest type in the world. It is useless to say they can be civilised to any great extent. I have known half-castes to be educated, but at the first opportunity they reverted to the wild state. Some time ago a very decent half-caste in Gascoyne married another half-caste, and I got the Government to give them a small block of land, whilst a few of us up there raised enough money to build a shack for them to live in. Actually they lived in it one night, after which the male half-caste went back to his camp.

Mr. Sleeman: Is it a case of the father being reflected in the children?

Mr. ANGELO: I do not know who their fathers are; I cannot say whether or not the hon. member was ever up there. I think it is coming a bit low to put the half-caste on the same footing as ourselves, and give him the same voting power.

Mr. Teesdale: The brotherhood of man!

Mr. ANGELO: When it comes to a half-bred Asiatic, he is the worst of the lot. The other night we had a discussion here because Chinese servants are employed in a certain hotel. Now we have this proposal that we should give the progeny of Asiatic immorality the same privileges that we have ourselves. I hope this degrading provision will be wiped out.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [10.3]: Parts of the Bill may be very beneficial.

The Premier: It is like the curate's egg, good in parts.

Mr. THOMSON: That is so. I am not enamoured of the suggestion to hand over the compilation of our rolls to the Federal Department. We are slowly but surely whittling away the rights and privileges of Western Australia. It may mean certain economy, but the Minister himself said the saving would be but very slight, perhaps £500 per annum. The Bill may be all right in its application to thickly populated centres, but I cannot see any provision for making it easier for those in remote districts to get on the roll. However, since the Government have decided upon the Bill, we can take it for granted that it will be passed. As for the exemptions for certain voters moving about from place to place, judging from the interjections when the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) was speaking, that provision seems to be aimed at his seat and, possibly, one or two others. If we are to permit a system that will give anybody the right to put countless names on the roll, I view the proposal with suspicion. There seemed to be a little ill-feeling towards the member for Gascoyne because after certain organisers had gone through the electorate and put many names on the roll they were hoist with their own petard. I hope there will be no stuffing of rolls in any electorate, that the rolls shall be made as clean as possible. I think that the giving of special privileges, such as are outlined in Clause 44, is opening the door a little wide and may tend to practices not altogether desirable. As for the proposal to strike out from the original Act the

words, "persons of half blood," to me it is an astounding proposition to have come from the Labour Party.

Mr. Panton: It has not come from the Labour Party.

Mr. THOMSON: Who is responsible for the Bill if not the Labour Party? We know of course that the Minister for Justice introduced the Bill and that the member for Kimberley (Mr. Coverley) and others have strongly advocated their inclusion.

The Premier: The member for Kimberley did not refer to it.

Mr. THOMSON: I heard him say that when a half-caste child was born in the North it was taken charge of by the Aborigines Department and placed in the aborigines' reserve, where it was educated and taught to be a boundary rider. Then the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) interjected that of course they were willing to have the half-castes working for the white men but did not want them to have a vote. Now we are told that half-castes were not mentioned.

Mr. Lambert: Why are they ashamed of their own progeny?

Mr. THOMSON: I am not discussing that phase.

Mr. Lambert: It is a phase you ought to discuss.

Mr. THOMSON: One of the proud boasts of the Commonwealth is that we stand for a white Australia.

Mr. Marshall: We still boast that.

Mr. THOMSON: Yet your party have introduced a Bill to give half-castes all the privileges that we enjoy. To me it is amazing. It will mean that the progeny of a Japanese with an aboriginal or of a Chinese with an aborigine, is to be placed on an equality with our own boys and girls. Some years ago in Katanning, until we persuaded the Government to stop it, we had aboriginal children coming in from the aborigines' camp and sitting in the State school side by side with our own children. I ask members who are supporting this provision in the Bill do they want to sit side by side with half-caste aborigines who may be the progeny of Japanese or Chinese with aboriginal women.

Mr. Lambert: This afternoon I passed a beautifully dressed woman in Hay-street nursing a poodle. Is an aborigine any worse than a poodle?

Mr. THOMSON: I am sorry that any hon. member should treat this subject with such levity. If this side of the House had dared to introduce such a provision I can imagine the reception it would have got from members opposite. I will certainly oppose that clause. I am strongly opposed to compulsory voting.

Mr. Lambert: Five or six years ago you were not opposed to compulsion; you were strongly in favour of it.

Mr. THOMSON: I am opposed to compulsory voting. Shortly we shall have the Federal elections, at which compulsory voting will be in operation for the first time in the Commonwealth. We can well afford to stay our hands until we see the results of the innovation. I am not opposing compulsory voting because it may be prejudicial to those I represent, but because I object to compelling people to go to the poll. Secondly I object to it because it is those who are living in remote country districts who will suffer most from prosecution. In the metropolitan area and in country towns it is easy for the elector to get to the poll, involving at most a walk of half a mile or a mile. Moreover, at election time in such centres there are plenty of motor cars to take people to the poll, and so there is no difficulty in getting there. But I can imagine a man very busy on his farm probably 10 or 15 miles from a polling booth—

The Minister for Justice: If he is that distance away he will have a reasonable excuse. Read the Bill.

Mr. THOMSON: Then say five, four or two miles away, the principle is the same. Facilities are not provided in the country districts, as in the more thickly populated centres, for people to get the polling booths. If it were necessary to have cars to get some voters to the booths, it would cost £1 or £2 per vote.

The Minister for Justice: Electors themselves would be compelled to go to the poll.

Mr. THOMSON: They will be compelled to do so if this measure is passed.

The Minister for Justice: There is provision for a reasonable excuse.

Mr. THOMSON: What is a reasonable excuse, and what is it going to cost? The Government would be wise to stay their hand as regards this provision. There is plenty of time. I presume the Government do not anticipate having an election before 1927.

Of course one never knows, but indications at present point to their continuing on the box seat until that time. This amendment could be introduced 12 months hence as it would then be just as effective in regard to Assembly elections.

Mr. Sleeman: You want to see the results of the Federal election first of all.

Mr. THOMSON: I have no doubt what the results will be; I am not worrying about them. I hope I am discussing this measure on broader lines than the bare consideration whether it will be advantageous to any particular section. We in this State have had no experience of compulsory voting. The Minister quoted figures to show that higher percentages had been recorded under compulsory voting in Belgium, Denmark, and Queensland.

Mr. Davy: What good did that do to anyone?

Mr. THOMSON: I do not know that those places are any better governed than is Western Australia. Viewed from the standpoint of good government, I am afraid that the quoting of Queensland as an illustration was not too apt.

The Minister for Justice: Queensland certainly has government by all the people.

Mr. THOMSON: And we have government by all those people who feel disposed to vote. If a man is not sufficiently interested to look after his own interests, he deserves to suffer if the Government returned to power is one of which he does not approve. He is to blame for his failure to exercise the franchise, and if he gets something he does not want, it serves him right. It is reasonable and fair to ask the Government to await the testing of the Federal Act and see how it affects the people. We want to know whether it will be advantageous, not to the Labour, Country or Nationalist party, but to the people and in the interests of the State. If it can be shown by the Federal elections that compulsory voting is beneficial, we will have sounder reasons for adopting it. There is no reason why we should adopt it at this stage simply because it is the law of the Commonwealth. Surely it is not going to become an accepted principle that, because the Federal Parliament has passed a certain measure, we as a State should do likewise. While I shall not vote against the second reading, I hope the Government will treat the Bill as a non-party measure and

will leave members free to vote upon it as they think fit.

On motion by Mr. Lambert, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.21 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 15th September, 1925.*

Assent to Bill	...	...	...	...	Page
Privilege, alleged intimidation, Hon. J. Duffell, and the Minister for Works	...	...	...	...	852
Bills: Main Roads, 2a.	...	...	...	...	852
Roman Catholic Geraldton Church Property, returned	...	...	...	...	886
City of Perth, 1a.	...	...	...	...	886

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

### ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the Group Settlers' Advances Bill.

### PRIVILEGE—ALLEGED INTIMIDATION.

*Hon. J. Duffell and the Minister for Works.*

Debate resumed from 10th September on the following motion by Hon. J. Duffell:—

That the conduct of the Hon. A. McCallum, M.L.A., Minister for Works, in using threatening and abusive language in the precincts of this House to the mover was a gross breach of privilege and deserving of the censure of members of Parliament;

to which the Colonial Secretary had moved the following amendment—

Strike out all words after "that" and insert the following:—"This House having heard the statement of the hon. member, and the explanation put forward by the Leader of the House on behalf of the Minister for Works, while deeply regretting the friction which has occurred, passes to the next Order of the Day.