

takes action for failure to pay rates and causes land to be sold, only 12 months from the date of the order is allowed to complete the sale. The sale is not completed until the purchaser has registered the transfer at the Titles Office. Sometimes delay takes place and the buyer, generally through ignorance, does not take action within the 12 months to register the transfer. Hence he is unable to get a title. The Bill will make it lawful for the Registrar of Titles to register such a transfer provided no encumbrance has been registered after the 12 months has expired. I move—

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

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*House adjourned at 7.35 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 10th September, 1924.*

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

### QUESTION—RAILWAY MATTERS, TAMMIN AND KELLERBERRIN.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What amount was paid as compensation for injuries received by passengers in alighting from trains at Tammin railway station? 2, Will he go into the question of providing this big wheat centre with a platform? 3, Will he also, in view of present growth of Kellerberrin, go into the question of providing Kellerberrin station with an overhead bridge?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Nil. 2, The question has already been considered on many occasions, and it has been decided not to depart from the

policy indicated by Subsection 2 of Section 40 of the Government Railways Act, 1904. 3, It is not considered that the capital expenditure which would be required to provide an overhead bridge at Kellerberrin station is justified.

### MOTION—AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES.

Debate resumed from the 27th August on the motion by Mr. Latham—

*That in the opinion of this House a Royal Commission should be appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the best means of providing permanent water in the agricultural areas of the State, and for the distribution and payment of same.*

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (Honorary Minister—Kalgoorlie) [4.36]: I oppose the motion. It is generally recognised, I believe, that the present Government are in full sympathy with the wants and requirements of those who are engaged in the agricultural industry here. I took notice, when the hon. member was speaking to this motion, that he said the previous Government had done everything possible in this direction with the funds at their disposal. Let me assure the hon. member that the present Government will also do everything possible. I sympathise with the hon. member on this subject. The Government realise that everything possible must be done to provide water supplies for the people settled on and developing our agricultural areas. But, after all, it is not a question of a Royal Commission, but a question of finding the necessary funds. If I could get the money to undertake the works now in hand, the hon. member would have nothing to complain of regarding water supply. The hon. member also stated that in his opinion this State had not an engineer competent to undertake the work. May I be permitted to point out to him that the engineers to-day in the employ of the Government, more especially those in the Public Works and Water Supply Departments, are more conversant with the subject of water conservation in Australia than any engineer in any other State of the Commonwealth. I know personally of men who have been engaged on that particular work for as long as 25 years, and I say without fear of contradiction that those men are better qualified than any imported man could be to undertake such work here. Only recently proposals have been laid before the present Administration for providing water supplies in the very districts mentioned by the mover. Plans and specifications are now in the Water Supply Department for consideration by the engineers, but there is only one thing that is hanging up the project, and that is the question of money.

The Leader of the Opposition will agree that providing we could get a million pounds now, that amount of money could very well and very properly be expended on water supplies to the agricultural areas. I say this for the purpose of demonstrating to the House, and also to the agricultural community, that the present Government are sympathetic towards the needs of the country districts and will, when funds are available, provide water supplies for those who to-day are putting up requests in that direction. I must stress that the engineers now employed by the Government in connection with the gold-fields and agricultural water supplies are fully competent, without any Royal Commission and without any importation of oversea engineers, to put in hand and carry out all such works as are necessary in the interests of our agricultural industry. Therefore I am against the appointment of the proposed Royal Commission. We can very well do the job by ourselves. Our engineers are thoroughly competent, and the Government are sympathetic, and I am confident that the Opposition will assist the Government in this connection.

Mr. LINDSAY (Toodyay) [4.41]: I am sorry that the Minister opposes the motion, because in my opinion an investigation should be made. Not that I consider our present engineers lack the necessary knowledge to decide the question. I am indeed pleased to have an opportunity of discussing the matter so soon after becoming a member of the House. I congratulate the member for York (Mr. Latham) on having moved the motion so soon after the general election. While he was speaking, the Premier interjected, "The matter is more urgent now than it was before." Had it not been for the hon. gentleman's interjection, probably I should not have spoken. This particular matter has caused more public meetings and more discussion on the wheat belt than any other matter. It is the most urgent question we have to deal with, and it has been urgent ever since the wheat belt was settled; that is to say, it has been urgent for many years. If I had read the Premier's interjection in the Press before I became a member of Parliament, I would have thought it was sarcastic. However, being now a member of Parliament, I take it that the Premier was seeking information, and that he made the remark because the member for York, when Deputy Leader of the Country Party of 18 members, failed to bring the question before the House, though frequently requested to do so. He has waited until he is in the cold shades of opposition, waited until such time as it is evident that the motion will not be carried. He is rather late in bringing the subject forward. I have here a long series of resolutions to prove that the question has been urgent for a very long time. They date back to 1921. I shall not

weary the House by reading all of them, but shall merely quote one. I have attended meetings of the political party as a deputation from my district on this very question. Things were very bad in the Toodyay East district during 1921, and I repeatedly visited Perth on behalf of the settlers in that district. At a combined conference which was held, the following resolution was carried:—

That this joint meeting of the executive of the Country Party affirms the urgent necessity for the Government operating with a view to making adequate arrangements for water supplies in the wheat belt, and that with this object in view arrangements should be immediately made to have a complete survey carried out, in order to definitely ascertain the cost involved.

That resolution expresses practically what the motion asks for. In those days, of course, the hon. member would not move it. I have a strong recollection of meeting him some time ago, when this matter was being discussed. Evidently on that occasion I said something he did not like, and in his reply to me he spoke two truths—he does not always speak the truth. He said to me, "You will be a member of Parliament yourself after the next election, and you will find things in Parliament are not as you think they are." The hon. member was right in both predictions: I am a member of Parliament now, and I quite agree that things here are not as I thought they were. I was certainly not aware that it is so easy to put a motion on the Notice Paper and have it discussed by the House.

Mr. Richardson: Easy to get it carried, too, I expect you will find.

Mr. LINDSAY: I particularly mention that episode because the Honorary Minister in charge of water supply is opposing the motion.

Mr. Latham: You are not making out a very good case on the strength of that evidence, anyhow.

Mr. LINDSAY: If the member for York had moved this motion during the last Parliament, he could have got it carried. Unfortunately the Government are opposing the motion to-day. I want to assure the Minister that it is a burning question out there. Every since 1914 I have been battling with this problem to see if we could not get something better than we have had. Past Governments have spent a good deal of money on water conservation in the wheat belt. We have had dams sunk all around the country. Unfortunately they could more properly be called pot-holes. They are merely dams of 1,000 yards, and are of no use except to the men adjoining them. We have also had boring parties out through the country, and generally a good deal of money has been wasted. In consequence we have to-day dams that never have held water and never will. I had the Minister for Agriculture through my district the other day. The crops out there are good

because we have had the necessary rains, but there are very few dams in the district with any great quantity of water in them. In the eastern part of the district we have large areas of forest country, always flat, with the result that the water will not run into the dams. So the farmers cannot carry sheep. However, in the near future sheep will be essential, because much of the land is becoming dirty and only by sheep can it be kept clean. The Minister has certain men out in my district investigating these problems. Whether that is the right way of handling the question, I do not know. Large parts of the district cannot be supplied by the existing dams, whether they be called key dams or district water supplies. What we are all waiting for is a comprehensive water supply such as would be furnished by an extension of the goldfields pipe line. That will be the only permanent solution of the problem. We have been agitating for this scheme for the past ten years, but are always faced with the question, "Why don't you sink your own dams?" We have sunk dams, but in doing so we realise that the Government will eventually give us a water supply and charge us for it, and so the money we have put into dams shall have been wasted. That fear has stopped development in the district. That is why I say we should have a Royal Commission that would let the people know definitely whether we are likely to get a reliable water supply from the extension of the goldfields scheme. This water problem is not confined to Western Australia but extends to the other wheat States of the Commonwealth. Victoria has a permanent water supply for her agricultural districts, and within the last few days New South Wales has started on a big scheme for the tablelands. I have here a newspaper clipping dated Sydney, 29th August, as follows:—

Approval has been given by the New South Wales Public Works Committee to a water supply scheme for the south-west tablelands at an estimated cost of £1,616,000. The water will be lifted from the Murrumbidgee River and supplied to Cootamundra, Temora, Wyalong, Young, and Grenfell. Electrical turbines, driven by power generated at Burrenjack reservoir, will be used for lifting the water.

Mr. Marshall: That sounds like an approaching election.

Mr. LINDSAY: I have not been here long enough to lose my native innocence. However, I know that country referred to. It is no better than ours. It has a general rainfall bigger than ours, although it falls the whole year round. If they can do that sort of thing over there, we can do it here. We have not yet started the development of the wheat belt, and I venture to predict that in a few years we shall be producing ten times as much as we are producing today. That, of course, is contingent upon our getting a permanent water supply. I

hope the Minister will reconsider his decision to oppose the motion.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [4.51]: I am gratified to know that the desire to provide water in agriculture areas has the sympathy of the Government. But sympathy without action is like mustard without beef: it is not very satisfying to those anxious to have water provided through the wheat belt. I quite endorse what the Minister said in respect to the professional attainments of and practical results achieved by the officers of the Water Supply Department, subject to the money they have to spend, which, unfortunately, is altogether too small. The lack of money for this purpose is one of the effects of the financial stringency from which the State has suffered for many years past. I am aware, however, that investigations are in progress in some of the drier parts of the State with a view to providing water supplies. This is a matter of great importance, and it is a pity that some resolution on the subject should not be carried by the House. The Government have refused to accept the motion moved by the member for York. I appreciate the action of that member in bringing up the subject for discussion. However, I think it would be a good thing if an amendment were carried, and so I move as an amendment—

*That all words after "House" be struck out with a view to inserting the following: "the Government, through their engineers, should inquire into the best means of providing water supplies in the agricultural areas of the State by extensions of the goldfields water supply scheme, key dams, and otherwise."*

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But that has been done already.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Not on a complete scale. I know many localities where these investigations have not been carried out.

Mr. Latham: It is one way of killing the motion by kindness.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Having considerable faith in the competence of the engineers, I believe Mr. O'Brien could carry out this work better than it could be done by a Royal Commission. Moreover, if the Government accept the amendment we shall at least have done something, which is better than merely having the original motion for a Royal Commission defeated.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (Honorary Minister — Kalgoorlie — on amendment) [4.56]: It is not my intention to oppose the amendment. It is generally recognised that something must be done in the direction of making further investigations into our agricultural water supplies. As I stated previously, I am of opinion that we have engineers fully qualified to make those investigations, and so I am in sympathy with the amendment.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford) [4.57]: I welcome the discussion. Whilst water is an essential of life, still we have to accept it as an economic fact that we can pay only a given price for water for agricultural development, and that we can arrive at a stage when water becomes too dear, when it is better to sacrifice the land than to pay for the water. Consequently it is a question upon which very great care has to be exercised. Therefore a discussion will do no harm, although I am inclined to think that at this stage a Royal Commission would be premature. My mind goes back to 1911 and 1914, two most acute dry periods. In 1911 we were faced on all hands with the water famine, and the position was equally bad in 1914. The rainfall of 1914 was actually less than that of 1911, but we had more complaints of shortage of water in 1911 than we had in 1914. That was because in 1911 the Government had declared a policy and vigorously enforced their opinions on the water supply engineers, with the result that wonderful activity was displayed by those engineers in every branch of the department. Unquestionably a lot of valuable work was then done. I have to emphasise that in 1914, the drought year of Australia, the position was not as acute as it had been in 1911, because the work had been done in 1911 and in consequence water was conserved in 1914 on a lower rainfall than that of 1911. This goes to show it was a Labour Government that introduced the policy, that extended the policy, and administered it, and this lifted Western Australia out of a deplorable condition. I say deplorable advisedly, because one shudders to think of what the womenfolk and children went through in 1911 and 1914. Settlers were scattered throughout the length and breadth of our agricultural areas with a total disregard of the necessity for water. We had 1,000-yard dams put down, but they were so limited in number and so far apart that they were of little value. That difficulty was overcome by increasing the dams both in number and capacity, and it was at that stage that something like a comprehensive policy was adopted with regard to the Mundaring supply. We had a difficulty in 1911 and in the following years because, previous to that, individuals had been allowed to combine for the purpose of getting a water supply to their particular holdings. There were other people not sound enough financially to take part in what was known as the guarantee scheme, with the result that they could not draw water from what was really a private main. In 1911 people rightly agitated for a supply of water under conditions that would enable a struggling man to carry on equally as well as those farmers more firmly established. Because of the exist-

ence of these small mains, it was impossible to supply other settlers who wanted water. The mains put down had been laid to supply the guarantors only, and could not carry additional quantities of water. Thus people who wanted water could not be supplied, and we had to go to the expense of lifting those mains and laying larger ones. We have again reached that position, and I emphasise this for the information of the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay). At that time a map was hung on the wall of the Chamber to show just where it was proposed to extend the mains. A comprehensive policy was adopted by the Labour Government under which the mains were to be extended provided a certain proportion of settlers owning a certain proportion of land petitioned the Government. The vast majority petitioned for the extension of the mains and they were carried out.

Mr. Lindsay: Some were not.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: In those cases petitions were not presented. I was in charge at the time and we denied no one, provided the petitioners represented the necessary majority of settlers and the bulk of the land. At that time members now sitting in Opposition adversely criticised the Labour policy. It is this carping criticism we get in Western Australia that hampers the putting into operation of an effective scheme. There was vigorous opposition to the Government policy.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: From 13 members!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We were subjected not only to the opposition of the 13 members but the opposition of the Press of the country.

Mr. Latham: You did not consider the Press, surely!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No, but the unfortunate part is the Press influences public opinion. The Press so attacked the policy of 4d. per acre rating imposed upon those who enjoyed a water supply that our operations were hampered and the expenditure was limited. When a Government is subjected to a concentrated attack from a united Press, together with the parliamentary opposition, it must have an effect, no matter what Government be in power or how determined it might be. When a Labour Government introduces a policy to benefit the agriculturists, and agricultural representatives, agricultural journals, and the leading Press of the State hammer away at that policy, what is the result? They said they did not want this expenditure and asked why it should be proceeded with. No Government was ever more condemned than was the Labour Government of 1911 because of the introduction of the measure providing for the 4d. rate, and members in Opposition to-

day declared they would repeal it on the ground that it was wrong. The attack was led mosly by Mr. Colebatch and his paper published at Northam.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: He was not in Parliament then.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I had to go to the agricultural districts and talk with the settlers. I attended the famous conference at Tammin. Everyone interested in the eastern agricultural areas will remember the great conference at Tammin, which was agitated for by Mr. Colebatch. The attack was prepared through his paper, and the conference was called to condemn the Government for having introduced that measure of taxation in order that the water mains might be extended. Those who attended the Tammin conference went there to curse at the dictation of Mr. Colebatch and others, but they remained to praise, and the Bill was generally endorsed. All the same, the agitation was maintained from the same quarter until it led to a curtailment of the expenditure originally proposed. This meant that the mains laid were of a minimum size. The engineers simply took the development of that day and estimated what quantity of water would be sufficient to supply the settlers within a given radius. Since then development has proceeded and, just as the original guarantee mains proved too small, so we find the present mains are not large enough to supply requirements. The mains cannot be extended to the areas in which the member for Toodyay is particularly interested because, if they were, no water would go through them. The main connecting with the goldfields pipe line is so small that the consumption of water between the two points would leave none for the settlers at the far end. The only solution is to lift those mains and lay larger ones. Sooner or later we must face this problem in order that water supplies may be extended further afield. I emphasise this as one who went through all the turmoil and strife, who had to bear all the criticism of the Opposition and the condemnation and ridicule of the Press.

Mr. George: You did not mind the Press.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: But the Press attacks had their effect. However, to-day the agriculturists are suffering because of the attitude of their so-called friends at the time the Labour Government enunciated this policy. Had we then enjoyed the unanimous support now accorded this question, the expenditure, instead of being reduced, would have been greatly increased in anticipation of the growing needs of the future, and thus the position of settlers to-day would have been much happier. I cannot see how the State, under existing conditions, can incur the liability of picking up those small mains and laying larger ones. People are agitating for supplies from the goldfields main for areas to which the water will not gravitate, no matter what sized pipes are used. There are new areas in which the people feel they should be supplied with Mundar-

ing water, but they forget that such water can be supplied economically only where it can be gravitated. Immediately it becomes necessary to instal additional pumping plant, the Mundaring water becomes too dear, and it is better to look around for a local supply. This applies particularly to the Bruce Rock district, a district I know something about. The farmers there agitated for an extension of the Mundaring supply, but it would have necessitated extra pumping plant and the water would have been too expensive for farming purposes. The local people were advised to go in for a local supply. That advice was adopted and a local supply is now being installed. I emphasise this to show that unless the Mundaring water is gravitated, it becomes too costly.

Mr. Lindsay: What do you consider too costly?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The present rate is 4d. per acre, and I consider that the maximum rate that could be imposed. The rate to the Bruce Rock people would have been something like 1s. per acre.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Totadjin guarantee is 1s. per acre.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Totadjin people may guarantee 1s. per acre, but the day may come when they will experience difficulty in paying. As a farmer I know I should not like to undertake to pay 1s. per acre for water. I think it can be conserved on the farm for considerably less than that. The Totadjin area, however, is a special area. It cannot be taken as a typical block sample of the possible value of water to farmers.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think 1s. is far too much.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It would be of greater advantage to the Totadjin area than to an average area. I do not know of a better wheat area in the State and possibly it could carry a greater financial burden for water than any other area. The Totadjin country is particularly flat and great difficulty was experienced in conserving water.

Mr. George: They seemed to be quite satisfied when I opened the scheme.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We have had many guarantees, and expressions of satisfaction. I have been cheered to the echo for things that I have done, but a little later people have told me they could not pay up.

Mr. George: We are both in the same box.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We must, therefore, not be too optimistic about Totadjin.

Mr. George: It is a very interesting study of human kind.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The time is coming. I believe, when we shall be able to supply Mundaring water at a cheaper rate than at present. This will be due to the fact that the capital cost will be returned as a result of the sinking fund con-

tribution. I know the sinking fund is not in operation to-day, but the time will come when there will be a total redemption of the loan.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There has been an enormous loss upon the scheme.

The Minister for Lands: I am not too sure that the price can be cheapened.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is my view. I believe that in a few years we shall be able to review the price charged for Mundaring water. It is often stated that the overflow from the weir should be conserved in order that a greater volume of water might be available for distribution. The Mundaring scheme is one of the engineering feats of the world. It was one of the most wonderful acts of the late C. Y. O'Connor, that, taking the minimum rainfall, he was able to calculate for a weir that would hold the entire water supply, no more and no less. If there is an increase over the minimum rainfall the weir overflows, but if we do not get the minimum fall there is no overflow. In other words the weir is built to conserve the whole of the water, within a safe margin, that the catchment can produce.

Mr. George: It does produce more.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: People ask how it is that so much water flows over the weir. That is because we are not using the water behind it.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You know the reason why we are not using it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am telling members this, so that they may have a word in connection with the agitation for an additional weir. If a man has a rain-water tank and is not using the water, the tank will overflow. During the summer, the rainfall is limited. The tank will not overflow in the winter-time, if the water is used in the summer, as fast as it would do if the supply was not drawn upon. That is the trouble with Mundaring. We are not using the water to the extent estimated by the late C. Y. O'Connor.

Mr. Thomson: What is the lowest level it reaches inside the weir?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is five or six feet. The weir is an immense height, so that even if the level drops six feet it only goes to show that we are not using the water to the extent of the safety margin. It would be economically unsound to attempt to conserve more water at Mundaring, but it is also economically unsound to leave water in the weir unused. A considerable quantity of water could be brought to the metropolitan area, and there would still be left a great amount for increased consumption in the country districts.

Mr. Latham: We are not worrying about the metropolitan area under this motion.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The motion deals with the dry areas, which are de-

pendent on Mundaring for their water supply. There is a considerable amount of water available for those areas, but the greatest difficulty is that the mains leading into the agricultural districts will not permit of an extension of the supply, because they have not been built to give that area more than is at present reticulated, and will not stand any increased draw upon them. I do not say we are drawing up to the full capacity of the pipes, for it would be dangerous to do so. We are to-day drawing the amount of water that the mains were installed to supply. If we extend the area everyone will be short at a given time of the year.

Mr. George: People are taking all the water that can be pumped through the mains, equal to 5,000,000 gallons a day.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Possibly the mains are already proving too small in many of the districts.

Mr. George: A main of that size cannot carry any more water.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Is the big main being used to its maximum capacity?

The Minister for Lands: To within 500,000 gallons a day of its full capacity.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There must have been a large increase in the consumption of water during the last four or five years.

Mr. George: As much water has been taken by the agricultural districts as is being sent to Kalgoorlie.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That shows how sound the policy of 1911 was, and proves the enormous value of the scheme to the agriculturists. I had no idea the consumption had increased to such an enormous extent. Since 1914 or 1915, when the mains were completed, the consumption must have gone up enormously, because at that time we were not using the mains to their full capacity.

Mr. George: The agricultural people are getting two and a-half million gallons a day, and Kalgoorlie two million gallons.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is interesting. It is not sound to talk about increasing water conservation at Mundaring, and it is not possible to extend the mains in the agricultural districts, because of their small size. We have, therefore, to devote our attention to local catchments, which people refer to as key dams. I take it they mean using catchments that are available in the country to their maximum capacity. Instead of putting down 2,000 or 3,000 yard dams, we should do as C. Y. O'Connor did at Mundaring, estimate the possible production from a given watershed, and conserve the whole of that water. The water will then be there in case of drought or water famine. I am not in favour of the motion. I am prepared to give the Government an opportunity of realising that the policy

of 1911, up to and until the Labour Government left office, will not fill the bill to-day. Little or nothing has been done since then. There is room, therefore, for the agitation of the member for York. His motion is influenced by a knowledge that the conditions that were satisfactory in 1914 and 1915 have become unsatisfactory to-day.

Mr. Latham: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The hon. member is safe. In 1911 the position was deplorable, but it was put right by Labour. In 1924 the hon. member states that that which was put right by Labour in the past must now be reviewed. I am prepared to leave it to the Minister in charge of water supply to review the question in the same sympathetic way as was done by Labour before, and with the same comprehensive policy and in the same practical form as was the case in 1911. I am prepared to accept the advice of the Minister that the matter can safely be left in the hands of the Government to see that the all essential water supply for the agricultural districts is given, in such quantities and at such a price that it will be of practical use to the agriculturist and enable him to farm under the best conditions. I support the amendment that the matter should be left to our engineers. It is advisable for one to express an opinion regarding our engineers, because the Government are contemplating appointing a new engineer-in-chief, and the Press of the country are urging that the new officer should possess special knowledge of hydraulic engineering and water supply. I had the responsibility of amalgamating the water supplies prior to 1914. When that was established it was proposed to obtain the best engineer that money could get in Australia. We did not intend going outside the Commonwealth, because Australia's needs from the water supply point of view are unique. The engineer that would be placed in charge of water supplies within the Commonwealth must have been educated in Australia, and must possess knowledge of Australian conditions.

Mr. Latham: What about C. Y. O'Connor?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: He was not an authority on the kind of work we want done in the agricultural districts. He had the brains to evolve the huge scheme at Mundaring, the unique part of which was the establishment of pumping stations and the mains connected with them. That was his great feat. It could not be said that he was the man for the kind of job we want in our arid country on the goldfields and in the agricultural centres. When we started we decided upon getting the best expert we could to take charge of the amalgamated department. We got into touch with a man we thought was suitable for the job in New South Wales. The late Mr. Jull, then Public Service Commissioner, was

deputed to make investigations and private inquiries concerning him. It was all arranged that we were to get one of the engineers from New South Wales. We had the position ready for him, when the New South Wales people realised their impending loss, and increased his salary beyond that which we were offering. To-day that gentleman is either engineer-in-chief of New South Wales, or is engineer-in-charge of water supplies there. We, therefore, slipped, and did not get the man we wanted, but we obtained others. I went to all kinds of trouble in 1911 and 1914. In Mr. O'Brien I am satisfied we have a capable man, who is second to none in Australia in regard to what is wanted here in the matter of water supplies. I know he has a bad temper and has other faults. A bad temper is a great burden to carry. Mr. O'Brien is something after my own style. He is inclined to tell people what he thinks, although at times it would be better that he withheld his views. He is a man of fixed opinions, and will declare them on all occasions, irrespective of the consequences. He is, however, a highly qualified engineer. I invite members representing the agricultural districts to go through our goldfields and see the wonderful work he has done there. Let me instance the dams in the remote parts of the country.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No one has questioned his ability.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I want to emphasise the point. It is necessary to do so at this juncture. Mr. O'Brien has demonstrated his capacity and those who have gone into the agricultural districts and know the improved conditions there regarding water supplies, know what he has done. There can be no question that Mr. O'Brien saved Western Australia many thousands of pounds as a result of his administration of the Mundaring water supply scheme. When that scheme was faced with grave difficulties from an engineering standpoint, Mr. O'Brien came into the matter at a time when it was proposed to spend a huge amount of money in relaying the whole of the main from Mundaring to Kalgoorlie. He discovered that by mending the pipes it would be possible to avoid all that expenditure and thus save the State a considerable sum of money. In the early goldfields days when transport was by camel team, and all sorts of difficulties had to be faced, he was able to supply water in the most remote parts. To-day his efforts remain as a monument of good engineering. Then in the agricultural areas he repeated his good work and now when he comes into the administration of the goldfields water supply—the biggest thing we have in the State—we find his administration is not lacking at all. As one who takes a great deal of interest in the forthcoming appointment of an engineer-in-chief for Western Australia, I appeal to the Government to realise that we have good engineers in Western Australia. It is not only a water sup-

ply engineer that we have; we have other engineers as well. We may have some we could well do without. Despite that fact, when we have regard to those engineers to whom I have referred, it will be conceded that they compare more than favourably with what may be said regarding others.

Mr. George: What about Lovekin's opinion of them.

Mr. Teesdale: Don't talk about that man.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am not prepared to take Mr. Lovekin's opinion regarding any one or anything.

Mr. George: But he is the expert!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am not prepared to accept Mr. Lovekin as an authority. I have had more experience and I am speaking of Mr. O'Brien as an engineer and as I found him at a time when we were going through grave difficulties that had to be faced.

Mr. George: You are quite right, too.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We may have other engineers in Australia who may possibly be superior administrators and even better engineers, but they are not available. I wish to sound a note of warning to the Government when I say that in regard to water supply matters they should not go outside Australia. It is Australian experience that is absolutely essential. The engineer who does not know Australia, and particularly Western Australia, will not be suitable; his engineering skill and previous experience will be as nothing. Only the man who has a knowledge of local difficulties and local requirements will be a success.

Mr. George: How can engineers do good work when they are subjected to malicious criticism such as they are getting now?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Like politicians, they must keep a stiff upper lip.

Mr. George: One does not mind politicians being criticised, but with these people it is different.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I know that the carping criticism we hear in Western Australia does harm to the State, hampers government and restricts the activities of members, while it interferes with the administration of our various departments. Unfortunately we have developed a habit of deriding everyone and everything that is West Australian. The Press, including the organ that calls itself the "West Australian," have very little regard for that which is Western Australian. In their desire to injure those in authority, and those who are endeavouring to do their duty, the Press are really helping those who are antagonistic to Western Australia. They are helping to give those who are outside Western Australia an opportunity to strengthen their grip upon this State to the detriment of our development and the disheartenment of our administrators.

Hon. J. Cunningham: The member for York said that.

Mr. Latham: I did not.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: As to other engineering works in this State, I had a fair experience while administering the Public Works Department. During the whole of my time many millions of money were spent, but we had no engineering difficulties. I pay a tribute to James Thompson for the engineering ability and skill he displayed in his position as Engineer-in-Chief. I do not think there is any man in Australia who can compare with James Thompson. He has his difficulties and his weaknesses. I differed from him while I was Minister, but never regarding his engineering capacity. All the works carried out by James Thompson have been a credit to him and to his engineering skill. Men have been educated by him in the department and that education has fitted those engineers to carry out the works that are necessary in Western Australia. They are better fitted to carry out the various works than any engineers who may be imported. When the time comes for the appointment of an Engineer-in-Chief, the Government should bear in mind that local experience is essential in connection with water supply and that local experience and local education is a great asset when other engineering works are to be undertaken. I am convinced that we have men in Western Australia and within the department who are capable of filling this important position. They will fill it better than will imported engineers, because local knowledge is so essential here. I support the amendment because I believe that the investigation can be better carried out by those within the State rather than by anyone who may be imported. Such people would have to be educated before they could be of assistance to us. I trust that the Minister will bear this in mind. To-day, owing to the dearth of money, it is not possible to relieve the position from loan expenditure as we did in earlier times.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Even these investigations will cost money.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I know the Minister is enthusiastic and that he will do his best regarding these matters. The two things that Western Australia most requires are markets and water supplies. Markets can be made available simply by way of legislation to enable the producers to do the work. With water supply there is the necessity for conservation.

The Minister for Lands: We can only provide the system; we cannot procure the water supply.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The water supply is available. We have the rainfall necessary. We can safely leave that problem in the hands of the Minister. I trust that our engineers will be continued in the service to proceed with their good work and that the trouble will be overcome without the necessity for any Royal Commission or any select committee.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Norham) [5.40]: I have listened with great interest to the remarks by the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson). I do not know of anyone who has criticised public men in the past more than has the hon. member. He complained about the "West Australian" criticising hon. members and others. Does the hon. member not know that there would have been very little settlement in the wheat areas had the "West Australian" not supported that policy stoutly for years. I do not know of any paper that has done more to help in the development of a country than has the "West Australian" which has been so criticised by the hon. member. A great deal was done in the past long before the hon. member became a Minister. He held that position before 1911. He was a Minister in 1904.

The Minister for Lands: But for a very short time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Thank God it was a very short time, too.

The Minister for Lands: I would not say that because had that not been so, he would not have had the effect of the drought of 1911 to deal with later on.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know that as a Minister he could have brought moisture down from the Heavens.

The Minister for Lands: But he could make provision for conserving the water.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course the hon. member was also a Minister at that time.

The Minister for Lands: That is why I spoke up.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Dams were put down at that time but they were comparatively small, because there was very little water in the country then. It was easy to follow up the work when the water was available and to put down bigger dams. It is a popular habit to say that nothing was done for the man in the back country. In country settlements that is always done. Water supplies and roads are put down whenever possible. In some instances the work was followed up by providing larger dams. It is true that more were put down in the back country than by the hon. member.

Mr. Marshall: One was pushed down by the pressure of water at Mt. Hawthorn.

Mr. Teesdale: I wish they could push you down.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not see the use of this wrangling about what was done by one Government and what was done by another. What we should do is to deal with the question before us at the present time. When the hon. member was a Minister he spent £56,000 upon boring for water and 13 fresh water wells were all that he got for that enormous expenditure. Those bores were put down from one end of the country to the other and yet there was no water.

Hon. J. Cunningham: There have been 467 wells sunk since 1910.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The maps still hang up with the records upon them. A report to that effect was published by the then Minister himself. He issued progress reports regarding the work. It was shown clearly that we could not get an adequate supply of fresh water from wells.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You must remember that a number of the wells struck water, but the fresh water was limited. It would have been waste expenditure had we gone further with them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I know the country and few members know the State as much as I do.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I question that. You have not seen as much of it as I have.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member is egotistical.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Well, I challenge you. You have not seen as much of Western Australia as I have.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: All right, then, I withdraw the statement, because the Minister has seen more. I do not mind. I hope he has seen more.

Hon. J. Cunningham: He is not the Minister!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope he has seen with a seeing eye and with a desire to help the country and the farmers. As the hon. member pointed out, water supplies were provided for the farmers, but they had to sign the agreements and pay for the water they obtained. Later legislation was introduced which provided that anyone having land within 11 chains of any main and for 1½ miles back from the main, had to pay a rate of 4d. an acre and £5 holding fee. In some districts in the back country 6s. per thousand gallons had to be paid for the water. My friend the then Minister for Works reduced that to 2s. 6d.

The Minister for Lands: And lost a lot of money by doing so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister will find on the files a great deal about these water supplies. We were asked to put in a supply north of Burracoppin, and were guaranteed £50 per thousand acres for a daily supply of 500 gallons. Hon. members know that that quantity of water would not permit the keeping of stock. A bigger supply would of course mean a bigger main, a bigger guarantee and greater costs. Then again it would not have been possible to have supplied more than 500 gallons on each day of the year. The quantity would be too low and the costs too high. The question of cost is the sole one. We must give the farmer something that he can pay for. The people in the towns of the State have to pay for the water they are given, but when it comes to supplying individual farmers, it is another matter.

They have to pay heavily, and you cannot overload them with costs.

Hon. J. Cunningham: They cannot get water for nothing.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I believe in the scheme the Minister intends to submit. It was the policy of the previous Minister for Works, and in fact investigations had been carried out and a start made. Though it will require some money, it should be done speedily. Farmers themselves have to conserve water on their holdings. The Mundaring water cannot be supplied to all, nor in the quantities desired. The member for Toodyay saw me several times about supplying water from the main for the Wyalcatech district. Then, again, no one worked harder than the member for York to induce the Government to spend money in conserving water. The Government, however, needed no urging.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Then why not leave it to the Government now?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I intend to do so. Let us see what is proposed now. I am willing to leave it to the Government, and that is the right thing for the House to do. Every Government in recent years has been sympathetic towards the question of water supplies and has been willing to do everything possible for the agriculturists. The previous Government were willing to supply water from the mains so long as the people were prepared to pay. The Minister in charge of the department said that he would accept the amendment, about which he evidently knew nothing. From the Murchison to Albany there is at least 500 miles of country on which wheat farming is being carried on.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Six hundred miles by one hundred miles.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am saying at least 500 miles on which farmers are operating over the greater part of that distance. If it were desired to serve farmers from the goldfields main, it would not be possible to carry the pipes beyond 30 miles. It would be possible to serve a few other places by pumping. We could supply water to Goomalling farmers at the main, and if they paid the cost of getting it to Goomalling, and the cost of the pipes, as well as of the connections, it would amount to 6s. per thousand without any charge for the water. But there is the rest of the country to consider. I consider the amendment is brutal. It is hard, when considering the question, that the people should be neglected altogether.

Mr. Thomson: The amendment says, "Permanent water supply in the agricultural areas of this State."

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That largely applies to water from the main.

Mr. Thomson: That is not the intention.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Key dams and otherwise.

Hon. J. Cunningham: I say the whole thing is unnecessary.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I say that too; the amendment is unnecessary. If anything is to be done, a commission should be appointed.

Mr. Thomson: We could put in three or four good tanks for the cost of a commission.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am perfectly willing to leave the matter to the Minister, but if anything is done it should be the appointment of a commission. It is a cruel thing to neglect all these people.

Mr. Thomson: That is not intended by the amendment.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Surely you can read.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have the amendment here. It says, "The Government through its engineers should inquire into the best means of providing water supplies in the agricultural areas by the extension of the goldfields water supply scheme—"

Mr. E. B. Johnston: "Key dams and otherwise."

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Let me finish it.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: I thought you had done so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: —by the extension of goldfields water supply, key dams, and otherwise." Let the Government look into the question. So far as one catchment is concerned, an effort has been made—

Mr. Lindsay: And a dam has been sunk.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member had a copy of the estimated cost of the reticulation from the main to Wyalcatech or from Merredin to Nungarin and to Wyalcatech. The cost, however, was enormous, and the life of the pipes would be short. These works cannot possibly be done at the expense of the farmer. Investigations have been made, and if the Minister will turn up the file he will find that is so.

Hon. J. Cunningham: And investigations will continue.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Let the House have the file, which will show what has been done and will also give an idea of the cost of running the water from the main.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You can get the files if you want them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Members would be interested to know. Cement pipes might be substituted for the iron pipes, and thus we would get 100 years' life out of the pipes instead of 15 or 20 years.

Hon. J. Cunningham: It still remains to be seen whether the cement pipes are entirely satisfactory.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They have proved satisfactory in other countries, where they have been used for hundreds of years. At Geraldton a cement pipe, I under-

stand, has given every satisfaction during a long term of years. With cement pipes there is very little leakage, and of course no corrosion. If cement pipes were used on the goldfields line, the water from the main could be used by the farming community, as the sinking fund required would be infinitesimal. I hope that not only will there be investigation, but that the work of putting down reserve supplies will be proceeding with. At Wyalcatchem there is a key dam which supplies the town and also gives the farmers a guarantee of water. Throughout the agricultural areas such supplies should be established here and there. At Kununoppin there is a fine catchment, and the work of investigation there has been completed and an estimate made. I understand that at Bruce Rock the work of providing the town with a water supply is now proceeding. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) will, I hope, agree with me that any inquiry should be by a Royal Commission. The engineers have already inquired as far as engineers can possibly inquire.

Hon. J. Cunningham: We are continually inquiring.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Now that I have read the wording of the amendment of the member for Williams-Narrogin, I apologise to him for the indignation I mistakenly expressed.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: I accept the apology at once.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Let us help the farmers, and let us not always be seeking credit for what we do. We are paid for the work, and Ministers are expected to do their best for all sections of the people. Of course their work is limited by the amount of money available, and by such factors as rainfall and catchment. I am quite content with the pledge of Ministers, and I am sure the mover will be similarly content. Let me say that the last Government not only were sympathetic, but gave practical help, to the farmers. Water is wanted everywhere, and of course nowhere more than in the wheat belt. But a great deal has been done, and the position to-day is much better than that of 1914, though it is not satisfactory yet. Each year sees some added catchment put in and some further supply established. However, the farmers want an adequate supply at a reasonable cost, and I agree with the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) that it is useless to offer farmers water at more than its worth, especially when the charge is liable to hang around their necks for all time. As regards the Goldfields Water Scheme, we have almost completed the payments towards the sinking fund. Interest on the cost of the work will cease in 1927, when the debt will be paid off. For the moment, however, we are losing heavily on the scheme as it

stands. The scheme was constructed to supply 5,000,000 gallons daily to the goldfields, but it is supplying only 2,000,000 gallons daily, and therefore it is not paying. Moreover, the pipes are deteriorating, though it is a wonder that the engineers should have been able to keep them in such good order as actually they are in. Still, in 1927 there will be relief. Meantime the farmer wants water, and in some districts he wants it very badly. I am sure Ministers will do everything possible to relieve the situation.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [6.7]: I am rather amused at the course of this discussion. Various members have said that what the country districts want is not sympathy but action.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I did not say that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes; the Opposition Leader said it. He went further, and said that the late Government not only sympathised with the farmer but took action in his behalf.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I also said I was sure you would do that too.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Labour Party can be judged only by the action they took previously for the benefit of the farmer.

Mr. George: We are not saying a word against you.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In 1911 there was a drought. At that time no provision whatever had been made, by any Government, for the supply of water to the agricultural areas.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) was then Minister for Works, and he scattered parties all over the wheat belt to see where water supplies might be available. The then Labour Government spent hundreds of thousands of pounds in supplying the agricultural districts with water. One result of that is that the present Government are not following on lines laid down by the late Government, and another result is that the late Government continued in a less degree what had been initiated by the Labour Government. Judging by the Labour Government's action in 1911, they will give practical effect to their present statements of sympathy. The Labour Government have scarcely been in office long enough to build a dam, and yet we find members continually asking, "Why don't the Government do something?"

Mr. Latham: I did not say a word about that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I say, give us time to do something. The mover says he wants a Royal Commission, but

is that really so? I raise that point because the hon. member further said that if a Royal Commission was not appointed, the Government should lay down a policy of water supply to the agricultural areas—almost the wording of the amendment which has been moved. No Government ever existed in Western Australia that had more sympathy with the agricultural section than the Labour Government, if for no other reason, because their bread and butter depends on the agricultural section, as also does the bread and butter of their supporters. If the agricultural districts go down, where will the city of Perth be? It is our duty, therefore, to support the agricultural section. But it is also our duty to support those who live in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Latham: It is very annoying to find that £6,000,000 have been spent with very little to show for it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That expenditure was started by the Government whom the mover supported. In my opinion, more work is being laid down and done than is necessary at present. I have always held that a Government establishing a water supply for the metropolitan area should do the work by degrees, without constructing right away such enormous works as seriously increase the cost before the population is there to meet it. On that ground I have always opposed the creation of a water board. But through a bit of a fright caused in North Perth, the late Government laid out millions on a premature scheme.

Mr. George: There was no fright on my part.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I did not say there was. However, the work which the late Government started has to be completed. The member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) said that there should be some inquiry in order to let the agriculturists know whether the Government intended to provide them with a scheme of water supply. If the Government did not intend to provide a scheme, doubtless the agriculturists would take action themselves, and lay down a scheme of their own. I have travelled various parts of the country with the present Leader of the Opposition, and in many places he has pointed out that it would not pay the farmer to obtain water for his stock from the Goldfields Water Scheme. The water would be all right there, the hon. gentleman said, in case of urgent necessity resulting from lack of rain, but it paid the farmer much better to provide water for himself.

Mr. Lindsay: The farmers cannot all provide it.

Mr. Latham: They can provide the means but not the rain.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Government can only provide means to retain water. They cannot yet control Providence. The present Government will lose no opportunity to ensure that the farmer shall be adequately protected in the matter of water supply. I am the representative of the largest farming community in the State.

Mr. Latham: But your district wants to do draining.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There are 11 millions of public money at stake in my department, and there is a corresponding need for protection of the farmers. The department I now control will see that those farmers get water, because otherwise the State will lose that money. There is no necessity whatever for a Royal Commission in this matter, because the Government realise that for successful farming in this State an adequate supply of water is essential. In fact, that is the essence of the whole thing. Without water nothing will live or grow. On the part of the Government everything possible will be done to provide the agricultural districts with sufficient water.

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

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington) [7.30]: Looking at the motion and the amendment I am reminded of the couplet, "How happy I could be with either were t'other dear charmer away." I can imagine that the farmers wanting water do not care tuppence whether it be the motion or the amendment that is carried, so long as it be put into effect. A good deal of what I have heard this evening calls for no reply from me. But I think we are straying a bit from the main issue. The question is, what is the best way to provide water for those who need it, and must indeed have it if they are to remain on their holdings. I was struck by the remarks of the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson), and by interjection was able to convey to him a little information regarding the goldfields water supply scheme. I think hon. members should know what I now propose to tell them. We are all aware that for years past the goldfields main has given the responsible engineers grave anxiety. Serious corrosion took place, causing perforation in the pipes and at one time threatening to render it incumbent upon the Government to consider whether they should not put down a second main in case the original failed. It would have been a calamity, not only to the goldfields, but also to agriculturists along the line, if anything had happened that could not be coped with in a short time. I am satisfied that the careful looking after of that main by the engineers, with Mr. O'Brien at their head, was work the country has not appreciated, but which nevertheless deserves the fullest recognition. The main was designed by the late Mr. C. Y. O'Connor to deliver 5,000,000 gallons per day to the goldfields. It was believed

that that quantity of water would be taken by the mines. Experience has shown that they have not come within reasonable distance of the quantity that could have been supplied. Consequently some of the remarks made by the member for Guildford were fully justified. If from the beginning Kalgoorlie had taken all the water the scheme was capable of delivering, instead of a tremendous quantity of water being wasted there would have been comparatively little to flow over the weir. It is not at all a bad thing that some should go over the weir, because it is desirable that the water in the lower levels should, if possible, mix up with the incoming supplies and be taken out, thus reducing the quantity of chloride. At present the main between Nos. 1 and 2 pumping stations is being taxed to its full capacity. I believe it is delivering nearly, if not quite, 5,000,000 gallons per day from the one station to the other. Of that quantity the mines at Kalgoorlie and along the route are taking a little over 2,000,000 gallons per day, while the agricultural areas also are taking over 2,000,000 gallons per day. A certain quantity of the water pumped is lost in transit and so, as I say, in all probability the main between Nos. 1 and 2 pumping stations is being taxed to its full capacity, especially considering its weakened state in consequence of the trouble I alluded to. I do not wish to create any nervousness in regard to that main, for I am confident that the responsible officers have their plans and preparations made to remedy in a short time any trouble that might reasonably be expected to occur. Coming to the reticulations through agricultural districts, I wish to speak rather from a practical point of view than from either the political or the financial aspect. If during my term of office money had been available I would have laid larger mains for the reticulation services, because I know that the man with such an undertaking on hand must not look merely to the needs of the day, but must have the foresight to visualise what is likely to be required in the years to come. The putting down of an inch or an inch and a-half pipe means that those at the far end can get but very little water until those nearest to the main have ceased drawing. The one thing to be said for those small pipes is that they represented the only means by which at the time relief could be given to those who needed the water. When one has but £5,000 or £10,000 for expenditure on such a work, one can only do his best to relieve the situation, cutting his coat according to his cloth, and giving the people those small pipes in the hope that consideration would be shown to those at the end of the branch by their more fortunate fellows nearer to the main. It must be remembered that when money is scarce those responsible for carrying out the work have to see to it that people in need of water shall get some, even if they cannot get all that they could do with. If any more of

those branch lines are to be laid, I should like to see them of sufficient size to serve a larger number of farmers and at a greater distance from the main than is being done to-day. The Leader of the Opposition said I had done certain things in respect of water supply for agricultural areas. I do not wish to say anything about that, except to remark that there will be found on the departmental files an indication of the conditions by which I was necessarily governed in trying to do the work with the money at my disposal. If the Minister now in charge of the department should at any time question anything that has been done, no doubt he will give me an opportunity to look into the matter and see what the trouble may be. For the advantage of new members, and at the risk of wearying old members, I wish to repeat what I have said a number of times about the supplying of Perth from Mundaring. To-day Perth is getting rather more than a million gallons per diem from Mundaring. I have advised that the utmost it would be safe to allow Perth to have from Mundaring, would be an additional million gallons per day. The cost of the main to carry that additional million gallons would run into very large figures, and so it was considered better to let that main go and put whatever money was available into the amount required for the big scheme now under construction. The suggestion has been made in the Press by contributors of sincere views but not much knowledge, and by leader writers whose knowledge is even less, that another weir should be built lower down the valley, and the water from that reticulated to Perth. One man in public life who has also an interest in a newspaper, and is always poking his nose into mischief, has declared that if that supplementary weir were built this other big scheme would not be required. The Minister will find that that question was thoroughly and carefully considered and a decision made, after consultation with the Premier and other members of the Cabinet, as to whether we could avail ourselves further of the Mundaring supply to get Perth out of its water trouble. A Royal Commission has been asked for. Both select committees and Royal Commissions may serve a good purpose on many questions, provided it be possible to secure men free from bias, prejudice, and malice. Members do not require me to name any of those I have in mind, because they will be patent to any who have read in the columns of the Press during the last few weeks the report of the proceedings of one select committee. In the questions asked, one member of the committee showed his malicious bias from start to finish.

Mr. Teesdale: Spite and venom!

Mr. GEORGE: That member endeavoured to pose as one having the whole of the interests of Western Australia at heart, and yet he gives away his case by indi-

eating bias and malice in every word he utters.

Mr. Teesdale: It was dripping from his nose.

Mr. GEORGE: If I had my way, I would make it a penal offence for any man connected with the Press to enter this Chamber or another place.

The Minister for Works: What about the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson)?

Mr. GEORGE: There is always an exception; there is one honest man in Galilee. I have known two Pressmen who attained high positions in this State, and I have no hesitation in saying, after 34 years of careful observation, that they have done more harm to Western Australia than any other two men I have known.

The Minister for Works: Who are they?

Mr. Teesdale: You ought to know them.

The Premier: Should not the public know who these awful men are?

Mr. GEORGE: They know.

Mr. Taylor: One a member of another place.

Mr. GEORGE: If a Royal Commission be appointed, it may do good, provided the Premier could find unbiassed men to serve upon it, but when a man joins a Royal Commission or a select committee and betrays by his utterances that his mind is biassed, he is not acting honestly to the State.

Mr. Taylor: The rogue elephant.

Mr. GEORGE: I believe that all the information required is in the files of the department. The engineer for goldfields water supplies has been studying this question for years, and if there is any one man in the State who knows the requirements of the agricultural areas, and how those requirements can best be met with the means at his command, it is Mr. O'Brien. I do not care twopence about the Herdsman's Lake scheme. Frequently men who have done fine work throughout their careers make one mistake and are not given credit for the good they have done. It is to be hoped that when our time for judgment arrives, there may be set against our sins some of the good things we have done. Mr. O'Brien knows all about key dams and the dams required by farmers. He knows the full strength of the Coolgardie water scheme and what he can do with it. Nearly four years ago he foresaw a shortage of water in the agricultural areas, and asked for a sum of money to make necessary surveys to decide where the dams should be placed. There are many people who believe that when you want a dam, all you have to do is to sink a hole, but those who have had some experience of dam sinking know better. An engineer in charge of such big works has a right to that which he knows is necessary before committing himself to the course it is proposed he should pursue. Without a proper survey it would be madness to attempt to put down big dams anywhere in Western Australia. In one

area a dam would not hold water, and a few hundred yards distant there might be good holding ground, but surveys are necessary to ascertain where the good ground is. It is one of the griefs of my official life that I could not find the money for the engineers to make the survey that would have enabled them to give an opinion by which they could stand. The Treasurer did not have the money and therefore the work could not be done as we wished to do it. No doubt the present Minister's experience will bear out every word I have said. It is unfair to blame either the department or the officers, as they have been blamed, or to hold them up to ridicule as they have been held up by the Press of the goldfields and of Perth. Were the facts known, it would be realised that they had foreseen what was likely to happen and that lack of funds alone was responsible for the needs of the country not being met. I speak of Mr. O'Brien with a certain amount of feeling. It is 29 years since I gave him his first employment in Western Australia. I gave him a job to make a survey for me, and he did it well. I consider it only right that I should bear witness to the value of the men who are working for the State. When people say we have no engineers in the Works Department capable of grappling with the problems of water supply, it is a deliberate and malicious lie. We have good engineers. Some people make erroneous statements through lack of information, but the man I refer to makes them when he has the information. When the Engineer-in-Chief was in the Eastern States at the end of last year, I asked him to look around and see what engineers he could find. On his return he told me there were no men available equal to our own. The reason is this: Western Australia has been doing engineering works ever since responsible government in 1890, and has trained its own men. The other States have been doing more in the nature of maintenance and routine work. Consequently young engineers in the other States during the last 20 or 25 years have grown up without that full experience so necessary to their success. You may get a young fellow from the University with no field experience, but if he shows a willingness to learn, and does not mind sinking his high falutin' notions, he will learn something about water works, railways, roads, buildings and such like things. Our engineers have had experience of these works. There is much in what the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) said. If we can find a man with local training plus the other qualifications, he is the man we want. If we engaged a man from abroad, he may possess knowledge that our engineers have not got, but without a knowledge of local conditions, he would

require nearly a year before he would find out whether his men were running with him or counter to him. I hope the Government will fully consider the claims of the men in this State. I repeat, that all the information required can be found on the departmental files. The Engineer-in-Chief has considered this matter and so have the departmental engineers, who know that their professional reputations and careers are at stake. For it to be said either in the Press or outside that these men have not the sense of honour to give the State the best that is in them, is not a proper thing, nor is it conducive to loyalty in the service. There are men who make mistakes. Where is the man who does not make a mistake be he a politician, journalist, engineer, parson or anyone else? If we are merely to be blamed for the mistakes we make, and be denied any credit for the good things we do, we shall be badly off indeed.

Mr. LINDSAY (Toodyay—on amendment) [8.0]: Members have asked how much the farmers can pay for their water. It is necessary to reply to their statements, particularly those of the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) and the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Latham: I do not know whether the hon. member is making another second reading speech.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand the hon. member is speaking only to the amendment.

Mr. Latham: He cannot reply to what was said before.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must confine himself to the amendment, for he has already spoken to the motion.

Mr. LINDSAY: I understand the member for Guildford spoke to the amendment.

Mr. Latham: It was a very wide speech.

Mr. LINDSAY: He made certain statements regarding the price of water. Certain rates will have to be struck in connection with the proposed district water supply. I have introduced deputations to the Minister, representative of 21 districts, and it was stated that the farmers could afford to pay £50 per thousand acres per annum. The Minister for Agriculture was at Trayning last Saturday, and a deputation that waited upon him stated they could afford to pay much more than that.

The Minister for Agriculture: A shilling per acre per annum was spoken of.

Mr. LINDSAY: I know we can pay that amount.

The Minister for Agriculture: I think so, too.

Mr. LINDSAY: Some districts cannot afford to do without water, and must have it at a reasonable price. A scheme for the district was put up to us for the supply of 750,000 acres at an average cost of £57 per thousand acres per annum. We have stuck to that scheme. Mr. O'Brien told us

he could not give it to us, because if he did so it would mean taking all the available water from the goldfields water mains, it being required somewhere else. He said he is satisfied he can solve the problem if he is given the opportunity to do so. He is honest and sincere in his statement, and knows the district. All I ask is that the Government make available sufficient money for an investigation and expedite the matter. Evidently the Minister for Lands misconstrued certain statements I made. I admit that some farmers in the wheat belt have not put down dams as they should have. Had they done so, they could have obtained water in certain places. Further east there are big areas of flat forest country, where it is not possible to catch water in a normal season.

The Minister for Agriculture: If there were a dozen dams there they would not catch water.

Mr. LINDSAY: That is so. I know of one man who put down three dams, which did not hold a drop of water. I would rather have the motion carried, but half a loaf is better than no bread.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [8.5]: When I visited the district represented by the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) I was struck by the great loss incurred by this country as a result of the settlers having no assured water supply. To-night members have discussed the ability of settlers to pay for a supply if one is provided. I am not speaking on behalf of the Government. It occurred to me when I was there that the people of this country were losing a great deal of wealth, because of the absence of an adequate water supply. If the people of this State realised the great waste and loss that resulted from the fact that many settlers along our existing railways have no water supply and can carry no stock, they would feel inclined to agree that the State should carry the burden. The ability of the farmer to pay for a water supply has been stressed. It is estimated he would be rated at 1s. per acre per annum, and that his supply would be 500 gallons daily. It has to be remembered that during half the year at least he would not require that amount of water, and that for the other half of the year he would be able to take 1,000 gallons a day, the rate remaining the same.

Hon. J. Cunningham: How is he to get the money?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I will tell the House some of my personal experiences.

Hon. J. Cunningham: They are not all like you.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Although I have dams which cost me £1,000, which is as much as any other settler can do in the years this country has been established, in 1922, I ran short of water.

This was in the month of January. I had to take my sheep away and rent a place where there was abundance of water but no feed. Within a few months I lost 200 sheep out of 700.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You had no rain-fall that year.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That number of sheep was worth to me, apart from the natural increase or the wool, at least £300. That represents six years of water rates at £50 a year.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You are not on a thousand-acre proposition. You would not be able to carry that number of sheep on a thousand acres.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If I had had 200 sheep only I would have lost them all.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: But your dams would have been half full.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: My dams were exhausted on the 1st January, and there was no rain until the end of April. Up to the end of October my sheep were not drinking at the dams. There was enough moisture in the feed and on the surface to carry them through. On a conservative estimate I lost £300, but my losses were more than that. I lost the natural increase, and my wool in the succeeding year was not good. I had no lambs in the following year. I therefore lost £400 as a result of that privation. The settler in the eastern wheat belt does not carry sheep. There is a vast area of country growing good feed, that is going to waste, because of the absence of stock. Farmers are put to the heavy expense of keeping their fallow clean when sheep should be doing this, and the essential fertility of the soil kept in it. There are hundreds of thousands of acres of land, sand-plain, which, if carrying sheep, would soon be brought into cultivation and become good pasture. People do not realise the great loss to the community in wool and mutton through the absence of sheep in those areas. If people want their meat at a reasonable price the best way to get it is for them to see that the country is placed in a position to carry stock. There will always be a shortage of meat if the country does not carry more stock. A vast area of country, stretching throughout the wheat belt from north to south, is carrying no stock. The wheat belt will never be completely developed until it is provided with water supply. It is not for me to say how this should be done, but to stress the necessity for the people having it done if it can be arranged.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Are you speaking in favour of the motion?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No; of the amendment. I do not think the Honorary Minister should be hostile

in this matter, for I am entitled to my own opinion. When I was in the Wimmera district I was informed that the Government, when the conditions were as bad as they are here, some years ago put weirs in the Wimmera River and pumped the water through 1,000 miles of channel. It occurred to me that the same thing could be done in parts of this country. There might be no necessity for pipes through which to carry water. I admit that the channel system might involve a good deal of loss by evaporation. In the Wimmera there were 1,000 miles of channel, and the water was led into the dams when necessity arose. It may be possible to concrete the foundations of channels in this State in order to carry water over country which would otherwise not carry it. The Government are giving every consideration to the matter. I merely expressed my own opinion to impress upon the House the great wealth that is lost to this country because the settler does not carry much stock, particularly sheep, which is of such great value, and so necessary to the prosperity of Western Australia.

Mr. BROWN (Pingelly) [8.12]: This matter is of vital importance to certain parts of my electorate. I feel rather sorry that no select committee or Royal Commission was appointed to make a report upon this. Any bushman who is conversant with timber can tell where to get water in my electorate. In granite country, jam, white gum and York gum country, there is never any difficulty in getting water. The timber has to be rung, and soaks spring up. Away from that class of country the only method of obtaining water is by surface conservation. Lake Yealering is the furthest freshwater lake eastward. It covers about 2,000 acres, and in certain parts is 9 feet deep. There are three years' supply in it if no rain falls.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It is a beautiful spot.

Mr. BROWN: It is possible that investigation would suggest that this huge body of water could be utilised, and become an economic gain to Western Australia. I have been told that further east there is a rocky gorge which, if a weir were put across it, would hold many million gallons of beautiful fresh water, which could be reticulated by pipes in various directions. Kondinin, still further east, is undoubtedly one of the greatest wheat-producing districts in this State. The Kondinin farmers have had to cart water for about five months this year from Dudinin. I saw them carting water in May to put their crops in. Now, about 1½ miles east of Kondinin a huge dam has been put down—I think by the Railway Department. The dam, when filled, holds millions of gallons. When I was there I found, to my surprise,

that it was empty. Over £14,000 has been spent on that white elephant of a dam. What is wrong? Something must be; otherwise the dam would not have been placed there. One engineer says the rainfall is insufficient to fill the dam. Yet in the month of March, when I was there, a dam situated within a stone's throw of this empty dam was full of water. Other engineers say there is a leakage in this dam. An investigation, such as the motion proposes, would probably reveal what really is wrong. Again, further east the only means of conserving water is by dams. The member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) pointed out that one has to be particular in choosing the site of the dam. The trouble is that on some selections there is no good catchment, and so the holders must always be hampered as regards water supply. I believe the day will come, probably after the goldfields have passed into oblivion, when the water from the Mundaring weir will have to be distributed through the farming areas. Another scheme for supplying the farmers with water may yet be found in the hills. The goldfields scheme provides for the storing of only a certain quantity of water, and immediately that storage is filled there is an overflow. That overflow should be conserved for the use of the farming areas. In that connection I believe that an inquiry would prove advantageous to Western Australia. I have no doubt that this State possesses engineers who, having devoted nearly the whole of their lives to questions of water supply here, have a very complete knowledge of local conditions. If they have made mistakes, they can correct them. An engineer brought here from another State would have to learn our local conditions from the very beginning. This water problem is very serious. At Kondinin I believe not a drop of water has gone into the dams. If the Kondinin farmers have to cart water this year, what will be their position next year? Therefore I hope a select committee will be appointed.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The select committee will have to find out how to produce rain, because the dams are of no use if no rain falls.

Mr. BROWN: In summer a heavy thunderstorm might occur, and it is only by thunderstorms that the dams can be filled. There should be an investigation, if only to ascertain how the Kondinin people shall be supplied with water. A district which has produced so much wheat is entitled to consideration. The Kondinin district is likely to become the backbone of Western Australia. The farmers of the dry areas should get an adequate supply of water.

Mr. LATHAM (York—on amendment) [8.25]: Are you going to allow further discussion on the amendment, Mr. Speaker, on the same lines? Because, if so, it will save my making another speech later.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can speak either in reply or on the amendment.

Mr. Thomson: Is the member for York speaking to the amendment, or speaking in reply?

Mr. SPEAKER: If the member for York speaks, but does not speak in reply, he must speak only to the amendment. There has been a certain amount of latitude, I will admit—even wide latitude—but it cannot continue further in this debate, attention having been drawn to it. Hon. members must confine themselves to the subject under discussion. Members who have spoken once can now speak only to the amendment.

Mr. Thomson: I asked the hon. member, since he had the floor, whether he was speaking to the amendment or speaking in reply. If the hon. member is speaking to the amendment it is all right.

Mr. LATHAM: The member for Kataning is a little hasty. Had he allowed me sufficient time I would have explained the position. I have always been fair to other members, and I have never claimed any undue privileges. I hope the amendment will not be carried. It is the duty of the Minister in charge of water supply to put up a proposal such as that moved by way of amendment.

Hon. J. Cunningham: I put up a proposition that I did not want a Royal Commission.

Mr. LATHAM: I should have expected that if the matter was going to be left to the departmental officers, that proposal would come from the Honorary Minister, and not from a private member.

Hon. J. Cunningham: It came from the Minister that he was opposed to your proposal for a Royal Commission.

Mr. LATHAM: I am referring to the amendment moved by the member for Williams-Narrogin. If the Royal Commission had been refused by the House, then I think the Honorary Minister would have told us the Government's intention was to have an investigation made by the departmental officers.

The Minister for Lands: How could he do that after the motion had been carried?

Mr. LATHAM: I am sure the Honorary Minister would have given us some information.

The Minister for Lands: The Speaker would not allow him to speak again.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister for Lands is out of order in speaking now. I consider that the proposal contained in the amendment should have come from the Honorary Minister. Then I would have taken some notice of it. I consider that the amendment has been forced on the House by the member for Williams-Narrogin. It is practically a direct negative. Its intention, of course, is to kill my motion. To that I have no objection, providing the member for Williams-Narrogin will take

the responsibility of his action. To move an amendment like this is to act with gross unfairness to the people of the agricultural areas, who are entitled to an inquiry as to the best means of supplying them with water. The amendment seeks to stop us from giving an expression of opinion in that connection. The matter is one of grave concern to the people of the country districts, and the carrying of the amendment would have the effect of preventing them from getting an inquiry at which they themselves could render assistance to the Government officers. I trust the amendment will be rejected.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning—on amendment) [8.27]: I regret that the member for York has misconstrued the intention of the member for Williams-Narrogin. The motion of the member for York is one which we as members of the Country Party heartily endorse; but when we have a statement from the Minister in charge of water supply that he is opposed to the appointment of a Royal Commission, we as representatives of the agricultural areas, should not seek to belittle the member for Williams-Narrogin for his amendment, but should recognise that he has endeavoured to keep the subject alive. Certainly he has afforded the House an opportunity of listening to a most interesting debate. The member for York says the amendment is intended to kill his motion. Nothing is further from our thoughts. We are endeavouring to attain the object he has in view.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: He knows it, too. The amendment is that certain words be struck out with a view to the insertion of other words.

Mr. THOMSON: We know what those "other words" are. The Opposition Leader and the late Minister for Works have given us a good deal of information regarding what they as Ministers endeavoured to do in this matter. They tell us that certain inquiries have been made. It is the first public intimation we have had of the fact.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh, no!

Mr. THOMSON: It is the first intimation so far as the House is concerned.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, it is not.

Mr. THOMSON: If it is not, will the Opposition Leader explain why it is necessary for his colleague, the member for York, to move that a Royal Commission be appointed to inquire into this very urgent work?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: He thinks it is necessary.

Mr. THOMSON: If everything has been done, as is alleged by the Opposition Leader, there would be no need for the proposed inquiry. We have heard the statement of the Minister for Agriculture, who has drawn from his personal experience an illustration of what a water supply means to the agriculturist. In the interests of

the country an inquiry is necessary. What is going to be the result if a Royal Commission is appointed? A Commissioner, we are told, is to be appointed from outside. That Commissioner will have to depend upon the very engineers whom some members have been condemning.

Mr. Mann: The Commissioner need not be an engineer.

Mr. Latham: Who are the members condemning our engineers?

Mr. THOMSON: Some members have done so.

Hon. J. Cunningham: The member for York made the statement that we had not in the State a man competent to make the inquiry.

Mr. Latham: I have not made any such statement.

Hon. J. Cunningham: If he looks, the hon. member will find that is in his statement.

Mr. Latham: I have looked and it is not there.

Mr. THOMSON: This a serious matter for Western Australia. We had a statement by the Minister for Lands that we have £11,000,000 of the State's money on loan to people on the land. Then we have the statement by the Minister for Agriculture that in the areas he visited last week there are thousands of acres that, if given an adequate water supply, would be carrying stock and returning a greater profit than is possible to-day. In my own electorate a railway was pushed out into an already settled area. No provision was made for water supplies, although members urged on the Government the importance of providing that, side by side with railway construction, should go provision for adequate water supplies. Last year water had to be carried out by rail to enable the settlers to continue operations. There were no facilities for them to water their horses, and they had to pay 5s. per hundred gallons for that water. I hope the House will accept the amendment proposed by the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston). The Leader of the Opposition said that we were dealing with the gold-fields water supply; we are dealing with the requirements of the State. Concurrently with the survey of land in agricultural areas should go an investigation to define what would be an adequate water supply for the district when it was thrown open for closer settlement. I want to assure the member for York (Mr. Latham) that the amendment was not moved with any intention to kill his motion. Taking into consideration the fact that the Government have a majority and that the Minister in charge of the department has stated definitely that he will not accept a Royal Commission, the amendment should be regarded as practicable and one that will be of benefit to the State. We have only the statements by the Leader of the

Opposition and by the former Minister for Works that certain inquiries have been instituted. I do not doubt their statements for a moment, but I think that the Government should accept the debate as an indication that provision should be made for water supplies when country is being prepared with a view to throwing it open for selection. In my opinion it is criminal to open up areas and encourage people to settle there if they are not able to farm properly. It amounts to a serious economic loss, when farmers, who should be putting in their crops, are compelled to cart water. The time spent in carting water represents so much valuable money lost to the State. I hope the member for York will recognise that, instead of being antagonistic to him and his desires on this question, the amendment represents an honest attempt to have this most important question of agricultural water supplies dealt with properly. I hope hon. members will have an opportunity of seeing the plans and designs of the engineers. As was pointed out by the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George), some of those men have grown up here and have learnt the requirements of the State. No man from outside, who does not know local conditions and therefore would have to be educated, could be in so favourable a position as those who have gained their knowledge locally. I hope much good will result from the debate, which is an important one to farmers.

Amendment (to strike out all the words after "House") put and a division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	28
Noes	..	..	11
Majority for			17

#### AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lambert
Mr. Brown	Mr. Lamond
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Lindsay
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Collier	Mr. Millington
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Heron	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Holman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hughes	Mr. A. Wan-brough
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Withers
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Barnard	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Davy	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Mann	Mr. Stubbs
Sir James Mitchell	Mr. Taylor
Mr. North	Mr. Latham
Mr. Sampson	

(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [8.40]: I move—

*That the following words be inserted in lieu of those struck out: "That the Government, through their engineers, should inquire into the best methods of providing water supplies in the agricultural areas of the State by extensions of the goldfields water supply scheme, key dams and otherwise."*

At one stage there was a slight misconception in the mind of the Leader of the Opposition regarding the scope of the amendment. I wish to thank that hon. gentleman for the generous way in which he acknowledged that misconception when his attention was drawn to it. It was my desire that not only the goldfields water supply should be extended, but that where settlers were within a short distance of the main pipe line—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has already spoken on this subject, and he has no right to proceed further.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I did not move the amendment before!

Mr. SPEAKER: The words the hon. member has just read were included originally, and they have been the subject of discussion throughout. The hon. member has no right to make a further speech.

Mr. Latham: Have I the right of reply to statements made previously?

Mr. SPEAKER No!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Cannot we move an amendment on the amendment?

Mr. SPEAKER: The original motion has been disposed of. The only words standing now are these: "That in the opinion of this House." Certain other words originally included in the motion have been omitted, with a view to substituting other words.

#### Point of Order.

Mr. Taylor: On a point of order. I was not present when the discussion arose, but I think you, Sir, are perfectly correct in saying that the amendment was to strike out certain words. I assume that the amendment you have read was indicated by the mover, of course with the object of inducing members to support it. But that part of the amendment, the insertion of new words, could not be moved until after the first part of the amendment, the striking out of words, was disposed of. The question now before the Chair is whether or not those words be added, and it is open to debate.

Mr. Hughes: What is your point of order?

Mr. Taylor: That it is open to debate. The Speaker says the debate is closed.

Mr. Lambert: Can you raise a point of order on the Speaker's ruling?

Mr. Speaker: In rising to a point of order the hon. member, I think, slightly misunderstood the position. I ruled that

the member for Williams-Narrogin could not again speak, he having already moved the amendment. But any member who has not spoken to the amendment, and desires to speak, even to move any further amendment, may do so.

Mr. Sampson: The member for Williams-Narrogin has not had an opportunity to elaborate his amendment.

Mr. Speaker: I am quite satisfied. I have given my ruling. If the hon. member wishes to dispute it, he must take other steps.

*Debate resumed.*

Mr. LATHAM (York) [8.47]: I move an amendment on the amendment—

*That the words "Government through its engineers" be struck out, and "Minister" inserted in lieu; and "and report to this House" be added.*

I have confidence in the Minister, and I am prepared to leave this matter with him, since the House has decided that it does not want a Royal Commission. In my original motion I merely wanted to give the Minister some assistance. I do not know whether it is any longer necessary to have any motion at all, since the Minister has given an undertaking that he will inquire into the question. I am prepared to accept that. I regret that the debate has created a little feeling, particularly in the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay), who deliberately set out to give the House and the public his views regarding my attitude in the past Parliament. All I have to say is that I hope the hon. member will do as good work for the State during this Parliament as I did during the last Parliament, and will be returned to the House with a substantial majority, as I was at the last election.

Mr. Marshall: On a point of order. I should like to know what this bickering has to do with the question.

The Premier: Why not have these differences outside?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must confine himself to the question.

Mr. LATHAM: You, Sir, gave me an understanding that I should have opportunity to reply to the debate. However, I am prepared to leave the question of water supply in the hands of the Minister, since we cannot have a Royal Commission. I am anxious that the agriculturists should know what the Government are doing in this matter. I hope the Minister will accept my amendment on the amendment.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [8.50]: The Government ought not to stand for members, even if they do represent the farmers, seeking a little publicity and kudos, and endeavouring to make the farmers believe that they are forcing the hands of the Government. The provision

of water for the farmers is the policy of the Labour Party, and we do not want any abstract motions carried by members who are merely trying to placate their constituents.

Mr. Thomson: But the Minister has agreed to accept the amendment.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not care if fifty Ministers agree. As a matter of policy the thing is wrong, and I will not vote for it. I should be sorry to think it was not the policy of the Government, within their financial means, to provide water in the farming areas. Those who represent the mining areas are just as desirous of seeing water provided for the farmers as is any other section in the House.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We are agreed upon that.

Mr. LAMBERT: Then why the necessity for carrying these absurd motions and amendments as if they were a direction to the Minister? The Minister is seized of his responsibilities to the House and to the country.

Mr. Latham: I am ready to withdraw even now. I have no further interest in the matter.

Mr. LAMBERT: A good purpose would be served in withdrawing the motion. If we are to have members placing on the Notice Paper motions respecting every parochial little grievance, we shall have the whole time of Parliament taken up by members seeking publicity and endeavouring to placate their constituents.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You have no right to say that.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know that I am wrong in saying it. In point of fact, what I say is right and I will say it, even if it be wrong to say it. If the Leader of the Opposition thinks it is wrong to say it, I am all the more convinced that I am right in saying it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are a weird creature.

Mr. LAMBERT: I hope members will not stand for the amended motion. The question has been ventilated, and members of the Country Party have expressed their opinions.

Mr. Thomson: You have no right to impute motives.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not imputing motives. You have every right to bring forward an abstract motion with the idea of ventilating a grievance, but—

Mr. Thomson: Had you heard the member for Toodyay, you would know that this is a very serious grievance.

Mr. LAMBERT: Of course it is. But for over 20 years the goldfields have been penalised in the payment for that scheme, and now that it is paid for, the farmers are to have the benefit.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The general taxpayers of the State paid for it.

Mr. LAMBERT: As a book entry, yes, but in actual fact the people of the goldfields paid for it. The contribution from Consolidated Revenue to the sinking fund was based on the indirect benefit derived by the State from that scheme. Now, of course, the farmers' representatives say that even at the cost of neglecting to provide cheap water for the mines—

Mr. Lindsay: We never said that.

Mr. LAMBERT: Not in actual words, perhaps.

Mr. Latham: But they thought it.

Mr. Lindsay: I say we are prepared to pay for it.

Mr. LAMBERT: Of course you are.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must request hon. members not to go over the whole ground again. The original motion has been, in effect, deleted. The question now before the House is whether the engineers or the Minister shall inquire. That is the only matter for discussion before the Chair.

Mr. LAMBERT: We have heard members representing the farmers deal flipantly with the question of water rates. One hon. member a little while ago made it a joke. He said the farmers papered their back rooms with final water rate notices.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss the whole question, but must confine himself to the alternative amendment. "May" says—

The object of an amendment may be to effect such an alteration in a question as will obtain the support of those who, without such alteration, must either vote against it or abstain from voting thereon, or to present to the House an alternative proposition either wholly or partially opposed to the original question. These alternatives only are before the Chair and hon. members must confine themselves to them.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (Honorary Minister—Kalgoorlie—on further amendment) [9.0]: To me as Minister in charge of the engineers for agricultural and goldfields water supplies, the amendment means just what is proposed by the motion as amended. The engineers are under my control and it stands to reason that the engineers will make the investigation under the instructions of the Minister.

Mr. Latham: This will give you further latitude.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I cannot see the need for the amendment submitted by the member for York.

Mr. Latham: It will not restrict you to engineers.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, it will. Any inquiry must be made by the engineers, who are under the control of the Minister.

Mr. Latham: Under the amendment you can obtain the assistance of anyone.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I think the House is wasting a lot of time over this

matter. If the motion be carried, very well; we shall go on with the investigation as we are doing at present. We know that the position of the goldfields and agricultural water supplies is governed by the finance at our disposal. If we get a good rainfall, in most instances we shall have an adequate water supply. The Government are fully seized of their responsibility, and will do their best in the interests of the people carrying on the agricultural industry.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning—on further amendment) [9.2]: I am somewhat surprised at the statement of the member for York (Mr. Latham) that for his part the motion may be withdrawn.

Mr. Latham: We have the promise of the Minister.

Mr. THOMSON: The hon. member, in moving his motion, said—

I do not think we have in this State a man qualified of his own knowledge to advise the Government on a permanent scheme of agricultural water supply. If a local man be selected he should be sent to the other States to learn what is being done there and whether their experience can be applied here.

The Leader of the Opposition said there was no need for an inquiry and that everything necessary was being done. Yet we find him supporting the proposal for the appointment of a Royal Commission.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I had a perfect right to do so.

Mr. THOMSON: But the hon. member is not very consistent. We have the assurance of the Minister that he will accept the proposal and I hope he will accept it as amended by the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston).

Amendment on amendment put and negatived.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [9.4]: I think the motion should be voted out. It should not be implied that it is not part of the Labour Government's policy to provide water supplies for the agricultural areas.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	18
Noes	..	..	..	..	20

Majority against .. 2

#### AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. W. D. Johnson
Mr. Brown	Mr. E. B. Johnston
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Lindsay
Mr. Collier	Mr. Panton
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Heron	Mr. Troy
Mr. Holman	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

## NOES.

Mr. Barnard	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Millington
Mr. Coverley	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Davy	Mr. Munzie
Mr. George	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Lambod	Mr. A. Wan-brough
Mr. Latham	Mr. Withers
Mr. Mann	Mr. J. H. Smith

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

# MOTION--WATER CONSERVATION, AVON RIVER.

Debate resumed from the 27th August on the following motion by Mr. Griffiths. --

*That in view of the influx of large numbers of immigrants in the near future and their part absorption on closer settlement lines, the time has arrived when a thorough investigation should be made of the Avon Valley and Avon River to determine whether the fine fruit-growing lands along this valley can be utilised for intensive culture.*

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (Honorary Minister--Kalgoorlie) [9.12]: I do not intend to oppose the motion. In my opinion the Avon Valley is not suitable, nor is the soil as favourable for the production of fruit as the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) indicated. The hon. member seems to have an idea that the submitting of such a motion may gain for him an advertisement throughout the State. He is looking for publicity. Some four years ago a similar motion was submitted by him; the Government did not oppose it and it was carried. If members desire to carry this motion, they may do so. It may please the member who moved it, but as to settling migrants on the lands adjacent to the Avon River, I do not think the motion will get us very far. However, if it affords the mover any mental satisfaction, he is welcome to it.

Mr. LINDSAY (Toodyay) [9.13]: I did not move the motion and therefore cannot be accused of seeking publicity. However, I did introduce to the Minister for Lands a deputation asking him to make such an investigation. I do not agree with the Honorary Minister's opinion of the land adjacent to the Avon River. I know the valley particularly well, and I consider it one of the finest bits of land in the State.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: In Australia.

Mr. LINDSAY: I am not going to talk about fruit-growing there--

Hon. J. Cunningham: The motion stresses fruit-growing.

Mr. LINDSAY: But the Minister for Lands the other day stated that some dried fruit from Toodyay had been placed in one

of the show cases at the Fremantle wharf, and certain overseas travellers who inspected it expressed the opinion that it was the finest they had seen in Australia. The land is suitable also for dairying and at present is carrying some fine crops of lucerne. It is also suitable for fruit-growing, but no one in his senses would use it for that purpose until the marketing conditions improve. There are thousands of acres along that valley 10 or 12 feet deep in black alluvial soil. The land is as fine as any in Australia, and has not been put to the best use. I hope the matter will be investigated by the expert officers of the department, and that they will be able to convince the Government that the land is suitable for closer settlement.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [9.16]: What the hon. member says about the Avon Valley is true, as it concerns that part along the river frontage. I hope the Minister will cause some inquiry to be made.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Why did not you do it?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We know all about it. Too often we are told that people along the Avon Valley are not doing their duty. When we made inquiries we were told that the country from Meckering to Menzies could be regarded as part of the Avon Valley, and that there were more acres in the Avon Valley than could really be found within 50 miles of it.

The Minister for Lands: If you want to reopen that discussion I will read you the officer's opinion.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have no objection at all. People have such a wrong idea of the Avon Valley. It is limited in area, and it is well worked.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Mostly in crops.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Fruit does grow there. The people are working the land as possibly few other parts of the State are being worked. If the Minister would make inquiries he would find that fruit grows well there. If it were not for the difficulties of marketing fruit we would not be deterred from increasing our orchard areas. If we planted now, when the trees came into bearing we would find the world would have settled down and would be able to buy our products. To-day the world is disturbed, and countries are off the market, with the result that there is a surplus. In France 4,000,000 acres of vines yield more in one year than all the wheat and wool in Australia put together. There is, therefore, some value in vineyards. When the chief inspector of fruit has made his report I hope it will satisfy the Minister for Lands that in the true Avon Valley people are really actively at work.

Hon. J. Cunningham: I am not opposing the motion.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: And I am encouraging it. I hope the chief inspector of fruit will let us know what he thinks of the possibility of fruit-growing within this area.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [9.20]: I oppose the motion. The Leader of the Opposition says he knows all about the Avon Valley.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I lived there before you were born.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am glad the Leader of the Opposition has become master of something, at all events of a knowledge of the Avon Valley. The carrying of these abstract motions serves no useful purpose. They mean nothing and end in nothing. This motion may involve sending a highly paid officer, in the chief inspector of fruit, wandering for weeks around the country, and inspecting land that a schoolboy knows is eminently suitable for closer settlement. The best means of bringing it into intense culture is to pass an effective Closer Settlement Act. It is no use sending highly paid officials round the country preparing reports that end in nothing. The greater portion of the Avon Valley is suitable for closer settlement and intense culture, and could have been purchased four or five years ago at about £3 an acre. The Government of the day did not realise their responsibilities and allowed the opportunity to go by.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Are you cross-examining members?

Mr. LAMBERT: The Leader of the Opposition admits that it could have been purchased four or five years ago at about that figure. I have the authority of Mr. Clarkson and others, who know the Avon Valley well, that a considerable portion of it could have been purchased at that price, while to-day it is worth treble the amount. I will always sternly oppose the idea of sending highly paid officials peregrinating round the country formulating reports which the Government have not the slightest intention of carrying into effect. It would not be in keeping with the policy of the Government to purchase land at extravagant prices. I hope members will not be bluffed into carrying this abstract motion, which will involve the country in further expenditure. There must be hundreds of reports upon every subject pigeon-holed in the various offices that have never seen the light of day, but have cost hundreds of thousands of pounds. I hope the Government will put their foot down and veto a motion of this kind.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [9.25]: I am afraid the dinner the member for Coolgardie had this evening has disagreed with him, and that he is suffering from indigestion.

Mr. Lambert: It is not mental indigestion.

Mr. THOMSON: Members have no right to accuse other members of seeking special notoriety. The Honorary Minister said he had no objection to the motion, and that it had once before been carried by the House. The member for Avon is really paying a great tribute to the present Administration.

Mr. Taylor: It avails nothing.

Mr. THOMSON: Probably not. He believes that if the House passes this motion the Government will make an investigation. There is nothing wrong with it, and the Leader of the Opposition has proved the necessity for it. A similar motion was passed by this House, but apparently nothing was done. I maintain that the hon. member was justified in drawing the attention of the House to the matter, and I hope this motion will not be treated in a flippant manner.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSON: I move—

*That the debate be adjourned.*

Motion put and negatived.

Question put and negatived.

#### MOTION—OVERSEAS MARKETING.

*To inquire by Select Committee.*

Debate resumed from the 27th August on the motion by Mr. Griffiths—

*That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the matter of overseas markets for the products (exportable) of the group settlements, Peel Estate, Upper Swan, and other settlements and agricultural areas. (1) Such inquiry to investigate the various pooling schemes and marketing legislation in vogue in the Eastern States, United States of America, Canada, Europe, etc. (2) Co-operative efforts in the marketing of fruit, etc. (3) To formulate a scheme suitable to Western Australian conditions and calculated to work in with an all-Australian scheme for the better handling and marketing of the products under review.*

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [9.31]: I regret that the mover of this motion appears to be unfortunate in his efforts to secure investigation. While I view his intention with every sympathy, I cannot regard the select committee for which he is moving as being necessary. In the first place, I feel the hon. member has overloaded his motion in asking for a select committee to make inquiries that go beyond the activities of the select committee. In my opinion, the proposed select committee would not serve any purpose. As for information concerning the marketing of the anticipated products of the group settlements, the settlements are in the South-West and on the Peel Estate.

The hon. member also suggests inquiry into the marketing of the products of the Upper Swan district, which are mostly dried fruits. The principal products of the group settlements, it is anticipated, will be milk, cream, and butter.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Also bacon; all things which we ourselves eat.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We imported last year 6,215,000 lbs. of butter, the value being over half a million sterling. That is an indication that we shall have no difficulty in marketing butter produced by the group settlements; and as butter will be one of the chief products of those settlements, the marketing problem in that respect is not acute. At present we do not supply our own market with dairy products, of which last year we imported from the Eastern States 7,111 tons. Pig farming also will be undertaken by group settlers for the production of bacon. The local market is not supplied in that respect, as last year we imported bacon and hams to the value of £196,000. The mover could not have been aware of these facts; otherwise he would never have asked for the select committee. The market is right here at our doors, and the group settlements will find their activities fully occupied for the next ten years in meeting Western Australian requirements in this respect. With regard to the Upper Swan, which is largely concerned with the vine industry, I noticed from the Press recently that there is a good market abroad for dried fruits, which are selling very freely in the Old Country. In addition, the Federal Government has given a bounty of, I believe, £10,000, for the encouragement of the sale abroad of Australian dried fruits. The proposed select committee would have no opportunity of inquiring into marketing problems in England and on the Continent. In this respect they could only go on hearsay, and hon. members will realise that a select committee depending on hearsay evidence would not be of great value to the producers of this country. I am satisfied, moreover, that for dried fruits there is a large market in this State, especially for lemons, if the people know the fruit is available at a reasonable price. I am sure that if the producers of dried fruits were to embark on an active propaganda and endeavour to get their products on the market here, they would find a large local demand for them. Apart from the great market for dairy produce in this country, there are already in operation a Federal Dairy Council and a State Dairy Council, both of which have been engaged for a considerable time upon the collection of data with a view to securing the most effective marketing facilities. The select committee could only collect, in this respect, data already collected by the two

councils. The data are available already. Further, there is a Federal Fruit Council which acts in conjunction with a State Advisory Board; and I understand the function of the two bodies is to find overseas markets for our products, and to secure information which will enable our Australian fruits to be put on the markets abroad efficiently and economically, and in a sound, good condition. Therefore it seems to me that the mover is asking for something which is not necessary. Of our exportable products, therefore, there remain only wool and wheat; and everybody knows that there is no dearth of markets for those two commodities. For wool particularly there is a clamant demand. The danger is that not enough wool will be produced for the English market. As regards wheat, there is no difficulty in selling abroad as much as ever we can produce. There is really nothing for the select committee to inquire into as regards selling the anticipated products of the group settlements. No problem confronts us from that aspect. I regret very much, therefore, that I have to oppose this motion for the appointment of a select committee.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [9.38]: I have listened with interest to the Minister's statement. Evidently the hon. gentleman has the correct hang of the situation. For our wheat and our wool there are undoubted markets. I question if better markets are obtainable, in view of the existing arrangements for marketing the two products. When it comes to the anticipated products at the group settlements, we are importing nearly one and a-half million pounds' worth of food-stuffs, the whole of which should be produced in Western Australia, and largely in our South-West. That one and a-half million pounds' worth will take a great many group settlers to produce. There will be no trouble about marketing bacon and butter from the group settlements in this State. Both products are needed, and we ought to grow them ourselves. It is disgraceful that we are importing any foodstuffs at all. We can produce them all in this State, and should do so. It is because we have not done so that we are in our present financial position. If we had the millions we have been sending out of the State for food during the last 30 years, we would be a very rich community indeed. Then as regards the anticipated meat production of the South-West settlements, the markets are available and well understood. There will be no trouble in that respect. Our group settlers ought to be made to understand that everything they are ever likely to grow will find a good sale either here or in the markets of the world. New Zealand exports to the Home market just the things that our South-West will produce. Last year New Zealand sent Home 37½ million pounds' worth of but-

ter, dairy produce, beef, and so on. We have the export facilities in Fremantle for bacon and butter. There will be no trouble about any of these products. Our one trouble is fruit. The Minister rightly says that if our people could get the dried fruit, everything we produce in that way would be sold in the State. We are importing dried fruits even now. If only arrangements could be made to facilitate the getting of fresh fruit to the people, all the fruit produced in Western Australia would be consumed locally. One half of the people in the back country never see fruit; they have no opportunity of getting it. If any member of this House wished to buy a 10-lb. box of dried raisins I venture to say he would not know where to go for it. They are really beautiful raisins. I believe the organisations mentioned by the Minister, coupled with the efforts of the fruit growers themselves, will result in our orchard products finding their way to the consumers. When that occurs it will be a happy day for the fruitgrowers. Their real trouble is that the fruit is scattered far and wide—25,000 acres of orchards spread over a huge area. Otherwise there would be no difficulty at all. As it is, the fruit is so scattered that it cannot be marshalled to be brought into a jam factory. I took note of what the Minister said about the help to be given to the fruitgrowers. They do want help in respect of marketing. It is difficult for the man who grows stuff to take it to the man who consumes it. It is very difficult indeed for him to do that except through an organisation. The farmers of the wheat belt are undoubtedly in a position to buy fruit if it can be taken to them, and they would very willingly buy large quantities of fruit. The same thing applies to the people of the goldfields, and I dare say that in Perth there are many people who see very little fruit. We should eat fruit in very large quantities here, and we would do so if we could get it at reasonable prices. There is now a select committee sitting to deal with the marketing of products in Perth. I hope good results will be achieved by that committee because half the population of the State who live in Perth produce nothing and have to bring their food requirements into the city. I do not know that any inquiry such as is suggested in the motion will be effective. I doubt whether the result will be such as the mover anticipates. He has brought the motion forward in all good faith and we should acknowledge that he has done a service in having the matter discussed. I have always wanted the group settler to realise that there is no possibility of failure to find a market for all that he can produce. The Minister has emphasised that by saying there is no question of over-production because of the ready market available.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.47]: The question of marketing is one of paramount interest to producers the world over. In

America a joint agricultural committee of inquiry, appointed by Congress, reported that, generally speaking, 37 per cent. of the consumer's dollar represented the cost of producing the article, while the remaining 63 per cent. represented the middleman's fee for transport and delivery to the ultimate consumer. Those figures are startling. They indicate very fairly what I believe to be the position not only in America but all over the world. At Waikerie, a citrus and dried fruit settlement on the River Murray, this question has been looked into. Regarding the dried-fruit industry, it has been demonstrated that at the rate of a shilling per lb., while the retail trader secured £112 per ton, the producer received but £15. That discrepancy is also reflected in the price for sultanas and currants. The motion by the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) refers to the need for an inquiry into the marketing system in vogue in the Eastern States, in America and in other parts of the world. Although the hon. member is not present at the moment, I am satisfied that it is not his intention that those concerned in the inquiry shall leave Western Australia.

Mr. Thomson: Hear, hear.

Mr. SAMPSON: The necessary inquiries can be made locally. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the position of those on the group settlements. I recall the fact that a few days ago the Minister for Lands mentioned that good progress was being made and that, in some instances, it would not be long before the groups reached the producing stage. The Leader of the Opposition has drawn attention to the fact that there is a vast local market for butter, bacon and other dairy produce. Although that market is there, the need for organisation is apparent. I will instance the dried fruit industry. The position of the Upper Swan growers is a difficult one. There are approximately 150 returned soldier settlers there and the State is interested to the extent of about £1,000 per settler. Those men are finding to-day that the marketing facilities are so bad that it is impossible to secure an adequate return.

Mr. Teesdale: What about the point raised by the Leader of the Opposition, who said we were not able to buy raisins?

Mr. SAMPSON: To-day a deputation waited upon the Minister for Railways and we received from him an encouraging reply. It is hoped that the Railway Department will adopt the same attitude as that of the Railway Department in Victoria and encourage the consumption of raisins. Later we waited upon the master bakers, who promised to help by baking raisin bread. By publicity methods suggested, it is hoped to create a demand on the part of the public for that commodity.

Mr. Teesdale: You have heard the statement that your products are not available for sale in the city?

Mr. SAMPSON: At a later stage we waited on the Minister in charge of hospitals (Hon. S. W. Munsie), who promised to give attention to the question of the consumption of local raisins in our State institutions. I admit that there has been some difficulty in securing supplies. That lack of organisation, however, will, I believe, be entirely overcome. It is due to that lack of organisation, and of marketing facilities, that the difficulty arises, and also accounts for the fact that 50 tons of raisins were over-carried from last season in Western Australia alone. Despite that fact, people experience difficulties in securing supplies to-day. Raisins may be procured from grocers and others, but I agree with the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) that adequate supplies should be readily available on all fruit stalls, at refreshment rooms, at our railway stations, and at other proper places where fruit is sold. I am convinced we shall never have a proper scheme of marketing, or have a proper control over the industry, until a measure is introduced such as the Queensland Fruit Marketing Organisation Act. If we had a similar organisation in Western Australia, the difficulties that confront the dried-fruit producer of the Upper Swan, of Toodyay, and of other parts, would no longer obtain. As has been pointed out, a large sum is spent annually in purchasing supplies from the Eastern States. This is because we lack the organisation and control that is essential. Some hon. member pointed out that it was not reasonable to expect the grower to produce the fruit and also to market it. I am of opinion that the grower must give attention to the marketing of his products. Under the Queensland Act, the growers themselves select their representatives and only growers are qualified to be representatives. If any of those representatives fail to carry out their duties, it is within the province of the sectional committee concerned to withdraw its member or members from the committee. The Queensland Act provides complete control. I trust that, notwithstanding the volume of legislation with which we are threatened this session, the Minister for Agriculture will provide an opportunity this session for the introduction of this most necessary measure. If such a Bill were introduced and passed at once, there would be no need to utilise the whole of the powers conferred under it from the start. In Queensland they are progressing slowly and with great caution. Similar care must be exercised here.

Mr. Lambert: This is somewhat different from your electioneering speeches.

Mr. SAMPSON: In addition to a measure along the lines of the Queensland Act, it will be necessary for Federal legislation to be introduced.

The Minister for Agriculture: This is compulsory preference to unionists that you are advocating.

Mr. SAMPSON: No, it is compulsory co-operation for growers.

The Minister for Lands: Then we must have other provisions to prevent black-legging.

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not know that the Government can go further regarding unions. If it is possible, we shall see about it.

Mr. Hughes: What has this to do with the motion.

Mr. Teesdale: The member for East Perth has just come in!

Mr. SAMPSON: The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) is speaking without thought or regard for the truth.

Mr. Hughes: Like you do in your paper.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SAMPSON: I have never condemned the Fruit Marketing Act.

Mr. Hughes: There is a Labour Government in Queensland!

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not mind. If a Labour Government are responsible for certain actions that are of benefit to the people, I will readily admit the fact. I would be lacking in intelligence and a spirit of generosity—I do not know that I am correct in using the word "generosity"—and of common sense if, because a Labour Government bring in a measure, I am therefore to oppose it. I hope the member for East Perth does not discredit me to that extent. Even if that hon. member expresses a sentiment that seems to me to be wise—

Mr. Taylor: That would be impossible.

Mr. Sampson:—I will endorse it.

Mr. Hughes: You would misrepresent it in your paper; you would not say it here.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope I shall never represent the hon. member as he seems to represent himself.

Mr. SPEAKER: This cross-firing from bench to bench must cease. I cannot allow these personal remarks to continue.

Mr. Hughes: The hon. member should confine himself to the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members must keep order.

Mr. SAMPSON: The outstanding need is for organisation and I consider the Queensland Act provides the solution for that problem.

Mr. Lambert: Did you say that during your election campaign?

Mr. SAMPSON: During that period I was careful to say that I was not then in a position to criticise the measure, but that it was my intention to pay a visit to Queensland and to look into the question on the spot. I did so and I have brought back information that I give to the House in all sincerity. Since the Government are anxious to help the growers, I hope they will take the necessary action.

The Minister for Agriculture: Is this in accord with what was said in "Sampson's Reminder"?

Mr. SAMPSON: I think so.

The Minister for Agriculture: You will get some of it by-and-by.

Mr. SAMPSON: If the hon. member can find something in "Sampson's Reminder" that opposes the measure, I shall be surprised. The motion is a very ambitious one, but one that, if we are anxious to support the growers in respect of marketing, should be adopted. All the questions contained in the motion can be answered without leaving Western Australia. The clause sitting out the need for inquiry into the various pooling schemes should have the support of every well-wisher of the State; and the final clause, affirming the formulation of the scheme suitable to Western Australian conditions and calculated to work in with an all-Australian scheme should receive, not only the support of growers in this State, but of the growers throughout the Commonwealth. I hope the House will carry the motion.

On motion by Mr. Thomson, debate adjourned.

#### BILL—LEGAL PRACTITIONERS' ACT AMENDMENT.

##### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from 3rd September.

Mr. DAVY (West Perth) [10.2]: I had expected to hear the views of the Government before being called upon to speak to the Bill. It is a private member's Bill, and I understand that such Bills are always treated as non-party measures. I must oppose the second reading without any equivocation. It is invidious for me to have to do so, because I am a lawyer and it will be said, with however little truth, that lawyers constitute a close corporation and any measure to make it easier for people to enter that close corporation is likely to be opposed by all lawyers. However, I think hon. members, when they have heard what I have to say, will agree that my attitude is not influenced by the fact that I am a lawyer. I believe that every learned profession, indeed every avocation, should be made as easy of access as possible to every member of the community, rich or poor. When I say easy, I mean cheap, and I do not use the expression in the sense that professions and avocations should be made easy from the point of view of qualification. I regard the profession of the law as probably the most responsible profession we have. I am reminded that my friend, the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) in almost every speech he has

made has complained of the misrepresentations he and other members of his party have suffered from the newspapers. The profession of the law, in common with the profession of mothers-in-law and with that of politicians, suffers from the cheap wit of music halls. On the Address-in-reply debate I made a humble protest against the habit of the general public of making sneering and ill-considered remarks disparaging to politicians. In the same way the man in the street, without thought and without knowledge, makes disparaging remarks relative to the profession of the law. Those remarks have been induced largely by the cheap witticisms of the music halls and of a certain section of the Press. I need not touch upon the evil results that accrue from incompetent and dishonest lawyers. I do not know which is the more dangerous, the incompetent lawyer or the bad lawyer. Each is capable of working the most terrible harm to the people at large. It is of the utmost importance to the community that their lawyers—we are the servants of the public in the same way as politicians and doctors are the servants of the public—should be well trained and of the highest moral character. I ask hon. members to consider what is going to be the effect of the Bill brought down by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes). I say without fear of contradiction that if the Bill became law the standard of training and capacity that will be required of persons wishing to enter the legal profession, will become lower than that of any other profession, indeed of any other skilled vocation. The Bill proposes to make it possible for any person to become a lawyer the moment he reaches the age of 30 years, without a single day's training, indeed without an hour's training.

Mr. Hughes: That is so now.

Mr. DAVY: It is not so. A lawyer is just as much a skilled artisan, a craftsman, as is the carpenter, the plumber, the wheelwright, the cooper, or the saddler. The only differences between the lawyer and those other craftsmen are two: the members of those vocations I have mentioned carry out their work by a combination of brains and hands, whereas the lawyer uses his brains alone. Lawyers make agreements, carpenters make doors; lawyers plead causes, while saddlers make saddles and bridles; lawyers give advice and coopers make casks. The second serious difference between them comes in this way: if a carpenter makes a bad door, the result of his inefficiency is that he has wasted the value of the material in that door, worth perhaps £2 10s. at the outside. If the saddler makes a bad saddle, he has wasted the material involved, and may also give the person unfortunate enough to ride in that saddle—well, some discomfort. The cooper, if he makes a bad cask, wastes the material used in the operation.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is the most serious instance of all.

Mr. DAVY: Yes, it may be that as a secondary result some of the liquid in that cask, regarded by certain hon. members as precious and by others as wholly deleterious, may be spilled and wasted.

The Minister for Lands: It must be precious if it be water.

Mr. DAVY: But most coopers make casks to contain something other than water. Perhaps the Minister would prefer that casks were made only for the purpose of holding water. However, the result of inefficiency on the part of the skilled artisans in those several avocations is of minor importance. But just consider for a moment what may be the result of inefficiency in a lawyer. A bad lawyer makes a bad agreement, makes some technical mistake which leaves a loophole. In doing this, he potentially involves the parties to that agreement in dreadful litigation that may even ruin them.

The Minister for Mines: But he does it now, even when he has to pass examinations.

Mr. DAVY: That is just what I say: examinations are not a sufficient test. If the Minister will listen, I will come to the point that under this Bill it is proposed to admit people to this highly responsible profession with no test whatever beyond examination.

Mr. Hughes: Is that not done now?

Mr. DAVY: No.

Mr. Hughes: Do not English barristers—

Mr. DAVY: I will deal with that presently. I think I can answer my friend's objection on that ground. It is of the highest importance that a lawyer, who is a skilled artisan, should submit to some test of his skill. As I say, a bad lawyer makes a bad agreement and may involve his clients in disaster; he gives bad advice and so sends his clients into court, with the result that they may be ruined.

The Minister for Lands: He may even send them to gaol.

Mr. DAVY: Yes, he may even send them to gaol. Which member of the House would suggest that the carpenter, the plumber, the wheelwright, the cooper or the saddler should be allowed to pose as such without a day's training?

Mr. Thomson: He would not be permitted to do it.

Mr. DAVY: Of course not. Then how much more important is it that lawyers should receive a proper training before being allowed to practice their profession? This Bill reduces to a ridiculous stage the standard required to be shown by a man who aspires to undertake the great responsibility that a lawyer carries. No training whatever is required from a man who desires to avail himself of the privileges of this Bill. He has to show no standard of general knowledge whatever; he need not know the King's English; he need know nothing about history; he need have no training whatever. All he has to do is to

pass two examinations in law and nothing else. Not only need he have no training or general knowledge, but he may pass his examinations in bits—subject by subject. I do not think I need point out to any member who takes a serious view of things that the most appalling fool may well be able to pass an examination if he is permitted to pass it in small pieces. An examination after all is merely a test of whether a man has been taught properly, and has studied properly, and has sufficient capacity to meet the requirements for which the examination is supposed to be a test. If a man is entitled to pass an examination in one little subject this month, and another subject six months hence, and a third subject at the end of another six months, he may be able to do it, and may nevertheless be a person of most limited capacity. The merest fool could pass any qualifying examination provided he could do it in small pieces. I do not know of any serious examination test that permits of a man, if he passes in one subject, not having to take that subject again when he sits for the same examination.

Mr. Hughes: Then you do not think much of the legal profession in the Eastern States.

Mr. DAVY: Some comments may be required on the question of examinations. Examinations are recognised everywhere by the teaching profession—they are the people best qualified to know—as a test whether the examinee has been taught properly the subject upon which he is being examined. But the shortcomings of examinations are well recognised by members of the teaching profession. At the same time no one has yet devised a better test, and so we have to put up with the inadequacy of the test as best we may. But examinations at all times have been regarded as supplementary to teaching, as something that does not stand alone but is grafted on to the teaching that has preceded it. In the good or bad old days colleges, schools and seminaries had no such thing as examinations. Students entered those institutions for the purpose of being taught, and the fact that they were taught a certain subject for a certain number of years and had applied themselves to the learning was considered sufficient to entitle them to regard themselves as qualified in the subject. The habit of setting examinations to students is a comparatively modern idea, and it was used as a method to ascertain whether the teaching had been effective to the individual. That being so, to endeavour to make examinations the test by an examining body that had nothing to do with a teaching body and was not relative to a teaching body is the worst kind of farce. It is putting the cart before the horse. This Bill is condemned in another respect. It is proposed to turn the Barristers' Board—a board with well defined powers and duties—into a pure examination board

without relation to any teaching. At present it is an examination board, but it is an examination board with relation to very definite teaching. Its job is to examine those persons who have been articled to practitioners, and to find out whether the practitioners have done their duty in teaching articled clerks their profession. When a student is articled to a legal practitioner, it is not a one-sided contract. The practitioner undertakes on his part to teach the articled clerk the profession so far as he knows it, and the articled clerk on his part undertakes to be diligent and obedient and to endeavour to learn the profession. It is a two-sided bargain with duties and privileges on each side. The Barristers' Board merely steps in at the end and ascertains whether the duty of the master and the pupil has been performed during the five years apprenticeship. That is all it does at present. If this Bill becomes law the Barristers' Board will become an examining body with no relation to teaching. The youth who thinks it might at some time in future become useful for him to have the certificate of the board may simply sit for the examinations without one day's tuition and without anyone to supervise the direction in which he is studying. If he cannot pass he should qualify for admission to a home for imbeciles, because this Bill will permit him to pass subject by subject. If he does pass he can go to the Barristers' Board and demand a certificate. He can put that certificate in his pocket and go away for 10 years into the bush, to Timbuctoo, or to the Argentine Republic and forget all about the very small smattering of law he needed to know to pass the examinations. At the end of 10 years he can return and, having passed the age of 30, can produce his certificate, go to the Barristers' Board, and demand to be admitted as a member of the legal profession and thus be turned loose on the public.

Mr. Hughes: Just like the English barristers.

Mr. DAVY: I knew that would be the particular parrot cry the hon. member would work off on us to-night. I shall deal with that presently. I ask members to realise what that position may mean. When any one of them has needed legal advice, has he selected a man admitted to the profession only two days before to guide him in the proper course of action to take? Of course not. A member would go to a man who had proved himself for a number of years to be sound, honest and experienced in his views, a man who had started with a sound training. But the general public often do not need to consult a lawyer more than once in a lifetime.

Mr. Panton: That is quite enough for most of them.

Mr. DAVY: I expected that comment. Suppose they do not need to consult a lawyer more than once, they do not know who are experienced, skilful and honest men. They go to a man recommended by a friend, because he saw that man's name in the paper, not noticing whether he was winning or losing his cases. A man engaged on one particular class of case is often selected to advise on a case of an entirely different nature by the unfortunate member of the public who has occasion to go to a lawyer only once. It is such people we have to protect. If this Bill becomes law we run the risk of turning loose on the community a lot of untrained, incompetent, unskilful persons to practice this highly responsible profession. I do not want members to think I have come here merely to destroy what may be described by the mover as a constructive measure, a Bill of reform. I am prepared to offer something that will remove what I consider is a disability under which the ambitious young citizen suffers at present, but by a sound method. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) has interjected over and over again, "What about the English barrister?" At present there are various ways of becoming a member of the legal profession in Western Australia. The normal way in which 90 per cent. of the practitioners have entered the portals of the profession is by becoming articled, passing examinations, and being admitted. There is another way and I admit it is a very easy way, too easy, and that is by being admitted to the bar in London and then coming back here, waiting six months and paying fees. To make the position quite clear, let me explain. Since time immemorial the legal profession has been divided very rigidly into two branches, the solicitor on the one hand, and the barrister on the other. Solicitors are persons who have offices, meet the general public, and discuss their troubles with them. They give them small pieces of advice, draw documents, and so forth. Barristers, on the other hand, are persons who specialise in a knowledge of the law, who plead cases in court, and never see members of the public except when introduced to them by a solicitor. The clients of barristers are solicitors, and the clients of solicitors are members of the public. A barrister does not handle a penny of anyone's money, and has nothing to do with investments or the general business of clients. A solicitor may be involved in all kinds of business matters, responsibilities in regard to the investment of money, the drawing of agreements, and a thousand and one other things. As a result of that division, and of the fact that a barrister has only solicitors for clients in the Old Country, the most responsible branch of the pro-

fession has always been regarded as that of the solicitor. It did not matter whether a barrister knew his job or not, because the people who were employing him were capable of judging upon that question.

Mr. North: He had to be the advocate.

Mr. DAVY: Yes. If the barrister did not know his job, he did not get a farthing's worth of work. The solicitor who had always employed him knew perfectly well whether the barrister, Smith, knew his job or not, and would not give him any work until he did know that. Until some 30 or 40 years ago a barrister had to pass an examination in the Old Country. He merely entered himself as a student of an inn of court, and in the ordinary course ate his dinners, which was a way of describing keeping his term; and at the end of three years, if he was a fit and proper person and it had been established that he had studied for three years, he was admitted. A solicitor has always been regarded as a person who must have an extensive training before being admitted. He must pass a difficult examination and must also satisfy the court that he is a fit and proper person, from the point of character, to be admitted. When this Crown Colony was founded it was thought that it would not be big enough to stand that division in the profession. The two branches were therefore rolled into one, and members of the legal profession were called legal practitioners. In order that there might be no invidious distinction made in this State, if a man was either a barrister or a solicitor in the Old Country, he was admitted here. That is the position to-day. A solicitor who is admitted to practise his profession in the Old Country has to go through five years' articles, and pass very stiff examinations. The man who is admitted to practice at the bar in the Old Country has merely to enter his name as a student at an inn of court, pay certain fees, keep his terms, and attend lectures, and over a period of three years pass certain examinations. If then he is a fit and proper person, he is admitted to the bar. When the ordinary young barrister is admitted to the bar in England he is entirely incompetent to practise as a solicitor. It is wrong that such a man should be able to come here and practise as a solicitor, and I say it whether the Barristers' Board would like me to say it or not. It is not right that a man who merely takes a three years' course in England, and is admitted to the bar there, should be permitted to return to this State and practise as a solicitor. He could not do that in England, and is not fit to do it here. When I returned to Western Australia I was quite incompetent to practise as a solicitor. Fortunately, however, I had enough brains to know that. I did not

attempt to practise by myself, but took the precaution of obtaining the necessary experience and practice before I endangered the public by dealing with their affairs. Because, however, something is wrong with our present Act, is that an excuse for doing more wrong? The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) wants to go further, and say that a boy may pass his examinations in a heap, or subject by subject, attend not a single lecture, and have not a day's experience or teaching of any kind, and then with his certificate in his pocket go away for ten years, and return to this State, demand admission to the bar, and thrust himself upon the public as a solicitor and legal practitioner. I do not care what his qualifications as a barrister are, for no one would employ him as such; he could not possibly carry out the duties of a solicitor. I would be with the hon. member if he moved to amend the Legal Practitioners Act making it impossible for a barrister, who had just been admitted to the bar in England, and had no other training, to be admitted as a practitioner in Western Australia.

Mr. Hughes: Why do you not move in that direction?

Mr. DAVY: Perhaps I will do so later on, but we are at present not dealing with any potential amendment I may move. If the hon. member were to move in that direction, I would be with him; but, being with him in that, I cannot be otherwise than very strongly opposed to him when he wants, not only to perpetuate a defect in the Act, but widen that defect. It would astound me if members agreed to pass this Bill as it is. The matter is one that affects us all. The members of the legal profession belong to you, Sir, and to members of the House. They may work ill or good for all or any of you. It is up to members to see that the standard of the profession is kept as high as possible. I believe for the good of the community, and in justice, that the entry through the portals of every learned profession ought to be made as easy as possible for the poor man as for the rich. To make it equally easy for both would be to obey a counsel of perfection. We may establish free universities, abolish any financial hindrance to a man acquiring the knowledge that is necessary, but we will still be faced with the fact that a person has to live. An entirely penniless boy may find himself unable to devote the necessary time to study because he has to earn a living for himself and his dependants.

The Minister for Lands: The authorities are so often raising the standard of examination that it is almost impossible for a lad to do that. This raising of standards is going on at our University.

Mr. DAVY: I am not asking for the standard of examination to be raised. As far as humanly possible I want it to be

made just as easy for a poor boy as a rich one, provided they have equal brain capacity, to reach the same point. We cannot enable every poor boy with ambition and brains to devote the whole of his time to study. That would be rather more than could be expected, though we may yet realise that ideal. I am in favour of any method that will make it possible for any boy to reach the same point that could be reached by another more fortunately placed. I have not come here to destroy the attempt of the member for East Perth—if it be a real attempt—to make it easier for the poor boy to get where the rich boy may go. I propose to offer something which I think is the logical, fair, and proper solution of the difficulty. Members of the party on the opposite side of the Chamber have taken some credit to themselves in that they were the first people to establish a free university in the British Empire. Whether the claim is well founded or not, I do not know; but they say they are entitled to make that boast. That being so, I say the proper method of making it easier for the poor boy to get where the rich boy can get is to establish a chair of law at the University. The member for East Perth wants to turn the Barristers' Board, without any relation to teaching, into an examining board—a thing for which it was never designed. The proper method is to establish a chair of law, which will examine any person who desires to be examined in law, and will confer on any person who shows himself fit a degree in law. If such a chair were established, I would say, "Yes, by all means if a boy takes his degree in law, and then serves one year or two years in a legal practitioner's office to get a certain amount of practical experience, let him be admitted to the practice of the profession." Under those conditions it would be easier even than the Bill proposes for a poor boy to become a member of the legal profession, because the University is wholly free, not even fees being charged for sitting for examinations. The Bill provides for the payment of the prescribed fee before sitting for examination. It may be asked, where are we to find the money to establish a chair of law at the University? I am here to-night with a guarantee from well-known members of my profession which I think will get over the whole difficulty of expense and reduce the cost of establishing a chair of law to an infinitesimal amount. I guarantee to find at least half-a-dozen thoroughly competent, enthusiastic and well-trained members of my profession who would be not only willing, but proud, to devote at least one hour per week for nothing to lecturing to students at the University on subjects of law. That is not a wild boast. I have tested it, and I could name the gentlemen now, if it were proper to mention the names here.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: For what period?

Mr. DAVY: For any period you like. I will guarantee to get at least half-a-dozen members of the profession, and more if necessary, and every one of them willing to give up at least an hour per week to lecturing on legal subjects at the University. The only expense, therefore, and I do not know whether even that expense would be necessary, is a small salary to be paid to one of the existing professors to supervise the conduct of the curriculum and the students who enter themselves. It would not be in the slightest degree necessary for that professor to have any knowledge whatever of law. All we would have to do would be to place the professor in charge of the studies of those people. We would say to him, "You are to see that these students attend their proper lectures in the proper order, and to see that they conduct themselves as students should; and that is all."

The Premier: Would the governing authorities of the University be agreeable to that?

Mr. DAVY: I do not know whether they would or not, but if they would not, I should be prepared to say that they were not honestly in favour of extending the scope of their institution.

The Premier: They have recently come to me on a deputation pointing out the disabilities of our young men with regard to law studies, and therefore I think they should welcome such a proposal.

Mr. Hughes: Does not the member for West Perth think that the same result could be got by putting in a lecturer at the Technical School?

Mr. DAVY: If the member for East Perth thinks the Technical School the proper place for teaching law, well and good.

Mr. Hughes: But law does not alter according to where it is taught.

Mr. DAVY: Of course not; but a University has always been considered the proper place to teach things which are carried out with the head only. The Technical School in the very essence of it is the place where people are taught things, to perform which they have to use their hands. It is, no doubt, merely a distinction; but there must be proper divisions in every sphere of life. It might be suitable to have law taught at the Technical School; I should have thought it would not. We have on the one hand a University to teach one class of things, and on the other hand a Technical School to teach another class of things. Why on earth not keep that division, which seems to have been thought wise in the past and which seems to be based on very appreciable differences? The proper means of attaining what the member for East Perth wants is this method of establishing a chair of law. I am perfectly sure that if the governing body of the University really want to help, the thing can be done for a paltry hundred or two a year. The

whole of the teaching can be provided voluntarily; and, after all, it is not much to ask of the legal profession that it should make its voluntary contribution to the community. The medical profession for many decades has contributed enormously for nothing. Every public hospital, every free hospital throughout the British Empire is practically staffed and carried on by the voluntary services of medical practitioners. A man may go into a London hospital and be operated upon, gratuitously, by a surgeon who would charge a fee of hundreds of guineas to operate on a person not in that hospital. As a member of the legal profession I would be not only pleased but intensely proud to offer my little mite towards directing bright boys into that profession. The result would be good. We who are in the profession are proud of it, and desire to see ourselves entitled to be still prouder. The way to become prouder of one's profession is to get the best people into it. The "best" people in that sense are not the sons of that man or of this man, but the boys who have the brains and the ambition. We do not care where they come from: if we get them into the profession, we shall be more entitled to be proud of it. I therefore say to members of this House that the Bill, if passed, will to a deplorable degree reduce the standard of the legal profession. The only argument brought forward is the argument that at present people not properly qualified are admitted. I agree that that is so, and I say that it should be remedied. The only objection to the present state of affairs which could possibly be urged is that it is a little too difficult, because an entirely destitute boy cannot enter the profession. I give members a solution for that: a chair of law, I ask, therefore, that the Bill be voted against solidly on the second reading. I say it is a Bill which does not merit the consideration of the House. I have carefully avoided making the obvious comment on the measure, but I do ask that members will vote the Bill down on the second reading and give it no further consideration.

On motion by Mr. Marshall debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.50 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Thursday, 11th September, 1924.*

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

### QUESTION—CREAM SEPARATORS, STATE AGENCY.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is it a fact that the State Government, through the State Implement Works, have become selling agents in Western Australia for a foreign company making or selling cream separators? 2, Have the Government, through the State Implement Works, already purchased a number of these foreign-made machines? 3, Is the separator a new type of machine that has never been proved as suitable for Australian conditions? 4, Is the Minister not aware that there are already six or seven reputable firms in the State meeting the demand for cream separators with well-known models?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, The general manager of the State Implement Works has become a selling agent for cream separators made in Sweden. 2, An order has been placed for 50, the selling price of which will be considerably below the price now being paid by settlers. 3, The machine has been tested and approved of by the Dairy Expert, Agricultural Department. 4, I am not aware of the number of firms who are selling, but I am informed that all separators used locally are of foreign make.

### BILL—PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Colonial Secretary and read a first time.

### MOTION—TRAMWAYS AND WATER SUPPLY.

*Transfer to Local Governing Bodies.*

Hon. C. F. BAXTER (East) [4.35]: I move—

*That in the opinion of this House the Government should immediately enter into negotiations for the transfer of the metropolitan tramway system and the metropolitan water supply to representatives of the local bodies concerned.*