

## Legislative Assembly,

### Wednesday, 22nd September, 1909.

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

### ELECTION FOR ALBANY.

*As to return of Writ.*

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): Before the business is proceeded with I should like to ask the Premier whether he can give us any reason for the delay in the return of the writ for Albany.

The PREMIER: I am not aware that the writ is not returned, but I can promise the member to make full inquiries.

Mr. SPEAKER: The writ is not to hand yet. The date fixed for the return of the writ is Saturday next.

### QUESTION — DRAINAGE WORKS, FREMANTLE.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is the Minister aware that the men that were employed on drainage works at Fremantle have ceased work owing to the contractors, Messrs. Shierlaw & White, not fulfilling the conditions of contract, by paying the ruling rate of wages? 2, Will the Minister cause inquiries to be made and have the conditions of contract enforced? 3, Will the Minister cause an inspection to be made and ascertain whether the underground

drains are properly ventilated to ensure safety and the health of the men employed on such drainage works?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, I am aware that some men have ceased work on Messrs. Shierlaw & White's contract, but understand the dispute is as to whether crib time shall be included or excluded from the week's work of 47 hours. 2, The conditions of contract are in no way violated, as the ruling rate of wages is being paid. 3, Yes.

### QUESTION — STATE HOTEL, GWALIA, ADDITIONS.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Minister for Mines: In view of the large profit derived from the sale of liquor at the State hotel at Gwalia, and in view of the fact that the proposed improvements to the hotel do not meet with the wishes of the residents, will the Minister consider it advisable to appoint a responsible officer to confer with a committee appointed by the residents of the district as to improvements to the hotel most suited to meet the requirements of the residents of the district?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: In view of the large amount being expended this year in improvements it is not proposed to incur further expenditure, but the Government would only be too pleased to receive suggestions from any responsible local body dealing with future improvements.

### QUESTION — WATER SUPPLIES, MEEKATHARRA AND NANNINE.

Mr. HOLMAN asked the Minister for Mines: 1, The total capital cost (in detail) of the Meekatharra (Garden Gully) water scheme. 2, The total capital cost (in detail) of the Nannine water scheme.

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: Meekatharra Water Supply—Cost of (completed 1906):—No. 1 well, pump station, rising main service tanks (30,000 gals.), main to State Battery, temporary main to town, £9,828. Additions, 1906 to 1909: Service tanks (additions

10). £269; No. 2 well, pump, engine, and pipe line to No. 1. £316; main to Marmont and adjacent mines, £940; reticulation of town (part), £644; No. 3 well, pump, engine, and pipe line No. 1, £1,567; reticulation—extensions in hand, 22nd September, 1909. £243. Capital cost, £14,307. Surveys and boring to locate water and test water-bearing areas. £500—not included in above.

Nannine Water Supply—cost of:—Well, £320; windmill, £90; main (3in.), £1,360; service tank and stand, £78. Capital cost, £1,848.

#### QUESTION — STATE BATTERY, MESSENGERS PATCH.

Mr. SWAN asked the Minister for Mines: 1. What was the cost of the gas producer plant for Messengers Patch Government battery? 2. What was the cost in Perth of Government battery and fittings for the same place?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, £308, *f.o.r.* Geraldton. 2, £364 1s. 6d.

#### QUESTION — MINING AND FOREIGN LABOUR, LANCEFIELD.

Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Mines: In view of the remarks of Mr. Justice Burnside at the Criminal Court at Kalgoorlie last week, as reported in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* of the 20th September, during the Linefull murder case, when he commented upon the number of Italian witnesses unable to speak English, will the Minister cause inquiry to be made as to the number of foreigners employed underground at the Lancefield gold mine who cannot conform to the language test.

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: I have instructed that the Inspector shall report if there are any miners employed underground in this mine who cannot readily speak English, and also to give special attention to Section 42 of "The Mines Regulation Act."

#### BILLS (3), THIRD READING.

1. Abattoirs, transmitted to the Legislative Council.

2. Opium Smoking Prohibition, transmitted to the Legislative Council.

3. Redemption of Annuities, transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### BILL — FREMANTLE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING AMENDMENT.

Order of the Day for third reading read.

Mr. FOULKES (Claremont): I beg to move—

*That consideration of this Order be postponed.*

#### *Point of Order.*

Mr. Hudson: On a point of order I desire to draw Mr. Speaker's attention to the fact that this Bill is an amendment of a private Act and the Joint Stranding Orders relating to private Bills state—

"In all cases where application is intended to be made for leave to bring in a private Bill, notice shall be given in the *Western Australian Government Gazette*, stating the objects of such intending application, and the time at which copies of the Bill will be deposited in the office of the Clerk; and if it be intended to apply for powers for the compulsory purchase of lands or houses, or for extending the time granted by any former Act for that purpose, or to amalgamate with any other company, or to sell or lease the undertaking, or to purchase or to take on lease the undertaking of any other company, or to amend or repeal any former Act or Acts, or to levy any tolls, rates, or duties, or to alter any existing tolls, rates, or duties, or to confer, vary, or extinguish any exemptions from payment of tolls, rates, or duties, or to confer, vary, or extinguish any other rights or privileges, the notices shall specify such intention: and the whole of the notice relating to the same Bill shall be included in the same advertisement, which shall be headed by a short title descriptive of the undertaking or Bill."

It will be observed that mention is there made of the amendment or repeal of "any former Act." There is no need to go

into the question of what private Acts are in this instance, as the principal Act is itself a private one. *May* defines a private Bill as follows:—

“Bills for the particular interest or benefit of any person or persons, are treated, in Parliament, as private Bills. Whether they be for the interest of an individual, of a public company or corporation, or of a parish, city, county, or other locality, they are equally distinguished from measures of public policy; and this distinction is marked, in the very manner of their introduction. Every private Bill is solicited by the parties themselves who are interested in promoting it, being founded upon a petition which must be duly deposited in accordance with Standing Order.”

The preliminaries in connection with the Bill before us have not been complied with as they should have been, and the measure is therefore, out of order.

Mr. Foulkes: A few minutes ago the member for Norseman (Mr. Hudson) informed me that he would raise an objection to the Bill, and I agreed with him to postpone consideration of the third reading until Tuesday next, so that I could have an opportunity of looking into the matter. He gave me to understand he had no objection to that procedure being adopted. About three years ago the original Bill was introduced, so I am informed, as a private Bill. Last year the Government introduced a Bill, which I have in my hand, and which was treated as a public Bill although it amended the original private Bill to which I have referred. This year the Crown Law Department prepared another amending Bill to which exception is now being taken. I have not had the opportunity of looking into the authorities as to the proper procedure in introducing this Bill, and that is the reason why I have moved that the order be postponed. I hope the member will not seek to have a decision given at this stage. There has been no attempt on my part to rush the Bill through, and I should like to consider the position.

Mr. Walker: It is not within our province to postpone the consideration of the

Order. Once it has been decided that a Bill is a private one—of that there can be no doubt in the present case—the position is clear. All precedents show that, as soon as the Speaker has intimated that a Bill is a private one, the mover has always of his own volition withdrawn the measure. No further intimation ought to be required, and the member is saved the trouble of having a ruling from the Speaker. That being so I would submit that this is the proper course for the hon. member to take now. *May* lays down very clearly the characteristics of a private Bill affecting private interests either of an individual or a corporation. When irregularities are pointed out the proper forms should at once be adopted, more especially in a Bill of this character, for the reason that it gives a municipality power which affects other corporations. The object of making private measures go through certain forms and be advertised in the *Government Gazette* is to inform others who are interested, as to what is proceeding, and to give them an opportunity of petitioning the House. The Bill might have passed through the House without anybody having such opportunity. It would be a graceful act on the part of the hon. member to withdraw and re-introduce his measure according to proper forms.

Mr. Foulkes: It is not my intention to withdraw the Bill, for I myself have not had an opportunity of looking into the matter. I will again ask that the order be postponed. There are many points one might feel disposed to raise. One is as to whether the point taken by the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) has not been raised at too late a stage. The time to make objections is the time when leave is asked to introduce the Bill in the first instance. However I have no desire to raise that point. What I desire is that the matter may be permitted to stand over. I am quite prepared to listen with all due respect to what the member for Kanowna has said, and if that hon. member does not see his way clear to agreeing that the Order of the Day might stand over until Tuesday next, at least he might agree to allow it to stand over until to-morrow.

Mr. Walker: It is in the hands of the Speaker.

The Premier: In view of the fact that the Speaker has not yet given a ruling on the point surely it would be reasonable to allow the Order of the Day to be postponed. At the same time it has to be admitted that no opportunity has been given for objecting to the Bill. As a matter of fact it was thought that a certain private measure might be introduced by a certain hon. member only last week, but as the result of consulting the Crown Law authorities and the officers of the House that measure has not been proceeded with. I am of opinion that this matter might reasonably be postponed.

Mr. Speaker: I will be pleased if the House do not ask for any decision on the point just now. If hon. members will be good enough to leave it over I will be prepared to give a decision to-morrow. In the meantime it is for the House to say whether the matter might not be postponed until to-morrow. I would ask hon. members to be kind enough to give me a little notice of such questions in order that I might be afforded an opportunity of looking up authorities more capable of expressing a definite opinion on such points. Possibly the hon. member would be satisfied if the matter were postponed until to-morrow.

Mr. Foulkes: By leave, I will amend the motion to read: "That the order of the Day be postponed until to-morrow."

Leave granted: Question put and passed.

#### BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

(1.) Land Act Special Lease Bill (introduced by the Minister for Works).

(2.) Administration Act Amendment Bill (introduced by the Premier).

#### BILL — DECLARATIONS AND AFFIDAVITS.

##### *First Reading.*

Introduced by Mr. Hudson and read a first time.

Mr. HUDSON (Dundas) moved—

*That the Bill be printed.*

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): It was not his intention to offer any objection at all to the Bill, but he thought it was only courtesy that in a matter of this kind the Leader of the House should be approached. As a matter of fact there was already on the stocks a Bill of a similar nature. When the Government were about to introduce a measure it was only reasonable that they should be notified of any intention on the part of an hon. member to move in the same direction. Such action would result in the saving of extra expense in printing and in other ways.

Mr. HUDSON: When giving notice of this Bill he had taken the Bill to the Crown Law authorities and left it with the Crown Solicitor. Some little time later he had asked the Crown Solicitor if he had considered the Bill, when the Crown Solicitor told him that he (Mr. Hudson) would have to communicate with the Government before attention could be given to it. The Government had already had notice, and if the Premier had reason to complain of want of courtesy he could have approached him (Mr. Hudson) outside. Had the Premier said that he was about to bring in a similar Bill he (Mr. Hudson) would have been very pleased to drop his.

Question put and passed.

#### MOTION.—RAILWAY PROJECT, LEONORA-LAWLERS.

Mr. GOURLEY (Leonora) moved—

*That in the opinion of this House the present railway line should be extended to Lawlers from Leonora at the earliest possible date.*

He said: In bringing a motion of this kind before the House for consideration, a motion which if carried will involve the expenditure of a large sum of money, I may say that I believe it to be in the very best interests of the mining industry and of the State generally that this line should be constructed. I am pleased to know that the claims of the Lawlers people for a railway have recently been more fully recognised. In 1904 a deputation of the Lawlers people waited on

the Premier who then promised that if the data placed at his disposal proved to be correct this line would receive the first consideration among the railway proposals. Again in 1904 the Minister for Mines when visiting Lawlers promised that he would bring this matter before Cabinet; but up to the present time nothing has been done in this respect. However since this matter has been brought prominently into notice I am pleased to see that the line is at last to have consideration. The Premier in his speech at Bunbury said—

"The lack of fuel added to the high cost of transport very largely discounts the strenuous efforts that have been exerted for many years in the Lawlers district in connection with our gold mining industry, and notwithstanding that the economical management of the principal mine in this district has established a record for cheap treatment it is becoming more and more evident that the time has arrived when the extension of railway facilities to this district must receive the earnest consideration of the Government and Parliament."

In bringing the question before the House I ask that it should get reasonable consideration because it affects the well being of the Lawlers district. And in speaking of Lawlers it will be necessary to refer to Wiluna. In a recent report the State Mining Engineer refers emphatically to the prospects of mining in and around Wiluna: in fact in advocating the construction of the Lawlers railway I might go so far as to say that it will be in the best interests of the State if this line be carried through to Wiluna. I am pleased to know that the Coolgardie-Norseman line is an accomplished fact, and has been constructed and will shortly be taken over by the Government. In this respect I may congratulate the Premier on his policy of State railway extension, for in my opinion it will be to the inestimable benefit of the country in regard not only to the opening up of its agricultural resources but also the opening up and further development of its mineral resources. Now, if the construction of the railway to

Norseman was justified, and I believe it was, then I say the construction of the line to Lawlers is still further justified; and I will endeavour to give to the House some figures which will bear out this contention. Take the gold output for Norseman in 1908. The quantity of ore crushed was 41,102.10 tons for a yield of 27,918.28 fine ounces; while for the same year the total quantity of ore crushed in the Lawlers district was 229,933.53 tons for a yield of 72,109.75 fine ounces. So that we find here five times as much ore crushed at Lawlers as at Norseman, and over twice as much gold yielded. Take the number of leases at Norseman in 1908. There were 78 leases aggregating 1,038 acres, while in the same year there were at Lawlers 137 leases with an aggregate of 2,085 acres. It will be necessary for me to refer at some length to the State Mining Engineer's report in regard to mining in the Lawlers district; and as I pointed out before, it may not be out of place if I refer at some length to Wiluna, because that mining centre is also in the Lawlers district. We have heard a great deal from the Press of Geraldton and from the Northern Development League in regard to the route this railway should take. I am not going to say anything against the Sandstone route; I am not acquainted with that district; but knowing the Lawlers district as I do, and knowing that the country from Leonora to Lawlers is auriferous, I must naturally advocate that the line should start from Leonora. The Press of Geraldton and the Northern Development League have taken up a most peculiar attitude on the subject. When it was decided that the Lawlers people should enter into negotiations for the construction of this railway, the Geraldton Press and the Northern Development League were up in arms against the proposal that the railway should start from Leonora, and tried to say that the country between Leonora and Lawlers was not gold-bearing; they tried to say that it was barren country. Now, I do not want to disparage the people of Geraldton or the Northern Development League with regard to the construction of the line from Sandstone, but I am not one of those who say

that we have in Western Australia such a lot of barren country as people would make out. I believe that throughout the whole of this vast State we have some splendid auriferous country, and I believe the only way it can be opened up is by extending the iron horse. I hope the extension of this railway will receive serious consideration. It is a matter that has been brought before the Government for many years, and I now hope that the Government will give the project earnest consideration. The matter contained in the report of the State Mining Engineer is most interesting. He shows that auriferous country exists from Leonora to Lawlers, and I trust that members will not be wearied by my references to this report, because they are necessary. The State Mining Engineer says—

"The geographical distribution of the granitic and dioritic areas is of importance for the reason that throughout the State it is the latter which are the home of the auriferous lodes, the granite country rarely having been found gold-bearing, except where close to greenstone or where it is intruded in small patches through greenstone country. A map showing the greenstone areas therefore also shows at a glance the most probable auriferous country, a consideration which has consequently to be borne in mind when dealing with routes of railways projected to serve the mineral districts. In the present instance it may be seen that an extension of the Eastern Railway northwards to Wiluna from Leonora or Malcolm via Diorite King, Mount Clifford, Lawlers, and Mount Sir Samuel, would be most of the way through greenstone country, favourable for gold discoveries, and would pass through or near all the most proved centres of gold production, except Lake Darlot and New England."

He goes on to refer to the rival projected line, and he says the rival projected line would mostly be through unfavourable granite country except for a narrow belt at Gum Creek, and would be of no service to the long belt between Wiluna and Leonora, in which railway communication is becoming more and more necessary as time goes on. The Geraldton people and the

Northern Development League have tried to show that the country on the Leonora side is not gold-bearing, but here we find in the State Mining Engineer's report that we have auriferous country the whole of the way from Leonora to Lawlers, and that on the Sandstone route we have practically 75 miles through which the line would travel through practically barren country. Now let me deal with the Wiluna district. I hope the House is as interested in our mining propositions as in our agricultural resources. It will be necessary to quote briefly the records of some of the mines in the Wiluna district. I understand that some time ago the Minister for Mines made a tour of the district and spoke very favourably and highly of the propositions at Wiluna, and also of those at Kathleen Valley. He knows the district thoroughly and so does the Premier, and I will refer briefly to the different propositions in these districts for the information of members who are perhaps not so well acquainted with the centres as the Premier and the Minister for Mines are. At the Gwalia Consolidated, one of the largest mines, there are 17 leases. The reefs have been opened up for a length of over 1,100 feet, and those from the south main shaft for about 650 feet. The State Mining Engineer says—

"The Gwalia Consolidated lode is of great width, being 50 to 100ft. wide, and the ore bodies are now known to have a total length of at least 1,750ft. To the 31st October, 1908, the official record of production of this company's leases was 139,022.32 tons crushed, the great majority of which was from this lode, for a return of 54,977.14 ozs. of fine gold, and the manager's estimate of ore reserves about the same time above the 100ft. level was given to me as about 100,000 tons of assay value 36s. per ton."

The State Mining Engineer goes on to say—

"Present prospects seem to me to be very good, and if the body of ore is found to continue downwards of payable grade, the mine must become one of the largest in the State."

Then after referring to the different plants erected in that centre at a cost of £160,000 he goes on to say—

"The Gwalia Consolidated, Moonlight, and Bulletin lodes have now been proved to carry large quantities of payable ore, sufficient of themselves to make Wiluna a mining centre of much importance for many years to come, and there seems much probability that other similar payable soft lodes will yet be found among the great number of more or less auriferous schists and 'formations' which occur in the district."

In regard to the gold production of Wiluna, we find that at the State battery no less than 20,113¾ tons have been crushed for a yield of 14,982 ozs., while the gold production of Wiluna has been 232,591.22 tons for a yield of 107,944.63 ozs.; so that we see that in the Wiluna district we have a district of great importance, and one to which the State Mining Engineer advocates railway extension; and I find that throughout the whole of his report the State Mining Engineer only refers to one route, and that is the route from Leonora to Lawlers. It would not be to the benefit of the State Mining Engineer, a man of great experience, with a thorough and practical knowledge of mining, to advocate any one particular route, but knowing the district as he knows it, and having travelled over the Sandstone route as well, it is only natural that he would advocate the best route for the railway, and throughout his report he advocates only one route, and that is the route from Leonora. I ask the House to take the State Mining Engineer's report. No doubt the member for Geraldton (Mr. Carson) will tell us the Sandstone route is the best route, and no doubt we will have members for Murchison on either side of the House telling us that the line must be constructed from Sandstone—

Mr. HEITMANN: Who said so?

Mr. GOURLEY: I am only drawing my conclusions from what I have heard. However, I ask the House to give favourable consideration to the matter. It is one that affects the welfare of the mining

industry in the Lawlers and Wiluna districts. Now in regard to the Sir Samuel district, 34 miles from Lawlers, a district of promise and where the Minister for Mines has decided to establish a State battery. I desire to congratulate the Minister in giving to the prospectors of the district the assistance of a five-head mill, and I trust the Minister will bring about the erection of the mill as speedily as possible. I believe that in five months it will be an accomplished fact, but on behalf of the prospectors I would ask the Minister to erect the mill as speedily as possible, because there is a large tonnage of ore waiting to be crushed, and it will be to the interests of the State and the people of the district that the stone should be crushed as speedily as possible. The Nil Desperandum mine at Mount Sir Samuel has crushed 21,756.50 tons for a yield of 9,982.4 ozs. The recorded output of the Yellow Aster to the 21st October, 1908, is 41,747.75 tons for 28,655.86 ozs. The State Mining Engineer in his report refers to a large number of mines. I have quoted one or two to show the enormous possibilities of the district. There are mines in the district producing a large quantity of gold. They are far away from the head of the railway, and are practically, on account of the great cost of mining and fuel, just existing. It will be seen from the report of the State Mining Engineer that these mines, notwithstanding, have produced a great quantity of gold, so that on this report I take it the district warrants the construction of a railway. I have heard the Minister speak favourably in regard to the prospects of copper at Kathleen Valley. The State Mining Engineer also refers to the copper there; but it is impossible to work the leases at the present time for want of railway communication. The State Mining Engineer in his report says—

"As shown by the descriptions very little has been done to test the lodes for copper though some of them are fairly promising prospects. There is a good deal of doubt as to whether there is any chance of working them profitably under the present conditions, and pros-

pecting is naturally not very energetic in consequence. Carting to Leonora can be got for £3 a ton by teams looking for back loading."

Then he goes on to refer to the ore treated and the percentage of copper obtained.

Mr. Angwin: Are they opening up their mines?

Mr. GOURLEY: There is a certain amount of prospecting going on, but it is very small on account of the high freight to Leonora, which is £3 a ton; and this with the high freight to Fremantle and the high cost of sending the ore to Wallaroo or somewhere else, is too heavy a cost. The State Mining Engineer refers to the fact that if the line were built no doubt furnaces would be erected because of the means of getting a cheaper supply of fuel. He says—

"The position would be greatly improved if a railway were running from Leonora to Wiluna. Smelting at Fremantle would also improve the prospects a good deal, but not enough to enable the mines to be profitably worked at their present apparent grade of ore. Local smelting affords really the only hope for permanent success, but until there is railway communication this also gives little promise on account of the want of good fuel. Reverberatory smelting with use of the local mulga firewood as fuel would be the only chance, and the supplies of good firewood in the immediate neighbourhood would soon be exhausted."

So at the present time there would be no chance of making these mines pay without the establishment of local smelters, and in addition to that there must also be railway communication. In this respect no doubt the Minister for Mines will be able to give very valuable information. At the Bellevue mine there are 13 leases employing a large number of men, and the State Mining Engineer referring to this mine says—

"This mine has been worked on a large scale for many years and has been a noticeable producer of gold, 219,049 tons crushed to 31st October, 1908, having yielded 113,211.85 ounces of fine gold."

He then goes on to refer to the lode, which is 15 feet wide. He says—

"Lately a new parallel lode has been found on surface about 140 feet west of the main shaft and has been sunk upon. At the time of my visit it was yielding some very good ore from an ore body five to 10 feet wide between its walls."

So it will be seen throughout the whole of the report of the State Mining Engineer that there are mines of great prominence, that have yielded thousands of ounces of gold, and have huge ore bodies. I refer to a statement made quite recently in regard to the Wiluna mines. It is the intention of some of the companies to considerably increase the number of stamps they have. The ore bodies there vary from 50 feet to 100 feet wide, and it will be easily recognised that at Wiluna we have one of the finest mining propositions in Western Australia. I say outside Kalgoorlie and Boulder in the Wiluna district we have some of the most promising mines in Western Australia. Referring to the scarcity of fuel in this district the State Mining Engineer says—

"Mining timber and firewood are getting scarce in the neighbourhood of the Bellevue mine, the teams having to go out 30 miles east for gum mining timber, and firewood is being cut out for about eight miles to the south and east. The lake and sandy country yield next to no timber, but there is good firewood about nine miles to the north-west. To the north the woodcutters are getting to within three miles of Kathleen Valley, but can go a long distance to the north-east without interfering with any other mines. Large mining timbers have to be carted 80 miles, and cost 4s. a lineal foot; firewood costs 22s. 6d. per cord. Some is obtained by camel carriage at 22s. 6d. per cord. Freights from Leonora are £6 a ton, or by camel £5 5s."

It will be seen from the report that the mine has produced a large amount of gold and is greatly handicapped by having to go 80 miles for mining timber. The total production of gold from Mount Sir Samuel is 233,612 tons for 120,663 ounces. Kathleen Valley, 12 miles distant, crushed



15,515 tons for 40,509.66 ounces, a total of 161,000 ounces. This district with the erection of a State battery will no doubt largely increase its output. Now I come to the Lawlers district to which I advocate the extension of the line, and although the report of the State Mining Engineer includes the whole of the Lawlers district, yet the proposed extension of the line is to Lawlers proper. At Lawlers there are many leases working, and there are many mines that have given great promise. At the Vivien, which contains six leases, we find that on the 31st October, 1908, 120,620.68 tons of ore had been crushed for 51,787.89 ounces of fine gold. At the Waroonga we find there that the lode has been worked for 2,700 feet and has been proved to be from 70 to 80 feet wide, and sometimes over 100 feet wide while in depth it has been worked 560 feet from the surface which is the greatest depth attained in any part of the State with regard to a similar lode. The State Mining Engineer writes—

"The experience at the Waroonga mine has been reassuring as to the permanency of values in such lodes, as in its case they have been improving in depth rather than falling off. At the time of my visit the faces of quartz that were being driven upon were of very promising appearance strongly resembling the quartz in the deeper levels of some of the best Kalgoorlie mines. The assay values of the quartz at that time were running about 10dwts. of gold per ton, which is considerably over the average of the 'formation' material."

With regard to these northern mines situated at Lawlers proper we find there has been 660,368 tons crushed for 242,650.64 ounces. Not many districts returning such a large amount of gold as that are without railway communication. "Looking over the gold production of Lawlers we find to date that no less than 849,708.08 tons have been crushed for 360,812.21 ounces of gold. That is right in the heart of Lawlers. Coming from Lawlers to Leonora we have various mining districts Wilson's Patch, Mount Clifford, Diorite King, and Alluvial Gold, which have

turned out a large amount of gold, and including these districts in the gold production of Lawlers we find that up to date there has been produced a total of 760,239.92 ounces of gold of a value of over three millions sterling. I have as briefly as possible endeavoured to show the great possibilities of the fields right through from Leonora to Wiluna, and quoting the State Mining Engineer again with regard to the construction of the line, and in reference to the district, he says—

The Waroonga and the Gwalia Consolidated appear to be now in a better position than ever before, and several others are coming on well which seem to have a fair chance of attaining premier rank. It is among the smaller ventures, however, that the greatest improvement seems possible. In field after field we have seen that there are a number of promising mines worked in a very small way, and mostly in straits for want of working capital for equipment and development. Several of these are winning their way through their initial difficulties even without help of capital, and with a revival in mining investment there would no doubt be many more taken in hand. There seem to be very excellent opportunities throughout the region under review for formation of small companies with working capital of from £6,000 to £10,000 to open mines able to keep a 10-stamp mill running, and from which a comparatively small monthly profit would pay excellent dividends on the amount of money sunk on their equipment. Starting in a small way, some of these would probably increase in importance as they become more opened up. There are also a wonderful number of small prospecting shows which have yielded encouraging small returns, but which have not been much opened up, or been able to continue working for want of crushing, transport, or pumping facilities. Many of these will no doubt be more extensively worked as time goes on, and some will no doubt turn out important mines. It cannot be supposed

that anything like the whole of the reefs have yet been found. There are great areas which have been but little prospected, and in the lacustrine flats especially, there must be great numbers of reefs concealed under the superficial cappings of alluvial material. Instead of these fields being worked out, as one is often told, it is seen that mining has in reality not more than made a beginning. The whole district suffers heavily from the disabilities imposed upon it by distance from railway communication, and extension of the railway from Leonora to Wiluna would be of the greatest possible service in enabling mining to be carried on under more favourable conditions. In all the more important centres it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain supplies of mining timber and firewood at reasonable cost, and as time goes on this difficulty will soon be a very serious one. It would be greatly minimised if the railway were constructed. In my opinion this is the most important mining railway proposition in the State which has not yet been authorised by Parliament, and its construction at the earliest date permissible on financial grounds seems worthy of the most serious consideration. The line would pass through likely mineral country, well proved in places, nearly all the way from Leonora to Wiluna, and though it would have little hope of being payable on the amount of traffic at present existing, there seems much reason for thinking that it would develop the country so much if constructed that its traffic would soon increase to the payable point. So far as the mining prospects of the country to be traversed are concerned, they are so good that they seem to me to fully justify continuation of the policy of pushing out railway lines into the gold-fields in advance of actual development, which has been so successful in the past in this State."

I am sorry to have had to refer at such length to the State Mining Engineer's report, but in bringing a question like this before the House I take it we desire to

produce the best authority possible and I know of no better authority than the State Mining Engineer with regard to the construction of this line. He has travelled over the whole of the district from Leonora to Wiluna and from Wiluna to Sandstone and through that country.

The Premier: He is a better authority than the *Geraldton Guardian*.

Mr. GOURLEY: That is so. Although I do not wish to say anything disparaging against the people of Geraldton and surrounding districts with regard to the construction of the line from Sandstone, I say that this House should be guided by the report of the State Mining Engineer, with reference to this matter, and I trust the Government of the day are serious regarding the construction of the line, and that they will endeavour at the earliest possible date to have the work carried out. It may be argued that money is somewhat scarce, and that our deficit is somewhat large, but personally, I am one of those who consider that so far as the opening up of our vast areas, such as we have in Western Australia, is concerned, the Government are justified in borrowing for that purpose.

Mr. Scaddan: We might construct a line out of the deficit.

Mr. GOURLEY: There will be no need to refer the question of construction to the member for Ivanhoe. I hope the House will not take any notice of the fact that we have a deficit, although it is a somewhat serious thing; still, I believe that with the coming prospects of a bountiful harvest, that deficit will soon disappear. There is one thing that I would urge with regard to the construction of the line from Leonora, and that is that the whole of the money derived should go into the State treasury. The Geraldton Chamber of Commerce and the Northern Development League have compiled a table showing the difference of the carriage of mining machinery, minerals, etc., per ton to be in favour of Geraldton; but I find that these people have quoted Geraldton as the starting point, and not Fremantle. I fail to understand why they should quote Gerald-

ton when the whole of the goods will have to come from Fremantle and travel either over the Midland railway or by vessel to Geraldton. If we analyse the returns presented by these people we find that if the Government decide to construct a railway from Sandstone the Midland railway will benefit to the extent of £14,000 per annum, and £13,000 will go into the pockets of the steamship owners. If the line were constructed from Leonora the whole of the revenue derived from machinery, freight, passenger fares, etc., will go into the State treasury. I am prepared to admit that the freight may be a little cheaper in favour of the Sandstone route. I find with regard to the passenger freight that from Laverton to Fremantle via Leonora the first-class fare would be 155s. 3d., and via Geraldton 169s. 11d. We have now to consider the merits of the two routes, and which of the two is more likely to develop and stimulate the mining industry. If we take the Sandstone route we find, 19 miles on the Lawlers side, Maninga Marley, and then there is a complete blank for 73 miles and no trace of auriferous country. How different it is from Leonora to Lawlers where we have the First Tramp, then the Gold Blocks, State Mill, Mt. George, Diorite, King of the Hills, Mt. Stirling, Mt. Clifford, Wilson's Patch, and Bannockburn which provide a total of 25 leases, and are responsible for no less than 65 head of stamps. Another reason I advance in favour of the construction of this line is that we have an enormous number of sheep and cattle being driven to Leonora, and brought down by railway to Kalgoorlie to be distributed throughout the district. When the Canning stock route is opened up, all cattle and sheep from Kimberley, and from the North-West will be brought to Wiluna and then be taken on by train to the various settlements along the line. That will be a great revenue-producing industry. Another reason why I advocate the construction of the line is the prohibitive cost of firewood and mining timber in the Lawlers district. The mines have to go 10 or 12 miles for firewood, but in the

case of good mining timber they have to go fully 80 miles for it. The cost of fuel is one-fifth of the value of the gold won. The Northern mines' consumption of firewood and mining timber is 21,000 tons per year. The present cost is estimated at 15s. per ton, making a total of £15,750. The cost under railway haulage would be £11,550, therefore there would be a saving of £4,200. At the Vivien the present cost is £6,750; the railway cost £4,950, making a saving of £1,800. At sundry other mines the present cost is £3,750, railway cost £2,750, making a saving of £1,000. The total saving would be £7,000 per year. The saving on bullion would be approximately £1,700, and on direct mining supplies £2,258. This with the saving on wood and timber of £7,000 makes a total saving of £10,958. We find from the returns that for the first five months of this year the Lawlers district produced 34,254 ounces of gold. We also find that the gold yield has increased considerably, and it is expected that for the present year the yield will be 84,000 ozs.; therefore the total increase in two years would amount to 23,000 ounces. The mining lease revenue for 1908 was £2,365, while for the five months of this year the mining lease revenue amounted to £1,869 15s. 6d. According to the official figures there are working in the Lawlers district about 1,500 men. These men are engaged in mining. In the district there are 245 head of stamps, 35 of which are within eight miles of Lawlers, and it is estimated that the value of the machinery is nearly £200,000. Again as to the cost of firewood, the Vivien mine pays 4s. 1d. per ton, and on this mine alone for two years they have spent £60,000 in wages, and there has been paid in wages a sum of £3,200 between Leonora and Lawlers. It is hardly necessary for me to deal at further length with the question of this line. I have endeavoured to show by the report of the State Mining Engineer and the official returns of the Mines Department that the district warrants the construction of this line. It has been battling along against great odds for a long time past. The district has produced three-quarters of a million ounces of gold.

and it is the duty of the House and the Government to authorise the construction of this line as soon as possible. I trust the Government will give the matter serious consideration. The Geraldton people recognise the importance of the Lawlers district. The reports that have been made by the Geraldton Chamber of Commerce and the Northern Development League as to the Sandstone route are entirely inaccurate. I would like to read an extract from the Geraldton Press under date July 7th bearing out the arguments which I have endeavoured to place before the House, and showing the reasons why the line should be constructed. The newspaper says—

"Figures recently quoted in these columns demonstrated that Lawlers wants and deserves a railway. A district which has produced three-quarters of a million ounces of gold merits better treatment than it has received. It has been allowed to grub along as best it could out in the wilderness, with 85 miles of sandy track between it and the nearest railway station. The wonder is that those 85 miles of dust in summer and swamp in winter, have not killed Lawlers. Its experience of that road is somewhat similar to that of Wiluna, which finds the cost of carting from Nannine (140 miles) nearly double the freight from Geraldton to Nannine, a distance of 310 miles. Until Lawlers gets a railway it will never prosper as it ought."

In conclusion I may advance one other argument, and that is in regard to Kalgoorlie being the mining centre for the distribution of mining machinery, etcetera. At the present time we have at Kalgoorlie large foundries turning out a great deal of machinery, and the State Mining Engineer reports as to Wiluna, in regard to sending down broken parts to Perth, that it takes ten weeks before such parts can be returned. If the line were constructed it would only be a matter of a few days in sending to Kalgoorlie.

Mr. Angwin: What makes the delay between the ten weeks and the few days?

Mr. GOURLEY: In the first instance the machinery would have to come from

Wiluna by teams, then it is sent to Geraldton, and from there to Fremantle by boat, and we find that in every instance there is a delay of ten weeks.

Mr. Angwin: Suppose the railway went direct, would there be a delay then?

Mr. GOURLEY: In regard to Kalgoorlie being the distributing centre for machinery, we have some of the most up-to-date foundries there that are to be found in the State of Western Australia, and any broken parts which require to be repaired could be sent to Kalgoorlie and there the repairs effected. And being the mining centre we would find that mining men who own large propositions in the mining industry, in the first place would go from here to Kalgoorlie and then on to Leonora and Lawlers. Without delaying the House at greater length I trust that the Government will give favourable consideration to the construction of this line. I am not going to say that the Sandstone people should not have railway communication, I am simply debating the question as it affects the mining industry of the State. I am one who believes that the Government are desirous of doing their best for the mining industry, and while I approve of the policy of the Government in opening up the agricultural resources of Western Australia if we wish the State to compare favourably with the Eastern States then we must do what we can to develop the mining industry. Not that I would infer for a moment that the members who have been returned to the Federal Parliament are not doing their best, but it is on account of our isolation and being removed so far from the seat of Government that we have not received that consideration to which Western Australia is entitled. Still I wish to cast no reflection on the members who have been returned to the Federal Parliament. Far be it from me that I should do so, but if we wish to develop Western Australia as it should be developed the Government must put forward a bold policy. The people are looking to the Government, and to Parliament to bring forward measures which will open up the vast resources of this coun-

try. I trust the Government will give earnest consideration to this proposal.

Mr. Angwin: Would this railway strike Wiluna?

Mr. GOURLEY: I am advocating that the line should be extended from Leonora to Lawlers, and the State Mining Engineer advocates that the line should be carried further to Wiluna which is in the Lawlers district. I trust the Government will give favourable consideration to this proposal.

Mr. CARSON (Geraldton): Some thirteen years ago the district of Geraldton had the Lawlers and Wiluna trade. At that time Sir John Forrest was in power, and the member for Geraldton sat in Opposition. We were then advocating the construction of a line from Magnet to Black Range, which was called the Magnet-Lawlers railway, and Mr. Robson then endeavoured to get the Government to construct that line, but unfortunately Sir John Forrest believed largely in centralisation, and in giving spoils to the victors, and that is the reason why we had the line constructed to Leonora, thus preventing the people of our district having their rightful trade. We lost the trade at that time. It has been stated by the Government, and I believe they were in earnest when they said so, that every part of the State should have its rightful trade. If that be so Geraldton should have the trade of the Lawlers and Wiluna districts. Lawlers is over 200 miles nearer to the port of Geraldton than to the port of Fremantle. The proposition for the construction of the line was advocated thirteen years ago. Since then there has been a great deal of settlement going on in the Victoria district, and I think those people should be considered as well as the people of Lawlers. The Lawlers people are not all agreed that the line should be constructed from Leonora. I hope the Premier will have this matter postponed until after the deputation that is to wait on him from our district on October 7th has been heard. On that deputation there will be gentlemen from Lawlers to put the case from their standpoint, and on that account I hope the Government will postpone the matter

until then. I am surprised that any Labour member should advocate that the consumer should pay more than two hundred miles of extra freight on the goods he has to consume. It is a very serious matter to the consumer, and this line is largely advocated by the people who own mining properties, more especially the Kalgoorlie people.

Mr. Holman: The Geraldton people objected to a refreshment room at Crowther.

Mr. CARSON: A few Geraldton publicans may have done so, but not the people generally. The State Mining Engineer referring to the construction of the Sandstone railway advocated that it should go from Mount Magnet, but he stated it would be a better paying proposition if the line were constructed right through to Leonora. We recognise in our district that Lawlers is entitled to railway communication from Sandstone, and this proposed railway will not serve Wiluna. At present Wiluna is served from Nannine. That is a very considerable distance. The member for Leonora has pointed out that the freights from Fremantle would be added; but we are looking forward. We are importing largely from the Old Country direct, and as that end of the State prospers we will import almost everything we want from the Old Country. There is another item the Government will have to consider, and that is the additional cost of construction owing to the fact that the material will have to be carried over very much greater distances than if the line goes via Leonora. All the material will have to be travelled about 300 miles further than if it went by the other route. The cost would be very much higher via Leonora than via Sandstone. The member for Leonora referred to the foundries at Kalgoorlie, but in a few years there may be no foundries there, while at Sandstone, which is a very prosperous place at the present time, there may be quite a number. The question is a very important one to the agriculturists in our district. At the present time they are barred from competition with the southern portion of the State. In speaking to the Address-in-

Reply I mentioned that our State had now to pay an inward wharfrage at Fremantle of 7s. 6d. per ton. Probably the idea of that is to keep out the Eastern States products; I would not venture to infer that, but the condition must be made to apply to all parts of the State equally. At present our district is penalised on that account and it is a very serious matter to the agriculturists. They recognise how important it is that the line should be started from Sandstone. I have received letters from societies in the Irwin, Greenough, and Northampton districts asking me to submit certain resolutions to the Premier when waiting upon him with a deputation.

Mr. Jacoby: How do the wharfrage rates affect the agriculturists?

Mr. CARSON: The position is that our agriculturists have practically to suffer a reduction in the price of their wheat of from 4d. to 5d. per bushel; that is due to the inward wharfrage rate. At the present time they are shut out from the southern markets.

Mr. Hudson: What has Geraldton done for Lawlers?

Mr. CARSON: What has Leonora done for Lawlers? The line to Lawlers will have to serve Wiluna, and so far as I can gather there are only a few propositions, some five or six miles from Leonora, that are payable, until Wiluna is reached. Certainly there is the Darlot country, but that is considerably out of the route of the proposed line.

Mr. Taylor: What about Wilson's Patch, Stirling and other places; it is all auriferous country there. I prospected it 14 years ago.

Mr. CARSON: I hope that the Government will allow the motion to be adjourned and not take a vote to-night. It should be postponed until a deputation has waited on the Premier from the people of the district I represent. We shall have a large amount of matter to place before him, gathered from the Lawlers, Sandstone, and other places up that way. I believe the member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Troy) intended to be here this evening to speak on the question, but he is unavoidably absent. I know that he

desires that the debate shall be adjourned. He is more familiar with the country to be served than I who am speaking more particularly this evening on behalf of the agriculturists, and because I recognise that Geraldton should have the trade that rightly belongs to that port.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): I cannot congratulate the member for Geraldton on the length of his address. After the very long and exhaustive explanation of the reasons why the railway should be constructed from Leonora to Lawlers we expected to hear a full account from the member for Geraldton as to the other side of the case.

Mr. Carson: You will get it from the member for Mount Magnet.

The PREMIER: I hope no attempt will be made to take a division on this motion to-night, as the member for Mount Magnet is anxious to make a few remarks on the question. After having had an opportunity of perusing the speech of the member for Leonora he will no doubt be able to reply effectively to the arguments used. This is not the first occasion that the matter has been brought before us, as I think last session a question very similar to it was brought under our notice. I congratulate the member for Leonora upon his advocacy of the principle of borrowing for reproductive works, and for railways which are necessary for the agricultural and mining development, reproductive or otherwise. One's advocacy of this principle must be largely affected by one's environment, and no doubt the fact that there are so many of the hon. member's electors who are ardent advocates of the railway from Leonora to Lawlers, as against the railway from Sandstone to Lawlers, has a good deal to do with his arguments. At the same time I can hardly congratulate him upon the accurate statements he has made as to my promises. It is very easy for members, after they have brought a deputation, to construe a promise that inquiry will be made into an actual promise for the construction of a railway. Anticipating that the hon. member would have the weakness common to most members, and that with the idea of making the best of his arguments he would allow his imagination to some extent

to run riot with him—I have not had occasion to complain of the hon. member on a previous occasion on this score—I took the precaution of obtaining some extracts from my reply to the deputation which waited on me on the question. The matter was brought before me when I was at Lawlers, and I said in reply to the deputation—

“We have committed ourselves to the policy of extending railway facilities where considered desirable and where justified. Each request will have to be considered on its merits as and when it comes before us.”

The members of the deputation pointed out that most of the mines were low-grade propositions, and in their opinion if the railway were built it was estimated the cost of treating stone would be reduced by about one dwt. I understand that the district holds the record in Western Australia for the cheap treatment of stone.

Mr. Gourley: Due to the very large size of the ore bodies.

The PREMIER: On that occasion I also said—

“I promise to send a forest ranger to estimate the supply of firewood within easy distance of the mines, and I promise that when Mr. Muir can spare a party from the men now engaged on the survey of the line from Mount Magnet to Black Range, I will arrange for a survey to be made to Lawlers. I understand that there are no railway difficulties. We have an extensive schedule of lines that we must get through before we can tackle any other, but I will see if there is any justification for this line, after obtaining every possible information, and if a sufficiently good case can be put up I will do my best to give effect to your wishes. I will give your request every consideration, and my coming here is an evidence that I am desirous of obtaining information in regard to the district. It is necessary in matters of this kind to discuss every phase of the question before making any definite statement.”

The member will recognise that tonight I should maintain that attitude more especially in view of the fact that the member for Geraldton has promised to

bring down the most convincing facts at a deputation he proposes to introduce to me, when I have no doubt he will be supported by many representatives of the portion of the State he represents. At the deputation to which I have already referred I said further—

“I shall be glad to receive any further information that you may have in regard to this matter, and if you will send it down to me when any new railway proposals are being considered I shall be pleased to go into your matter very carefully and bring it before Cabinet, accompanied by any arguments you may put forward in support of your proposal.”

There is nothing very definite about that, in so far as the construction of the railway is concerned. I carried out my promise for on the 3rd of May I gave instructions for a flying survey to be made. Later on, as a result of a consultation with the officer in charge of engineering surveys, Mr. Muir, I said I thought it would be advisable to get more detailed information, and that he should, instead of simply making a horseback traverse of the route, make a theodolite traverse and take levels so that a section of the proposed railway might be plotted. A sum of one thousand pounds was provided for that work, which was carried out, and completed on the 13th November the same year. More information was obtained than was ever promised in the first instance. As a result of the examination and survey, Mr. Muir was able to report that there were no engineering difficulties existing between Leonora and Lawlers, that the railway would be some 80 miles 60 chains in length, and that the ruling gradient would be one in sixty. He stated that the country traversed was, on the whole, easy and well watered and well adapted for railway construction, but that the watercourses and creeks to be crossed were numerous, and many of large size. Some good belts of country existed, and from Leonora to Wilson's Creek all the country passed through was auriferous; and although all the country had been prospected, practically very little development had taken place. The line was practically a surface line, and it was estimated that the ap-

proximate cost would be something like £118,000. Now, anyone who looks at the map without having a knowledge of the subject would consider that by virtue of its geographical position, Lawlers should be looped up with Geraldton. But against that, the argument was brought forward by a recent deputation—and it is supported by facts—that with the exception of some 20 miles as far as Maninga Marley, the country lying between Lawlers and Sandstone is not auriferous. So that, taking this into consideration, one must naturally have regard to the opinion of the State Mining Engineer and other officers who are in a position to point out the facts from the geologist's point of view. I do not pretend to have any knowledge of that sort of thing, and in regard to facts that are brought forward in connection with mining railways, naturally I have to depend very largely on the advice of the mining engineers and the knowledge possessed by the Minister for Mines. He has had more opportunities than I of making himself acquainted with these districts and their possibilities. In the neighbourhood of Lawlers we have not such large bodies of ore as at Wiluna, and I only hope that the rumour is correct which has reached town to the effect that a fairly large sum has been made available in connection with these big propositions at Wiluna.

Mr. Holman: What is the distance from Wiluna to Lawlers?

The PREMIER: About 120 miles.

Mr. Holman: Yes, only a step.

The PREMIER: Well, any step if it be in the right direction is surely an argument in favour of railway construction for a part of the way. From his interjection I should say that the hon. member is in favour of the Sandstone connection. I know he is in favour of railway communication being extended to Wiluna, but he does not state whence that connection should be made. No doubt he will suggest a line from Meekatharra. As far as the Government are concerned the route has not been decided, but we recognise that it is only a question of a very short time when the line must be coupled up right from Sandstone to Leonora. I only hope the development will go on at so

rapid a rate that instead of only extending the line from Sandstone to Lawlers, or from Leonora to Lawlers, the second section can be completed, and the two railway systems, namely, the Murchison system and the Eastern goldfields system, linked up together. I do not know that I need say anything further at the present time except that I hope the hon. member will not ask that we should take a division on this question, as one or two other members are anxious to speak.

On motion by Mr. Scaddan, debate adjourned.

#### RETURN—FOREIGN LABOUR IN MINES.

Mr. GOURLEY (Mount Leonora) moved—

*That a return be laid upon the Table of the House showing the number of foreigners working in the mines of Western Australia on wages and contract as on the 31st day of July, 1909.*

He said: In moving for this return, I may say that it is not done out of inquisitiveness, nor is it that I have been spurred on by anyone outside. But in view of repeated rumours in regard to the number of foreigners in the mines of Western Australia I am desirous of obtaining this report, that I may, if it appear necessary, bring down legislation drafted with a view to prevent so large a number of foreigners working in our mines as are to be found in some centres, more particularly at Gwalia. There we have 50 per cent. of foreigners working in the mines, while at Niagara there are something like 30 per cent. In other centres we have a large number of foreigners working in our mines. The result of this large influx of foreigners has been that there has been driven out a number of our own fellow workers. Steady, sober, respectable citizens, those who came to Western Australia in the early days, have been driven right out of the country by the influx of foreigners. In consequence they have taken with them the few pounds they had saved; and I have often thought in regard to



this question that had we kept the foreigners out of our mines these people we have lost would have been in the State to-day assisting in developing the State as it should be developed; whereas at the present time we have these foreigners herding in camps, and doing nothing whatever to advance the State.

The Minister for Mines: What has been the increase of foreigners during the past few years?

Mr. GOURLEY: I cannot say. I am desirous of obtaining this report, and I am advancing these arguments why this report should be presented. I do not know whether the Minister himself has any particular liking for foreigners. I am sure I have not. We find, so far as Kalgoorlie and Boulder are concerned, some 50 or 60 per cent. of the men employed in getting timber are foreigners. I say they have deprived those of our own flesh and blood of employment, and on these grounds I am strongly opposed to the introduction of foreigners into our mines. I have brought this question forward with the purpose of subsequently bringing down legislation to prevent so large a number of foreigners having employment in our mines.

Mr. Holman: I second the motion.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): In dealing with this question I want, in the first place, to point out that in the event of the motion being carried, it will be absolutely impossible for the Mines Department to get the desired information.

Mr. Gourley: Well, get it approximately.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Had the motion asked that the information should be obtained at some later date, it would be possible, perhaps; but to find out the number of foreigners engaged at some past date is entirely impossible.

Mr. Scaddan: Make it the 31st October and take a census.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not think I could do it. But I want to impress upon the House that it is quite impossible to get the numbers as at a previous date. I thought the hon. member would have taken the House into his

confidence and explained exactly why he was desirous of having this information.

Mr. Gourley: To what date would you agree?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am not agreeable at all, as I shall point out. I oppose the motion. If hon. members will take their minds back to 1904 when we heard a great deal of the large influx of foreigners into Western Australia and the necessity for action being taken by the Government to protect the welfare of our own workmen, it will be remembered that I, as well as other hon. members, was very anxious that if it were found that a large number of these foreigners were coming into Western Australia and robbing our own men of employment we should immediately provide legislation to protect our own workmen. Similar legislation was passed in Germany some years ago when it was found that there was a large influx of workmen from Hungary into the coal mines of Germany. Germany passed laws enacting that there should not be more than a certain percentage of aliens in proportion to their own people working in these coal mines. Thinking there was something more than a mere election cry in the statements being made in 1904 we appointed a commission to inquire into the question raised. The commission took very exhaustive evidence on this question, and on the question of bringing foreigners here under contract. The commission reported that so far as they could gauge, the number of foreigners then working in our mines was 4.13 per cent. of the entire number of miners working in Western Australia.

Mr. Scaddan: But the percentage in some of the mines is very high.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, it is exceedingly high; in some cases it is over 30 per cent. I had expected that the hon. member would endeavour to show that there was a necessity for some legislation of this sort. Hon. members must remember that for inspectors to go through all the mines—and I presume the hon. member wants something in the nature of a census taken—and ascertain how many foreigners were working on a given

date would mean considerable expense. And we would have to get special authority from Parliament to obtain such report. In the legislation we have just passed dealing with the mines regulations it is provided—

(Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.)

*Interruption by Standing Order.*

Mr. SPEAKER: By Standing Order 214 it is necessary after two hours for a motion to be moved to continue the discussion of motions, otherwise the House must proceed to the Orders of the Day. As I have had previously to interrupt members speaking at the expiration of the two hours, I think it is more convenient for members to deal with the motion at this stage. We have hitherto been following the practice of running the full two hours, but I think it would be more convenient if the Minister in charge would move the necessary motion at this stage.

Mr. Seaddan: The Standing Order was framed when the House adjourned for tea at 6.30?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

On motion by the Minister for Works motions continued.

*Resumed.*

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Before tea I was pointing out that it was impossible for the Mines Department to have a census made of the number of foreigners engaged in our mines on the 31st July last, and that even now it would be impossible to have a census without special legislation to enable us to get the information sought by the motion. I was also remarking that I thought an hon. member in moving a motion of this sort in face of the reports laid on the Table in 1904 in regard to the number of foreigners engaged in our mines would have endeavoured to show that there is now a greater number employed than there was some years previously. I have no means of refuting the statement that there are more Italians than Austrians employed to-day than there were in 1904; but the

*Statistical Abstract* shows that in January, 1905, we had only 481 Italians in the State.

Mr. Holman: There were more than that employed on the Great Fingal at the time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: These figures may be wrong. I do not know, but according to the *Abstract* in January, 1909, the number of Italians in the State was only 455, so that according to these records, apparently there are fewer Italians in the State to-day than there were in 1904.

Mr. Seaddan: That many arrive every year.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It has been suggested by some members that it would be advisable to alter the date and to have a census taken at some later date so as to obtain full particulars as to the number of foreigners engaged in our mines; but in the first place, it would mean an expense for the inspectors to be able to take the census all over the State on one day, and in the second place special legislation would be needed. There is no legislation on the statute-book that would enable us to go to the mines and demand lists of the names or a census showing the nationality of the men employed. I mention this to show the futility of the amendment suggested, because of the impossibility of carrying it out unless special legislation were passed to enable it to be done. What I propose to the hon. member, and what I think will meet his views, and the views of the hon. members opposite is different. I take it that the desire of the mover of the motion is to try to get some authentic information, as authentic as we can get, or a special census to find out the number of foreigners engaged in the various mines, and I am sure that it is not his object to have this information obtained from all the little mines, because it would cost a great deal of money for the inspectors to travel through the outlying country and find out the number employed on mines employing perhaps one or two foreigners only. I am willing to make the number employed underground smaller; but what we want is to come

to some conclusion as to whether there is an undue number of foreigners employed on our big mines. Therefore I suggest that I should instruct the inspectors to make inquiry as speedily as possible and report on the number of foreigners employed on any mine employing ten men underground, and also on the total number of employees on such mines.

Mr. Bath: Would that be at the time of the report?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: For instance if the Sons of Gwalia mine is examined one day it would be quite possible that the Lancefield mine, or the mines at Menzies, Malcolm, or Kookynie would not be examined for a week or a fortnight later. There certainly would be delay in that direction, and I do not see how I could overcome it without considerable expense. If the hon. member desired it I might send a request to the various mine managers asking them if they would send the information, but if they did so it would be simply out of courtesy, and I am sure it would not have the same weight in the House as if the reports were obtained by the inspectors. I am quite content to adopt either course. If the mover of the motion thinks it would be wiser to send out this circular letter to the managers asking them to give lists showing the number of persons employed as well as the number of foreigners, so that we could arrive at a percentage, I shall do so. On the other hand I am prepared to instruct the inspectors to prepare a report as speedily as possible for me to let me know from their own observations and from their examinations of the books of the mines the number of foreigners employed. I hope the hon. member will withdraw the motion, of course conditionally that some effort will be made by the department to try to carry out that which he really desires, that is, to ascertain the percentage of foreigners working on the mines.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret): I am pleased the member for Leonora has brought forward this motion, notwithstanding the figures quoted by the Minister. One who travels through the back country in our mining areas cannot

fail to be struck by the number of foreigners employed on our mines. I do not confine my remarks to the Golden Mile, it is the Golden Mile that brings down the average to such a low proportion, but out in the outlying districts where one mining company—I speak of Bewick, Moreing & Co.—operates, we will find a very large percentage of foreigners employed underground and against the Mining Act. Men are employed underground who cannot speak the English language. I say this in the interests of the workers underground generally, irrespective of what their nationality may be. Men working underground where explosives are used, who cannot understand the English language, endanger not only their own lives but the lives of others who are working there who do understand the English language. I have worked underground with men who could not speak a word of English. When you are firing out a face, it is the custom before you split your fuse to warn those in the vicinity that you are firing it. "Fire" is the term used. All understand it who understand the language, but when there are men there who do not understand the language it is useless crying out "Fire." They do not leave their work when everyone else has left the danger spot. That was eight or nine years ago, before I came to Parliament, and I know it happens in a larger degree now, because Bewick, Moreing & Co., who are so favourable to this class of labour, were not operating in so many districts then as they are to-day. Wherever they operate outside the Golden Mile they have a large proportion of men working underground who do not understand the language and who are a source of danger to others working there. Figures were quoted by the Minister with reference to the Royal Commission of 1904. It is a bye-word in the back country as to the procedure of the Commissioner. No doubt the Commissioner conducted his inquiry in as straightforward and as proper a manner as any gentleman could do it; but understanding nothing about the habits and customs of the

country, when he saw such names on the pay sheet as Jones, Dooley, Murphy or Sanderson, he concluded they were Englishmen.

The Minister for Mines: The Commission contained Mr. Carr who was president of the miners' association.

Mr. TAYLOR: The Commission I am speaking of was composed of only one man—Commissioner Roe. The Minister is confusing the Commission on Ventilation with the Royal Commission inquiring into the foreigners.

The Minister for Mines: The Royal Commission on Mining was composed of Mr. Montgomery, the State Mining Engineer; Mr. Hewitson of the Ivanhoe Mine, and Mr. John Carr, who was president of the miners' union at Kalgoorlie.

Mr. Bath: Mr. Roe was appointed by the Federal Government a special commissioner to inquire into the same question, and I gave evidence before him.

The Minister for Mines: We are talking now of the Commission of 1904.

Mr. TAYLOR: The inquiry that Mr. Roe conducted is the Commission that I am referring to. I pointed out that Mr. Roe as a special commissioner conducted his investigations on the lines that any straightforward and honourable man would do, but he was unaccustomed to the habits and customs in that part of the country, and I believe he took it for granted that all the names appearing on the roll were those of Englishmen.

The Attorney General: Another insult to Ireland.

Mr. TAYLOR: Ireland has had many insults, but it is one of those fertile countries that it can stand it. We can only hark back to the case tried in Kalgoorlie last Friday where ten witnesses were examined, and the presiding judge said they could not understand English. In order that I may not be misunderstood I will quote from a report which appeared in the *Kalgoorlie Miner*. It was the trial of Matteo Castellani. This man was charged with murder, and the witnesses who came before the bench had their evidence interpreted. Mr. Justice Burnside summed up in these words, addressing the prisoner: "And you cannot speak Eng-

lish? Accused: A little bit. His Honour: The law requires that you should all speak and understand English. I have had about ten before me lately and not one of them has been able to speak English. If you had been able to speak English you would have understood better the proceedings here to-day. You must not use your knife against your fellow-countrymen whilst you are under the protection of the British law. Accused: Excuse me, I do not understand what you say." The remainder of His Honour's remarks were interpreted to the accused by Mr. Gianini a local Italian resident. His Honour: "You must not use your knife against your fellow-countrymen or anyone else whilst you are under the protection of the British law. You have had a very narrow escape. If the jury had found you guilty of murder, you would have suffered the extreme penalty for your offence." All these men were working underground at the Lancefield mine. I do not suppose they are the only ten men there who cannot speak English. Speaking about Niagara and the Minister's own electorate, there are there a large proportion of foreigners engaged in mining operations who cannot speak English. I know of two in my own electorate at Kookynie. There is one employer who in his own evidence before the Arbitration Court at Leonora some twelve or eighteen months ago in a case in which I appeared for the men, under cross-examination said that he worked with rather more Italians underground than he did on the surface. That was Mr. Hill of Murrin. He said it was necessary to keep a majority of foreigners underground, and I wanted to know the reasons. He replied quite frankly, "So that they will not put their heads together; they don't understand as a Britisher does." There is proof why these men were employed underground.

Mr. Heitmann: They might be compelled to comply with the regulations if they were not employed underground.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am reminded that they would come under the regulations. There was no necessity for that. All that he wanted them for was that they might

be instrumental in reducing the wages, because they did not understand the language. We know well that when foreigners are in Western Australia and have been in the State sufficiently long to learn the language they are just as staunch and as true men to stick up for their rights as others are. The only time they are a menace is when they cannot speak English, and it is at that stage that the employers take advantage of them. The only way to get an accurate statement of the fact would be to appoint a commissioner and instruct him to interview each shift as it came off, and then find how many foreigners were working on that shift and how many were unable to speak English. Those who were unable to speak English were the real danger, and if the commissioner did that on the three shifts we would know exactly what the numbers were.

The Minister for Mines: Take the Sons of Gwalia mine. There is a union there. Is it not possible for any man of that union to give information to the inspector as to the number working underground who cannot speak English?

Mr. Heitmann: That has been done at Day Dawn and it is ineffective.

Mr. TAYLOR: I have been informed that proceedings similar to those mentioned by the Minister have been taken, with little or no effect. The fact has been brought under notice times out of number. If the Minister reads the reports of the proceedings he will find that this very question has been a bone of contention.

The Minister for Mines: We have asked them to give information to the inspector and the warden, and they have declined.

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not desire to contradict the Minister. The workmen would be in a very unpleasant position if they did that.

The Minister for Mines: The secretary of the union could do it.

Mr. TAYLOR: The only person who could do it would be the secretary of the union, who was beyond the reach of the employer. The Minister knows that if a workman underground made matters objectionable to the employer by giving information to the inspector of mines,

which in the opinion of the employer would hamper him in the operation of his industry, the man would be going along the road with his swag on his back.

The Minister for Mines: We have asked the secretary.

Mr. TAYLOR: That is not what I have been informed, and I know well that this kind of thing was going on at the Lancefield before the mine closed down two years ago. I have not been there since they re-started operations, but I am informed that now it is worse than ever. This case coming under my notice on Saturday made more apparent to me the necessity for the Government to do something to protect the men—those who cannot speak English. As for the number of Italians who are in the State, the figures given by the Minister are absurd, because I venture to say there is a greater number of foreigners employed woodcutting at Kurrawang alone.

The Minister for Mines: I only dealt with Italians.

Mr. TAYLOR: In Gwalia and in my own electorate there are considerably more Italians than 308 or 405. I find from the *Statistical Abstract*, that for the year ended 30th June, 1909, 285 Italian males and 23 Italian females arrived in the State. The number of Austrians was 151.

The Minister for Mines: How many left?

Mr. TAYLOR: I am dealing with the number that arrived.

Mr. Collier: There is an excess of 123 arrivals over departures.

Mr. TAYLOR: There are 408 in the State, according to the Minister's statement. Austrians also rank amongst those who do not understand the language and who are employed in mines. They come within the scope of the motion moved by the member for Leonora. It is necessary while we are on this subject we should go into the matter thoroughly. Every communication I receive from the backcountry, whether from my own electorate or not, contains complaints from secretaries of unions regarding the influx in the mines of foreigners, who are unable to speak the English language, and expressing wonder as to how they creep in.

If one goes to the railway station after the arrival of a steamer he will find these men making straight for the goldfields, and if they are asked where they are going, they reply "choppa de wood." If one says "Good morning" to them, they reply "choppa de wood." If on the goldfields they are asked what they are doing they reply "shovel de mullock." Wherever they go they are found work, and our own workmen may often be seen carrying their swags looking for work. The member for Fremantle in the Federal Parliament is responsible in a large degree, and more than any other individual in the State, for the importation of these men and finding them employment. I do not know whether his affection is so great for them now as it was before the struggle in connection with wood-cutting in Kalgoorlie twelve months ago, when the Italians would not swing into line with the employers. At that time when there was trouble between the employers and the workmen, and when the latter were not getting fair play, the Italians stood side by side with them. That was only because there was a sufficient number of Italians who could speak the English language and their own language as well, and they put the true position before those of their countrymen who could not understand. They all realised then that their proper place was on the side of those engaged in the industry, namely, the Woodcutters' Union. Had not the position been placed before those who were not able to speak the language, no doubt we would have found them on the side of the employers. That is not so bad as putting them to work underground, where they are surrounded by great danger and where the danger is accentuated by the fact that they cannot speak the English language. Any member on the other side of the House who has experience of mining operations knows what I say to be the absolute truth. But I am tired of the Minister parleying with the question. This House should emphasise the necessity of having the position put truly before the country. It is idle to say foreigners are not employed. I say they are not employed so much about the Golden Mile, where the

eyes of the people are upon them, but out in the back country where the employers have better opportunities and facilities to put them on to work and where the agitation is not so strong against them, they are put on. At Day Dawn it was found that there were so many foreigners to the detriment of the people of the district, that the old miners were to be seen carrying their swags and new arrivals from Italy and Austria were going on and taking the work. The same thing is occurring at Gwalia to-day, and at Lancefield, in my electorate. I would remind the Minister that the people will no longer remain silent and submit themselves to this kind of thing. The country will stand it no longer. I have no desire to do those foreigners an injury. I want to be perfectly clear on the point that they are a danger to those who are working with them when they cannot speak the language, and when the law says they should do so. I say it is the duty of the inspectors to faithfully represent the position to the head of their department. I know the Minister controlling a big department has not the time and the opportunity of staying about a mining town for a week or two to see the men going off work, or to see the men in the hotels and walking about the streets. The Minister has not that opportunity; he is too busily engaged in the administration of his department, but when the fact is brought home to him the Minister could take action. The Minister has gone to the trouble of having mining rules and regulations printed, and by Act of Parliament they must be in a conspicuous place on the surface of the mine, and in a conspicuous place where these men are working on a mine, so that they can read them. That ought to appeal to the Minister himself. There is a set of regulations for the protection of the workers, yet a number of men working on these mines cannot read these rules and regulations. Does it not seem strange to safeguard people by putting up regulations which they cannot read. That is no safeguard. The whole question has reached such a stage now that I hope the Minister will go a bit farther than he has done, and try to bring about a faithful settle-

ment in accordance with the motion which has been moved.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): I think the Minister for Mines has misinterpreted the statistics, because those which he has read apply only to immigrants to and emigrants from Western Australia recorded during the six months ended on the 30th June, 1909. It has no reference to the total number that is here.

The Minister for Mines: I got the figures as I came into the House after tea.

Mr. BATH: One has only need to have had experience with the Kurrawang and other wood lines in the vicinity of Kalgoorlie to know that in these localities alone there are more than the number mentioned by the Minister. The point I wish to emphasise in regard to this discussion is this: the great obstacle to secure reliable information not only on this point, but in regard to other matters has been that the Minister has evinced too much anxiety to disprove statements made by members, because those members happened to be on this (Opposition) side rather than to display any anxiety to secure information. During the course of the trouble on the wood line which caused a cessation of the work, and which if it had been continued would have meant a considerable loss not only to the gold-fields but to the whole State of Western Australia, I had some opportunity of coming into contact with the men employed on the various wood lines, and on no previous occasion have I had the difficulty of the situation so vividly impressed on my mind as during the period that trouble continued. When it was thought that the matter had been happily adjusted, and every thing arranged for the men to resume work, I had a call to the Lakeside wood line, and found it necessary to go out there one night, when otherwise I should have been going to bed, and to spend the whole night in travelling to the camp where the men were employed with a view of adjusting the difficulty on the next day. When I arrived there I found that the whole trouble was due to the difficulty of dealing with the large foreign element employed on the

wood lines, and to such an extent had the incursion of the aliens been permitted to grow that when it came to a question of difficulties between the Italians and Austrians it was on a question of adjusting the work between them without any room for the Britisher who happened to be on the scene. The only opening they would permit, so far as the British workmen were concerned, was that they should cart the wood and all the rest, the cutting and loading, and other grades of the work were to be performed by Italians and Austrians, with a sprinkling of other nationalities included. The difficulty that presented itself was that there was an absolute impossibility to make even the terms of the settlement known to get any understanding from them as to how they regarded it. When I returned I told the employers, or the proprietors of that wood line that the trouble through which they had just passed and which had been adjusted, might recur the next week or the next month. The difficulties presented by the employment of so many foreigners was something that made strikes possible at any moment, and no surety of a continuance of the work. As a matter of fact a few months later we found the trouble resumed on the Kurrawang wood line, and was only adjusted by the help of the police and, I think, the magistrate for the Kalgoorlie and the Boulder area. As far as this inquiry is concerned, on previous occasions when the necessity for some action by the Mines Department had been emphasised by members on this (Opposition) side, the Minister had always evinced a desire to distrust the statements made by members on this side. I undertake to say that if the contrary spirit were shown and the Minister said he would have a thorough inquiry into this and find out the truth, and impress this view on the officers of the department, there would be no difficulty in the matter, and he would secure reliable information. That is the point that should be impressed on the officers who will conduct this inquiry, and no regard whatever paid as to which member, or from what side of the House the motion is moved, should be taken into consideration. I want to say here that in Western Aus-

tralia, as in other parts of the Commonwealth, there are many persons of these nationalities who have proved their worth as citizens, and we want to create no prejudice against them; and so long as a man of European nationality comes here without any concerted effort on the part of the employers to bring him here to the exclusion of other nationalities, so long as they evince a desire to take their chance, and to take an interest in Australia's future, there would be no difficulty presented by members on this side of the House, but the fact that certain employers wherever they happened to obtain control of the mines almost immediately proceed to employ these men to the exclusion of others in search of work, and against whom no reasonable complaint has been urged—so long as this occurs, there will be this bitterness of feeling and complaint against the influx of these persons. Apart from the view we may take, as Ministerialists or members of the Opposition, we ought to use our endeavours to create such a cordial feeling to those who happen to come here from European countries and assist them to take their places as citizens amongst us; but when a body of men find that when certain employers take control of a mine, that they are squeezed out, and men of foreign nationalities come in, and are preferred, we have that resentment, and it is bad for the community, and it has led to the scenes that have occurred from time to time at Gwalia, and on the Murchison. I had an opportunity, during the visit of the Premier to the Murchison to inspect Meekatharra and the vicinity, of going down the Great Fingal mine, and the Premier must have been impressed with the fact that a considerable percentage of aliens were employed in that mine. We found, too, that there must be some inducement for the employers to employ these, and if we looked further, we found probably the reason for that employment in the report submitted by Dr. Blanchard wherein he states that the greater number of cases of miners' complaint, that is phthisis occurred amongst the foreigners employed on the Great Fingal mine. It is in evidence that they are not so regardful of their welfare and not so

insistent on conditions of sanitation and ventilation as perhaps the British workers are, therefore, their services are preferred to Britishers. That is not a condition to be desired. I think if the Minister will get rid of the idea of any party aspect from this motion, and will give credit to the hon. member who introduced it for a desire to get at the truth, and will give credit for a desire to remove friction and resentment, we can get information that will be of use to members of the House in guiding us as to the course of action we should take. That the position at the present time is unsatisfactory, one needs go no further than the report, or rather the statement which the member for Mount Margaret read as to the remarks of Mr. Justice Burnside in connection with the Lancefield case. That shows there is an unsatisfactory position there, and if it exists at the Lancefield mine it is a fairly logical argument that it will exist in other communities where the same firm operate, and aliens are preferred to Britishers. Under these circumstances I hope the return will be made as complete as possible, and that the Minister will urge on his officers to give the fullest information possible on this question.

The Minister for Mines: Will the mover of the motion accept the statement I made to-day?

Mr. GOURLEY: In view of the statement made by the Minister that he will instruct the inspectors to obtain a report, I ask permission to withdraw the motion. I trust that the report the Minister will instruct the inspectors to make will be as full as possible in regard to the number of foreigners working at the present time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will endeavour to have the return prepared before the Mines Estimates are under consideration. When the vote for the inspectors of mines is being dealt with I hope members will have that return before them so that they can then discuss the whole question. I would like to impress this on members: we have legislation dealing with the employment of men underground who cannot speak English, and I want to see that carried out in its entirety. I would urge members



who represent goldfields constituencies to impress upon the secretaries of the unions that when they find cases of foreigners working underground they will let us know and give us something we can go on. If the inspectors are not doing their duty in this respect steps will be taken to replace them by someone else.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### PUBLIC SERVICE, INCREMENTS AND CLASSIFICATION.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): In view of the fact that negotiations are proceeding between members representing the Public Service and the Government in regard to the questions of the payment of annual increments and the classification, and the fact also that the committee represents the whole of the Civil Service and not merely the members of the Association, I do not intend to proceed with the motion I have tabled in regard to this question.

#### MOTION — MINES REGULATION. TO DISALLOW.

Mr. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe) moved—

*That an address be presented to His Excellency the Governor praying that the addition to the general rules under Regulation 4 of the Mines Regulation Act, 1906, made in pursuance of Section 63 thereof, and appearing in the "Government Gazette" for February 7th, 1908, be disallowed.*

He said: I desire to say at the outset that had I any knowledge of the fact that the regulation was gazetted in February, 1908, I would have taken action last year to have obtained the sanction of this House to present a petition to the Government praying that it be disallowed. To-night I want the Minister to tell the House how it comes about that apparently no one in the State with the exception of the publishers of the *Government Gazette*, the officers of the Mines Department, and perhaps the Chamber of Mines, had any idea of the fact until May of this year that the regulation was gazetted in February, 1908. I would like to know

what prompted the Mines Department to publish in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* in May of this year a regulation which had been in operation for over twelve months. When we remember that every man working underground in any mine in Western Australia is responsible for the due carrying out of all the regulations under this Act, as well as those under the provisions of the Mining Act itself, it is essential that every regulation made should be promptly despatched to every mine, and posted there for the information of every man employed. Why was not such a course adopted in connection with this regulation? What prompted the Minister to make the regulation? He told the Miners' Association, when they objected to this regulation, that it was promulgated after very careful consideration.

The Minister for Works: What is the regulation?

Mr. SCADDAN: It is as follows:

"Mines Regulation Act, 1906.—Department of Mines, Perth, 5th February, 1908,—495/07.—His Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, has been pleased to make the following addition to the general rules under Regulation 4 'The Mines Regulation Act, 1906': to take effect from 1st March, 1908.—H. Gregory, Minister for Mines.

#### Regulation 4.

39. No person shall enter any shoot or pass underground in which ore, rock, mullock, or sand has become jammed or hung up, for the purpose of examining or freeing the said pass or shoot, unless all other practicable means have been previously taken of causing the ore, mullock, or sand to run or become free. Before any person enters such shoot or pass, the fact of its being necessary to do so shall be reported to the manager or to the person for the time being in charge of the underground mining work, and the work of freeing the said shoot or pass shall be done under his instructions. Every case of any person having to enter such shoot or pass shall be reported to

the manager and entered in the record book."

On the face of it, to those who have not a practical knowledge of mining, this regulation might appear an excellent one, for its effect seems to be that if a shoot becomes jammed the manager or some other responsible person should be present to issue the necessary instructions; but when I say that 90 per cent. or more of the miners engaged underground would rather leave their jobs any day than proceed up a shoot hung up, and in fact would leave mining altogether—I would do that myself—they will recognise it is absurd to make a regulation of this nature. Was the Minister prompted to make this regulation owing to a request made by men employed in the mines? Did they request this for their protection? I understand that such is the only reason for making regulations under the Act. If so who made the request for the regulation? When the Minister replies we will find, I expect, that someone else than the men employed underground made the request.

Mr. Johnson: You will find nothing.

Mr. SCADDAN: We should find something, according to the reply of the Minister to the men when complaining about the regulation. The Minister in reply to a letter received by the Mines Department from the secretary of the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Federated Miners' Union dated May 31st of this year wrote—

"Referring to your letter of May 31 conveying a protest by your union against the recent addition to general rules under Regulation 4 of the Mines Regulation Act with reference to clearing shoots or passes, I have the honour by direction to say that the matter was very carefully inquired into before the regulation was framed."

Where were the inquiries made, and who made them?

The Premier: Did not he consult you?

Mr. SCADDAN: He never consults me in these matters unless he is certain beforehand that I will agree with him. There was an occasion when the Minister asked me to consult him with regard to the Mines Regulation Bill, but I care-

fully avoided doing so as I would not commit myself before the Bill was received in this House. During the discussion on the Bill here the Minister said he would be pleased to receive my assistance in making it a workable measure, but when I proffered my assistance in the shape of some 60 or 70 amendments, which I thought should be inserted, he disagreed, I think, with every one. In this disagreement he was backed up by the Chamber of Mines whose representatives were in the gallery of the House on every occasion when the Bill was under discussion, having been informed of the dates of the debates by wire from the Minister. I never received a wire from the Minister asking me to be present on any occasion when the Bill was coming on for discussion. In the letter the Minister goes on to say—

"It represents an attempt to meet a serious difficulty in a practical manner, it being recognised that the practice of entering 'hung-up' passes to clear them is an extremely dangerous one, but at the same time cases not uncommonly occur where no other course of action is reasonably practicable."

I want to take the strongest possible objection to that. I suppose the Minister was prompted in that direction by the State Mining Engineer or some other person. I decline to accept that authority however high it may be. There are other means by which safety could be insured. The life of an individual is of much more concern to me than any so-called reasonable means of clearing a shoot. I would rather see the pass cleared by taking the stone out of the top by a bucket and windlass than see a man go up in hanging rock in the nature proposed by the regulation. The letter continues:—

"The regulation allows the entering of passes only as a last resort and requires it only to be carried out under the direct instructions and at the responsibility of the mine official."

I would not mind if the responsibility rested on the mine manager. If the regulation provided that the mine manager if he desired to clear the shoot should go up against it I would not complain so much.

for he would never go up. However unpractical he might be he would never do that. The reason I object so strongly is that the regulation is in a sense nothing short of absolute manslaughter. It would be far better to have the old conditions that men could exercise their own free will, and if they declined to do work of that kind could not be compelled to do it. Under the regulation the manager can order a man to do this work, and he would be protected by the regulation. He could use it as a lever, for all personal responsibility is removed from the manager and thrown on the Mines Regulation Act, which is a dead letter. The letter concludes—

"The responsibility is clearly laid upon the manager and his staff to see that all other practicable means of freeing the pass have been tried, and in the face of this it cannot be supposed that they will neglect to take such means as in the event of an accident it could be usually shown if they had failed to try them. It appears to the Minister that it will be only in the most extreme cases that any manager will allow a man to go into such a pass, and he cannot understand how your union has arrived at the opinion that 'in framing this regulation there has been no regard for the life and limb of the working miner, but rather to free the company from any responsibility that might eventually.'—(Sgd.) H. S. King, secretary for Mines."

I want to endorse the last paragraph of the letter, and say that if the Minister promulgated the regulation knowingly and with a practical knowledge of the working of the mines and of the great dangers of clearing these passes when once hung up, he had absolutely no regard for the life and limb of the men employed in the mines.

Mr. HEITMANN: One man was killed at Day Dawn in that way.

Mr. SCADDAN: Probably that was the reason why this regulation was framed. I want to know who is going to interpret that particular section of the regulation which says "all other reasonable means have been adopted for clear-

ing the shoot"? Why, the manager, the person who is on his trial! Until the accident happens you can say what you like, and declare that these people ought to be tried for manslaughter; but when an individual is killed, then everybody is for, not the person killed, but the manager who is likely to be placed on his trial for manslaughter. The manager gets out of it by saying he took every reasonable precaution. I say that reasonable precaution cannot exist when you compel a person to go into a shoot that is hung up. I would not go there for His Excellency the Governor, nor for King Edward himself. My life is of more value to me, and so it should be with every other individual. But under the existing conditions what is a man to do? If he is ordered to proceed up that shoot he has to do it, or go out on an overstocked labour market, where he will walk about for weeks and, moreover, find himself, perhaps, in the position that I, like others have found myself, namely, blackballed in that particular district. I am not going to let this sort of thing go by without entering a strong protest against it. I say that if the Minister permits this regulation to continue after these matters have been brought under his notice, he is absolutely regardless of the welfare of the men employed in the mines; and I say that with a full knowledge of what it means. It is nothing short of manslaughter to ask a man to proceed up a shoot and attempt to clear it. As everybody knows, it only requires the slightest keystone to hold up a huge mass of rock; and if a person happens to touch that small keystone, which may be only two inches in diameter, the whole mass will come down. Under these conditions it can be seen how absurd it is to ask a man to go up. What does this phrase "every reasonable precaution" mean? For the most part, it is restricted to an attempt to bring the stuff down by shooting. One can see that if the last shot has been fired just before the man goes in, the whole mass may have been loosened; and in such circumstances it probably comes down upon him and he has no chance whatever. I say it would be better to abandon the mine than to

offer up lives in this way. I trust the House will seriously consider this matter and that the Minister will agree to withdraw the regulation.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory); I do not think there is any necessity for the hon. member to go into hysterics in regard to this matter. This regulation was framed entirely in the interests of the men themselves. The hon. member wishes to know what induced me to have this regulation framed. Probably he will remember that some 18 months ago a very bad accident occurred in the Great Fingal mine, owing to a workman going up into one of these passes. There was a fall of earth and the man was crushed, and died. I immediately referred this matter to the State Mining Engineer, asking him to try to discover some way in which to get over this difficulty; to try and stop the dangerous practice of men going up into these passes. The matter was considered by Mr. Montgomery, and he thought the best thing would be to frame a regulation of this kind: Firstly when an accident of this sort occurred in connection with mining, no man should be allowed to go into these passes until every effort has been made to clear the pass; and, secondly, that it should be done under instructions from some responsible person in the mine in order that there shall be some person on whom the responsibility may rest. I feel convinced that if we were to cancel this regulation the men will have indirect instruction given them to bring ore down, thus throwing the responsibility on the workman instead of on the boss.

Mr. Scaddan: Make a regulation preventing men going into the pass under any circumstances.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I thought the hon. member would give us some idea as to what action should be taken to secure the safety of the men without closing up the whole of one portion of the mine as he stated.

Mr. Holman: How do they do in other parts of Australia?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I thought the hon. member would have told

us that, and given an indication of the class of legislation we should have.

Mr. Scaddan: I would not permit any man to go into a shoot.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Well, it is done elsewhere. I do not know how, with the exception of closing up a mine altogether—

Mr. Taylor: No, you can remove the ore from the top of the shoot.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Impossible. In a number of mines in Western Australia they have the shrinkage system of stoping in vogue. The rock above the leading stope is left so as to form a rill, and that rill runs the ore down into the pass. In the Fingal mine the hanging wall is fibrous, and after exposure to the weather pieces of this come away in large lumps; in some cases huge pieces of rock get right over the rill and block the pass. The usual practice is to send explosives up on a long rod and fire them with a view to clearing the obstruction and getting the pass to run again. In many instances where they think it is secure, men go up and make arrangements for the explosion, and try and get out of the way in time; of course this is highly dangerous. I want to say that this regulation was only framed in the interests of the workers. If the hon. member desires it, I am quite prepared to cancel the regulation. I will not oppose the motion. But in regard to future mining there is no doubt that some special effort will have to be made with a view to entirely preventing accidents arising from the clearing of shoots by persons getting up into the shoot. In regard to our future work we should insist that in connection with all these passes there should be a double pass. That is not possible where they adopt the shrinkage system. Still, wherever possible in regard to future mining we should insist upon the double pass. One pass of course would be for travelling and the other for the conveyance of rock. In the event of one pass being choked, the men could go up perfectly free from danger; although I have heard of the case of a man who went up a double pass under such circumstances and got jammed and was killed. However the

matter of such a regulation in regard to our future work is under consideration now. Still, that will not apply to mines stoped by the shrinkage system; because except for the rill there is really no pass in the level. However it is not my intention to oppose the motion. If the hon. member is desirous of having this regulation cancelled I will be only too willing to fall in with his wishes. The only thing is, I think that if this be done we shall have accidents, the whole responsibility of which will fall on the workmen themselves. In conclusion I may say my asking for this regulation was not at the instance of any body or any person. As I say, the idea originated when we had that unfortunate accident in the Fingal mine about 18 months ago. I asked the State Mining Engineer to frame a regulation which would avoid a repetition of that deplorable occurrence. If the regulation be not satisfactory I will accept the motion brought forward by the hon. member. I may say that if the hon. member likes to withdraw I will cancel the regulation in the next *Gazette*.

Mr. HEITMANN (Cue): I do not think that even the cancellation of the regulation will overcome the trouble; because, as the Minister has pointed out, he and his department have failed up to date to find means to get over the difficulty in connection with the shrinkage stoping. It appears to me that even the Minister has not grasped the situation, inasmuch as there is not even a rill in connection with some of the systems of shrinking. In the Fingal mine, as stated by the Minister, a fatal accident occurred some 18 months ago. This is one of the reasons why the Italians are employed in the mines of Western Australia. It is simply because the Italians are forced to do this work, which a Britisher refuses to do. It is well known that in the Fingal mine on more than one occasion Britishers have refused to go into the stopes, and the underground managers have stood over the Italians and forced them into the shoots. The result was that one of them was killed. Now the Minister tells us that after one of the men has been killed he is going to legalise

this practice of sending men into the shoots. If the Minister makes a regulation putting a heavy fine on the manager or foreman when a man is found going into these shoots, he would do much better and would get over the difficulty in regard to the shrinking system. In Bendigo is one of the biggest and oldest mining fields in Australia, where there is not that desire to obtain such great profits, they are prepared to adopt humane methods of breaking out the stone; but the old system of erecting passes through-out the stopes is not good enough for Bewick, Moreing & Co. or any other big company operating in Western Australia. They want to break out the stone on a grand scale; and in putting down shoots through which the ore can be run out, they leave out the travelling passes and simply put in a shoot. The result is a jam after they have got up two or three hundred feet—and in one case it was 270 feet in the Fingal with a bad hanging wall. With the stone being allowed to remain as it is broken, and using about 20 lbs. of dynamite to the one hole, we can understand the huge rocks that are broken down. These rocks are allowed to remain there, and the machine men or the miners work on top of the mass while the ore is taken out of the shoot at the level below. It is only natural that these huge pieces of stone are going to hang up in the shoot. That is the trouble. It may be that after trying all reasonable means to make the ore run through the shoot the least explosion may loosen the whole lot and let it all run down while a man is in the shoot in the act of loosening the stuff. In my opinion, the way to get over the difficulty would be to force the companies to adopt the same measures as are adopted in Victoria, that is, to build passes right up throughout the stopes, and there would be then no necessity for anyone to go into the shoots to loosen the ore. I have worked in many mines and I have never known a pass to be hung up in Victoria, because there the men in the stopes are protected by the timbers, and before the ore is allowed to go into the shoots it is broken to a reasonable size. Of course

I can quite understand that the big scale adopted by the mining companies in Western Australia would not allow them to do this in dealing with low-grade ore, because it would cost them a little more; but I think the first duty of the State and the Mines Department is to take care of the men's lives. The companies are always ready to find means of treating the ore and of mining at the lowest possible cost, but it is the duty of the Mines Department to see that the miners are protected. I would suggest that something be done in the direction of forcing the companies to put up passes where now there are shoots without passes.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): I have thought in addition to cancelling the regulation to which objection has been taken by the member for Ivanhoe that something that would meet the case more satisfactorily might be provided in consultation by the Minister or the State Mining Engineer with those who have a practical knowledge of the question, say, the representatives of the miners or miners' union and, if necessary, a representative of the Chamber of Mines. I think it would be fixed up in a short space of time. I do not agree with the member for Cue that it will penalise any company to any great extent, particularly those in Western Australia, to enforce a reasonable safeguard in regard to the underground handling of ore after it has been stoped. I have been in a number of mining camps in the Eastern States at Sunny Corner, and Gapman's Flat, and other mines where the margin of profit was extremely low, amounting to a very few shillings per ton; and I never saw a stope worked in any of those mines where there was not a double pass, one for the ore and a travelling way. It is impossible to prevent the ore pass from hanging up even with the provision of breaking the ore to a reasonable size, because there are times when the very finest dirt will form a sort of a cake and hang up; but where there is a travelling way alongside the pass where the ore is it is easy for one to go up with a short bar and work the ore from the travelling way.

Mr. Heitmann: What opening will you have?

Mr. BATH: Between the logs.

Mr. Heitmann: Then you will have the dirt in both passes.

Mr. BATH: No. I have seen dozens of passes. In one mine there were 14 or 15 along the line of lode, and the mullock for mullocking up the stopes was run down the passes and not handled at all. These passes were logged with spaces between, but there was never any question of very much dirt getting in the travelling way other than the fine stuff, and it was always easy with a small bar to remove the dirt in the ore passes, though there was one occasion when the stuff came away suddenly and struck the end of the bar forcing it on to the watch of the man using the bar. I notice one thing here that is different from the other States, and those mining places where I have had experience. If there was any occasion where loss or danger was involved in a stope or a dangerous spot, the underground boss was always the man who undertook the work; but here it is absolutely the reverse, because the underground boss here sends men to do it, and they take the responsibility. I see no difficulty whatever and little extra expense involved in the very reasonable precaution of having a double pass carried up, one for the travelling way, and one for the ore.

The Minister for Mines: That will not get over the difficulty where they are using the shrinkage system.

Mr. BATH: It may be done. As they are stoping they can be carrying up the pass.

Mr. Heitmann: But they have no passes.

Mr. BATH: What is to prevent them?

The Minister for Mines: It would be altogether contrary to the system; it would not be possible, but at any rate I concur in your idea.

Mr. BATH: It would be easy to remove the passes. As the ore is taken down, the logs can be removed so as to keep the top of the pass level with the top of the ore. However, as pointed out by the member for Cue, with no pass what-

ever, with just a shoot it is absolutely impossible to prevent the ore from hanging up, because the big stuff they break down jams, and I cannot possibly see how it can be prevented under the system. Undoubtedly, in Western Australia, probably through the fact that the personal control by the owners is not in close association with the men employed, there seems to be less regard in these matters as in the Eastern States, because I do not care how poor the mine was, whether it was struggling to make it a paying proposition or not, in the East it was always taken as the natural course that these precautions used from time immemorial, should be adopted by those in charge of the mine. It is entirely different here, and in many instances the worst offenders are those whose profits should be sufficient to provide proved safeguards for the safety of the men.

Mr. SCADDAN (in reply): Without being hysterical I desire to express my pleasure at the attitude adopted by the Minister on this occasion. I can assure him that I am quite prepared, representing as I do a constituency made up of 80 per cent. of men actually employed in mines, to take the full responsibility of my request for the withdrawal of this regulation; and after the withdrawal I hope the Minister will go further, if the discussion that has ensued to-night will have some effect, that is, in the direction of bringing about the conference suggested by the Leader of the Opposition between representatives of the Chamber of Mines and the miners' association to deal with the question. There will be difficulty, and the greatest difficulty will be in connection with the shrinkage system of stoping employed in the Fingal and other mines. I agree with the member for Cue that it may be advisable to prevent the shrinkage system in mines altogether. As pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, it is usually those mines that can well afford to work their properties on the stope system that usually adopt the shrinkage and other dangerous systems.

The Minister for Mines: The shrinkage system would be quite as safe as any

other except where the hanging wall breaks away.

Mr. SCADDAN: There is great danger in the shrinkage system. There are really no passes. There is merely an opening at the back of the level, and if the ore above the level happened to hang up, there would be no method of dealing with it other than going up through the ore pass. I do not think that it would be practicable to put up log passes as suggested by the Leader of the Opposition, because immediately you get away from the shrinkage system you must introduce the old system of filling the stopes with mullock. Under the shrinkage system a man working at the shoots will be working at a spot where the roof may be 50 feet above him. Men may be working week after week without seeing the wall under which they are working. No one should be permitted to work underground unless he can see the ground to see whether it is safe to be under it, and it is impossible to do that if the ground is 200 feet above one's head. I contend, therefore, the time has arrived when, for the safety of the men, we should compel the mines to keep their stopes within a reasonable distance of where men are working. That is one of the views that will have to be discussed at the proposed conference, even if we have to go to the extent of compelling the mines to work their stopes on the old system of mullocking up and providing log passes for the safety of the men. It would be better to do that, than to continue the other system much longer. If the travelling ways were provided alongside the ore passes, in the event of the ore hanging up a man could go up by the travelling way and without danger, except in the instance where a bar may be knocked up by the falling stuff, as pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, or in the circumstances pointed out by the Minister where a man in trying to rake away the stuff with his hand was injured, the operation should be performed in safety. I consider that the companies should consider the welfare of the men as well as their profits. It would not be a great expense, especially to those mines that could afford to give

ample provision against dangerous methods.

The Minister for Mines: I was trying to do something in that direction. For years there has been no regulation.

Mr. SCADDAN: Fortunately the regulation has had no ill effect to date, and I am pleased the Minister will withdraw it and that he will have this proposed conference.

The Minister for Mines: I am not satisfied with the regulation.

Mr. SCADDAN: I ask leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

#### PAPERS — PROSPECTING AREAS.

On motion by Mr. Holman (Murchison) ordered: "That all papers dealing with applications for Prospecting Areas Nos. 392N and 393N be placed upon the Table of the House."

#### PAPERS—CASE OF CONSTABLE POYSER.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison) moved—

*That all papers relating to Police Constable James Poyser be placed upon the Table of the House.*

Since giving notice of this motion things had developed rather rapidly, and there were some peculiar circumstances concerning the case at the present time. Some time ago this constable had reason to complain about some treatment which was meted out to him. It was his (Mr. Holman's) intention to move for the papers to see what the reports were and what were the grounds for the complaints. Some few weeks ago the constable was sent to the Eastern States to bring back a prisoner. That was less than a month ago. After that he went to Karridale and conducted an inquest there, and it appeared that he carried out this duty satisfactorily. Then within the last week the officer was recalled to Perth and arrested on suspicion of being of unsound mind. The officer had written a letter to him (Mr. Holman), and on receiving it he was surprised to find that though it was addressed to him at the Legislative Assembly, for some rea-

son it had been opened by a doctor at the Perth Public Hospital. It was rather surprising that a letter from a patient at the hospital to a member of Parliament should have to go through this procedure. He was not aware whether there was any power given at the hospital whereby a patient, even though he might be in the hospital under suspicion of being of unsound mind, could have his correspondence opened before it was sent out. This letter which was received only on that day seemed to be a perfectly sensible letter, and dealt with subjects that he (Mr. Holman) had heard about before, and yet it was opened by someone signing himself H. G. Tynms. It was surprising that private correspondence should be opened in this way. The letter was enclosed in another envelope, and there was included a note from this same individual who signed himself "Superintendent, Perth Public Hospital." It seemed very strange that immediately after notice to move for the production of the papers in connection with the case was given that these circumstances should arise, and that the officer should be recalled to Perth and then be practically arrested on arriving in the city. Not being one of the medical profession, he (Mr. Holman) was not prepared to say whether there was anything wrong with the constable, but he would be very sorry to think so; but as far as the letter was concerned it was surprising that it should have been opened. There was certainly nothing in it to lead anyone to believe that there was anything wrong with the constable who was under arrest at the present time on suspicion of being of unsound mind. It was only on the day before that he (Mr. Holman) learned of this development, and he was rather surprised to know that though the constable was well enough to be sent away to the Eastern States within the last few weeks to bring back a person safely, and that he afterwards conducted a case at Busselton and carried it through sensibly and well, that when the papers in connection with the case were moved for, the officer should be arrested. It was a very strange affair, and more strange when one thought that such things could take place in these days. In



his opinion the time had arrived when a commission of thoroughly competent men should be appointed to go into the question of the state of affairs existing at the Asylum for the Insane. Men had written letters to him, sensible letters, and he had had conversations with those men who had been allowed out on leave from the asylum, which led him to wonder why they were detained in the institution. Other hon. members had held conversations with some of these men, and the time had certainly arrived when an inquiry should be held. It was his intention if possible to move in that direction at the earliest moment. Although we knew that such institutions were absolutely necessary in a country, still if it was possible for a man to be detained there on suspicion of being of unsound mind when there was no necessity to detain him, the time had arrived to make an investigation.

Mr. Angwin: What place was the hon. member referring to?

Mr. HOLMAN: The Fremantle Asylum for the Insane.

Mr. Angwin: There was no such place now.

Mr. HOLMAN: Well, then, the Claremont Asylum. He sincerely hoped that the Minister in charge would place the papers on the table, and he would then compare those papers with the information that was in his possession and see if there were any grounds for the complaint which had been made. The letter which had been written to him by the constable made a strong appeal.

The Minister for Works: Where was this officer?

Mr. HOLMAN: He was under observation at the hospital.

Mr. Taylor: I can explain the matter.

Mr. HOLMAN: It was only on the previous evening that he was speaking with the wife of the officer and she stated that there was nothing wrong with him. The House should understand that he was not going to express a definite opinion on the question of the man's sanity, but as far as he could see by holding conversations with him and from the letter he had received, and which any member of the House could read, there was nothing

which would lead one to believe that the person was not responsible for his actions. The strangest part of the whole thing was that although he carried on his work and no complaint was made, when the papers were moved for, the action was taken of arresting him on suspicion of being of unsound mind. There was something radically wrong either then or at the present time. One thing he strongly resented was the opening of the letter that had been addressed to him from the patient in the hospital. The wife of the officer had stated that no one was allowed to see her husband. She had seen him and had stated that her husband in her opinion was quite sane and quite able to look after himself, and could speak to her as well as he had ever done before. The question, therefore, was one that should be taken up at the earliest moment.

The PREMIER: There had not been an opportunity of going into the question, but before accepting the motion of the hon. member the opportunity should be given to make further inquiries so that a reply might be made to some of the statements of the member for Murchison. With that object in view the hon. member might agree to withdraw the motion or agree to the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. TAYLOR was sorry that he had not seen the motion on the Notice Paper earlier. As a member of the Hospital Board he had heard of the case of this constable from Busselton who came to Perth a few days ago. Discussing the position with the Resident Medical Officer of the Perth Hospital it was found that the officer was under observation in the detention ward of the institution and that he had been placed there on the recommendation of three or four medical gentlemen who declared that because of the state of his mind he was not safe to be at large. It had also been gathered from the medical officers that the constable was quite sane on every point except one, and that was that he was under the belief that there was a conspiracy against him to do him an injury.

Mr. Collier: He is no worse off than many of us.

Mr. Holman: That question did not crop up at all.

Mr. TAYLOR: That was the manner in which all people suspected of being of unsound mind were placed under observation. It was on the advice of medical men. Very few medical men cared about signing a certificate in the direction of declaring a man to be insane, because it carried with it a responsibility which rendered him liable to the law if the individual concerned could prove that he was not insane. It was perfectly right and just that that should be the case, because the medical faculty should not be able to commit a man to a home for the insane without incurring some responsibility. In the present instance three or four medical men had certified in that direction.

Mr. Brown: And two justices also.

Mr. TAYLOR: The officer had been for some days under observation in the observation ward of the Perth Hospital. He did not know what were the rules in regard to correspondence, but one would naturally expect that a person under observation would not be allowed to send a sealed communication out, but that the person in charge would see the correspondence.

Mr. Holman: Why?

Mr. TAYLOR: If a person was under observation one would hardly think that such a person was in a fit condition to send out a communication as he liked. What he had told the House could be borne out by the file when produced, and the member would be satisfied, he was sure, when the file was produced.

The Minister for Works: It would be better to see it in the office.

Mr. TAYLOR: Just so; it would not be fair to the man otherwise.

Mr. HOLMAN (in reply): If the file could be seen at the earliest possible moment—it was the police file he wanted, he did not desire to interfere with the medical men at all—and if the Premier would promise that he (Mr. Holman) could see the file, the motion could be adjourned until some future time.

The Premier: The hon. member could have an opportunity of perusing the file to-morrow.

Mr. HOLMAN asked leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### PAPERS—MINING REGISTRAR, WILUNA.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison) moved—

*That all papers dealing with the requests for a Mining Registrar, and the appointment of a Deputy Mining Registrar and Clerk of Courts at Wiluna be placed upon the Table of the House.*

Repeated requests had been made for the necessary appointments at Wiluna, but unsuitable appointments were being made. A school teacher had been appointed to this position. At Meekatharra a police constable, who held half a dozen other positions, had been appointed as mining registrar. The officer was a hard-working man, and it was surprising the amount of work he was able to get through. It was an absolute absurdity to make such appointments as the Minister had done in outback places. Wiluna was 120 miles distant from the nearest mining offices, and one could not expect a schoolteacher to carry out the duties. In this case the schoolteacher did not know anything about mining; he could not grasp the position or do the necessary work. In places where there were hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of people, the necessary facilities should be granted. If the Minister desired to see mining districts progress, he should give the necessary facilities to open up the place. Men came in from some little distance and found they could not do their business. The present cheese-paring policy was detrimental to the mining industry, and the sooner the Minister recognised that, the better for the country.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): There was no objection to the papers being laid on the Table. He recognised the necessity of trying to give all the conveniences to people in the back-country, bringing justice as close to them as possible. The Government had tried to do this in Wiluna, and had appointed

a deputy registrar. Unfortunately in the present state of the finances it was impossible to appoint a man at £200 or £240 a year wherever necessary, but an endeavour was made to give people in these districts all the facilities they could, and the warden had been instructed wherever possible to do that in all cases, instead of compelling people to go to Lawlers.

Question put and passed.

#### PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Mines: Machinery permits granted under the Mines Regulation Act.

#### PAPERS—RAILWAY DEPARTMENT, MEDICAL EXAMINER.

On motion by Mr. Brown (Perth), ordered: "That all papers in connection with the new appointment of medical examiner to the Railway Department be laid upon the Table of the House."

#### MOTION—APPOINTMENT OF Mr. J. G. HAY, TO INQUIRE.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill) moved—

*That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the grievances of Mr. J. G. Hay against the Government Labour Bureau.*

The grievance about which he proposed to make a few remarks was one of old standing, and one for which Mr. Hay had up to the present time failed to secure adequate redress. It appeared that Mr. Hay on the 6th April, 1905, was engaged by Mr. Hitchins of the Government Labour Bureau at a salary of £110 per year to assist in the work of the Government Labour Bureau, at Perth. He took the appointment at that time, Mr. Hitchins telling him that Mr. Longmore, who was then superintendent of the Government Labour Bureau and who was somewhere out of the State, on his return intended to resign his position so far as the Government Labour Bureau was concerned, intending only to retain the position of Superintendent of Public Charities. Mr. Longmore would then recommend that Mr. Hitchins be appointed

to his position, and that if this arrangement came into effect, and Mr. Hay continued in a junior position until Mr. Longmore's return, Mr. Hay would receive a permanent appointment.

The Premier: Who gave him this assurance?

Mr. BATH: Mr. Hitchins. This arrangement was accepted by Mr. Hay, who entered on his duties the same day as the appointment was made. He had a considerable amount of work to carry out. He was entrusted with a good deal of the routine of the department, he had to keep the register of applications for employment, the statistics and compilation of returns, he had to compile the returns from the wardens and clerks of court, from the agricultural societies and unions, and other bodies sending in information, and he had to frame the reports which were issued at intervals, of each quarter, half-year, and annually. This work was carried out during the morning, and in the afternoon Mr. Hay had to go to Fremantle and take charge of the branch at the port. He not only had to attend to the work there, but had to act as office cleaner of the Fremantle branch of the Labour Bureau. He continued to do that until the abolition of the Fremantle branch. When Mr. Longmore returned to Western Australia and Mr. Hay approached Mr. Hitchins and asked him for the fulfilment of the promise made to him, he was informed that for certain reasons Mr. Longmore deemed it inadvisable to relinquish his position as Superintendent of the Labour Bureau. To some extent his promise to Mr. Hitchins was carried out inasmuch as Mr. Hitchins was styled officer-in-charge of the Government Labour Bureau. Mr. Hay, in view of this fact, asked that the arrangement under which he took up the duties in the office should be carried out, and that he should receive a salary commensurate with the duties he was called upon to perform. When he made this request he was informed that nothing could be done until the Public Service Commissioner had gazetted the regulations. These were gazetted on the 25th August, 1905, and Mr. Jull in the course of his duties in investigating the Government depart-

ments visited the Government Labour Bureau and make inquiries; but he was given no information as to the existence of Mr. Hay as an officer in that department.

Mr. Angwin: Was he engaged there at that time?

Mr. BATH: Yes, he was in the department; he was not present in the Perth office, but at the Fremantle branch. When he asked why he had been overlooked he was informed it was an oversight, but that Mr. Jull would be informed of the fact. The Public Service Commissioner paid a second visit to the Bureau, and again no information was given him as to Mr. Hay's engagement or position. On that officer again asking why that was so, the same excuse as previously was proffered. Mr. Hay obtained the permission of the superintendent of the bureau to write to the Public Service Commissioner. He laid his request before Mr. Jull, who informed him that under the regulations governing temporary employment, instead of receiving £100 a year, he should have received, from the time of his appointment, 10s. a day. On the advice of Mr. Jull he put in his application for that payment as from the date of his engagement. No reply was given to this, but he ascertained that the Public Service Commissioner had received his letter, and had made a recommendation to the officer in charge of the bureau. On inquiry from the officers of the department as to what was being done he was told that Mr. Jull would have an interview with Dr. Hicks, the then Colonial Secretary, who controlled the Bureau. He found, however, that no interview such as had been promised ever took place. Notification that officers would forfeit their accumulated leave of absence unless they took it, induced Mr. Hay to apply for a month's leave which had accrued to him during his two years of service. Failing to obtain any adjustment of his grievance Mr. Hay brought the matter under his (Mr. Bath's) notice, and a question was asked in the House? The present Minister for Works, who was then the Treasurer, said that the Public Service Commis-

sioner had classified the position as a permanent one with a salary commencing at £120 a year and rising to £150; also that applications would be called for the position on those terms, and that the present applicant would be given an opportunity to apply for the position. At the time the Minister gave that reply to the House the applications for the position had closed, and no notification had been given to Mr. Hay that he would be given an opportunity to apply for the position as a permanent officer. The notification certainly was published in the *Government Gazette*.

The Minister for Works: Did not Mr. Hay have an opportunity to apply for the position?

Mr. BATH: No, because he had no idea that applications for it were being called. One would have thought that those in charge of the bureau would have had the courtesy to inform Mr. Hay that applications were being called, and that any application from him would be considered, but the first he knew of it was when it was too late to apply. During his term of office the officer had not only carried out his ordinary duties in the day time, but he was requested repeatedly to work overtime at night. Subsequently he received a notification that he would be paid 1s. 6d. an hour for that overtime, but although the promise was made, it was never fulfilled. A notification was sent to him by Mr. Hitchins that he was still to regard himself as a temporary officer, notwithstanding the regulations under the Public Service Act, which set out that he had every right to be considered a permanent officer. Mr. Jull had classified the position at a certain salary and no notification had been given to Mr. Hay that his services were dispensed with, so that under the Act he should have been entitled to be looked upon as a permanent officer of the department. Subsequently, Mr. Hitchins began to treat Mr. Hay in a very cavalier fashion, and ultimately, the officer, fearing that his services would be dispensed with, resigned. The resignation did not affect his claim for the payment, which on the authority of the Public Service Commissioner was

due to him. It also had no effect upon his claim for overtime at the rates he was promised. A select committee should be appointed to inquire into the matter and if an injustice had been done, if Mr. Hay had been deprived of what was due to him the good sense of members would surely lead them to insist that justice should be done and that the promises of the officers of the department, and the statement of the Public Service Commissioner should be carried out, and Mr. Hay be paid the amounts due to him.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

#### RETURN — MINERS' INSTITUTE CUE, SUBSIDY.

Mr. HEITMANN (Cue) moved—

*That there be laid upon the Table the House a return showing—1, The total amount paid in grants to the Cue Miners' Institute. 2, The total amount paid in subsidy.*

The object of the motion was to draw the attention of the Government and the country to the system adopted by the Government of granting subsidies to miners' institutes.

The Minister for Works: Do you want to abolish the subsidies.

Mr. HEITMANN: There should be a better method of distribution. He had no desire to take away the assistance due to these institutions, but the money of the people should be safeguarded. Some eighteen months ago when the Premier and the then Minister for Works were in Cue, Mr. Price was cornered by the committee of the institute and was asked for assistance towards the carrying out of improvements to the building. The institution had already been supported by the Government to the extent of £600. Mr. Price explained to the chairman of the committee that if the institution raised £100 the Government would give a subsidy of £125. The method adopted by the institution of obtaining a special grant was not altogether what it should have been. He believed that a few weeks ago there was a bank certificate sent out from Cue stating that a little over £100 had been paid to the bank to the credit of

the institution. By the balance sheet of the institution it was clear that the total receipts for last year were something like £270. They included £75 subsidy from the Government, the sum of £125 made as a special grant for repairs to the building, £30 collected as rent for a block of land owned by the institute, and £18 which had been collected towards the £100 necessary to obtain the Government subsidy, the balance in the amount being made up of subscriptions of members of the institution and the letting of the hall. It was therefore impossible for the institute to have collected the £100 they were forced to find, and on which the Government paid them £125. He had been led to believe that a sum of money had been placed to the credit of the institution in the bank, and at the moment the grant was made by the Government that sum was paid back to those who had put it in. Either that or the institute had waited until they received the subsidy of £75 from the Government, and had placed it in the bank and had then received on that sum and the few pounds which they had found in order to make up the £100, the sum of £125 from the Government. The position was a very serious one. In his opinion someone should be put into gaol over this deal, if what he had stated was true. The attention of the Government should be drawn to the fact that the system at present in vogue of paying subsidies left practically no security to the Government. This institution during the last three years had never had more than fifty financial members on its books.

The Minister for Works: We had a sworn declaration.

Mr. HEITMANN: That was why someone should be in Fremantle over the business. It was found that the sworn declaration was that there were 105 members on the books and that entitled them to a £75 subsidy. He was drawing attention to these matters so as to expose the methods of some of the institutions and in the hope of bringing about the adoption of some other system of payment of subsidies. While certain committees could get special grants and inflated subsidies, in some parts of his district it was impossible to get anything like a

fair amount. It was his sincere hope that the Government would go thoroughly into the matter. On the file there was a statement that £100 had been collected, yet the balance sheet showed that the whole of the receipts were about £260.

The Minister for Works: Would that be shown as a building fund or something of that sort?

Mr. HEITMANN: No, it was shown as an item on the balance sheet; as a collection towards the building fund. He remembered receiving a request from the committee asking for a donation for that purpose. The strictest inquiry should be held into the whole thing. He was sorry to have to say it, but if it had not been for him (Mr. Heitmann), at that particular time the Minister for Works would have been prepared to grant almost anything to particular individuals in that district. This institution, too, was like many more. It had had ample assistance from the Government. When the return was placed before the House it would be seen that the institution had been assisted to the extent of £700 in grants and subsidies.

The Honorary Minister: What do you suggest with regard to this £125?

Mr. HEITMANN: I suggest it is nothing more than a political dodge.

The Honorary Minister: You should be ashamed of yourself.

Mr. HEITMANN: No. If he had introduced some of the deputations which waited on the hon. gentleman they would have got very little consideration. At that particular time he passed a number of deputations on to his opponents because he knew they would get a better deal than he could himself. The institution in Cue had been in existence for nine or ten years, and had received a grant in one year which amounted to as much as £200, a grant that they had no right to get. That, however, was beside the question. All he asked for was a strict inquiry into the affairs of the institution when it would be found that what he had stated was correct. The committee of the institute had recently discovered that the secretary had been stealing the money of the institution, and

this had been proved to have been going on for two or three years.

The Minister for Works: Why did they not deal with him?

Mr. HEITMANN: Because some of those on the committee were derelicts and were afraid of the ultimate result; they did not want any inquiry. It had been proved by a special committee appointed to inquire into the matter that the regulations had not been carried out, and as a matter of fact the institution had been something like a derelicts' club for the past three or four years.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): There was no objection to the return asked for being prepared and laid on the table. He had intended saying that the thanks of the Government were due to the hon. member for bringing the matter under notice, if there was a system of misrepresenting the Government, but the hon. member did not advance his cause by imputing or practically insinuating that the Cue library was given these grants in order that political candidates might be assisted. A statement like that often destroyed an argument used by an hon. member. It was sufficient to emphasise a case without imputing motives to other people. The hon. member was aware of the conditions under which grants were made. They were made on a statutory declaration being presented that certain collections had been made, and then the Government subsidy was paid. It was 30s. in the pound up to £100, and then pound for pound between £100 and £200. That had been the custom, and it had not been restricted to the particular district represented by the hon. member. The Minister for Works proposed to grant this subsidy under the new regulations only to new buildings that were being erected. If the hon. member's remarks were correct these people had obtained a subsidy from the Government under false pretences and the £75 granted by the Government towards the upkeep of the library was shown in the statement as an amount collected and it was on that they drew their subsidy.

Mr. Heitmann: I do not know what became of the £75.

The PREMIER: Was not that the whole point, that they utilised this grant paid to them by the Government, as a collection, and on that amount received from the Government, they again claimed a subsidy of pound for pound towards the building fund?

Mr. Heitmann did not say they did that. They had the banker's certificate but he had been told that some of the committee paid money into the bank, and as soon as the grant was forwarded to the bank they received it and paid it back. He had been told since that the £75 obtained as a subsidy was used in this way.

The PREMIER: That was practically the same thing. It meant that the individual who made the statutory declaration had committed perjury and fraud. The return would be prepared and any information that could be given to the House in connection with the matter would be given when the papers were laid on the table.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. J. Price): The hon. member's charge against the committee of the library was that they deliberately and wilfully misled the Minister and that the Minister on their representations and accepting these representations in good faith paid the ordinary subsidy. That absolutely destroyed the hon. member's charge against the Minister that this payment was made for political purposes.

Mr. Heitmann: I did not say it was made for political purposes.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am glad the hon. member has withdrawn the denial.

Mr. Heitmann: I have not withdrawn it. I did not make it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Hon. members would put that interpretation on the words he used.

Mr. Heitmann: I said "promised."

The HONORARY MINISTER: It was a distinction absolutely without a difference. The hon. member admitted misrepresentation on the part of the local people, and at the same time seized an opportunity like the present when he had discovered a wrong of throwing mud absolutely without any justification.

Mr. Heitmann: I did not accuse the Minister who paid the money of any thing.

The Premier: Who paid the money?

Mr. HEITMANN (in reply): The Public Works department paid the money on the certificate of the bank. He was sorry if he had hurt the feelings of the honorary Minister. Time after time in Cue, and the people of Cue themselves knew this to be true, if they wanted anything from the Government they had to go to his (Mr. Heitmann's) political opponents who could get anything they wanted. What conclusion then could anyone arrive at? At the time the Minister for Works was there, deputations were passed on to opponents because they had a better chance.

The Honorary Minister: You passed them on because the Premier and I were taking deputations concurrently.

Mr. HEITMANN: That is your opinion.

The Honorary Minister: It is a fact.

Mr. HEITMANN: It is nothing of the kind; but it does not matter.

The Honorary Minister: You are getting excited now.

Mr. HEITMANN: I am not, but I know what has taken place in Cue.

The Premier: Do you not know that the Ministers were there at the invitation of the member for Murchison (Mr. Holman) to go to Meekatharra.

Mr. HEITMANN: I am not accusing the member of making any promises at all.

Mr. Collier: They nearly killed the Premier at Day Dawn.

Mr. HEITMANN: Being aware of the position of affairs in Cue he was not prepared to alter his opinion. What he asked for was that the strictest inquiry should be held into this matter.

Mr. George: You are asking for a return and not an inquiry.

Mr. HEITMANN: If the member for Murray (Mr. George) would not object very strongly he would like to have an inquiry. When that gentleman was Commissioner of Railways, he had occasion to write to him and was practically told that he was writing something which was untrue.

The Premier: Is this an interjection or are you replying?

Mr. George: May I—

Mr. Bath: Can the hon. member speak now that the motion has been replied to?

The SPEAKER: The hon. member for Murray cannot address the House.

Mr. George: I bow to your ruling Mr. Speaker, but I am awfully sorry.

Motion put and passed.

#### MOTION—PAYMENT OF MEMBERS, TO ABOLISH.

Mr. BROWN (Perth) moved—

*That in the opinion of this House, owing to the present financial condition of the State as recently shown by the necessity for the reduction in numbers of the civil service, it is desirable that a referendum of the electors be taken on the question of amending the Constitution by providing for the abolition of payment of members.*

He said: I have much pleasure in moving this motion. It would have been in the power of the House itself to effect this proposed amendment, and I believe there is an hon. member on this side who will move an amendment to the motion, to the effect that the House itself shall decide on the question of abolition of payment of members. But we heard the other day in reference to the proposed abolition of the Upper House that such questions should be referred to the people. Just the same I believe in members taking the sole responsibility. We know that in all walks of life, particularly in municipal councils, men cheerfully take on certain duties which entail the giving up of almost as much time as is demanded from members of Parliament, and I think that with retrenchment the order of the day, hon. members should be asked to come here and work for the honour and glory of it. I am quite sure if the resolution be carried, we will get much the same representation as we have to-day. The Labour party may go into the argument that they will not be able to come here without payment of members, but I know that in England, where we have the experience of Mr. Broadhurst to guide us—

Mr. Angwin: Do not bother about us; there are as many on your side of the House in want of the money.

Mr. BROWN: It is a very appropriate interjection; no one requires the payment more than I do myself. There will be no fear that if a member of Parliament be worth his money his constituents, at all events amongst the Labour party, will be prepared to support him.

Member: What about your side?

Mr. BROWN: I say that on our side of the House very few members will get a bean under those conditions. Some hon. members here to-night view this motion with derision, but they must remember that the Labour party has been ably represented in the British Parliament for many years past, and their representatives have been kept there because they are good and capable men. If I spoke for a week it would not alter the result; because hon. members have their minds already made up one way or another, and I am not going to labour this motion. My friend the hon. member for West Perth, will move that the matter be left, not to the people but to the House itself to decide. I have pleasure in moving the motion.

Mr. MALE (Kimberley): I second the motion.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): I move—

*That the debate be adjourned.*

Motion negatived.

Mr. DRAPER (West Perth) moved an amendment—

*That in line 5 the words "referendum of the electors be taken on the question of amending the Constitution by providing for the abolition of payment of members," be struck out and "that it is desirable that payment of members be abolished," be inserted in lieu.*

He said: That is a direct issue and one which the House is quite capable of deciding without any referendum.

Mr. HAYWARD (Wellington): I second the amendment.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. J. L. Nanson): An amendment of this character, if it is to be taken seriously,



merits some more detailed treatment than it has received from the hon. member for West Perth.

Mr. Holman : It is all he is capable of.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL : An observation of that kind is not justified in regard to that learned and hon. member. It may seem an amusing matter to hon. members on private members' day, when we discuss, not always to the best advantage, a large variety of subjects, and when hon. members bring forward motions of a far-reaching character and suggest that they should be carried in this House. We are, however, not merely a Legislative Assembly : we are also a deliberative Assembly, and we desire to win, if we have not already got it—perhaps I had better say to retain—the respect of the electors and the public of Western Australia. And although I do not question in the slightest degree the right of the hon. member for West Perth or of the hon. member for Perth in bringing forward motions of this description, yet when we consider what is their aim ; that they are intending to reverse a policy that is adopted in every State of the Commonwealth, that is adopted in the Commonwealth itself : I think those hon. members both for the sake of their own political reputations, which are high, and for the sake of the reputation of this House, should advance some political reasons, some more cogent arguments than they have yet advanced for a change of this most sweeping description.

Mr. Brown : We are not somersaulters like you.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL : An interjection of that nature from the hon. member for Perth is an interjection of a most ungenerous character. I am not greatly grieved at interjections of that kind, however, because they rebound on those who use them. If one looks back into the political career of any man in any country who has made a name in the political world we find that charge of inconsistency is always levelled against him. We live in a world of changing conditions and is it for one moment to be asserted that a politician alone is to be the one

man who is never to be allowed to change his opinions, or to be influenced by the changing conditions of this changing society in which we live. A contention of that kind has only to be put forward by the hon. member in the form of the interjection he used in order to show the absurdity of it. There is no man in the private relations of life, there is no man in the business relations of life, who is not entitled to change his opinion, and who, under many circumstances, would be regarded as a person lacking in common sense if he did not change his opinion ; and when hon. members take the opportunity of throwing it out as a taunt at one another that a member of the House has changed his opinions, they are not doing anything that will harm that hon. member. To return, however, to the very immediate subject, the motion, or rather the amendment, we have, as I have pointed out, one settled policy in Australia of payment of members. I suppose the recollection of several members in the Chamber will go back to the day when in Western Australia the principle of payment of members had not been adopted ; and though at that time we had a Chamber filled with men, many of them of great ability, a Chamber possessing debaters to whose speeches those of us who can remember that time can look back with pleasure, yet I think it can scarcely be seriously advanced that, despite the ability in the House at that time, the House of that day represented the people of Western Australia to the same extent as the House of to-day does represent them. And when we come to think of it, the reason why the House to-day, without drawing any comparisons as to whether its ability is superior or inferior to that of an earlier day, better represents the opinion, aspiration and ideals of the people is the fact that the people have a much wider area of selection than it is possible to have where we have no payment of members. Where would that party be that sits opposite but for the fact that we have payment of members ? And although I do not for a moment hold with many of the tenets and principles of that party, the mere fact of those members sitting

in the House to-day shows that they represent and render articulate aspirations and opinions of a large number of the people of the State; and whatever side of the Chamber we belong to, we cannot but regard it as a good thing that, where there are certain political opinions held, those political opinions should obtain the fullest representation in this Chamber. That could hardly be possible in a country like Western Australia, or, indeed, in any State of Australia, if we did not have this principle of payment of members. It is too late in the day to attempt to put back the clock in this fashion. Australia is, I firmly believe, permanently committed, or at any rate committed so far as our time is concerned, to the principle of payment of members. The area of selection would be altogether too narrow if we had to depend upon the few people who could have sufficient leisure at their disposal to devote the time required from Australian public opinion in the work of politics without payment or reward of some sort. In the days when we had no payment of members in Western Australia political life was not so strenuous as it is to-day, not so much was expected of members representing constituencies. There is one great advantage that springs from the small payment that members receive. It seems to give the constituencies a special claim upon the services of those who represent them. I doubt if there ever was a time in the history of Western Australia when the constituencies were better served by their members than they are to-day. A very current impression no doubt outside political circles is that hon. members' work is done merely in this Chamber, or within the precincts of the House; but there is not a single member who is not well aware that perhaps an even larger amount of work is done outside the Chamber, and is done without advertisement in attending to the many wants of the constituencies, and in acting as a special representative of the constituencies, or rather as a link, I should say, between the constituency and the central Government. I do not think if the motion goes to a division this evening we need expect any large number of mem-

bers even on this side of the House to vote for it; for this reason, if for no other, that before we advocate a change of so sweeping a character we should require arguments and reasons more cogent than have yet been advanced; we should require fuller time for consideration, so that if finally we do decide on a subject of this kind, it may be said that we have acted after the fullest consideration and not without a sense of the responsibility that attends upon a motion of the House.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara): I intend to support the motion. I have listened to the Attorney General, and I think he has proved conclusively that a great politician must change his opinions pretty often. If that be the standard of a great politician then we have one—of considerable dimensions. I wish to say that I resent the Attorney General or anybody on the Government side of the House pleading for me. I am prepared to plead for myself. I am not here as a subject for charity. I am going to support the motion and put it to the people to see what they say about it; and if the people are of the opinion that I am not worth what they pay me, then I can go back to my mine and earn more than I get here. I am not under any compliment to any member on the Government side of the House or to any person in Western Australia, and I certainly resent the patronage bestowed on this side of the House, the special pleading for this side put up by the member for Perth and by the Attorney General. Let them plead for themselves. Let those who are hard up on the Government side plead for themselves, and let us plead for ourselves. When it comes to our salary we are prepared to talk about it for ourselves. Now put the motion.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): I do not think there was any desire on the part of the Attorney General to do any special pleading for any section of the House. I am altogether opposed to the motion and to the amendment moved by the member for West Perth. I say that every man who comes here is entitled to some remuneration for the time he gives to

the service of the public. I have always held that opinion, and I have never known any just, good, or solid reason why that remuneration should be abolished. I regret I was not present when the member for Perth made his speech so as to know the reason that induced him to think that a referendum should be taken on this question.

Mr. Brown: I was not aware that the House could decide it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: When we look at the Constitution of the various States of the Commonwealth, without going outside Australia, I think we will admit it has become a recognised policy in Australia that members elected by constituents to attend to their requirements, and to legislate for them, should receive some remuneration. As the Attorney General pointed out, we might as well absolutely alter our Electoral Act, because it would be futile to give adult suffrage and tell the people they can vote for any person they choose if the person they choose is not in a financial position to enable him to act for them. That has been fully recognised in Australia, and I can see no reason why there should be a departure from the system. To have a referendum on the matter would be absurd, because there has been no great request from the people of Western Australia so far as I know that there shall be any change.

Mr. Bath: Then why object to put it to the people? They find the money. There would be less quibbling.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The people have not objected, and unless there is some solid reason given in the House why we should not have payment of members, why should we ask the people to decide on a matter on which we are all satisfied?

Mr. Bolton: We are not all satisfied; the payment is not sufficient.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is a subject for another motion altogether. The question before the House is that we should have a referendum as to whether payment of members should continue, and the opinion of the representatives of the people is that payment of members should continue. At least

I think that is the opinion of members here. I think the amendment will have little support. I see no reason why we should have a referendum on a question on which the majority of the members of the House are agreed. Therefore, I feel that both the motion and the amendment should be negatived.

Mr. JACOBY: I move—

*That the debate be adjourned.*

Motion put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	18
Noes	..	..	..	16
				—
Majority for				2
				—

#### AYES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Layman
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Male
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Davies	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Draper	Mr. Nanson
Mr. George	Mr. Price
Mr. Gregory	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Hayward	(Teller).
Mr. Jacoby	

#### NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Swau
Mr. Bath	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Collier	Mr. Walker
Mr. Gill	Mr. Ware
Mr. Gourley	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Holman	Mr. Heitmann
Mr. Hudson	(Teller).
Mr. O'Loughlen	

Motion thus passed; the debate adjourned.

#### BILL—FISHERIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

*House adjourned at 10 34 p.m.*