

weight than the people really thought they were getting. I am pretty well convinced that it requires no eloquence of mine to commend this Bill to the House. I am glad that this should be so, because I have no eloquence. There are just one or two other alterations to the Act as amended by this Bill. It is provided that roads boards as well as municipalities shall have the power to appoint inspectors. It has been found absolutely necessary in the outback country that this provision should be made. In my own district, for instance, a most important district, there is no municipality at all. The whole district is run by road boards. It seems to me wrong that such an important district as Pilbara should be unable to appoint inspectors under the Bread Act.

Mr. Allen: Very wrong.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): There is one other provision in the Bill, and that refers to what I think has been a fault in the drafting of the Act. It is provided in the Act that when an inspector goes to take bread for weighing he must take six loaves or more. There is no provision made for the position which may arise where there are not six loaves. If a person selling bread has only five loaves he cannot be checked at all. The amendment to which I have referred provides that where there are six loaves that quantity shall be taken, and an average struck, but where there are not six loaves a lesser number may, by this amendment, be taken. I do not think it is necessary to speak at any length at all on the Bill. I am sure it will appeal to the sense of members, for it is only putting into operation what was really intended by the original Act. I move—

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

On motion by Hon. H. B. Lefroy debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.43 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Tuesday, 17th August, 1915.*

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Medical, Health, Factories, Early Closing annual report for 1914. 2, Industries Assistance Act, 1915, regulations 1 to 6 inclusive. 3, University of Western Australia Act, 1911, Statutes Nos. 16 and 17. 4, Health Act, 1911-12: (a) Avon Roads Board—resolution; (b) Donnybrook Local Health Authority—by-laws; (c) Kalgoorlie Roads Board—amendment of By-law No. 16. 5, Return of claims received for resumed lands for period 1st July, 1911, to 30th June, 1915 (asked for by Hon. H. Carson).

### WAR BETWEEN BRITAIN AND GERMANY, ANNIVERSARY OF DECLARATION.

*Letters from the Governor.*

The PRESIDENT: I have received the following communications from His Excellency the Governor:—

9th August, 1915. Sir, I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant forwarding copy of a resolution passed by the Legislative Council on the 4th instant, and to inform you His Excellency has been pleased to cable the resolution to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Sgd, H. F. Wilkinson, Major, Private Secretary.

10th August, 1915. Sir, I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to inform you that His Excellency has received from the Secretary of State for the Colonies the following reply to his telegram forwarding the resolution passed by the Legislative Council on the 4th instant:—"In answer to your telegram 7th August it has been laid before His Majesty, who greatly appreciates resolution of Parliament and people of Western Australia to continue war to victorious end. Sgd, Bonar Law." Sgd, H. F. Wilkinson, Major, Private Secretary.

#### QUESTION—PASSAGE MONEY REFUNDS, S.S. "ROON."

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is it a fact that certain individuals who travelled to London during last year by the N.D.L. steamer "Roon" have had portion of their passage money refunded at the office of the Agent General, London, whilst other individuals who travelled by the same boat were refused a similar refund, both here and at the office of the Agent General, London? 2, If so, what are the reasons for refusing the others?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1 and 2, Nothing is known here of any refunds of this nature being made through the Agent General's Office.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. CORNELL (South) leave of absence for twenty-four consecutive sittings granted to the Hon. J. E. Dodd (South) on the ground of ill-health.

#### MOTION—RETIREMENT OF PUBLIC SERVANT, TO INQUIRE.

*Case of C. F. Gale.*

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [4.37]: I move—

*That a select committee of this House be appointed to inquire into the circumstances attending the retirement of Mr. C. F. Gale from the position of Chief Protector of Aborigines.*

In moving the motion standing in my name I have ever before my eyes the injunction of those who, in season and out of season, say that nothing in the nature of captious criticism should be indulged in on an occasion like the present, and I hope that even those who may be opposed to the motion will acknowledge when I have finished that my criticism has not been captious. Let me say, too, that if we are supposed not to indulge in criticism, should not those who are in a position to do things do only things which admit of no criticism being passed upon them? It may be said in connection with the present case—the retirement of Mr. C. F. Gale from the position of Chief Protector of Aborigines—that the Government are following out the policy of which we have had two or more previous samples. I refer to the retirement of Mr. Roe from the magistracy and of Capt. Hare from the position of Commissioner of Police. But if the Government take up that stand we can forcibly and with some reason remind them that if this is a policy of theirs, that policy has, in these two instances, at all events, given rise to a great deal of just criticism, and that criticism has not been confined to this Chamber alone, or to Parliament alone, but has extended to a very large section of the community. Whatever merit those two former retirements had in that the two officers who were retired had reached the allotted age which is set forth under the Public Service Act, no such defence is possible in the present instance. Again, I would like to make another point clear to the leader of the House and the Government, that I have not been approached by Mr. Gale to bring this matter forward. Whatever information has been given to me has been given to me at my request by Mr. Gale, and not on his own initiative. I would beg to remind the Government of this, because there are matters still pending in connection with this retirement, and it may be possible that some action of mine might otherwise prejudice the case of the gentleman of whom I am speaking. I bring this matter forward, not on behalf of Mr. Gale, but, as I ex-

plained when I moved for the tabling of the papers, I bring it forward firstly on behalf of the State, secondly on behalf of the civil service, and thirdly, and in the least degree comparatively speaking, on behalf of Mr. Gale, who I contend has suffered an injustice. Now let us consider for a moment the significance of the office of the Chief Protector of Aborigines. Let me say, if hon. members do not already know, that the office is one which has an importance greater than that usually assigned to officers of the same position. It is an office which is jealously guarded and closely watched, not alone by the State of Western Australia, but by the authorities of the Mother country. It has always been, I think, one of the brightest spots in the administration of the British Empire that the Empire has invariably endeavoured to make as pleasant, as profitable and as successful as possible the lives of the inhabitants of those countries she has acquired either by conquest or by peaceful occupation, and the following out of this declared policy of the Empire has made the authorities jealously watchful of the administration of the Aborigines Departments in every State in every dominion of the Empire. Great Britain owes her position as the first colonising power of the world to the manner in which she has treated subject peoples, whether they be subject to her owing to conquest or subject simply as inhabitants of a land which, as Australia, has been peacefully and gradually occupied. Hon. members will see therefore that there is a great deal more significance attaching to this position than to any similar position in the service. Consequently so much the greater need that this position should be capably filled and the duties pertaining to it efficiently carried out. With regard to the importance of the position and the problems with which the gentleman who fills it has to deal, let me say that, coming closer home, there are very many subjects which have to be dealt with, very many knotty points which have to be settled, and which demand from the occupant of that position an intimate knowledge of the cir-

cumstances of the State, the circumstances attaching to what I may call the waste places of Western Australia, and the circumstances attaching also to the calling of those white people who occupy those places, which it would be impossible for him to possess without having a knowledge of Western Australia second to none in the State. For instance, there is the problem of native labour in this State. Members who have travelled much through the State know that in the North-West it has become a custom amongst the station-owners there to get over a difficulty for themselves and a far greater difficulty for this State, by employing natives to do the work on their stations. Those natives have their interests safeguarded under the Aborigines Act by agreements and regulations which detail to the minutest particular how they shall be treated. Let me say that the settlers who employ these natives employ knowingly the dearest class of labour that they can obtain. They do it knowingly, almost I might say, from patriotic motives. I know a station in the north which from year to year has fed and clothed well every day 300 natives, and those natives do the work, I suppose, of not more than a dozen white men. It is not possible, however, to do entirely without white labour. White labour has to be employed to supervise the black labour, but the moment that the system is stopped thousands of natives will be thrown on the care of the Government and the Aborigines Vote will go up 100 per cent. There is a problem which demands the attention of a man who is intimately acquainted with the circumstances under which that problem exists. A few words about the position of the public service in this matter. As hon. members know, in 1904 what is known as the Public Service Act was passed in this State, whereby the control of the public service was taken out of the hands of the Ministerial heads of departments, and in order that the service might be better administered was placed in the hands of the Public Service Commissioner, with power to him to have assistance appointed if such assistance was needed. Now, the

functions of the Public Service Commissioner as set out in the Act are at least twofold. The first function is to regulate admissions to the public service, and transfers from office to office therein. The second function, as I see it and as I contend the public servants of this State see it, is that the public service shall be adequately protected against undue oppression, and that public servants shall be protected from removal at the whim of Ministers. I would ask hon. members who have read the file bearing on this matter to express their opinion later as to how the second function has been carried out. Let me say that cases like those of Mr. Roe, Capt. Hare, and Mr. Gale can have nothing but the worst possible effect on any public service. I am not one, nor have I ever been one, who thinks that the position of any public servant should be rendered impregnable. I do contend, however, that when a public servant has given up the best years of his life to the service of his country—being, of course, adequately remunerated therefor—when it is almost too late for him to engage in any other walk of life, when his service has been absolutely free from spot or blemish, when his capability is undoubted and his diligence also is undoubted, then, I say, it should not lie within the power of any Minister for the sake of a mere whim to dispense with the services of that public officer. Whether or not this has occurred in the present instance I will leave hon. members to judge when I have finished. Let me say, too, that when those who remain in the service see the treatment meted out to men such as I have described, men of unblemished reputation and of undoubted ability, and capable in every sense of the word, what encouragement is it to them to do anything but just enough work to keep out of the way? When we find that a man who by his initiative has saved this country thousands and thousands of pounds has for his reward retirement before he has reached the allotted age at which such retirement should take place in order that a man who knows nothing

whatever about the position should be put into it, in order that an alleged saving which is no saving at all may be made, what must the other members of the public service think? It is a policy which can only result in a discontented and inefficient public service, and that is the second reason why I am bringing this motion forward. Now, let us take the case of Mr. Gale himself. While moving for this select committee, it would perhaps be as well if I were not a member of it for this reason, that I say here—and I am proud to say it, too—that Mr. Gale has been a personal friend of mine for nearly 30 years, that I have known him under circumstances when men get perhaps to know one another better than under any other conditions. Mr. Gale and I had very hard times together in the North-West of this State 25 or 26 years ago. We then struggled through adversities which appeared to us absolutely insurmountable; and it is when men are cast together in such circumstances that they get to know one another and, I hope, to esteem one another for all that is good in them. I have watched Mr. Gale's career ever since, and the opinion I formed of him then, under those adverse circumstances, has been more than justified by what I have seen of him in after life. That, however, is going outside the subject. I warn hon. members of this fact in order that if they think it necessary to allow any discount from what I say, they should know exactly what discount they have to make. But I would recommend them also to deal with this subject as I am endeavouring to deal with it, as far as possible without any sentiment and, I trust, without indulging in any personalities whatever. I am going to tell them, as I have told them, what are undoubted facts, and not matters of opinion. Mr. Gale joined the public service as an inspector of the Stock Department in June 1893, and his employment in the service has been continuous ever since. From 1893 to 1896 he was an inspector of the Stock Department. In 1896 he was appointed inspector of pearl shell at Shark Bay. In 1899 he was promoted to the position

of Chief Inspector of Fisheries. In 1908 he was again promoted to the position of head of the Fisheries and Aborigines Departments, which were then thrown into one. In 1911 the Fisheries and Aborigines Departments were separated in consequence of the growing importance of the work. Mr. Gale then took the position from which he has now been retired. From 1911 to 1915 he was Chief Protector of Aborigines. His total service to the State is 21 years 9 months. Mr. Gale was the responsible officer who organised the Fisheries Department and framed the necessary legislation and regulations controlling the industry. During his term as Chief Protector of Aborigines several highly important developments have taken place. To deal with one which is purely legal, the system of committing native prisoners was abolished and certain necessary legislation was passed. Hon. members who have had anything to do with natives will know that the change was necessary, because a native can be a particularly lighthearted and free and easy person in cheerfully owning up to all sorts of enormities which, I believe, according to his code of morals are rather to be commended than blamed. As I said a little while ago, Mr. Gale has saved this country thousands and thousands of pounds. I will now proceed to prove how that was done. Hon. members well know—there are some members of this House who know particularly well—that native depredations in Kimberley connected with the spearing of cattle were a very serious circumstance indeed, and know that in consequence of those depredations the native gaols throughout the north were full. While public works had to be carried out at the northern ports, that perhaps was not altogether a circumstance to be deplored. Hon. members who have visited the North know that a great deal of work has been done at the northern ports by native labour. Indeed, it was amusing to hear a report in the north of complaints from Port Hedland that that place had no gaol and therefore was unable to have carried out the same amount of public works as other places which

were more fortunately circumstanced. However, be that as it may, the time came when there were no more public works on which native labour could with advantage be employed. All such works had been carried out, and the cost of the arresting, transporting to gaol, and the keeping in gaol of these natives was becoming very heavy indeed. On Mr. Gale's initiative then the Government purchased a cattle station. I must confess that when this project was first mooted, I was not altogether in favour of it. I looked upon it as another rather pernicious variety of State enterprise. But that cattle station has had a considerable significance, and the significance which more really attaches to it is the one which counts. The station is, of course, a State enterprise; but that is not what it really amounts to from the point of view of the Aborigines Department. The Aborigines Department and Mr. Gale as originator of this scheme contend—and the figures undoubtedly bear them out—that since that station has been established the expense of arresting, transporting, and keeping of the native prisoners has decreased in a most wonderful manner. In consequence of the policy which was recommended by the then Chief Protector of Aborigines, the native gaol expenditure in the North was reduced from a total of £33,635 for the four years ended 1910 to an expenditure of £380 only in 1912. Thus the expenditure on that head has come down from over £8,000 per annum, as it was in the year before the station was established, to under £400 in 1912; and since that time I understand the decrease has been even more considerable. That is a thing of which anybody might be proud, to save this country approximately £8,000 a year; and the reward obtained for it is the summary dismissal of the gentleman who effected the saving. Now, here is another important development. Lock hospitals for the treatment of natives suffering from contagious diseases were established on two islands in Shark Bay—I think in 1910. The Chief Protector of Aborigines was entrusted with the task of organising these hospitals and look-

ing after them, and, more important still—and this is where the difficulty lay—of getting those natives who needed treatment to the hospital. It was easy enough to treat the natives once they were at the hospital, but to get them there from the stations, to collect them, was a task which demanded a high degree of tact and a knowledge of the country and a knowledge of the circumstances of the natives. This is one of the tasks which Mr. Gale efficiently and capably carried out, and his reward has been that while still in the prime of life he is retired from the position in which he has done so much. Let us examine for a moment at what the Government value this gentleman's services, and what they are going to pay now for similar services. As hon. members know, some considerable time ago a classification of the Public Service was undertaken and carried out by the Public Service Commissioner with assistance. When that classification took place, the circumstances of Mr. Gale's position were fully gone into, and his salary was fixed at a minimum of £432 working up by the usual increments to £552 per annum. With this classification Mr. Gale was dissatisfied. At the time of his retirement he was receiving £528 a year. He appealed to the Public Service Classification Appeal Board, and his appeal was upheld. The board classified his salary as one to start at £504 and to work up to £636 per annum. That is to say, that after the utmost consideration that can be given to it by the properly constituted authorities, the work which Mr. Gale was carrying out is considered to be worth from £504 to £636 per annum. The gentleman who has been appointed to the position is in receipt of £312 per annum. That gentleman is Mr. A. O. Neville, of the Immigration Department. Mr. Neville, as all those who have come into contact with him will testify, is a most excellent man in his position, and one who managed the now defunct Immigration Department in a most admirable way. But he is purely an office man, knowing nothing about the country districts of Western Australia, a man who, when he went into the districts inhabited

by the State's wards—for these natives are wards of the State—would be classed undoubtedly as what the Yankees call "tenderfoot," or what the natives call "munjung," that is to say, a new chum. This is the gentleman appointed to administer the affairs of this most important department. For £312 per annum he is asked to undertake duties assessed at a maximum of £636 per annum; and this at the hands of a Government the foremost plank of whose policy is that the labourer is worthy of his hire, that no sweating shall take place, that whatever a man earns he shall get. Yet, for a position admittedly worth £636 per annum, they pay the gentleman who is forced into it—for I cannot for a moment regard this as voluntary on the part of Mr. Neville—the sum of £312 per annum. I do not know how the leader of the House will explain that away, not to us so much as to the listening public outside. This favouring of a sweating wage by the Labour party is a most curious circumstance, and will take a tremendous lot of explanation. Let us examine now the real state of affairs. It is distinctly set out in the file that Mr. Neville has little or nothing to do in connection with immigration. Therefore, his services may be supposed to be worth nothing in that respect. So he is getting for his services as Protector of Aborigines £312 per annum. Mr. Gale, on account of his experience and his work in the past, should be entitled to the highest pension he can draw. This will be between £220 and £250 per annum. There we have the total expenditure on this post or office of somewhere about £530 or £540 per annum. Mr. Gale was in receipt of £528 per annum. And we are now getting the work done by a gentleman who knows nothing about it, as against a man thoroughly conversant with it. I ask is that economy? In my opinion it is not. Again, there is another aspect. This classification practically has the force of law. Mr. Neville is getting £312 per annum, but he is doing work which competent judges have said is worth £600 per annum. He cannot long sit down under these circumstances. He must ask for, and must get, a higher

salary. That is a point which I would like hon. members, and the Government in particular, to remember. There are certain peculiar omissions in regard to this file. While I thank the Colonial Secretary for the promptitude with which he laid it on the Table, I really think the file does not answer the description of the papers I asked for, namely, all the papers in connection with the retirement of Mr. Gale; because I should have thought that Mr. Gale's personal file would have had some bearing upon it.

The Colonial Secretary: All the papers dealing with the retirement are there.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: These are all the papers dealing with the retirement?

The Colonial Secretary: That is so.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: There are some peculiar omissions in regard to the file. Possibly they were never on the file, and because of that I want to draw attention to them. At the top of the file we have a minute from the Honorary Minister, Mr. Underwood, to the Premier in Cabinet. Mr. Underwood says—

I desire to call attention to the position of Chief Protector of Aborigines. The amount of work to be done by this department is very small indeed; the vote this year being about £28,000, the great bulk of which is expended by officers of other departments. The Medical Department attends to the lock hospitals. The Moola Bulla station is, and must remain, under direct control of the station manager. Resident magistrates and resident medical officers and the police supervise the distribution of food and clothing, and the remaining expenditure (except head office) consists of subsidies to missions and charitable (?) institutions. This being so, it seems advisable that the position of chief protector should be held by some officer who has other work to fill in his time. I recommend that the Aborigines Department be taken over by the Charities Department, to which it properly belongs, and that Mr. Longmore act as chief protector. I further recommend that Mr. Longmore be relieved of his position of superintendent of the labour bureau, and

that Mr. Hitchens be given full charge of that institution.

I notice that that minute is signed "R. H. Underwood, Honorary Minister, for the Colonial Secretary."

The Colonial Secretary: Mr. Underwood has control of the aborigines.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Yes, but he signs for the Colonial Secretary, which I thought peculiar; because, knowing the Colonial Secretary so well, and knowing that he knows the department so well, I am sure such a minute would not have been written for him. Let me deal with one or two of the points made in the minute. "The amount of work to be done by this department is very small indeed." I think I have pointed out that if the duties which I indicated are properly carried into effect, the amount of work in the department is very large. We have the supervision of natives over one-third of Australia. We have the supervision of natives in a State where the native population is very much greater than in any other State. We have the supervision of the natives in a State where they have been better treated than in any other part of Australia. That being so, I think the statement that the work of the department is very small indeed must go by the board. Then we come to the statement, "The great bulk of the money is expended by officers of other departments." That is totally wrong. If hon. members will look at the Aborigines Act of 1905 they will see that the moneys appropriated by Parliament, which approximately averaged £30,000 a year in recent years, are directly under the control of the Chief Protector of Aborigines, who is personally responsible for the expenditure of those moneys. If he delegates to any other person the spending of them it does not remove his responsibility. He is responsible to the Auditor General for the expenditure and that, I say, would keep the gentleman busy. Here is another statement, "The Medical Department attends to the lock hospitals." That again is one of those half truths. The Medical Department, it is true, attends to the treatment of natives after they are

in the hospital. But the mustering of the natives, if I may use such an expression, from their various haunts—one might almost say hiding places—throughout the vast extent of the North-West, lies entirely in the hands of the Chief Protector of Aborigines, and that, I maintain, is by far the most difficult task of all, calling for great diplomacy, and for a thorough knowledge of the natives. Then we come to the statement, "Moolaboola station is, and must remain, under the direct control of the station manager." There are gentlemen here who understand a good deal about the management of such stations. I would ask them whether they would be perfectly satisfied to have their enterprises placed in the hands of a man who did not know one end of a bullock or of a sheep from another? Mr. Gale has an actual personal knowledge of the running of cattle and sheep stations. He is a man who can be put on a horse, or put into a boat, or put to any work on a station, and who could carry it out to the utmost satisfaction. Is it not more likely that this experiment of the Government will receive efficient treatment at the hands of a man like that than at the hands of a man who is unfortunate enough to occupy a position to which he has not been trained, and for which he has not the least capability given to him by his previous experience? Then there is the further statement, "The remaining expenditure consists of subsidies to missions and charitable institutions." One of the most difficult problems the Protector of Aborigines has to deal with is in connection with these missions. If hon. members will read his report, which was laid on the Table the other day, it will be seen that it was only by the persistence shown by Mr. Gale that the Drysdale River Mission was not wiped out of existence. As Mr. Gale himself remarks, the people who run those places are generally of an innocent and unsuspecting nature. They credit the native with childlike qualities, but refuse to credit him with the cunning and ferocity which sometimes he displays. The

native is like a child in many ways, but sometimes he is like a very naughty child, and when that is the case those gentlemen who risk their lives at the Drysdale River Mission and other places of the sort find it hard indeed to keep those lives. It was only with the assistance of Mr. Gale, only as the result of his demand, almost command, that they should keep a larger force of white people at Drysdale River Mission, that the mission, which had been seriously attacked, was enabled to avoid being wiped out. So much for Mr. Underwood's minute. Now we come to the protector of the poor—the Public Service Commissioner. When I read the Public Service Commissioner's answer to Mr. Underwood, I said, "Well, there is no necessity for me to move in this matter; the Public Service Commissioner has anticipated all the arguments that I can possibly use in favour of the retention of Mr. Gale in this office. He has answered Mr. Underwood completely." And so he had. If hon. members will read what Mr. Jull has to say, they will see that he has raised pretty nearly every point I have raised so far during this discussion. He has pointed out that it is necessary for the man who occupies the position to be thoroughly acquainted with the ways of the natives. He has pointed out that it would be well-nigh disastrous to appoint a man not so acquainted. He has pointed out the importance attached by the Home authorities to this position. In this connection we have on the file a very funny memo. to which I must draw attention. Mr. Jull writes, "The State, under the Constitution Act, is compelled to spend no less than £10,000 per annum on the aborigines." And there is a little side-note on this paragraph which is rather humorous. This has been put there by the Premier. It is signed "J. S." "The State under the Constitution Act is compelled to spend no less than £10,000 a year on the aborigines," says the Commissioner. The Premier puts a side-note as follows:—

Don't worry, that is a simple matter.

J. S.

I should like to know from the Colonial Secretary when he comes to reply what



the Premier meant by that. Perhaps the hon. Mr. Drew can tell us.

The Colonial Secretary: I did not catch that.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Then I must catch it for the hon. gentleman. There is a paragraph in the Public Service Commissioner's minute in which it points out the impracticability of retiring Mr. Gale, and it reads—

The State under the Constitution Act is compelled to spend no less than £10,000 a year on the aborigines.

Then there is a note to that in the Premier's handwriting and it is signed "J. S." and is as follows:—

Don't worry, that is a simple matter. Did the hon. gentleman intend to repudiate the Aborigines Act? Did he mean to repudiate the liability which this part of the Empire owes to the motherland to see that these subject people to which I have alluded are properly treated? Is this a metaphorical way of cutting the painter, so far as the aborigines are concerned? The Premier should not be allowed to put side-notes on public documents unless he makes himself considerably clearer than he has done in connection with this matter. Mr. Jull has, so far as I have gone with the file, put up the best possible case for Mr. Gale. He has pointed out what I have already pointed out, and possibly more. Then, at a later stage in the file we find that he recommends the retirement of Mr. Gale. I am unable to follow Mr. Jull's trend of thought. I can say no more than that.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Is there a minute to that effect from Mr. Jull?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Yes.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Would you mind reading it?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Which minute?

Hon. J. F. Cullen: The minute recommending the retirement of Mr. Gale.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Certainly. This is a minute in the form in which it does most harm. It is an Executive Council minute. This is on the minute paper of the Executive Council dated

16th March of this year, and is as follows:—

I recommend His Excellency the Governor to (1) amalgamate the Immigration Department with the Aborigines and Fisheries Department under Section 9 (2) of the Public Service Act; (2) to call upon C. F. Gale, the Chief Protector of Aborigines, to retire under Section 9 (7) of the Public Service Act as from 1st May, 1915; (3) to appoint A. O. Neville, Secretary for Immigration, to be also Chief Protector of Aborigines, at his present salary of £312 per annum, as from 1st May, 1915.

Let me recall to hon. members the fact that Mr. Jull had himself expressed the opinion that this position was worth £636 a year. No; what he actually said was it was worth £552 a year, but the Public Service Appeal Board said it was worth £636 a year. Mr. Jull knew that, but still he says that Mr. Neville should be appointed at his present salary of £312 per annum as from the 1st May, 1915. Mr. Jull having reported, as far as I have got on the file, adversely to the retirement of Mr. Gale, Mr. Underwood then takes a hand. He writes an eminently characteristic minute, characterised by the exquisite modesty like unto that of a shrinking violet, which the hon. member possesses in so marked a degree, and he says—

If Mr. Longmore's opinion would carry no weight in a court of law, the Minister's would.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The Honorary Minister, I suppose?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Yes.

The Colonial Secretary: On that particular question.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: On which particular question? Does the hon. gentleman think that the Honorary Minister would confine himself to any particular question? The hon. gentleman goes on—

Further, the fact that Mr. Longmore does not possess knowledge of the habits and customs, etc., of aborigines will not materially affect his ability to administer the Act.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Why should it?

Hon. E. M. Clarke: That is a qualification.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Mr. Jull said in paragraph 13 of his minute—

Would it not be better to cut down some part of the vote, have a smaller ship, so to speak, rather than drop the pilot?

The hon. Mr. Underwood rejoins—

A smaller ship suggests to my mind a smaller fee for the pilot, which is not suggested by the Public Service Commissioner. As to dropping the pilot, for the purpose of carrying on the Commissioner's figure of speech, we could assume that the Minister is the captain of the ship, and so far as the present skipper is concerned, he holds a pilot's exemption certificate for this port.

It occurs to me that whatever may happen to the Honorary Minister in after life nothing will ever happen to him through any lack of appreciation of his own good qualities. In defence of my own intelligence I must say that I am unable to take that hon. gentleman at his own valuation, although other people may. Let us for a moment consider such a calamitous state of affairs as that in which the hon. Mr. Underwood would not be administering the Aborigines Department. Let us suppose that it had to fall into the hands of some gentleman who is less qualified by knowledge to be, not only the skipper, but also the whole crew, what would happen to the unfortunate ship? It would soon be on the rocks as a result, either of a proper want of confidence in the Minister controlling the department, or because he does not possess that knowledge which the hon. Mr. Underwood claims to possess. That is what the Honorary Minister says in rejoinder. Then he goes on and reports further to the Premier in Cabinet. This again is signed for the Colonial Secretary. I am sorry for the Colonial Secretary, and I am certain he does not agree with this. Indeed I am positive he does not. The hon. Mr. Underwood says—

I have conferred with Mr. Jull on this matter and he has suggested—

The words "he has suggested" are slashed out and on the top are written in red ink the words, "it was agreed." Then Mr. Underwood goes on—

It was agreed that the Immigration Department be disbanded with the exception of Mr. Neville who will retain his present position and salary and also take over the position of Chief Protector of the Aborigines, or secretary to that department if Mr. Bolton is senior. Mr. Gale to be retired, the whole work to be done by the present aborigines and fisheries staff as at present constituted, with the exception mentioned above. Mr. Gale to be retired and Mr. Neville to be added. I recommend that this proposal be approved. Signed, R.H.U., 22/2/15.

Underneath appears the line, "Cabinet approves." I would like to ask the leader of the House to state that it is not a fact that the Immigration Department has not been disbanded, that this alleged economy has not taken place. It is true that the Immigration Department under the present Administration has next to nothing to do, that even before the war broke out they had practically killed immigration. But they still retained Mr. Neville, although he had nothing to do, and I understand that he has taken with him to the Aborigines and Fisheries Department some of his clerks. If this is not correct I hope the Colonial Secretary will contradict me when he comes to reply. Next comes the Executive Council minute dated 16/3/15. This minute appoints Mr. Neville. There is a peculiar thing about Mr. Neville's appointment, a peculiar thing about the file altogether, and that is that the permanent head of the department was never consulted. The under secretary, the man who is directly responsible to the Minister who runs the department, had not his opinion asked. He was never consulted. Not only was he never consulted, but the fact is alluded to later in the file, as Mr. Jull says, on

looking through the file, in a minute addressed to the under secretary—

I find there is no record of this having been before you. I therefore send it on to you for your opinion.

It is dated 8th April, 1915, the Executive Council having decided that the appointment should be made on the 16th of the previous month. Then the acting under secretary is asked for his opinion. The acting under secretary says in his minute to the Minister, amongst other things—

I cannot refrain, however, from remarking that the appointment of Mr. Neville has caused considerable concern to other officers of the department whose seniority (and, may I say knowledge of the requirements of the Aborigines Department) has entitled them to think that an opportunity should have been afforded them of making application for the position in an orthodox manner. Signed, J. R. Campbell.

When Mr. North came back he had little to say, but under this minute of Mr. Campbell he writes to the Public Service Commissioner as follows—

I note that Cabinet and Ex. Co. have decided this matter. My opinion would, therefore, only be criticism of the action of those bodies, which I do not feel justified in affording. I should think not.

Mr. Neville does not appear to have been officially notified of the arrangement, as far as this file shows.

There is quite a number of interesting omissions. Mr. Gale was never consulted. He never had a chance of defending himself or putting his case forward. The hon. Mr. Underwood even refused to discuss the matter with him and when he sought for an interview on one occasion told him he had not time. The minute of Mr. North is dated 27th April. It is a peculiar thing that under the Public Service Act, Section 44, whenever appointments of this sort are made the following steps have to be taken—

Before an officer is promoted from any office to a higher office in the administrative or professional or clerical division, there shall be submitted to the

Governor the name of the officer recommended for promotion to such higher office by the Commissioner, after report from the permanent head; and any officer so recommended may be promoted by the Governor accordingly.

That is explicit enough, and yet Mr. Neville is appointed without any report from the head of the department having been obtained and without, indeed, the permanent head knowing anything at all about it. The hon. Mr. Drew, if he likes to take the House into his confidence, can tell us of a case where such a retirement was proposed and the officer in question received notice of retirement without the hon. gentleman knowing anything at all about it, it having been worked through the Premier and the Public Service Commissioner.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: They did not worry.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: He did not worry, and it shows in what manner the public service of the state is being administered at the present time. I feel I have unduly delayed the House and I am sorry if I have done so. There is one thing I must say in this connection. I have searched the file and so far as I can see there is an absolute absence of motive. I cannot see any motive. As a rule some underlying motive is conveyed to one in an action of this sort, but undoubtedly the action of the Honorary Minister is like that of the wayward and destructive child. There is no economy, but simply for the pleasure of doing it, he pulls down a capable officer from the position he occupied in order to appoint an officer, who through no fault of his own, is evidently incapable of filling it. Even if there was economy, considering the nature of the position and the qualifications of the late Chief Protector of Aborigines, even, I say, if there was an economy, it would not be justice, in the circumstances, to pull a man out of his position in order to put in a man who knows nothing about the question. I regret that the necessity has arisen for all this. I think that the best means of inquiring into the matter would be by a committee and that the committee might

possibly devise some means whereby such a state of circumstances might be avoided in the future. If Mr. Gale was over the age I could understand it. Mr. Gale is not.

The PRESIDENT: I have to call the attention of the House to Standing Order 114, as follows—

If all motions shall not have been disposed of one hour after the time fixed for the meeting of the Council, the debate thereon shall be interrupted, unless the Council otherwise order . . . The consideration of motions may be resumed after the Orders of the Day are disposed of.

We have two alternatives; the Council can decide that the debate be continued now or that it be continued after the Orders of the Day are disposed of.

Resolved: That the motion be continued.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: I have to thank members for their courtesy in allowing me to conclude the few remarks I have to make. I regret that the necessity has arisen for an inquiry into this matter. I could have understood the retirement of Mr. Gale if it had been a question of age, but Mr. Gale is well under the statutory age under which retirements can be brought about. The alleged economy is no economy at all and as an alternative I put forward this, that if it were an economy it would not be justified under the circumstances. In regard to the personal aspect of it, I ask hon. members to dismiss it from their thoughts. It matters nothing to the Honorary Minister that Mr. Gale after 22 years of service, thinking himself secure in a statutory position, should have entered on new responsibilities in regard to his life, and that it was not until his return from his wedding trip that he learned that he was thrown out of his employment which he had adorned for so many years. That is nothing to the Honorary Minister. I am sure he would not give it a moment's thought, but it is very hard to think that a public servant of the calibre of Mr. Gale should be subject appar-

ently without adequate protection to the whim of any Minister, whether he be an Honorary Minister, whose elevation to Cabinet rank has not been endorsed by his constituents, or whether he be a Minister in the ordinary sense of the word. I think it is a shocking thing that any system of administration of the public service should permit such a state of things to exist. It is wrong and it should be altered as soon as possible. I look to the select committee, if appointed, to make some suggestions in that connection. Hon. members may look upon me as being prejudiced because I am what might be called a life-long friend of Mr. Gale, and for that reason I would prefer not to serve on the select committee, but I ask the House to appoint the select committee, and I think the circumstances I have detailed and the remarks I have made, point to the necessity for a committee being appointed.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.35]: I do not intend to go right through the details which have been so ably explained by Mr. Kingsmill, but I feel that after having perused the file very carefully, no other conclusion can be come to but that the system which was employed in dispensing with the services of Mr. Gale was to say the least of it very clumsy. The Public Service Commissioner dealt with the case minutely, and he pleaded as it were for further consideration on the part of the Honorary Minister before taking the drastic step that he proposed to do, and I was astonished to find that a few weeks later the Public Service Commissioner made the recommendation which has been read out to the House this afternoon praying for the dismissal or retirement of Mr. Gale. This leads me to the point that the civil service of Western Australia is not on that rock of stability which the important duties rendered by the members of the service demand, and which have been duly recognised and provided for in the Act which was quoted this afternoon. If, as I have always contended, the civil service is to be the blue ribbon of employment, then it is actions of this nature which have a tendency to prevent officers

from rendering that efficient service which the country expects of them. Under the circumstances one is almost surprised to find in going in and out and about amongst the civil servants, the amount of attention, the ability and the deep interest which is taken by the members of the service in the duties they perform. Since I have been a member of this House I have been through nearly every branch of the service, to see for myself how matters were being carried on. One hears many reports outside the House as to what is being done by the civil service, how the work is being slumped and that there are a lot of slackers amongst the members of the service, and it was to satisfy myself on these points that I went round. I can say as the result of the investigation that I made of the departments of the service—and I didn't go as a member of Parliament because I buttoned up my coat to hide my railway pass so that I would not be recognised—that I received the greatest consideration from everyone with whom I came into contact, from the heads of departments to the messenger boys. One realises that employees in the service are entitled to that degree of safety which they are led to believe they are working under and which is provided for them by the Act. When we come to the remarks of the Public Service Commissioner in making a recommendation to the Governor for the dismissal of Mr. Gale, and the roundabout way in which it was done, we cannot but come to the conclusion that the remarks published some time ago to the effect that the service was a whited sepulchre, leave some ground for these civil servants to wonder whether they are really safe in their positions or not. When heads of departments can be sent about their business in the manner in which Mr. Gale was sent about his business, it is time that we, as representatives of the people, should move. Referring back to my visits to the departments, I feel it is my duty to emphasise what transpired, and I may be allowed to refer to an act on the part of one branch of the service in regard to a mat-

ter which affected me personally to a considerable extent. I refer now to the land resumption branch of the service, and the work which they did and the manner in which they carried out their duties, although it was of great detriment to myself, made such an impression upon me as regards the earnestness with which they were carrying out their duties, that I was led to forego what was of monetary consequence to me. The transaction was in regard to some land for which I had been offered 50 per cent. more in cash than I was offered by the land resumption officer, and the action of that officer compels me to say that it is the duty of members of Parliament to uphold and safeguard in every way possible the positions of the civil servants so that they may guard against anything in the future which may bear a resemblance to the dismissal of Mr. Gale. I feel grateful to Mr. Kingsmill for having brought this motion forward because there may be other members who like myself are desirous of speaking their minds in regard to this service. I have always referred to this service as the blue ribbon of employment, and I maintain more than ever to-day that that should be so. We have only to look around for ourselves to see how the members of the service have responded to the call of duty. They have never been lacking whenever an appeal has been made to them to do their duty, no matter in what form that duty may have presented itself. Even at this present time when they have been called upon to lay down their lives in the interests of the empire, we as members of Parliament and as representatives of the people should see that no acts of injustice are carried out by a Minister of the Crown, the Public Service Commissioner, or anyone else, and that there shall be no departure from the path of rectitude as in the case of Mr. Gale. Without any further remarks I have much pleasure in seconding the motion which has been so ably proposed by Mr. Kingsmill.

On motion by Hon. F. Connor debate adjourned.

# BILL—ADOPTION OF CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

## RESOLUTION — HORSE - RACING CONTROL, TO INQUIRE BY JOINT COMMITTEE.

The following Message was received from the Legislative Assembly:—"The Legislative Assembly acquaints the Legislative Council that it has this day agreed to the following resolution:—"That a joint select committee of both Houses be appointed to consider the question of horse-racing within the State and matters connected therewith, with a view to the subsequent introduction of legislation providing for the control of such matters." The Legislative Assembly has, in accordance with this resolution, appointed a committee, consisting of five members, with power to call for persons and papers, to sit on those days on which the House stands adjourned, and to report on Wednesday, the 1st September. The Legislative Assembly requests the Legislative Council to appoint a similar committee to join with the committee of the Legislative Assembly for the purpose aforesaid."

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY resolved, that the Message be taken into consideration forthwith.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.47]: For some time past there has been a feeling abroad that some steps should be taken to secure, by legislation, the regulation of horse-racing. That feeling existed long before the war, and it has intensified since. It is undoubtedly the impression among thoughtful men that this form of amusement, innocent in itself, has assumed such dimensions as to become something in the nature of an evil. I have prepared a few statistics in connection with the question, and they speak for themselves. This is a return of the racing days in Western Australia for 1914. In the metropolitan area there were 173 days (112 registered and 61 unregistered). In the goldfields

district there were 66 days (16 registered, 50 unregistered). In the country districts there were 126 days. The total for State was 365 days during the year 1914.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: That includes trotting.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Now we will take the half year ended 30th June last. In the metropolitan area 85 days were set apart for racing (59 registered and 26 unregistered). In the goldfields area 33 days (8 registered, 25 unregistered). In the country districts 72 days; making a total for the half-year of 190 days, as against 365 days for the year 1914, so that members will see that instead of racing diminishing it has increased since the war. The W.A.T.C. raced, or controlled, on 61 days in 1914 (45 in metropolitan area); on 32 days in the half year 1915 24 days in the metropolitan area. The Trotting Association raced on 67 nights in 1914 and 35 nights in the half year 1915, all in the metropolitan area. It will be seen from these figures that, notwithstanding the war and the bad season, horse-racing has in no way diminished but rather has increased in volume; for, while there were 365 days of racing in W.A. in 1914, there were no fewer than 190 for the first half of 1915. Such a degree of indulgence in horse-racing appears to the Government to be fraught with bad results of a far-reaching character, especially at a time like this. It absorbs time which should be given to more serious affairs; it is a great obstacle to thrift. I think no one will dispute that proposition; it is having its effect on our generous and honest traders, who give credit and who have to meet their obligations, and it must lead to the impoverishment of many homes.

Hon. F. Connor: Why did you give the totalisator to the unregistered?

\* The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The picture could be painted in bolder colours, but I do not wish to prejudge the case. The Government have decided to ask this House to appoint a select committee to act in conjunction with a select committee of another place to make full investigation into the question, and report; take

evidence if necessary, and endeavour to see that every interest is justly treated in connection with the inquiry, and having the whole of the evidence before them to report to Parliament. On that report action will be taken by the Government, and it all depends on the nature of the report whether the Government will introduce legislation dealing with this important matter. The Legislative Assembly has appointed its committee, and I ask this House to do likewise. I move—

*That this House agrees to the resolution of the Legislative Assembly set out in Message No. 2 from the Legislative Assembly, and appoints the Hons. W. Kingsmill, H. P. Colebatch, F. Connor, J. F. Allen, and R. G. Ardagh to act jointly with the select committee of the Legislative Assembly.*

Hon. C. SOMMERS (Metropolitan) [5.51]: I am glad that the Government are making a move by the appointment of a select committee, but personally I think a Royal Commission would have been far better in the interests of the people of the State. If one can believe one-half one hears as to the practices in connection with horse-racing, particularly unregistered horse-racing, it behoves that the fullest inquiry should be made. I do not think that a select committee will probe the question as deeply and get all the information that a Royal Commission would be likely to get. For that reason I suggest that it is not too late now for the Colonial Secretary to ask another place to cancel the appointment of the select committee and go one better and appoint a Royal Commission, but if it is too late, a half loaf is better than no bread. It is a perfect scandal that horse-racing should have increased to 400 meetings in the year when we are fighting practically for our existence.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [5.53]: Owing to my complete lack of knowledge in racing matters I am compelled under the Standing Orders to decline to act, as I have a perfect right to do. A select committee is not the place to go to for me to learn, and as I know nothing of racing matters, perhaps the

leader of the House will take my suggestion and appoint the Hon. A. G. Jenkins in my stead.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: No thank you. I suggest the name of Mr. Baxter.

The PRESIDENT [5.54]: If the motion is not agreed to in its entirety the House can appoint the members to act on the select committee by ballot.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: I have the privilege of declining to act?

The PRESIDENT: You have.

Hon. C. Sommers: Seeing that it is necessary to appoint someone else in place of Mr. Kingsmill, I suggest the name of Mr. Baxter, who represents the country districts admirably.

The PRESIDENT: I have explained to the House that the Minister has selected five members to serve on the select committee; if the House does not agree to the five there can be a ballot.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: As Mr. Kingsmill has declined to act, with the leave of the House I will substitute the name of Mr. Baxter for that of Mr. Kingsmill.

Hon. F. CONNOR (North) [5.56]: The personnel of the committee will not be complete without the name of Mr. Jenkins. It will be a great pity if this committee is appointed without Mr. Jenkins. I prefer to retire myself rather than Mr. Jenkins be not included.

The PRESIDENT [5.57]: The names proposed are, Hon. C. F. Baxter, Hon. H. P. Colebatch, Hon. F. Connor, Hon. J. F. Allen, and Hon. R. G. Ardagh.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.58]: I move—

*That the first meeting of the committee be held in the committee room of the Legislative Council on Thursday, 19th August at 11 a.m.*

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.59]: I move—

*That a Message to that effect be transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.*

Question passed.

# BILL — FREMANTLE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING AMENDMENT.

Received from the Legislative Assembly and read a first time.

## ASSENT TO SUPPLY BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the Supply Bill, £1,409,300.

## MOTION—STATE IMPLEMENT WORKS, TO INQUIRE.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER (East) [6.2]:  
[ move—

*That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the conduct and management (past and present) of the State Implement Works, and that the select committee consist of the Hons. R. G. Ardagh, J. J. Holmes, and the mover; to report on Wednesday, 1st September, 1915.*

My object in moving this motion is to endeavour to put one of our trading concerns on a business footing. I do not think we can say that the implement works are operating as smoothly as they should be, or showing the results that we expected of them. I want it clearly understood that I am not biased in any direction, and I am not moving this motion in any party spirit, I am doing it simply as a representative of the people with an endeavour to bring about a more satisfactory state of affairs. We have heard the arguments on either side. After reading the statements of the Minister for Works one was inclined to the opinion that the Minister was justified in the attitude he had adopted. But then, on perusing the statements by Mr. Davies, one was led to believe that he was in the right. The only proper step we can take, therefore, is to have an inquiry to obtain the whole of the facts so that we can ascertain the true position of this trading concern. When it was proposed to establish the State Implement Works, I, as one unit of the community, opposed the idea strongly; in fact I did not hesi-

tate to voice my opinion in opposition on public platforms. But after they once became an established fact, I gave them all the support I possibly could, because I maintained that it was my duty to get any good possible out of this concern, and that I would not be doing any good by further opposing it. That is the attitude I have adopted towards all State trading concerns, and it is the position I take up to-day. I am interested in the financial side of the implement works, and I would like to see them made a thorough success. It remains to be proved whether this was possible under the past or present management, or perhaps I should say administration. It has been suggested that the same methods of management should be adopted in State trading concerns as is adopted in connection with State railways. The State trading concerns are commercial concerns in opposition to existing trading firms, but the State railways have a monopoly, and the two propositions are therefore vastly different. It is necessary in a trading concern to have a manager possessed of a certain amount of power, but according to the information before us, the manager of the State Implement Works did not have such power, and I suppose the present manager has not the power necessary to permit him to carry on the work successfully in competition with outside firms. If we wish any trading concern to be a success, it must be run absolutely clear of political control. I am sorry to say that since my election as a member of this Chamber, I have come to the conclusion that most of our trading concerns are not run free from political control. Unfortunately, that is where the trouble commences, and until such time as not only the trading concerns but practically all the Government departments, are made free to some extent and at any rate far freer than they are to-day of political control, we cannot hope to obtain satisfaction. I would ask is it right that an employee in any Government department or concern should be able to appeal to the Minister and thus bring about a state of affairs overriding the head of the department



and compelling him to allow that man to continue at his work? That is the state of affairs which exists in different departments to-day. I know I shall receive plenty of criticism later on for my statements, but that does not worry me. I stand here and make the statement, feeling that I am merely doing the duty I was sent here to do. We have trouble confronting us, and we are the people who must face that trouble. One thing that strikes me very strongly is the fact that the late manager of the implement works, against whom so many charges are now levelled, was, until a few weeks back lauded to the skies by the Ministers as the very best man they could get to fill the position. Such being the case, it seems curious that, in the short space of a few weeks, the Government should turn around and adopt a diametrically opposite attitude toward the manager, and I have not noticed that anything has been advanced to justify that change of opinion. There is a controversy in reference to some motor car repairs which the late manager of the works had effected to a car owned by himself. This is one very important matter which should be thrashed out. We want further particulars. On the one hand we have the statement that Mr. Davies had no right to procure the stuff; on the other hand Mr. Davies states that he had the right to procure it. Personally I feel that if the manager of any concern like the implement works owns a car, he should have the privilege of repairing it, but I will not say that the different items in this case were obtained in the proper manner. These are matters which a select committee would be able to elucidate, and the position certainly demands an inquiry. Going through the correspondence, it appears that Mr. Davies showed a lack of business ability, but I also think it reveals that he was a competent man as far as the work he had to carry out was concerned, and perhaps there is something in his statement that any lack of business ability on his part was due to interference with him as manager. Mr. Davies has made statements which I think prove to a certain extent that he was

interfered with unduly, and that he did not really have an opportunity to show what the State Implement Works could do. Any interference with the employees of a commercial concern against the judgment of the manager, and without his concurrence, must reflect on him and must show that he is not recognised, and he could not hope to be respected by his employees afterwards. That must have been the position in which Mr. Davies found himself when he complained that employees had been interfered with. During the past 18 months, the manager continually recommended that certain things should be done to bring about a better state of affairs. Whilst these recommendations may not have been of the best, still the correspondence shows that the running of the implement works, and especially the clerical branch, is in a deplorable state. There is no gainsaying that fact. There is one statement made by the manager with regard to the cost of work—

At the North Mole I found a philanthropic institution. There seemed to be nothing in the way of books kept, apart from the workmen's time books. This was when he took over the old Government workshops.

I had no small difficulty in straightening things up. In fact, I never really succeeded in doing so, and I believe to this day accounts are in dispute concerning work done there prior to my taking charge. To give an idea of how things were I will cite a few instances which came under my notice. Eleven tons of specials were quoted for the Water Supply at £25 per ton; 7¼ tons were supplied at an actual cost of over £700, or at the rate of nearly £100 per ton.

These are statements which should be inquired into. If such is the case it shows that this trading concern is in a very bad way indeed, and that it is high time some action was taken to put it on a sound footing. Further on the manager states—

It will be remembered that the State Steamship Service refused to pay the amount charged for repairs to the "Western Australia," the surveyors

finally recommending a liberal estimate of a little over £1,000 for work which cost the Harbour Workshops £1,500. There is something radically wrong with a concern which loses £500 on one job, such as that.

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

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Before tea I was speaking of the excessive cost of various implements turned out by the late Government workshops at the South Mole. In the correspondence of the late manager of the State Implement Works, as far back as the 15th July, 1914, I observe a recommendation by him that certain steps should be taken with a view of cheapening the cost of the products of the State Implement Works. It will be necessary for me to quote short extracts from the correspondence. On the date I mentioned, the 15th July, 1914, Mr. Davies wrote to the Under Secretary for Agriculture and Industries in the following strain—

The question to be decided is, whether we are to proceed as a Government department, or as a commercial trading concern. My opinion is not hypothetical, but is based upon a lifelong experience of similar establishments to this. I have no hesitation in saying that if this business is to be conducted on departmental lines it will result in failure, as we are so hedged about with regulations and restrictions that there is no freedom of action in any direction. As you know, I was directed by the Hon. the Minister to take part in the preparation of a working scheme at the time the building and equipment of the factory commenced, but had no opportunity of doing so, and was not asked to meet the officers appointed. The procedure proposed was submitted to me at the last moment, to all intents and purposes "cut and dried," and such objections as I raised were lightly dismissed, with one exception, namely, the system of time-keeping, which was altered as I desired. I admit I consented, but very reluctantly, to the pro-

posals made, and have given them a fair trial; but had I been so familiar with departmental procedure as I am now, I should not have concurred as readily as I did.

In that connection I wish to point out that I am not bolstering up Mr. Davies' case in any respect. Still, I think he was quite right. With so much red tape there can be no possibility of conducting State enterprises on commercial lines. I repeat, I hold no brief for Mr. Davies. Having gone into the correspondence, I think Mr. Angwin was quite right in taking the stand he did take; but whether everything he did was justified in its entirety is one thing that the Select Committee would have to find out. On the same date Mr. Davies writes—

The system of handling factory stores as at present prescribed is both cumbersome and extravagant to a degree, and the same results could be obtained with simplicity and without sacrificing efficiency. In the matter of control there is really no authority centred in any one, certainly not in myself. The stores are under the direction of the stores manager, the office staff under yourself and the Public Service Commissioner, and the accountancy under Mr. Berkley. There is no guarantee, therefore, of the permanency of the staff, neither need I be consulted as to the suitability of applicants.

If Mr. Davies is correct in this, it shows a deplorable state of affairs. To say that a manager need not be consulted as to the suitability of the men he is to employ, is out of all reason. Furthermore, where so many are concerned in the conduct of the business, it seems impossible to escape failure. On the 16th September, 1914, Mr. Davies again writes to the under secretary—

Your minute dated August 21st having reference to my report of 15th July, reached me on 7th September, sixteen days after you had written it. This is a fair criterion of the expeditious manner in which correspondence and matters generally are handled. yet I am expected to successfully con-

duct a huge business enterprise on these lines. First, dealing with method of handling stores, for some reason or other it seems impossible to get prompt delivery of any material when ordered through stores. On several occasions I have ordered material from Sydney and simultaneously goods which I know to be in stock here in Western Australia, and the Sydney order has been delivered first.

That shows a very bad state of things. If one can send to Sydney for goods and get them from that distance, with the transshipment involved, and land them here before stocks known to be on hand locally can be received, it proves how little chance there is of this Government undertaking being conducted on proper and business-like lines. Mr. Davies further states—

It is costing us £50 in salaries per week to handle our stores, and it should and can be done with better results for less than half that amount.

An amount of £50 per week for handling the stores of such an undertaking as the State Implement Works is undoubtedly alarming. Mr. Davies then mentions the clerical division, where most of the trouble seems to have lain. He says—

*Re Clerical Division.* No man with any commercial knowledge at all will question the need of having men in the office with at least a little technical knowledge. The Public Service Commissioner evidently thinks otherwise. The consequence is we are being exploited, it would seem, with the idea of proving his contention. Since January 1st of this year, we have had no less than ten changes in our office staff. Last week another was sent back, and when his successor arrives it will mean eleven.

There is a great deal of similar matter with which I need not occupy the time of the House. Again, on the 1st February, 1915, Mr. Davies writes to the under secretary—

As time goes on, I feel that my personal efforts are of little avail; and in

placing this report before you I desire that you become fully cognisant of the difficulties of managing the works, which the public consider a commercially run enterprise, but which is really controlled by individuals holding positions having no personal interest in its advancement, and consequently its future success cannot be vouched for.

That is a very wide statement to make. I do not know whether Mr. Davies can prove it or not.

To comply with the regulations as decided upon from time to time, it is apparent that while quite a number of officers whose qualifications for this class of work are on a par with that of a labourer to a skilled tradesman, there cannot be expected good results. The present system of conducting the clerical work has already offered so many instances of irregularities that a continuation of same will bring forth harsh comments from the public generally and our customers in particular. I expressed myself in somewhat similar words in the initiatory stages, but, having no concrete evidence to strengthen the position I was advocating, simply had to wait until proof in abundance would be forthcoming. I maintain this is now before us and goes to expose the fallacy of such an arrangement as at present obtains being allowed to continue. The system is radically wrong, as by the disjointed manner in which the books are kept we find that the goods from those works have been supplied months before any account was sent out. Quite frequently I find farmers writing for their accounts, while demands have in many instances been made to farmers who have paid cash months previously.

I will refer to that matter later, because I know of cases—though I do not intend to particularise them—which certainly point in the direction Mr. Davies indicates. The crux of the whole situation seems to have been a discharge of certain employees. To my mind there is no doubt that the manager had some trouble with the employees. Naturally, he would

have with a big concern like that. At the outset he said—

Of course, I had no end of trouble with the men, but after discharging a number who refused to do a fair thing and getting the more reasonable to respond, better results were obtained, and at the time of the late Minister for Lands relinquishing charge, the men were responding very well. Since then, however, there has been a gradual falling-off, until, at the present time, not half the work is being turned out that should be with the number of hands engaged there. . . .

If that is truly the state of the works, it will mean that not only have they been a failure in the past and lost a lot of money, but they are going to double that loss. Surely there should be some inquiry into a charge like that. Mr. Davies further states—

It must be recognised that perhaps the main factor to ensure the success of such a place is for the manager and leading hands to be men with a knowledge of the business. By interference of Labour unions I was prevented from bringing capable men from the East, and therefore was handicapped from the start, as very few men skilled in the manufacture of farm implements were to be had here.

I do not know whether the case is as stated by Mr. Davies, but I do know that very few agricultural machinery mechanics are to be obtained in Western Australia. If Mr. Davies has been interfered with by Labour unions in this respect, it shows plainly that there has been trouble outside as well as inside the works. A concern like the State Implement Works would have to depend largely upon getting skilled mechanics from outside the boundaries of Western Australia. No restraint should be placed on the manager in that connection. On the contrary he should be allowed a perfectly free hand. To my mind, a man in charge of any concern like this should be entirely free from interference as regards the employment of labour. If it could be proved that he was wrong, that he was keeping on men

who should not be kept on, the time was ripe to demand the resignation of the manager. After that, the Minister could go into the matter and put the works on a proper footing. But it appears that employees under the manager remained there although he had instructions issued by the responsible Minister to discharge them.

The Colonial Secretary: Who kept them there?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The manager kept them there. But the Minister's duty, if he thought the manager was not competent to employ proper men, was to discharge the manager first and then deal with the men afterwards. What sort of chaos must result from interfering with the manager as regards the employment of men? The result would be to make him afraid to dismiss any of the employees. I notice that in one case where the manager proposed to discharge an employee he was told by the Minister to stay his hand. I have a copy of the letter giving that instruction. Then we have from the Minister this letter, dated 4th May, 1915—

My attention has been drawn to a letter forwarded by you to Mr. Jeffreys, foreman boiler maker at the works. It appears that some action is likely to be taken by you in respect to Mr. Jeffreys, if he does not forward his resignation. Will you please stay from taking any action until I have had an opportunity of discussing the matter with you.

Any head of a business concern should be in a position to discharge what hands he likes. If this cannot be done the manager is a manager in name only. The attitude taken up by Mr. Angwin is absolutely wrong. I think he will come out in good colours in regard to himself, that he will prove his case, but here is one mistake he made, undoubtedly. When a Minister steps out and listens to the tales of discharged employees and turns round on the manager, he is failing in his duty as a Minister.

Hon. C. Sommers: I makes the position impossible.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Absolutely. Then there is the discharge of Mr. White. Here is a letter written by the manager in which he refers to instructions received by him to dismiss Mr. Briggs and Mr. White. I will not read the whole of the letter, but listen to this much of it—

White's heart and soul is in his work. He puts in hours of overtime, on Saturday mornings and oftentimes on Saturday afternoons and on Sundays without any pay. To my certain knowledge, he has written scores of letters to farmer acquaintances and by this means has brought us our best customers. I have no hesitation in saying that White has done more to ensure the success of the undertaking than any other man on the works. He is most courteous and obliging, and a good deal of the overtime he has been compelled to work has been in trying to adjust matters in straightening out the mess made of things by the Agricultural Department. Mr. White is the man they all fall back on and confer with in straightening up accounts, etc., consequently he has been overloaded with work, but undertakes it all in a kindly spirit and without the slightest demur. There is a eulogy from the manager in regard to one of his employees. Here is another letter from Mr. Murray, in charge of the sales department down there. It was written to Mr. Davies, who was inquiring whether he could dispense with Mr. White's services. He sent the inquiry to Mr. Murray, and this was the reply—

*Re Mr. White.* At the present Mr. White is fully occupied in dealing with orders for machine duplicate parts, and attending to customers. Regarding his capabilities, he is thoroughly conversant with our specialities, and most obliging, which is a big factor in attending on clients. I have found him a good assistant and exact in his undertakings. Further, this is a position that cannot be dispensed with. What are we to think of this? Mr. Murray is a gentleman with whom I have had

business dealings extending over, perhaps, 15 years. In my opinion the State Implement Works were very fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Murray, who is one of the best, if not the very best man that could have been obtained in Western Australia to take control of such a business. There is sufficient proof of his straightforwardness in his holding his position for such a lengthy period with his late employers, and when he writes like this in reference to a man under him it goes a long way to prove that Mr. White was a capable officer, and that Mr. Angwin's advisers entirely misled him both in spirit and in detail. Another employee, Mr. Anderson, is referred to by the manager in these terms—

Mr. Anderson has put in hours of overtime without asking any remuneration. He also, when occasion calls, works willingly on Saturday mornings. Even last Saturday—picnic day—he worked at the wheat sheds from early in the morning erecting the maize crushing plant—without pay, of course. He is easily the most capable carpenter on the job, and has been foreman over the whole of the woodworkers for some ten months.

He goes on in the same way to speak of Mr. Briggs. For those gentlemen to go to their work on Saturday morning, when a holiday is declared, shows that they had some energy and were doing their best to make a success of the works. Yet they have been dispensed with.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: You bet; they worked overtime for nothing.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It seems there are some grounds for Mr. Davies' complaints. Referring again to the accounts branch, which was in a state of chaos, I can give one case which I know of. A farmer had purchased certain implements. The account fell due last February, but he heard nothing of it until June. When ordering the goods he sent £3 to prepay the freight. He could have had no idea of the extraordinary charges made by this Government, because the freight amounts to £3 10s. However, he sent the

£3, and the next he knew of it was in June last, when an officer called who could just give him a debit note, not a full account. He disagreed with the amount and the account was returned. The facts are that the goods purchased by this farmer were forwarded by rail via Coolgardie and Norseman to Esperance district. The money was sent along by the purchaser to pay for the freight. It did not cover the cost. The agent here paid the freight, amounting to £8 10s., and he showed the receipt to the implement works people, and had to make three special trips to the works at Fremantle to get the £3 refunded. Lo and behold! when the account came along the farmer was debited £8 10s. ocean freightage to Esperance and £3 for an advance. This shows a deplorable state of affairs. Fancy charging ocean freightage when the machine had been sent by rail, and then to debit the refunded deposit as an advance made! Now let me take a letter from Mr. Davies, dated 13th March, 1915. Mr. Davies is explaining his position, and he goes on to say—

I cannot help saying that in my opinion the accountant has endeavoured to influence you on account of the failure of his scheme for controlling the sales and having the showrooms established in Perth, also for the dismissal of Parker, as I have been blamed for both these happenings. They were particularly bitter over the rejection of the Perth scheme, since the under secretary and accountant invited Mr. Murray to Perth without consulting me, inspected the proposed premises, and even went so far as to ask Mr. Murray to select his furniture for the office.

The most astounding way of running a business I have ever heard of! Fancy establishing an agency in Perth over the head of the manager and calling the salesman in conference to Perth and arranging everything, even to the purchase of office furniture, without reference to the manager! I want to refer to the most important of this implement works business, in my opinion one of the really bad cases we have

to deal with. It is another of these secret contracts. I am referring now to a contract with Monteath Bros. I asked questions in the House last week, and I am sorry that better information was not given by the Colonial Secretary in reply. As a matter of fact the Government were manufacturing pipes at the implement works for £9 10s. to £10, while the iron was costing them approximately £5 5s. At the same time they let another contract, another secret contract. They have the opportunity of calling for tenders, and nobody is in a position to say that they will get only one tender because of somebody being in a better position to supply. They have the Tender Board, and they should call tenders for work put in hand. Such was not done in this case, and we find that the implement works were manufacturing the pipes, despite the information given to me here that they were not. They were manufacturing those pipes, and when the manager left, some 800 of the pipes were lying there. It appears that Mr. Davies met Mr. Nevanas by appointment made by Mr. Johnson, the then Minister for Works. Mr. Davies met Mr. Nevanas, they went into the matter and decided on the contract. No contract was signed at the time, but the agreement was made.

The Colonial Secretary: Who made the agreement?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Mr. Davies, the manager, with Mr. Nevanas. I may say right here that the appointment was made for Mr. Davies by the responsible Minister, Mr. Johnson. Surely when the Minister made that appointment for Mr. Davies to meet Mr. Nevanas, it was sufficient authority for them to come to some arrangement. A certain number of pipe moulders were sent by Mr. Johnson to the implement works, and Mr. Davies was instructed to find them work. He was at his wit's end at the time the contract was arranged, and he said that even if there was not a great deal in the contract, he felt like accepting it, so that he could keep the men employed. He made the contract. Then some hitch occurred and Mr. Nevanas was on the point of leaving the State; but he was called

back and he went down to the works one morning and told Mr. Davies to go on with the pipes. Mr. Davies said "I have word from the under secretary not to go on," but Mr. Nevanas replied, "It is all right now, go on." As soon as Mr. Nevanas left, Mr. Davies rang up the under secretary and asked if he was to go on with the pipes, and the under secretary said yes, he was to go on slowly. That shows that everything was in order. Yet they say no contract was made. Regarding that contract, the Colonial Secretary, in reply to my question, said "There is no objection heard from Mr. Davies as regards the contract until the 23rd February." Very good. And why? Simply because Mr. Davies was not in a position to know there was any contract in existence. It was a secret contract. Only a few of the inner circle knew of it. Contracts of that sort would be the downfall of this or any other State. Very probably Mr. Davies would never have known of the contract but for the fact that a deputation of moulders from the implement works waited on the Minister, and then they got word that the contract had been made with Monteath Bros. What was this contract? Does it stand to the credit of the Government? I say no, it is very much against them. We find a contract entered into and signed on 13th January, 1915, but that it was made retrospective to the previous June. Why was this? Was it to take in the tremendously large amount of eight-inch pipes which were lying useless in Monteath Bros.' yards? It must be so. There is no doubt, in my opinion, that it was so. I hope the evidence on this point will show me to be wrong, for the sake of the Government. I may say that I am not able to put any other construction upon it myself. The contract price has not been disputed. That was £10 15s., but there is the usual proviso which is always found inserted in these things, namely, that the contract price of £10 15s., basing the cost of iron at £4 2s. or £4 2s. 6d. per ton—I am not sure which, but it is at all events somewhere in that direction—would automatically increase with the increase in the

cost of iron. As a matter of fact this made the contract price £11 10s. 6d. per ton, whilst the Government were supplying Nevanas at £9 10s. per ton at the time the contract was signed, also the Water Supply Department.

Hon. J. Duffell: For the same sized pipes?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Pipes are supplied on the tonnage basis. They are worked out on the tonnage basis.

Hon. J. Duffell: We are told that the implement works could not manufacture that sized pipe.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I will come to that in a moment. The Colonial Secretary, in reply, said that a contract was let to Monteath Bros. for vertically cast pipes; that vertical cast pipes are superior to those cast on the bank, and Monteath Bros. possessed the only plant in the State for vertical casting, such method being necessary for pipes of eight inches and over. I quite agree with the Colonial Secretary that eight inch pipes and larger require a vertical plant to cast. It is not so many months since Mr. Davies and Mr. Sampson and another gentleman—I forget his name—were instructed to go into Monteath's business with a view to the purchase of it by the Government. I do not know what their report was. It must have been against the transaction, because they never purchased it. We find the Government did not purchase the works, but they let a secret contract a few months afterwards. As regards vertical casting plant, I may say that I have gone into the matter, and I find that one can put a plant of the very best that one can need for the purpose, and have that plant installed in the Government Implement Works for £6,000 at the very outside.

Hon. J. Cornell: Did the implement works provide for this class of work?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Everything needed to carry on the casting of vertical plant would be included in that £6,000; it would not, in fact, cost that amount. What does this price, which is over and above the price being paid to the Gov-

ernment of £9 10s. per ton mean? The price of £11 10s. 6d. means that the Government are making Monteath Bros. a present of £12,300. After establishing a plant which would cost £6,000, it leaves a balance of £6,300 to the good, and the implement works have benefited by having a new plant installed.

Hon. F. Connor: And have men working it as they like.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes. Is there any justification for an action of this sort? I do not know that I need go further into the case. I ask for a thorough investigation into the administration of these works. I want to see the works run on sound and good business lines. I feel that if the implement works are run on these lines they will be a success from every standpoint. I have every faith in them. Unless there is a thorough investigation, and they are established on good lines, they will never pay anything into the revenue. It may be found advisable to appoint a good commercial man to take charge of the concern and obtain engineers, one man to take charge of ordinary engineering, and another to take charge of the agricultural machinery portion. That will be the best way of running the works in my opinion, if we are to expect any success out of them at all. I have much pleasure in moving the motion standing in my name.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [8.8]: I second the motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [8.9]: I do not propose to reply to the statements made by the hon. member. The matter is practically *sub judice*. The Government have approached the Chief Justice with a view to having a judge of the Supreme Court appointed to inquire fully into the whole matter.

Hon. F. Connor: A Royal Commission?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes. The Government court the fullest inquiry, but if the Legislative Council thinks that it can appoint a select committee which will obtain more information than a judge of the Supreme Court with all the powers of a Royal Commissioner, I do

not think the Government will offer the slightest objection. I do not envy Mr. Baxter his task as chairman of the committee, for the appointment of which he has asked. Surely he has already given proof of his patriotism in carrying out these duties by moving the motion, which presupposes that he will undertake the work of chairman. I certainly will offer no objection to the appointment of a select committee. I wish to remind the House, however, that a judge of the Supreme Court is to be appointed to thoroughly investigate the matter.

On motion by Hon. W. Kingsmill debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [8.10]: I move—

*That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 24th August.*

Question passed.

*House adjourned at 8.11 p.m.*

### Legislative Assembly,

*Tuesday, 17th August, 1915.*

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

#### QUESTION—BAGS, SUPPLY OF.

Mr. HOLMAN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Has any agreement or arrange-