

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 5th December, 1900.

Papers presented—Question: Railway Workshops, Midland Junction—Question: Surveys in Victoria District—Question: Mr. Surveyor Dreyer—Question: Land Purchase Board—Motion, to Discharge Orders, close of session; Discussion (renewed) on Reports—Prorogation.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 3 o'clock, p.m.

### PRAYERS.

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: 1, Return as ordered, showing Additions and Improvements to Opened Railways, authorised from 1st July, 1896, to 5th November, 1900. 2, Coolgardie Municipal By-laws.

Ordered to lie on the table.

### QUESTION — RAILWAY WORKSHOPS, MIDLAND JUNCTION.

MR. WILSON, without notice, asked the Premier, Whether it was the intention of the Government to order from England the material required for the new locomotive workshops at Midland Junction, or to invite tenders for the same within the colony and in England in accordance with the resolution of the House passed last year.

THE PREMIER replied:—The question cannot be answered offhand. The Government desire to call for tenders as far as possible in the colony, in accordance with the resolution of the House; but whether this particular material can be satisfactorily tendered for in the colony will depend, of course, on the consideration of the matter after having received the advice of the Chief Mechanical Engineer and the Engineer-in-Chief in regard to the matter. The desire of the Government is that everything that can be tendered for satisfactorily in the colony shall be tendered for here.

### QUESTION—SURVEYS IN VICTORIA DISTRICT.

MR. MITCHELL asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Whether he could give any information as to when Mr. Surveyor Leeming's report, in respect to

the classification of land in the Victoria district, was likely to be published.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS replied:—Mr. Leeming was at present engaged in the preparation of his report, and those portions of it which were considered to be of interest to the public would be published shortly.

### QUESTION—MR. SURVEYOR DREYER.

MR. MITCHELL asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Whether he would cause to be published all reports made by the various inspecting surveyors, in connection with surveys made by Mr. Surveyor Dreyer in the Victoria district.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS replied: Inquiries were being made in regard to the surveys made by Mr. Dreyer, and it was considered inadvisable that the information should be published at the present time.

### QUESTION—LAND PURCHASE BOARD.

MR. RASON asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands: 1, Whether the Land Purchase Board have made any recommendation as to the purchase of the Grassdale and Gwanbadine estates. 2, What is the nature of such recommendations, if any, and the date on which made. 3, What are the names of the gentlemen forming the Land Purchase Board. 4, Whether any purchase can be made under the Act without special examination of the land by the board, and without a recommendation by such board.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS replied:—1, The Agricultural Land Purchase Board has reported on the Grassdale Estate, but not on the Gwanbadine Estate. 2, The recommendation was to the effect that the Grassdale Estate was not a suitable property for the purposes of the Act. The offer has therefore been refused. This recommendation was dated 29th November, 1900. 3, The following gentlemen comprise the board, namely Mr. John Robinson, Cottesloe Beach; Mr. E. M. Clarke, Bunbury; Mr. Richard Gell, Wagin; Mr. Francis Craig, Perth; and Mr. Wm. Paterson, manager of the Agricultural Bank. 4, No purchase of land can be made under the Act, without special examination and recommendation by the board.

MOTION, TO DISCHARGE ORDERS—  
CLOSE OF SESSION.

## DISCUSSION (RENEWED) ON REPORTS.

Orders of the Day: 1, Perth Public Hospital, debate (adjourned) on Select Committee's report; 2, Fremantle and Whitby Falls Lunatic Asylums, to consider Select Committee's report.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): As there was no time available for the House to deal with the Orders of the Day, owing to His Excellency the Administrator being about to prorogue Parliament, and as it was usual on occasions when Parliament was prorogued for a few words to be said by the leader of the Government and the leader of the Opposition, he regretted that it would not be possible for us to deal with the Orders of the Day.

MR. HALL: Why not?

THE PREMIER: It would be better that the two orders on the Notice Paper should be discharged, on the understanding that the report of the Select Committee on Lunatic Asylums should be taken into consideration by the Government during the recess.

MR. HALL and MR. VOSPER intimated a desire to speak.

THE PREMIER: If hon. members were going to speak, say for five minutes, of course it could be arranged to dispose of the Orders of the Day; but if the speeches were not to be limited to a few minutes, there would be no opportunity for the remarks which were usual at the close of the session, before the prorogation took place.

MR. HALL: There would be time if the Premier would not speak so long.

THE PREMIER: If hon. members would allow himself and the leader of the Opposition, and anyone else, to say a few concluding words in regard to the session, as was usual, there would be no desire to prevent the hon. member (Mr. Hall) saying anything he liked. He (the Premier) appealed to the hon. member, therefore, to say a few words, but not to monopolise the whole time available, as it was desirable that a few words should be said at the close of the session in regard to the Speaker and the officers of the House. On the part of the Government, he undertook that the matters contained in the two reports of select com-

mittees should be taken into consideration by the Government during the recess.

Question (discharge of Orders) put:

MR. VOSPER: Before that motion was carried, he for one would not agree to consent for the discussion of such important recommendations as those embodied in the two reports of select committees to be postponed, for the purpose of passing a few empty compliments. The compliments which were usually passed at the termination of a session were not remarkable for veracity or sincerity, and might well be omitted, being to a large extent personal. In regard to the Lunatic Asylums report, he was willing to accept the assurance of the Premier that this matter would be taken into consideration by the Government in the recess. He earnestly hoped the Government would not stop at consideration, but would take some action on those reports. The revelations made in the report of the committee on lunatic asylums, and which were confirmed by every officer of the asylum, were of such a character that if the Government were to delay action by postponing the reform of that institution, the result would be that matters of the gravest importance, and involving most serious consequences, would remain without amendment during 12 months. Therefore he urged on the Government, in the name of humanity and in the name of Christianity, the necessity of bringing about a reform of those institutions.

MR. QUINLAN asked leave to make a personal explanation, which he desired to do at the instigation of his friend opposite (Mr. Illingworth), and also because he felt that a charge had been made on the previous evening with regard to Mr. Coultas having sent his son to the Hospital? That charge was made by him on information given to him by another member of the board; and as he (Mr. Quinlan) had no positive grounds for stating what he did with regard to Mr. Coultas, therefore in justice to that gentleman he wished to withdraw the charge. He had also received a letter from Sir George Shenton (referring to a certain letter) asking him to explain that what he (Sir George) told him was that Mr. Grant, the Chief Messenger, stated that he gave the letter (from Sir George) to Mr. Hall, and not that Mr. Hall had told

Sir George that the Chief Messenger gave it to him.

MR. HALL said he did not want to lose his chance of replying to the criticisms on the report of the select committee on the Perth Public Hospital. As chairman of that committee, it devolved on him to reply to the criticisms of his erstwhile friend, Mr. Quinlan, who was one of the first, when the select committee were appointed, to laugh. It could be read in the newspaper records that when the committee were appointed, there was a laugh raised in the House by Mr. Quinlan.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member must refer to the hon. member as the member for Toodyay.

MR. HALL: An apology was due to the House, and the member for Toodyay would henceforth be referred to. That hon. member had thought fit to abuse him (Mr. Hall) considerably over the report of the select committee; but it must be left to the public to say whether that report was or was not justified. Much had been said about a letter which the member for Toodyay had stated he (Mr. Hall) had put in his pocket. It must be explained that the secretary of the select committee, who was also chief messenger of the House, came while the House was sitting and informed him (Mr. Hall) there was a letter requesting certain witnesses should be called. When that information was given he (Mr. Hall) said, "Certainly; lay the letter before the committee;" but, though a meeting of the committee was held, that letter never appeared before members. The secretary had since stated the letter was placed on the table, along with other correspondence and reports; but nothing whatever was brought forward to show the letter was before the committee. The letter was never seen or read by him (Mr. Hall), and was not brought before the committee; and for the member for Toodyay to come here and tell hon. members that Sir George Shenton said he (Mr. Hall) had apologised, and had stated he had forgotten the letter, had put it in his pocket, or something of the kind, was an absolute falsehood on the part of either the hon. member for Toodyay or of Sir George Shenton.

MR. QUINLAN: It had not been said the hon. member for Perth apologised.

MR. HALL: The object of the present remarks was to inform the House exactly how the whole thing happened. The member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) had stated that Sir George Shenton asked to be called as a witness before the select committee, and was not called, and the same hon. member suggested that he (Mr. Hall) ought to explain to Sir George Shenton. As Sir George Shenton was going out of the House, he (Mr. Hall) approached him in the most respectful manner, and attempted to explain exactly what had taken place. But Sir George Shenton, with his usual snobbishness—[Several MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!—Sir George Shenton, with his usual snobbishness, said, "I know, Mr. Hall, I know you did not want to call me; I know all about it."

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member ought not to make use of such language as that.

MR. HALL: All that was being said was what took place.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member ought to withdraw the words?

MR. HALL: Why withdraw?

THE SPEAKER: What was referred to was the improper way in which the hon. member referred to the President of the Legislative Council.

MR. HALL: It was not the President of the Legislative Council who was being referred to, but Sir George Shenton.

THE SPEAKER: There was no difference: the hon. member could not draw that distinction.

MR. HALL: If Sir George Shenton was protected by the Speaker, no more need be said; but when he (Mr. Hall) approached a gentleman, who was a gentleman by Act of Parliament, and attempted to make an explanation, that explanation ought to be received in a gentlemanly manner. It had been his (Mr. Hall's) intention to say a great deal more on this point, but as he perceived he would be stopped by the Speaker, he would say no more. The hon. member for Toodyay had made a charge against the jurymen who sat on the case of the man Rodgers. As to the charge against himself (Mr. Hall), that need not be bothered about; but three honourable men of this city had been charged by the hon. member with violating their oaths as jurymen.

MR. QUINLAN: That was not true.

MR. HALL: It was not untrue. The hon. member for Toodyay, under the protection of the House, had charged these gentlemen with violating their oaths; but the select committee found that the jurymen had faithfully performed their duties, and, if anything, had erred on the side of clemency. The jury on that occasion consisted of three honourable members of the community, namely Mr. Perrott, the representative in this colony of the Gates Ironworks Company, who was foreman; Mr. Coultas, one of our most respected merchant tailors here; and Mr. Knapp, of the well-known firm of opticians in this city; and for the member for Toodyay to come into the House and say these three gentlemen had violated their oaths—

MR. QUINLAN: That was untrue.

MR. HALL: The member for Toodyay had been challenged by Mr. Perrott to repeat the statement outside the House; and it now remained for the public to say who did their duty—the three jurymen or the hon. member who attempted to asperse the characters of these gentlemen. [Several MEMBERS: Time!] There was a great deal more to say, but not time to say it in. [MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] A distinct and determined attempt had been made by the Government to block discussion, beyond the statements of the hon. member for Toodyay.

MR. GEORGE: That was a serious charge. The Government ought to go out of office on it.

MR. HALL: A statement had also been made by the member for Toodyay—[MEMBERS: Time!]  
—who had not yet quite got over the municipal elections—a statement had been made that one of the jurymen (Mr. Coultas) violated his oath because his son was refused admission to the Hospital; but Mr. Coultas had addressed a letter to him (Mr. Hall), as chairman of the select committee, in which strong objection was taken to the “false accusation” made by Mr. Quinlan and the secretary of the Hospital, and Mr. Coultas and his son offered to make a statutory declaration denying the allegation.

MR. QUINLAN: That accusation had been withdrawn.

MR. HALL: To make such a statement on mere hearsay was not creditable

to any member, especially to a member so highly respected as the representative of Toodyay.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The member for Toodyay had withdrawn that.

MR. HALL: There was not time to say very much, but if he were able to go on he could show, as indeed could be seen from the report, that men had been sent out of the Hospital in a dying state, and that a woman had been discharged when she was not able to take care of herself. If any unbiassed person read the report of the select committee, it would be seen the committee had acted in an extremely moderate manner in drawing up their report. As to the considerable amount of venom displayed towards himself, he knew the reason for it. The member for Toodyay the other night said—so he was informed by a right honourable member of the House—he was going to give him—

MR. GEORGE: Beans.

MR. HALL: “Beans,” possibly, though the exact term had been forgotten for the moment. But all this arose, not from the Hospital inquiry, but from the recent municipal elections.

MR. QUINLAN: That was untrue.

MR. HALL: It was to be regretted if the member for Toodyay had taken offence because of opposition during the elections.

MR. QUINLAN: The hon. member got well paid for his opposition.

MR. HALL: A man ought to be able to take a beating, and not, when defeated, abuse the other side.

MR. GEORGE: Squeal, in fact.

MR. HALL: One effect of the report of the select committee would be to lessen the strain on the Government. The Perth Hospital cost the country a considerable sum, the public not subscribing because they had no confidence in the management, their lack of confidence being due to the fact that the Hospital was a “close borough.” The select committee endeavoured to effect a reform in this direction, and though the Government showed a desire to block the question, it was to be hoped the future would see a desirable change. A “Hospital Sunday” or “Hospital Saturday” movement should be inaugurated, as in the other colonies.

MR. DOHERTY: What about Fremantle?

MR. HALL: By such a movement the Government would be saved expense, and the public of Perth would have the right of electing the board of management; whereas the present board, nominated by the Government, represented nobody in particular and had no particular responsibility. The member for Toodyay had spoken of the cost of the select committee; but the whole expenditure was £22 10s., and the public might be left to judge whether or not the committee had done good work. Any person who read the report and the evidence must come to the conclusion the committee had done good and faithful work, and were to be commended instead of condemned.

MR. GEORGE: What about that letter?

MR. HALL: The Colonial Secretary was not to be blamed for the strong minute he wrote; but he had not sufficient evidence on which to arrive at a fair conclusion. The evidence taken down by the clerk was only partial evidence, and there was every necessity that, at future inquests, a verbatim report of the evidence should be taken. The finding of the jury must be strongly supported. The jury consisted of three fair-minded representative citizens of Perth; and why they should be condemned in the House for having done their duty, it was hard to understand.

MR. GEORGE: That was "spleen."

MR. HALL: As to spleen, it was to be doubted whether the member for Toodyay ever knew any of these gentlemen; and why he should condemn citizens who devoted their time to the work of the country was, as had been said, hard to understand. All this little venom was not the outcome of the report of the select committee, but was the outcome of the recent municipal elections. So far as the Hospital was concerned—the internal working, the cleanliness, and the looking after patients—the institution was all that could be desired. The Premier had promised that the Government would take this matter into consideration during the recess; but no confidence could be placed in that promise, because other resolutions of the House had time after time been forgotten or "shelved," in the same way as were the Robson charges this year. If the matter of the Perth Hospital were left in the

hands of the Government, there was no likelihood of any forward steps being taken.

THE PREMIER: Do not say that.

MR. HALL: There was no chance of the report being adopted by the House, seeing the Government were against the report. It was to be hoped, however, the public would take the matter up, and that before twelve months were over the "close borough" would be abolished, and, as a result of the select committee's inquiry, the public would have control of the Hospital board. Nothing further need be said; except to thank hon. members for their attention, and to express the hope that such venom as had been shown towards him over this matter would never again be displayed in this House.

MR. QUINLAN: In speaking to the motion for discharge of the orders, he would first refer to the remarks of the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper), made on the previous evening. With reference to the long hours of the nurses in the Hospital, he had information here from the secretary of the Hospital to the effect that the hours for nurses in the Perth Hospital were exactly the same as the hours for nurses in the Melbourne Hospital and the Fremantle Hospital. Therefore, if there was any sweating or slavery in the Perth Hospital, the same must exist in the Melbourne and Fremantle Hospitals.

MR. SOLOMON: No complaints had been made in either of the other places, but there were complaints in Perth.

MR. QUINLAN said he was referring to the statement that the nurses in the Perth Hospital were overworked, and practically treated as slaves.

MR. VOSPER: The hours were even longer in Japan and China. Why not quote them?

MR. QUINLAN: The information supplied by the secretary showed how necessary it was that statements made in this House should be accurate. Then in regard to the admission of members of friendly societies into the Perth Hospital, Rule 19 was amended, and on this point the secretary of the Hospital wrote him to the effect that his instructions from the Hospital Board were to treat cases on their merits; adding that he had never refused admission merely on

account of persons being members of friendly societies. Therefore, according to this testimony, the hon. member (Mr. Vosper) was wrong in that statement. Then it would be seen by reference to evidence given before the select committee in question 621, that the answer there given was to the effect that in consequence of statements made by a deputation to the Colonial Secretary, the secretary of the Hospital Board sent a letter to the friendly societies, and received a reply (read to the committee) stating: "No statement was made to the effect that friendly societies' members had been refused admission to the Hospital, but that much trouble had been caused in the instances cited" (two cases mentioned). The same point was referred to in question 745, put to the chairman of the friendly societies' board in Perth, and he replied that the latest annual report showed that about 50 members of friendly societies were sent to the Hospital in the last year, and he added that about 15 of those members belonged to the Perth friendly societies.

MR. ILLINGWORTH rose to a point of order. The hon. member had spoken once to the question of discharge of the orders.

THE SPEAKER: The question had not been put, he believed, when the hon. member spoke before.

MR. QUINLAN proceeded with his remarks.

#### SUMMONS TO MEMBERS.

BLACK ROD appeared at the Bar (3:40 o'clock), and summoned members of the Legislative Assembly to attend His Excellency the Administrator in the Legislative Council Chamber.

MR. SPEAKER and hon. members proceeded accordingly to the Legislative Council Chamber, where His Excellency was pleased to give assent to 45 Bills of the session, reserving one other Bill for the approval of Her Majesty; and His Excellency also delivered an address proroguing Parliament. (*Vide* Council proceedings.)

*The session then closed.*