

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 14th August, 1912.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAY STATION, GERALDTON, LAND RESUMPTION.

Mr. DOOLEY asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that it is 15 months since the Government resumed the properties in Geraldton required for new railway station and yards? 2, Is he aware that the owners of the above-mentioned properties are suffering serious financial loss and inconvenience through the delay on the part of the Public Works Department in settling their claims for compensation? 3, Is he in a position to state whether the claims in dispute will be submitted for arbitration before the expiry of the present year? If not, will he state approximately the date a settlement may be expected?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, There is no need for this because the Department offered claimants, some months ago, an advance on the compensation payable. 3, Not definitely; this depends on when the necessary papers are filed by claimants for hearing in the compensation court, and upon when a judge can thereafter attend at Geraldton to hear the cases. If papers are filed at once, there is no reason why the cases cannot be heard within two months.

PAPERS—PRISON WARDER AND DEFERRED RENT.

On motion by Mr. CARPENTER (Fremantle) ordered: "That all papers in con-

nection with the application of Wm. James Pascoe for payment of deferred rent, during his service as prison warder, be laid upon the Table of the House."

PAPERS — JETTY EXTENSION. HOPETOUN.

Mr. HUDSON (Yilgarn) moved—

That all papers in connection with the extension of the jetty at Hopetoun, and with the proposed further extension of it, be laid on the Table of the House.

Some years ago an extension was made to the jetty at Hopetoun. The harbour at that time was known as the Mary Ann harbour. It was a small harbour and did not permit of a very long jetty. It did not permit of extending the jetty out into the sea as was done in the north-western portion of the State. When that extension was made it was pointed out that it would not properly serve the requirements of the State, that it was really only a tentative proposal, and while it might improve the facilities of the harbour for the time being, it would not help the people to any great extent. After some further efforts had been made by those representing the district, including himself, the Government were induced to give further facilities there and justification was urged that those facilities should be given. Among the reasons was the fact that there was something like 100,000 acres of agricultural land, some of which was under cultivation and parts of which would be taken up and cultivated in the immediate future if facilities were given. The development of the mines in that district was shown to be so promising as to justify an expenditure, as the Government of the day had admitted: indeed at the present time the steamers had been unable to cope with the traffic in ore and there was now a congestion of ore at Hopetoun ready to be transhipped for smelting purposes in another State. It was within the knowledge of a number of people that there was a likelihood of the opening of smelters in the immediate future, and there was as much justification to-day as there ever had been for providing harbour facilities.

ties at that port. The Government admitted that, but what they proposed to do was to expend a sum of something like £6,000 to extend the present jetty 200ft. The depth of water at the end of the present jetty was something like 9ft. and it did not permit of a boat drawing the draft of steamers trading there to get alongside. With the further extension of 200ft. there would be very little advantage gained, inasmuch as there would be barely 12ft. at the extreme end, and possibly not that. It was suggested in some quarters that the depth there would not permit of boats drawing 12ft. to trade to the port. The local residents, who had acted in a most public spirited way, had pointed out to the department that they had one request, and it was that the harbour should be made properly at this stage and that it would be a waste of money to expend the £6,000. It was not often that the people in a district objected to have £6,000 spent on their port, but in this case they believed the money would be wasted. They asked for an expenditure of something like £10,000, that the jetty might be extended into water so that ships drawing 15 or 16 feet might lie comfortably in calm water and discharge their cargo. This was all that could be asked because no future extension could be given as there was no room in the harbour. It was a question of the direction of the jetty, and there appeared to be an opinion on all sides, that was among the people of the neighbourhood, the road board, the Hopetoun vigilance committee and the prospectors' association, and from navigators along the coast, that the proposed extension of the jetty would be not only a waste of money but a disadvantage to the harbour itself. He was moving the motion with the idea that there should be some further investigation before this waste took place, that greater publicity would be given to the proposition, and that the Minister, as he did in connection with the North-West, would see for himself that proper facilities were given in the harbour and that the money was not wasted.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Has not the material gone down?

Mr. HUDSON: Some of the material had, and operations had been actually commenced. The Minister would probably explain what he was doing in that connection. His desire was to point out that the engineers' department had urged that this extension might be safely made for 300 feet in a southerly direction. All the papers and all the reports of the people had been placed before the engineers, they had had every advantage of inspecting the harbour, and still they persisted in doing apparently what was not right. Because they had made a blunder before, there was no need for them to perpetuate it or extend it. He asked for further consideration by the Government of the subject and in doing so urged upon those responsible the necessity for holding their hand and making further inquiry, suggesting as a course that they should obtain an expression of opinion from those who navigated the port. He regretted to say that the manner in which that opinion was stated by the officers of the department would not commend itself to the Minister or to those who approached the department to assist them to do the right thing in the expenditure of public money. The details of that need not be dealt with at the present time because the matter had only to be considered from a public standpoint.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson): That there was some difficulty in regard to the construction of the extension of the Hopetoun jetty he was prepared to admit, but the difficulty was not altogether one of to-day. It was due to the fact that the jetty originally was undoubtedly placed in the wrong position. Originally it appeared that the engineers of the department desired to place the jetty where it could be extended into fairly deep water, getting to a depth of 17 feet, but to do that the removal of a number of sand hills, and other heavy construction works on the shore were involved, with the result that the expenditure was so great at the time, and the prospects of the port not being so good as they were to-day, that the then Government decided to try

a cheaper proposition. They removed the jetty to another site where the extension only got into a depth of nine or ten feet of water. With the extension of trade, the erection of smelting works, and increased tonnage at the port there came the necessity for the use of lighters to lighter the cargo from the shore to the boats trading to that port, and also to lighter the material taken to that port from other ports of the State. This became very expensive to the residents of the port, and it was then decided, and that was some considerable time back, that an extension of the jetty was necessary, and the engineers were asked to prepare a plan and an estimate of the cost for the extension to a depth of 11 or 12 feet. The estimate and the plans were submitted, and it was then considered that the work could be done for £3,000. It was true, as the member for Yilgarn had stated, that on the position being reviewed it was found that in order to get the depth of water necessitated by the increased trade, a distance of 300 feet would be required and that that distance would cost £6,000. That extension then was adopted by himself (the Minister) on the recommendation of the engineers and the material was ordered for the purpose of putting the work in hand. Immediately the local residents discovered that it was proposed to extend this jetty in the same direction as the present jetty was running, they entered a protest and stated that it would be a waste of money if it was built in that direction. Further investigations were made and the hon. member brought the matter under notice and wires were also sent direct to the department. After the investigations the course was followed that the hon. member suggested, namely, consulting those officers connected with the vessels which were trading to that port. Undoubtedly one of the best authorities was Captain Douglas, who had been trading along that portion of the coast for a considerable time, and that officer was in favour of the proposal of the Government to extend the jetty in a southerly direction.

Mr. Hudson: Only tentatively.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The matter was being dealt with fairly by

him. Captain Douglas favoured the Government proposal. Later on the Government discovered that the proposal submitted to Captain Douglas was not clear to that officer, who stated that, had he known the full facts of the case, he would not have made the recommendation he had done. On Captain Douglas' recommendation it was definitely decided to go on with the extension of the jetty, and immediately after the work was put in hand Captain Douglas reversed his opinion, and stated that if he had known of the alternative he would have declared in favour of that alternative.

Mr. Thomas: He is not a very reliable individual.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Captain Douglas claimed that the full facts were not placed before him, and he (the Minister) was of opinion that a little more information could have been furnished. When the captain reversed his opinion, and on further representations being made to the Government, a conference was called of the whole of the departmental officers concerned in the matter, including Captain Douglas. The object of the Government was to make sure that a mistake was not being made and as a result of the conference it was decided to send Captain Airey down to go into the question, and make a further recommendation to the Government as to whether the Government or the local people were right. Captain Airey was on the spot at the present time, and he had with him all the files that the member for Yilgarn was moving for. On these grounds, therefore, the hon. member should not press his motion for the production of the papers. In the first place, the papers were not available and in the second place, on the return of Captain Airey they would be required by the department in the event of Captain Airey deciding against the departmental opinion, and even though he declared himself in favour of it, the department would need the papers in order to get on with the work. He was prepared to admit that the hon. member's statement was correct and the hon. member could rest assured that as a result of the inquiries that were being made by

Captain Airey, the Government would do the right thing, so far as the extension of the jetty was concerned. It might be pointed out, in passing, that the Government had to be very careful in regard to local representations. He was of the opinion that the local people were satisfied that the proposed extension would meet the present requirements, but that future requirements would need a greater depth of water than could be got by extending the jetty as was now proposed. Ultimately it was proposed to reach a depth of 17 feet of water, and he hoped that the district would progress to such an extent as to justify the extension to that depth. In all local representations it had to be borne in mind that the Minister had to look at the other side of the question, and be careful that he was not pressed into doing a work which eventually might not be required, and the construction of which in the first place might have been due to over-ambition on the part of the local residents. Now that an officer was down there there was no doubt that he would report as to what was best under the circumstances. Therefore the hon. member might be requested not to press for the papers because the effect would only be to delay the work.

Mr. HUDSON (in reply): The Minister had referred to the report of Captain Douglas, and it was only fair to that officer to say that he was not unreliable with regard to his opinion as the interjection which was made would lead members to believe. The proposal to extend this jetty for 300 feet in a southerly direction was put to Captain Douglas in such a way as to invite the expression of opinion which he in a tentative manner gave. If the jetty was extended 200 feet it would go in a southerly direction. When he (Mr. Hudson) pointed out to the engineer responsible for the telegram which invited an answer to the question it contained, that it did not fit the circumstances, that engineer promised then that he would send a wire of a comprehensive nature, and put both proposals before Captain Douglas. Captain Irvine and another officer of the department left on the understanding that the wire would be

sent to Captain Douglas, putting the two proposals before him, instead of which they sent a wire which invited a similar reply to that which they got on the previous occasion. It was not a fair thing on the part of the officers of the department to place Captain Douglas in that position. He had distinctly stated, and more than once, and it was on the files of the department, that Captain Douglas did not favour the extension of the jetty in the direction proposed to the 300 feet. It was due to that officer who was now trading along the coast in charge of the Government steamer—and he knew more about the matter than the majority of the navigators—to make this statement. That officer had stated that he was in favour of the proposals of the residents of the place, and it was the only successful way of dealing with the proposal. With regard to the satisfaction of the people of the district in the extension of the jetty 300 feet, they said it would serve no purpose because, owing to the weather and the currents, they would be no better off than they were at the present time. Although they would have another foot or 18 inches of water they would still have to lighter except in calm weather. He would suggest to the Minister that inasmuch as there was no time fixed in the motion for the laying of the papers on the Table, he might agree to the motion being carried, and the papers could then be brought down at any time before the presentation of the Estimates. As far as he was personally concerned, there was no immediate necessity for their production, but he did not desire to submit a similar motion later on.

Question put and passed.

RETURN—STATE INSTITUTIONS AND TOBACCO SUPPLIES.

Mr. LANDER (East Perth): I beg to move—

That there be laid upon the Table of the House a return showing: (a.) The prices paid for cigars, cigarettes, and tobacco used in connection with State hotels, State steamships, and other Gov-

ernment institutions. (b.) From whom purchased. (c.) The quantities purchased. For the twelve months ended 31st July, 1912.

As I do not anticipate any opposition to the motion, I shall content myself with having moved it. But I want to amend it. I want further information, and I intend to give notice to-morrow of a fresh motion. The amendment I wish to make in my motion is that tenders for the previous year be added. I want to find out the name of the successful tenderer for the current year, and the names of all the tenderers. Therefore I should like to add to my motion, "the names of the successful tenderers for the current year and the prices."

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member must withdraw the motion if he wants to amend it.

Mr. George: It is competent for another member to amend it.

Mr. Speaker: Certainly.

Mr. Lander: Then I shall move the motion as it stands.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member, with the consent of the House, may withdraw the motion with the intention of submitting an amended motion.

Mr. Lander: I beg leave to withdraw the motion with the object of amending it.

Mr. Heitmann: It is impossible to amend something that is withdrawn.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member desires to withdraw the motion with the leave of the House, for the purpose of moving another motion.

Mr. Lander: I wish to withdraw the motion for the purpose of moving another motion.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion be withdrawn?

Mr. George: Is it the intention that the amended motion be put to-day? If so, I have no objection.

Mr. Lander: It is not my intention to move the amended motion to-day.

Mr. Speaker: Then the hon. member must withdraw the motion entirely. If there is any objection to the withdrawal it cannot be withdrawn.

The Minister for Lands: A motion has to be moved and seconded before it is in possession of the House. If the hon. member withdraws the motion with a view of submitting an amended motion at a future date he is in order.

Mr. Speaker: Standing Order 211 says—

A motion not seconded may not be further debated, and no entry thereof shall be made in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

The motion not being seconded, is therefore not before the House.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The hon. member has given notice to move a certain motion. He gets up and, before doing so, asks leave to withdraw it. One voice in the negative refuses him permission, and he must go on with the motion. If no one seconds the motion it lapses. One voice in the negative should mean that there is someone to second the motion.

The Minister for Lands: Surely the hon. member has a right to withdraw the motion if he likes, and if he does not wish to move it.

Hon. Frank Wilson: He cannot withdraw a motion without the sanction of the House.

The Premier: It is not in possession of the House.

The Attorney General: He can decline to move it.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Then he should get out of the House if he declines to move it.

The Minister for Lands: All he has to do is to sit tight.

Mr. Heitmann: It appears to me that the leader of the Opposition desires to take advantage of the want of knowledge of the hon. member for East Perth. That hon. member desires to make an alteration in the motion. He finds out that he cannot make an alteration himself, and therefore he declines to move the motion. In my opinion the motion not being moved it cannot be seconded.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Standing Order 212 overcomes the matter. It reads—

After a motion has been read by the Speaker it shall be deemed to be in possession of the House, and cannot be

withdrawn without leave being granted, without any negative voice.

The hon. member is in order in withdrawing his motion before he moves it.

Mr. Taylor: How can he withdraw it if he does not move it?

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: I contend my statement is absolutely correct, that the hon. member, having given notice of a motion, is expected, if he is in his place, to move it, and the only logical way to overcome that, if he does not want to move it, is to ask leave to withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: I find that the hon. member did not move his motion in the proper sense. Therefore the motion is not before the House. He certainly made some statement in respect to it, but he did not move it; it was not read.

Mr. Allen: Yes, it was.

Mr. Taylor: I was not present when the hon. member was on his feet, but it appears that the hon. member made a statement but declined, before resuming his seat, to move the motion and did not read it.

Mr. Speaker: Did the hon. member read the motion?

Mr. Lander: Yes, I read portion of the motion. I did not read the whole of it.

Mr. Speaker: Did the hon. member read the whole of it?

Mr. Lander: I only read a portion. I do not think I read the whole of it.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member desire to go on with the motion?

Mr. Lander: I do not, I desire to withdraw the motion.

Mr. Speaker: The member for East Perth has stated that he did not read the whole of his motion, therefore the motion is not before the House, and the motion lapses.

Mr. George: What a pity.

MOTION—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION, CONTRACTS TO EXPEDITE.

Debate resumed from the 8th August on the following motion of the Hon. Frank Wilson:—"That in order to expedite the granting of railway facilities to settlers, and in order to increase the

avenues of employment for our people, it is expedient that contracts be called immediately for all railways authorised by Parliament."

Mr. THOMAS (Bunbury): So much time has elapsed since this motion was originally introduced by the leader of the Opposition, that it has lost a great deal of its interest, in fact after the speech made by the Minister for Works and the manner in which he made his reply, it seems that there is hardly very much to be said on the matter. However, there are one or two little points that I want to emphasise if I possibly can. It seems to me that this motion is something in the nature of a death-bed repentance by the leader of the Opposition. It seems that after all the years the hon. gentleman has had in office, and the unlimited opportunities he has had of carrying his desires into effect, he waits until the country has relegated him to the position which he now adorns to urge on the existing Government to do those things which he neglected to do himself. The hon. member in the concluding portion of his motion, says, "and in order to increase the avenues of employment for our people, it is expedient that contracts be called immediately for all railways authorised by Parliament." Now, that is a very sweeping assertion, that contracts should be called immediately for all railways authorised by Parliament. The hon. member, in a very suave and courteous speech, pointed out that his motion had really no party significance, that he had no intention of causing the Government any inconvenience but the motive that actuated him was the same that always does actuate the hon. member—the good and welfare of Western Australia. He desired that all these railways be constructed immediately by contract. Of course, the hon. member is not aware that it is part of the principles of the Labour party that, as far as possible, railways should be constructed by day-labour in preference to contract, and consequently, when moving this motion, he had no intention whatever of putting the Labour party to any inconvenience in connection with this matter. [The hon. member

said it was our bounden duty to develop this great territory in our charge with as much expedition as possible. Now, it seems to me that, at this late hour of the day, it is at least strange that the hon. member did not do these things when he had the opportunity. Why does the hon. member wait until he is in the cool shades of Opposition before he attempts to carry into operation a policy that he seems to have set his heart upon so much? Why did not he, in the hey-day of his prosperity, carry out this proposal? It would have been easy for him when he was Minister for Works to have called contracts for all railways waiting to be constructed in Western Australia.

Mr. HEITMANN: He let contracts for as many as he had the money for.

Mr. THOMAS: That may be so, but I will deal with that question later. Why does the hon. member ask the present Ministry to do what he obviously was not prepared to do himself? It would seem to me that the leader of the Opposition was desirous of posing before the country as the champion of the farmers and the people in the country districts, and as one burning with a desire to provide them all with railway facilities, inferring, of course, that the Government in power are not prepared to do all those things the hon. member would have done. Well, it seems plain to me that there is something of sincerity lacking in that attitude, and, if I may be permitted to use the term, it seems that the hon. member is posing before the country, and trying to make the people of Western Australia believe that he is that which he is not. That is one of the objects which he sought to achieve by this motion—to impress the people of this State with his great zeal and ambition to do those things for their benefit; when it is within the knowledge of this Parliament and of most thinking people that the hon. member could have done them but did not. The hon. member also said that the Government had done nothing in the last twelve months. I like that magnanimity that the hon. member assumes occasionally; it is most generous of him. Knowing the work which the present Ministry have done,

and knowing the strenuous efforts of the Minister for Works in this direction, it is most magnanimous of the hon. member to say that they have done nothing during the last twelve months. I am pleased to be able to repeat the statement of the Minister for Works that the present Government are constructing 16 miles of railway per month more than the best average of their predecessors. That seems to me to be an argument in favour of the present Government, and to do away, in a large measure, with any necessity there might have been for carrying this motion. If the present Minister for Works is constructing 16 miles of railway per month more than his predecessor constructed, he is, in effect, constructing nearly twice as much as was done before—although the hon. members in opposition still turn round and say that the Government are not doing as much as they should be doing—obviously the Minister for Works is twice as good in this connection as the Minister for Works who preceded him. The hon. member continued and said “build, build, build.”

Mr. HEITMANN: “Organise, organise, organise”; you remember that cry?

Mr. THOMAS: The hon. member for Sussex said some time ago, amongst other things, that we would be so busy bungling the finances that we would not have time to attend certain institutions, but if we were to listen to his cry of “build, build, build,” he would call the tune and we would have to dance; we would have to find the money at his dictation, and he would take all the glory, and the Government all the cuffs and kicks. So far as I can see, it is with the leader of the Opposition a case of “Do as I say, but do not do as I do.” Apparently the advice that the hon. member offers is excellent for the Labour Ministry, but “no class” for his own Ministry. That is illogical, and, if I may use the expression, it is absurd.

Mr. HEITMANN: His friends the contractors were not squeaking in those days.

Mr. THOMAS: The hon. member evidently thinks that the voice of the

contractor, like the voice of the turtle, is loud in the land. However that may be, it is very easy to pose before the country when one is in opposition, and to impress the people that one is desirous of achieving a certain policy, knowing all the time that one's opponents have no intention of carrying out that policy. One can always make a "good fellow" of one's self at the other fellow's expense. Now, I claim that all the trouble that exists in Western Australia at the present time, all the clamouring for railways to be constructed, and all the complaints about delay, may be laid at the door of the previous Government. They, without sufficient reason and justification, led the people to expect, within a reasonable time, railways, here, there, and everywhere.

Mr. Heitmann: Within an unreasonable time.

Mr. THOMAS: They led them to expect railways within a reasonable time, and did not give the settlers the lines within an unreasonable time. They seemed to be lacking in conscience in that matter. It did not seem to matter to them when the settler was being sent into the wilds of Western Australia with the promise of a railway, what his disappointment was, so long as they got his vote, bought by promises they did not intend to materialise within a number of years. It seems ungenerous that, having dug these trenches for themselves, having made these promises and having failed to carry them out, although they recognised them to be so necessary for Western Australia, they should now attempt to pass their troubles on to the shoulders of the present Government. I do not appreciate that kind of thing. I think that the leader of the Opposition, if he had said, "We failed lamentably; we were unequal to the task that the country laid upon our shoulders; we were unworthy of the confidence placed on us; as a natural conclusion we were turned out, and we have so much respect for the present Government, and so much appreciation of the greater ability of the present Minister for Works, that we ask him to do what we realise we never could do ourselves," would have been

speaking truthfully. In my opinion, there has been too much deception of settlers by the promising of railways. My opinion is that railways should precede settlement instead of following it. If we were to decide the areas in Western Australia that are suitable for settlement and fit to carry population, the railways could then be constructed, and the land afterwards submitted for settlement and those who selected would then know precisely what they were doing and what they should expect in the future. Then a great deal of dissatisfaction would be avoided, and much more prosperity would be the lot of those people who have invested their all. The Minister for Works pointed out and there can be no harm in emphasising it—that in nine months the present Government have spent £200,000 more in railway construction than was spent by their predecessors, and still the cry goes up that we should spend more. I do not claim that we have yet reached the limit of railway construction, nor do I believe that we have yet reached the limit of departmental construction. I agree that we should go on increasing, and that while there are railways to be built, we should speed up as much as possible within reasonable limits. There is a financial limit to everything that any Government can undertake, but, according to the wisecracks of the Opposition, there is no such thing as limitation. That mighty genius who sheds lustre over the name of Murray-Wellington when he condescends to represent that constituency in this Parliament, conceived and gave forth an idea—strange as it may seem—

Mr. George interjected.

Mr. THOMAS: That remark is just about equal in vulgarity to what the hon. member generally indulges in. He gave forth an idea, strange as it may seem, and in effect it was that if we cannot build all the railways in Western Australia immediately by day labour, we should let the rest of them by contract and build them at once. With a fine display of declamation in place of oratory, the hon. member went on to say, "There is no excuse for delay; these railways

are needed, why delay another year? Let us build them at once." Well that is a wise utterance, and worthy of the hon. member for Murray-Wellington. But let us examine and carry it to its logical conclusion. Do not let us wait until to-morrow or next year for what we want. We want 500 or 1,000 miles of railway. Let us build them all at once. Let contracts for railways here, there, and everywhere. If it costs five million pounds, what does it matter to the member for Murray-Wellington? Let us build them; well and good. Suppose, then, we want a number of roads and bridges in Western Australia—hundreds of each; why parcel out the portion we can do from year to year? Why not let us do it all to-day as the member for Murray-Wellington suggests? Consequently, we will spend a few more millions on roads and bridges.

Mr. George: You are not paying for them.

Mr. THOMAS: I dare say I will contribute as much as the hon. member, but I do not suppose that the question as to whether I will pay for them or the hon. member will pay for them has anything to do with the subject. That is just one of those luminous interjections the hon. member makes occasionally.

Mr. George: I adapt myself to my company.

Mr. THOMAS: Perhaps the hon. member does, seeing where he is now sitting. This bright and intelligent member says, "Go on; build and construct." We want a number of harbours in Western Australia. I want one at Bunbury at a cost of a million pounds or so, and there are half a dozen others wanted. Therefore, a few million pounds are needed for harbours, and why wait until next year? The hon. member for Murray-Wellington says it can be done, and obviously, if he says it can be done, it can be done. The weight of the hon. member's experience gives sufficient guarantee that the thing can be achieved.

Mr. George: Why not stick to truth? You know that I did not say anything of the sort.

Mr. THOMAS: I take exception to the hon. member's remark, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw if the member for Bunbury takes exception to it.

Mr. George: Of course I bow to your decision, Mr. Speaker, at the same time when the hon. member is putting words into my mouth which I have never uttered, I think I have the right to object.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no withdrawal. The hon. member must withdraw the expression.

Mr. THOMAS: I was only carrying out the hon. member's idea to its logical conclusion.

Mr. George: You have not got the brains to understand an idea.

Mr. THOMAS: The hon. member, like many other great minds, occasionally unbends to indulge in a little repartee. He is so graceful; he reminds me of nothing so much, in the graceful movements of his repartee, as a camel trying to dance the minuet. The hon. member in reply to an interjection of mine, when I asked him why he did not practice what he preached, said, "You are too young in politics to know what you are talking about." Well, to quote what someone else has said before me, I trust that my faults and failings will cease with my youth, but I trust that I shall not follow in the footsteps of my friend and grow coarse and vulgar as I progress in years. The hon. member's statements are so irresponsible that I would be wasting the time of the House if I followed him into every rut, and it would be dignifying statements that are not worthy of consideration.

Mr. George: I would lose you in a fog in five minutes.

Mr. THOMAS: The hon. member has been in a fog all his life, and I think the hon. member's constituents must be very dense to send him here.

Mr. SPEAKER: I submit that all this has nothing to do with the motion.

Mr. THOMAS: I apologise, Mr. Speaker. I shall proceed with the motion. The member for Murray-Wellington was good enough to say that he does not deny

that the present Government have done better than their predecessors.

Mr. George : I never said that.

Mr. THOMAS : I copied it down on a piece of paper so that I should not misquote the hon. member. Perhaps the idea is better expressed than the hon. member expressed it in his own language, but still he meant the same thing. It is something to even get a fact from the hon. member. He said that he did not deny that the present Government had done better than their predecessors. After finding fault with the hon. member so much, it is very pleasing to me to have the opportunity of commending him for having given vent to at least one idea of interest. The present Government deserve that commendation; they have done splendid work, and I would like to see members of the Opposition more generous in their criticisms. When a man does well in the service of his country, or when the Government do well in the service of their country, why not be magnanimous and generous enough to say, "You have done better than we did and we appreciate the fact?"

Mr. S. Stubbs : Did you do that when you were in opposition?

Mr. THOMAS : I did not have the pleasure, but if I were in opposition I would try to set an example.

Mr. Monger : You will be there soon enough.

Mr. THOMAS : If the hon. member's anxiety to bring about that day will have that effect, I have no doubt it will be very soon. The member for Murray-Wellington also said—I know I am giving the hon. member an importance he does not warrant in this House, but still it is wise to devote a little attention to him now and again to put him in his place—the hon. member said he was not concerned with the sins of preceding Governments, as much as to say, in effect, that he admitted the failure of the previous Government to accomplish what he asks us to do. Yet he had the cast-iron audacity to turn round and say the present Government ought to do it. As I said at the outset, I really thought there was very little that could be added

to the debate that has already taken place, but I cannot conclude without saying that I appreciate immensely the reply made by the Minister for Works. He put forward a clear, honest, conscientious and effective reply.

Mr. Monger : It is about the only time he ever did.

Mr. THOMAS : The hon. member's personal grievance against the Minister for Works will never allow him to appreciate any good in the Minister no matter how great it may be.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs : His judgment is warped.

Mr. THOMAS : His judgment is warped, it is jaundiced. Hope deferred by sitting on the benches of the Opposition and dreaming of the day when the Opposition will get back to the other side of the House has somewhat warped and jaundiced the hon. member's judgment. The defence put up by the Minister for Works in this case, if a defence were necessary, was almost faultless. The reply showed, as I have already stated, that we are constructing practically twice as many miles of railway as were constructed by our predecessors, that we have spent in eight or nine months £200,000 more than was spent by the preceding Government. These two statements alone are sufficient refutation of statements made by the members of the Opposition, and I only trust the people of the country will understand, as well as the members of the House, the reasons which actuated the leader of the Opposition when he brought this motion before Parliament. I have not the slightest doubt, if one could get within the inmost recesses of the hon. member's mind, one would find that after he heard the Minister for Works he deeply regretted he ever laid this motion before the House.

Mr. ALLEN (West Perth) : It was not my intention to say anything on this matter, but after the remarks of the last speaker, I would like to have one or two words to say. On a recent occasion the member for Bunbury expressed his deep regret that the House had descended to the personalities members had given ex-

pression to, and he hoped that we should not continue them. Therefore I was surprised this afternoon, when the hon. member got on his feet, to listen to his remarks and the reflections he indulged in respecting the leader of the Opposition and the member for Murray-Wellington.

Mr. George: Do not worry about me.

Mr. ALLEN: I am not worrying about you, but I thought that the hon. member who expressed those sentiments, with which I entirely agree, would, at any rate, put them into practice.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Do not follow suit.

Mr. ALLEN: I do not intend to.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You are doing it now.

Mr. ALLEN: No, I am entirely in accord with the expression of the hon. member that we should not indulge in these personalities, and I regret that this afternoon he should come along and indulge in them. A great deal has been said about this motion being a party one. Although I am not bound by any bonds or the caucus of any party I think if this had been a party move from the Opposition those of us who are sitting in Opposition would have heard something about the motion before it was tabled, but the first I heard of it was when it was on the Notice Paper. Anyone who is not biased or has not in his mind something of a suspicious nature it seems to me ought to welcome a motion of this sort because its first object is to provide railway facilities. We all want railway facilities for the settlers in our country districts. That is admitted on all hands: both sides of the House have expressed the desire that the settlers who have gone out and taken up land should be provided with railway facilities. The second object of the motion is that it would provide employment for those of our people who have not work now. Surely that is an object that would be welcomed by members on both sides of the House. Finally, to give effect to the motion, it means that the railways the Minister for Works cannot carry out should be built by contract.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): No, it says "all railways."

Mr. ALLEN: I take it that the department, according to the Minister for Works, is doing all it can at present, and the object of the motion is that the others should be built by contract. These are the three points of the motion which I have noted, and I cannot understand why such opposition has been raised to it. We had a long speech from the Minister for Works setting out what the Government had done, and, as we have heard so much of in this House, also pointing out the misdeeds of the past Government. I do not think we are here to criticise past Ministries or to find fault with them. I consider we are here to deal with the needs of the present. There has been a lot of extraneous matter brought into this debate which in my opinion is quite unnecessary. If the truth of the matter is that the Government cannot get the money—and we admit their borrowing powers are limited—I am surprised to find them chasing round looking for avenues of expenditure. Recently we had a debate in this House over the Perth tramways purchase and the expenditure of £475,000 plus another £150,000 to bring the Perth tramways up to anything like efficiency. If the Government have not the money to do urgent and necessary works to provide railway facilities for settlers, why need they go and take away a facility Perth already has, though it is in the hands of a private company, and put money into that instead of using it for railways?

Mr. Heitmann: Why do you not get rid of that clown in front of you?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must withdraw.

Mr. Heitmann: I withdraw.

Mr. ALLEN: If the department find when tenders are called for certain railways that the tenders are a long way in excess of the estimates of the department, there is no compulsion for them to go on with contracts. At the same time, it seems to me the motion is a very proper one which should commend itself to the House, for the two reasons that we need to provide railway facilities and to ab-

sorb the unemployed. I cannot understand why all this extraneous matter has been brought into the debate and in my opinion much of the opposition to the motion is very largely a waste of time.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin): I listened to the leader of the Opposition moving his motion with a considerable degree of interest; but I must confess that, as I heard him proceeding, I could not but have feelings of doubt regarding his sincerity in the matter. As one very new to politics and as one who does not know the intricacies of party warfare, I could not understand how it was that the leader of the Opposition in moving this motion wept what, metaphorically speaking, can only be described as crocodiles' tears because the settlers along the route of the Yilliminning-Kondinin railway did not have a railway, when we remember that a few months ago, when the Railway Bill was introduced, the hon. member strongly opposed the passing of that measure on the route surveyed by his own Government and authorised by the present Government.

Mr. Monger: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It was only because the line went too far north.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: But your Government surveyed the route proposed in the Bill, and you opposed the measure.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I did not oppose the Bill: it was part of our policy.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I have every desire to be just to the hon. member, but we have the fact that he opposed the measure in Parliament a few months ago.

Hon. Frank Wilson: No.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: You opposed the route proposed by the Government.

Hon. Frank Wilson: No.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: But you did. I would like to know whether, if through any unforeseen circumstances the hon. member should find himself leader of the Government before that railway is constructed, he would build it on the route surveyed by his own Government and authorised by Parliament? The hon. gentleman is silent; he does not reply.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What reply do you want? I am quite anxious to please you. Most certainly I would construct the railway.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: But not on the route authorised by Parliament, and surveyed by your own Government. The hon. gentleman's remarks show that he is not burning with a desire to let a contract in order to get that railway built quickly. He would delay the matter by calling for fresh surveys, perhaps five of them, and the people would not get the railway.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I never said so. This is a question of whether the Ministry would adopt your suggestion and have the line constructed on that route.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It was not my suggestion. The route accepted by the present Government was surveyed by the late Government throughout the entire length in dispute. I say the hon. gentleman's remarks clearly show that, as the member for Bunbury said, he is only posing in his desire to build this railway quickly, while, as a matter of fact, if he were in power again he would delay the matter, and perhaps it would be years before the people got their railway.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Did you not ask the Minister to have the contract let for this line?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That is not quite correct. If it were, it is not the point I am discussing now. I will deal with that presently.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It is the only point which this motion covers.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The point I am making is that the member for Sussex does not desire to have this railway built quickly, but, on the contrary, if he were again in power, he would build the railway on a route different from that authorised by Parliament, and would first hang up the matter for years.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I would build it in double-quick time.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I am aware of certain reports which were obtained by the hon. gentleman, when Premier, from a contract surveyor at Wagin, obtained behind the backs of the advisory board.

I say that if the hon. gentleman had had his way that railway would not have been built from Yillimining or from any point leading to the town of Narrogin, but on a route recommended by a contract surveyor at Wagin, and running out from Nippering, on the Dumbleyung line, to the country east of Narrogin, in order to take the business into Wagin. This, too, notwithstanding that the project was against the advisory board's views, and against the wishes of the people of the district. That was the hon. gentleman's idea, and that was why he got a lengthy report on the subject from a contract surveyor at Wagin. That was why he delayed that particular railway for years.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! This discussion is quite out of order. The Yilliminning railway is not under discussion.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I am sorry if I have been led away from the issue by the hon. gentleman.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Entirely by your own imagination.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, by facts that are on the files. At any rate, apart from the hon. gentleman altogether, we have the testimony of another gentleman, the member for York, as to the kind designs the Liberal party have on the construction of this particular railway from Yilliminning to Kondinin. I regard the member for York as one of the most capable of our political opponents, and I take it that he was speaking as the mouth-piece of the Liberal party when at Narrogin he stated that the railway should not be built on the route authorised by Parliament, that although the route was surveyed by the Liberal Government the acceptance of the survey by this Government made of it a political job. I thank him for having let the people of Narrogin know the intentions of his party. He conveyed the impression that if they had their way they would certainly not have this railway built on the route authorised by Parliament. I am sure the member for York will correct me if that is not the impression he intended to convey. I think the Tabling of this motion was certainly a party movement, and from the way in

which it was moved I regard it as a party attack on the Government, an attempt to belittle the Ministry. The leader of the Opposition did not show nor try to show, that the settlers would get the authorised railways any more quickly by contract than they would by departmental construction. My impression was that the Opposition party desired to get contracts let so that their political friends the contractors, might once more have a chance of dipping their fingers deeply into the State Treasury. It is quite possible that some of my remarks at a recent deputation influenced the hon. gentleman in bringing this motion forward.

Hon. Frank Wilson: They had no influence on me whatever.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: At any rate you regarded them as of sufficient importance to quote in your speech. The remarks I made were, that rather than have the settlers wait unduly I would build the railway by contract.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You recognised that the settlers were waiting.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I recognise that the Minister for Works has clearly shown us since then that the railway from Yilliminning to Kondinin could be built far more quickly by departmental labour than under contract.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You require to satisfy the settlers on that point.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I believe they are pretty well satisfied. For instance, if it were decided to call contracts, there would be considerable delay in the preparation of specifications; tenders would have to be called, and we would be faced with the delay which is harassing the Minister to-day, namely, the absence of railway material. The Minister for Works has a large number of men employed cutting sleepers at the present time, and huge numbers of sleepers are being amassed in the timber districts. A contractor would have to make anew those arrangements which the Government have already made. Then, whether a contract is let or whether the railway is to be constructed departmentally, the Government have to supply the rails, and the Minister for Works

has told us that this work is hung up because the rails are not in the country at the present time. At any rate that statement has been made, and I accept it. The Minister for Works also said that when the material, the rails, arrived, we shall be ready to start. A contractor could not start before then.

Mr. George: Yes, he could start tomorrow.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No. The Minister has said that when we do start there shall be expedition in connection with this line, and that it will be carried out more rapidly than any line built in Western Australia, with the exception of the Bullfinch line.

Hon. Frank Wilson: He was talking about the Quairading line.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, this statement was made in connection with the Yilliminning-Kondinin railway.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The hon. member is wrong.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I am absolutely right, and I defy you to prove me wrong. The rules of the House will not permit of my quoting from this session of *Hansard*, but an extract I have here was made from *Hansard*, and although I cannot quote from *Hansard* direct I will stake my reputation on the accuracy of the copy. That is the statement the Minister for Works made, the promise the Government made to the people of the district. When we remember that under the administration of the member for Sussex the people between Wickiepin and Merredin had to wait all those years after it was authorised for that railway to be started—

Hon. Frank Wilson: When was it authorised?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It has been promised for six or seven years, and it is in hand now. It would not have been started so soon had there not been a change in Government to put an end to the stagnation which existed in that particular district through the absence of railway facilities under the Liberal Administration. At any rate, the Government have given an assurance that the

railway from Yilliminning to Kondinin will be built more quickly than any other railway, except the Bullfinch railway, and I accept that assurance with confidence.

Mr. George: I hope it will be justified.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The Minister promised that this railway would start not later than next March, and since making that promise he has said "I have no hesitation in saying that we will start that railway earlier than I anticipated." I desire to tell hon. members that the Minister's promises are very reliable. For instance, a few months ago, in company with the member for York, we visited the district between Merredin and Wickiepin, and on that occasion the Minister for Works promised that the Quairading-Nunajin line would be finished by next March. To-day we find the work so very well in hand, and so very far advanced, that the railway will be completed in November, possibly in October, instead of in the month of March as promised by the Minister.

Mr. George: Nobody is questioning that.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, but it is an unpleasant fact for the hon. member to know that the 48 miles will be built in nine months, whereas it took the late Government a year to build the 24 miles from Wagin to Dumbleyung. These are absolute facts. At the same time I fully expect the Government to do more than merely keep faith with the settlers in this matter. For the first time the settlers in that district have a definite understanding as to when the railway will be built, and we will see to it that the Government will keep their promise.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It took a long time to get a definite understanding.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, the present Government were not in power three months before they authorised that railway. You had three years' opportunity to authorise it, but did nothing beyond sending the Advisory Board's reports back for further consideration. When the Minister introduced the Bill a few months ago, there were 473 settlers in the district; to-day there are over 1,000, so the matter is an urgent one. I realise the

difficulties which the Minister for Works has had because the people of this country know that when the Labour Government came into power they found a depleted Treasury chest, and they also found that railways had been authorised from one end of the country to the other and no arrangements had been made for commencing them. None of the contracts had been let for railways which to-day the leader of the Opposition says should have been let. The Government, I am glad to say, have these necessary public works in hand and the other night the Minister for Works told us that 451 miles of railway are now under construction. Since October last the Government have constructed $285\frac{1}{2}$ miles of railway as against 102 miles constructed by the Liberal Administration.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The hon. member is wrong.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: These are the official facts given by the Minister for Works.

Hon. Frank Wilson: No.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The Minister stated that in regard to some of the facts and figures the Engineer-in-Chief was his authority. However, I am not going to be drawn aside by interjections.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The Minister said that he had taken over 286 miles, but not that that distance had been constructed since last October.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I take it that as soon as they are constructed they are taken over. If these figures are correct the Government has constructed four and a half times as much railway in a year as the late Government did in the years 1908/9 and 1909/10; at any rate we have the authority of the Minister for Works and of the Premier that the Government is constructing not 200 miles of railway a year but 200 miles a year more than the previous Government constructed. Even this I am prepared to admit is not enough. The fact that we are doing four times as well as the late Government is not sufficient for me, I do not want our progress to be judged by their rate of progress, even when it quadruples theirs. I say to the Government—"go on and do better;

double the records you have already established." We have a big country that needs opening up and I would say to the Minister that these railways which are to be built ought to be built quickly. The motto of the Government in regard to railway construction should certainly be—"Do it now." For my part I hope the Government will put up a record of 1,000 miles of agricultural railways in a year, and I am quite convinced they will before they finish their tenure of office. That is what the people of this country expect the Government to do.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The Minister says no; he says the people are satisfied that he is doing too much now.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: If he did we shall have to get the Minister to reconsider that statement; I doubt the statement.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Yes, that is what he said.

Mr. Foley: He did a bit of stirring up the other night all right.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Railways are reproductive works and it is our policy to spend money and, if necessary, borrow money freely to construct them. The average of the late Government was 100 miles a year, let us build a thousand. The Minister for Works has his opportunity and his opportunity is also that of the people in the agricultural districts. The people right through the agricultural areas are on the land without money of their own, depending on limited advances from the Agricultural Bank, and it is absolutely necessary that railways should be built in order that settlers should have legitimate opportunities to make a living on their holdings. In this matter I agree with all speakers, whichever side of the House they are on, that time is the essence of the contract with regard to railway construction. At the same time I look on this motion with suspicion owing to the way in which it is worded. The wording is that contracts be called immediately for all railways authorised by Parliament. If this motion is carried, it means that the present system of day labour, under which such excellent results

are being obtained, is to be abandoned. It means a contract will have to be called for the Brookton-Kunjin line at once, despite the desire of the Government to hold this work up until it has been decided whether the Trans-Continental railway will take the same route. It means that the Margaret River railway, the line west from Wagin, and the Norseman-Esperance line must be let by contract as soon as they are approved by Parliament. The Public Works Department have men and organisation and plant, and I would not vote for a motion which would throw this plant and organisation back on to the hands of the State. This is a motion instructing the Government to build future railways, as well as those now authorised, by contract, and no Labour member is likely to vote for it; neither should any member of the House who desires sound administration and economical construction. Then we have the deplorable experience the State suffered in regard to one other railway built by contract. We know the contractor could not finish the Port Hedland-Marble Bar line; the work was hung up and the Government had to pay him £28,000 to buy him off and finish the work under departmental construction. That project was not much of an argument in favour of the contract system. Then we find that the Liberals did not adopt the contract system of railway construction when they had a special railway project of their own. When the late Government wanted to rush a railway to Bullfinch, where a number of ex-Ministers and their political friends and supporters outside this House had some wild cat or other mining interests to serve, they did not build that railway by contract but adopted departmental construction.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What did you say ex-Ministers got?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I say when the hon. member wished to take a railway to Bullfinch with such remarkable celerity he did not build it by contract.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I thought you said the Ministers had wild cats or something of that kind.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Yes, I do not want to deny what I said, but that was earlier.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Who were the Ministers?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I said a number of ex-Ministers and their political friends and supporters had some wild cat or other mining interests to serve.

Mr. Monger: Mr. Speaker, I ask that that remark be withdrawn.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I believe the Bullfinch rush as a whole was a wild cat proposition; I know people who put money into it and suffered very severely and they were induced to do it by the late Government building the line there.

Mr. Monger: I demand the names of the ex-Ministers.

Mr. George: It is a very serious charge.

Mr. Monger: Let us know who they are.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Did not the leader of the Opposition state that he had some Bullfinch shares?

Hon. Frank Wilson: Yes, but not in a wild cat.

Mr. George: Let us know who to put the blame on.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The hon. member knows pretty well and the people in this State and those in England and the Eastern States who lost their money know who to put the blame on.

Mr. George: I do not know, but I would like to know.

Mr. Monger: I would like to know too.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Certain speeches were made in the Palace hotel and the action of the Government in rushing the railway out in the way they did had a lot to do with it.

Point of order.

Mr. George: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, seeing the hon. member is making severe accusations against ex-Ministers and members, and that more weight may be attached to his arguments outside than in Parliament, it is only just that the hon. member should give the names of the persons to whom he refers.

Mr. Speaker: Will the hon. member tell me what Standing Order demands that?

Mr. George: When a member makes accusations like the hon. member has done, I think he should justify them. I could not tell you where it is provided in the Standing Orders but I believe there is a rule that no member shall reflect on the character of another member, and he has not only reflected but thrown the full glare not of a reflected light but of his own personality. He also said that I knew who they were. I state most emphatically that I do not know, and that I know nothing about the persons he was referring to. I did not have a single share in the Bullfinch.

Mr. Speaker: Order! The hon. member must not make a speech. The hon. member for Williams-Narrogin has certainly made statements regarding ex-Ministers but he has not reflected on any individual. There is nothing in the Standing Orders to compel him to name any person or for me to demand a withdrawal. If the hon. member reflects upon any member personally and the member thinks the reflections are likely to cause disorder I will compel him to withdraw.

Mr. George: I quite agree with you to a certain point but he reflected on me because he stated I knew who the persons were. I state emphatically that I do not know.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member does not know of course.

Debate resumed.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: A good deal of fuss is being made over nothing.

Mr. George: You are making it then.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I said that not only ex-Ministers but their political friends and supporters outside of this House were interested in certain mining propositions at Bullfinch, some of which were wild cats.

Mr. George: I did not hear you say that they were outside of this House or I would not have mentioned anything about it.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The hon. member's political friends and supporters

are not in this House, but are to be found on St. George's-terrace and in the Murray-Wellington district.

Mr. George: That is a reflection on my district.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I have no intention to reflect on the hon. member or his district.

Mr. George: We have some honest men down there, a good many of them.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: After hearing the most effective speech of the Minister for Works the other night, I do not intend to support the motion. I object to the way in which the motion is worded. I say that Parliament has a duty to perform to the people and to the country by seeing that the Government build more railways, and that a vigorous public works policy is pursued, but I do not think it is the duty of this Chamber to instruct the Government as to the method by which the railways shall be constructed.

Mr. George: It is a case of helping one another, Christian charity.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Parliament is justified in asking the Government to build the railways quickly but it is not the function of this Chamber to instruct the Ministry in detail how those railways shall be built. If the leader of the Opposition wants railways built and if it is not his first desire to get jobs for the contractors—

Mr. George: That is a nice thing to say.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: In using the word jobs I mean it in the sense of work for the contractors. If that is the case I ask him to strike out the words "that contracts be called immediately" and insert after "Parliament" the words "should be constructed immediately." If that were done it would be a suggestion to the Government that the work should be pushed on, without giving any impertinent instruction as to the method by which the work should be done.

Mr. George: You move that as an amendment?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Before tea I suggested that, if the leader of the Opposition was sincere in his desire to have

the railways built quickly, rather than have contracts let, he would alter his motion in a manner that would intimate to the Government that it was the desire of this Chamber that the railways should be put in hand quickly. If this were done, the hon. gentleman could safely leave it to the Ministry to continue the good work they are doing, and build railways in the way they thought best. The people in the agricultural centres want railways built, and they are not greatly concerned as to whether they are built by day labour or by contract. What they want is the railways, with the benefits they bring. Personally, I believe in the day labour system, because it gives much better results for less money. I still hold the opinion, however, which I expressed at a recent deputation that, rather than keep the settlers waiting for their railways, they should be built by contract. From the recent statement of the Minister for Works on this question, there does not seem to be any necessity to introduce the contract system, and, in passing, I would congratulate the Minister for Works on the effective reply he made on behalf of the Government to the reckless statements uttered by the leader of the Opposition regarding our public works policy. I do not intend to support the motion, which I regard as a design to harass the Government rather than to help the people in our farming districts, who are so worthy of Governmental assistance, and who are doing noble work in making homes for themselves and their families in the great agricultural areas of this State.

Mr. MONGER (York): I had no intention when I came into the Chamber this afternoon, of expressing an opinion one way or the other upon the motion moved by the leader of my party. I say "my party" because it was so nicely referred to by one of the speakers this afternoon. When I listened to the rhetoric which emanated from the brain of my able friend, the member for Bunbury, I thought, in the first instance that we were going to have not an attack upon one member as it resolved itself into later on but a general discussion upon a big question, and I might even

have overlooked that, had it not been for the remarks made by the hon. member who has just sat down, and who was kind enough to make a reference to some remarks of mine on an occasion at Narrogin, the centre of the electorate he represents. I have to-night, no desire to withdraw or retract for one moment anything I then said in connection with that line. I am referring to the Yilliminning-Kondinin line, and when the matter was submitted for the consideration of hon. members last session, it may be fresh in your memory, Mr. Speaker, and it must be fresh in the memory of all hon. members seated on the Ministerial side of the House, that the principal argument used by the Minister for Works in support of that railway, as against the recommendation of the advisory board, was that a surveyor connected with some portion of one of the surveys had reported and recommended the line which my friend, the member for Williams-Narrogin, was desirous of seeing carried out. If an ordinary surveyor or surveyor's assistant as I believe this gentleman was, is to overrule the recommendation of the advisory board, I say there must be some kind of political jobbery that allows such an incident to take place. I stated that in the hon. member's electorate, and I say to-night, if the interpretation to be placed upon the Minister for Works, reason for altering the advisory board's recommendation is correct, I was privileged, and, under those circumstances I have nothing whatever to withdraw.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Would you alter the route?

Mr. MONGER: I have on every occasion from my place in this House, and before we came to this Chamber, always supported the recommendations of the Government engineers, surveyors, and, later on, the advisory board, from the first recommendation for an agricultural railway, and I am going back now to the year 1896, when the then Government proposed the first agricultural line of railway from York to Greenhills. If I am in order, I desire this evening to refer to certain statements made by a section of the members as to the attitude I then adopted. I

say that my attitude then was to support the recommendations of the Government advisors, and my remarks in connection with the Yilliminning-Kondinin line were in that direction. This afternoon, during the course of a somewhat mild interjection by myself, the Minister for Lands made some reference that I had not the mental ability to do something. I do not know to what he was referring, but perhaps I may be privileged for diverting for the moment from the question before the House. I want to know what great mental ability the Minister for Lands has shown since he has occupied his seat in the Ministry, and I am going to tell the Minister, or ask his colleagues to tell him, if he continues this attitude towards me, the rude attitude that he has recently adopted. I shall give to the House an account of one of the most painful incidents that has ever taken place within the precincts of this building in regard to the castigation which the hon. member received.

Mr. Green : You are getting touchy.

Mr. MONGER : Am I to sit down and hear myself criticised, and my party condemned, and to have an interjection of the kind made by the Minister for Lands hurled at me if I take exception to the attitude of some of the members on the Ministerial side ? With regard to the motion submitted by the leader of the Opposition, I think it is one which, under ordinary circumstances, or under any circumstances, should commend itself to hon. members seated on the Ministerial side, more especially my friend, the member for Williams-Narrogin after the remarks he made when either introducing or supporting a deputation the other day. When the hon. member found that his particular pet line of railway, the particular pet line of railway through which he gained his present seat in this House, was likely to be delayed, he said, " Well, if you cannot carry it out by day labour if you have not the necessary plant, let it to the ordinary contractor," or words to that effect. He rises to-night and states, " My Government, the gentlemen behind whom I sit, can do no wrong. If it be their policy to carry out everything by day labour, and if I did make that

remark, I did not intend that that construction should be placed upon it." When you find that on every occasion members on that side of the House are somewhat concerned, I hardly like to use the word " prevaricating "—

Mr. SPEAKER : Order. Has the hon. member used the word " prevaricating ?"

Mr. MONGER : What I said was that I would not like to use it. When I find they make a statement on one occasion and then refute that statement, I think I may be permitted to draw the attention of hon. members to the fact, and in making, perhaps, the fairly strong comment in that direction I did. I was glad to hear one hon. member say that time should be the essence of the contract, and as long as that be the motto of the present Government in the construction of lines of railways already authorised, I am with them. I hope that may be taken as a correct interpretation of the desire of the leader of this side of the House. He says that time should be the essence of the contract, and that the work should be done as expeditiously as possible. With regard to the remarks made by some hon. members concerning the big concessions granted in some cases where contracts could not be carried out, we have heard during the last few days frequent mention of the Port Hedland-Marble Bar railway. I say that the gentlemen who undertook that contract must have submitted splendid grounds for the Government to have paid them £28,000, and undertaken to complete the work. Every member on the Ministerial side is well acquainted with the financial standing of the gentlemen who undertook that contract, and unless they had more than fair and ordinary grounds for asking the Government to cancel their contract, do members think the Government would have done it ? I say they certainly would not. The Government were well acquainted with the financial position of those gentlemen, and it was only because the surrounding circumstances were such that no local contractor could successfully carry the work to completion in accordance with the terms of the contract, that the Government took over the job from them.

Mr. Carpenter: Did they not know that when they contracted?

Mr. MONGER: I say, and I want to be most emphatic on the point, that knowing the financial position of these gentlemen, the Government who cancelled their contract and undertook to complete the railway would never have released the contractors of one shilling of their obligations unless they knew that the State was going to gain by paying that £28,000. Perhaps it would not be out of place to refer to the Hopetoun-Ravensthorpe line on which the contractors lost a small fortune. There has been no mention made of that, but I venture to say that had the Government undertaken to carry out that work on the day labour system it would have been one of the most costly lines ever attempted departmentally or otherwise. We have heard something to-night about the Bullfinch railway also, and I wish to express the opinion that when hon. members make innuendoes, imputations, or reflections, against ex-Ministers and their supporters, even if they have all the Parliamentary privileges imaginable, they should be prepared to give the names of those ex-Ministers and supporters who are supposed to have derived benefits from the construction of this line. If under our Parliamentary privileges and the protection we enjoy, we are to make all sorts of nasty reflections against those whom we personally dislike and with whom we are not personally on friendly terms, Parliament is going to be reduced to the level of the lowest spots that this fair City possesses. I further resent the references that so often come from the Government side of the House as to the political influence which a certain hotel in Perth exercises on those who sit on this side of the House. I say that those remarks are impolitic, ungentelemanly and uncalled for, and I ask that in future we shall confine ourselves as near as possible to the matter at issue instead of resorting to aspersions such as are cast by the members on the Government side, who never lose an opportunity of casting reflections and making innuendoes against members who sit in oppo-

sition. So long as I sit on this side of the House I will always endeavour to conduct myself in such a manner as will, at all events, command the respect of the House, and I hope it will be the endeavour of other hon. members to do the same.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (In reply): I am satisfied that hon. members opposite have wilfully misread the motion, or at any rate they have wilfully put a wrong construction on my remarks. I endeavoured to put before this House clearly the necessities of the country at the time when I gave notice of the motion, and hon. members will remember that the motion was tabled on the first day that Parliament met, which was towards the end of June. So that it is idle to accuse me of having put a view upon the position of affairs which perhaps at the present time has been altered considerably. Naturally a considerable amount of work can be done in six or seven weeks when once a start is made with railway construction, and to-day the position is that several lines which were hanging in the balance have just been commenced, although at that time no work had been done upon them. However, I want first to take exception to the Minister's rude comments on a speech which I quoted from as having been delivered in London a few weeks ago by the Canadian Minister for Trade and Commerce. I quoted that speech to show that Canada realised that she depended for her progress and prosperity on a spirited public works policy, and to show that the Minister who at present controls the department realises that that policy had been fruitful of great results in Canada. Notwithstanding that the Dominion had launched out in bad times when her population had decreased to some extent by emigration to the United States, they had confidence to engage in a vigorous railway construction policy, and that policy has proved to be in the best interests of the country. All that the Minister for Works can do is to declare that to be a boom and burst policy, and to make the foolish statement that Canada is losing its population to-day. I leave it to any hon. member

who is interested to look at the statistics for himself. If we used the term "boom" to indicate a legitimately prosperous time I admit that it was a boom policy that was followed in Canada. They certainly had the strength of their convictions. They certainly did not hesitate to embark on the building of railways which opened up their lands and brought unparalleled conditions of prosperity to the Dominion. As to the "burst" business, that time has yet to come in Canada, and it ill befits a responsible Minister in Western Australia to insinuate, even in the mildest degree, that the prosperity of Canada is bound to burst because of the statement of a responsible Minister. Those words which I used, "build, build, build," to which the member for Bunbury has so scathingly referred to-night, were not my own. They were the words of that Canadian Minister who said that notwithstanding the thousands of miles which had been constructed in Canada, even before they had settlers to bring traffic to the railways, the demand had overtaken the conveniences that had been supplied, and the cry was that they should still continue to build.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: What is the population of Canada to-day?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The hon. member can turn up the statistics for himself, but the population is somewhere between seven millions and eight millions. I referred to that speech to emphasise the position that I adopted, that in Western Australia we had no need to be timid in connection with our railway policy, that we might safely build railways even into lands which were not settled, in the sure belief that ultimately the lands would be settled, and be productive of great traffic to the railways.

Mr. Green: Why did you not do it?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I did do it. Those members upon whom the lash of the caucus has been laid, and whose flesh is still writhing from the strokes of the lash, who last year showed some disposition to rebel and revolt because they were galled with the harness of their caucus, are to-day grovelling to the powers that be. They have come to

heel already, and that great "I am," the Minister for Works, and the Premier and his colleagues can do no wrong in the sight of those hon. members. Why, the member for Bunbury used to indulge in a fair amount of criticism last session, but this session there is nothing but honey in his speech, and he intimates he is looking for the expenditure of something like a million of money in connection with the Bunbury harbour works. I expect, from the remarks that fell from the Premier the other night in connection with finance, he will have to look a long time before he has that million expended at Bunbury in his electorate. The hon. member says I have asked the Minister to do what I could not do myself, and he says this with the satisfaction of the egotist whose judgment can never fail, whose judgment must always be accurate and right. I want the hon. member to understand this, that we doubled the railway system in Western Australia during my term of office, absolutely more than doubled it; therefore we are not asking any Government to do more than we undertook in bad times and carried out successfully.

Mr. Green: We are going to open up a new province.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: But let us look at the figures which the Minister for Works quoted so extensively and used in a very vindictive sense the other evening. He was more like a tornado or a willy-willy than anything else in this matter. He flashed across the Chamber with a volume of sound which, if it was not convincing, was at any rate ear-splitting; and I am satisfied that the brilliant reply he is supposed to have made, and which has been commended by all members who have spoken on the other side of the Chamber, will not carry conviction to the hearts of those settlers who are waiting anxiously for railway facilities. He uses an argument the amounts which have been disbursed by his department in various periods. He takes the 1910-11 disbursements and compares them with those of 1911-12, and in the same breath he accuses me and my colleagues in the past Administration of having neglected our duty to

provide material. Now, just let us look at it for a moment. It is perfectly true, according to the figures the Minister put before the House, and which I have no wish to dispute, as I presume they have been drafted by his responsible officers, and are accurate, that in 1910-11 we spent £341,000 in round figures on railway construction in nine months, that is, from October, 1910, to June, 1911; and out of this sum £80,000 was expended for rails and fastenings. In other words, rails and fastenings were sent out from the store to these jobs representing that value and were debited up to the different contracts. In the following period, from October, 1911, to June, 1912, they spent £543,000, out of which £153,000 was the debit for rails and fastenings. Now, the Minister accuses me of not having ordered material, and yet we have the large sum of £153,000 delivered from store and charged up against these very railway jobs for rails and fastenings during the nine months from October, 1911, to June of this year. Is that answer not sufficient? So far as the shortage of material is concerned, I wonder how he supplied this £153,000 worth of rails and fastenings if we had not ordered them in advance. And let me say that these figures convey nothing to the House, and prove nothing so far as this motion is concerned, because there are final certificates and progress certificates of every description. One contractor alone received over £90,000 during that time, exclusive of rails and fastenings, for the works he was doing on his different railway contracts. Let us pass on, and I will call attention to the railways by and by which compose this expenditure. The next argument the Minister advances is that 1910-11 we handed over to the Working Railways 232 miles only, whereas in 1911-12 they handed over 286 miles. Now, let us look at the lines they take credit for, and see whether it was our work or their work which enabled the Working Railways to take over 286 miles. First of all there was the Bullfinch railway, the much despised railway which hon. members sitting on the Government side supported when the measure was before the House, and which was con-

structed in record time. It was working for nine months for the Public Works Department prior to our leaving office, and was not taken over by the Railway Department until the 1st December last. The line was completed in three months, but it was not taken over for seven eight, or nine months later, namely on the 1st December.

Mr. O'Loughlen : Why ?

Hon. FRANK WILSON : Because the Public Works Department were making a good thing out of the traffic. That is the reason. They were charging a special rate, as they always do, the same as a contractor does, and they were making a good revenue. There was no need to transfer it to the Working Railways.

Mr. O'Loughlen : A contractor would get all that if he had the contract.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : Undoubtedly, if he had the time, but if we bound him down to three or four months, he would not. It is not very likely a contractor would have had twelve months in which to carry out that work. Then there was the Katanning-Nampup line, 38 miles in extent. This was built by contract and was taken over in April of the present year. There was also the extension of the Upper Chapman railway, a small extension of 12 miles, constructed departmentally, and taken over on the 3rd May of this year. Then we have the extension of the Dumbleyung line taken over also on the 3rd May. Also there was the Boyup-Kojonup railway, 52 miles in length, taken over on the 21st May last, and the Port Hedland-Marble Bar railway, 114 miles in length, taken over on the 1st July last, and the Tambelup-Ongerup line, also on the 1st July last. These lines comprise the 286 miles which the Minister puts before the House and the country as works they are responsible for, and which he contrasts with the previous year. Everyone of those railways was under construction pretty well for the whole of the previous year, and some of them longer. They were going up to completion, and, naturally, if that had not been the case they could not have been taken over at the present time.

Mr. O'Loughlen : We do not dispute that. It is the present construction we dispute.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : If I am constructing 1,000 miles of railways and I get them constructed within 100 miles of completion, and if when I have completed nine-tenths the hon. member comes in and takes my place as Minister, and within three months completes the other 100 miles, can he say "Look at me, I have completed 1,000 miles of railway?" But that is just the attitude of the Minister for Works is taking up to-day. "Clever fellow, I am managing works differently from hon. members, because I have handed over to Working Railways 286 miles of railway against their 232."

Mr. Heitmann : That is not the point. They are spending far more per month than you did.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : I have questioned that. The expenditure was on the very same railways.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : How could the hon. member spend it if the work was completed previously?

Hon. FRANK WILSON : Take the Port Hedland railway. I suppose it has been under construction for a couple of years. It was completed at any rate so far that the Minister thinks it to his advantage to take it over. He takes it over, but not only have they certificates for the work that has been completed up to that time debited in this as money expended, there is also the final adjustment of £28,000 for extras and settlement with the contractor. All that goes to swell the figures. This is only an instance of the payments which have been made on account of contracts, and on account of works undertaken in previous times by the Administration of which I had the honour to be the head.

Mr. Heitmann : Still the fact remains that the Minister is building 16 miles a month more than you did.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : I dispute it; but I am going my own way about it. The hon. member ought to have taken his opportunity of proving the statement of this 16 miles a month.

Mr. George : He cannot prove it.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : I refer to his Minister's words that he has more than he can do, and that he cannot keep it up. He said he did not maintain he could keep it up. How can they prove they are making 16 miles a month more to-day than we made and constructed last year, except by taking the number of miles that have been handed over?

Mr. Heitmann : Not necessarily.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : There is no other proof. They have not started or completed a single railway that they initiated themselves, except the Canning Hills line, 1 mile 20 chains in extent, which I call a siding. All the railways the Government have spent money on and for which they are taking credit for having completed are works that were well in hand previous to their acceptance of office. It will be observed that three of those lines were constructed departmentally, and four of them by contract. Those constructed departmentally were 58 miles in extent, and those constructed by contract 228 miles in extent. It is the contractor who has enabled the Minister for Works to put up this record. It is the contractor who has enabled us—me when I was in office, and the Minister for Works to-day—to claim that this mileage of 286 miles has been handed over to the Working Railways Department. Yet, we find the Minister, with his usual irresponsibility, regardless of the feelings of anyone, saying he has absolutely no time for the contractor, that he would not trust contractors at all, that he has not a good word for them.

Mr. Heitmann : I do not think he said he had not a good word for them.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : I say the Minister has not a good word for them, because he wants to make a strong attack on the motion I made, and to imply that I am moving the motion only for the contractors. Then the Minister went on to make another comparison, and to say that lines which had not been commenced in June, 1911, numbered four, and that in June last—I suppose he means that, although he said to-day—there were only two—the Brookton-Kunjin and the Yilli-

mining-Kondinin. But the lines not commenced in June last were the Brookton-Kunjin, the Quairading-Nunagin, the Wickepin-Merredin, and the Wongan Hills-Mullewa. With regard to the Wickepin-Merredin he was most strong in his denunciation of my methods of administration. He said that I ought to have given them that line years ago, that I had had it years in hand.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Hear, hear!

Hon. FRANK WILSON: And the hon. member applauds. The Minister said I had never done a tap to construct the railway. Perhaps he had forgotten that the Bill was only assented to on the 16th February previously. How on earth could every line be put in hand by the following June? We passed 12 railway Bills during the session of Parliament in which I occupied the position of Premier. There were 12 railway Bills passed, namely, Bridgetown-Wilgarup, Brookton-Kunjin, Dwellingup-Hotham, Katanning-Nampup, Naraling-Yuna, Northampton-Ajana, Quairading-Nunagin, Tambellup-Ongerup, Wagin-Dumbleyung Extension, Wickepin-Merredin, Wongan Hills-Mullewa, and the Bullfinch. There were these 12 railways, aggregating 648 miles, authorised by Parliament in that time. All the Bills, with the exception of the Bullfinch, were assented to by the Governor on the 16th February, 1911. Yet the Minister says that because we had four which had not been commenced in the following June we neglected the requirements of the country, and that he was doing very much better although he still has two on hand which he has not commenced. I cannot understand such an argument for a moment. Four out of 12 had not been commenced within four months, whereas the hon. member has filled the position for ten months and is only just beginning to make a start. Now, what is the position in regard to these lines? Take the Wickepin-Merredin to-day. In August: at the Merredin end 17 miles are cleared, 15 miles of earthworks constructed, and 20 miles of sleepers are on the ground; at the Wickepin end 15 miles have been cleared, 7 miles of earthworks constructed, and 9 miles of sleepers are on the ground.

I ask any practical man whether he considers that having the work well in hand, in full swing? At any rate, I tabled my motion at the end of June, and to-day that is the position. We know that clearing is scarcely worth mentioning on the railway lines in that country, and we know the earthworks are mostly light, while as to the sleepers, if it has taken the Minister 10 months to provide 20 miles of sleepers on that job, I wonder how long it will take to provide the whole of them.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You know very well it is impossible at this time of the year.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Why?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Because there is no water there.

Mr. George: Why not import some water?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We did, for the settlers.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: But surely the hon. member knows that if a contract had been let the contractor would have had to find the water. It is idle for him to say that because he did not have the water he could not start the lines. The Minister for Works said they had started the lines, and had built more than we did. The Honorary Minister contends that the lines could not be started because there is no water, while the Premier says they could not be started because there is no money. Now, what are we to understand? Are we to understand that it is because of the shortage of money, are we to understand that it is because of the shortage of material, are we to understand that it is because of the shortage of water, or are we to understand that it is the departmental system which is hanging up the works? As I said before, I do not want, or I did not want, to make any party matter out of this motion. I did not want to, but the hon. member has been so vindictive in his reply, so thoroughly condemnatory, so far as I am concerned, that he forces it into the position of a party question. Any amount of abuse, so far as I am concerned, cannot take away from the seriousness of the motion, notwithstanding that the hon. member has stated it is a direct at-

tack upon his own administration. It was never intended as such, but it was intended that we should not only utilise the whole of the labour of the Public Works Department which are available for departmental construction, but that we should also call in the aid of the contractors who have, up to the present, done excellent work in Western Australia. I am not concerned about the contractors as such, but I am concerned about the unemployed which exist within our midst, those hundreds of men who are walking about, and who wired down to the Minister from the Wickepin district asking when the railway would be started, in other words, when could they get work. Were these men likely to send those telegrams—I think it was in June—if the work had been there? Am I not justified in saying that hardly a tap had then been done, so far at any rate as these railways were concerned? Now, the next brilliant statement I have briefly to refer to is that to-day we are building 450 miles of railway, and that I had only a little over 200 miles going at any one time last year. I do not care twopence whether it is 450 or 4,050 miles; the fact of having the railways authorised and a few men scratching away at the clearing is not going to give the settlers their railways. We could have passed a Bill for the Trans-Australian railway continuation, and so put another 400 odd miles on to these, or we could have passed the Coolgardie-Esperance line and put another 100 odd miles on to the aggregate. The fact of having 450 miles of railway under construction—if you may call “under construction” a mere announcement made—conveys nothing, proves nothing. It is nothing to compare with the 200 miles of the previous year—200 miles which were almost completed, and which, in such condition, are a jolly sight better than 4,000 miles with only a few sleepers provided and a few miles of clearing performed. And this 450 miles which we have in hand are made up of the Wongan-Mullewa of 190 miles, which was passed by my Administration; the Wickepin-Merredin, of 120 miles, and the Quairading-

Nunagin, of 50 miles. There we have 360 miles of the lines for which the Minister is taking credit as being in hand. But, as I have pointed out, from his own words the work done on the whole of these lines is very little indeed. It merely consists of a few miles of clearing, as compared with the whole extent of the railway; a few miles of earthworks, and a few thousand sleepers on the ground. It is better far to have 232 miles well in hand, as we had when we left; it is better far to be in that position than to have 400 miles of railway with only a handful of men making a commencement on it. It seems the Minister contented himself, and has passed his glamour over his colleagues and blinded their judgment—I especially appeal to the Attorney General, because he ought not to allow anything to blind his judgment—the Minister has contented himself and his colleagues by letting the department finish the works we had got well in hand. It is only since Parliament met, only when there were likely to be questions and troubles, that any movement was attempted with regard to these other lines. Yet we have the Whip interjecting that the department is constructing at the rate of 16 miles per month more than we did. This can only be got at by setting this 450 miles recorded as being under construction against the 232 miles which we handed over last year. It means an increase of 200 miles in the year, which is the very limit of the Public Works Department, according to the Minister himself. It seems to me that the arguments of the Minister are at all sea. Let me just give another illustration with regard to the way in which he has put his case before the House. In respect to the Midland Junction workshops, there was nothing too bad for him to say about myself personally. He accused me of having delayed, and neglected to order some roofing material.

Mr. Lewis : It took five months to get the riveis.

Hon. FRANK WILSON : He accused me of having put up the walls before the roof was ready, and he said that the walls

were now ready to fall down again for want of the roof. It was claimed that we had blundered; and notwithstanding that, when I asked him if he had ordered the roof since taking office, he admitted that he had not done so, that it was ordered during my term. Yet he went on villifying me, and said I was a blunderer, and did not know what I was doing. The hon. member is always in that vein; he is for ever going to put up a record, he is about to build faster and better than anyone ever did before. He counts without his host, because he does not know that the control of the building of railways, as well as all other public works, is not directly in his hands, but lies with his responsible officers. Hence my interjection that it was a reflection on his responsible officers. We authorised the construction of large additions to the locomotive shops, and it was handed over to the departmental officials to get under way. If I remember rightly, it was ordered in August, 1910. The material for the roofing was included in the works; of course the whole job had to be completed, walls, roofing, and everything else. The material for the roof was cabled for to the old country immediately.

Mr. Lewis: Some of it has not arrived yet.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It does not matter, the material was cabled for. Yet the Minister accuses me of having waited until I had finished the walls before ordering the material for the roof. He said they would not do that sort of thing; in fact he went further and said I had forgotten to make preparation for the roof. It is not a part of the duty of a Minister to forget or to remember a roof. It is his part to authorise the work, and it is then the duty of the responsible officers to see that the proper material is ordered. First of all, we did not let the contract for building the walls. They were constructed departmentally. We did not forget the roof. I am making this explanation on behalf of those officers who cannot reply for themselves. The material was ordered within a month after the authorisation. It was delivered in March, 1911, and it had all to be con-

structed and put together. There was a lot of work in connection with the construction of this roof, special machinery was imported, drilling and other machinery, which, of course, will be utilised on a similar class of work in the future. The roof was manufactured in the shops and as the necessities of the railways would permit them to manufacture it. The strike materially interfered with the completion of the roof, the shops were held up for two months and yet we have this charge of gross blundering hurled at us. The Minister could not leave the question alone. He occupied about two pages of *Hansard* in accusing me of blundering in this direction. I do not think it is necessary to deal with many more of the illustrations which the Minister placed before the House. If it is a question of finance, as the Premier stated, and that they cannot go on the money market, and cannot find the money to construct the railways fast enough, if that is the true position, why not say so? I admit it is a valid excuse, although at the same time we should not be in the position of hanging up our works because of a want of money. It is contrary to the expressions which have fallen from the Premier on many occasions, when he declared he could get all the money he wanted, and that the Labour party were essentially a borrowing party, notwithstanding their platform to the contrary. It is also contrary to the half-expressed views that six millions of money will be wanted, and perhaps raised in a short time for public works.

Mr. Heitmann: What do you call half-expressed views?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Why, half-expressed; the hon. gentleman is half-expressed at the present time.

Mr. J. B. Stubbs: It was half-contradicted, too.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I could go through many other phases of the Public Works Department. I could refer to contracts which have been let and turned out cheaply and expeditiously by the contractors, as I did in my opening speech, and I could give other instances which have come under my notice since, all of

which show that we can effectually and well utilise contractors to carry out the works of the country, and all of which show it is unwise to tie ourselves down to a hard and fast rule as to contract or departmental work. The hon. member's speeches from time to time, and in years gone by, prove that these are his views if he dared to express them to-day. I know full well he said he wanted a check on public works expenditure departmentally, just as he wanted a check on the contractor, and therefore he did some work by day labour, and that has always been the principle that has actuated the Government while I had the honour of being a member of the administration until October last. We would see that no contractor got an undue advantage of the State, and if it were necessary we would construct departmentally to keep a check on them, and otherwise we would utilise the contractors and their plants where we could do it economically to get the work carried out expeditiously and well. The motion was not moved for party purposes, notwithstanding what members have said to the contrary.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: What did you move it for?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: To get the works constructed, and because the Works Department is congested, and the Government cannot possibly put the great works of this great and growing State in hand and complete them by day labour. The officers of the department are not numerous enough. In a contract it takes a staff of 10 to 12 officers with an engineer constantly on the job to see that the work is expeditiously carried out. We had four contracts let a year before I left office with staffs such as I have mentioned controlling the work, and urging it on, and yet Ministers think that by giving the Engineer-in-Charge, Mr. Thompson, instructions to go on he is going to get the same results.

Mr. Heitmann: Is it not a fact you require the same officers under a contract as by day labour?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I instanced New South Wales, and only did so to show that there at any rate the Minister

was in a quandary and saw that it was essential to utilise the assistance of contractors. He said, as mentioned, that he was going to see if he could not utilise the contractors on a percentage basis. He remarked that there were contractors who had special knowledge and special experience and also had at their command certain plant. Of course, in addition they had the men who went around with them year by year and who were men they could rely on to see that the work was properly carried out. He was going to utilise the contractors, though by doing so he was departing from his principles to do the work by day labour, because he is a Labour Minister, and that is the rule of the labour congress that all work shall be done departmentally, but he thought that he might, by paying them a percentage on their contracts, induce them to take charge of works and carry them out expeditiously and get the benefit of their expert advice and management. The Minister for Works seemed to be in ignorance of the idea. I quoted it from the remarks of the Minister for Works in New South Wales himself. I had no communication with him. I presume it is true. The statement appeared to be official, and there has been no denial of it. I instanced the fact that the New South Wales Government on one occasion had taken the contract off the hands of a contractor before it was completed, the same contractor who built our Port Hedland to Marble Bar line. Mr. Teesdale Smith, and he immediately went to another Labour Government in South Australia who handed him a departmental job to complete under his schedule rates. I instance that because it proves that two Labour Governments can do exactly opposite things and be acting in the interest of their State.

Member: They are not hide bound.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I am trying to get through the hide, and I cannot. It is too thick. I might try till doomsday and not get members to listen seriously and weigh earnestly the arguments put before them. The other side have met me with a charge of insincerity, and have continuously said that I was insincere.

The member for Williams-Narrogin, a young man with all his future before him, charges me with being insincere; yet he attended a deputation a few months ago and urged the Government to construct the Yilliminning-Kondinin railway by contract, if they could do it quicker that way.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The Minister says he can do it quicker by day labour.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The hon. member will swallow anything the Minister tells him, because he is under the whip of the caucus. Are the settlers, who are undoubtedly languishing for want of these railway facilities going to be equally and as easily satisfied as the member who professes to represent them in this Chamber?

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You wanted to re-survey that particular railway.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I dare say the hon. member would do with a little re-survey.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It would delay the work.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It might for a few weeks possibly, but that is no reason why it has not been started for ten months. The Minister got up and charged me with the responsibility. The Minister for Works says the leader of the Opposition is responsible for the unemployed, that he is responsible for the settlers not getting the railway facilities, that he is responsible for the shortage of money in the Treasury chest, that he is responsible for everything that is ill to-day; that, forsooth, because the Government are unable to carry their own responsibilities. I object to this casting of the responsibility on the Opposition. It was all very well in the first session of Parliament last year, and if the hon. member recollects, I stated at the close of last session that, at any rate, I thought he should not put the responsibility on the Opposition after they had been long enough in office to carry their own responsibilities. I said that I hoped the charging of those who went before them with the responsibility for their actions after they had been ten months in office would not be repeated because it

was simply absurd. I hope we will not hear any more about this question of responsibility, but that the Ministers will be prepared to accept the responsibility which the country—a grateful country no doubt—has placed on their shoulders; that they will be prepared to explain their deeds, good deeds and misdeeds, when the time comes; and they will be prepared to state publicly and plainly the reason why they have not started these railways which the settlers require; that they will be prepared to explain why they did not take advantage of the plant, and men who are in Western Australia, and who are able to assist them in the construction of the railways.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why did you not utilise the plant of the private saw-mills, instead of building two of your own?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I did utilise all the plant in the private saw-mills available, but there was no more available, and we had to build one or two of our own.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They could have given you twenty years' supplies.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Why is not the Government using them now?

Mr. Green: Because we can do it cheaper ourselves.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: That has to be proved. I have said before, and have proved it by my acts, that I have not been inconsistent, but that, when it suited the country and paid the country to do the work departmentally, I should do it. If I could get a fair deal by contract, I would do the work by contract. If I could have got a fair deal from the saw-millers, I should not have countenanced the construction of saw-mills. But we could not get the material supplied at the price we thought we should; hence we put up a couple of saw-mills as a check upon those gentlemen in order that they might be taught that we must have fair terms and conditions for the State. That is what I am asking the Minister for Works to do to-night, and not to go from the frying-pan into the fire, to use a homely illustration. I ask him not to go from the extreme of "all contracts" to the extreme of "no contracts" and "all departmental

work," but to wisely and justly, in the interests of the people generally, without paying any heed to the fads and shibboleths of his own party or of this party, to utilise both the contract and day labour in the best interests of the State as expeditiously as possible. I hope the Chamber will be satisfied with the motion. The intention was that the motion should carry instructions to the Government to utilise the services of contractors, not to abandon day labour, but, wherever possible in subsequent works authorised by Parliament, to call tenders in order that we might have that check and that expedition which we have advocated.

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

Ayes	12
Noes	24

Majority against	..	12
		—

AYES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. A. E. Plesse
Mr. George	Mr. A. N. Plesse
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. Male	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Wisdom
Mr. Monger	Mr. Layman

(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Bath	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Bolton	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Collier	Mr. Munste
Mr. Dwyer	Mr. O'Loughlen
Mr. Foley	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Green	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Heltmann	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Walker
Mr. Johnston	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Lander	Mr. Swan

(Teller).

Question thus negatived.

[The Deputy Speaker (Mr. McDowall) took the Chair.]

BILL—SHEARERS AND AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS ACCOMMODATION.

Second Reading.

Mr. McDONALD (Gascoyne) in moving the second reading said: In submitting this measure to provide for the pro-

per and efficient accommodation of shearers, shed hands and agricultural labourers, there is no need to make a long speech, for the simple reason that, so far as the first and the second portions of the Bill are concerned, they are, with a couple of slight exceptions exactly the same as those contained in the measure which was passed through this House last session. The member for West Perth speaking a short time ago referred to those who were not biassed or were not of a suspicious nature. If there are any of those in this Assembly I appeal to them for support for this measure, and since one can never tell if there be any in this Assembly to whom such an expression might not apply, I would appeal to them also. Speaking last session when introducing a similar Bill I quoted, it might be remembered from a report which was given to the Western Australian branch of the Australian Workers' Union, commonly known as the Shearers' Union. That report, dealing with the hut accommodation for shearers and shed hands in various portions of the State, referred to the fact that with one or two honourable exceptions, accommodation for these men was absolutely lacking. The report went on to say that in one particular shed on the Great Southern railway line the men were put into sheds which had formerly been used as pigsties, and in which pigs at night time still used to go. I do not know if hon. members are laughing at my expression but I can promise them, as I did last session, to produce for their inspection the report to which I have referred. During the shearing, or that portion of the shearing which takes place in the north-western portion of this State, and which is just finishing some of the men who have come down from one of the best known stations in the North-West complained that the only accommodation given to them on that station was a lean-to against a stable regularly used for the horses of the homestead. In speaking last year it might be remembered that I was, in point of time, about the most recent arrival in the House; as a matter of fact I think it was on the fifth day of my attendance that I, recognising

the urgency of having this measure put through, asked for leave to introduce the Bill. It was then hurled at me by those opposed to us, not exactly politically but industrially, that it was not on account of any desire on my part to benefit the shearers or shed hands, but that I was moving in the hope of gaining for myself a certain amount of political kudos. It was also said that from no union in this State had any request come for a Hut Accommodation Bill. Immediately after the end of last session a conference was held in Sydney of the Australian Workers Union, at which 48,000 members of the union were represented, and there a motion was carried unanimously that it be a strong recommendation from that conference to the Government of Western Australia that a Hut Accommodation Bill be immediately brought forward on behalf of the members of the union resident in the State of Western Australia. As I have said, the Bill now before the House is practically the same as the one which passed through this Chamber last session and I would ask permission to refer to one or two of the alterations which it has been found necessary to make. The first one is in Clause 5, which deals with the appointment of inspectors. The measure of last year, which was read on the 21st November, 1911, provided that police constables or police officers might be appointed inspectors. Since then those interested in the measure have gone into consultation over it and have come to the conclusion that it would be better to have independent inspectors appointed by the Government, and on their suggestion that portion of the clause dealing with the eligibility of police officers as inspectors has been struck out. Clause 7 has been somewhat amplified. The Bill last year provided—

That the employer may, in any such case as aforesaid, deduct the cost of any work pursuant to either of the foregoing subsections, in equal parts, from the wages due or accruing due to such shearers, or may recover such cost as a debt from such shearers jointly in any court of competent jurisdiction; but so that he shall not be entitled to recover from any one person more than five

pounds in respect of the cost of any such work done on any one occasion.

That has been altered to the following:—

The shearers aforesaid shall be jointly and severally liable to the employer for the cost of any cleansing, etc.

I want to point out that although the wording of the clause is slightly different from that in last year's Bill, still the sense practically remains the same, and I do not anticipate any opposition on that account. Another alteration in the wording of the Act will be found in that portion dealing with the regulations, which was Clause 15 in the Bill of last year and which is Clause 21 in the measure before members. This proves that if either House of Parliament passes a resolution at any time within 20 days after the regulations have been laid before the House disallowing any regulation, such regulation shall thereupon cease to have effect. That is giving power to Parliament to deal with the regulations that have been brought forward by the Governor-in-Council. To that also I am sure members will have no objection. An addition has been made to the Bill to provide for sufficient and proper accommodation for agricultural labourers. As I said before, the portion of the Bill dealing with shearers and shed hands passed through this House last year, certainly with amendments, and it is that Bill with the amendments which I have brought forward to-night, and I want to say that no hon. member in this House will ask that accommodation such as is deemed sufficient for shearers and shed hands should be denied to agricultural labourers. Seeing, therefore, that I can commend the Bill to the careful consideration of members of both sides I have much pleasure in moving—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. Mitchell, debate adjourned.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. McDowall in the Chair, the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

Clause 4—Interpretation (Hon. Frank Wilson had moved an amendment—That paragraph (d) of the definition of “industrial matters,” be struck out):

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The amendment had been moved because preference was not desirable, whether it were on the side of the employer or on the side of the employee. No person should have the power to demand the labour of a worker as a right, nor should any union have a right to demand that its members should have preference of employment. To allow that, would be to go back to the conditions of the fourteenth century, which the Attorney General had so eloquently referred to in moving the second reading, when an Act of Parliament compelled men to work for certain masters at certain rates of pay. If an employer by the order of any court could demand a man's work against that man's inclination, he was practically acting as a slave master.

The Attorney General: It only means that a claim of that sort can be considered by the court.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The power given to the court was a power to be exercised.

The Attorney General: No.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Then why should the power be given to the court?

The Attorney General: This is merely a definition.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: When there was a definition it followed that there must be a clause dealing with it. No one could adduce sound reasons, unless it were on behalf of a small section of unionists, why there should be a provision of this sort in the Bill. Members knew that where the power had been in operation it had not prevented strikes, but certainly had been the cause of a certain amount of friction and disruption.

Mr. Munsie: Because the workers could not get to the court.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The workers could always get to the court, although the procedure might have been more tedious than it would be under this measure. For that improvement the Attorney General was to be com-

mended. But that had no bearing on the paragraphs which implied preference to a section of the community. It was interfering with the rights of the individual, whether master or man, to deny him the right to sell his labour in the most congenial market.

Mr. GEORGE: There was no right which could confer on Parliament the power to say that any one class of taxpayers should have preference over any other class of taxpayers. Why should an employer have the right to command the services of any particular man in a trade? Surely Parliament was not going to do away with the right of a man to work for whom he pleased. If a man had personal objections to working for a particular employer, was that employer to have the right to approach the court and ask that the man be compelled to work for him? That was a destruction of the liberty which all men claimed to possess, and in the same way, if preference were to be given to unionists we would be denying the right to work to men who did not belong to unions, and by denying them the right to work we would be denying them the right to live. How could there be anything like fairness or justice in such a proposal? Let members consider this matter, not from the cramped position of unionism or the caucus, but from the position they held because of what preceding generations had done to rescue the worker from the conditions of slavery to which the Attorney General had referred.

Mr. A. A. Wilson: Who rescued them?

Mr. GEORGE: It was not a matter of who had done it; what had been done was good? Members should be chary ere they placed the slightest stain or blot on the escutcheon of the unions, which they claimed had assisted to raise the working man from his degradation. There could be no degradation so great as saying that a man must work for a certain employer, or refusing him the right to work at all unless he belonged to a union. Let members consider what would be their own feelings if any one of them was claimed by an employer for whom he did not wish to work. Would they not go to gaol rather than work for an em-

ployer whom they despised, even though they were ordered to do so by a judge. If it was not right to compel a man to work it was not right that he should be compelled to work unwillingly for a certain employer.

Mr. MUNSIE: The best method of settling industrial troubles was by conciliation and arbitration, and the trades unionists of the State were responsible for the existence of the present Act. Employers, if they so desired it, should have the preference of the services of unionists. Many employers sent to union offices for workers instead of advertising. The object of the amendment was not so much to delete giving preference to employers to use unemployed union labour, as it was a means of deleting that portion of the Bill which gave preference to unionists.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The discussion was decidedly premature. This was merely a definition. The paragraph merely included the claim of employers to employ unionists in preference among the matters a court could listen to. It was purposely done to avoid litigation. Volume 12 of the Commonwealth Law Reports contained a whole case dealing with nothing more than the definition of an "industry" and "industrial matters," and there was no desire here to have costly litigation over these things. All the definition did was to make it competent for this matter to be considered as an industrial matter. It was an extension of the right of the employer to obtain the best services he could get. Unionism meant nothing if it did not mean the collection of qualified men for a particular work. If a man believed that the most skilled workers were in the union he should have the right to claim their services, and if there was a dispute on the point, then the court could hear it. Whether a man had the right to insist on those in unions working for him was a matter for the court to decide, but in order that the court might decide the point it was provided in this paragraph that such a dispute should come within the definition of an industrial matter. The whole object was to enable the court to

hear every possible kind of case relating to an industry. Delete paragraph (d) and there would be disputes that the court could not hear.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: This interpretation covered a principle, and members were entitled to take into consideration what its effect would be in this interpretation clause. Every matter brought under the definition of industrial matters was a matter the court could deal with specifically, and by putting this in the definition clause it went without saying that in the subsequent clauses dealing with the powers of the court any claim by the employer to the right of the services of unemployed unionists the court could deal with. It sounded very well to say the employer got the right class of labour. He had yet to learn that expert labour was only to be secured from a trades union. He denied the right of any trades union to declare that in its ranks alone could be secured the quality of labour necessary for the successful carrying out of an industry. He would not go to a trades union for a bricklayer, because he knew that union bricklayers were, by resolution of the union, only allowed to lay a given number of bricks per day.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: That is incorrect.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: In America men had been fired out of unions for having presumed to make records in the laying of bricks. He would not object to exclusively employing trades unionists if it were possible to get a guarantee that the best men would be offered. The argument that the paragraph should be allowed to stand in justice to the employer was too thin. When did ever a union trouble to give justice to an employer? He understood that the Government departments were using the Trades Hall to get a supply of labour when they wanted it.

The Attorney General: That is news to me.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It was understood that the information was correct.

The Attorney General: I hope it is true.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: There was no reason why the court should have power to say that certain labour should be compelled to serve a certain employer, and that an employer could prosecute any unionist who refused to serve him. What sort of service would an employer get from a man who did not wish to serve him? No sane employer would wish to have the court issue instructions compelling certain workers to give him their services. This power to make any member of a union work for a given employer was only put in by way of off-set to the preference to unionists principle. Trades unionists were a good body of men, but they were trammelled and hampered and bound up by their own officials. He had often found occasion to refer to the tyranny of trade unionism.

The Attorney General: At all events what we are now discussing is merely a definition.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It was advisable to strike out all definitions relating to the giving of power to the court to show preference. Whoever had heard in a free country of an industrial union of employers demanding the services of an industrial union of workers? If an award were given in that direction how could employers get satisfactory duty from unwilling workers? He would move subsequently that the next paragraph be deleted in order that everyone should be put on an equality.

Mr. GEORGE: Under Clause 106 provision was made with regard to employers or workers refusing to offer or accept employment upon the terms of an award or agreement. If that happened it partook of the nature of a lock-out or strike, and that meant gaol. Yet in the face of this definition the Attorney General told us, with all the force of his eloquence, that it gave the employers more power than they had before. How could inconsistency go any further?

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: The principle involved was repulsive to a very large body of people in this country, and although members on his side might not have the power to strike out the definition, we were there to enter our protest. The Attorney General told us very plausibly

that the principle came later in the Bill. If we agreed to wait till then, he would ask why we did not object when the interpretation clause was under consideration. The whole principle of the Bill was defined in the interpretation clause.

The Attorney General: Will you give us a pledge you will not repeat this argument when you reach the clause?

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: No. It was passing strange that now we had a great democracy formed in the name of liberty it attempted to overstep the mark and take away that liberty. This principle was not only repulsive to employers, but to a large body of workers, and he protested against the danger which it involved.

Mr. MONGER: I move—

That progress be reported.

The Attorney General: What, when a vote is about to be taken?

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

Ayes	13
Noes	24

Majority against .. 11

AYES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. A. E. Piesse
Mr. George	Mr. A. N. Piesse
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. Male	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Wisdom
Mr. Monger	Mr. Layman
Mr. Moore	(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Bath	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Collier	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Dooley	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Dwyer	Mr. Swan
Mr. Foley	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Green	Mr. Walker
Mr. Heltmann	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnston	(Teller).
Mr. Lander	

Motion thus negatived.

Amendment (Hon. Frank Wilson's) put and declared negatived on the voices.

Mr. Monger: You decided, Mr. Chairman, before the "Noes" were heard, and besides, I was on my feet be-

fore you put the question. I was going to speak to the amendment as moved by the leader of the Opposition.

The Chairman: I have declared that the "Ayes" have it, and I cannot listen to the hon. member.

Mr. Monger: I join issue with your ruling.

The Chairman: The hon. member is at liberty to do so.

Mr. Monger: Do you want me to write out my protest?

The Chairman: The hon. member may do so.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

Dissent from Chairman's ruling.

The Chairman: I have to report that a motion was submitted by me to hon. members in the usual manner by asking those in favour to say "Aye" and those of the contrary opinion to say "No." Both sides answered and the "Ayes" preponderating, I gave it to the "Ayes." Then this protest from the member for York was submitted—"I join issue with the ruling of the Deputy Chairman of Committees on the ground of the question having been decided before the 'Noes' were called."

Mr. Monger: I was desirous of entering my protest in the first instance against the tyranny of the Attorney General in his desire to continue a debate which is altogether out of gear this evening. We have heard a great deal during the evening of particular paragraphs.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is out of order.

Mr. Monger: I absolutely disagree, and I think a majority of members on this side of the House disagree with the ruling of the Deputy Chairman of Committees.

Mr. Heitmann: On what grounds?

Mr. Monger: On the grounds stated in my protest. Before the Deputy Chairman had put the question I had risen to speak. I do not want to throw it out as a threat, but every paragraph of the clause in the Bill will have to be spoken to. I am only asking you, Mr. Speaker, whether my protest against the

ruling of the Deputy Chairman of Committees is in order, and whether I can be allowed to resume.

Hon. Frank Wilson: So far as my memory serves me the position is that the Deputy Chairman of Committees gave his decision too quickly. He put the question and said "All in favour say 'Aye'." There was a moderate cry of "Ayes" and before the "Noes" could voice their opinion, the Deputy Chairman gave the decision in favour of the "Ayes."

Mr. Allen: Simultaneously with the cries of "No."

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is the position the hon. member complained about.

The Minister for Lands: The hon. member for York complained that he was on his feet when the question was put. As a matter of fact, the Deputy Chairman of Committees affirms that he gave both sides of the House an opportunity of speaking and that he gave the decision for the side which he considered preponderated. In view of the fact that there is a greater number of members on this side, it is only natural I presume that he would give it to the "Ayes."

Mr. Speaker: There has been a misunderstanding, but the Chairman has already decided, and the Chairman undoubtedly is the person who should decide in a case of this description when the House is in Committee. My duty on such an occasion is to support the Chairman's ruling, and I therefore have to rule against the question raised by the member for York.

Committee resumed.

Mr. A. A. WILSON moved—

That in paragraph (e) in line 1 the words "the claim" and in lines 2 and 3 the words "be employed in preference to non-members" be struck out, and at the beginning of the paragraph the words "All workers under this Act shall be" be inserted.

The paragraph would then read, "All workers under this Act shall be members of an industrial union of workers."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The amendment was out of order. Para-

graph (e) was a mere definition and such an amendment as the one proposed could not be inserted there.

Mr. A. A. WILSON: I will withdraw it provided that the Attorney General will give me an opportunity of moving it somewhere else.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment could not be accepted.

Mr. A. A. WILSON: It had been moved and he had not yet withdrawn it.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment was not put before the Committee properly and therefore no notice would be taken of it.

Mr. A. A. Wilson: The matter will be brought up later.

Mr. MONGER moved—

That progress be reported.

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

Ayes	13
Noes	21
Majority against ..	8

AYES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. A. E. Plesse
Mr. George	Mr. A. N. Plesse
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. Male	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Wisdom
Mr. Monger	Mr. Layman
Mr. Moore	

(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Bath	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Dooley	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Dwyer	Mr. O'Loughlen
Mr. Foley	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Green	Mr. Swan
Mr. Heltmann	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Walker
Mr. Johnston	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Lander	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Lewis	

(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

Hon. FRANK WILSON moved an amendment—

That paragraph (e) be struck out.

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

Ayes	13
Noes	20
Majority against ..	7

AYES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. A. E. Plesse
Mr. George	Mr. A. N. Plesse
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. Male	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Wisdom
Mr. Monger	Mr. Layman
Mr. Moore	

(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Bath	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Dwyer	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Foley	Mr. O'Loughlen
Mr. Green	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Heltmann	Mr. Swan
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Walker
Mr. Lander	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Underwood

(Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. GEORGE: The Labour party should be congratulated on the fact that at last they had seen fit to deal with the question of apprentices in a proper spirit. Not many years ago there had existed a very great objection to apprentices, but it was gratifying to see that this prejudice had been overcome.

Mr. MUNSIE: Before the clause was finally passed he would like an assurance from the Attorney General that provision was made against the recurrence of such a contingency as had occurred in 1908, when the tailors' union of Perth had been ruled out of court on a technicality.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: All those cases which had occasioned difficulties in the local arbitration court and the arbitration courts of Australia had furnished the material for the drafting of this Bill, and the alterations of the old Act were all in the direction of facilitating access to the court and the dealing with matters in the court when the cases were taken there.

Mr. MUNSIE: The definition of "industrial union" was given as "an industrial union registered under this Act." Sub-clause 2 of Clause 6 stated that any branch of an industrial union might become registered as a separate union. In Sub-clause 3 of Clause 98 it was distinctly stated that any union affiliated with an industrial association must obtain the consent of the head body before they could cite a case to the arbitration court.

In the case of the Federated Miners' Union, the executive was registered as an industrial association, but the branches were all registered separately as industrial unions. Was this definition of an industrial union going to give to any branch the right to go to the court and put the executive to the cost of fighting a case without first having obtained the consent of the executive?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The definition included only an industrial union which was registered. It was true that a branch might become registered as a separate union, but when it was registered it was no longer a branch.

Mr. MUNSIE: Every branch of the Miner's Union was registered as a separate union, and the Bill would validate all those registrations. The point at issue was could any one of those unions cite a case to the court without the consent of the executive?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Bill anticipated cases of that kind. Part 2 dealt with unions and associations, and stated what a branch could do, and what it could not do. All branches of a union became industrial unions, but what powers they had as such were dealt with in Part 2, which was not now under consideration.

Mr. GEORGE: The interpretation of a "strike" was fairly comprehensive, but would it deal with that form of cessation of work called a "conference"? The Attorney General was endeavouring to deal with anything that might occur to interfere with the working of an industry, but had he taken into consideration the word "conference" and was it covered by the definition of "strike"?

The Attorney General: It includes anything and everything which is of the nature of a cessation of work or refusal to work by any number of workers acting in combination.

Mr. GEORGE: But would it cover any cessation of work for any cause whatsoever? There had been conferences not for the purpose of interfering with the business of the employer, but that had been the effect. Would such instances be covered by the definition of "strike"?

The Attorney General: Yes, if it is done with a view to coercing the employer.

Mr. GEORGE: Assuming a body of workers chose to go into conference and gave a plausible reason for so doing, but the conference meant a cessation of work and the stoppage of the employer's business, had the employer any remedy?

The Attorney General: Undoubtedly. Anything that is done in combination to stop work comes within this definition.

Mr. GEORGE: If a number of workmen desired a certain thing and asked their employer for it and did not get it, they could, instead of declaring the reason why they had gone into conference, advance any excuse. Would this clause deal properly with a cessation of work in such circumstances?

The Attorney General: Undoubtedly.

Mr. GEORGE: Under this new fangled invention of a conference it is quite possible for the men to hold a conference and cause a stoppage of work without advancing a reason which would bring them under this clause. He wanted the Attorney General to make the clause deal with any act which caused a cessation of work.

Mr. A. A. WILSON moved an amendment—

That in the definition of "Worker," the word "any" between "of" and "age" be struck out and the words "not less than fourteen years of" be inserted in lieu.

Mr. George: Why not make it 16?

Mr. A. A. WILSON: It would interfere with apprentices, and some people cannot afford to keep their children until they are 16 years of age.

Amendment (to strike out "any") put and passed.

Mr. GEORGE: It would be better to make the age 16.

The Attorney General: You will knock out apprentices if you make it 16; 14 is consistent with the school age and everything else.

Mr. GEORGE: The age of 14 was too young. A boy of that age might be doing work for which he was not physically fit. The climate in Australia made a big difference in this respect.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: If we made the age 16 we would not prevent boys from going to work but only from coming under the operation of this measure. The Education Act allowed them to leave school and the Factories Act allowed to go to work at the age of 14; on the other hand every member realised that 14 was too low an age for boys to start work.

Amendment (to insert "not less than 14 years of") put and passed; the clause as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5—Penalties:

Mr. GEORGE: The penalties were numerous and he thought they were bringing people under this measure almost on a level with criminals.

The Attorney General: You must have something substantial.

Mr. GEORGE: If it were necessary, well and good.

Clause put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.50 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 15th August, 1912.

Question: Quairading Lock-up	1120
Bills: Methodist Church Property Trust, Report stage	1120
Tramways Purchase, 2r., Amendment, six months, defeated, select com.	1120
White Phosphorus Matches Prohibition, message	1152
Adjournment, one week	1152

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

QUESTION—QUAIRADING LOCK-UP.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (without notice) asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, If his attention has been called to the condition of affairs existing at Quairading,

where there are no police quarters, and where three men have been chained to a tree all night in bad weather. 2, If steps are being taken to remedy this state of affairs.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: I am quite willing to reply to the question. My attention has been called to this condition of affairs, and I propose to take steps to remedy it.

BILL—METHODIST CHURCH PROPERTY TRUST.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—TRAMWAYS PURCHASE.

Second Reading—Amendment, six months.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East): I do not think it is necessary for me to say very much, or to speak at any length in regard to this Bill, as a great deal has been said by previous speakers. One can only judge the merits of a Bill by the reasons put forward by its sponsors when introducing it to the House. If one were to judge this Bill solely by the utterances of the Government I say without hesitation members would have no other choice than to vote directly against the Bill. I have listened with considerable interest to the able and eloquent speech of Mr. Colebatch, and let me say that I thoroughly agree with every argument uttered by that hon. gentleman. Again I say, were we to judge the Bill by what has been said in its favour by the Government, and against it by Mr. Colebatch, we should have no choice but to vote directly against the measure. We are told that this is a Bill for the purchase of a certain property from the tramway company. It is a business proposition and naturally one looks, in the first place, to see if we are getting value for our money. Let us take the case as it is placed before Parliament by the Government. The Government stated that they did not enter into negotiations without having first got their expert officers to advise them in connection with the value of the property. They instructed