

they did borrow some money; and as far as I can remember from reading history, they forgot to repay it. At any rate, in some of the Southern States they did borrow money. [HON. G. RANDELL: And repaid it with greenbacks.] Every year America sends to England from eighty to a hundred millions sterling more than is sent from England. In other words, America pays eighty to a hundred millions a year in interest on money borrowed from the old country. A large proportion of the development of the United States of America has been carried out by means of capital obtained from Great Britain. All the American stocks are stocks held in the old country. It all comes to the same thing, whether we borrow through the bank or through the State. I quite agree with the statement "that close attention to administration is of greater importance at present than adding to the statute-book;" and I believe that the Government will carry out their promise in that direction. With reference to the state of the rolls at the recent elections, there is no doubt that an alteration is needed in the Electoral Act; and I think the chief alteration should be, as suggested by Mr. Drew, the abolition of postal voting. There is bound to be a great deal of nonsense talked about the number of people struck off the roll—about 40,000, it is said. As a matter of fact, at the previous election there were apparently about three-fourths of the population on the rolls, which was perfectly absurd. I know one election where, if the people had been counted, the number on the roll would have been more than the total population. The number on the roll in that electorate was reduced by a thousand, and I think it can still be reduced by several hundreds. If one looks at the population of the State and at the present number on the rolls, there is no doubt that though a good many were left off, there are still many names that have no right to be there. If any citizen of the State does not take sufficient interest in the affairs of the State to see that his name is put on the rolls according to his qualification, he has no business to be assisted in getting his name on the roll. At the last elections I knew several people whose names were not on the roll but who were entitled to have votes. They

were men in prominent positions and who would have voted for the Government supporters. Every man and woman entitled to vote should see that their names are on the rolls so that they may vote as citizens on the affairs of the State.

On motion by HON. R. D. MCKENZIE, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9.43 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 29th November, 1905.

	PAGE
Questions: Mining Inspections	63
Engine-drivers' Certificates	64
Ringbarking, Dudawa Estate	64
Bill: Eight Hours Day, first reading	64
Motions: Horse-racing Prevalence, to Inquire	64
Electoral Abuses and Defects, to Inquire	69
Electoral Abuses, resumed	91
Factories Act, as to a Despatch (negatived)	98
Address-in-Reply, presentation	99
Private Members' Days	99

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Annual Report of Public Library for year ended June, 1905.

By the MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND LABOUR: Amended Regulations under the Workers' Compensation Act, 1902.

QUESTION—MINING INSPECTIONS.

MR. SCADDAN asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Has he at any time during his present term of office received information bearing out the statement made by Mr. Scaddan during last Parliament, that the inspectors of mines were in the

habit of giving notice of their intention to visit a mine? 2, If so, what action has the Minister taken to stop this practice?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES replied: During a recent visit to Kalgoorlie, the statement was made to me that such was the case. I instructed that a circular be sent to the inspectors inquiring whether there was any truth in the statement, and if so, their reasons for giving such notices.

QUESTION—ENGINE-DRIVERS' CERTIFICATES.

MR. SCADDAN asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Is it true that the Board of Examiners for engine-drivers have granted certificates of service to applicants who have not attended before the board? 2, If so, how many such certificates have been granted, and what action does the Minister intend to take?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, All certificates have been granted in accordance with the Machinery Act, 1904, and the regulations thereunder gazetted on 9th June last. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—RINGBARKING, DUDAWA ESTATE.

MR. CARSON asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What area of Dudawa Estate has been ringbarked? 2, At what cost per acre? 3, Was the work done by contract or day labour? 4, Is the result satisfactory to the State?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, 2,000 acres. 2, 1,000 acres at 4s. and 1,000 acres at 5s., or an average of 4s. 6d. per acre; this includes cutting down all scrub and timber under 4 inches in diameter. 3, By contract. 4, Yes.

BILL—EIGHT HOURS DAY.

FIRST READING.

MR. A. J. WILSON (Forrest) moved for leave to introduce a Bill for "An Act to provide for a Legal Eight Hours Day." He said: During the last Parliament leave was granted to introduce a precisely identical Bill, but owing to the unfortunate circumstances which then arose the Bill could not be gone on with.

Leave granted; Bill introduced and read a first time.

MOTION—HORSE-RACING PREVALANCE.

SELECT COMMITTEE TO INQUIRE.

MR. A. J. WILSON (Forrest) moved:

That a select committee of this House be appointed to inquire into the alleged surfeit of horse-racing and the effect thereof upon the community, and to suggest remedies if necessary.

He said: Since giving notice of this motion, I have noticed that the Leader of the Government has introduced two Bills dealing indirectly with the subject of the inquiry that my motion purports to make; but these two Bills scarcely contemplate covering the ground which I think it is essential should be covered in the inquiry suggested by this motion. Wherever one goes in any portion of the State—on the goldfields and in the coastal districts—one cannot help but being struck most forcibly with the fact that there is a very large amount of commercial depression, which is alleged to be directly attributable to the fact that there is an overplus of racing in the different centres of population. For instance, on the goldfields at the annual cup meeting—and in fact, whenever there is a round of race meetings on the goldfields—they generally continue for a period of six weeks without stopping. Of course Coolgardie has its day or two and Boulder its three or four days, and Kalgoorlie, not to be outdone, must have its three or four days; and then Kanowna, Menzies, and other places all along the track must necessarily have their great racing carnival. One has only to be reminded of the enormous sums of money handled by the totalisators at these different meetings to gather some idea of the great amount of money diverted out of legitimate business channels. I gather from the *Morning Herald* of to-day that at the last W.A. Turf Club annual race-meeting the amount of money that passed through the totalisator was no less a sum than £71,084, while at the other meetings of the same club during the year a sum of £15,000 passed through the totalisator. Again, I find that at the last Kalgoorlie Cup meeting no less than £76,531 passed through the totalisator; and if we add to these the amount that went through the totalisator at Coolgardie and Boulder and other centres during the same round of meetings, the

sum is then brought considerably over one or two hundred thousand pounds. The whole amount for the year has been computed at no less a sum than £324,133. [MEMBER: That is going in over and over again.] Quite true; but, while remembering that, a certain amount of it is always being diverted into channels other than the pockets of the investing speculators in this business. Unfortunately we have also to bear in mind that in connection with racing in this State, as in every State of Australia, there is a large number of undesirable people who earn their living at this particular game; and I think it is about time that some means were taken to deal with these people, who are so utterly undesirable, and who in many cases provide the people who subsequently have to be maintained in His Majesty's gaols in different portions of the State. Also, some means should be adopted to try and divert this money into some more satisfactory and advantageous channel. So far as the horse-racing question is concerned, it is conclusively demonstrated by the commercial and business people of the whole of the State that it is very undesirable from a commercial standpoint, and that it must materially interfere with the well-being of the community generally to have such a surfeit of racing as is going on in some portions of the State at present. In the metropolitan area those of us who have inclinations in the direction of horse-racing find that we can have almost invariably two race meetings every week in the year. There are the registered races invariably held by the different clubs on Saturdays; and then we have the more or less questionable unregistered meetings which are held at South Perth; and I believe that even Fremantle boasts the enjoyment of one of these doubtful and questionable institutions. I want to say here that the object of the inquiry is to show exactly what takes place and to furnish the House and the country with the actual position so far as the effect of this alleged surfeit of horse-racing goes, and its effect on the business, commercial, and industrial community of the State. Also, we want to know, not only its effect, but some remedies for the purpose of overcoming or regulating those evils which are at present in our midst.

I do not know that by taxing totalisators we are going to remedy the evil, I do not know that even by licensing racecourses we are going to get over the evil, but in regard to the matter, first of all we must have the whole facts placed before us, and when we have that information then, and only then, we shall be qualified to handle, bring forward and deal with remedial measures that will work out satisfactorily as far as the regulation of the evil is concerned, and help to place the commercial and industrial portion of the community on a much better footing and basis than they find themselves at the present time owing to the overplus of racing. I hope that the House will fall in with my desire in the matter and have a committee appointed to go into the whole subject, so that we may have a full and complete inquiry into the whole question to find out how we shall be in a position to deal with the Bills which have been suggested, and also in a position to suggest some more far-reaching reforms than are proposed in the Bills submitted by the Premier. One of the greatest evils that will not be reached, in my opinion, by the licensing of racecourses is the evil of what might be called the antithesis of legitimate sport. There is no doubt a large amount of legitimacy on the part of racing clubs, there is no question about that—those race meetings that are carried on by responsible people who cater for the desire of a certain portion of the community. These meetings are infinitely creditable to the people responsible for their conduct; but there is the antithesis of the legitimate branch of the sport, what may be termed profit-mongering, or getting money by proprietary clubs and concerns. I want to know where we are in regard to these concerns; I want to know what they are making at the expense of the general community. I say, therefore, in order to place ourselves in full possession of all information, an inquiry such as I have suggested is eminently desirable, and will redound not only to the credit of the House, but to the credit and advantage of the community generally; therefore I move the motion standing in my name.

Mr. A. A. HORAN (Yilgarn): I second the motion.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): No one can find fault with the wording of the motion or the terms in which the hon. member has moved it. I should welcome, speaking on behalf of the Government, a recommendation from any committee that approaches the subject in the spirit outlined by the member for Forrest. There is only one exception which can be taken to his remarks, and that is his reference to some Bills which are now before the House. I hope that the appointment of this committee will in no way influence the manner in which the House will deal with these two measures. Whatever the report of the select committee may be on the evils of the surfeit of horse-racing, or whatever remedies that committee may suggest, these will in no way affect either of the two Bills to which the hon. member has referred.

MR. A. J. WILSON: It may assist you.

THE PREMIER: Speaking as Treasurer, any delay in dealing with either of these Bills will effectually take away what I seek to acquire, which is a little more revenue; therefore I hope members will not allow the fact of this select committee being appointed—and I wish to say at once that I offer no objection to the appointment of this committee—to weigh with them when considering these measures, which are not intended to deal with the surfeit of horse-racing, but are introduced for another purpose altogether.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): I have no objection to offer to the motion moved by the member for Forrest, because I think if such investigation be pursued thoroughly it must result in information not only to the advantage of members of the House but to the people at large. I cannot quite agree with the Premier in his statement that such inquiry will have no influence on the subject dealt with in one at least of the measures mentioned—I refer to the Racecourses Licensing Bill—because in this Bill we contemplate giving a large amount of power in the control of horse-racing to the West Australian Turf Club, and the result will be that if that organisation or that club were not desirous of limiting the number of race-meetings throughout the State, the matter brought forward in the member for Forrest's motion will be absolutely neglected. Then in the matter of the Totalisator Duty Bill, we know the solici-

tude of the Premier in regard to that measure, and we know he is desirous of obtaining revenue by means that will be palatable to the members who follow him on the Government side of the House. But we may be afraid of this contingency: if the Premier is so engrossed in the pursuit of revenue, he may desire that as many race-meetings as possible be held in order that he shall receive more revenue. I do not profess to have any great knowledge of horse-racing myself, but judging from the statements made from time to time by the Chamber of Commerce and by business people on the goldfields, they regard with disfavour the large amount of racing throughout the goldfields. We know as a matter of common knowledge that during the racing carnival on the goldfields the police department generally has considerably more work to perform than it has at other times of the year. There is an influx of undesirable persons brought about by the fact that the racing carnival is being held, and that at that time of the year people spend more money, or go into town with money to spend, who do not enter town at other times. These people constitute the prey for speilers and those who follow race meetings. I hope the motion will be carried, and I think it is desirable that the investigations of the select committee should have some bearing on one measure at least, the Racecourses Licensing Bill. I think it will have a material bearing on the discussion of the measure by members of the House because of the information brought about by that select committee.

MR. T. WALKER (Kanowna): I hope the motion will be carried, because I am just anxious to learn what kind of information can be secured by a select committee of this sort. How is a select committee to arrive at the determination of how many race meetings should be held, say down at the coast and then at Kalgoorlie, or even, as expressed by the mover, in the large and influential centre called Kanowna. I fancy the one good from a committee of this kind ought to be to show how we are drifting back into the old puritan notions, why we are taking into our special guardianship the tastes and habits and pleasures of the people, and wherefore we are beginning to imagine that we are sitting in a

Chamber presuming to know more about necessities of enjoyment and sport, and the special forms of happiness of the people in various centres, how we are presuming to know just how many horses should trot and how many should gallop in the course of the year.

MR. A. A. HORAN: And how many should run "stiff."

MR. T. WALKER: And how many should run stiff. It strikes me in dealing with matters of this kind we altogether forget the foundation of reform. Horse-racing, so far as it is used for gambling purposes, and so far as it is attended by the evils that have been mentioned, is an outcome of the conditions of society. If it be an evil to have twenty race meetings in the year the evil is equally great to have one; for whatever evils there are in twenty race meetings there are in one. The spoilers are at one, the fleecers of every description are at one, as much as they are at twenty, and if we want to deal with these evils why not deal with them specifically. Are we incapable of preventing the confidence-men plying their games on the racecourses? Are we unable to define the offence or to enact laws which will check the common thieves gathering at racecourse meetings? Is racing necessarily an evil because these attendant birds of prey are always present? I have heard—I have not known it because I have not had occasion to suffer from it—of pickpockets being in crowded churches: are we then to prohibit a clergyman from preaching so many times a year, to diminish the number of his sermons because at one or two or many meetings pockets have been picked in churches? That is the absurdity of classifying all general evils under one head. I hope if we have the committee, it will make these differentiations, and decide between evils that are attendant on a thing and the thing itself. But more than that: the committee, I think, should take a wider scope, and if it goes into the question thoroughly it will never terminate these labours. It must inquire, or should inquire, into what promotes this gambling evil; how it comes about that men are anxious to have race meetings purely for the purpose of betting; why it is not the racing, the breed of horses, the pleasure of a gala day, or the splendid magnificence of the great event,

such as that which eventuates at the Cup at Kalgoorlie; but how the whole interest is centred in the bookmakers, upon the totalisators, in the money expended on the chance of winning fortunes on a single event. All this is not attendant on the mere horses that are running: it has its foundation in the disposition or the nature of the human being, and in the social environments. If the member for Forrest desires to prevent betting, let him try and devise some scheme that will make every man's position in life secure to him. It is the terrible dread of ultimate poverty and misery that prompts men to attend race meetings; it is the feeling of living from hand to mouth, especially amongst the wage-earners in the community, that next week one may be without work, and without as a consequence bread, and that his family may be starving, that makes him take every opportunity that offers to win a penny at every chance and on every occasion. If we abolish all horse-racing we shall have card-playing, and if we abolish that we shall get the two-up school or some other means of trying to get hold of a penny to provide against want. The element aiming at securing some slight advantage in the race for life is deeply rooted in our common nature. It is the competitive system under which we live that prompts us all to get a little better of our fellow men in material advantages. That is the root of it all, and so long as that is so we cannot prevent men entering into a gambling spirit; we cannot prevent them from utilising horse-racing for that purpose. And without anticipating what the inquiry may bring forth, I question whether we can diminish that spirit or the amount of money devoted to speculation if we do away with horse-racing, because undoubtedly the money would go to the other States; and not only that, but men feeling that they had only one race meeting, they would, instead of making their money run over a certain period, do all their speculation on one day. If there were only one day's racing a man would speculate with every penny, and would save nothing for the second day's speculation. At all events, I do not see that we are doing much good by dealing with this subject. The proper course for legislation is to try and get a healthy humanity,

healthy conditions of society, and allowing individuals to look after their own morals. I take it there is a good deal of use in these race meetings, especially on the fields. [MEMBER: To some people.] To all; to the community generally. I will state why. Out in these districts subject to the severity of a very trying climate, where the amusements and enjoyments are exceedingly few, and where the trials and difficulties of living are numerous and distressing, a relief of that kind is of great value. It is a time when people put on their best clothes, their best smiles, and their best disposition, an opportunity to gather in the whole community, as it were, and even by a spectacle of that sort letting their feelings loose and enabling them to forget for a while the worries and ills of life. Such gathering is a relief to them, and gives them a new start the week after. It is a break in the monotony of goldfields life, and I venture to think a stimulating one, that makes life on those fields more tolerable. I do not see what you can substitute in place of it. What can you do to give people one big general outing, one huge gathering? [MR. SCADDAN: Eight-hours day.] People will bet even there. By horse-racing you bring together not only your best people but your best horses in the State, and you get that touch of nature which makes not only human nature but all nature kin. You feel a sympathy with animal life itself, and the animals in their conflict stimulate one, inspire one. One enters into what is a refreshing enjoyment, which I am sure is beneficial when free from those evils which have been its curse. I sincerely trust the inquiry will go farther than merely answering the question whether there are too few or too many race meetings held throughout the year. Let us have some foundation to go upon in considering betting in the future; let us see, or let the committee see, if it cannot discover that we are going altogether too far in prescribing the pleasures of the people, in limiting them, or in any way interfering with their individual liberty in getting happiness such as we have had in the past in these racecourse meetings.

MR. A. C. GULL (Swan): Although I hold the opinion that we cannot make people moral by Act of Parliament,

still I have rather a pleasure in assisting the member for Forrest in the direction of a select committee to report on this matter, because I think it will only have a tendency to good. It will show up a good many fallacies and show that horse-racing, properly carried out, is a thing that we as a nation are intensely fond and proud of. It seems to me that the very worst cause of so-called over-racing is that the clubs, especially the smaller clubs, suburban and others, are not giving sufficient stakes away to make the racing as pure as it might be. Also, dealing largely with the goldfields clubs in particular, of which we have heard so much, it seems to me that they are allowed to run meetings extending over six weeks, which in other States could be run off in three. It is simply this, that they extend their meetings so that the miners will have an opportunity of being played upon during the carnival; and that is an inducement to them to go on trying for the "recovery" mentioned just now. As far as unregistered clubs are concerned, I think they are an unmitigated evil. I see all over the country young fellows travelling about with perhaps one or two horses, called racehorses by courtesy. It does not matter twopence to them: they are going to make money if they can. [MR. HEITMANN: The same thing applies to the registered courses.] Principally, my objection to the unregistered clubs is that they are very largely composed of men who have been rejected from the registered clubs. [MEMBER: Sometimes unjustly, too.] Those members have always the privilege of waiting till their term has expired before making a fresh start. If a man has a just case he is not going to South Perth or Bicton or elsewhere, but will wait for his time to expire. I do not think it can be alleged against the W.A. Turf Club. At all events a man can always get a hearing. I have seen a great deal of this sort of thing, and I assert that men get their hearing and always get the benefit of a doubt, if there be a doubt. [MEMBER: There never is a doubt.] Anyhow, I think there are too many days of racing, and in my opinion the greatest good would be derived by compelling clubs to give higher stakes on fewer days and the same amount of money, confining the running

to two days, or three for a big cup meeting, and having sport carried out in a week instead of 10 to 14 days as now. When people talk about racing, it seems to me from what I have followed and watched around this country, that racing is no longer an amusement, but a primary industry. There is not the slightest doubt about it, there are nearly as many men getting a livelihood by following racing as by following any other primary industry.

MEMBER: Following Rason, not racing.

MR. TAYLOR: The Rason Stakes.

MR. GULL: The question of the racing stakes affects the class of horses imported into this country; and even with the West Australian Turf Club, it seems to me they neglect to subsidise their weight-for-age races sufficiently, and I think that in a lot of things alterations could very easily be brought about.

MR. DAGLISH: More wait for prices than "wait"-for-age on the racecourse.

ANOTHER MEMBER: Specially at election times.

MR. GULL: As far as betting is concerned, as I have said, we are not going to make people moral by Act of Parliament. If we stop people from betting on racing they will bet on football. They will bet on football whether there is racing or not, but if there is less racing they will have more money to bet with on football. Anyhow, I do not think the inquiry can do any harm. I think it will probably do us a lot of good. Therefore, I am quite satisfied to assist the member for Forrest in trying to obtain it.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken, and a committee appointed comprising Mr. Bolton, Mr. Gull, Mr. Horan, Mr. Monger, also Mr. A. J. Wilson as mover; with power to call for persons and papers, and to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned; to report on 8th December.

PAPERS—ELECTORAL ABUSES AND DEFECTS.

OR SELECT COMMITTEE TO INQUIRE.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) moved:

That all papers containing the reports of the investigations made by the Electoral Department into the following elections, held on the

27th October, 1905 (Fremantle, South Fremantle, North Fremantle, and East Fremantle), be laid on the table of this House.

He said: I much regret the necessity for the motion which stands in my name on the Notice Paper, especially so soon after the general election; and I am sure the like sorrow will be expressed by other members in this Chamber who in the last Parliament took part in passing the Electoral Act. It was the desire of the House that every freedom should be given to the electors, every opportunity for recording their votes. I am sorry that those facilities, especially the facility for postal voting, have been so much abused during the last general election. I may say that the facility for postal voting was abused during the preceding election, if we may judge by what members had to say in this Chamber after their return. In moving for the papers containing the reports of investigations made by the Electoral Department into the elections mentioned in the motion, my only desire is for the fullest investigation. Statements have been made to me by those who took part in these elections; and from what I can gather there have been some irregularities, and more than that, illegal votes have been recorded. I will point out—and I believe this will be borne out when the investigations are brought to light—that men lying ill in bed recorded postal votes, or at least that a man lying ill in bed recorded a postal vote. This latter is a rather delicate subject, for since that man recorded his vote he has passed away; but I take his case as an instance. This man in particular was waited on by a gentleman appointed by the Government to take postal votes; and having seen the sick man, the Government official decided that he was incapable, mentally and physically, of recording his vote, and decided not to have the vote recorded. But we find that when the count of the postal votes was made on polling day, the sick man's vote was recorded by post, and it was initialised by another gentleman authorised by the Government to take postal votes. If the Government desire that I shall reveal the names to the House, I will do so. Most of these Fremantle electorates have returned supporters of the Government; but that is not my reason for this motion.

My desire is to have every light thrown upon the manner in which the last general election was conducted. We find that men voted who had no right to vote. We also find cases in these very electorates—I am not going to specify one particularly, but the case I have instanced is dealing with the East Fremantle electorate; there are cases in connection with the Fremantle election where the names of men who were on the water between here and the Eastern States appear on the roll, and their votes were recorded on polling day though they were hundreds of miles from this State. I have been informed of this on what I believe to be a reliable and truthful authority; but if I am badly advised it is not my fault. Those men who were acting as scrutineers, I think, should be qualified to know. At least, when they knew a man personally and knew that he was between here and the Eastern States, and when they found that his vote had been recorded, they are sufficient authority for me to speak in this Chamber. I have no objection to any man or woman recording a vote in accordance with the Act; but I certainly object to any man recording a vote illegally for any man in this Chamber, whether he is sitting on this side of the House or on the Government side. We also had personations. In the Electoral Act we have power for postal votes; but it has been abused, not only on the coast but in practically every electorate that we have heard members speak about. I have no complaint to make so far as my own election was concerned. The returning officer in the Mount Margaret electorate gave every facility for every person in that scattered electorate to record his vote. He made polling places in every centre where there was a sufficient number—and that number was not very large for that purpose. I have no complaint to make so far as I am personally concerned. Members opposite may say that the successful candidates never find much fault with their election returns. It is the gentlemen who are defeated who can tell how and why they were defeated. There are startling things in circulation now about men recording votes for candidates who have been successful while undergoing a term of imprisonment for three years. [MEMBER: The candidate?]

No; but there are times when members qualify here for the other place. These are rumours which are most undesirable; and what I desire by this motion is to have a thorough investigation so far as these elections are concerned. No doubt other members who know other electorates where elections were conducted perhaps in a worse manner than these, will add them to this motion. I have no objection, especially if in those electorates investigations similar to those in the electorates I have named have taken place. I know these investigations have taken place, because those who were interrogated are not backward in saying that the investigations took place. Concerning the Government appointments of gentlemen to take postal votes, I am not going to raise much objection to those who were appointed. I find the list contains the name of an estimable gentleman, a justice of the peace, Mr. W. J. Holmes. I have been informed and know that this gentleman has a brother who is very much like him, so much like him—in fact he is a twin brother. I do not mean the member for East Fremantle (Mr. J. J. Holmes), who knows that what I say is absolutely correct. It has been asserted by some who know both brothers, William and Robert, that they believe it was Robert Holmes who took the postal votes, and not William Holmes. [MEMBER: Do you know the difference?] I know the difference between the two gentlemen; but they are very much alike, and it has been asserted that Mr. Robert Holmes went so far from Fremantle as Bayswater to take votes; and those who recorded their votes there told me they were sure it was Mr. Robert Holmes and that they knew him for years at Fremantle. It is also stated without doubt that those people who recorded their votes at Bayswater have at least been residing there and not in East Fremantle for many months. Many voters who recorded their votes by post—I am sure the truth will be forthcoming—have not been residing in East Fremantle, some of them, for as long as nine years. This may be startling to hon. gentlemen; but numbers of them have not been residing in East Fremantle for twelve months and others for two or three years.

MR. J. J. HOLMES : Perhaps you will tell us whom they voted for.

MR. TAYLOR : It is no concern of mine whom they voted for. My concern is to make the elections in this State as clean as possible. I have no feeling towards the member for East Fremantle, and I think it is about time in this Chamber when a member can stand up and advocate something that may affect another member without the latter feeling that the hon. member was speaking with antipathy towards the gentleman directly concerned. Though we have crossed swords many times, I am sure that the member for East Fremantle knows that in the old Parliament we were at least friends outside politics. [MR. GORDON : You don't call this politics you are talking now?] The hon. member who represents Canning thought it was quite politic that those deadheads should record their votes on the 27th October to return the Government's majority at that beautiful gallop described to-day by the member for Swan as "the Rason gallop." These irregularities have taken place; and I think it necessary that the House should know something about the accuracy of them. Now we come to polling day itself. What do we find? We find the honorary Minister (Hon. M. L. Moss) standing outside the polling booth at East Fremantle for the whole of the day, with an electoral roll in his hand, influencing those whom he could to record their votes for the Government supporter. We also find that the honorary Minister had recorded his vote by post some few days previously, with the object, he said then, of being absent from the electorate. I am not going to assume that the hon. gentleman recorded his own vote by post to give him more time to work for the Government supporter. I do not believe that the present Government with their magnificent majority would stoop to such contemptible actions if the elections took place to-morrow; but when they went to the country they were not so strong as they are to-day. And I am indeed sorry that any Government should tolerate an honorary Minister pimping about a polling booth supporting a candidate in the way I have indicated.

MR. FOULKES : One of your Ministers went to East Perth twelve months ago to do the same thing.

MR. TAYLOR : I did not go to East Perth during the election. I have religiously refrained from being about a polling booth on polling day, especially in my own electorate. I left my own electorate on the morning the polling opened. I knew too well the intention of Parliament when the Act was passed, and I think that all candidates should refrain from being present at the polling booth on polling day. If I have been in East Fremantle or in any other electorate supporting a Labour man, I have been at a public meeting before the polling took place. In East Perth I addressed two public meetings against the present Agent General, Mr. Walter James, when he was Premier of this State. I spoke in the interests of the Labour man, but that was the day before the election. I shall do that again in any electorate where a Labour man is standing. I am sure about myself, and I hope I shall never find any member of the party with which I am associated pimping about a polling booth trying to secure votes if they are members of Parliament, and especially if they are Ministers. It is contemptible for Ministers to be guilty of such a crime. I am not going to mince matters. I desire to know whether it is the intention of the Government to put the law in motion against those who were appointed by the Government to take those votes, so that they may be punished for any illegal acts or irregularities. The Government are responsible for the officers they appoint, and so the Government should take this matter into consideration and try to clean up the elections in this State. We have heard the member for Menzies (Hon. H. Gregory) twitting the member for Leonora (Mr. P. J. Lynch) about something in connection with votes. To me that matter is foreign. I had no hand in it, nor do I know anything about it; but if the hon. member who represents Menzies has any fault to find with the member who represents Leonora, or anything that hon. member did during his campaign, why does not the member for Menzies rise and make a statement

against the member for Leonora, for then it may be refuted, or proved?

MINISTER FOR MINES: You can throw all the dirt necessary.

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. member cannot get any dirtier than he is. It is not my desire to make him any dirtier, and I have no desire to cleanse him. I want to know whether the Government are going to put the law in motion against those, whether they be in the employ of the Government or whether they be voters, who have committed any breach of the Electoral Act during the last election. I have no desire to speak any longer. [MR. GORDON: Hear, hear.] I have no desire to speak at any length; but when the Leader of the Opposition was dealing with electoral matters yesterday, he made some statements with reference to some applicants for votes in the Menzies electorate, who, through the writs being hurriedly issued, were not eligible to vote. I can bear that out as true. The leader of the Opposition was perfectly correct when he said there were from three to five hundred applications for votes eligible to be recorded, only they were a day too late. I also know that the Minister for Mines was well primed and informed as to how the votes that were registered would apply. He was the very first man to tell me and others in the ordinary course of conversation, while discussing the election and the chances of candidates' successes. There was no secret about it; it was the ordinary way in which one talks. He produced a telegram and showed it round as to how many voters who were eligible to vote at the general election were not eligible to vote at the Ministerial election. The hon. gentleman practically denied it yesterday. The denial was so strong that, in accordance with the forms of the Chamber, the Leader of the Opposition had to withdraw the remark. I am confident there were from 300 to 500 electors in the Menzies electorate for whom application had been made, and had not the writs been issued on the day they were these 300 or 500 persons would have been allowed to vote, and they would have materially affected the election. That did not apply so strongly at any other election. It was strange the hon. gentleman should know exactly how

many applications for votes were in. The writ was issued so that these votes were too late to be recorded, for the Act says that if an application for a vote is received 14 days before the issue of the writ, the name shall be deemed to be on the roll. These people were debarred from voting because the writ was issued a day, or I may say weeks, sooner than it should have been; the Premier in manipulating looked out for that. He was well advised, I suppose, as to how it would apply in various instances where a Government supporter was being opposed by a Labour man. I move the motion standing in my name.

MR. M. F. TROY (Mount Magnet): I second the motion.

MR. A. A. HORAN (Yilgarn): I desire to support the motion. If my memory serves me right, the hon. member (Mr. Taylor) was originally the head of a department controlling the electoral officers, and I am somewhat disappointed that he did not do one thing that many people in the House would have liked him to have done, and for which he would have received the support of every member of the community, dismiss the Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Oct. Burt. I must express regret at the condition of things during the recent election. They were unsatisfactory in all quarters. The member for Mount Margaret may have no reason to complain in regard to his electorate, but members in different electorates have had reason to complain. There were no less than 4,400 odd names removed from the electoral rolls in my district, but somehow it happened I was returned. I do not know that I am justified in making this accusation, but I say this: whilst the sitting member is given a slight privilege over a new candidate in the fact that he has a railway pass, I found in my electorate three Government officers with free passes canvassing against me. I will make a specific charge with names before long. That is the way in which the Government of the day carry out the administration of the Electoral Act. There are strong reasons to call for the papers in the case. In my electorate I had many strange experiences and many extraordinary interpretations of the Electoral Act. On a previous occasion the electoral officer decided that the counting of votes

should not take place until the whole of the boxes reached the central polling booth; he was therefore prepared to accept postal votes, if those votes bore the postmark that they had been deposited on the day of election, and before the final counting of the votes. When the new Government came into power the same Electoral Act was in operation, but there was quite a different interpretation put on the Act, with the result that the returning officers were authorised, in the different portions of my extensive electorate, to open the boxes and telegraph the results at once. Consistent with that interpretation the returning officer stated that he would not receive postal votes unless they were in his hand by 7 p.m. on the 27th October. I have in my possession some votes that have been sent to me by an officer authorised under the Act to receive postal votes, and I find by the postmarks and the postage stamps on the outside of the envelopes that they were received at the central post office in the district, which by the way is the same building in which the returning officer has an office, and had lain in the Southern Cross post office for several days when they should have been received by the returning officer on the 27th October. I have the envelopes in my possession and they are marked "T 2, refused." I understand that to mean that the postal authorities charged 2d. each for these letters, whereupon in all probability the returning officer refused to receive them. Mr. Oct. Burt has issued instructions time and again under the authority reposed in him by the Electoral Act that all postal votes should be conveyed by post free, and the Commonwealth Postal Act makes a similar provision. Why the votes were refused when the returning officer himself lived in the same building and within two doors of the post office I cannot say. I think this condition of things needs far greater inquiry than the state of affairs which even the member for Mount Margaret suggests. Had not the Address-in-Reply been concluded with so much rapidity and with so much discourtesy on the part of members on the Ministerial side yesterday this matter would have been ventilated; still there are opportunities to voice our opinions in regard to the

administration of the Electoral Act. In regard to the Electoral Act itself I was not a member of the Parliament that passed it. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): In dealing with this motion, I desire to make the allowance which is usually made to people who approach a subject under circumstances such as exist in regard to members opposite. One must make allowance for a certain amount of ill feeling, and one must make allowance for disappointment. I try to make such allowance, but I do regret after making that allowance that an hon. gentleman who has been himself a Minister of the Crown should have thought it necessary to make the accusations which he did against Ministers. I shall have no objection to lay the papers on the table. I do not know why the hon. member has shown such undue preference to South Fremantle, North Fremantle, East Fremantle, and Fremantle, when, one would think, if one could judge from the members's remarks, there were many other places within his own knowledge that he might as well have added; but if he thinks South Fremantle, North Fremantle, East Fremantle—

MR. G. TAYLOR: They are the only places I know about in which a departmental investigation has taken place.

THE PREMIER: And Fremantle, are directly concerned and offer the most shocking illustration, I shall be glad indeed to assist him to have the most thorough inquiry. The hon. gentleman gives us an illustration of the shocking deeds performed under this Act, and he was himself for 12 months the Minister in charge of the Act. He gives us the glaring illustrations of something wrong, that men have actually been seen in the street when they have recorded their votes by post.

MR. TAYLOR: I did not say that.

THE PREMIER: Whatever the hon. member meant or intended to say, that was what he did say.

MR. TAYLOR: I did not.

THE PREMIER: If I misunderstood the hon. member I regret it, and I withdraw. I was sorry indeed that the hon. member should refer to one of my colleagues as having been pimping round a polling booth on polling day. I do

not myself know what constitutes a pimp. I believe it is something very offensive; but the hon. gentleman, if he recorded his vote by post, was perfectly within his right if he had reason to believe that on polling day he would not be in East Fremantle. What I take exception to, and the strongest possible exception, is the remark of the hon. member that the writs were manipulated by me—that the date of issue of the writs was manipulated by me for the purpose of shutting out a certain number of voters. That is a most unjust and most unworthy remark, only capable of being made use of by the member who made it and the gentlemen who applaud it. Let me remind members of the House that the whole of the writs were issued on one day, and the whole of them or 44 at least out of the 50 were returnable on the same day. Let me remind members that the rolls on which these elections were held were the rolls left by the members opposite; they were their own rolls. What would have been said, what charges of manipulation would have been made, if I had delayed the issue of these writs so that fresh rolls could have been used? Instead of the charge of indecent haste, we should have had charges from all quarters that we purposely delayed the issue of the writs in order to stuff these rolls. [MR. TROY: Nonsense!] That is my opinion. I have some experience of hon. gentlemen opposite, and I give that as my unhesitating opinion as to the course they would have adopted. Because we did not do that, because we took the rolls which they themselves left to us and held the election upon those rolls, we are accused of manipulating them. I cannot imagine any more unfair charge being made. I have heard frequently of the indecent haste with which the writs were issued. What would have been said if we had delayed the issue of the writs? It would have been said that we were afraid to go to the country, that we were holding on to the offices we held as long as possible without an election. More unworthy things, very much unworthier things than that, have been said already. [MR. TROY: Why did you rush the elections?] We adopted the constitutional course of holding the elections at the very earliest opportunity at which

they could be held. Any other course would have been improper in the extreme, and any other course would have been used against us with even greater force than the arguments which have been adduced. What we did we are responsible for to the people of Western Australia, and the people of Western Australia, the vast majority of them, are perfectly satisfied that we adopted a proper course.

MR. TROY: The majority did not vote.

THE PREMIER: That being so, I do not know that we need exercise our minds unduly because it has not pleased some few hon. gentlemen opposite. I am as anxious as anyone that there should be purity of election. I will do my utmost to assist any member of the House at arriving at that most desirable result. No one would regret more than I should, or I trust any of my colleagues, or any members sitting on this side of the House, that there should be unfair advantage taken in any election throughout this State. My desire is to see that every man or woman who has a right to vote shall exercise that right, and shall have every assistance possible rendered. My desire is that anyone who votes wrongly should be made to see the error of his or her ways. But when we speak of there being improper uses made of the franchise in one direction, let us at least be honest and admit that if wrong has been done on one side it has been done on the other also. It goes without saying that if sins have been committed at all they have been committed on both sides. That would not make either of them any better, but it is not, I submit, a very good practice for people who have been beaten—I do not use the word offensively, I do not mean it in that light—to try and show that they were defeated by improper practices. [MR. TAYLOR: I have not implied it.] My experience is that the man who takes his defeat well is very much on the high road towards victory, and the man who takes a defeat badly is not doing himself or his cause any good. I was surprised that my friend the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Horan) should have referred to the conduct of three railway inspectors, and I am sure that if the hon. member had brought that conduct under the notice of the Government we should have been very glad indeed to inquire into the

matter. This is the first I have heard of that, but I did hear of an immense body of railway servants taking part in a certain election not a very long time ago, and not a hundred miles removed from that particular locality. That seems to have been quite in order and quite the proper thing to do on that occasion. [MEMBER: They paid their own fares.] On this occasion because three railway inspectors are supposed to have taken part in the election campaign, that is most improper. It is merely a question of circumstances altering cases. I fail to follow the reference of my friend opposite to Mr. Robert Holmes and Mr. W. J. Holmes, unless the complaint be that they are so much alike each other. I have been put to inconvenience by that fact on more than one occasion. I do not know because Mr. W. J. Holmes went to a place instead of Mr. R. Holmes, or *vice versa*, that any serious thing was done or that anyone has very much cause of complaint, unless it be that the hon. gentleman wishes to infer that Mr. Richard Holmes obtained a vote which Mr. W. J. Holmes could not obtain; or that either one or the other obtained a vote because he was so much like his brother. I have already said that I have no objection to placing these papers upon the table of the House. I wish the hon. member had confined his remarks to moving for those papers and giving his reasons for moving for them, and had not accused any member of this side of the House of manipulation—manipulation which did not exist, because the rolls were never touched, and we dealt with the rolls that the hon. gentleman himself left us—and had not attributed, as the hon. member has been too fond of doing in the past, wrong imputations to people who happen perhaps to have just as good a desire to obtain justice for anyone as the hon. gentleman himself has.

MR. J. J. HOLMES (East Fremantle): I realise that we must always make due allowance for any utterance by the member who moved this motion. I have had considerable experience upon the floor of the House, and I always make allowance, and I believe we all do, for his statements and utterances. I was under the impression that the Supreme Court and the Crown Law Department were the departments to deal with matters of this kind.

Personally I court the fullest inquiry. During the whole of that campaign in East Fremantle—and if opportunity arises I am prepared to prove it—the contest was fought in an honest and straightforward manner. I am prepared to go before any justice and any authority and swear that I did not ask one single individual to vote for me, either at this or at the previous election.

MR. TAYLOR: I did not accuse you of it.

MR. HOLMES: No; but you accused those associated with me of underhand work, which I in a measure am responsible for.

MR. TAYLOR: You did not know anything about it.

MR. HOLMES: I did not know anything about it except this, that my honest desire was to see that those entitled to vote should have an opportunity of doing so, and that those not entitled to vote should be prevented. So much so that on the morning of the election my committee had prepared no less than thirteen pages of foolscap, typewritten as closely as possible, challenges to people who were not entitled to vote. When the poll opened we put one copy into the hands of each returning officer, and what happened? [MR. BOLTON: You won the election.] The returning officer refused to accept the information my committee supplied. He said, "You must challenge the electors when they come in." And they did challenge them when they came in. Some came to one booth and were prevented there, and went to the next and were prevented there also, and they turned round and said, "We will not go any farther; you prevented us at two places, and we suppose you would at others." That is the way we prevented a lot of votes from being recorded which had no right to be recorded; and because it has been suggested that someone squeezed in votes which had no right to be recorded the hon. member wishes to infer that I am responsible. I court inquiry, and will prove that if these people had been challenged as they should have been and prevented from voting, the majority would have been more in my favour than it was at the recent election. Personally I refuse to fight another election under an Electoral Act such as that which exists to-

day unless there is to be a short, sharp, and shining fight before there is any chance of amending the present Act; and in that case I will fight. The present Act is open to fraud and to corruption of every description. If I go on hearsay as my friend goes on hearsay—nothing else—I know of instances where votes have been recorded before postal vote officers, and the votes never reached their destination. That is a condition of affairs that ought not to exist. [MR. HORAN: I have 600.] What became of those votes in the meantime? Perhaps some other person can explain; it is beyond my comprehension altogether. In reference to the two brothers and postal votes, I think that what has been said is entirely out of place. I was no party to appointing any person to receive postal votes. I was a party to preventing my brother R. H. from being appointed at Fremantle. The National League suggested that he should be appointed to Fremantle to take postal votes, but I said: "No, I am a candidate for East Fremantle. He is not going to be appointed." My opponent, Mr. Angwin, as mayor of East Fremantle, had his town clerk available for taking postal votes. [MEMBER: His town clerk?] He is the mayor of East Fremantle: I say his town clerk. My opponent, Mr. Angwin, was not satisfied with his town clerk, but had his rate collector also appointed. Members will see that whilst my friend opposite has, perhaps, a little cause for complaint, I have much more cause for complaint. As to Mr. Moss, that gentleman is able to defend himself. If the law be put in motion against him—and if he has done anything wrong it should be—I am satisfied he will come out scathless. As to where people should vote, that is a matter which is open to misconception. The Act is not too clear. And when we have had the member for Brown Hill (Mr. Bath), who should know that the qualification is residential, standing up in this House yesterday as he did, and making a statement that he voted where his interest was—[Interjection]—I refer the hon. member to *Hansard*. He said he voted where his interest was. When we have the Leader of the Opposition, an ex-Minister of the Crown, making a statement that he voted where his interest

was, surely we can forgive the individual electors not versed in the Electoral Act for making a mistake by voting at East Fremantle where their interests lay. Much has been said by the mover of the motion as to the condition of the rolls, and what should be done; but I should like to carry back the hon. member's memory to the time when he was Colonial Secretary, and in charge of this department. After the general election for the last Parliament I think that data were supplied to the Electoral Department by the National League in Fremantle to the effect that certain persons voted in East Fremantle, North Fremantle, and South Fremantle, on the same day, and at two or three places; and practically no notice was taken of the communication. There was the hon. member's opportunity to distinguish himself by prosecuting those who had done wrong, and by preventing a recurrence of the wrong by putting the rolls in order; but nothing was done. Put the hon. member on the attack, and he is all right; put him on his defence, and he is an absolute failure. Again, I should like to refer to an honest attempt made before the last general election to revise and put in order the Fremantle rolls. [LABOUR MEMBER: By whom?] By the National League. An honest attempt was made; and in East Fremantle some 1,200 names were objected to. And who prevented the names from being taken off?

MR. BOLTON: I am glad I had a hand in it.

MR. HOLMES: Yes; you and some other Labour members standing at the time. But while we asked that only 1,200 names should be taken off, a revision court held subsequently took off no less than 1,800; so I think we treated the rolls fairly liberally in asking that only 1,200 should be taken off, when it was subsequently proved that the number unjustly on the rolls was 1,800.

MR. BOLTON: The resident magistrate did not think you had treated the parties too fairly.

MR. HOLMES: He did.

MR. BOLTON: He threw you all out of court, and would not allow your objections.

MR. HOLMES: If one desired to go into details, one could mention many other matters connected not only with

Fremantle constituencies, but with the general elections throughout the State. But if we are to go into detail and occupy the time of the House instead of the time of the Supreme Court, I think we are travelling in the wrong direction.

MR. TAYLOR: This is not a Supreme Court matter.

MR. SCADDAN: It needs a Royal Commission, presided over by a Judge.

MR. HOLMES: We have had enough of Royal Commissions. So far as I am concerned, I will on every possible occasion vote against Royal Commissions. For select committees, to which there is no pay attached, I will vote when desirable; but as to Royal Commissions, neither the member interjecting nor any other member of this House shall have an opportunity of sitting on a Royal Commission if I can help it.

MR. SCADDAN: I said a Royal Commission presided over by a Judge.

MR. HOLMES: As to the East Fremantle electorate, the organisation was perfect; and so perfect that my committee objected to about 500 or 600 names which were handed to the returning officer on the morning of the election, because the persons in question had left the district.

MR. BOLTON: Because they had moved next door.

MR. HOLMES: No; because they had moved altogether out of the district. In one place we challenged would-be voters; they went on to the next voting place, where they were again challenged; and ultimately they turned round and said, "Your organisation is too good; we cannot get in." I can go farther. One of my managers was some 12 months ago removed from East Fremantle to a shop at Subiaco. At the time of the election he was still on the East Fremantle roll. He came to me on the day of the election, and said, "Your opponent, Mr. Angwin, has asked me to vote for him. He knows I have been out of the district, but he says, 'Mr. Holmes will not object; he will probably think you are going to vote for him.' What am I to do?" I said, "You have been 12 months out of that electorate. Do not vote." He did not vote. If the House wants facts of that kind, it can have them. So far as I am concerned, I court the fullest inquiry. Mr. Moss can take care of himself; and

when the inquiry is over, I am perfectly satisfied that I and the gentlemen mentioned to-day, principally my brothers, will come out of that inquiry with the clean record they have held in this State up to the present.

MR. A. J. DIAMOND (South Fremantle): As Fremantle seems to be solely mentioned in this motion, I will content myself by saying a very few words. I think it a great pity that the member for Mount Margaret should have specially directed his motion at one district. So far as I am concerned, I am certain that I have suffered much more than my opponent through the disgraceful state of the Fremantle rolls. I know men and women who have been living there and in the same houses for the best part of their lives; and they, my own personal friends, had their names omitted from the rolls. I am not making an outcry; but I will support the hon. member or any other member in securing a general inquiry. The rolls are a disgrace to the State; and whether that be the fault of the Act or of those who administer it, I for one will be prepared to support very drastic measures to bring about a better state of affairs. But though I will not oppose the motion, I do not think any good can be achieved by an inquiry as to one particular district. Personally I am certain that, had the rolls been in a good state, I should have been returned by a majority of 200, 300, or 400. As to the South Fremantle election, I court the strictest inquiry; and I leave other members to speak for themselves.

MR. J. C. G. FOULKES (Claremont): To my mind, the discussion so far shows quite clearly that this House is probably the worst tribunal to deal with the matters in question. There is too much party feeling in this House to permit of securing a fair or correct decision on matters in dispute concerning the recent election. I say that advisedly. It was the practice of the House of Commons, I think until 1880, to inquire into election disputes by means of a tribunal of members selected by the House itself. And what was the result? That the House of Commons election committees were composed of partisans pure and simple. When the Conservatives were in office, if the Liberals questioned the result of an election, the Conservatives took care that

the majority of the members of the select committee should be Conservatives; and the converse happened when the Liberals were in power; with the result that both parties in the House ultimately agreed that all matters in dispute as to elections should be dealt with, not by the House of Commons, but by a tribunal of High Court Judges, seeing that the House of Commons was not capable of giving fair and just decisions on matters of that kind. Here already we have had the member for Mount Margaret complaining of certain facts brought to his notice. The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) also complained of certain facts brought to his notice. Every member of this House who, at the last general election, won a contested campaign, knows quite well that, owing to the faulty machinery of the Electoral Act, many things took place which all recognise should not have taken place. But I wish to impress members with the fact that the present Government are pledged—and they will, I am sure, receive the support of members on this (Government) side of the House—to amend the Electoral Act; and I believe they will keep their pledge. Any facts we may now bring up in relation to the faulty machinery and faulty administration at the last general election will not help us in the slightest; because, if there was any doubt in the mind of a single member as to the necessity for amending the Electoral Act, I could quite understand its being thought necessary to appoint a select committee to inquire into the administration of the Act. But surely every single member, either on that side or on this, does think it is urgently necessary to amend that Act as early as possible. So I think that the motion will not help us in the least. Certainly the Premier has agreed not to oppose it; but I do not expect the slightest practical result to arise from the investigation. I wish to be quite frank. I think the motion indicates what is commonly called in the Supreme Court something in the nature of a fishing inquiry. I can judge only by what we see in the public Press. Some time ago a meeting was held in Fremantle with a view to try to upset the return of a member at the recent election. Perhaps the conveners of that meeting have not obtained

sufficient facts to assist them in securing what they would like, and perhaps they think that by appointing this committee they may be able to secure those facts. [LABOUR MEMBER: What committee?] I am wrong as to the committee. Certain members evidently think that they may obtain farther information by having the papers laid on the table. [LABOUR MEMBER: Why should they not?] There is no occasion for that. I would point out that passing the motion will not help us. We are all agreed that the Electoral Act needs amendment; that the Government are pledged to amend that Act, and I believe they will as soon as possible carry out their pledge. The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) interjects. I was in the House when the Electoral Act was passed, and so was that hon. member.

LABOUR MEMBER: It is not much credit to either of you.

MR. FOULKES: Perhaps not; but the Labour party gave that Bill their strongest support.

MR. HORAN: Where are they now?

MR. FOULKES: Some of them are here. The member for Mt. Margaret supported the Bill, and was subsequently in charge of its administration. I have risen only to point out that this motion will not help the matter in the slightest; because it must be agreed that we are all partisans, and that we are the worst possible tribunal to deal with a matter of this sort.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): In discussing this motion, the fact that the Premier has expressed his intention to lay the papers on the table disposes to a large extent of the proposal of the member for Mount Margaret. For myself, I was not aware of the fact that the Electoral Department had held any investigations into the result of the elections in the Fremantle constituencies; and I think that if those investigations were held, similar investigations should be held regarding every constituency in the State. I wish to direct attention to the special pleading of the Premier in regard to what we Labour members characterised—and I think characterised correctly—as the indecent haste in the issue of the writs. The Premier said, if he had delayed their issue he would have been accused of other

sins by those on this side of the House. It has always been the policy of the members of the Labour party and always will be their policy, to give facilities to the people, so many as are entitled to vote, to record their votes. I have yet to learn what country enjoying a constitution hurries on an election and the issue of writs to prevent a great number of people having their names on the roll. I know of no State in Australia where the issue of writs after a dissolution and before a general election has been hurried in the fashion it was before the recent election. I know that in Western Australia previous to this and in other States of the Commonwealth it has always been the practice, after a dissolution and when, through the effluxion of time of any Parliament, a general election was pending, to allow time before writs were issued for the rolls to be brought into something like a proper and complete state. We know a lot of electors are careless in this matter and that they usually leave it to the eve of a general election before they get their names on the roll; and that is why it is the practice in the British dominions and Australia and New Zealand to give ample time for the people to fill in claim forms and to take every opportunity of having their names placed on the roll before the election is held. In the case which has been quoted by the member for East Fremantle as to the vote which I exercised in the recent election, I wish to say that it was not through my own instrumentality that my name was placed on the Kalgoorlie roll. It was placed there some time ago by the electoral department, and that is the only roll on which my name appeared during the recent election. I am one of those members who attend to their parliamentary business, and it is impossible for me during the sessional work to reside in Kalgoorlie and carry on my parliamentary duties, and this compels me to reside within a reasonable distance of Parliament House; but I take every opportunity during recess to reside in Kalgoorlie, and every recess I not only go myself, but my wife accompanies me, and we take up our residence on the goldfields. I am more justly entitled to record my vote for Kalgoorlie than I am for a district with which I am

not particularly concerned, and in which I just happen to reside during the time the parliamentary work is continuing. During the course of the parliamentary work when I have the opportunity I pay frequent visits to Kalgoorlie, and I resided there before the general election. Some talk about disputing my vote and inflicting a fine of £1C upon me. I only hope they will get to work and try, because they will find they will buck up against considerable difficulty.

MR. HOLMES: Would you recommend the prosecution of anyone else in similar circumstances?

MR. BATH: So far as I am concerned, any such display on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite will meet with the contempt it deserves from me. In regard to the best method of remedying the defects that have cropped up, we all recognise that abuses have crept in; and I for one do not wish to say that hon. members on this side of the House have not availed themselves of opportunities under the Electoral Act, just the same as members on the Government side. We all join in this view that the practice is reprehensible; and if the Act is defective, let us join together, and if the hon. gentlemen are honest in their intention to make the Act one in which it is difficult for those abuses to creep in, they will receive every assistance, as I suggested yesterday afternoon, from members on this side of the House. I agree with the member for Claremont that, while it is desirable to have this information, little can be accomplished in the way of reform by the mere passing of this motion. An amendment of the Electoral Act is absolutely necessary, and we shall give every assistance to have that amending Act passed at the very earliest opportunity.

MR. H. E. BOLTON (North Fremantle): I feel it incumbent on me to say a few words since my electorate is mentioned in this motion. I think most of the debate has wandered from the object sought to be obtained by the motion; and possibly the Premier is the one who led to this mistake, because he said he wondered at the member for Mount Margaret limiting the inquiry to the four Fremantle seats. If I read the motion correctly it is only asking that the papers already in the hands of the

department be laid on the table of the House. Most of the debate has led to this conclusion, that it is the desire of all members that an inquiry should take place into every contested election on the 27th of October; but to my mind that does not come within the scope of this motion. If the mover knew, and he has declared that he knew, that a departmental investigation had taken place, he is only asking for the result of that investigation to be laid on the table, and he is not dealing with any electorate but the four mentioned, because he knew an investigation had taken place into the four Fremantle elections. It is unfortunate that the member for East Fremantle should take the attack to apply to himself personally. [MR. TROY: The cap fits.] I did not hear any expression used by the member for Mount Margaret that referred to the member for East Fremantle. [MR. HOLMES: What about the twin brothers?] The member for East Fremantle must claim to be one of triplets, because the member for Mount Margaret in referring to twin brothers was not referring to the member for East Fremantle. How could he? Consequently the member for East Fremantle claims to be one of the triplets. When the member for Mount Margaret referred to East Fremantle, he specifically stated that an honorary Minister of the Crown was responsible for certain actions, and the hon. member did not refer to the member for East Fremantle. The Premier took some exception. I must say that if the Premier knew all he would take less exception. An hon. member said it was surprising that an ex-Minister of the Crown, such as the Leader of the Opposition, should make the statement that he voted where his interests were; but I say that an honorary Minister, not an ex-Minister but a member of the present Cabinet, took such action in the East Fremantle election as was at least degrading. [MR. TROY: Despicable.] It may be advanced that all is fair in love and war and politics, and that they played the game for all it was worth. Possibly so. I am not making a charge that anything of a criminal nature can be brought against that honorary Minister. [MR. HOLMES: Tell us what he did.] I shall directly if you will give me time. I like my own

time and my own way. I can give all you want to listen to in that direction. He was guilty of such action that at least was not the action of a Minister of the Crown. I have not said he was guilty of an action of a criminal nature. [MR. HOLMES: Tell us what he did.] For the benefit of hon. members I will tell them one or two things. I preface my remarks by using the expression, as used by the member for East Fremantle, that it is only hearsay. He was preceded by the member for Mount Margaret who also said "hearsay." So is mine. It is hearsay, but from a fairly reliable source. A few minutes before the close of the poll at East Fremantle, some lumpers working on the north side of the river, who had of necessity to cross in a boat to get to East Fremantle, went to the Caledonian Hall to record their votes. There were seven of them I think. The honorary Minister of the Crown met them and told them they had no right to vote in that hall because they lived nearer another polling booth. I do not wish to claim that they were so simple as that; but when members smile they are either smiling at those seven lumpers, or at the Minister of the Crown; because these seven men went away and were not allowed to record their votes. Again, as the member for East Fremantle has pointed out, a very lengthy list was made out of objections to those who would present themselves to claim their right to vote. These objections were carefully gone through and marked in a particular manner, and almost invariably they were passed into the polling booth from the hands of the honorary Minister through the hands of the policeman to the hands of the scrutineers. I do not know whether it was the Premier's own words, but reference was made to "pimping."

MR. SPEAKER: That is an offensive expression that should not have been used.

MR. BOLTON: I am not referring to any member of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not say you are using it, but I take this opportunity of pointing out that you must not use an offensive expression against a member of this House or any House.

MR. BOLTON: I do not intend to use it.

MR. SPEAKER: I know it was used, and I take this opportunity of saying that.

MR. BOLTON: I can only say that it is reported from a reliable source that notes were passed in to the scrutineers informing them whether they were to object or not to object to votes; and the whole of this work was done by a Minister of the Crown. The game was played for all it was worth, and the member for East Fremantle should raise a monument to that Minister of the Crown, because that gentleman alone was responsible for the hon. member's election. There is no question about that.

MR. HOLMES: I cannot help my friends battling for me.

MR. TEY: You are going to make him a Judge, are you not?

MR. BOLTON: There is another matter referring to the Electoral Act. Of course most hon. members have expressed their determination to get some amendment to that Act. The member for East Fremantle says he refuses to fight another election under the present Act. I almost feel inclined to wish there was an election to-morrow; for then the hon. member would not stand. [MR. HOLMES: Oh, no.] Then I beg your pardon; I was wondering why you would pull out so easily. We all recognise the necessity for an amendment to the Act. Postal voting has been referred to. For the information of the member for East Fremantle—I do not wish to accuse him as an individual or as a principal of knowing anything of it—I may say that a gentleman, once a member of this Chamber devoted something like two weeks to travelling about in his trap taking postal votes all day long; and this is to my certain knowledge; it is not hearsay. It might not be known to the member for East Fremantle, but I give it as information and as a fact, that the gentleman was once a member of this Assembly.

MR. GORDON: Is that an offence?

MR. BOLTON: I do not say so, but if we had an inquiry some offences would come to light. It is all very well for people to say that they had the right to vote by post if they were to be absent a certain number of miles on the day of election; but certain people voted by post who had not that excuse, but did so

because they thought they would like to vote by post. I do not know whether this gentleman's services were honorary or not. It has been said that the National Political League made an attempt to clean up the rolls. They attempted to strike off 1,400 names from the North Fremantle roll, and they were particularly careful to find the majority of them from those favourable to their opponents. This is not hearsay. I, with my colleagues at Fremantle, also the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Diamond), appeared at the revision court against these objections. The league went so far as to have a solicitor to appear for them to back up their objections, and out of the first dozen that went through half-a-dozen were the names of people who had not removed their place of residence. Amongst the National Political League I might mention the names of the members for East Fremantle and Fremantle. Although the member for Fremantle did not take part in these objections, the member for East Fremantle certainly did. And during that time it was found that fully half the objections alleged were frivolous. Instead of a person living at 23 King Street he was living at 27 King Street, next door but one. The names would have been struck off the roll if it had not been ruled that the objections were entirely out of order. It was proved that the objections were incorrect, and the magistrate said that he would upset the whole objections because the first half dozen were found to be incorrect; the names had been wrongfully objected to. We applied for expenses in these cases, and the resident magistrate said that he would not give expenses, but he gave the National Political League a warning to be more careful in the future or he would give expenses in every case, and they have been more careful since. There were 400 votes less polled in my electorate than at the previous election, but my majority was considerable increased; therefore, these votes had nothing to do with my election. The National Political League posted notice of objection to the addresses of the persons as they appeared on the roll, and the letters were simply returned as unclaimed. If a person removed to the next house, or the next house but one,

the name was removed from the roll. Persons practically did not receive the notification, but in such cases it was the fault of the Act and not that of the association. Since the Premier has said that only urgent matters will be dealt with this session I think this question should be taken up, as it is one of the most important that could be dealt with.

MR. T. WALKER (Kanowna): It seems to me that a certain amount of digression has been allowed in the debate this afternoon and that it has not been altogether in order, but as the debate has gone so far it would now be unwise to attempt to stop it. I rise only to ask the Premier if there be any chance of getting on with the motion of which I gave notice this afternoon. I gave notice of a motion to the effect that a select committee be appointed, and I think the select committee should commence its labours almost immediately. [MEMBER: It should be a Commission.] It should be a Commission in one sense: it should be as independent of any political party as possible. I am not in favour of Commissions being appointed that will cost the country a large amount of money, but any committee appointed should be independent of this House, and should make a thorough inquiry. What strikes me is that the offence alleged in the manipulation of the polling booths, the matter with regard to postal votes and other votes, are confined to no particular electorate. The charges could be made in every part of the State, from the farthest North-West electorate to the farthest Southern constituency. There has been something radically wrong, not due to any political agency. There must be some fault in the system or with the officer in charge of the electoral rolls, for it is so conspicuous. In my electorate, if I may add to a few of the instances given, I know of cases where the wife's name has been left on the roll and the husband's name taken off; both live in the same house, have been living there for years, have never been out of the electorate, but by some mysterious process some objection has been taken by the electoral officer or some person, and the husband's name has been struck off the roll while the wife's name is retained. And *vice versa*, the wife's name sometimes has been struck off

and the husband's name left on. Then a whole family has been left off when there has been no change whatever, where the residence qualification has been intact. These alterations show incompetency or a design somewhere. Some inquiry should be made to see if these matters were due to actual design emanating from some source. All added, strange to say, to the success of the Ministerial party at the last election. [MR. J. J. HOLMES: Instances could be found on both sides.] But the vast majority of instances are on the fields, decidedly. Hundreds of names were left off the rolls, names of persons entitled to vote, and who had every right to vote, and who would have supported members on the Opposition side of the House. Fortunately it did not interfere with my election, but hundreds of names were left off the roll in my constituency, the great bulk being names of workers. It may have been a coincidence, but those who were left off the roll would have supported Opposition candidates. That is an extraordinary thing. Some members say that on the coast there was a practical demonstration. That seems to be monstrous, and it all points to this, that it should be left to no Minister, it should be left to no electoral officer, it should be left to no national association or political party to interfere with the rolls or the rights of citizens to vote. The Act should provide that the power of manipulation shall be beyond chance of interference. Every citizen should have the right to vote. It is this that is precipitating the revolution in Russia to-day. The whole trouble in Russia is in regard to the right of citizenship, the right to vote, to take part in the government of the country; yet in this State nearly 40,000 people have been reduced to the condition of Russia, without votes and legislative privileges. It is a crying shame, it is a crime of the worst possible kind. Whoever may be guilty, it is not for me now to make the suggestion, but I think the Premier was remiss, when dealing with the Governor's Speech, for not stating the nature of the electoral reform proposed. Any reform that keeps it within the power of any department to fluctuate the rolls or the Revision Courts to alter them, or any party to deprive citizens of the right to

vote. cannot be satisfactory; we must have the matter placed beyond dispute. Every citizen should have the right to vote the moment his name is on the roll, and he should have the right to exercise his vote without interference from any quarter. I ask the Premier if he will give me an opportunity of going on with my motion or whether he will agree to it, without further speaking about it, at the earliest possible time, say to-morrow. All must see the desirability of dealing with this matter speedily.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): I should not have had anything to say in connection with the motion only for the remarks made by the leader of the Opposition yesterday, and the farther remarks made to-night by the member for Mount Margaret. In the first place the member for Kanowna pertinently pointed out that at the last election a great number of people were disfranchised; but I do not agree with the argument that if these people had been on the roll they would have voted for candidates in the Labour interest. When the member for Kanowna pointed out how badly the electoral department was administered, why did he not put his finger on the sore spot and find out who was disfranchising these people.

MR. T. WALKER: Oct. Burt and the National League.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I can quite understand the member's remarks applying to the member opposite, who had control of that department. The member for Mount Margaret was in charge of the electoral department, and when he took office there were something like 160,000 electors on the rolls in Western Australia, and when he went out of office there were something like 100,000. To whom then was the blame due? The fault was in administration; necessarily the Minister must have sanctioned the alterations, being in control of the department. Does the hon. member think that when Ministers come in new to office—[**MR. T. WALKER:** You knew the ropes]—they had time to attend to these matters? In the first place they had to consider their elections. The whole blame was due entirely to the late Administration, who bungled the electoral department exactly as they

bungled the business of the country generally. The hon. member spoke in reference to some electorates, and accused my chief of hurrying the elections because a number of applications for placing people on the rolls had been received in my constituency, the elections being hurried to prevent these persons exercising the franchise. I showed the member for Mount Margaret a telegram, and he has emphasised that telegram very severely. The telegram I sent to Menzies was to find out the number of persons who had been added to the roll since the previous election was held. I got a detailed telegram giving the number of applications made, and I knew then that there were 260 names added to the roll and in what condition the roll was. I could then interpret the matter in connection with the next election. That telegram I showed to the hon. member, and this was the shadow that he made so much substance out of. I have heard a great many of the conclusions of members who have not been particular on what they have based their conclusions. A lot has been said about postal votes, and I would like the member for Brown Hill to make the statement outside this House that he made yesterday in reference to the way in which a certain officer of the department carried on his work in my electorate. I am certain if the hon. member did so he would be served with a writ for trying to defame that officer's character. I have great confidence in that officer; I know him, but I am certain the hon. member does not. No such thing occurred. I have sent the substance of the hon. member's remarks to that officer, and I hope very soon to publish a reply to the scandalous statements made by the Leader of the Opposition. There were a number of postal votes recorded at Menzies, where there are something like 2,200 voters on the roll; but not more proportionately than elsewhere. There was good reason for the postal votes, because at the previous general election the rowdiness that occurred at the booths was sufficient to debar ladies going to the booths again. I am talking of that which I know; and I say that one cause would prevent a great number of ladies from ever again going to a polling place. But in a great

number of districts, such as Tampa, Cane Grass, Comet Vale, and from Waverley to Kunanalling, there were no polling booths; and officers were appointed so that people should not be disfranchised there. One thing I can boast of: that never since I stood up at an election have I touted or asked any person to vote for or otherwise support me.

MR. LYNCH: At Tampa only seven votes were recorded.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: There were 10 votes recorded, every one of which was for me, and every one was disqualified, because the officer initialled the postal votes instead of signing them on the butts. But what about the huge parcel of postal votes that the hon. member interjecting carried into the electoral office at Malcolm eight minutes after the time for receiving votes? What about the occurrence at Gwalia on the day of election? The hon. member might tell us.

MR. GULL: Was he then a Minister or an ex-Minister?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Only an ex-Minister. His opponent came to me, and wanted to know what action should be taken. I replied that I did not think anything should be done; that I thought the occurrence was an error of judgment, and that no action should be taken. That is somewhat different from the action of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bath), who yesterday made such a savage attack upon me. In that hon. member we have a gentleman who was for a long time Chairman of Committees in this House; who has always professed to know a great deal of constitutional law. He has had experience as a Minister; and yet we have that hon. member contending that he was quite justified in voting at the last general election for the constituency of Kalgoorlie, in face of the present Electoral Act. Let me tell hon. members that there may be some good and special reason why too long notice should not be given to certain people before an election; for they may dump electors from one constituency into another. About 18 months ago, at the preceding general election, about 40 names were placed on the roll as those of residents at the Union Club Hotel, Kalgoorlie; and in the list was the name

"Bath, Thomas Henry, Union Club Hotel, M.P."

MR. BATH: And the same gentleman was residing at the hotel.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: He was so modest that he did not describe himself as a representative of the Press, though he had been at one time acting as editor of the *Democrat*, and was the writer of the special "Labour Notes" for the *West Australian*. And to-day my friend resides in Kalgoorlie! I believe he has recently purchased a piece of land in Subiaco. He did not try to get a lease anywhere, though he says a lot against the alienation of Crown lands.

MR. BATH (in explanation): You are wrong. I never bought a piece of land in Subiaco, or erected a house on it.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Not a piece of land?

MR. BATH: No.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I withdraw. Anyhow, the hon. member has been living nearly two years in Perth; and Section 107 of the Electoral Act states that an elector shall only be entitled to vote at elections for the Assembly in the district in which he resides, and for which he is registered; provided that an elector who has changed his place of residence to another district may, until his name is transferred to another roll, vote for the district in which his name continues registered for three months after he has ceased to reside in the district. Only a few days before the Leader of the Opposition went to Kalgoorlie and recorded his vote, it was found that a gentleman named Tungs had voted at Bunbury, who had left the district a little more than three months prior to the election; and he was fined £10 for recording that vote. Yet the hon. member wishes to make the country believe—

MR. BATH: Had I ceased to reside in Kalgoorlie for three months before the election?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I question very much whether you had not.

MR. BATH: You will find that I resided at the Union Club Hotel within these last six weeks.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: You certainly were for two years past residing in Perth. As to assisting at elections,

I think the hon. member was quite justified. I believe he was also in Kalgoorlie assisting the late Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Johnson) in his election. On the other hand, the Hon. M. L. Moss was quite justified in assisting at an Assembly election, provided he kept within the four corners of the Electoral Act.

MR. BATH: It was the methods he employed that were objected to; not the fact that he assisted.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: He was quite justified in assisting any of his colleagues in an election, provided he acted honourably. And although there has been a good many insinuations, all that he did was to tell several lumpers that they would not be able to vote in one electorate, but would have to vote in another; and even that statement is only hearsay. We should add to the motion, so as to secure the papers relating to Kalgoorlie, Menzies, and Leonora.

MR. BOLTON: Has there been any investigation regarding these electorates?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not know. I am satisfied to have all the investigation possible; but if an investigation is made in my district, I wish it to be made in the Kalgoorlie, Menzies, and Leonora districts.

MR. LYNCH: Do not worry about Leonora. You got nothing for your pains the last time.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member need not get annoyed. I can assure him I should not have brought this forward had it not been for the bitter manner in which I was attacked yesterday. I will not sit here and be attacked without retaliating. When one finds statements made which are not true, one loses one's temper at times, and perhaps makes interjections one is afterwards sorry for. I move as an amendment—

That the words "Kalgoorlie, Menzies, and Leonora" be inserted after "East Fremantle," in the last line.

This will secure the laying on the table of the papers relating to those electorates.

MR. M. F. TROY (Mount Magnet): I move a farther amendment—

That to the words proposed to be inserted, "Sussex and Geraldton" be added.

As regards the Sussex electorate, I wish

the inquiry to be held particularly with reference to the recent Ministerial election; because I have been informed that at the Leeuwin and also at the Lower Blackwood—

MR. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member read his amendment?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I will accept the amendment as an addition to my own.

MR. J. J. HOLMES: I desire a further amendment, to provide that the motion shall apply to the whole of the electorates throughout the State. It will then read, "That all papers containing the reports of the investigations made by the Electoral Department into the whole of the elections held on the 27th October, 1905, be laid on the table of this House."

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I will withdraw my amendment in favour of that suggested.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

MR. G. TAYLOR: I should like to point out that while I have no desire to prevent an inquiry into the whole of the elections held on the 27th October, I certainly object to any delay in tabling those papers which the motion seeks to secure, as to those electorates in respect of which I know that an investigation has taken place. I recognise that members are anxious to see the whole of the elections cleaned up. But if the motion is altered as proposed, my point will be missed. I know of the investigation into the Fremantle electorates; I should like those papers to be laid without delay on the table, and the Premier has promised to let us have them. Some member can move a separate motion to inquire at some future time into the whole of the elections. I hope members will not, for three or six months, delay the tabling of the papers I require.

MR. HOLMES: I should like to say that my amendment will not cause any such delay as the hon. member fears; because the general investigation can go on and the reports as they come in can be laid on the table.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has already spoken on this question. He must not make a speech.

MR. HORAN: He is speaking to his amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no amendment before the House.

MR. J. PRICE (Fremantle): I move an amendment—

That the words "into the following elections, held on the 27th October, 1905, (Fremantle, South Fremantle, North Fremantle, and East Fremantle)" be struck out, and "the whole of the elections which took place on the 27th October, 1905," be inserted in lieu.

It is news to me that any investigation has taken place. During the two or three days since I took my seat in this House I have become accustomed to a system of Jedburgh justice. Yesterday, I was tried, executed, and condemned by the Leader of the Opposition, without the opportunity of saying one word in reply or in explanation. *Ex parte* statements were accepted as facts; and now I find that in the electorate with which I am connected an investigation has been held, and I as one of the principals have not been invited to such investigation. The same, I believe, applies to all the other Fremantle electorates; and I should like to know on whose initiation this investigation, if held, has taken place, because it appears to me that certain strings have been pulled here of which I know nothing. [Several interjections.] It has been stated that objectionable practices have taken place, practically throughout the State, in connection with the general elections; and so far as my constituency is concerned and the election in which I took part, I desire to have every inquiry made, for I believe the election in that constituency was conducted honestly, and I would not put any obstacle in the way of investigation.

POINT OF ORDER.

MR. T. WALKER (Kanoona): On a point of order, I submit that the amendment just moved has entirely anticipated a motion of which I gave notice when the House met this afternoon, and which I believe the Premier expressed his desire to see carried to-morrow. This amendment anticipates everything in that notice; for without having the scope of the motion of which I gave notice, this amendment anticipates it practically and will prevent its adoption.

MR. SPEAKER: On the point of order, I may say that the member for Fremantle (Mr. Price) is quite in order

in moving the amendment, because the matter of which the member for Kanoona gave notice has not yet come before the House, and I cannot take notice of what does not appear on the Notice Paper. I may also point out that the motion on which this amendment has been moved is intended for the appointment of a select committee.

MR. WALKER: Yes; but it would be a select committee for making the very inquiries which my notice of motion contemplates, but with this difference, that if the amendment is carried it will to a certain extent nullify the motion of which I have given notice, because it deals with the very papers which would have to come before the committee which I wish to see appointed. The committee contemplated in the amendment would deal only with the matter so far as the papers and reports are concerned, whereas my motion would have a larger scope. Therefore I submit the amendment militates against the action of the committee which I wish to see appointed.

MR. SPEAKER: I agree with the hon. member's objection, but I do not see any other course than to say, as I have done, that the mover of the amendment is in perfect order; because we cannot anticipate a motion of which notice has been given until it comes before us in the ordinary course, and therefore we cannot take it into view to-day. I can deal only with a question that is before the House in accordance with the Standing Orders.

RESUMED.

MR. A. C. GULL (Swan): While seconding the amendment, I must say I expected from this House, although this is only my second appearance in it, an entirely different tone from that of some hon. members, particularly on the Opposition side, whose accusations have necessarily called forth smart rejoinders from the Government side; and I cannot help thinking it would have been better if the subject now before the House had not been mentioned, because it is absolutely stupid—

MR. TAYLOR: Is the hon. member in order in referring to the Premier and the Minister for Mines as being absolutely stupid?

Mr. GULL: Although I have seconded the amendment, I must express my regret that the House has descended to the level of schoolboys in a discussion which ought never to have arisen.

Mr. P. J. LYNCH (Mount Leonora): I do not wish to prolong this not altogether frivolous debate, but to give my support to the motion of the member for Mount Margaret, and also to record my amazement at the mover of the amendment in not having stated his ground for moving it. The mover of the original motion (Mr. Taylor) has explained that inquiries have been held in regard to the four Fremantle contests, and that the reports of those inquiries are about to be formulated, so that this House should have the benefit of those reports as soon as possible. Now an amendment is plumped down in a bald form, without any reason urged for it; and therefore I say the mover and seconder of the amendment commit themselves to a needless confusion of the intention of this House. In the original motion I recognise there is good sense, in so far as it will enable the House to get such an amendment of the Electoral Act as will give a fair and full reflex of the will and aspirations of the people. There has been an unusual amount of industry applied, certainly during the *régime* of the Labour Government, to get the rolls put into such a condition that they should conduce to the return of the large majority which now supports the Government. [Mr. DIAMOND: Absolute nonsense!] One must needs be deaf if he goes about the country without hearing that there has been certain secret and keen industry exercised in order to reduce the rolls to such a condition as would tend to bring about a certain result; which procedure is not in accordance with the expressed wish of a certain association, that it was anxious to have every citizen in the State put on the roll who ought to be on it. It comes to this, that the statements made, particularly by the member for North Fremantle—[MEMBER: They have no foundation]—and I believe they have foundation, coming from him, and I believe it is high time that the Act in its present form should be so amended that the rolls shall not be used for the benefit of any particular faction in the country. Whether due to defects in the Act

or to its administration, amendment is needed, and one way in which one would like to see it amended is that it should cut at the fountain as it were of that free flow of cash which has been devoted to the employment of election scrutineers and to that political surveillance which has rendered the rolls of many of those constituencies not at all as they ought to be. The late elections have shown clearly one direction in which the Electoral Act needs amendment, so that when any one person is entitled to object to certain names on the roll, then the man who has cash at his command should be made to feel a difficulty in rallying up every elector he would cause to be struck off the roll. There is one accusation made by the member for Menzies, which now that it is mentioned I may as well contradict completely. During the election campaign I was not about the polling booth on election day in any part of my constituency, nor was I in the vicinity while polling was going on. As to the charge of carrying postal votes which arrived too late to be recorded, I may say the town clerk of Leonora, who was one of those authorised to take postal votes, as were town clerks in some other electorates, landed in Gwalia with those votes sealed, and I took them as the member for Menzies says, eight minutes too late. I felt quite free and justified in taking those votes as I did, and I would do the same again under the same circumstances. I know a great endeavour was made to obtain the highest legal opinion as to my action on that day; but what I did never struck me as being a contravention of the Act, until I saw it mentioned by a small obscure paper in the electorate I am connected with. This debate shows, as I have said, that an amendment of the Electoral Act is sadly needed in one direction at least—in the direction of making the task more difficult to those who choose to employ unlimited sums of money for the alleged purpose of purging the rolls, making the task more difficult than it was on a recent occasion. Though the Ministry of the day did hasten the elections, I believe the Premier had an intention to hold a revision court; yet he found that, although the rolls were not handed over in a satisfactory fashion by the late Administration, they were in a more satisfactory state

than they would be after the revision court.

THE PREMIER: I never saw them, and never asked.

MR. LYNCH: My honourable friend cannot deny that it was his intention to hold revision courts, but that on squarely summing up the position he found that the National Political Plague had done this work very well, and that it could not be improved upon by the revision courts.

MR. J. E. HARDWICK (East Perth): I am delighted to see the gentlemen opposite so energetic since the last election to get electoral reform; although strange to say the same Act was in existence some eighteen months ago when they came into this House with such a sweeping majority, and on that occasion we did not hear from that side of the House of the anomalies which existed in our present electoral Act.

MR. BATH: If you look up the debates you will find them, all the same.

MR. HARDWICK: They were in office and they did nothing at all towards the reform of the Electoral Act. On this occasion I principally rise perhaps to defend the Electoral Registrar, who is not here to speak for himself in this respect.

MR. TAYLOR: You mean the Chief Electoral Officer.

MR. HARDWICK: I mean Mr. Oct. Burt, who was mentioned by the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker). I wish to point out that under the Act I have watched his career very closely, and I am of opinion that he does conform entirely to the spirit of the Act. [**MEMBER:** That settles it.] Mr. Walker pointed out that many things did exist in connection with it, but he lost sight of the fact that the population of this State is such a shifting population that it is almost impossible to have any system of elections conducted satisfactorily. I may point out that the member for Kanowna nine or twelve months ago was an elector of East Perth; the chances are to-day he may be an elector for Kanowna; and possibly in the course of another week or two his removal from there will be a disqualification, and he will then be a voter for Perth. How is it possible for the registrar to follow round the different electors and have them placed on the roll to the satisfaction of the electors of the State? It is, I think, unfair to blame the

person who is authorised for the carrying out of the Act. He is not here to speak for himself. I know that in my own electorate many people were disfranchised, and many of them probably through their own faults. They change their residences, and in the electorates of Perth in particular that is the case. It is nothing to see on a Monday morning in my own electorate carriers removing six or seven voters probably out of one street. [**MEMBER:** But they do not leave the electorate altogether.] They do. They are shifting and changing all over the State every two or three weeks. [**MEMBER:** Every new moon.] Therefore the whole trouble does not rest upon the shoulders of the gentleman who is authorised for the carrying out of the Act. It has been clearly demonstrated to the House to-day that there is need for electoral reform, and I hope now we shall get it.

MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco): I should not have said a word on the motion but for the assertion of the Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory) that the whole trouble in regard to the late election was due to bungling and incapacity on the part of the late Government. I want to give that a most emphatic denial, and to call as evidence confirming my denial the statement of the present Government embodied in the Address of His Excellency to Parliament, which says amongst other things:—

The recent election has, in the opinion of my advisers, demonstrated the necessity of amending the Electoral Act.

If the difficulty had occurred through incapacity or maladministration on the part of the late Government there would certainly have been no need to get over that maladministration or incapacity by the amendment of the law, for which law the Minister for Mines and several of his colleagues were responsible; an amendment of the law in regard to the compilation of rolls, respecting which a number of us sitting on this side of the House made a protest. I pointed out at the time it was being passed that the rolls could not be expected to be satisfactory when the numerous sources of information supposed to be resorted to were insisted upon. I contend at the present moment just as I contended in the last Parliament,

it is necessary, if we are to have a good Act, that we shall have a very careful inquiry into the matter, and in order that such careful inquiry may be made I, for one, am willing to see the whole question delayed until the second session of the present Parliament. In my opinion it will be a mistake in the present short session for the Government to attempt to amend the electoral law, and I should like rather to see a proposal such as that of the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker), that there should be a thorough investigation into the working of the Act as evidenced by the last two elections; and on the result we obtain from that investigation we can frame our law. In this connection we might well go into the electoral laws of each of the other States and of the Commonwealth itself. I want to say that in reference to either one side or the other, I know of my own knowledge of thousands of electors in this State who were disfranchised through no fault of their own in the last election. Persons living in one house for a number of years, who without the slightest reason found their names on election day off the roll; persons who, in some instances, found that the wife was on the roll and the husband off the roll, or the husband on the roll and the wife off it, when they have been living in the one electorate and in some cases in one house for a number of years. I know of one case where this sort of thing happened in regard to an elector who had been living in one house for no less than eight years, and I know of another case where a person who had been dead for four years was on the roll for a street which was not in existence at the time that person died, and therefore where the name of a dead person must have been transferred from the street in which that person at one time lived to the street in which subsequently a relative lived.

MR. H. BROWN: Was not the Karrakatta Cemetery in your electorate?

MR. DAGLISH: The Karrakatta Cemetery does not enter into this discussion. We have not so many resident persons voting in my electorate as in the electorate of the member for Perth. But this sort of thing can only occur when we have an Act which is defective. Some reference has been made to the fact that

the late Government did not amend the Act. The late Government did not amend the Electoral Act in the first session, and unfortunately the late Government did not have more than one session in which it had the opportunity of doing so. I shall be prepared to concede the present Government the right, and I am prepared likewise to recognise on the part of the present Government the duty, of not amending the Act during this session, because I believe it is far better that we should have 12 months to deal with the matter than have a farther amendment which will have the unsatisfactory results the present Act has had. I am very sorry that for the purpose of making political capital against the late Government the Minister for Mines should have used the argument he did in regard to the metropolitan district, which was mainly affected by the motion moved by the member for Mount Margaret (Mr. Taylor). Before the late Government took office instruction had been given by its predecessors that certain investigations should be made with the object of getting all the persons resident in that district on the roll; and in regard to other parts of the State the late Government followed the practice of instructing the police whilst compiling Federal rolls to likewise attend to the State rolls.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: They did not carry that out.

MR. DAGLISH: It was carried out.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Not on the goldfields.

MR. DAGLISH: Right throughout the length and breadth of the State with the exception of the metropolitan area, which had been attended to before the late Government took office. The member for Mount Margaret, whom I have not consulted in this matter, and who did not consult me before he brought forward this motion, can confirm or deny the accuracy of the statement I am making. I say distinctly that whilst the late Government were in office a police canvass was made for the preparation of the Federal rolls, and instruction was given that whilst that canvass was proceeding the State rolls should be similarly compiled.

MR. TAYLOR: That is right.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The electoral registrar at Menzies said he wrote

stating that the police were taking claims for the Commonwealth, and that he desired that he should take State claims, but no authority was given.

MR. DAGLISH: I do not know what the electoral registrar stated, but Ministers can obtain the file of correspondence on the subject, and get the instructions I am speaking of. The instruction given did not relate to the metropolitan area, which had previously been arranged for by the Electoral Department, under instructions I believe of Mr. Walter James, who at the time was Premier. I am, therefore, justified in saying that any errors in the rolls—

MR. SPEAKER mentioned that members had to wait upon the Governor at a quarter to 6 o'clock.

[Sitting suspended at 5.45 until 7.30 o'clock.]

At 7.30, Chair resumed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY. PRESENTATION.

MR. SPEAKER announced that he had waited on His Excellency the Governor and presented the Address-in-Reply. He read the following reply from His Excellency:—

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

I thank you for your Address in reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament, and for your expressions of loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign.

FRED. G. D. BEDFORD, Governor.

Government House,

Perth, 29th November, 1905.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' DAYS.

MR. SPEAKER: I desire to draw the attention of members to Standing Order 214, with respect to motions of private members' days. It will be necessary for a member, if the discussion of private members' motions is to be continued, to move to that effect, otherwise we must proceed with the Orders of the Day.

MR. T. H. BATH: I submit, with all due deference to you, sir, that Standing Order 214 is somewhat in conflict with other Standing Orders which deal with the same question. For instance, Standing Order No. 1 states that in all cases not provided for hereinafter, or by sessional or other orders, resort shall be had to the practice of the House of Commons.

This means, I presume, that when a sessional order has been passed by this House, that order becomes the groundwork of our procedure in cases of this kind; and Standing Order 214 reads that "unless otherwise ordered" the debate shall be adjourned. I should like your opinion as to whether the words "unless otherwise ordered" do not apply to a sessional order passed by this House. Standing Order No. 220 states that only on days fixed for the consideration of Government business do matters relating thereto take precedence of other matters on the Notice Paper. This is a day set apart for private business. I submit that those two other standing orders are more explicit on the question of private business occupying the whole of the day than is the order under discussion, No. 214.

MR. SPEAKER: The course I indicate has always been the course adopted in this Assembly, so long as I can recollect, except perhaps within the last 12 or 18 months. It was the custom in the late Sir James Lee Steere's time to adhere to the allowance of two hours for private members' business, as provided in the Standing Orders; but that custom was departed from by courtesy of the Leader of the Government of the day. I am of opinion that Standing Order 214 is the order to which we should adhere, though as the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bath) points out, Standing Order No. 214 reads "unless otherwise ordered." I hold that the words in Standing Order No. 1, "provided for hereinafter," refer to Standing Order No. 214, and that therefore the provision in No. 214 must prevail.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): With your permission, sir, I should like to say that a sessional order cannot for a moment be interpreted as overriding a standing order. The sessional order, as passed this session, is exactly the same order as was passed in previous sessions, providing for a private members' day. That day in the past has always been interpreted to mean two hours of the time of the House. I appreciate your courtesy in drawing the attention of hon. members to the existence of that Standing Order; for it may very well be of the utmost importance, at some future day, to adhere strictly to the two

hours' limit. Upon this occasion, however, if any member wishes to proceed with the Notices of Motion, and will move that they be proceeded with, I shall offer no objection.

MR. BATH: Without wishing to be discourteous in this matter, I still believe that the words "unless otherwise ordered" apply to an order of this House, whether a sessional order or any other order; and while I quite agree with the Premier that a sessional order cannot override a standing order, the fact of the standing order providing that private Notices of Motion cannot be proceeded with "unless otherwise ordered" is covered by the fact that by a sessional order we have agreed to give private members' business precedence for one whole day in each fortnight.

MR. F. ILLINGWORTH: I contend, Mr. Speaker, with all due deference, that a sessional order can prevail only during the session in which it is passed.

MR. A. J. WILSON: I move—

That the debate on motions be continued.

I think, after the statement of the Leader of the House, there is no occasion to discuss the matter. We can appreciate the magnanimity with which he is utilising his enormous majority on this particular occasion. I hope this will be a forerunner of many subsequent occasions.

MR. A. A. HORAN: I second the motion; and while I recognise, as do most members, that private members' night is generally restricted to two hours, I was not aware that in past Parliaments, parties standing as they did, took advantage of the fact that the Standing Order restricted private members to that brief time. I am rather surprised that the Leader of the House should now take advantage not only of the Standing Order, but also of the preponderating majority he has behind him to try to gag private members in this unfair manner.

THE PREMIER: I take the strongest possible exception to the remarks which have just fallen from the hon. member. I think I have demonstrated to the House that I have no wish to take any advantage. On the contrary, I expressed my willingness to fall in with the view of any member who, by moving that motions be proceeded with, would conform to the

rules of the House. I think the hon. member's remarks are quite uncalled for; and I am surprised that an hon. gentleman should be guilty of such conduct.

MR. SPEAKER: I did not hear the final remark of the hon. member. The question is that we now proceed to the motion before the House.

Question put and passed.

ELECTORAL ABUSES AND DEFECTS.

DEBATE RESUMED.

MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco): When speaking before the tea adjournment, I mentioned that in the term of the James Government a canvass was made of the metropolitan district, and that outside the metropolitan district the succeeding Government had arranged for a canvass by the police in order to get the State as well as the Federal rolls compiled and completed. But I was guilty of an inadvertence, by omitting to say that the James Government had a canvass made, by certain special agents employed for the purpose, of the metropolitan district of the goldfields as well as that of the coast; therefore, my remark with regard to a police canvass related to the districts outside both metropolitan centres. With this correction my remarks stand; and the facts I have supplied to the House fully justify me in asserting that there is not the slightest ground for making any attack on the late Government because of the administration of the electoral law, but that any reflection that may be made must be on the lines of the reflection contained in the Governor's Speech, that is as a reflection on the law itself. In regard to the particular question we are now considering, we have a motion by the member for Mount Margaret calling for certain papers which he alleges are in existence, relating to certain elections. It is usual, when a member desires papers to be supplied, that they shall be supplied; and I for one will always vote for the supply to this House at the instance of any member of any papers of public interest or public importance. But an amendment to this motion has been moved by the member for Fremantle (Mr. Price), that in addition to the papers which are being supplied to the House, certain papers which are not in existence shall likewise be laid on the

table. Such is the purport of the amendment of the hon. member, that before the papers asked for by the member for Mount Margaret are supplied, there shall be created certain papers which at the present moment are not in existence. The object of this amendment I am unable to conceive. If the member for Fremantle or any other member had desired to obtain the papers relating to all the electorates, I could readily have understood his moving to secure them; but when, failing himself to move, he comes forward with such an amendment as this, providing really for an investigation in every electorate throughout the State before any papers whatever can be laid on the table, his amendment seems to me simply an attempt to burke the hon. member who has moved the motion and to prevent his obtaining the information desired. Therefore I shall be much surprised if the other side of the House agrees to support such an unfair, such an uncalled-for amendment. I may mention that the carrying of the motion will not debar the hon. member (Mr. Price) from obtaining later on information in regard to other electorates, after investigation has been made; neither does it debar the Government, if any member of that body so desires, from laying on the table any papers relating to other electorates. It is within the province of any Minister to ask permission of the House to lay on the table papers relating to any subject whatever which he thinks it desirable to place before the House; and if Ministers or other members on the Government side desire to have an investigation and to communicate the result of that investigation to the House, the passing of this motion of the member for Mount Margaret does not in any way affect their power or their right to do so. I shall therefore support the motion; and if at a future time the member for Fremantle or any other member thinks it necessary to apply for other papers, I shall gladly support him likewise in so doing; but at the present time I must object to any amendment calculated to burke the desire of a member of this House to secure papers of public interest and public importance.

MR. N. KEENAN (Kalgoorlie): I should not have intervened in this debate had it not gone a good way beyond the

original ground covered by the mover; and indeed, if the amendment now before the House were properly described by the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish), I should be just as much opposed to it as he is. But it has been explained, both by the mover of the amendment and by those who supported it, that if it be carried it will in no way interfere with the laying on the table of the House papers called for by the member for Mount Margaret. That being so, I cannot see how the amendment fairly comes within the category propounded by the member for Subiaco; in fact, if my view of the amendment be correct—and we have every reason for believing it is—I feel sure that the member for Subiaco will see fit to change his opinion. The original motion was simply a request by the member for Mount Margaret that certain papers, already in existence as the result of some departmental inquiry, should be laid on the table of the House; and that request was met by an immediate consent on the part of the Premier. One would have thought the matter would have dropped there; because after all, when a request is made on one side and consented to on the other, there does not seem to be much more material for discussion. But the member for Mount Margaret, in making his request, added to the bald statement some interesting narratives which might have been more appropriate, if he will allow a young member of the House to say so, to the corridors of this House than to the House itself. While we are all interested in hearing such amusing anecdotes, we know that they have a very small substratum of truth, and that they are far more interesting than useful. But the ground covered since the motion was moved has been of somewhat greater importance; because general reference has been made to the late election, and general criticism indulged in as to the manner in which the election was conducted. I suppose that any event which took place in the course of a general election must be open to some criticism on the part of members, and particularly on the part of those who are somewhat disappointed with the result. It is only reasonable, as the Premier pointed out, that we should make every allowance for the frame of mind of disappointed mem-

bers; and indeed I myself would be prepared to say that the laments of the Opposition members for their departed friends have been confined within very reasonable limits. But I say the Opposition go too far when they attempt to fasten particular attention on some officers who have attempted to discharge with all the capacity in their possession, the duties entrusted to them. For instance, when attention is fastened on the doings of certain persons appointed to receive postal votes in one electorate, it would be only right for the member mentioning that incident to enlarge his vision somewhat and to notice other officers in other parts of the State whose doings may also have been open to exception. [Interjection made by MR. HORAN.] I think the only incident in the speech of the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Horan) is the fact that he came into possession of certain papers that ought not to have been in his possession at all. Referring to the remarks of the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor), it is always open to a member to make a scapegoat of some other member for all the disappointments he has experienced, especially in elections. It is just as important to keep persons off the roll who have no right to be on it as it is to get persons on the roll who should be there; because if you have a roll with a large proportion of persons who are not entitled to be on it, the result cannot be satisfactory to the country or to the member elected under it, because that member will have been elected by persons who have no right properly to vote. Therefore, when odium is cast on the fact that a large number of persons were struck off the roll before the elections, it should be remembered that a large number of persons were on who ought not to be there. Considerable attention has been directed previously to the fact that the names of some 40,000 electors were removed from the rolls; and if so it shows that those electors were struck off because it was found on inquiry that they did not exist. [LABOUR MEMBER: No; no.] I can only judge by the experience in my electorate, in which 5,200 names were on the roll, which number on a departmental inquiry was reduced to 3,100, and I assume that when similar results were arrived at in other electorates, a similar state of things must

have prevailed in regard to the rolls. Let me point out another phase. As to the man whose name is not on the roll and is entitled to be there, whose fault is it that the name is not there? Surely it is the fault of the person in neglecting to have it put on the roll. You must blame the neglect of those electors themselves who would not take the trouble to be put on the roll.

MR. TAYLOR: There were peculiar circumstances in connection with that election, you know.

MR. KEENAN: Those peculiar circumstances would arise under any set of conditions you can imagine. If electors will not take the trouble to get their names on the roll, those peculiar circumstances seem to be permanent. I would like to congratulate the members on the Opposition side in regard to the zeal they display for purity of election, because we know they had an election which was conducted entirely under their own guidance, with no interfering Premier or Minister, and the result of that election did not give satisfaction to the defeated parties. We all know this much, that if we could get the proper information out of members on the Opposition side as to how several of those members obtained their election, it would be a big reflection on some of the officers concerned. I have been told that in some cases the bottom of the ballot-boxes were stuffed up, and that plenty of votes were put in. It is common knowledge on the goldfields that if there were a court before which some of those members could be challenged, the Opposition would find themselves in an awkward position. What they appear to ignore or condone in their own selection ballots, they condemn in regard to other elections outside of their organisation, so that when it comes to a general election their methods and their manners change entirely.

MR. BATH: I thought those members who were selected under Labour ballots expressed entire satisfaction.

MR. KEENAN: If the leader of the Opposition wishes that I should direct some of my observations to him, I shall be pleased to do so, and I may remark that if effect is to be given the pious wish indulged in by the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) that all parties who

have been guilty of infraction of the electoral law shall be made to feel that they cannot do such things with impunity, it may then be necessary for the Opposition to consider the duty of electing another leader, because nobody on the Eastern Goldfields who has local knowledge and common sense believes that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bath) is a resident of Kalgoorlie and not a resident of Subiaco. The hon. member was described on the electoral roll as residing at the Union Club Hotel, Kalgoorlie. I congratulate him on having a very happy home; and therefore if the Leader of the Opposition wishes to centre attention on himself and desires also that the pious wish of his friend should be carried into strict effect, we may have to inquire into the question as to where the hon. member really does reside, and for which electorate he was qualified to vote. However, what I wish to emphasise is that there appears to be no reality in this debate. The member for Mt. Margaret has asked for certain things. He is going to get them, as far as the House can obtain them for him. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Price) has asked for a wider inquiry. No member of the House I believe objects to that wider inquiry; and if so, we are prepared to give the mover of the motion all he has asked for, and I believe the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) and other members are also prepared to give the member for Fremantle what he has asked for, inasmuch as it has been expressly stated by members of the Government, by the mover of the amendment, and by every member who has spoken to-day, that the result will be not to delay the laying on the table of the papers asked for in the motion. I cannot see how the hon. member (Mr. Taylor) can justify the motion and oppose the amendment for widening its scope. That is the view I take; and because I do not believe that the carrying of the amendment will cause delay in the production of the papers desired by the mover of the motion, I shall vote for the amendment.

Question (that the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the question) put, and negatived.

Farther question (that the words proposed to be inserted be inserted) stated.

MR. G. TAYLOR (in reply): I am sorry the House has seen fit to carry the amendment, because it was not my desire to go beyond the scope of the motion I moved. I knew there were investigations made by the Electoral Department in certain electorates, and I had no knowledge of any investigations in other electorates. That being so, I desired the result of those investigations to be laid on the table of the House. Notwithstanding the eloquent appeal made by the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Keenan), in contending that the amendment in no way affects the motion, I would like to point out that the amendment is asking for investigations that are not in existence. I have no knowledge, nor has the mover of the amendment any knowledge, of any investigations having taken place in electorates other than those I mentioned. The mover of the amendment is now desirous to call for investigations that have yet to be made.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Is there any reason why they should not be made?

MR. TAYLOR: I should think it is the duty of the member who represents Fremantle (Mr. Price) to ask that those investigations should be made if he feels there is any necessity for them. It is evident to me that the head of the Electoral Department, the chief electoral officer who controls the working of the Act, must have realised the necessity of investigating the electoral proceedings in those four electorates which I have compassed in my motion. Those apparently were the only electorates that he believed necessitated a departmental inquiry. I do believe the gentleman will not go beyond his powers in the Act. I believe he has full power to hold a departmental inquiry if he thinks it necessary. I am sorry my friends from Fremantle have taken this matter somewhat personally. Those members for Fremantle who sit on the Government side are united on the point. I do not know of any investigation in any other electorate, or I should have included it in the motion. The mover of the amendment gave no reason for the necessity of that amendment. He moved it without making any speech, although the intellectual giant from Kalgoorlie was able to

say that the hon. member made it perfectly clear that an amendment was necessary. The member for Fremantle moved the amendment at the instigation of the member for East Fremantle, who was ruled out of order by the Speaker. The amendment was not written at the time of moving, for after the hon. member resumed his seat he wrote it out. I had no desire to deal with the electoral rolls whatever. I simply dealt with the administration of the Electoral Act during the elections, and I want to bear out what has already been said by the member for Subiaco, that a house-to-house canvass was made by the Electoral Department in the metropolitan centre on the goldfields and the metropolitan centre on the coast, embracing from Midland Junction to Fremantle on the coast and the various electorates surrounding Kalgoorlie on the goldfields. That house-to-house canvass, as has been mentioned by the member for Kalgoorlie, reduced the inflated rolls considerably. I am speaking from memory, but I think the number on the coast was reduced by something like 10,000 names, and I think by a similar number in the metropolitan area on the goldfields. It was impossible with the funds that the last Parliament voted for the Electoral Department to carry out a house-to-house canvass throughout the State, but the next best thing was done. While I was Colonial Secretary the Federal rolls was being compiled, the police were collecting the voters' names; and instructions were issued to the chief electoral officer so that the work done by the police for the Federal Parliament should be utilised by the State in compiling the State rolls. The member for Menzies says it was not done at Menzies. I admit that mistakes were made at various places, but I myself say that in discussing the position with the electoral officer, I put that phase of the question to him; and he said, "We are doing it, and will continue to do so." I am told by the Premier that it was not done. Then all I can say is that so far as I am concerned, at the time as Colonial Secretary that was my intention, and also I can say that was the understanding with the Chief Electoral Officer, and up to the present time I thought it had been done. Members have said that in outlying districts there

was no canvass; but that does not prove that the work was not done throughout the length and breadth of the State. I recognise the difficulty of placing names on the rolls. The Chief Electoral Officer pointed out to me repeatedly that during the house-to-house canvass, the canvassers complained to the department about the difficulty they had in visiting the various houses. They had gone as many as three or four times to various houses, the occupiers being at the meals, or going out and too busy to sign their names or make an application for their names to be placed on the rolls. In some cases the complaints were so great that the officers pointed out they would get as much courtesy if they were collecting accounts. In Queensland and in this State I have personally endeavoured to get men to sign application forms so that the names could be placed on the rolls, and I know the difficulty as pointed out by the member for Kalgoorlie. People neglect these matters during the quiet time before an election; but they recognise just before an election the necessity of getting a vote. Then they find many reasons why their names should appear on the rolls, and they see no justification for the absence of their names. In a large measure the people are to blame. I say that had as the Electoral Act is, up to the present time the Electoral Act passed in last Parliament is the most liberal Electoral Act in any of the States of Australasia that has come under my notice. There is no difficulty in a person getting his name on the roll. In the old time one had to sign an application form in the presence of a justice of the peace; and I have carried as many as three or four or five hundred forms to a justice of the peace after they had been signed by electors. But because the forms were not signed in the presence of a justice they were not recognised. There is nothing in our Act of a similar character. All a person has to do is to sign the claim, and the name is placed on the roll. I am reminded by the member for Kanowna that then the name may be cut off. The Act says you must be summoned to appear to show why your name should not be struck off, and I suppose if a person does not appear, the name is struck off. The member for Ivanhoe says that names are cut off even then.

MR. SCADDAN : After appearing before the revision court ?

MR. TAYLOR : I cannot contradict that statement. I know in a large measure the notices sent out may not be of sufficient importance for people to deal with them, and some do not take notice of them. While I was Colonial Secretary I endeavoured to have all people eligible to vote in the State placed on the rolls. I admit, in moving this motion, I instanced a case with reference to undue haste on the part of the Premier in issuing the writs. But that hon. gentleman somewhat clouded the issue or tried to change the statement I made to a matter of manipulating the rolls. If I accused the Premier of manipulating the rolls, that was not my intention. I accused the Premier of manipulation only as to the writs and the hasty way in which the writs were issued. I said that in issuing the writs he was well advised. The Minister for Mines, the member for Menzies, was advised as to the state of the rolls in Menzies, and he knew full well there were about three to five hundred applications for other names to be placed on the roll. Had the writs not been issued for another two days, these names would have appeared on a supplementary roll, and the people would have been eligible to vote. I pointed out that if that had been so, we might not have greeted the pleasant face of the member for Menzies in the Chamber after the general election. That is the statement I made. I did not charge the Premier with manipulating the rolls, because the rolls had been compiled from time to time, and the Act specifically lays down that if an application form is in the hands of the registrar 14 clear days before the issue of the writ, the name will be placed on the roll. The undue haste with the writs prevented in the one case, that is the Menzies electorate, the names of three hundred or five hundred names being placed on the roll.

THE PREMIER : Does it not strike you that there was undue haste in regard to the applications also ?

MR. TAYLOR : I may point out that the undue haste as far as the applications were concerned was this. The member for Menzies was contesting the

seat as a Minister, and he was opposed by another gentleman ; and during the campaign those on both sides realised the necessity, when they found that there were hundreds of persons in the electorate whose names were not on the rolls, of having them placed on. That is the reason why the 280 names which in a large degree would have supported the Government candidate, and 300 to 500 names which would have supported the Opposition candidate, were sent in. It is idle for Ministers to treat this matter lightly. The Minister for Mines and the Premier—no one knows better than what I am saying is absolutely true—know that if the writs had not been issued for two or three days, there would have been three to five hundred more names on the roll for the Menzies electorate. I do not know anything about the contents of the telegram, other than what the Minister for Mines has stated. There is no secrecy about the matter. The hon. member, in conversation, showed me the telegram in an ordinary way, and I am not accusing the Minister as far as the telegram is concerned of any underhand business.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES : Your statement is not in keeping with the telegram, but that does not matter.

MR. TAYLOR : I have no hesitation in saying the Premier tried to place my remarks in a wrong light before the House when he accused me of stating that he manipulated the rolls.

THE PREMIER : You did.

MR. TAYLOR : I did not ; but the manipulation was in connection with the writs. So far as the writs are concerned, I suppose had the elections not been so hurried, the Electoral Department would have had the rolls in a better condition to have fought the election upon. We know how hurriedly the election came on, and it was expedited considerably by my friends opposite, with perhaps some success. With reference to the remarks made by the member for Kalgoorlie in reference to the selection ballot, I want to point out that he is not accurate at all when he says I was a defeated candidate at the selection ballot. I wish to point out, in case hon. members may have to refer to the matter on some future occasion, that the selection ballot

was void; and, that being so, nobody could be successful. However, I shall not debate in this Chamber the selection ballots of the Labour party. While it is permissible for members on the Government side of the House to drag in anything they desire in reference to our party or the Labour movement, and our method of conducting our business, I shall not deal with that aspect of the question. Before the session closes I shall be able to deal just as effectively as they with the manner in which Government members are selected, when the National "Ass." selects them, and when the Premier and the representative of the Midland Railway Company and some other gentleman are called in as referees. I shall be able to deal with that aspect of the question at some other stage of this session. I certainly feel grateful to the Premier for allowing the papers asked for to be laid on the table. I am not grateful to the Government, but I am grateful to the Premier. This amendment is certainly irrelevant to my motion. I believe it is hardly in order to tack on foreign matter to such a motion. No investigations have been held as to elections throughout the State. The mover of the amendment (Mr. Price) has not shown that they have, nor has that been shown by any member on the Government side. If investigations had taken place in electorates other than those mentioned in my motion, I should not have objected to the amendment; but with the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish), I say that the amendment is intended only to burk my motion.

MR. PRICE: How do you know that investigations have not been made?

MR. TAYLOR: The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) is now of opinion—or was when he was speaking—that no other investigations have been made, and he gave as a reason for thinking so that his side was not consulted. I tell the hon. member I hope that the gentleman in charge of the Electoral Department, when he believes that there has been a breach of the Electoral Act, will not ask any party in Parliament or out of Parliament whether he is properly to administer the Act, or to bring to justice those who should be brought to justice. It is not for any political party

to advise the department when certain irregularities have been committed. I presume that the irregularities took place under the noses of the officers in Perth; and an inquiry followed. Whether the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Keenan) is speaking on behalf of the Government, I am not prepared to say; but if he is not, I hope the Premier will contradict him, so that the House may not be led astray. The member for Kalgoorlie has said that the papers indicated in my motion will be laid on the table immediately, and that, if the amendment be carried, further inquiries can go on throughout the State. If that be so, then I will not find so much fault; but I shall not accept a statement from the member for Kalgoorlie as the statement of the Premier or of the Ministerial bench. Before I resume my seat, the Premier might give me, in the ordinary way, his assurance that he will not delay the placing on the table of those papers that are in existence respecting the electorates covered by my motion, but will table them immediately, and not hold them back pending an inquiry throughout the State. If inquiries have to be made in the Kimberley district, and if the generally accepted opinion that this session will close before Christmas be true, we shall have no possible chance of seeing the papers during this session. In fairness to me, to the State, and to the purity of electoral campaigns, those papers which I know to be in existence should be laid on the table at the earliest possible moment; and if additional investigations be necessary throughout the State, let those investigations take place, and let this House be supplied with their results when these come to hand. But I hope the Premier will not, till the whole of the investigations are completed, withhold the information desired by me. I am sure that the Premier will give me the required assurance, for the fairness of my request must be apparent to hon. members. We have in existence papers containing the results of certain investigations. I have called for the papers; and if they are not to be produced till the whole of the elections throughout the State have been investigated, there will be no chance of our getting the papers during this session.

Question (as amended) put and passed.

PAPERS—FACTORIES ACT, DESPATCH RECEIVED.

Notice had been given of a motion, "That all papers in which the operation of the Factories Act of 1904 have been adversely commented upon by the Imperial Parliament be laid upon the table of the House."

Mr. HORAN (Yilgarn) said: With your permission, Mr. Speaker, and with the concurrence of the House, I desire to amend the notice of motion standing in my name, which was hurriedly drafted on account of the Premier's inability to reply instantly to my question. I desire leave to amend the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is provided in Standing Order No. 223 that such notice cannot be amended save by leave of the House.

Question put and passed; leave given.

Mr. HORAN: I move—

That an Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that all despatches exchanged between himself and the Imperial Government relative to the Factories Act of 1894 be laid on the table of the House.

As I think I am the first person who, after dinner, has yet risen in this House since the beginning of the session to propose a specific motion, permit me to congratulate you, sir, on attaining your present high position. As the sole occupant of this (third Opposition) cross-bench, I think I may assure you that you may rely on receiving the cordial support of everyone who sits with me. I think it is due in courtesy to the Premier to explain that on coming into the House a little while ago, I thought he had taken advantage of a Standing Order so as to prevent certain private members' business, set down for to-night, from being discussed. I was perhaps somewhat rash in coming to that conclusion; and I found afterwards that the Premier was good enough to allow us to discuss to the fullest extent the private business on the Notice Paper. I desire to express my regret at the remarks I made, believing that the Premier was trying to take advantage of his power to prevent our discussing this subject. This is a question of grave importance; and I am not sure whether in any other Australian Parliament any such subject has been under discussion. While I do not wish for a moment to criticise or discuss in

any way the principles of the Factories Act, the question which I ask the Premier is, whether the Imperial Government is about to interfere in the domestic legislation of this country. I am sure I can rely on support from all sides of the House when I say that no matter how violent and how virulent our battles during the past general election, we are capable of managing our own affairs in such a manner as we deem fit and proper and suitable to our own requirements. In moving for the production of these papers, I feel confident that the Premier will raise no objection. Time was when Governors used to interfere with the business of Parliaments. Such interference took place more than once in the Eastern States; in New South Wales, in Queensland, and in circumstances which may be known to most of the members of this House, when that celebrated democrat, George Higinbotham, as Acting-Premier of Victoria, refused to accept a recommendation from the Governor of that State. But the present position, if the newspapers are to be believed, seems to be totally different. It would seem that the Imperial Government proposes to dictate to the people of Western Australia as to whether we shall pass legislation which in our opinion meets the exigencies of local conditions. I do not for a moment think that this Parliament will agree to anything of that kind; but the time and place will be found for discussing the subject in fuller detail. In this instance I think myself justified in moving for the production of the papers, and setting at rest once and for all the question whether the newspaper reports are correct, and what action the Premier proposes to take. I know exactly the limitations in which the Government of the State is placed by the Act of the Imperial Parliament, known as the Constitution Act. It is no business of mine to mention those limitations. If the Premier will only be good enough to produce the papers, that will no doubt meet the requirements of all representatives in this Chamber. I therefore move the motion standing in my name.

Mr. J. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): I second the motion.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): As a general rule, the Government hesi-

tates considerably before objecting to the production of papers asked for by an hon. member. Personally I think that practice has grown in the past until it is becoming somewhat objectionable. It has been frequently the case that members have asked for papers to be laid on the table of the House merely to satisfy their inquisitiveness—I make no allusion in this particular case; and it has frequently happened that considerable complications have arisen from the fact of these papers being laid on the table of the House and being made available to the public and the Press. The Press in quoting from papers laid on the table naturally desire—and I give them credit for an honest attempt to carry out their desire—to give a fair review of the facts contained in the papers; but it follows that they cannot give them at very great length, and often their judgment as to what they should quote and what they should not leads them astray. In any case they very frequently omit to refer to certain facts leading up to certain circumstances; and the public generally, not having the whole of the facts before them, are apt and do frequently arrive at erroneous conclusions. It also very frequently happens that the Government of the day has communications which are to a great extent of a highly confidential nature, and confidential papers of that description should certainly not be laid on the table of this House. I remember that last session some papers which were strictly private and confidential in nature were laid on the table of the House—I think in error only and not intentionally, but the result of that has been very unfortunate indeed. The hon. member in the first place moved “That all papers in which the operation of the Factories Act of 1904 has been adversely commented upon by the Imperial Parliament be laid on the table of the House.” That has been altered by consent of the House to “That an Address be presented to his Excellency the Governor praying that all despatches exchanged between himself and the Imperial Government relative to the Factories Act 1904 be laid on the table of the House.” I hope the House will not agree to that motion. I object to it very strongly myself. I object very strongly myself to the business and the conduct of the

business of this House being taken out of the hands of the Ministry in this way. If communications have been received affecting any legislation of Western Australia, his Excellency will, in the ordinary course of events, submit those communications to his responsible advisers; and they will give him advice as to what should be done in regard to them. In this case I wish to be perfectly honest, open, and straightforward. A communication has been received, not of an objectionable character, but of a very important character. It was strictly confidential. I applied to his Excellency the Governor to be allowed, in certain circumstances, if the circumstances arose and if the necessity arose, to make the contents of that confidential communication public. I wish to assure the House that, having that permission, before any action is taken in any shape or form whatever, or before any action is proposed in regard to the Factories Act, this communication will be submitted to the House. That is as far as I am prepared to go; and I assure the hon. member and members of this House that if they press this motion and it be carried, though I am sure the good sense of the House will render that impossible, those who are seeking to do good, for I believe the hon. member is actuated by the best motives, will be doing incalculable harm. I assure the House that, before the Government attempt to take any action whatever with reference to the Factories Act, the contents of that communication will be made public and submitted to the proper persons to whom they should be submitted, that is the Parliament of Western Australia; but until that time does arrive, I certainly object to having the papers, be they whatever they may, submitted or placed on the table of this House. So far as I know, there is only one communication which could be placed on the table, and that is the one that I have specially asked for permission to make public should the necessity arise. That necessity has not yet arisen. In carrying out what I believe to be my duty not only to the House but to the country, I object very strongly to the motion being carried, and I hope that, after an explanation has been given, the hon. member will withdraw it.

MR. T. WALKER (Kanowna): One can well understand the motive of the

Premier in wishing to maintain the secrecy of the Government in a matter of such vast importance; but he surely cannot blame the hon. member who moves this motion, or the House, for desiring to have the information which has been communicated to him. No question has arisen within the life of this or previous Parliaments, or any other Parliament so far as I am aware, of greater importance to this State, nay to the Commonwealth of Australia, than that which is involved in this simple motion to-night. It involves not only the question to which the whole of Australia is pledged, that which has become a cant phrase, a "White Australia," but it involves what is dearer perhaps to us as a self-governing State than even the question of alien restriction. The whole question of our right to govern ourselves is involved in this simple motion, is involved in these papers. The question is, Are we to govern ourselves just so long as we are comporting to the ideas of the Home Ministry and the Government in power in England for the time being—are we to be allowed to play at legislation, or are we a self-governing country? That is the question which is involved in this, and I hope that the matter will not be so lightly put aside as it has been by the Premier. He has told us that his Excellency has been pleased to communicate to him certain information. That information is within the Premier's knowledge. When the Premier sees fit he will communicate to this House what that information is, and not till then. That information he will give us—he has permission—if ever the necessity should arise for him to deal with the Factories Act. It may so happen that he may never have an opportunity of dealing with the Factories Act; but I submit that this House has a right to know what the Home Government thinks of our legislation, just as much as the Premier has the right to know what the Home Government thinks about our legislation. Every member almost of this House is pledged to pursue a certain policy in regard to outside nationalities. Almost every member here is pledged to what is called a "White Australia." We have legislation on the statute-book; not only have we laws in force, but we are administering them in our courts; we have paid officers

who are carrying out the laws that are passed; and to-morrow we may find some despatch communicated to us which will render null and void all our past legislation, all the acts which we have committed, and which will render illegal the steps we are taking every day of our lives. Yet we are supposed to know nothing about it, and to wait here as children to receive the information when it pleases the Premier to communicate it to us about the Factories Act. I submit a matter of that great importance is not a matter on which this House should be kept in ignorance. I have no desire to speak with any disrespect of those institutions under which this country, and every country under the British Crown, flourishes; but it is incumbent on us at times to remember that between the representatives of the people and even the Crown there may be conflicts, or controversies, or questions as to rights. We know that the sovereigns of England, in days gone by, have been confronted by members of an Assembly like this, and that in the end the sovereign has been compelled by reason or other force to recognise the rights of the people in their representatives assembled in Parliament. Rights which we enjoy here, and which they enjoy in the British House of Parliament itself, in a great measure have been wrung from the past sovereigns of England, until by the conflict between sovereign and people a happy union of power and combination, which has rendered the British Constitution the most perfect political machinery the world has ever seen, has been attained. Now, I venture to think that here is just the possibility, not of the Sovereign of England, not even of his representative in the person of His Excellency, coming into conflict with this House, but there is a danger of the Government of England for the time being usurping what was once the royal prerogative, what was once the sole power of the Crown, and coercing us, restricting our liberties, interfering with our legislation, checking us at any particular point, and rendering null and void what may be of vital interest to us. For think what this implies, what it involves. If we can be prevented legislating in our own colonies and in the Commonwealth against the influx of aliens, or against

the competition of Chinese with white people in this country, what does it mean? It means that within a decade from now, ten years hence, white workers will not be able to live in this State. I am making no exaggeration. If our ports were to-morrow to be thrown open to those hordes from China, or even from Japan—and I have no desire to speak disrespectfully of that wonderful and gallant nation that has humiliated the most warlike nation of Europe—if our ports are to be thrown open to those nations and we have to receive from those over-populated countries their surplus, no workman could continue in his employment, no man working under present civilised conditions in this country could earn his livelihood. I do not speak from fancy. I have seen what has taken place in South Africa. The importation of the Chinese there upon the mines has rendered it totally impossible for a white labourer to live in Johannesburg.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: There are more white workers there now.

MR. WALKER: There are not. I have been in South Africa; I have relatives there now, and I know something about it. The state of South Africa for white men has been completely ruined. Nothing but absolute ruination exists for the white worker. There is no opening for the man who wants to earn his living by his hands, or as an artisan by means of a trade. The place is absolutely given over to the black and yellow men, and to the capitalists; and I submit that, if we are not allowed to restrict alien population from coming to our shores and to regulate their conduct when they come here, we give this country over to China and Japan; absolutely making us denizens of the Empire of the Mikado and that of the Empress of China, giving it absolutely over to them.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The Commonwealth controls all matters of immigration.

MR. WALKER: The Commonwealth may, but this State is involved; and if we can be prevented from administering our domestic legislation to-morrow, the Commonwealth Government may be interfered with in the same way.

THE PREMIER: The home authorities can veto the Act.

MR. WALKER: I know; and they can suspend the constitution. But are we to allow them to do it without a protest? Are we to assume the attitude of legislative slaves?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: You are assuming all the time.

MR. WALKER: Assuming what?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: That they are going to interfere.

MR. WALKER: I am not saying they are going to, but that they are interfering, and I say that if I am under a wrong assumption, I am not the only one in the House under that error by any means, and not only on this side of the House, but on that side of the House. Have I not the right to be correctly informed? Is it not the duty of the Premier to take us into his confidence to the extent that he knows the facts of it? Why should the Premier tell us that when he deems it fit to deal with the Factories Act he will inform us? He says, by what he has already told us, that he could tell us, that it would not be wrong to tell us, that at a certain time it would be right to tell us. If it would be right to tell us then, it would be right to tell us now; for in a matter of such importance the country cannot know the facts too soon. Not only we, but the people outside desire to know something about this. Every body of workers in the country is immensely concerned in the attitude of the Government and the future attitude of Parliament upon this question, and the people have a right to have information on a matter that concerns them so vitally. If we have any of the blood of the old fighters in our veins, if we have anything like honourable manhood within us, we shall resist or make at least some protest. I admit that resistance would be futile. If we could not obtain force for resistance, we could make some strong protest against interference with domestic legislation in this State by the home authorities. Is not this limitation or nullification of the Factories Act an interference? Will the hon. member deny that the Imperial authorities have communicated to this State the fact that the Act must be inoperative, that it must not be put into operation?

THE PREMIER: Oh!

MEMBER: Certain clauses.

MR. WALKER: Undoubtedly; dealing of course with aliens. The information has come to this State—and I challenge denial—that we are not to treat the aliens, the Japanese or the Chinese, other than we treat our own State citizens. We are to give them every opportunity that is given to the white citizen. We are to make no distinction whatever between them, and indeed we must allow them the fullest personal liberty, which means liberty to undermine our own workers. It means the ruination of all our trade and the pauperisation of our own people. And are we to make no protest against this? Are we quietly to submit to it? Are we not to protect our own people? Are they not more to us than even the allies of Great Britain, great as may be that growing nation of Japan, and wonderful and useful as may be the alliance between her and the mother country? Are we not or should we not be more to the British Crown than even that great nation? Should we be compelled to submit or to act like children in obedience to the will of British statesmen because this foreign nation is involved?

THE PREMIER: You are acting like children now, as much as anything else.

MR. WALKER: Acting like children! Is it childish to protest against this secrecy which conceals from this House that which is more vital than any other thing at this moment? I dare say the hon. gentleman would like to dismiss it in so easy a fashion. But if the House has any sense of self-respect, it will not permit that. The hon. member not only thinks he can treat the Leader of the Opposition with contempt, not only thinks he can treat the whole of the Opposition as children, but he thinks he can treat the whole of the House in the same way. That is rather the conduct of a big school-boy with a lolly in his mouth. Perhaps the hon. member has something to learn in this respect, for he undoubtedly lacks a sense of the dignity of this Assembly, lacks respect for the people of this country, is lacking in regard for the rights of this self-governing institution of which he by accident has become Premier. He will perhaps in due course learn. Without prolonging the debate to-night, I have no doubt that we shall have other occasions to deal

with the subject again. We must deal with it, and if the Premier forgets to bring down the Factories Act, or whatever it may be in connection with this subject, and does not give us that communication, I trust the House will bring him back to the words he has uttered to-night. When he thinks necessary, he will communicate a portion of the despatches that he has seen. I submit that this House should have information now. We have a right to deal with it now, and if the House has any sense of its own dignity it will not permit the Premier to snub it in this cavalier fashion.

MR. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison): I rise to support the motion of the member for Yilgarn. I am sorry indeed to know and see that the Premier of this Assembly has thought fit to allow Cabinet secrets to be published in the Press, and to refuse to give information to this House.

THE PREMIER: I did nothing of the kind.

MR. HOLMAN: It is a disgrace to him in his position that news can be given to the Press stating that certain information was received of a confidential nature from the home authorities, from the Secretary of State, who may not be Secretary of State after the next general election in the old country, and for him to refuse to give any information to members of this House, the representatives of the people of this State. This is not the first time confidential matters have leaked out. It was stated to-night that the Labour party betrayed the interests of the country; but I say we never betrayed the interests of the country, as very likely is being done at the present time. On another occasion we heard a Minister talk about the Labour Government bungling the business of the country. A similar case of leakage to this occurred when the present Premier was a member of a previous Cabinet. In regard to the Phillimore-street case, information leaked out and this country had to pay thousands of pounds more for land than it would have had to pay had these things been done in a proper manner. Now information has gone out and the Press has informed us about this communication. Yet we, as representatives of the people, the voice of this country, were refused any informa-

tion on this matter at all. I maintain it would be the duty of every member of this Assembly to stand up and fight as long as he was able to do so for the rights of the people in this State, the people he represents. A fight has been made in other countries before this. We look back to a question of a somewhat similar nature that cropped up in America some time ago, and we come to a later date when President Cleveland, at the time the Chinese Exclusion Bill was before the American Congress, sent a message in which he said:—

It is a recognised canon of international law and intercourse that every sovereign State has a paramount right to exclude from its borders all elements of foreign population, which for any reason might retard its prosperity or be detrimental to the moral and physical health of the people.

I maintain that if the home authorities interfere with our domestic legislation in relation to the Chinese or Japanese, they are interfering with something they have no right to interfere with. We are the best people to judge what legislation we should enforce in this State to control the workers in our factories, and I maintain that if we labour under a delusion with regard to this communication, the Premier should be the person to set us right. I do not think we are going to be dictated to here in Australia, although we are only a few, although we only number four millions of people. It is for the Premier to make a statement to this Assembly and place us in possession of information, giving us the exact terms or as nearly as possible the exact terms of the communication received, and not allow us to be in ignorance of its contents for any longer time than necessary. We have the case of South Africa mentioned. I maintain it would be the duty of every member in this Assembly to stand up and fight as long as he had breath or a hand to raise against the States of Australia being brought into the same condition as the States of South Africa are in at the present time. We know that at the present time the white worker cannot earn a living in South Africa. I received a letter from my cousin in which he said that if the white worker desired to live at all he had to bring himself to the level of the black man and work for five shillings a day.

I believe that if the home authorities had the same power as they have had in South Africa, where they have been controlled to a great extent by boodlers in that country, we should be in the same position in Australia. I think it is a disgrace to the Premier of this State to be in receipt of a communication that may affect the interests of the whole of the people of this Commonwealth, and to refuse to divulge that information to the members of this Assembly. Certain information leaked out from a Cabinet of which he was the head, and was published in the Press, whereas we cannot get any information at all. I deprecate his action in trying to dismiss the matter from this Assembly by the commonplace cry that it is one of no importance. If this is an important matter we should be given the full text of the communication; and if it is not important, the Premier should rise in his place and make that statement in this House, and allow us to rest content with a full knowledge that the interests of this State will be protected to the utmost. I maintain that every representative in this Chamber should demand information from him.

MR. H. E. BOLTON (North Fremantle): I desire to enter my protest against the refusal of the Premier to give this information to the Assembly. I cannot help thinking, knowing some of the gentlemen as I do, that possibly the time is not yet ripe to give that information to the Chamber. The hon. member had told us that he will give us that information when he thinks fit or as necessity arises.

THE PREMIER: Before any action at all was taken.

MR. BOLTON: I am glad the Premier reminded me of that. But I would also remind members that when it is given it may be too late to take any action against the proposal of the Government. Very possibly some machinery may be in course of construction, and when the information is given to the House, certain action may have been taken, and it may be too late to enter any protest. It is absolutely necessary that the information be given to this House; but members on this side of the Chamber recognise the futility of continually asking for things when we know that the

brutal majority sitting opposite to us can simply lie back in their chairs and smile as they do in regard to most things we have asked for, treating our requests in silence and contempt. I only hope that their actions will be noted by the country as well as by members on the Opposition side of the House. The member for Kanowna referred to the danger of such an objection being raised from the home Government without any protest from this House or from the representatives of the people in this State; but when we remember the very large interests, for instance, of the Minister for Works in the Collie Coalfield, and also that some of the supporters of the Government are interested in Collie coal, it will be perhaps in their interests to have a replica of Johannesburg in this State, for then they will be able to produce Collie coal cheaply by Japanese and Chinese labour. This information is to be delayed until it is found necessary, in the opinion of one man, to give it to this House. I say it is scandalous that it should be held back so long from 50 representatives of the people; but the hon. gentleman has supporters who, I regret to say, are still looking for cheaper farm labourers. Perhaps a few Chinese and Japanese can do away with their trouble and with the vexed immigration question. If such a communication from the home authorities is allowed to go without any protest, another can follow it demanding that our ports be thrown open to alien nations, Japanese and Chinese; and what would happen then? Undoubtedly the Government would be supported by their present supporters, because they are a mixed variety. Some of them are interested in industries which would be considerably enhanced by the importation of Chinese.

MR. J. C. G. FOULKES (Claremont): I think all the hon. members who have spoken on the Opposition side on this subject are rather unduly alarmed. They speak of fighting the Crown, and of doing all kinds of things, and of carrying on the industries here with Chinese labour and Japanese labour. I have read Press statements regarding this affair both here and in the English papers; but I have so far not learned anything at all that would alarm us or in any way show that the British Government have any desire to

interfere with our local legislation. One speaker said just now that any day we might find our liberties taken away from us, and that some despatch would come here—I think the words were, “that would render null and void any legislation we had passed.” One can hardly think that the hon. member who used language of that kind really knows anything at all as to how we frame enactments. Acts of Parliament are not annulled by despatches. In that case it would be hardly necessary for us to meet here. One can hardly expect that members who hold such curious and extreme ideas—

MR. WALKER: What about the suspension of the Constitution itself? Has it been done recently?

MR. FOULKES: But it has not been done here.

MR. WALKER: It may be.

MR. FOULKES: Do not be unnecessarily alarmed. I am not alarmed at such a contingency as that. There is not the slightest fear that such a thing would happen to us, that our Constitution would be annulled. I do not know what is in this despatch that has been sent to his Excellency the Governor; but I feel quite sure that, as the Premier has said, when the time comes he will inform the people of this despatch. I am certain that full justice will be done to the people. I agree with every member of this House that we should be most anxious and strong believers in the maintenance of the principle of a white Australia. There is not the slightest shadow of doubt as to that. No one is more loyal to that principle than I am myself. I was recently in South Africa, and I saw the Chinese there and the black races and the various half-castes in that country; and I always believe in the principle of a white Australia. What I have seen in South Africa has convinced me that it is of the utmost importance to Australia that we should keep Australia white. Although I have these opinions, I also know that it is a fact that the British Government and the people in England have, during the last ten years at least, shown every desire to recognise the wishes of the various peoples who live in their respective colonies. We need never be afraid of any dictation from the home Govern-

ment. I am quite sure of that fact. They have treated Australian and Canadian colonies with the utmost generosity. We have to bear in mind that it is owing to their protection that we people here are allowed to pass legislation. If it were not for the protection of the British fleet, the danger would then arise of our having our Constitution annulled. The British people and the British Parliament are our best friends; and it is all nonsense to hear people talking of having despatches sent here to annul our Acts. I am not afraid of that. I am certain that the hon. member who has pointed out the danger of such a contingency happening, in his own mind does not fear anything of the sort. We cannot annul the Factories Act even by the Governor's proclamation. If we must have the Factories Act annulled, it will be necessary to introduce a Bill to do so. [MR. HORAN: You are wrong.] I am not. It will be necessary to introduce a Bill to alter any provision in regard to the Act. If the Government think it necessary to alter the Act—I do not say they do—I myself think that they will not do anything at all whereby they will make it easier to have black labour or Chinese labour employed here.

MR. HOLMAN: They have already done it.

MR. FOULKES: I do not anticipate anything of the kind happening, but it seems to me utterly ridiculous that a man should rise up here—[MR. WALKER: To fight for the white people]—we are not called upon yet to fight. The time for us to make protest, if any protest is necessary—and so far I have not learned anything whereby we should excite ourselves about this question at all—is not the present. We do not know that there is any necessity. The main thing is that there seem to be a few members in this House who are most curious and inquisitive to know the contents of these letters that are written by some people. It is quite true that certain statements have been made in the Press; but I do not know that these statements are correct. We have learned, some of us, not to believe everything that is said in the Press; and I have learned this fact too, in connection with business, that sometimes, pending negotiations, it is not always advisable to show everybody what

is taking place in connection with these negotiations. For all I know there may be no antagonism or opposition whatever on the part of Great Britain. It may be some foreign Power that has communicated with Great Britain. Do not let us take steps that will cause difficulties between Britain and some other Power. There is no necessity to talk about fighting. I have every confidence that the Government will see that justice will be done to all parties. I feel absolutely certain that, knowing how anxious we are to maintain the principle of a white Australia, the Government will take no action whatever that will put in peril that principle; and I have every confidence that they will make public this correspondence when the right time has arrived.

HON. F. H. PIESSE (Katanning): I had not intended to speak to-night in reference to this motion, but for a remark which fell from the lips of the member for Murchison with regard to want of confidence shown by Cabinet in regard to these despatches, that is, the information having been given to the Press. Speaking as an old Cabinet Minister, and in reply to one who has recently filled that position also, I am sorry to hear the member for Murchison making such remarks; because any Cabinet with confidential communications before it would not disclose that information to the Press; and if that information has filtered to the Press in some way, it is through some other source. Confidential communications are kept within the scope of the Cabinet and its executive officers. As a rule, nothing is heard of a confidential communication; but when the case arises that the communication is referred to officers of departments for their information or their advice in regard to certain matters, then there may be want of confidence shown by those men and disclosures are made. This is reprehensible, because it is by that means frequently that information of a confidential character gets abroad. Speaking generally, we can admire the bulk of the civil servants of this State as men of uprightness and integrity; and, as a rule, Cabinet secrets and confidential matters are kept, and if they do get to the Press it is from other sources. I take it this confidential com-

munication, if such has been received, has probably reached the Press from sources from which it should not have reached the papers. Members are no doubt speaking in the interests of the country; and I am sure those who assisted to pass the Factories Act last Parliament were quite agreeable to help it through; but there are members who have spoken to-night who would make the public believe that there are other men in this House who are ready at once to repeal the Act. The member for North Fremantle made a reference that the farmers were ready to have cheap labour and Chinese and men of similar nationality to do their work. The hon. member should not make that reference. If there is one set of people in this country that helps to build up the interests of the State and to employ workmen at times when other trades have been stagnant, it is the farming community; and indeed the farmer is one who has done a great deal to help industries in other directions. Though we have heard so much eloquence from the member for Kanowna to-night, he seems to be a bit too previous. He should know that a matter of this importance could not be dealt with by any Government until it had been brought before the House for consideration. The Premier has already assured us, if there is any necessity for bringing the matter forward and he can disclose the information, the House shall have the information. It will be for us then to decide the course to take, it will be for us then to hear speeches in favour of the measure passed last session, and if temperate and moderate, at the hands of the broad-minded members of the House they will receive due consideration. Therefore Parliament to-night, in discussing the matter, is too previous. The matter has not reached that serious stage which some members would lead us to believe it has reached. I quite believe with the Premier that such a confidential communication should remain secret until such time as the Ministers who are controlling the affairs of the country decide what course they should take.

MR. J. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): I cannot allow this opportunity to go by without answering the Premier, who said that members in calling for the papers

were only inquisitive and curious. This is a peculiar assertion for the Premier to make, when we want the country to know what is transpiring. It would be quite a different matter for the Premier to say that it is undesirable that this information should be made known at the present time; but he has stated that it was inquisitiveness which caused members to call for the production of the papers.

THE PREMIER: I did not say that.

MR. SCADDAN: The Premier did exempt this particular occasion and spoke generally, but the inference was that it was inquisitiveness which prompted the request of those papers. The Press of the State has already made public certain matters with regard to the despatch from the home Government, and the question arises whether the Press should make a half statement, which is often worse than a lie, and the Premier should refrain from making the whole statement public. The public want to know what was the tone of the despatch, and curiosity has arisen in the minds of the public on this matter. It is no good for the Premier to waive lightly by the despatches which have been received, and not make them known until some action has been taken. There may not be any alteration of the Factories Act suggested, but at the same time dust should not be thrown in the eyes of the public. If this despatch does refer to the Factories Act passed last Parliament does not refer to the working of the Act, the public should know at the earliest possible moment what it is. It is not curiosity or inquisitiveness for members to ask that this despatch should be produced. The Premier might explain if the despatch has no bearing on the Act, or to what extent it has, and not allow the public to remain in a curious frame of mind. This matter not only affects the State but the Commonwealth as a whole. If we are to permit the Asiatic races to come into the State, and the Commonwealth to be dictated to as to how they shall treat them when they come here, it is time we made something like a decent protest.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Make the protest when the time comes.

MR. SCADDAN: That is all very well. We might find ourselves in the same position as the people of South Africa,

who made their protest about the Chinamen, but the Chinamen are still there. The time to protest is when we see danger ahead of us. It is useless for a man to protest when he sees the cliff in front of him. We know the people of the State are agitating their minds as to what is the nature of the despatch. The Press have made a certain statement, and that statement has never been contradicted or confirmed by the Premier, and it is high time the minds of the community were set at rest on this question; therefore the Premier was not justified in saying that members were only curious and inquisitive in asking for the papers.

THE PREMIER: I did not say so.

MR. SCADDAN: I understood the Premier to say so, and I was listening as attentively as possible. We are not curious; we are doing our duty to the country. For the life of me I cannot understand the conspiracy of silence on the other side. I should like to know why members on the Government cross-benches have nothing to say on this question. They had a great deal to say at the election, but now they have nothing to say because the Premier is using his button in front of him very well. These members have been returned to the House against the Labour party because of the exclusiveness of that party, and because their freedom is taken from them. How can members opposite hurl that accusation against us when members opposite remain silent? They have been effectually silenced. I hope the members of the National Association will assert themselves, and show the people of the State what they said on the hustings and carry out what they said on the hustings. This is a matter which is agitating the minds of the people and members on the Opposition side as well as on the Government side of the House. The Premier would be doing no harm if he made the contents of the despatch public by laying the papers on the table of the House.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. Frank Wilson): I think I can answer the query of the hon. member who has spoken, in a few words. He wishes to know why members on the Government cross-benches have not been relieving their minds on this question. The answer is that because a majority of the hon. members of the House have confi-

dence in His Majesty's Government. I should like to point out to the Opposition that what they are demanding is unconstitutional, it is unheard of and unseemly. [MEMBER: Rubbish!] To say that the Government should divulge a despatch to the House is absurd in the extreme; and if members opposite occupied the Government benches they would be the first to resent such interference. His Excellency the Governor has received, as the Premier told the House, a confidential despatch from the Secretary of State, and that despatch belongs to the Governor—[MEMBER: To the Press!—] and His Excellency asks his Ministers' advice in connection therewith. Hon. members are forgetting the oath of allegiance which they have just taken to the Crown, when they suggest for a moment that we should divulge the contents of that despatch until it has been finally dealt with.

MR. T. WALKER: It has been divulged to the Press.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for Kanowna knows we did nothing of the kind, and he is an old enough parliamentarian to know that the motion before the House is irregular in the extreme. The hon. member allows himself to be carried away with his own eloquence and his own fevered imagination until he builds up a mountain out of a molehill. The hon. member says we are going to open the doors to flood this country with Asiatic immigration in consequence of this despatch. He ought to know the question of Asiatics coming into Australia depends on the Federal Government and on the Imperial Government. [MR. HORAN interjected.] The all-wise member for Southern Cross cannot wait patiently with his rude interjections until I have stated my view. It has been stated by the member for Ivanhoe that any alteration of the Factories Act, if there be any, might admit Asiatics into Western Australia. What has the Factories Act to do with the admission of Asiatics? Nothing whatever. This despatch cannot affect the question at all, and members are just indulging in a little sentimental claptrap to call the attention of the public to the fact that they are earnest in their endeavour to assert the rights of the people, which the people do not want.

One hon. member had the audacity—I think it was the member for North Fremantle—to draw in the question of Collie coal; and he insinuated, as usual, that I, with other members of the House, had an interest in Collie coal. I wish I had never seen Collie coal, because it has not been a payable interest, and I fear never will be. If the hon. member wishes to accuse me of any desire to introduce Asiatics into Western Australia to work the Collie Coalfields, he is mistaken. He may cast his insinuations as he likes, but they prove nothing. He can take my past career in Western Australia and examine it year by year and day by day, and if he point the finger of scorn at my actions on anything, let him do so. If he thinks I am of opinion that Asiatics should be introduced—[MEMBER: Six bob a day]—if he can find anything in my actions in the past that will warrant him in insinuating that I would open the gates of Western Australia to Asiatics, then I am content to sit down reprovéd; but the hon. member cannot do it. [Interjection by Mr. HOLMAN.] The hon. member knows that he is speaking an untruth when he casts six shillings a day at me. [MR. HOLMAN: You did say so.] The hon. member is accusing me of a misstatement.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not do that.

MR. HOLMAN: I accept the statement, Mr. Speaker, but I do it with very bad grace.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member must accept the denial.

MR. HOLMAN: I accept it unconditionally, because I have to do so.

MR. T. H. BATH: The Minister for Works himself accuses the member of Murchison of saying an untruth.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not do that.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I said the hon. member was not speaking the truth when he charged me with having made a statement as to six shillings a day. I deny it. If it is against the rules of the House I withdraw the statement I made; but I wish to say at once the statement he accused me of is not true, and I have never made the statement he accused me of. It is a strange thing that I cannot get up to speak without members bursting open their

vials of wrath and making these false accusations against me. I have asked them hundreds of times to bring proof, but they cannot do it. We seem to have got altogether off the track. Every member who has spoken has discussed the Asiatic question, quite apart from the subject of the motion. The only question we have to consider is whether confidential despatches should be placed on the table, to be perused by hon. members, and to be made public. It is well known, and the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) knows, that Ministers of the Crown have much correspondence and many despatches which they cannot make public. It is not in the interests of the people or of the State that such communications should be made public until the time is ripe. And surely this House will accept the assurance of the Premier, who says that when the time is ripe, and before any action is taken, he will take the House into his confidence. Any member with any sense of decency will accept that assurance. If members do not accept it, I say they are not true to their oath of allegiance to the Crown. [LABOUR MEMBER: That is too bad.] That is my opinion; and I am confident it is the opinion of the majority of hon. members. They at any rate have confidence in the Ministers of the Crown; and I will say farther that it is the opinion of the mass of the people in Western Australia, and they will endorse our action.

MR. J. EWING (Collie): It was not my intention to speak during this debate, being perhaps a somewhat new member; but I must take this occasion, on which I cannot congratulate those gentlemen in Opposition, nor the House so far as I have seen it while here to-day. I think the tone of the House is certainly not so high as the tone of the House to which I used to belong. It seems to me that we are not prepared to discuss this question on its merits; and members on the other side of the House are too prone to play to the gallery. One would think that instead of this being the first session of Parliament it was the third session, and that we were about to appear before our masters, the people. If that were so, we might expect this great talk about a white Australia, and protestations that members were prepared

to guard the interests of the people, especially the workers. I take strong exception to any member's saying that he is more especially sent here than any other member to guard the interests of the people. I sit behind a Government in which, though not a Labour Government, I have every confidence. That is my reason for having hitherto remained silent to-night. I believe the action Ministers have taken is the right and proper action. It seems to me that the Governor is in receipt of a despatch from the home Government, communicated in due course to the Premier; and I suppose his colleagues are aware of the contents of that despatch. [LABOUR MEMBER: And the Press.] It seems to have leaked out somehow or other, or some portions of the despatch have leaked out; but the Premier has told us that what has not leaked out is very important, so important that at this juncture he does not feel prepared to submit it to the House. He has assured the House that everything in the despatch will be placed clearly before members ere any attempt is made to alter legislation in this State. With that assurance I am perfectly satisfied; and I believe the Premier is only acting in the best interests of the State in asking the member who has moved the motion to withdraw it. In view of the Premier's promise, I think the least the mover can do is to withdraw the motion. But I farther take exception to the statement of the member for North Fremantle (Mr. Bolton), that it is the desire of any man in this State to introduce Japanese and Chinese either as agricultural labourers or as workers in our mines. Though I am here representing what is perhaps known as a Labour constituency, I would remind the hon. member that in the last Parliament it was represented by a Labour man; and that representative did not retain the confidence of those people, who have shown, by returning me as their member, that they have some confidence in the Government I am supporting. Because, when before the electors, I made no mistake; I made no promises; I did not pledge myself to do anything for the workers, but only to do what I thought to be my duty to the State; and that I am prepared to do. It seems to me that the constituency I represent, in

common with many other constituencies, has seen fit during the last general election to return a member prepared to give loyal support to the present Government, so long as they do what is right in the interest of the State. I am not a silent member. Later on I may be somewhat more troublesome than I have been hitherto. But I desire to expedite the business of the House, if it is possible to do so; and if each member is to speak for half an hour, however pleasing it may be to listen to such as the member for Kanowna, however we may enjoy his remarks—

MR. TROY: You were outside when he spoke.

MR. EWING: I was not—if we have made up our minds that the session must end by Christmas, all members cannot occupy the time of the House on every conceivable occasion. I simply rise because it has been remarked that Government supporters are sitting here as dummies, not prepared to exercise their common sense or to say exactly what they think. The moment I lose confidence in the present Government, no one will be more ready than I to express my views. But I have at the present time the greatest confidence that they will guide successfully the destinies of this State for many years to come; and I believe that their return with such a strong majority at the last elections will result in much good to Western Australia. I give my cordial support to the Premier and the Government for doing what I conceive to be their duty; and I believe that when the despatches in question are placed before us, should occasion arise for their being tabled, we shall see a justification of the attitude assumed by the Premier.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): I am glad to hear from the Minister for Works (Hon. Frank Wilson) that the members on the Government cross-benches have placed their consciences in his safe keeping. There was a time in former Parliaments of this State when, for instance, the member for West Perth (Mr. Illingworth) was one of the foremost among the watchdogs of the people's privileges and the people's rights of self-government; but to-night we have not heard the hon. member defending those privileges in the vigorous style he adopted

in times gone by. The position to-night is that we have a communication from the home authorities in reference to the restriction of the employment of aliens under our Factories Act. The Premier states that the communication is confidential; but the communication, or what purports to be a *résumé* of that communication, has appeared in the Press. It has been stated in the public Press that a peremptory message came from the home authorities to the authorities here, with an intimation that an amendment must be made in the Factories Act to repeal the sections restricting the employment of aliens in our factories.

THE PREMIER: You might add, that has been denied.

MR. BATH: I have not read any denial of the truth of that statement. It is just that which I wish to complain of. While the Premier states that the despatch is confidential, and that its present publication is not desirable, I say it is infinitely more desirable that the public of this State, who perhaps are interested in the retention of the Factories Act on the statute-book, should be acquainted with the real purport of the message, rather than that a garbled account of it should be given by the Press, and that an account which is stated to be garbled should be allowed to continue unchallenged. The Premier, while not expressly characterising this motion as of an inquisitive nature, has said that members are too prone, out of pure inquisitiveness, to call for papers. I say every motion for papers has to run the gauntlet of this House, to receive the support of the majority; and when the Premier accuses of inquisitiveness one member who calls for papers, he accuses of inquisitiveness the members of this House. I say that on every or almost every occasion, except where Ministers themselves have expressed their willingness to table the papers, we have always had in the speech of the mover reasons for calling for the papers. So it comes ill from the Premier, and is a reflection on all members, when he states that simple inquisitiveness has prompted this motion. In regard to this question we know, and I believe the Government supporters, however silent they may be, will agree with me, that it was by the wish of a majority of the people of this State

that the Factories Act was placed on the statute-book. Members on the Government side supported the Factories Bill when it was introduced; the Premier was a member of the Cabinet that introduced the Bill; and therefore I say that if we have reason to believe that a message has been received from the home authorities aiming at the destruction of some of the privileges under the measure, or at some of its sections, then it is the duty of the House to decide one of two things: whether the Premier and his colleagues are responsible to members of this House, or whether Ministers shall be allowed to assume a dictatorial attitude and adopt a policy of suppression. This is not a matter which concerns merely the members in Opposition; it is not a party matter, but concerns the undoubted rights of members of this House, irrespective of the side on which they sit. If it is possible for messages of a confidential nature to be sent, and if the secrecy of Cabinet or of the Executive Council demands that such messages shall be confidential, and if such messages tend to sap the very root of our institutions of self-government, then there is something wrong in the system which permits of them, and urgent necessity for an alteration by which the Legislature of this State can be acquainted with communications which threaten the institutions of self-government. That is the point which I wish to emphasise; and I wish to draw the Premier's attention to the fact that the tragic attitude which he has adopted to-day is not a dignified attitude. It was almost tantamount to saying that he was responsible to himself only, and not as the Leader of the House responsible to the members of the House, and therefore responsible to the people of the State. Some members have said we have no reason to be alarmed; that we had better wait until the situation becomes serious. I say that infinitely more good can be done by setting at rest any doubt in the minds of the people, by making hon. members acquainted with the real purport of the message. I say it is infinitely better to disprove what may be erroneous assertions in the Press, if the message received by the authorities in this State is not of the nature foreshadowed in the Press. I say, it is more in the interests of hon. members that the nature of that

despatch shall be made public, than that it shall be any longer kept confidential or kept from members' knowledge.

MR. A. J. WILSON (Forrest) : For the especial edification of the member for East Fremantle, I have risen to tell him what all this debate has been about. The only thing I deeply deplore is the absence from his place of the hon. member for South Fremantle. The member for South Fremantle is a gentleman who took a very close and very keen interest in the passage of the Factories Act, which is, I think, the question involved in the despatch, and which the motion of the hon. member for Yilgarn refers to. We have, of course, to come to our conclusions and to make our deductions from the information supplied and the suggestions thrown out by the gentlemen sitting on the Government side. It has not been denied that the despatches have passed, and that these despatches deal with the amendment of the Factories Act. The inference is certainly justifiable that these despatches have some bearing on that Act; and no member of the House, after hearing the Premier speak on the matter, can come to any other conclusion. We have been accused by some persons of being too previous in regard to the matter. There are two evils of which we may be guilty: one the evil of being too previous, and the other of being too late; and of these two evils members have to accept the lesser. It is infinitely preferable to be too previous in a matter of this kind than to be too late. One thing I deplore in this connection. The hon. gentlemen sitting on the Government side have endeavoured to drag a red-herring across the trail. They have endeavoured to make the deduction that we had an anxiety on this side of the House to deal with matters that were not within the province or prerogative of this House; that we sought to exercise functions that belonged to another branch in the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Australia. But the position is unquestionable, and has unquestionably been brought about to-day in regard to these despatches by the operations of the Factories Act in this State and in consequence of certain cases that were cited to be taken before the Supreme Court of the State in connection with

that particular Act. The information has already been made public, and certain negotiations have taken place between interested parties with regard to the operations of the Act, and the people against whom the Act operates. In my opinion and in the opinion of members of the House, the people in the country are against aliens being engaged in many industries in this State. Everybody knows that the whole thing has arisen in connection with certain prosecutions occasioned, I understand, by the actions of the late Minister for Labour and Railways, in connection with his refusal to register certain aliens as a registered factory or workshop, owned by certain aliens. The whole thing has arisen out of this, and it is a matter upon which we, with all due respect, are to be authorities; in which we have an especial interest, and in which I think nobody but ourselves has any real or especial regard in connection with it. I want to say here, this is a most important matter, and certainly the Leader of the House has no right to take unto himself the prerogative of saying, if a majority of the House think these despatches should be made public or placed at the disposal of members, or the perusal of the members of the House, that he does not think so, and that therefore the despatches have no right to be seen. I know that the member for East Fremantle is one of those who is aiding, I was going to say an innumerable, host who are responsible to enable the member for Guildford to adopt the high-handed attitude in regard to this matter. I know members are anxious to get along with the business of the country. That is the reason why they wish to close the shop by Christmas time. I know, as far as I am personally concerned, there are hon. members on the Government side who will get on with the business, and we will give them ample opportunity during January, February, and March, or even April. What is wanted is not so much to get on with the business of the country, but what is desired by a number of members is to hang up the prerogative of Parliament, and set themselves free to set aside the shackles of Parliament in order that the Government may administer the affairs of the country without having to put up

with the inconvenience or annoyance of inquisitive members of Parliament wishing to know about the affairs of the country. I am sorry indeed to see such stalwart champions of the white Australia policy as the member for South Fremantle allowing himself on such an occasion as this to remain practically silent, and refusing to re-echo those sentiments for which he has so long been famous, and in which he finds himself, or I find myself, in perfect harmony with him. In connection with this question, one has only to bear in mind that the importance of the matter is largely occasioned by the position in which many white workers in Western Australia find themselves at the present time. Whether it is because of the existence of this despatch, whether it is because of the position of certain knowledge communicated in this despatch to the Governor, there is at the present time in the administration of the Factories Act a looseness and a lack of energy in the administration of that particular measure which is responsible for a majority of the white workers engaged in the furniture trade in the metropolitan area being thrown out of work. Anybody knows who has an opportunity of making investigations in this department of industry that the number of aliens in the furniture trade is daily and constantly increasing. This is going on to the serious detriment of the workers who have spent years in learning a trade and subsequent years in eking out an existence in that trade. Now they find themselves out of employment and without an opportunity of continuing an employment which they have followed for years. They are placed at the serious disadvantage of making a fresh start in life, or following some occupation which is entirely unsuited to them and which causes the expenditure of a great deal of time and money. In a matter of this kind there can be no question from the tone of the discussion about the silence on the white Australia policy in support of the Government to-night. There can be no question from the tone of the speeches and the eloquent tone of the silence maintained by some members, that the majority behind the member for Guildford will enable him to carry out his purpose in making the people of the State simply have to stand down and quietly grin and

bear the circumstances, waiting the time when the Premier thinks it convenient to place before the public what communications he has been pleased to receive from the Imperial authorities in regard to the matter. I hope that something may subsequently transpire to convince the Premier that the right time is as early as possibly can be; because there is no question about it, the public are fully seized of the matter, and any farther suspense is going to make the position much worse as far as a considerable portion of the community is concerned. I think that the request preferred by members on the Opposition side, although it has been insinuated by some members that it savours very much of pre-election campaign, the probabilities are, if it were so, it would be a very much more previous affair than the suggestions that have been made, and that we should get the despatches placed at the disposal of members of this Chamber. What we want to know is the position, so that the country will understand where they stand in the matter and whether the Government intend to do anything. If the Premier had done anything else he should have told us distinctly whether or not the Government intend to interfere with the existing factory legislation as far as Asiatic labour is concerned. I know, in the important speech made by the Minister for Works at Busselton a short time ago, he stated it was the intention of the Government to put through some consolidating measures, and that in putting through these consolidating measures they were going to exercise a wise discrimination as to certain clauses, and remedy some of the drastic effects of the legislation which the Labour party put on the statute-book of the State. The House is entitled and the country is entitled to know from the Government what they intend to do with this important matter, the Factories Act, as far as Asiatics are concerned.

MR. P. J. LYNCH (Leonora): I wish only to draw the attention of the Assembly to a couple of points, which after all may be regarded as a reasonable proposal if looked at from the point of view of the reasoning of the Premier himself. First of all we can understand how constitutional despatches are received and re-

spected, and we can understand the situation with regard to confidential despatches when they should be so treated on account of their character, when the welfare of the people of the State is bound up with the preservation of the secrets of any constitutional despatch. Under these circumstances, it would not be a wise act on the part of any one section of the House to insist on the disclosing of the contents of such despatches. In this case we find the despatch under consideration, as has been referred to by the Premier himself, is one that he is willing to place on the table at a later date; and consequently in view of his agreement on that point the arguments put forward by his colleagues fall to the ground, so to speak. The Minister for Works urged very forcibly that this despatch should be withheld on account of its confidential nature; and on the other hand, side by side with this protest of the Minister for Works, we have the assurance of the Premier himself that the nature and contents of this despatch will be made known at a later date. In other words, the only difference between the request made on behalf of, I am sorry to say, a small section of the House, and the hon. member who is in a position to accede to this, is a question of time. Having reduced this question to a matter of time, I ask wherein comes the presumption, wherein comes the impolitic character or nature of the request, seeing that it is only a question of time that divides the making of the request on one side and conceding to it as mentioned by the Premier? That, I think, dispenses entirely with anything of an impolitic nature that may characterise the request as outlined in the motion by the member for Yilgarn. I feel sure that as this motion involves very significant issues, it is only reasonable and justifiable on the part of the Premier to take the House into his confidence, especially when we recall that the despatch involves an interference on behalf of the Imperial Parliament—if we are right in putting the popular construction on it—with the making of our own laws within the borders of this State. It is within the four corners of the Constitution which Her late Majesty was pleased to confer upon the Parliament of this country to make laws for the

peace, order, and good government of this State, with a few special reservations on matters relating to the levying of import duties on certain articles that may be manufactured in other countries and sent here, or *vice versa*. It was only necessary to make those special reservations regarding those special subjects alone. On a question of this kind, where a law has been enacted dealing with internal affairs of this State, it seems nothing short of repudiation of the contract entered into. I say again, I am going on the popular assumption that there is something suspicious in this despatch. If the Premier would say that there was nothing of a mandatory character he would ease the position, if in the first instance he is justified in doing so. Long before our party, such as now finds a place not only in this State but in other self-governing States in Australia, long before the Labour party came into existence, men holding precisely the same position and status as the Premier found it necessary to protest—and their protest is on record—against the undue interference by the home authorities on subjects when they had much greater warrant to interfere than exists on the present occasion. I remember Sir Thomas Mellwraith, who was a man of backbone, when it became necessary to protest against foisting a governor on the Colony of Queensland, protesting against the conduct of Downing Street with such effect that the Governor was recalled, and from that day to this was never foisted on that self-governing Colony. Again, we have Sir Henry Parkes, who interfered with regard to the landing of Chinamen in New South Wales, when he came into conflict with the Downing Street authorities. Although he is dead now, peace to his ashes. He acted with considerable credit to himself and his sense of keeping intact the prerogative of a self-governing Colony. The Chinamen never landed. In this instance, we have, if I am right again in putting a construction upon this despatch, an interference by the authorities in relation to the contract conferred upon this country. Furthermore, perhaps the most vital aspect of it is seeking to interfere with the making of laws relating to the internal affairs of this State and with the power which is clearly and succinctly

set forth in the Constitution. I say that seeing the difference is so slight between what is requested by members on this bench and what has been already guaranteed by the Premier himself, and that it is only a question of time, there is in that circumstance alone ample warrant and justification for making the contents of this suspicious document as well and widely known to the people of Western Australia as possible. I do not know that it is very necessary to labour this subject, because the Premier has evidently discerned a degree of justice in the request, having guaranteed to place before the people of this State as well as its representatives the nature and contents of this confidential despatch; so it is not necessary on my part to reflect on the remarks of his colleagues, who considered the mere fact of a request of that kind coming from this side of the House was evidence that it was of sufficient insignificance not to be treated properly. Bear in mind the marked difference between the Premier, who did recognise some degree of justification for our request, and his supporters, the wooden majority behind him, so to speak, who were willing to get up at any moment, first ignoring the position taken up by the Premier, and secondly casting as far as they could in their feeble way—

THE PREMIER: I qualified that by saying, if any action was necessary.

MR. LYNCH: The hon. member said it would be made known prior to an interference with the Factories Act. I say the very fact of that assurance being given by the Premier himself strips to the bone any aspect of offensiveness or want of justification on our part in making this request for the papers. The matter is one which affects every resident of this self-governing State. If the Premier standing in his place will assure us that there is nothing of a mandatory character in the despatch which has been received, I for my part will be satisfied.

THE PREMIER: I have already given that assurance.

MEMBER: When? To the newspaper?

THE PREMIER: No; this afternoon.

MR. LYNCH: I feel certain that if an assurance of this kind be given, that there is nothing of a mandatory, commanding, or peremptory nature within

the four corners of that despatch, the reasonable section of the House will be perfectly contented to have that document kept in the secret cellars of the Treasury, or wherever it is kept. I can only say, in conclusion, that it is a fair proposal; so much so, in fact, that the Premier has acknowledged it himself in a degree. By taking the people of the State of Western Australia into his confidence, the Premier will be acting in precisely the same way as other statesmen have acted who have gone before and who are revered by the people of the States to which they belonged.

THE PREMIER: Did they not choose their own time?

MR. LYNCH: I was in the country then, and I would remind my friend that they did not have an opportunity of choosing their own time. The time was forced upon them, and so much alive were they to the responsibility of the position and to the careful safeguarding of the prerogative of the Legislature to which they belonged, that they instantly took action without referring the case to Parliament; with the result that, so far as I am aware, their action was overwhelmingly endorsed by the representatives of the people in the various Parliaments concerned. I wish, in conclusion, to urge the Premier to diminish the gap which divides the two parties in this House, or, failing that, to give an assurance that there is nothing mandatory, nothing peremptory, nothing in the nature of an attempt on the part of the Imperial authorities either to revoke or repudiate the compact entered into when Responsible Government was conferred on this colony.

THE PREMIER: How many times do you want the assurance repeated?

MR. A. J. DIAMOND (South Fremantle): I do not wish to take up the time of the House; but within the last few minutes I have been politely referred to as one of the wooden-headed majority. I have come on the scene with my wooden head, and will say that it appears to me that we have been treated to-day to a succession of storms in tea-cups. There was one about the investigation into electoral matters in South Fremantle, which inquiry, so far as I know, is simply hearsay. I know nothing of such investigations. Now we have another storm

in a tea-cup. I have been referred to in this debate as a consistent supporter of a white Australia; the inference being that I am frightened to speak to-night because I am muzzled by my leader. I believe this is a storm in a tea-cup. I do not believe that any objectionable despatch has been received; because I have sufficient confidence in the leader of the House to feel sure that he would resent it as soon as any other member. But, to put myself right, I will say that as soon as any attack is made on the white Australia policy by the home Government, or any other Government, I will be standing in front and fighting against it.

MR. M. F. TROY (Mount Magnet): I wish to say a few words before the discussion closes. The Opposition are absolutely justified in the stand they are taking to-night. To my mind this is not a storm in a tea-cup. The despatch in question relates to a measure which vitally affects a great majority of the people in this State; and the Premier, in withholding the required information, is flouting the wishes of the majority of the people. We have on the Ministerial side of the House a majority of members fresh from their constituents. On the hustings many of that majority advocated fully a white Australia policy. Farther, the other day, on the Address, we had a long diatribe on the white Australia ideal from the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Eddy). Yet to-night, on this most important subject, he does not think it worth his while to speak for a few minutes. Here is a member fresh from his electors, one who only a few days ago advocated a white Australia policy, and to-night is supporting a Ministry which denies to the Opposition in this House and to the people of this country the right to see a certain document. I hold that the Premier and leader of this House is treating members as if, instead of representatives of the people, we were a lot of school children. He has become so inflated by his success at the polls that he thinks he can override the will of the House. And the Opposition, I feel sure, are justified in doing their utmost to bring him to his senses. Then we have the Minister for Works (Mr. Frank Wilson) rebuking with some warmth the member for North Fremantle (Mr. Bolton), because that member dared to

criticise the actions and the public utterances of the Minister. If that Minister desires a recapitulation of the history of his past political career, I shall only refer him to the Premier and the Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory). Only a little while ago those gentlemen pronounced his political career as detrimental to the people of Western Australia.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member had better keep to the subject before the House.

MR. TROY: I hold that the people of this State are surely justified in learning from the Premier what that despatch really contains. The Press know all about it. During the last elections the Premier, very possibly, gave that information to the Press.

THE PREMIER: I must ask the hon. member to withdraw that most unworthy insinuation.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw.

MR. TROY: I shall have pleasure in withdrawing the statement; and I am glad anyhow that we have had one assurance to-night from the Premier—the only assurance—that he did not give that information to the Press.

THE PREMIER: You have too much assurance.

MR. TROY: Anyhow, there is such a thing as making too many professions: possibly the Premier has made too many to-night. However, a little while ago members on the Government side spent a considerable time in discussing and passing in this Chamber a Factories Act. The Act provides certain rules for the registration of factories wherein Asiatics are employed, and of factories controlled by Asiatics. To-night we have the spectacle of a majority of those members, notwithstanding the work they did a few years ago, supporting a Premier who treats the House in this cavalier fashion. I wish to say, the Opposition will be justified in putting this vote to the test, and proving to the country whether the professions those members made at the last election were sincere, and whether their present advocacy of a policy is in accord with what they advocated on the hustings.

MR. W. T. EDDY (Coolgardie): Certain hon. members have evidently been

"sooling" me on so as to get me on my feet, and I refer particularly to the last speaker. I wish to state that if the Factories Act, or any of its sections that may affect the interest of the worker or the principle of a white Australia, be endangered, that Act or those sections will not suffer from the members sitting on the Government side. The member for Forrest (Mr. A. J. Wilson) spoke of an eloquent silence observable on this side. But I take it that at this particular stage, perhaps silence is golden. There is always a danger in meeting trouble half way; and it seems to me that to-night there has been an inclination on the part of the Opposition to look for a "scrap" or a fight. We have the assurance of the Premier that the required information will be given before any action is taken. Surely we can take the Premier's word; for it would be most dangerous for a man in his position to keep back any information that might endanger the interests of the people of the State. I think it is in the best interests of the country that this motion should be settled at this point without farther discussion.

MR. HORAN (in reply as mover): I have to express my acknowledgment to many members and also to you, Mr. Speaker, for having allowed that divergence and expression of opinion which has been traversed during this last hour or so with regard to the subject under discussion. Before you are called upon to submit the question, I feel that I am bound to reply to one or two questions that have been raised by different speakers. The member for Claremont stated that the Imperial Parliament could not annul an Act of this Parliament without this Legislature agreeing to it. I contradicted the hon. member at the time, and now desire to read from an authority, Judge Inglesdom, proving the correctness of my statement. It is as follows:—

POWER OF THE CROWN TO DISALLOW AUSTRALIAN LEGISLATION.

By the several Acts of the Imperial Parliament here provided from time to time for the erection of local legislatures in the several Australian colonies, power is reserved with the Crown to disallow at any time within two years thereafter any Bill which has been passed by the local legislature and has received the Governor's assent.

Possibly the member for Claremont was thinking and arguing from a legal point that when the Governor assented to the Act it was sufficient. I am not questioning the right or wisdom of the Governor to assent to it; and I have not been discussing the Act at all. Presumably the member for Claremont thought that the Governor, being representative of the Crown and vice regent, could do no wrong, and that *ipso facto* the Act having been assented to, it necessarily became law and could not be questioned. The member for Claremont is a lawyer, and sometimes it feels painful to me as a layman to question the opinion of a barrister of the Supreme Court of this State. Nevertheless we have a free Parliament and I suppose a free voice, and are not debarred from expressing the opinions we hold. The people will judge according to the respective weight of the opinions we put forth. There is another thing I draw attention to. During the course of my preliminary speech I did not deal with the Factories Act itself. I was not in Parliament when it was passed. If I had been I would have taken such a course as would in all probability have prevented certain sections being in the Act. I am talking of a higher constitutional question which nobody has yet touched, the right of the Imperial Parliament to dictate to this Parliament what we should do. The Leader of the Opposition the other night accused the Premier's movements in connection with the elections as being somewhat "slim"; and I am somewhat surprised that the Premier was not aware of the fact that, even if the Governor had made a mistake in assenting to this Act, should the question crop up the Act might be annulled within two years. The Act, according to the records, was passed on the 16th January, 1904; and the Governor's Speech does not convey any intimation that there is going to be any amendment to the Factories Act this session. In all probability, therefore, the two years provided by the Imperial Act during which the Imperial Parliament will have the right to interfere with this piece of legislation will expire. Should we not have an assurance from the Premier himself on this matter? We observed last night with some degree of uncertainty and suspicion the

Premier's attitude towards the member for Claremont who was introducing a Bill regarding the Wines, Beer, and Spirit Act. The Premier seemed to take advantage of the authority he had as Premier to utilise it in defiance of the rules of this House. Therefore I am justified in bringing this matter forward now to learn from the Premier, whom I should expect to be in his place, what is to be done; whether during the currency of the present Act it will not be administered as laid down by the legislation of this State. I want that legislation to be administered while it is an Act; and when it ceases to be an Act, to be administered in its amended form and not otherwise. I am reminded by some hon. member of an occasion almost a quarter of a century ago: I think the member for Kanowna was also a listener on the occasion. The time arose in New South Wales when one of the most distinguished statesmen that ever occupied a place in the Parliaments of Australia, Sir Henry Parkes, introduced an Act—and went in absolute defiance of the British Government. I think I can remember his words. He said—

Not for Her Majesty's ships of war, nor for Her Majesty's representatives on the spot, shall the Government of this State turn aside from its purpose to exclude the Chinese from these shores for ever.

I think in these circumstances that we might anyhow consider the fact that the Legislature of this State can exercise similar power. [THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Learn to shoot.] I do not care for that proposition, but the member for Sussex mentioned that my proposition was unconstitutional. Of course, it is very easy for anyone to say that these things are unconstitutional, but the hon. member never for one moment brought forward a reason why it was unconstitutional, in the slightest degree. He proceeded to discuss mere details of the Asiatic movement, with which I, in common with most members here, absolutely agree. I think that, in closing this debate in order to enable hon. members to catch their trains, I may mention that still I believe—and I am only assuming now, which I did not presume to do before—that this despatch under discussion made some demand on the Parliament of this country to alter

its legislation to suit some treaties and conditions that prevail between the United Kingdom and some places in the East. We are well aware of the fact that when the Factories Act was passed in 1904, we were not informed, nor was the Parliament of England made aware, of the fact that a treaty had been entered into by Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain with some nation in the East, the Japanese to wit. Were they made aware of this fact? No; they were not. And are we to be held subservient to subsequent treaties entered into by the Imperial Government? I submit the motion I propose is a very modest one. It is not an alarming one. No harm can result from it. I shall raise my voice in accordance with the powers given to me by the Acts of this State and under the Imperial Parliament, and I defy the Premier, even with the majority he possesses, to carry an amendment to the Factories Act before the 16th January, when the power of the Imperial Parliament will cease. But let the Premier take what action he deems necessary.

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

Ayes	16
Noes	25

Majority against ... 9

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Bath	Mr. Barnett
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Brebber
Mr. Collier	Mr. Carson
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Cowcher
Mr. Heitmann	Mr. Drarnoud
Mr. Holman	Mr. Eddy
Mr. Horn	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Isdell	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Lynch	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Scaddan	Mr. Gull
Mr. Stone	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Taylor	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Walker	Mr. Hicks
Mr. Ware	Mr. Holmes
Mr. A. J. Wilson	Mr. Illingworth
Mr. Troy (Teller).	Mr. McLarty
	Mr. Mitchell
	Mr. Monger
	Mr. N. J. Moore
	Mr. Price
	Mr. Rason
	Mr. Smith
	Mr. Veryard
	Mr. Frank Wilson
	Mr. Gordon (Teller).

Question thus negatived.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at twenty-two minutes to 11 o'clock, until the next afternoon.