

where we are trying to encourage sheep raising.

Hon. G. Taylor: The dogs you want to catch are mainly half-breeds.

Mr. LATHAM: The member for Murchison suggested that I had given no consideration to the Bill. Let me inform him that this measure has received consideration from the Pastoralists' Association, the Road Boards' Association, which is representative of all parts of the State—

Hon. G. Taylor: In this form?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, and it has been endorsed by them. If the hon. member had followed the newspapers closely, he would have realised that the proposals are almost identical with the resolutions carried year after year asking for greater protection from the domesticated dog. Nearly every vermin board—and I do not know that there are many parts of the State without a vermin board—has asked for additional powers for the better control of domestic dogs, and last but not least the Primary Producers have continually agitated in this matter. The Bill was not drafted by me. It was drafted by the ablest man available in this State, though it was drafted on lines suggested by me. If the Bill is not all that members desire, they must at least admit that it represents a step in the right direction. I have no intention of preventing the tabling of amendments that may be considered necessary. I ask the House to pass the second reading and if that is done I shall suggest that the Committee stage be set down for a later date. Meanwhile I shall go into the question with the draftsman and see if it is possible to satisfy members who feel that the measure as framed may impose hardship on some people.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—CLOSER SETTLEMENT.

Returned from the Council with amendments.

House adjourned at 10.12 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 23rd November, 1927.

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

QUESTION—STATE IMPLEMENT WORKS.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN asked the Chief Secretary: Referring to the balance-sheet of the State Implement Works, item, stock in hand, 30th June, 1927, £71,304 5s. 4d., what is the amount—(a) of new stock; (b) of second-hand stock; (c) what amount of discount has been written off in depreciation of the second-hand stock?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Information obtained from the General Manager, State Implement Works, is as follows: (a) £63,952 1s. 4d. (b) Second-hand agricultural lines, £1,995 2s.; second-hand engineering and miscellaneous lines, £354 2s. (c) Each item of second-hand plant is inspected personally by the General Manager at stock-taking, and a low value placed on same—in some cases being depreciated to a scrap value.

QUESTION—MINERS' DISEASE.

Commonwealth Health Laboratory Examination.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: With reference to the recent examination by the staff of the Kalgoorlie Commonwealth Health Laboratory of men engaged in the gold-mining industry in centres other than Kalgoorlie—1, What was the total mileage covered in the journey, and what centres were visited? 2, In which of these centres were the men not subjected to an X-ray examination? 3, As the only known method of accurately comparing the condition of the lung is by repeated X-ray examination, why was this method of diagnosis departed from in certain cases on this

occasion? 4, Have the examinations now been completed? 5, When will the full report and data be made available?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1. About 4,000 miles. The centres visited were: Mt. Monger, Norseman, St. Ives, Carbine, Ora Banda, Gwalia, Morgans, Linden, Wiluna, Meekatharra, Cue, Reidy's, Mt. Magnet, Payne's Find, Field's Find, Gnow's Nest, Victorious, Bullfinch, Glenelg Hills, and Southern Cross. 2, Mt. Monger, St. Ives, Norseman, Carbine, Ora Banda, Mt. Morgans, Linden, Mt. Magnet, Field's Find, Payne's Find, Victorious, Bullfinch and Glenelg Hills. It was impossible to establish the X-ray plant at these centres as, with the exception of Morgans, there was no electric power available, but all men were examined by the Laboratory Doctor, and any doubtful cases were sent in for X-ray examination at the Laboratories temporarily established at Gwalia, Wiluna, Meekatharra, and Gnow's Nest, or to the Commonwealth Health Laboratory at Kalgoorlie. 3, There has been no departure from the method of diagnosis on this occasion, except that the X-ray plant was not set up at Cue, Southern Cross, and Mt. Morgans. No men were employed at Cue or Southern Cross centres, and the doubtful cases from Mt. Morgans were X-rayed at the Gwalia Laboratory. 4, No. A few men remain at Comet Vale, but these will be examined this week. 5, As soon as it is received.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. E. H. Harris (for Hon. H. Seddon), leave of absence granted to Hon. J. R. Brown (North-East) for six consecutive sittings of the House on the ground of ill-health.

MOTION—CLAREMONT TRAINING COLLEGE.

Appointment of Vice Principal.

HON. H. J. YELLAND (East) [4.37]: I move—

That the method of appointment of the Vice-Principal of the Claremont Training College is opposed to the best interests of the State, and that it caused dissatisfaction and discontent throughout the Department especially and the service in general, thereby diminishing efficiency.

After much thought and consideration I have moved this motion, because I feel it is

a matter that should be brought prominently before the public. I called for the papers dealing with the subject some time ago, because there have been quite a number of rumours that the appointment was not in accordance with general usage and the general methods of making appointments. For that reason I thought it necessary to ascertain whether the rumours were correct. I had various reasons for doing this. One was that I wished to protect the appointee, Mr. Milligan, if there was any necessity to protect him; another was to uphold the department if the appointment was made under the usual conditions, although it was rumoured that this was not so; and on the other hand, if the rumours were correct, and the department was at fault, it was my duty as a member of this House to bring the matter before the public. For that reason I moved some time ago that the papers should be laid on the Table of the House. Everyone will agree that there were rumours at the time. When the papers were laid on the Table of the House, it was shown conclusively that the rumours were not unfounded. On going closely through the papers I found that the Government could be criticised for their actions. I felt, therefore, I had done the right thing in bringing the matter forward, and I have now gone further by moving this motion. After the papers were laid upon the Table of the House the "West Australian" epitomised the position nicely in a current comment published on the 19th September, 1927. The remarks were prefaced by these words:—

Fortunately it is rare indeed for a Government, in making appointments to important posts in the Public Service, to ignore utterly the advice of those best qualified to pronounce upon the fitness of the applicants.

I am satisfied, after looking through the papers, that no leader writer could come to any conclusion other than that the very important procedure in connection with Government appointments had been flouted in a worse degree than he could ever have known. The current comment continued—

That this was done in the selection of a Vice-Principal for the Teachers' Training College at Claremont is abundantly evident from the papers tabled in Parliament last week, extracts from which were published in Saturday's issue.

I think these extracts raised the ire of the whole of the teaching staff and others who felt that justice and equity were the first things that the Government should give to

their employees. It was recognised that Mr. Miles was the person who had been recommended by the experts of the department. Commenting upon this, the leader writer put the matter very nicely when he said—

Mr. Miles was, however, passed over in favour of a junior officer, a prominent member of the 'Teachers' Union, who is understood to have been very strongly supported by certain members of the Cabinet for the office of Principal of Muresk College.

He went on to criticise this action and said—

It is exceedingly flattering to this officer that he should have been deemed pre-eminently qualified for two posts so divergent in the claims which they make upon the occupant.

That seems to be one of the great faults in connection with our public service. There is promotion without consideration for the ability of the person to fill the position to which he is very often appointed. The article went on to say—

It would be still more flattering if we could be assured that those who took this view were themselves competent judges. To assume that, however, would be to assume the incompetence of the State's chief educational expert.

In my view, if the advice of the experts of the Education Department was rejected on that occasion, then we must assume their incompetence to recommend the appointment. The paper asked for some explanation, and it was given. I shall have occasion to refer to that later. We cannot wonder that there were several rumours. As the current comment said, the rumours went right back to the period of the appointment of the principal of the Muresk Agricultural College. It is known that Mr. Milligan was an applicant at that time. I was responsible for the papers dealing with the appointment being laid on the Table of the House. Those papers were illuminating, just as these papers have proved to be illuminating. In that particular instance, however, the appointment was made under the Public Service Commissioner, and there has been a great deal said in connection with the appointment as to whether it should have been made under the Public Service Commissioner, as an appointment in connection with the public service, or whether it should have been made in accordance with the methods adopted for the appointment and promotion of teachers. If Mr. Milligan is a teacher he would naturally come under the method adopted for the appointment and promotion of teachers. If he comes under the

jurisdiction of the Public Service Commissioner, applications should have been called through that particular channel. The positions held by the inspectors of the Education Department are under the Public Service Commissioner, and those officers are governed by the Public Service Act, as also is the principal of the Training College. If it is just that the principal of that college should come under the Public Service Act, it is suggested that the vice-principal should also be brought under that particular method of appointment. If so, then the Government have overridden the Act by not going to the Public Service Commissioner. It appears that the appointment has not been made under that heading. If the appointment has been made as would be done with a teacher, then we want to know why it is that the Classification Board did not take the matter up, and make the appointment as is customary where teachers are dealt with. Whichever way we look at it, this particular appointment seems to have been made in a manner altogether at variance with former appointments to such positions. The matter takes us back to the time when the Public Service Commissioner called for applications in connection with the Muresk Agricultural College. The present appointee at the Training College was one of the applicants and it is freely rumoured that the position was offered to him. When that position was to be filled, the Public Service Commissioner considered it such an important matter that he could not trust himself to make the appointment, so he referred the matter to a board of investigation. That board consisted of the Director of Education, the Director of Agriculture—he was included because the appointment was to be made in connection with the Agricultural College—and Professor Shann of the University of Western Australia. Those three expert officers were appointed to make the selection. When their decision was arrived at, the question was again referred back to the Public Service Commissioner who was asked to review the position.

Hon. H. Stewart: On what grounds?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Ostensibly to see if it were not possible for the appointment to be made from within the State. It was freely rumoured at the time that it would give another chance for the selection of Mr. Milligan. Such matters cause dissatisfaction among those who have climbed, by hard work and attention to duty, to responsible positions.

Naturally this caused dissatisfaction and discontent. The result of the reference back to the Public Service Commissioner was that Western Australia lost the services of a gentleman who had already had 10 years' experience in connection with an agricultural college. However, the position is now held by a person who holds some of the highest educational qualifications. He is one of the finest gentlemen in the State, but he did not hold the qualifications that were possessed by the gentleman who had 10 years' previous experience. That was the method adopted on that occasion. As it was an appointment that came under the Public Service Commissioner, it was not possible for the Government to have a free hand and they had to refer the question back to the Commissioner. It has been freely rumoured that Mr. Milligan was offered that position.

Hon. G. W. Miles: By whom?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: By the Minister. Acting on advice, however, Mr. Milligan withdrew his application. I do not know exactly how it was done, but at any rate his application was not accepted. It has also been rumoured that Mr. Milligan has affirmed that the position was offered him, and that he did not accept it. I want to know from the Minister if those rumours are correct.

Hon. J. Cornell: Why a rumour without some verification?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: If the person associated with it has made that statement and it is true, it is well for the Minister to clear the matter up. If it is true and the position was offered to Mr. Milligan, then Mr. Milligan and the rest of us know what to think of the Government; if it is not true, then the Government and the rest of us know what to think of Mr. Milligan. This matter should have been cleared up long ago.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You do not blame Mr. Milligan for taking the position?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I do not. I have a great respect for Mr. Milligan personally. I believe he is a teacher possessing high qualifications, but I object to the methods that have been adopted. It will be seen that my motion refers to the method of promotion and that is what I am debating. In order to do so, I have to point out the methods pursued in the past and those adopted in connection with this particular appointment. It is unfortunate that the name of Mr. Milligan has been associated with it.

Hon. J. Cornell: Was not the head of the Education Department appointed in the same manner?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Unfortunately he was not.

Hon. J. Cornell: I was referring really to Professor Cameron.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: He came under the Public Service Commissioner and was not appointed in the same way as teachers. Had the hon. member been in the Chamber earlier he would have heard me explain the difference between the methods of appointment. After the Muresk appointment had been made, it was freely stated that the next appointment in connection with the Education Department would be the vice-principalship of the Training College. It was recognised that a Professor of education was to be appointed and that a vice-principal would be associated with him. Mr. Milligan's name was associated with that rumour, which was prevalent as far back as the Christmas vacation of last year. I had occasion to speak to one of the teachers about that time, and he made a significant prophecy that we have often referred to since. He said, "The vice-principalship will be gazetted at a salary above that of a teacher, Class A1, and below that of the senior inspector, and the appointment will go to Mr. Milligan." That was several months before the appointment was made, and I want hon. members to notice how closely that prophecy was followed.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You suggest that someone knew something.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I suggest that he anticipated something. At any rate, it showed that some of the teachers expected that political service would be regarded in connection with the appointment of vice-principal. It was recognised that Mr. Milligan had rendered a good deal of service and ability to aid the political party now in power. I want to show how that prophecy was fulfilled almost to the letter. The salary paid to the senior inspector is £756 per annum, while ordinary inspectors receive £708 per annum. A teacher holding the A1 certificate, which is the highest grade, is in receipt of a salary up to £630. That is the highest amount paid to a Class A1 teacher. The salary of the vice-principalship was fixed at £640 with quarters, light and fuel. Thus the salary is between the two classes and, as predicted, was higher than that paid to a Class A1 teacher but below that of the senior inspector. That, of course, enabled

Mr. Milligan to be appointed at a salary that would not appeal to the senior inspector as being worth while.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Who fixed the salary?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I understand the Government fixed the salary when applications were called for the position. I have not yet found whether the applications were called under the Education Department or under the Public Service Commissioner.

The Chief Secretary: Is the hon. member sure that the salary was fixed by the Government?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I understand it was fixed when the notice was gazetted. I presume that the notice in the "Gazette" specifies the salary as fixed by the Governor in Council. I did not look into that matter, but I understand that is the usual procedure. I want to show that this sort of thing has caused unrest for a considerable time because, as I have already indicated, there were teachers and others who anticipated the action of the Government. It had been freely stated that the appointee would be associated with the Trades Hall. I do not make that assertion without being able to proceed further to show that it is so. It is necessary for me to connect up the motion with the present situation to indicate that if preferment is to be given to persons who render signal service to a political party in power, there will be a tendency to convert officers into pendulums swinging automatically in accordance with the political party that happens to be in power. That is not a procedure that should exist in a well-ordered community. We do not desire to go back to the time of King Charles, when the Vicar of Bray declared that he could hold his position whatever king happened to be in power, because he could change his coat to suit the political views of whatever king might rule.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: That is very comforting.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: But it is not manly. The consequence following upon a Government appointment of that description is that those concerned with the effect of the overriding of existing provisions become disheartened and discontented. Discontent and dissatisfaction in the service mean that efficiency is threatened. I believe this to be so, and therefore I have moved my motion. I wish to draw attention to a letter I received from another teacher, to back up what I have said.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Was not this appointment made in spite of the recommendation of the heads of the Education Department?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: That is a point I am coming to. So much information was revealed as a result of a perusal of the file that I am afraid I shall have to trespass upon the time of the House to a considerable extent, but owing to the importance of the matter, I hope members will bear with me. Here is a note I received yesterday when it became known that my motion was to be placed before the House—

You have earned the gratitude of nearly all the teachers in every part of the State in connection with the matter of the appointment of the Vice-President of the Training College.

I have not sought the gratitude of the Education Department Staff, but I have taken this course to try to check the demoralising effect of the existing system of appointments over the heads of experts. That is the only reason why I have taken the action of bringing the question before the House. I hope that by doing so I shall accomplish something for those whose sole thought is devotion to duty and the best interests of the State. I have drawn attention to the fact that the appointment was made because of this gentleman's political activity. I wish here to say that in my opinion civil servants should not under any consideration take an active interest in party politics. I had occasion to read in the "Worker" a little while ago a report in which Mr. Milligan was specially thanked for his services on educational matters during the Labour Congress. That indicates that he associated himself with a political party. I do not consider it advisable that any civil servant should be actively connected with any such party. Whenever we find officers of the service taking an active interest in political affairs, we cannot expect them to give unbiassed and whole-hearted service to the State generally. To my mind such officers are prepared to sell their services to the particular party that they may favour, and then expect preferment in return. That is wrong, and it is unfair as well as unjust to other members of the civil service. Mr. Milligan has actively associated himself with a movement and because of that he has received consideration unjustifiably. One cannot help associating the two things.

Hon. H. Stewart: To what movement are you referring?

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Not to the one to which you belong.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The appointment of Mr. Milligan was made over the recommendations of experts, and those experts displayed no political bias at all. Never have I known the heads of the Education Department to stoop to matters having a political flavour; their recommendations have always been untrammelled and unbiassed, free altogether from any political consideration. In this particular case their recommendation was turned down by the Government and the choice fell on a person who had assisted a political party with which he had been associated. More than that, one of the experts made his recommendation in spite of a difficulty of a personal nature he had experienced with the individual he recommended. Even then the recommendation was turned down. I desire to turn to a report that appeared in the "West Australian" of the 21st July, when Mr. Milligan was appointed to his position. I intend to read two extracts from this newspaper in the issues of the 21st September and 20th July, and I desire members to follow me closely in order to grasp the similarity between the two reports. This is the report made by the secretary of the School Teachers' Union, and I should like to say in passing that he made the report concerning the president of his own union. After a little introduction he says—

As already announced, Mr. R. G. Cameron of the Teachers' College, Sydney University, has been appointed principal of the college and professor of education. This will have the effect of strengthening the college very materially on the scholastic side. The appointment of Mr. Milligan as vice-principal will likewise reinforce it on the practical side. Mr. Milligan, who is a trained teacher, holding the highest departmental certificate, and who has taken special courses at the Melbourne University, has had practical experience in every class of school. Since 1912 he has been lecturing at the Teachers' College, and has been head at the practising school at Claremont. At one time or another he has come into touch with practically every teacher in the State, and is undoubtedly peculiarly fitted for the position to which he has been appointed. It was at one time felt that the positions might have to be filled from abroad. It is therefore a matter for congratulation that the successful applicants are both Australians.

Then after some current comment, which appeared in the newspaper on the 19th September—the papers had then been laid on the Table of the House—the Minister for

Education in his endeavour to justify the appointment, made this statement—

In Professor Cameron, the Teachers' College has as principal a gentleman who is not only possessed of the highest university distinctions, but who has had many years experience in training teachers. He is well fitted to look after the university and secondary education sides, and to introduce improved methods into the system of the college generally. Apart from supervision and direction he should not be able, with the added duties of Professor of Education to devote much time to the practical side which so vitally concerns our primary schools. It is here that the qualifications of Mr. Milligan come in.

And the statement goes on couched in language almost similar to that used by the secretary of the School Teachers' Union. One would think, in comparing the two statements, that the Minister had been repeating the words used by the secretary of the union, or perhaps that the secretary of the union had dictated the principles of the union to the Minister. In his reply the Minister quoted Mr. Rooney's annual report on Mr. Milligan's particular work. It is hardly worth while asking the House to listen to this report. It need only be said that the Minister quoted simply from the annual report which every inspector is obliged to submit to his superior officer. If it happened that Senior Inspector Miles had been the inspector in Mr. Milligan's district, he doubtless would have had the opportunity of writing a report on Mr. Milligan's work. As it happened, Mr. Milligan was associated with the Training College, and the reports, in his case, came from the Principal of the Training College.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: You do not suggest that those reports are not correct?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: No, but if the hon. member will follow me he will admit that the reports are on the individual work of particular teachers. We have over 1,000 teachers in the State, several hundred of whom have to be reported upon by the inspectors as they make their annual or biennial reports. It does not happen that the inspector is called upon to compare one teacher with another, but in this particular case, where comparisons were necessary, when the reports concerning Mr. Milligan were put forward to support the appointment, the Minister overlooked the fact that the reports, good as they were, were not considered equal to those of the other candidate. It is only when we are able to see the

reports on the file that we are able to make comparisons. The Minister cast aside all comparisons made by the experts and said, "Here are the reports of Mr. Rooney on this particular man and he is entitled to this position." No one has said that he is not entitled to hold the position. Everyone recognises that he gave a great deal of time and energy to his work, but when they start to compare him with others who have been in the service longer, and have a higher classification, and who have done the work for a longer period, then one must question the methods adopted. It is here that the Minister side-stepped the mark when, in the "West Australian" of the 20th September, he gave his reasons in justification of the appointment that had been made. The Minister said, "These are the reasons why he was elevated above all the others." Regarding the rumours that the appointment was made because of the assistance given to the party, that is borne out by the existence of the system of preference to unionists. We have quite a number of teachers who are opposed to the principles of the Labour Party, but those teachers are compelled to accept preference to unionists because the Labour Party happen to be in power. I have in my hand a brief history of the administrative and legislative achievements of the Collier Government, which was distributed during the last general election. It is headed in red ink, "Labour's Unique Record," and I note that on page 33 the following significant words are to be found:—

The principle of preference to unionists has been extended to the Teachers' Union, to apply in cases of promotion. Representation has been granted to the union on different educational boards.

When I see those words, and several other passages which have caught my eye, I am inclined to say one must feel there is some ground for the suggestion that the present appointment was made because of assistance given to the Labour Party by the recipient of the promotion. I have also the record of an address delivered by the present Leader of the House, Mr. Drew, as Minister for Education. The record says—

Addressing the Metropolitan Council of the Australian Labour Party the Hon. Mr. Drew, Chief Secretary and Minister for Education, delivered a remarkable address covering the activities of the departments under his care . . . This department (declared the Minister) moulded the minds of the future rulers of the State, and the destinies of nations to a great

extent were in the keeping of the teachers of little children.

It is a beautifully worded and very fine sentiment, but it was spoken by Mr. Drew, a member of the Government that adopted preference to unionists throughout the Public Service, including teachers and the Education Department generally. In voicing that sentiment, I think, the Minister had in his mind that good unionists among the teachers would sow the seeds of unionism among the children, and that he himself was then on good ground for sowing those seeds; consequently the hon. gentleman used to the full the opportunity for developing that spirit.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: Or vice versa.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I do not know that the opposite has ever been taught in the schools. I think it important to quote Mr. Drew's words, seeing that they were spoken by a Minister for Education and a Leader of this Chamber. I may add that the address was delivered in May, 1926. He was telling the congress just what he had done in the Education Department.

The Chief Secretary: Did the hon. member say "congress"?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I think the report says "congress." Is "conference" the proper term? Let us call it a meeting of the Metropolitan Council of the Australian Labour Party, as the report is headed. At any rate, the report proceeds—

He had enforced the principle of preference to unionists among the cleaners. A number of them resented his action, but they were given to understand that there was no alternative, and they joined up. On this recommendation—

That is to say, the Minister's recommendation.

—Cabinet had extended the preference to the Teachers' Union, which that body highly appreciated. The Teachers' Union was not affiliated with the A.L.P. at all, but had its Arbitration Act and the Public Service Appeal Board, whose decisions it had bound itself to accept. The principle operated in connection with promotions.

And then in black type follows the most astounding statement I have ever known in connection with the Education Department—

If there were two teachers who both possessed the qualifications necessary for a certain position, and if one was a member of the Teachers' Union and the other was not, preference was given to the one who belonged to the union.

When I see a quotation like that coming from the Minister for Education, and see on the file an appointment made under the conditions under which this one was made, and when I know that the man appointed was the president of the Teachers' Union, I consider there is every reason for believing the appointment to be a political one, and I regard myself as justified in drawing attention to the appointment in this House.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: Do you say the officer was appointed because he was president of the Teachers' Union?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Not at all, but I do say that the fact of his being president of the Teachers' Union should have given him no preference in the matter of the appointment.

Hon. H. Stewart: What was the order of recommendation of the departmental experts?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I am coming to that by and bye, and shall have a good deal to give on that important aspect. Following on the last quotation, the report proceeds—

About two months ago he—

That is, the Minister for Education.

—asked the secretary of the Teachers' Union to supply him with a list of the reforms effected by him in the interests of the teachers since he had been in charge of the Education Department. The request was complied with, and the list supplied to him was as follows:—

Then there is a list of 12 reforms which had been effected, the first that is mentioned being preference to unionists.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The most important one.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Yes. I ask hon. members whether in the face of those facts, and the further fact that the president of the Teachers' Union was appointed to the vacancy in direct opposition to departmental expert opinion, we are not justified in saying the appointment was a political one. That is the conclusion I have drawn from the facts, and I have come to it only after looking into the matter closely. Now I ask the House to bear with me while I quote what the experts have said in connection with the appointment. As the file is illuminating, a little time may be occupied in running through it. There were quite a number of applicants for the position when it was made available, and among them were persons with the degrees of Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts, Bachelor of Arts,

and Diploma of Education. There were only three who held no degrees, and one of those three was the gentleman appointed to the position.

Hon. H. Stewart: How many applicants were there?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Sixteen, three of whom did not possess a degree.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Was Mr. Milligan one of them?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Mr. Milligan did not have a degree at all. Some little time ago I asked that there be laid on the Table other papers bearing on this matter, namely papers relating to the appointment of two inspectors to their present positions. I am now about to read from a minute of the Director of Education on file 311/12. It will be noted that this occurred during a Labour Government's term of office. Mr. Andrews, the Director of Education, wrote—

I recommend Messrs. Clubb and Klein for the position.

That is, of senior inspector of schools.

Mr. Gamble is the senior of the inspectors concerned. Messrs. Clubb and Klein are next. Mr. Gamble has not a university degree.

And so Mr. Gamble was thrown out. Now we have from another Government in power the filling of a precisely similar appointment, and we have 16 competitors, of whom 13 possess degrees while three do not, and the Government deliberately appoint one of those who have no degree. I simply ask, why this turnover on the part of two Labour Governments?

Hon. W. H. Kitson: Is a degree absolutely necessary?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I am glad the hon. member interjected, as I almost forgot that point. I do regard a degree as necessary, because no person is considered to be of much standing in association with a university unless he has a degree. An academic qualification is considered necessary for the imparting of academic education. Should it happen that the Professor of Education is called or sent out of the State, especially while the University is in session, the vice-principal would have to take his place; and is it a fair thing to ask prospective students of the University, and those who happen to hold with the system adopted by the present Professor of Education, that the tuition should be carried on by a person without a degree and without ability to conduct the course? It is the academic qualification

which places a man on an academic pedestal. If he is to perform academic work, he should have an academic qualification. Now I want hon. members to hear with me a little while I read the enlightening recommendations of the principal of the Training College. The Director of Education asked the principal for his views on the matter.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Who was the principal then?

Hon. H. J. VELLAND: Mr. Rooney, and I know of no person who has done more for Western Australian education than has Mr. Rooney, who is thoroughly qualified to make the statements he has made. He wrote as follows:—

Granting that all are successful teachers, I would look for the following qualifications as essential—(1) Wide experience as a teacher in varied types of schools, and direct contact with all forms of educational endeavour. (2) Wide reading in education and related elements of knowledge and science, combined with a close study of literature. It would be well, too, if psychology apart from, but also and mainly in, its bearings on education formed part of the equipment. (3) Ability as a lecturer in education and at least two other subjects, of which literature must be one, with a sympathetic attitude towards and considerable knowledge of some others.

These are the qualifications considered to be necessary in a man who is to hold the position.

(4) Wide knowledge of the general and special method of the primary school, with some knowledge of the method of secondary subjects. (5) Ability to demonstrate—not so much in order to demonstrate as to illustrate—and capacity to direct students. (6) Ability to control students, not only as students but as residents (a weak man in this respect would be a calamity). With this goes power to organise under the chief organiser.

Resolved: That motions be continued.

The report continues—

(7) Possession of culture to influence students towards the cultured and gentle life—a great need. Experience of a teachers' college is possessed by Messrs. Dunn, Fowler, and Lee, and to a less degree by Messrs. Milligan, Miles, Thomas, Pepper, and Wardrop. Taking the qualifications stated as ideal, it appears to me that Mr. Miles most nearly approaches them. He absolutely stands out above the others, in my opinion. One possibility would make in Mr. Fowler, who has both college and secondary experience, an absolute need almost. It may be said as axiomatic that the Vice-Principal's strength should fit in with that of the Principal. If the Principal is not a psychologist, then Mr. Fowler would make good the deficiency, allowing the strength of the Principal full play and its right direction. (1) In this respect Mr. Miles is easily

first. The Vice-Principal will undoubtedly take charge of the year courses (rural), the Principal correspondingly taking University work and secondary practice. Mr. Miles having specialised for some years in rural schools, is eminently qualified for this work. (2) Mr. Miles is undoubtedly one of the best read men in the service. I am quite sure his teaching within the sphere of education is wider, much wider, than that of any other applicant. Mr. Fowler alone stands above him in the domains of psychology and specialised literature. (3) and (4) He answers these requirements better than any of the others. Moreover, he has insight and initiative. Of the special method of an individual secondary subject, probably Messrs. Fowler, Lee, and Dunn have more knowledge. (5) The strongest demonstrators are Messrs. Thomas, Miles, Milligan, and Pepper. Messrs. Fowler and Dunn have much experience in demonstrating within the College. The Vice-Principal, however, will not do much of this except by way of illustration. (6) Most of those applying have power to control students in class. The tact and strength to control an institution as a residential one are probably possessed by several. In addition, leadership is a possession of Messrs. Miles, Milligan, and Thomas in particular, Mr. Fowler gave promise of it. (7) From the culture aspect, those with degrees have a distinct advantage, not so much because of the degree, but because of the specialised training received and the culture developed. Working among the University students of the College, and particularly among the graduates, some of whom have had distinguished courses, as Vice-Principal or lecturer with a degree of some work, would gain influence and standing. Having studied literature at a high level is essential, for the Vice-Principal would have to take the literature at present taken by myself in order to allow the Principal to give time to education here and at the University. I have not been on intimate terms of friendship with Mr. Miles, but I have recognised for years that he is an outstanding figure in the department's service, one possessing both skill and the essential knowledge upon which it rests. He should make a very good second to an able Principal. His standing and experience as an inspector should prove of great service to himself, if appointed, and the College.

That is the statement made by Mr. Rooney, who was the principal of the college at the time. Could one imagine a higher recommendation than that given by Mr. Rooney to Mr. Miles in the closing paragraph of that report? That report was sent on to the Director of Education, who then sent the papers through to the Chief Inspector, Mr. Hope Robertson, whose report is well worth reading. He wrote to the director in these terms—

I should recommend the appointment of Mr. Miles, who has outstanding qualifications. Apart from his scholarship and literary attainments, his wide reading on all educational subjects, his practical experience, his powers of organisation and control, his initiative, his

teaching skill, and his successful experimental work all combine to make him eminently suitable for the position. I should place the other candidates as follows:—Messrs. Hadley, McClintock, Thomas, Edmiston, Wardrop, Milligan, Fowler, Orr, Little, Pepper. I have not placed Messrs. Lee and Dunn, as I am not acquainted sufficiently with their work.

That went on to the Director of Education, who sent on his recommendation to the Minister. I do not propose to read the whole of that recommendation, which is very long, but I wish the read the director's closing remarks as follows:—

No other candidate would be so well qualified to take the Principal's place in his absence.

That seems to be one of the points the Government have overlooked in making this appointment. I should like to know whether they consulted the University. For in the absence of the Professor of Education, the vice-principal must take his place in the University. And surely the University should have the right to say who should lecture there. Yet we have a man without academic qualifications appointed, while one with ample academic qualifications is turned down. The report continues—

It so happens that Mr. Miles is the senior officer among the applicants, not only in length of service with the highest certificate, but according to the Public Service definition. It would be impossible to pass him over.

Under the Public Service Act here is a regulation stating that if a senior officer is passed over, the head of the department must certify that there is no senior officer capable of holding the position. The report continues—

To recommend anyone else would involve certifying "that there is no senior officer available as capable of satisfactory performing the duties." No one who knows the candidate could think of making such a statement.

Hon. H. Stewart: Is there not such a declaration on the file?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: There is not.

Hon. H. Stewart: Then the appointment is illegal.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The next point comes on page 112 of the file, when the other pages were sent on to the Minister above the signature of Mr. Andrews, Director of Education, who wrote—

I am forwarding additional papers with regard to Mr. Fowler's candidature for the Vice-Principalship of the Teachers' College. Mr. Fowler is at present in England. The additional papers do not make any difference to my recommendation.

That is Mr. Andrews' report after having considered the other applications that came in.

Hon. H. Stewart: You have not told us Mr. Andrews' order of preference.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: He did not give it. Mr. Robertson gave an order of preference, and Mr. Rooney gave his order, as Mr. Miles first, Mr. Fowler second. When those papers came through from the Director of Education, there is no record of their having been passed on to the Minister for Education. But there is this significant minute—

Cabinet approves of the appointment of Mr. Milligan. P.C. 13/7/27.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Was no recommendation put up to Cabinet?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: No, we just get that "Cabinet approves," on page 112.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It is a remarkable way of doing things.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The most astounding thing that has ever come under my notice.

Hon. H. Stewart: And you used to be in the service.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: All the good men have been driven out of the service.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: On page 113 of the file, that is passed on to the Minister for Education from the secretary to the Premier's Department.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Did not the Minister make a recommendation to Cabinet?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: No.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Does that suggest that the Minister had this job thrust upon him?

Member: That is the general opinion.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Minister had a recommendation but, according to this, Cabinet did not agree.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: That bears the initials of the Premier and is dated the 13th July. It was passed on to the Minister for Education on the 14th July by the secretary to the Premier's Department, and was then passed on to the Director of Education by the Minister for Education on the 13th. I presume the last-named date should be the 15th. Then follows the necessary approval of the appointment by the Governor. Here is another point that members should understand: the whole business connected with the appointment is concluded on page 114 of the file, but then follows a whole sheaf of extracts from Mr. Milligan's files. I presume they were placed there for the benefit of members of the House when

application was made for the tabling of the papers. I have not read that portion of the file because I know that sort of thing too well. The extracts are from other files and carry the dates when the reports were made, but not when the extracts were placed on the file. There is one point I omitted to mention in its sequence. The report of the Education Department for 1925, dealing with the matter of salaries says—

Of the total expenditure of the department, 89.2 per cent. is devoted to salaries. The salaries are fixed by classifications and appeal boards.

I wish the Minister to inform us why, in view of that statement in the report of 1925, the salary of this officer was not fixed in that manner. Now let me epitomise the facts in conclusion. I have raised various points and made assertions that I am prepared to stand by because I think they are backed up by the file and and by the information I have placed before the House. Firstly, preference to unionists is practised by the Government in respect to the appointments on the teaching staff. That has been made clear. Secondly, this has the effect of conscripting the teachers into party politics. Whenever any Government official is conscripted to follow a particular party it is demoralising to the department.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: Do not you know that the Teachers' Union is not affiliated with the Trades Hall?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I agree with that. Yet I have the statement of the Minister himself that preference to unionists had been granted to the teachers in the matter of promotion. I do not care whether they are affiliated with the Trades Hall or not; we have the statement that preference to unionists is granted, and preference to unionists in the Civil Service is demoralising. The third point I have asserted is that in respect of the appointment, Mr. Miles has qualifications superior to those of any other applicant and superior to those of the person who received the appointment. Fourthly, Mr. Miles did not actively associate himself with the Trades Hall. Fifthly, the person who received the appointment did. Sixthly, the reasonable inference, therefore, is that the appointment was influenced by those facts. If that is so I am fully justified in bringing the matter before the House.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: What is the minimum salary of the Vice-Principal?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The salary is £640, but the allowance of quarters, fuel and light would represent another couple of pounds a week.

Hon. H. Stewart: And there would be the prestige also.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Yes. My other assertion has been that the usual method of making appointments in which the head of the department certifies, "There is no senior officer available capable of satisfactorily performing the duties" was overlooked or set aside by the Government. Another assertion I have made is that the method of appointment has roused the ire of the teaching staff, has diminished their confidence and created dissatisfaction and discontent throughout the service. That was my assertion in my opening remarks and I feel that I have proved it. I have also asserted that the unsettled conditions created diminishes the efficiency of the staff and I believe that has happened. From my knowledge I am satisfied there is a great difference between what civil servants can do and what they will do when they feel that their efforts and claims have been set aside because of a political appointment or because of personal bias in other sections of the service. I also assert that this unsettled condition is spreading to other branches of the service and is not in the best interests of the State. I want the Minister to obtain from "Hansard" the few questions I am about to put and to answer them in his reply:—

(1) On whose authority did the Minister make the statement concerning the qualifications of Mr. Milligan as a psychologist?

I ask that question because Mr. Rooney, in his report, said there was only one man who stood above Mr. Miles in that particular and he was Mr. Fowler.

(2) Has Mr. Milligan produced evidence of passes said to have been obtained by him at various Universities?

When applicants have signed their names and attached the degrees they hold from various Universities, they may be called upon at any time to prove their claim to those degrees. Before a person enters the department he must show that he holds the qualifications claimed. It has been said that Mr. Milligan holds passes in certain subjects, and since he has not placed on record his academic qualifications it is only fair that proof of them should be forthcoming. The Minister has said that

Mr. Milligan's appointment was made to strengthen the teaching or practical side. Therefore I ask—

(3) Has Mr. Milligan superior claims to Mr. Miles, who was recommended by the experts?

My next question is—

(4) Has Mr. Milligan the ability to carry on the work of the Professor of Education at the University in the event of the professor's illness or absence?

I also wish to know—

(5) Why was not the board of classifiers approached regarding the appointment, if it was made under the regulations for the appointment of teachers? or

(5a) If the position is to come under the Public Service Act, as does the principalship, why were not applications called through that channel?

My last question to the Minister is—

(6) Is it considered that Mr. Milligan will be acceptable to the University if he should be called upon to take the principal's place?

Those are legitimate questions that, in the interests of the department, should be answered. If the Minister can answer them satisfactorily, I shall be the first to go to him and say that the best appointment has been made. Seeing that the usual procedure has not been adopted, may not we assume the possibility of the Government's continuing to make appointments of this kind? If there is a possibility of that, I feel that I am justified in bringing this matter under the notice of the House. I have occupied nearly one and a half hours in stating my case, and if my action has the effect of preventing a recurrence of this sort of thing, I shall have done my duty to the department and to the State.

HON. SIR WILLIAM LATHLAIN (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.57]: I feel that Mr. Yelland has dealt with the question so decisively and produced so much evidence in support of his contention that little further need be said. There is one point, however, that should be submitted to the Minister for an answer. When Professor Cameron was appointed, he wired to Perth requesting that no appointment should be made to the vice-principalship until after his arrival. Strange to say, Mr. Milligan's appointment was made and confirmed, contrary to Professor Cameron's request, on the day before he arrived in Perth.

The Chief Secretary: Have you any evidence to prove that?

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: I have credible information that it is so.

The Chief Secretary: You should supply the information to the House.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: You can easily find out. Mr. Collier approved of the appointment on the 13th July. That is shown on page 112 of the file.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: Mr. Yelland has dealt with the question so exhaustively that, having raised the one additional point, I shall content myself with seconding the motion.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 3), £1,363,500.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

MOTION—POLICE DEPARTMENT.

To inquire by Royal Commission.

Debate resumed from the 16th November on motion by Hon. G. Potter—

That, in the opinion of this House, a Judge of the Supreme Court be appointed a Royal Commissioner to inquire into and report upon the administration of the Police Department of Western Australia, especially in regard to the present system governing promotions awarded to and punishments inflicted upon, non-commissioned ranks of the said Police Department.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [6.0]: Mr. Potter is asking for a Royal Commission, consisting of a Judge of the Supreme Court, to inquire into the administration of the police force. I have too much appreciation for the capable manner in which he can handle any reasonable case he may take up to believe that he himself is satisfied with the material which has been placed in his hands to enable him to convince the House that his request is called for, and should be granted without demur. Mr. Potter, in the course of his speech, said—"A policeman gets advancement upon the recommendation of his superior officers who consider the notations on his file." Now, as a matter of fact the regulation dealing with promotion provides for the appointment of a board

consisting of the Commissioner as chairman, the Chief Inspector and a first-class Inspector. Efficiency is the first consideration, and that is defined as "special qualifications and aptitude for the discharge of the duties of the office to be filled, together with merit and good and diligent conduct." The regulation is carried out as far as possible, and where a candidate is passed over, the reasons for his rejection are given to him clearly and definitely. Mr. Potter says—"On some occasions when a policeman has made a mistake, serious or otherwise, he may be discharged from the service with or without trial or without a statement of reasons." This is misleading, for under Section 26 of the Police Act, 1892, he is entitled to ask for a board to inquire into any charge of insubordination or misconduct against the discipline of the force. There is opportunity for each side of the case to be presented; it is an inquiry of a thorough and regulated kind, and the whole of the facts are stated on oath, reduced into writing, and the finding of the board is subject to the approval of the Governor in Council.

Hon. G. Potter: Does that apply to every member of the police force?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: When there is a charge of insubordination or misconduct. Of course under Section 8 of the Police Act, 1892, an inspector may be removed from the force with the approval of the Governor in Council, and a non-commissioned officer or constable may be removed with the approval of the Minister. This is a very necessary power for the Government to have, for example, in order that they may be able to effect retrenchments if it is considered necessary, but so far it has not been considered necessary to make retrenchments. There was only one case in which the Solicitor General advised that a non-commissioned officer or constable could not be dealt with by a board for an act of insubordination under Section 26, and that was one in which the defaulter committed a grave error of judgment by causing an innocent man to be imprisoned without a hearing. The Solicitor General held that it could not be called an act of insubordination or misconduct, but the constable's actions were so callous that neither the Government nor the Commissioner of Police could see their way to retain such a man in the Service, and a

Royal Commission subsequently appointed to inquire into the case found against the constable on every point. Since then the present Government have been prepared to go further in regard to supplying the means of reviewing punishments. In 1926 we introduced a Bill providing for an appeal board consisting of a police or resident magistrate as chairman, a member of the police force appointed by the Commissioner, and a non-commissioned officer or constable, or his deputy, elected by non-commissioned officers or constables of the force. This board was to have been clothed with powers to hear appeals in cases where non-commissioned officers and constables are accused of insubordination or misconduct in connection with the discipline of the force, or for breach of official duty, or of any conduct rendering them unfit to be a member of the force. But the police union are not satisfied with this unless such a board is also empowered to deal with appeals in connection with promotion, and to this neither the Government nor the Commissioner can agree.

Hon. G. Potter: The Commissioner was one agreeable to it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: He had a bitter experience. The 1926 Bill lapsed. Subsequent to that the Minister for Police introduced a similar Bill in another place on an undertaking from the union that they would not ask for an appeal board on promotion. But no sooner did the Bill reach its second reading stage than that the action proposed in the first instance and agreed to was departed from by the union.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Was the Bill dropped?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It did not pass. It may be mentioned in reply to Mr. Potter that provision is made in the Bill, now before Parliament, to repeal Sections 19, 23 and 24 of the Police Act, 1892, which provide for imprisonment in lieu of fine and also for bringing defaulters before the police court on charges of neglect or violation of duty. The repeal of these sections was also provided for in the 1926 Bill. Hence it will be seen that the Government have been anxious all along to remove any obsolete provisions from the Police Act, and that the only stumbling block to the accomplishment of the object is the union itself. Mr. Potter says a policeman may also be punished by the infliction of a fine or by being transferred to a remote district. So far as the fine is concerned, a policeman is in no worse a position than a civil servant or railway official who may also be fined and

transferred. Insofar as the transfer of an offender to a remote district is concerned, this very rarely takes place except at the request of the constable, as the Commissioner is of opinion as the result of extensive experience that defaulters must be kept under supervision as far as possible; and it is not in their own interests, and certainly not in the interests of the force, to send them to out-of-the-way places where they would be under the supervision neither of inspectors nor sergeants. Mr. Potter points out that a policeman might be punished by a transfer, if he had arranged for the purchase of a home, or the education of his family. With regard to the purchasing of a home and the education of children, when a police constable enters the force, he does so on the distinct understanding that he must serve in any portion of Western Australia to which he may be sent. This applies to other State servants as well as to the police.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: The same as in the case of a bank.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Nevertheless, where it is practicable to send a man to a place where his children can be educated, this, I am assured by the Commissioner, is done almost invariably; but it is impossible to do it in all cases and at the same time protect the welfare of the public. If every police constable who builds a house in the metropolitan area was kept there for that reason, it would be impossible to administer the department efficiently, as members will recognise. If a police constable were in a position on erecting a home in a particular place to take up that attitude he would be able to remain there for the term of his career in the force.

Hon. J. Cornell: That would be a good provision to apply to members of Parliament.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Regarding the power to reduce in rank, as a matter of fact, since the present Commissioner was appointed in 1912, he has not recommended the reduction in rank of even one officer or non-commissioned officer. That is a fact. Mr. Potter goes on to say: "But they claim, and justly so, that there should be a proper method of inflicting punishment, so that the man charged may have a fair and just trial. He should at least have an opportunity to state his case. At the discretion of the officers controlling the Department a policeman may be charged behind closed doors; he may be charged in open Court." That is a quotation from Mr. Potter. Noth-

ing more deceptive could be placed before members. It should be known to Mr. Potter that a non-commissioned officer or constable, charged with an offence against discipline, may, if he so desires (it is left entirely to his own judgment) have the charge investigated by the Commissioner, or by an inspector appointed by the Minister, or by a board under Section 26, and in every case evidence is taken similar to that in connection with the procedure in our law courts. There is no foundation for the statement made by the hon. member. In connection with this inquiry not a word of hearsay is permitted. As already stated, in the case of the board, the finding must be approved by the Governor-in-Council, and in a case where it comes before an inspector, the finding must be approved by the Minister. Let me reiterate—as it seems necessary to do for Mr. Potter's information—the Government are prepared to go one better and give the police an appeal board to deal with such punishments. Could anything be fairer? Still, however, they want something more; they want a board to deal also with promotions.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I was explaining the procedure followed in connection with the hearing of charges of breaches of discipline preferred against police constables and had pointed out that the Government had at present before Parliament legislation to grant to the police a board of appeal. Now I will proceed further to analyse the case put up by the mover of the motion. Mr. Potter states: "The Union feel there is a danger, if not an actual practice, of trivial charges being recorded and brought up against a man when he is being considered for promotion." The truth is that all such charges are expunged after a period of five years, and are not taken into consideration, provided the man has made good and that he is considered suitable in other respects for advancement. It may be remarked that this is rather an interesting statement to come from Mr. Potter in view of the fact that some months ago, when a certain appointment was mooted, the president of the Union asked the Minister to look up the record of a certain likely applicant and go into something that happened over 20 years ago. It is true that when a man refused promotion it is a difficult matter to promote him afterwards, as someone must be pro-

moted in his place, and that someone has a right to claim seniority over him from that day forward.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is quite right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Certainly it is. Nothing would tend more to create discontent than giving promotion to a man who had previously refused it when he had the opportunity to accept it. It would be contended, and properly so, that this particular individual was obtaining preferential treatment and was being permitted by the Commissioner of Police to pick and choose where he should go. With respect to the remarks made about the police not being under the Workers' Compensation Act, I would point out that Parliament had an opportunity of discussing this matter when that measure was before the House in 1924, and when it was provided in the Bill that members of the force should be exempted. It is stated that members of the force contribute to their own Workers' Compensation Fund. This is not correct, as the Government since 1st July, 1919, have been paying into the fund the sum of £300 to cover cases of injury. The Police Benefit Fund to which the force contributes, is not drawn upon for the purpose, so I cannot understand Mr. Potter's statement. If the claims for compensation for injuries received on duty had been dealt with by insurance under the Workers' Compensation Act, there is no doubt that most of the claims allowed by the board would have been rejected by any company engaged in workers' compensation business, or by the officer in charge of the Government scheme. I have perused the list of claims, and out of the total of £3,006 paid out since July, 1919, I am of the opinion that £1,200 would have covered the whole of them had they been dealt with by an insurance office. It seems to me the board has been very sympathetic, and it is apparent that its generous consideration has not been appreciated. In the ordinary course of events a worker who is insured under the Workers' Compensation Act is entitled to claim 50 per cent. of his wages up to a minimum of 70s. per week. In the police force, however, full wages are paid during incapacity, together with hospital and doctor's expenses for injuries received on duty. If the incapacity is such that it is necessary for him to be retired from the force, then he is paid 12 months' wages, in addition to a month's pay for each year's service after 12 years. Take the case

of a constable with a broken leg: he would receive 12 months' pay, but no provision is made under the Workers' Compensation Act for such a case other than 50 per cent. of wages during the period of incapacity. The police cannot have it both ways. If they are desirous of enjoying the benefit of the Workers' Compensation Act—very well; but, in such circumstances, all claims for injuries would be dealt with in accordance with that Act and payment of full wages during the period of incapacity would cease. If there was a transfer to the Workers' Compensation Act, it could hardly be expected that sick leave conditions could be permitted to remain as at present, for we should have an anomalous position created. A man injured on duty would receive half pay only, while a man suffering from, say, influenza, would draw full pay. Summed up, if the police force are brought within the scope of the Workers' Compensation Act, then they cannot expect any privileges or concessions in addition to the compensation provided by the Act. In fact, they would have to be treated similarly to any other worker. If the Workers' Compensation Act is to apply to the force it will be necessary to (1) amend the Act; (2) arrange for members of the Force to be insured similarly to other workers; (3) cease paying the £300 to the Police Benefit Fund Board; (4) revise the rules of the board so that there will be no clashing of interests between the workers' compensation scheme and the gratuity provisions of the Police Benefit Fund. There is yet another phase of the question to be considered. The Workers' Compensation Act provides only for those workers in receipt of £400 per annum and under. What is going to be the position of members of the force in receipt of a daily wage, who are drawing over £400 per annum? If the force as a whole are to be brought under the Act mentioned, then such members in receipt of more than £400 a year would not be entitled to any comparison. What would become of them? What scheme has Mr. Potter in mind? The Government has no objection whatever to bringing the police force under the Workers' Compensation Act if they so desire.

Hon. J. Cornell: It would be a fatal mistake if they did so.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: But up to the present no request has been made that

this should be done. It must be distinctly understood, however, that members of the force cannot have it both ways. They cannot draw full pay and allowances up to six months for ordinary sickness, and at the same time be allowed to draw 50 per cent. of their pay for injuries received on duty under the Workers' Compensation Act. That is self evident. If the Police Union will approach the Government for an amendment of that Act, the Government will be only too pleased to give their request serious consideration. In regard to this matter, however, I would point out that for ordinary sick leave for the 12 months to the 31st December, 1925, the cost to the Department was £3,700, and for the 12 months ended December, 1926, £3,276. This is the value of the wages drawn by the police when on sick leave and does not take into account any amounts paid to doctors, chemists, or for medical attention which the police are also entitled to under their present regulations. I would add that a record was kept of the amount paid to outside medical men from August of this year to date for medical attention afforded members of the force for ordinary sicknesses, and this totalled a sum of £200 for a period of 3½ months. This is quite apart from the medical attention given to members of the force by district medical officers, and it would pay the Government to bring the force under the Workers' Compensation Act, instead of continuing the present conditions. Regarding Mr. Potter's statement that the Police Act requires to be reviewed, I have already pointed out that it is the desire of the Government to repeal certain obsolete sections of the Act, which was passed in 1892, and the necessary amendments are included in the Bill before another place. This Bill might have become law almost immediately if the Police Union had not taken the stand it did by endeavouring to hamper its passing to secure a promotion board. The hon. member's reference as to what a Supreme Court Judge would be requested to do is obscure. He does not set out what the judge would be asked to inquire into. Again, the hon. member says, "In the opinion of the union the machinery of the Department requires to be overhauled." But he does not indicate in what respect such overhaul should take place. It is very easy to make general statements of this

nature but Mr. Potter should give specific instances in justification of such a request, and not confine himself to intangible denunciation. What are those things which may have been all right before the days of telephones and telegraphs but are all wrong now? If Mr. Potter will say, and the Government agree that remedies are necessary, the requests will receive earnest consideration. But we can do nothing if the champions of the police make general remarks without getting down to details. Mr. Potter says the department should be modernised, but he has no suggestion to offer as to how a start should be made in that direction, or what is to be done. He alleges that the department which should be a highly systematised one is not so, and if any system did exist it is put into operation in a slipshod fashion. He has failed absolutely to tell the House in what manner the system is weak. The hon. member goes on to state that "in the administration of such a body as the police force, the question of promotions, punishments, etc., must occupy a great amount of time in a policeman's life." Does he mean to infer that the policeman has so much time on his hands that he has nothing else to think of excepting himself—that his police duties are nil or practically nil—and the greater part of his time is given to nursing grievances of an imaginary nature. The number of punishments and dismissals are so small in comparison with the strength of the force that one could hardly think Mr. Potter was serious in his contentions. His opinion is not shared by other members of Parliament as was shown during a recent debate, when, not only the Commissioner was credited with good work, but it was admitted that we had an excellent force and that no State was better served in this regard than Western Australia. Yet the hon. member would lead the House to believe that the force is seething with discontent. In 1925 a Commission was appointed to deal with the pay, allowances, and working conditions of the force, practically on all-fours with the manner in which the Arbitration Court functions. It was recommended by the Commission that there should be 9 first-class sergeants, 20 second-class, and 35 third-class. It was intended that the first-class sergeants should be in charge of district headquarters stations, the object being that such men were to take over the control during the absence of the district inspector. In fact each first-class sergeant be-

came a potential district inspector. Later, the Government agreed to appoint a temporary promotion appeal board by regulation. Now the police regulations provide that all promotions above the rank of constable shall be filled by promotions from the next grade, that is, of course, where there is a suitable man available. If such a procedure were not followed, the union would be the first to complain. In order to bring this about it is necessary that, before a man attains the rank of first-class sergeant, he should qualify by examination for the rank of inspector. This is absolutely necessary, for the number of first-class sergeants is so small, the department must be satisfied that he is qualified for higher rank before promoting him to the rank of first-class sergeant. There is nothing unusual in this, as in other services officers are expected to qualify for higher grades long before they can hope to obtain such rank. In the mercantile marine, for instance, a first or second officer frequently holds his master's certificate long before he is able to obtain command of a vessel. That is all that is expected of a member of the force. In regard to Sergeant Wilson, who was referred to by Mr. Potter, he did not qualify, although he had some 10 years in which to do so. The Commissioner was well aware, and indeed it was common knowledge that he had no intention of qualifying, and for that reason he was passed over when the promotions arising out of the Commission's recommendations were made. He appealed to the temporary appeal board, consisting of the Acting Police Magistrate, the president of the Union, and a member of the force nominated by the Commissioner, and he succeeded in his appeal. From the moment he was successful in that appeal, until he was compulsorily retired from the force, six months afterwards, he did not perform one day's duty. He drew the pay for the higher rank from November, 1925, and had the audacity to ask that the pay should be made retrospective from the 8th April previously. It is altogether wrong to say that nine members of the force have been passed over for many years and were given promotion under the recommendation of the Commission. The facts are that the present Government decided to agree to the recommendations of the Commission and make the money available to carry out such award. With respect to the appeals that came before the board, Mr. Potter says three were upheld. One of these

was the case of Sergeant Wilson to which I have referred, another was that of Sergeant Blank—I will call him Sergeant Blank, for Mr. Potter did not give his name. It is common knowledge that Sergeant Blank is not suitable for that rank. The Commissioner still maintains, and this sergeant's action since he won the appeal supports the contention, that he was unsuitable for promotion, and that there were many men in the force superior to him who should have been given the preference. The hon. member states that Acting Chief Inspector Sellenger gave evidence in his favour. It is quite true that he did give such evidence, but, strange to say, only this month Mr. Sellenger did not recommend him for charge of a metropolitan-suburban station for which Sergeant Blank was the only applicant, and in a discussion between the Commissioner, Mr. Sellenger, and the staff clerk he agreed that this sergeant was not suitable for the position. This shows the value of evidence tendered at a promotion board. I would add that the department strongly opposed this promotion. With respect to the third case, that of Sergeant McGuinness, he passed his examination for inspector in the interim between the award of the Commission and the sitting of the appeal board, and in view of that fact no objection was raised by the department to his promotion. The next case referred to by Mr. Potter as having been adjourned sine die relates to another sergeant, and the facts may be briefly stated. The department's officers reported that this man had not shown any initiative or energy and recommended he should be stood down for 12 months in order to give him an opportunity to prove himself. At the end of this 12 months there was a marked improvement and the sergeant obtained his promotion quite apart from any appeal board. Let me remark that a determined effort was made by the Union representative to oust the present drill instructor and school master with a view to replacing him by a man utterly unfitted for the position. The matter was so serious that the Commissioner himself found it necessary to enter the witness box and tender evidence against an efficient officer being stood down in favour of one whom he considered absolutely incompetent to carry out the important duties of instructor. This instruction is the foundation on which the whole force is built up, and it is obviously essential that the school should be in charge of a man possessed of high quali-

fications. It is as well that the House should know that all members of the force holding first-class sergeant's rank, and any member of the force wishing to obtain that rank must pass the qualifying examination for inspector. If it were otherwise it would lead to grave discontent and friction between the district inspector and the first-class sergeant in charge of the station. For instance, if a first-class sergeant at district headquarters were passed over for promotion to the rank of inspector by a second-class who had qualified by examination there would be continuous strife between them, and the two men to whom the Commissioner looked for the successful administration of the police district would be perpetually at loggerheads. It is incorrect to say that the files are not placed before the promotion board. In every instance this practice has been followed when candidates for promotion are being considered. It is true that the previous system with respect to the promotion board has been superseded. The former board consisted of the district officers between Geraldton and Albany, but it was found that such board had outlived its usefulness. Can the hon. member say that this is not a sign of modernising the force? The new board consists of the Commissioner (as Chairman), the Chief Inspector, and Inspector O'Halloran, and they go into the claims of every candidate, and when a senior man is passed over, the reasons for so doing are given. Notwithstanding anything Mr. Potter may say to the contrary, no one is in a better position than the Commissioner and his officers to decide the qualifications of the respective applicants for promotion. There is not a single important happening connected with the force in any part of the State which is not immediately reported to the Commissioner, and by that means he gains a complete knowledge of the work of every member.

Hon. J. Cornell: What part does seniority play in promotion?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: A secondary part. Mr. Potter suggests lack of method but I think it must be agreed that such organisation in regard to detail does not bear out his contention. It is admitted that in 1924 the Commissioner stated in his report that the time was opportune for the appointment of an appeal board on similar lines to the one established in New South Wales. In accordance with that expression

of opinion, a temporary board was set up by regulation, but it proved such an absolute failure that the Government could not see its way clear to continue it and the regulation was cancelled. Such a fiasco it was proved through the selection of incompetent men that the Government did away with it, and that is the reason why the Commissioner changed his view. He was justified in so doing in view of the experience gained by the working of that temporary board. This is an experience that occurs to everyone, especially to members of Parliament when they find a law requires amending or repealing though they may have supported it previously. It is abundantly clear from Mr. Potter's remarks, that what he wants is not a Royal Commission, but an appeal board to deal with appeals against promotions in the force; and the Police Union ask that such a board should consist of a resident magistrate as chairman, a representative of the union, and one of the Commissioner. In view of the experience gained with the temporary board already referred to, which was composed on similar lines to that now asked for by Mr. Potter and the Police Union, the Government consider it would be wrong to take out of the hands of the Government and the Commissioner the right to select officers for promotion, and to hand over that selection to a board the chairman of which would have no knowledge of police administration, no knowledge of the particular member of the force who appeals, and no experience in the control and management of men in the mass. Regarding the union representative, experience has shown that he is not in any way concerned with the efficiency of the department. On every occasion—perhaps quite naturally—he is out to assist the appellant whether the appellant is justified in his claim or not. It must also be borne in mind that even the Commissioner's representative, who would be an inspector, is a member of the union whose executive fix his salary for submission to the Arbitration Court. Hence it is apparent that control would be completely taken out of the hands of the Government and of the Commissioner, notwithstanding that the Police Act throws the responsibility of the control and management of the force on the Minister and Commissioner. It must be realised by hon. members that successful administration is brought about by securing the most suitable men for particular positions, and the question is who is in the best position to judge—the Com-

missioner, or a board such as I have just described. Say, for example, an officer is required for certain work in the Criminal Investigation Branch, Traffic, Weights and Measures, Liquor Inspection, Pillaging, or Gold Stealing Staff: who is in the best position to judge as to the most suitable man? If the suggested promotional appeal board is granted for the police force, then it should be equally good for other departments such as the Railways, Tramways, Public Works, Fire Brigades, State Shipping, and, in fact, for the Public Service generally. Indeed, if the principle were carried to its logical conclusion, it might be applied to any commercial concern of considerable magnitude. Hon. members know what the result would be. The Government feel strongly that it would be wrong to take the control from men who know their work and hand it over to a board, at least two members of which have no knowledge of the administration. I may say that where the union put forward reasonable grounds in connection with a promotion with which they are not satisfied, the Minister controlling the department would always be prepared to have any special case reviewed. All through Mr. Potter's speech he talks as if the police were a very badly treated body of men. Nothing could be farther from the facts. A constable after passing out of the instructional school draws £292 per annum, and after three years' service he is paid £301, but goes up through a graded scale, and at the end of 20 years' service he is drawing £337 per annum. A third-class sergeant is paid £355, a second-class sergeant £373, and a first-class sergeant £392. The union are now claiming increased pay, which claim will be heard by the Arbitration Court early next year. In addition to the wages drawn the police are provided with uniform and receive free medical and surgical attention, sick leave up to six months on full pay, as well as three weeks' annual leave and two days off per month. They are also entitled to three months' long service leave after 10 years, six months' after twenty years, and nine months' after thirty years' service. They are permitted to travel on trams when in uniform free—a concession not enjoyed by any ordinary worker: they have various railway privileges such as free passes to the coast for themselves and families from the goldfields, and from outlying centres every two years. In all other parts of the State they are permitted the privilege of excursion fares for themselves and families

when on holidays, no matter what time of the year it may be. Indeed, there is no other servant of the State who has such abundant privileges as members of the force have, so that Mr. Potter's allegations in this regard fall to the ground, and fall heavily. The experience of the temporary appeal board has led to the conclusion that in a small force such as ours it would only require a very few appeals such as the two I have mentioned to succeed and the efficiency of the force would in a short time be destroyed. This might not be so noticeable in a large force of several thousand men, but in a small force like ours the effect would be felt almost immediately. It should be borne in mind in connection with the appeal board that one constable was permitted to call another constable to give evidence as to his suitability for promotion; and whilst there is no difficulty in appellants getting some members of the force to support them in that respect, it is no easy matter for the Commissioner to obtain persons to come forward and say that a certain appellant is not fit for further advancement. Hon. members will readily recognise that factor. It would be a simple matter for the Government and the Commissioner to follow the easy course and agree to promotion being given by seniority, and so save all controversy. This course was followed in Victoria some years ago, and culminated in a disastrous police strike, creating a wave of crime which has not yet been stemmed. After Victoria's acceptance of the foolish principle, no one took any particular interest in his work, as each knew that so long as he conducted himself, he would get promotion in his turn whether he was suitable or not. Hon. members, I think, will agree that efficiency cannot be secured in such a way. There is a promotional appeal board in New South Wales, the chairman of which is a county court judge, and long ago he expressed the view that no one other than the Commissioner of Police and his officers was capable of advising what men were suitable for advancement. In Victoria there is an appeal board which consists of the Commissioner as chairman, the Under Secretary of the Chief Secretary's Office, and a magistrate; but the Victorian Police Union have no representative whatever. In South Australia there is an appeal board practically on similar lines to what is asked for here,

but I have no information as to results there. Hon. members will agree that the secret of successful management is the careful selection of the best man for the particular position which is to be filled. May I add that if this right is taken out of the hands of the Government and the Commissioner, and handed over to men who know nothing about the job, and who have no sense of responsibility, it means goodbye to successful administration. Mr. Potter has not given a single instance in which a suitable man for a certain position has been passed over for promotion. The hon. member has furnished no evidence in support of his request that the services of a Supreme Court judge should be requisitioned to conduct an inquiry into the administration of the police force; and the House, I trust, will give his motion very little support.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [8.14]: The motion before us asks for the appointment of a judge of the Supreme Court as a Royal Commission to inquire into certain matters mentioned. The Chief Secretary's comments on the scope of the motion have perhaps some merit, in that it may be advisable to widen that scope and ask the Royal Commissioner to inquire not only into the system governing promotions and punishments among the non-commissioned ranks, but also, as I gather from what I have heard, into transfers and dismissals, and to make such recommendations as the Royal Commissioner may think fit regarding the advisableness or otherwise of appointing a board for the purpose of dealing with such matters as promotions, transfers, and dismissals. That, I think, would then give the Commissioner some particular duty to do, and it would probably accomplish what is desired in this matter. Because, as the Chief Secretary points out, obviously what is asked for here is the appointment of a board to deal with these matters. We have heard from Mr. Potter certain instances of alleged discontent. The Chief Secretary points out that sufficient proof has not been produced by Mr. Potter to sustain the motion. The Chief Secretary also pointed out what I think is true, that whilst sometimes before a board it may be a simple matter to get one man to come forward and speak in support of another, it is a very difficult thing to get a man to come forward and voice an adverse opinion of the qualifications of an applicant for a position.

Hon. J. Cornell: That does not apply at election time.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Sometimes it does. What is advanced in that regard probably can be advanced with equal force in the case of the mover of the motion. That is to say, it is very difficult for the mover of a motion like this to ventilate before the House precise cases with full details and give all the evidence that is asked to convince members beyond all doubt of the justification for such a motion. If movers of motions of this nature were compelled to bring forward evidence of such a character as that suggested, it would dispense with the need for appointing a Commissioner; because we would convert ourselves into a Royal Commission, and the House would then be able to have all the essential evidence before it and would determine the question that it is proposed to refer to a Royal Commission. The object of the motion I take it is to enable somebody to inquire into these matters.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Somebody that does not know the job.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I think probably a Supreme Court judge would have some knowledge of this duty and might be quite as alive to what is necessary in making his investigations as would any other individual who might be appointed Royal Commissioner. Probably the suggestion to appoint as Royal Commissioner a judge of the Supreme Court is the wisest suggestion. I have heard murmurings, and probably other members have heard murmurings, regarding discontent in the police force. I agree with what the Chief Secretary has said as to the praise we should render to members of the force. I believe we have in this State a body of men second to none in the Commonwealth, and I think they compare more than favourably with the police in other countries of the world. That being so, surely it is desirable in the interests not only of the Minister who has control of the department, but also of the Commissioner of Police, who is the head official of the department, that everything possible should be done to preserve harmonious working in a responsible department, and that we should have there at least some element of content and satisfaction. I believe that if a Royal Commissioner did inquire into these matters, and the scope of the motion were enlarged on the lines I suggest, we would be able to receive the report of the Commissioner, and if he made recommendations after close in-

vestigation into the subject, we should be in the happy position of knowing that it was the result of careful thought on his part. It has been explained to us that similar boards have been appointed in several of the other States. South Australia was one instance mentioned by the Chief Secretary, and the Police Union here, it is said, are desirous of copying the lines on which that board is framed. I do not know the method adopted there. The Chief Secretary was in some doubt as to how that board was appointed and as to what its functions are. That is the very thing a Royal Commissioner could find out. He would inquire into the merits and demerits of boards in the various States, and if we enlarge the scope of this motion all these and similar matters could be inquired into with profit and benefit generally to the police force. Because if we are to achieve something for a body of men in whom we must have confidence, surely the best method is by inquiry in the way suggested here, by appointing a Royal Commission. I hope, therefore, consideration will be given to the motion. If the mover would be prepared to adopt the suggestion I have made, I would give my support to the motion.

HON. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM (North) [8.23]: We have all listened with interest to the speeches that have fallen from the two members and the Minister. What we have heard may have proved useful in clearing up the situation a little. Nevertheless it seems to me unfortunate that matters of this kind should be brought before Parliament. When Parliament interferes in the management of any department it is hopeless to maintain discipline there. We all recognise that one of the functions of Parliament is to redress outstanding grievances that cannot be remedied in any other way. Still, it is dangerous for either the Government or Parliament to interfere in the management of any department. The Police Department is an exceedingly important one; indeed, in this respect it stands out from any other department. Therefore it should be put on a different footing from that of other departments and should have the very best treatment the Government can give it. For the duties undertaken by the police are of a very serious and responsible nature. Some years ago I wrote to the newspaper a letter in which I said I thought the police and the locomotive engine-drivers should be the best paid men in the service of the State

because they, more than anybody else, had the lives of the community in their hands. An engine-driver if not careful, sober and capable can do a great deal of harm, and indeed wreck human life.

Hon. A. Burvill: So can the drunken driver of a motor car.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: We are not speaking of motor car drivers. The police, on the other hand, do their best to save lives in every possible way. They are in such a conspicuous position that their department ought to be put on a different footing and treated differently from other departments, and, may I say, very generously. The duties of the police are multifarious and of an unusual nature. First of all, those men must be strictly sober and loyal to their Government and to the people. Then they have to carry out their duties with great tact and have to use a great deal of discretion. I am a great admirer of the police force of Western Australia, for I think it will compare favourably with any other force in the world except, perhaps, that of London. I feel certain the Commissioner and his staff and the Minister will give them every possible justice. Naturally the Commissioner likes to surround himself with the best men, for the better the men he has to help him the easier are his own duties. I have been in the service of the Crown as a Minister. Years ago a great point was made of promotion by seniority. Indeed a great many people attach weight to that nowadays. But I think merit should supersede seniority in many cases, especially in the police force. If we are sending a man to some out-of-the-way place such as Kimberley or Kalgoorlie, where there is the gold to look after, we want, not seniority but merit. Nobody but the heads of the police force are in a position to make these judgments. Consider the duties of the police in a time of industrial upheaval between the employers and the employees. A strike has been declared. Look at the responsible duties the police have to carry out. If there is a disturbance they have to exercise their discretion and arrest either party, employers or employees. Their duty is to carry out the laws made by Parliament, without discriminating amongst those who break the law. They have to be loyal to Parliament and to the people, and in carrying out the laws they have a very delicate duty. Hitherto it has been discharged exceedingly well. **Mr. Nicholson**

said he had heard rumours of discontent in the force. I am not in a position to know whether members of the force are contented, but I must say that they look contented and well and, to the best of my knowledge, they carry out their duties admirably. I hope, therefore, that the Commissioner, the Minister and the Government will treat those men in the best possible manner and far better than any other body of men. The matter might well be left in the hands of the Government and the Commissioner. I listened with the greatest interest to the remarks of Mr. Potter, and although many of the instances he cited were contradicted by the Chief Secretary, I admit there is bound to be a certain amount of discontent in any organisation. The House would be wise not to pass the motion.

HON. G. POTTER (West—in reply) [8.32]: I listened with great interest to the remarks of the Chief Secretary. He suggested that I had not made out a case. In the course of my speech I was careful to state that I considered it necessary to make out a strong case, because I felt I was voicing the opinions of a responsible body of men and dealing with an important subject. I was careful to state also that, in common with the members of the Police Union, I had a regard for the privileges of Parliament, and I drew a distinction between the reasonable exercise and the abuse of those privileges. It would be very simple for any member of Parliament, under the shelter of the privilege of Parliament, to make extreme or even libellous assertions; but in dealing with such a motion it would ill become anyone to use material that would not be available to a Press investigator or to an interested member of the public. The members of the Police Union would ill-deserve the respect of the community if, through them, I or any other member became possessed of confidential matters, the publication of which would militate against the smooth working of the Police Department. I have voiced the opinions of the Police Union. When such a body of men pass a resolution without a dissentient voice, it shows that they are attacking neither the Commissioner nor the Government. They feel that after studying the conditions prevailing in other police forces in Australia, there are certain matters here that might well be adjusted. That should effectively dispose of the statement that I should have presented more evidence in support of my

motion. Various grades of men are represented in the union. Many non-commissioned officers, particularly the senior ones, would undoubtedly have access to some of the most confidential files of the department, but such matters have not been introduced into the discussion of this motion. The only matters introduced are those that have already been made public. The Chief Secretary went so far as to say that I had quoted no instances at all to warrant the passing of the motion. He told the House that when officers were making promotions, all files were placed before them. We have incontrovertible evidence that in the case Sergeant Wilson, the late Inspector Duncan said his file was not produced to the promotional board. Had it been produced, Inspector Duncan, who was one of the members of the board, said he would have recommended Sergeant Wilson before any of the others who received promotion. That is a specific instance of a sergeant's file not having been placed before the promotional board.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Did Sergeant Wilson subsequently get promotion?

Hon. G. POTTER: He appealed to the temporary appeal board in 1925. The board was appointed as a palliative to the Commissioner's suggestion in his report of 1924 that an appeal board would be in the best interests of the State. That was the unanimous opinion of the Police Commissioners of Australia, and our Commissioner asked the Government to treat the matter as urgent. The Government appointed a temporary appeal board constituted as the Chief Secretary has mentioned. Sergeant Wilson was one of the appellants, and it was before the appeal board that the late Chief Inspector Duncan made the statement that had Sergeant Wilson's file been before the promotional board, he would have recommended him before other non-commissioned officers who had been passed over his head.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is Sergeant Wilson still in the force?

Hon. G. POTTER: I believe so.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I understood the Minister to say that he was not.

Hon. G. POTTER: Anyhow, that is in the records of the department. Another reason has been mobilised to justify the non-presentation of Wilson's file before the board. We were told it was on account of sickness. Now we are told it might have been because he had not passed the examination. The Chief Secretary has referred to another

sergeant, and, as his name already appears in "Hansard," I shall refer to him. Sergeant Ford was the man whom acting Chief Inspector Sellinger said he would be glad to have as an assistant in any district. In the case of Sergeant McGuinness, we are told that he did not pass the examination. He was never asked to pass the examination. The Commissioner of Police said he was neither requested to pass the examination nor advised that it was necessary to do so. It was not necessary for either of them to pass an examination for promotion. The Chief Secretary told us there were mercantile officers sailing as chief officers though they held masters' certificates. I know of second and third officers who hold masters' certificates.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Some who hold masters' certificates are A.B's.

Hon. G. POTTER: It is not necessary for a third officer to hold a master's certificate. Certainly some of the big mail lines insist that no man shall become chief or even second officer unless he holds a master's certificate. Still, we are not dealing with the mercantile marine or even with the navy. We are dealing with the police force. The regulations lay down that only two examinations are necessary, one to pass from constable to non-commissioned rank and the other to pass from non-commissioned to commissioned rank. If a second-class sergeant is desirous of receiving promotion to first-class sergeant, it is not necessary for him to pass another examination. Sometimes a first-class sergeant has been entrusted with the execution of duties pertaining to commissioned rank. There was evidence of that when two districts were amalgamated recently and an acting inspector was reduced to non-commissioned rank. That, however, was an isolated case. The regulations state that a constable, to qualify as a non-commissioned officer, must pass an examination, and that a non-commissioned officer must pass an examination before he can attain commissioned rank. The fact that a man has not passed the commissioned officers' examination is no reason why he should not be promoted from third class sergeant to second class or first class sergeant. The Chief Secretary has said that the whole of my speech made it patent that the real request of the police was for an appeal board. The police want an appeal board because they feel they should be on a par with similar organisations

elsewhere in the Commonwealth. Despite the opinion of any county court judge, the records show that appeal boards in the Eastern States have given every satisfaction. In solemn conclave Commissioners of Police of the Commonwealth carried, without one dissentient voice, a resolution that an appeal board should be established in the interests of the police force. The Commissioner of Police returns to his State, and asks the Government to treat the matter as urgent. Is he so much of a will o' the wisp that some trifling thing will cause him to change his mind? Surely experienced men like these commissioners would not hurriedly carry such an important resolution if they did not mean it. Other States of the Commonwealth have put that recommendation into practical effect. In Western Australia a temporary appeal board was tried. The Chief Secretary said that the Commissioner changed his mind between 1924 and 1926 because of his bitter experience in 1925. Five appeals were listed. One was withdrawn, one was declared ineligible, and three went by the board. The board upheld Sergeant Wilson's appeal and granted his promotion. Sergt. Ford also got his promotion before the appeal board. Neither the Government nor the Commissioner of Police nor any of his officers had a word to say against these promotions. Sergt. McGuinness from Kalgoorlie had passed an examination, although it was not necessary for him to do so. His case had been adjourned sine die to allow of the calling of further evidence, but before his case was called on he received his promotion. What disintegrating influence has this had upon the police force? It has had none. The fact that these men have been deprived of what the Commissioner recommended in 1924, and what so many of the other States enjoy, does make for dissension. I am glad Sir Edward Wittenoom has supported me in saying that the police force are not comparable with any other body of workers. It was from these premises that I had to mention the Workers' Compensation Act. Members will see from "Hansard" that special reference was made to the death benefits accruing under the Workers' Compensation Act. I pointed out that Constable Read at Tambellup was killed in the execution of his duty. His widow received about £273, whereas under the Workers' Compensation Acts he would have been entitled to £600. That was the

point I was raising. I do not contend that the police force as a whole should come under the Workers' Compensation Act. I raised the question to show the difference between the Police Union of workers and other organised unions of workers in the State. According to the Chief Secretary I stated that members of the police force were charged behind closed doors. I should not like it to go abroad that I or members of the police union laid a charge against the Commissioner or any of his officers that men were dealt with behind closed doors, according to star chamber methods. I would point out, however, that everything hingeing upon a constable's promotion or that of a non-commissioned officer does not always appear upon the file. There is such a thing as a verbal report which is never recorded. Against such things any body of workers should be protected, especially in a department like that of the police which calls for the highest of discipline. It is the opinion of members of the police force that certain portions of the administration are conducted in a somewhat slipshod manner, or that there is a missing link somewhere, seeing that matters with which they are perfectly familiar, and which I have already designated, are not dealt with in the manner outlined by the Chief Secretary. We have heard there is a measure in another place dealing with the Police Department. I know that members of that department do not view with any degree of equanimity the chance of that measure becoming law. It is not wrong for the organised workers of the Police Department to secure an amendment to any Bill that is before Parliament. From time to time unions of organised workers have been successful in securing amendments to legislation that is being dealt with by either House. I see nothing wrong in that. These people are engaged in an industry. If they can show that a Bill can be made better by amendment that is helpful to Parliament, and it is their duty to make such suggestions. It is insinuated that the Police Union of Workers have been responsible for retarding the measure in another place, because they wish to have an appeal board, and are quite entitled to it. That was not inconsistent with the political platform of which the Chief Secretary is such an able exponent. The appeal board is a real question with members of the police force. It

must have been disappointing, if not galling, for them to hear the Premier's remarks when a division was taken, namely, "That is the end of your promotion board." These are the little things that cause unrest, not a Royal Commission of this kind. They may be somewhat small in the general scheme of things, but they are of great importance to members of the force.

Hon. J. Nicholson: A Commission could inquire into all these things.

Hon. G. POTTER: Yes. There would be many confidential files to examine. I might have taken the opportunity before moving this motion of asking that certain files should be laid on the Table of the House, but I thought that an indelicate thing to do. It would have placed the department and those in control in a somewhat embarrassing position. I do not suggest there is anything on the files which is not correct.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Then it is not fair to bring that up here.

Hon. G. POTTER: It might not be advisable to have the inner workings of the department made the football of Parliamentarians or of the Press. The Chief Secretary criticised my conception of the duties of the police when he said I stated that the question of promotions, etc., occupied a great deal of their time. What I said was that it occupied a position of importance in the life of a policeman. A policeman has nothing to look forward to but his next promotion. He has only his labour to sell in the interests of the State. He knows that the more efficient he becomes, the more likely he is to get promotion, but that this must be slow. During the last 15 years there has been no appreciable increase in the strength of the police force, although, because of the increase in the population, the increase in trade and in our primary industries, the duties of policemen have multiplied enormously. Promotion comes but slowly. It occupies a very important part in the life and aspirations of a police officer. It would be satisfying to members of the force to know that in the event of any heartfelt grievance in regard to punishments, promotions or transfers they could appeal to a board that would be qualified to sit in judgment and give a fair and impartial hearing to their claims. The Chief Secretary asks, who better than the Commissioner can judge the qualities of a man? There are many cap-

able constables or junior non-commissioned officers whom the Commissioner would not know to-morrow if he met them. The head of the police force must rely entirely upon the reports he receives from others. I have shown that certain files were not placed before the proper authorities. In the event of a full inquiry being made many such instances could be quoted. It would not undermine the authority of the Commissioner or any of his officers to have such a board appointed. It is the contention of members of the police force that the promotion board, which has been boasted of, did good work. When that board was functioning I do not know that there was much trouble, because the police were represented by inspectors who were decentralised. Now we find that the Commissioner, his Chief Inspector and the inspector of the liquor branch comprise the promotion board. We all know the wonderfully good work that Inspector O'Halloran has carried out, but it is some years since he was attached to the active work of the police force and there may be many changes and developments with which Inspector O'Halloran may not be in direct touch. His work does not really associate him directly with the real operations of the Police Department. As to the position of the Chief Inspector or of the Commissioner in connection with the board, I would not like to be in the position of either in the event of disagreements taking place respecting a question of promotion, particularly when it affected one of the senior positions. I endorse all that the Chief Secretary said regarding the necessity for efficiency in the police force. But again I would remind the House that the people who have a knowledge of constables and non-commissioned officers are those who are most intimately associated with them. The Minister told us of the many concessions that members of the police force are enjoying, and he also reminded us that the police recruits joined the service with their eyes open as to the conditions of their employment. That is quite true, but that should not be held up in this House by the Minister as a reason why special or fair consideration should not be extended to members of the force. In view of the fact that we have undoubtedly one of the most efficient and best police forces in the Empire or in the world, we should keep it in that condition and not allow old-established customs to set aside the more modern trend of thought throughout the police force.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I would like to ask the hon. member whether he proposes to move the amendment I indicated.

The PRESIDENT: Mr. Potter cannot move any amendment now; it is too late.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Would I be in order if I were to move one?

The PRESIDENT: No, Mr. Potter has closed the debate.

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

| | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|---|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 9 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 8 |
| | | | | — |
| Majority for | .. | .. | .. | 1 |
| | | | | — |

AYES.

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Hon. A. Burvill | Hon. H. Seddon |
| Hon. E. H. Harris | Hon. H. A. Stephenson |
| Hon. W. J. Mann | Hon. H. Stewart |
| Hon. J. Nicholson | Hon. E. Rose |
| Hon. G. Potter | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. Sir W. Latblain |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | Hon. Sir E. Wittenoom |
| Hon. J. W. Hickey | Hon. H. J. Yelland |
| Hon. J. J. Holmes | Hon. W. H. Kitson |
| | (Teller.) |

Question thus passed.

BILL—HOSPITALS.

Third Reading.

Debate resumed from the 10th November.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [9.10]: When I secured the adjournment of the debate it was not with the intention of speaking to the Bill, but since then I have gone carefully through the measure, and there are one or two matters regarding which I think some explanation should be given by the Honorary Minister. The House is entitled to be informed by him respecting one or two points that have not been dealt with. During the discussion nothing has been said as to how it is proposed to finance hospitals in the future. References are included in the Bill to the provision of hospitals and so forth, but there is nothing dealing with the broad question of finance. In the interpretation clause we find the following:—

“Hospital fund” shall mean a fund intended for the provision of hospital services for its contributors and established and maintained by means of contributions made in accordance with regulations approved by the Minister.

Although I have gone carefully through the Bill, I cannot find any contingent machinery in it to which that interpretation would apply. Clause 20 of the Bill provides for the boards appointing collectors of voluntary contributions and donations from the public for the purpose of maintaining public hospitals under their control. Clause 23 provides for medical funds and Clause 25 applies to hospitals controlled by the Minister and sets out that the Government may appoint a visiting and an advisory committee who may solicit and receive donations and subscriptions. It appears to me that the financing of hospitals will be, as hitherto, on the cadding system. I am totally opposed to that system which has proved an absolute farce in the past. There is only one logical way by which we can maintain our hospitals up to the required standard, and that is by a direct tax on incomes and wages. There is no other safe way of doing it. It seems absurd to pass a new Hospitals Bill to continue on the old basis of cadding, which means that 60 per cent. of the money raised is used in working expenses. Why is the hospital fund provided for, seeing that there is nothing in the Bill to give effect to it? What are we to infer from that? That is what I want the Honorary Minister to explain. I direct the attention of the House to the position so that if the Bill is to be recommitted, Clause 2 and the others I have mentioned may be dealt with and finality reached.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering Clauses 2 and 28, new Clause 27, and the Title.

Amendment put and passed.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I ask the Honorary Minister what is the interpretation of "hospital fund." I have looked through the Bill three or four times but I cannot find any reference to "hospital fund." Perhaps the Minister will give us some explanation of it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member has raised several points this evening during the course of private discussion.

Mr. Yelland also has raised some points, all of which have a bearing on the Bill. I think we have come to some arrangement in connection with the matter. There are, however, one or two points that are not quite clear, and for the purpose of satisfying myself and the hon. members I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and passed.

Progress reported.

BILL—EMPLOYMENT BROKERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Amendment, Six Months.

Debate resumed from 17th November on the motion by the Honorary Minister that the Bill be now read a second time, and on an amendment by Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom that "now" be struck out and "six months" added to the motion.

HON. SIR WILLIAM LATHLAIN (Metropolitan Suburban—on amendment) [9.20]: I did not intend to speak on the Bill because there is an amendment before the House moved by Sir Edward Wittenoom that the Bill be read this day six months. I would be in accord with that amendment but for the fact that it is proposed to alter the machinery governing the Act already in force, and for that reason I shall support the second reading in the hope of having the machinery put into operation. This is one of the many Bills introduced to enable the Labour Party to put into effect one of their planks asserted by them to be part of their platform. When we were debating the Bill last week, on the very same day, Mr. Barker, a prominent member of the Australian Labour Party, had some comments to offer on employment broking, and the methods adopted by the employment brokers. He said that the matter had received considerable attention from the A.L.P., and that at the State-wide conference in July, 1925, the question was debated at length, and it was resolved "That this Congress desires the abolition of private registry offices, all labour to be engaged through unions working in conjunction with the Labour Bureau." Then he went on to say, "While that explains our attitude, we welcome the proposed legislation as something that will tend to improve the present position." That is further evidence that the present Government are desirous of carry-

ing on all sorts of industries from State insurance to employment broking. Regarding the Bill, it may be said that some brokers have not controlled their establishments in a manner that meets with the approval of the Government. I maintain that by placing the control of these agencies under the Inspector of Factories, we shall get better supervision and better results than are obtained under the existing order of things with control by the licensing bench. There are some controversial clauses in the Bill with which I do not propose to deal. One to which I take exception is that which excludes the employee from the payment of any fee. Many of us have had considerable dealings with employment brokers and we know that they carry on useful work in the community, more particularly in regard to the engagement of domestic servants. It is surely much better for domestic servants to be introduced to an employer through the medium of a private bureau, and it is as necessary that the employee should know something about the employer as it is that the employer should know something about the domestic. I contend that employment brokers are giving a service to the people that is required, and a service that is thoroughly appreciated. There is another point. Clause 16 provides—

Every employment broker shall retain in a registered place of business of such broker, for a period of not less than six months, all letters, telegrams, or other documents received by him in the course of or in reference to his business.

Whilst it may be quite right to retain all letters and telegrams that may be received, there are many people who do not employ typistes or shorthand writers and it would be a difficult matter for them if they had to make copies of letters that they wrote or received. Mr. Cornell told us of his experience with a registry office. One of my first jobs was in a labour office of this description.

Hon. J. Cornell: Brothers in misfortune.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: The point I wish to stress is that it may be right enough to ask people to keep copies of letters, but the clause will inflict a hardship on those people who are in a small way of business. It would be a difficult matter for a woman controlling a small registry office to keep a copy of all her correspondence. Clerical work would not be an easy matter in an establishment of

that kind. As I stated at the outset, whilst there are certain clauses that if passed will make for the better working of registry offices, it is my intention to support the second reading so that those clauses may be passed into law. There are clauses that would, if passed, inflict a severe hardship on registry office keepers. We are told that it is the policy of the Government to put these people out of business altogether. I do not intend to be a party to that. The people I want to see put out of business are the Government themselves who want to run every sort of business even down to that of employment broking.

HON. E. H. HARRIS (North-East)—on amendment—[9.27]: The Labour Exchange Bill of 1925, the object of which was to drive all people seeking employment to the Labour Bureau, was defeated by a sentence of six months. The Bill before us contains a clause similar to one that was embodied in the Bill of 1925, the object being to drive everyone to the State Bureau. It is well to remember the decision of the Labour Congress referred to by Sir William Lathlain. This shows that it is obviously the policy of the Labour Party to drive everybody to the State Labour Exchange. Preference to unionists is the policy of the Government, and I repeat what I said when we had the Labour Exchange Bill here that no person would be employed unless he was a member of a union. A person who goes to a labour exchange must become a member of the union, if he is not already one, before he can get a position. It will be remembered it was pointed out that there were many people seeking employment who could not afford to pay a fee of 15s. or £1 to private employment brokers, but that if they sought work through the State bureau they had to join a union first and that would cost them 25s.

Hon. H. Stewart: Where does the right to work come in?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The Bill provides that you shall have the right to pay tribute to the union in order to get a position, instead of paying the employment brokers.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member seems to assert that that is a means of peaceful penetration.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: It may be a means towards achieving that object. Certain of

the amendments proposed I regard as very necessary, and I do hope that Sir Edward Wittenoom's amendment will be withdrawn. The licensing bench, who issue certificates authorising the conduct of the business, are practically rubber stamps;—the bench comprising Mr. Lyon Johnston, Mr. Cahill, and Mr. McClintock. Formerly the State was cut into licensing districts and the various licensing benches dealt with employment brokers' licenses in their respective districts; but since the Licensing Act Amendment Act provides that the present bench shall be paid from the fund under that measure while administering the licensing laws throughout Western Australia, they take no interest in this particular business, with which they want to have nothing to do as they consider it somebody else's work. Reports are submitted by the police, and those reports are accepted by the bench, who occasionally decide without full knowledge of the character of the applicant for an employment broker's license. Therefore it is highly necessary we should pass certain clauses of the Bill. Other clauses, in which I do not believe, I shall deal with later. In Committee we can sift the wheat from the chaff—the Bill is mainly chaff—and pass the provisions that are needed for the better working of the existing Act.

Hon. H. Stewart: Do you think licenses should apply to estate agents and so forth?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Estate agents do not come within the scope of an employment brokers Bill. I know the licensing bench have very little interest in this class of work that is thrust upon them now; and the sooner they are relieved of that business, the better it will be for the administration of the Employment Brokers Act. A reference to the "Statistical Abstract" for 1925-26 shows that during the 12 months ended on the 30th June, 1924, 1,369 persons found employment through the State Labour Bureau, and in the next period of 12 months 1,554. The figures of the private employment brokers for the same years are 3,934 and 4,820 respectively. I am quoting the latest figures published; those for 1926-27 are not yet available. It appears that for the two years in question, whereas 2,932 persons found employment through the State Labour Bureau, 8,754 did so through private employment brokers.

Hon. A. Lovekin: What is the cost of the State Labour Bureau now?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I will deal with that aspect presently. Only some 24 per cent. of the total engaged in the two years were found work by the State Labour Bureau. By the Bill we are asked to drive the other 75 per cent. to the State Labour Bureau also. No doubt many of them are unionists, but the others would have the hard word put on them at the bureau, "Have you a ticket?"

Hon. V. Hamersley: A new system of organisation.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I do not know that it is new; but it is cheap and effective. It is far better to have a man come to your office to buy a ticket than to employ an organiser at £7 or £8 a week to go out into the country and round men up. If the Bill passes as printed, these people would be compelled to go to the State Labour Bureau instead of to private employment brokers, who are authorised by Act of Parliament to conduct the business.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: Which clause of the Bill deals with that phase of the subject?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The hon. member might read Clause 12, which he will find interesting. It says, "No payment or remuneration of any kind for or in respect of hiring or attempting to hire" and so forth "shall be paid." In other words, the employer shall pay all fees for the engaging of persons.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: Quite right, too.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I am glad of that interjection, because I want to prove to the House that the proposal is wrong. This is a monopoly clause. Will the hon. member say that a monopoly of unionism, or a monopoly of land, or a monopoly of any other brand is good for the country? I have frequently heard the hon. member who just interjected speak disparagingly of monopolies. The Labour Congress proposes to drive every seeker after employment through the bottleneck of the State Labour Bureau.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: What about the Bill?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Never mind the Bill. The measure introduced in 1924 was more stringent than this.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: You are not speaking about this Bill yet.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: That Bill put the stranglehold on individuals. Under Clause 12 of the present Bill, which provides that no fee is to be paid by the employee, is it not

natural to assume that all private employment brokers will be driven out of their businesses without compensation from the Government, whilst some of them, I understand, have entered into contracts with regard to leasing or renting of premises? The individual worker would then be forced into the State Labour Bureau. Further, is it not reasonable to assume that immediately the employers of Western Australia find that they have to provide all of the fees, whether the amount be 1s. per head or £1, they will establish an employment office of their own? I am having regard to the unionists on this point, and I ask, is it not reasonable to assume that no one will be engaged through the office of the employers unless he is a non-unionist? Certainly no one will find employment through the State Labour Bureau unless he is a member of an industrial union. Will that position serve the interests of the Labour Party? I say it will be to the interest of neither the employer nor the State.

Hon. J. Cornell: That argument applies also to the pastoralists' bureau.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I do not know whether, if the Bill passes, that bureau could be maintained.

Hon. J. Cornell: They do not charge.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I do ask for regard to the position that will arise if the idea underlying the Bill is adopted. It has been said on the other side, "We do not force a man to join a union. If he says, 'I have no money,' we allow him two pays." This means that a man will have a month in which to join, say, the A.W.U., the largest union in the State, the fee for joining being 25s. I do not know that anyone could be called upon to pay 25s. to an employment broker unless a fairly good position were secured for him. Under the Bill, however, the average individual will continue to pay the same amount of money, the only question being whether he will pay it to a union or to an employment broker. If the Bill passes in its present form and eventually there is only one place in Western Australia where labour can secure employment, our friends in Beaufort-street might eventually declare the State Labour Bureau black; and then no employment whatever would be obtainable in Western Australia.

Hon. J. Cornell: The employers might then declare the State Labour Bureau black.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Under Clause 15, Subclause 2 a person who sends to any em-

ployment broker any written statement of fact which is false to the knowledge of that person, and so forth, shall be liable to a fine of £50 or six months' imprisonment. I ask the Honorary Minister, when replying, to state what the penalty is for making a false statement to the State Labour Bureau. I say there is none. What is the reason for the discrimination? Furthermore, the Government are apt to pay the amounts necessary for persons applying at the State Labour Bureau to go to positions found for them. That happens more frequently by far in the State Labour Bureau than in the case of private bureaus. There is the greater reason why the Government, who are going to spend public money in advancing fares to enable applicants to go to the positions found for them, should have truthful statements made to them in regard to applications coming their way. Mr. Lovekin wanted to know the cost of railway fares, etc., advanced by the Government. I have from the Statistical Bureau the total of the fares advanced and the amounts refunded during the last 10 years. I will not quote all the figures but let me take the years 1924-25 and 1925-26. The total number of fares advanced in the former year was 3,875, and their cost was £3,684 11s. 11d., the amount refunded being £2,981, or 83 per cent. In 1925-26 there were 3,465 fares issued at a cost of £3,612 18s. 4d., and there was refunded £2,696, or 75 per cent. During the last six years the percentages have decreased slightly from what they were hitherto, so roughly it may be said they have been fairly well maintained. If we are to have regard that for 25 per cent. of the persons engaged the Government will be called upon to advance a great sum of money, and that the individual who secures employment will pay the same amount to the unions that he now pays for the position, I seriously say I do not think any good purpose is going to be served by passing Clauses 12, 13, 15 and 16 of the Bill. However, I hope the Bill will pass the second reading, and that we shall be able to rectify some of the sections of the parent Act and give members an opportunity to accept or reject the clauses I have alluded to.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan—on amendment—[9.47]: If members propose to amend the Bill in Committee they will find some difficulty, for by the time they have finished there will be very little of it left.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: There will be the machinery clauses.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: But the Bill is so drafted that if we leave the machinery clauses, we shall be leaving a good deal more. The only machinery required is the substitution of "court of sessions" in regard to these licenses, for "the licensing magistrates."

Hon. E. H. Harris: That is very good.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: That can be done in a one-clause Bill prescribing that whenever in the principal Act "licensing magistrates" appear, there shall be substituted the words "court of sessions." Such a one-clause Bill would save us from getting into a good deal of difficulty in striking out parts of clauses containing matter other than machinery. The course I suggest is that we should leave this Bill on the Notice Paper and bring down a one-clause Bill that would cover these machinery clauses. We could put up that Bill as a new Bill and then, under Standing Order 176, we could elect which Bill to go on with. That standing order provides that if more than one Bill dealing with the same subject is on the Notice Paper the Council shall decide which one shall be withdrawn.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Could not the Minister bring down the new Bill?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: That would get over the difficulty, but I take it the Minister is a friend of this Bill and so would stand by it. I do not want to start amending this Bill when we could get all that we require by bringing down a one-clause Bill simply stating that wherever in the principal Act those words I have mentioned are used, the other words shall be substituted. Then we would have two Bills dealing with the same matter before the House and under Standing Order 176 we could decide which to go on with. I suggest that some member who has not yet spoken move the amendment of the debate in order that my proposal might be considered.

On motion by Hon. H. J. Yelland, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.51 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 23rd November, 1927.

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

QUESTION (4)—RAILWAYS.

Trucks held up at Fremantle.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What is the loss, per day, to the Railway Department on the 400 wheat-laden trucks held up at Fremantle by the dispute which has arisen between the lumpers and the A.W.U.? 2, How many trucks, loaded, are being held up at country stations and sidings? 3, Are the department charging demurrage upon trucks so held up? 4, What is the estimated loss to the department to date? 5, What steps are the Government taking to relieve the present position? 6, In view of the position at Fremantle and the loss to the railways, will the Government consider the transferring of wheat by rail to other ports, say Albany, whose harbour will take the largest steamer afloat?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, It is not possible to estimate what the loss is, if any 2, None. 3, Yes. 4, Answered by No. 1. 5, The position is being carefully watched. 6, Wheat is conveyed to the destination to which it is consigned.

Brookton-Dale River project.

Mr. BROWN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is the new survey of the authorised Brookton-Dale River railway completed? 2, If so, when will the Government construct the railway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. Permanent survey is still in progress. 2, Answered by No. 1.