

fiable, the appellant might be made to pay the costs of the appeal.

MR. MORAN: Subclause 3 of Clause 55 apparently gave the board power to impose a fine.

THE PREMIER: Better give power to make him pay the costs.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. MORAN: The striking out of Subclause 2 would be consequential?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 11 to 15—agreed to.

Clause 16—Administrative Division, Professional Division, Clerical Division, General Division:

On motion by MR. MORAN, the words "on the recommendation of the Commissioner" inserted after "Governor" in line 3; and the clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 17—Salaries in Administrative Division:

MR. MORAN suggested an amendment:

That the clause be struck out and the following inserted in lieu: "The officers in the Administrative Division (except in the case of officers paid at a specified rate by virtue of any Act) shall be paid such salaries as may be provided in the Appropriation Act."

Why was the Professional Division included with the Administrative Division in regard to salaries according to the Appropriation Act? Under Clause 17 the Administrative Division were not graded and classified like other portions of the service; but in the Clerical Division there were grade and classification, and by another part of the Bill the Commissioner was allowed to grade and classify the Professional Division.

THE PREMIER: It appeared to be a clerical error.

On motion by the PREMIER, progress reported and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 37 minutes past 10 o'clock, until 7:30 on the next evening.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 19th October, 1904.

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THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 7:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Expenditure of £278,318, details moved for by Dr. Ellis.

ORDER OF BUSINESS, MOTIONS.

MR. THOMAS asked the Premier (without notice): Is to-day set apart for private members' business? and if so, why is Order of the Day No. 10 (Increase of payment to members, adjourned debate on Mr. Henshaw's motion) not put in front of public Bills?

THE SPEAKER: The member could raise the question as a matter of privilege; but he could not anticipate anything on the Notice Paper in any way.

THE PREMIER replied to the question: The debate on the motion of the member for Collie (increase of payment to members) occupied its present position because it had become an Order of the Day and was taking its place with the other Orders of the Day. As far as his experience of parliamentary procedure went, it was the custom, immediately a motion reached the adjournment stage, to allow it to take its place with the other Orders of the Day. In this matter he had simply acted on the precedent created during his past term in Parliament.

MR. THOMAS: The Premier could alter the Orders of the Day.

TRANS-AUSTRALIAN RAILWAY, LANDS ADJACENT TO BE RESERVED.

THE PREMIER (Hon. H. Daglish): I move that the Standing Orders be sus-

pending, for the purpose of enabling me to move the following motion:—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should at once reserve from sale all rural Crown lands for 25 miles on each side of the proposed route of the Trans-Australian Railway, between Kalgoorlie and the eastern boundary of the State, with a view to facilitating the construction of the said railway; and that the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth be so advised.

MR. GREGORY: I second the motion.

Question passed, and the Standing Orders suspended.

THE PREMIER: I now move the motion I have just read to the House; and in doing this I may state, for the information of hon. members, that at the end of last week I received a telegraphic communication from Mr. J. M. Fowler, the member for Perth in the House of Representatives, pointing out that the reservation of land along this line of railway would facilitate the carrying of the Survey Bill through the Federal Parliament. This telegram was immediately referred to the Minister for Lands, and he recommended that Cabinet should endorse the temporary reservation of land from sale along that proposed line. Cabinet at once adopted his proposal; so that at the present moment the Government have already temporarily reserved from sale land along that route. Yesterday I received, too late to bring it before the House, the following telegram from Sir John Forrest:—

Re Railway Survey.—Please consider whether you can approve and pass through Parliament the following resolution:—"That the Government of the Commonwealth should be informed that this Government agrees to reserve from sale all rural Crown lands for 25 miles on each side of the proposed route for the railway, from Kalgoorlie to the eastern boundary of the State, for such time as the Commonwealth Government may consider necessary, with a view to such lands being available for negotiation between this Government and the Commonwealth Government, should the construction of the railway be approved by the Commonwealth Parliament." If you could do this at once, it would greatly help us in getting the Survey Bill through. In my opinion, there is not the least objection to your doing this, as it will not interfere with leasing for mining or pastoral purposes, or with selling of town lots. If you approve, wire to the Prime Minister and to me at once.

I have not felt justified in moving the motion precisely on the lines suggested by that telegram but it seemed to me

desirable that the Commonwealth authorities should be informed of the precise position, and should be aware that this land had been reserved. Likewise it seemed strongly desirable that the Government in their action should have the sanction of Parliament; because when the sanction of Parliament has been given to the course the Government have taken, it will be necessary, before the reservations can be withdrawn, having been made with the sanction of Parliament, that the sanction to withdraw shall be given by Parliament. The reservation will be of a temporary character, and will require to be undone by Parliament instead of being liable to be undone by the Ministry of the day. I think members will agree, therefore, that there is considerable justification for this course. We must recognise that there is strong need for action of this description, seeing that the same request for the reservation of the lands has come from two of our representatives who sit on different sides of the Federal Parliament. It is obvious, therefore, that the request has not been made for the purpose of serving either one party or the other. It no doubt was required, apart from party purposes. In regard to the proposal that we should make this reservation for such time as the Commonwealth Government desire, I am not prepared to recommend or propose the carrying of a motion to that effect, neither am I prepared to recommend the House to carry a motion inviting the opening up of negotiations in regard to this land by the Commonwealth Government; but I wish to point out to anyone favouring that course that the mere reservation of the land will enable the opening up of negotiations by the Commonwealth Government, should that Government desire to take steps in that direction, and at the same time the motion will not commit us to dealing with this land in any particular way. In view of the importance to the State of the carrying of the survey motion, and in view of the similar importance of this great railway following, I hope members on both sides of the House will agree to fall in with this proposition. Should it be carried, I purpose moving that the resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Council, and their concurrence

requested in regard to it. I have pleasure in submitting the motion to the consideration of the House.

MR. H. GREGORY (Menzies): I have much pleasure in seconding and supporting the motion introduced by the Premier, and I fully concur that it would be hardly advisable at this early stage to pass such a motion as that suggested to the Premier. I think the motion which he has moved will better meet the case. When members remember that all this area will be open for leasing or for mineral or pastoral purposes—

MR. BURGESS: It has already been reserved from that.

MR. GREGORY: Oh no. There is no intention, so far as the motion is concerned, of preventing within the reserved area any applications for mineral leases. Whether the Government have already taken action with the view of preventing pastoral leases being taken up, I do not know. The passing of the motion will have no effect of that kind at all. It is to prevent any of the land being sold; and I think under any circumstances, whether we are prepared to negotiate with the Commonwealth Government or not—and as far as I am concerned I would be pleased that the Government of the day should, at a later stage, negotiate to some extent with the Commonwealth Government—I do not think we should be justified in passing a motion through the House that the Government should negotiate at this stage. In any case, it will be a wise procedure on our part to reserve all land along the route from sale by the Government; and I hope members on this side will cordially indorse the action of the Premier and enable the motion to be carried.

MR. P. J. LYNCH (Mount Leonora): Will the reservation apply to the permanent line that is to be constructed, or merely to the survey?

THE PREMIER: It applies to the land already surveyed. I cannot state precisely the line. The motion relates to the sale of the land, not the leasing of it.

DR. ELLIS (Coolgardie): Has the line of survey been arranged yet? As far as I can make out, there are two routes under discussion for the survey at the present moment. There is the route passing close to Eucla, and another route passing a few miles inland. In reserving

the land, the Government will require to have some idea whether they will reserve on both routes or whether they will reserve on only one. Personally I am in favour of reserving all the land until we know what we are doing, because any land that may be taken up will be purchased for speculative purposes. I think it is advisable that all the land along these routes should be absolutely reserved from sale. I should reserve all that section of the seacoast, not limiting the area to 25 miles. So far as this particular section of the State is concerned, if there is a chance of a seaboard being formed, it would be wrong to sell the land at the present moment, as it may be more valuable than we know now. There are two lines which the survey may take; consequently if there is no interference with the mineral leasing, which I personally look on as very important, I can see no harm in reserving the whole of the south-eastern section of the State from sale at the present time, for at present any land which may be sold there will be bought for speculative purposes.

MR. A. A. HORAN (Yilgarn): In common with other members of the House I may say that no motion could be passed which would give me greater pleasure than the motion now before members, and I wish to ask the Premier a detail in connection with it. The motion states that all land within 25 miles of Kalgoorlie shall be reserved. When the two trial surveys were made they originated from Kanowna. The Premier states that all land 25 miles from Kalgoorlie shall be reserved from sale.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: On either side.

MR. HORAN: That is assuming that the line starts from Kalgoorlie, but the original survey showed that it would start from Kanowna.

MR. A. E. THOMAS (Dundas): I do not think we are taking enough distance southward, on the side of the proposed survey. I have read all the reports that have been written on the subject, and there is no doubt that the line of route will be through the country in which there is the best chance of settlement and of a return for the expenditure necessary for the building of the line. For that reason I would like to see the

Premier amend his motion to include a greater distance, say 50 miles south of Kalgoorlie, because there is practically no land that would be alienated for agricultural or pastoral purposes 25 miles on either side of Kalgoorlie until one approaches near Eucla or the coast. If that line at any time be made farther south—and there is a possibility of that being done in keeping with the report of Sir John Forrest and Mr. Mason on that country—then it would be necessary to grant power to the Government to reserve farther land than they have taken to themselves in the motion. For that reason also I would like to see the Premier extend the area farther south from Kalgoorlie. Twenty-five miles north of the route is enough, but let it be 50 miles south, and he will include then the whole of the country likely to be enhanced in value because of the survey and the railway being built. I hope also that the Government will not, in this connection, continue the policy adopted by their predecessors in office by blocking that country from pastoral lease. Goodness knows that with the incursion of the rabbits those people have had enough difficulty to contend with in the way of their pastoral leases; and unless something is done soon, if people are going to do any good with that land at all, and if that known splendid pastoral country is to be of any use to Western Australia, the people will have to take it up and fence it within the next few years. Let men have the chance of getting some return for their money. The late Government blocked pastoral leases from being granted in the neighbourhood of Eucla. The then Premier, Mr. James, stated that the Government did so on account of the proposed Transcontinental Railway, and that they wanted to reserve that land and not allow anyone to take it up for speculative purposes. We are told now this does not refer to pastoral leases, and I would like an assurance from the Premier that as far as that pastoral country at present lying idle in the Eucla division is concerned, they are not going to block settlement, and if people have the courage to go there and pay for a pastoral lease, they will be allowed to do it, so that the country will be of some good. I would like him also

to fall in with my suggestion that country inland is going to be protected against sale, and that he will make the motion stipulate 50 miles south of the route from Kalgoorlie to Eucla, instead of 25 miles as proposed.

THE PREMIER (in reply): I may point out that this motion is introduced to Parliament at the request of one of our representatives in the Federal House, who himself has specified 25 miles. We have therefore adopted in the motion the recommendation made to us. We want this motion to effect the purpose aimed at. In regard to the distance of 25 or 50 miles, I am quite willing to assure members who are in any doubt on the subject that the Government have no intention whatever of agreeing to the sale of land—[MEMBERS: Hear, hear]—on that line of route. I may tell members that the reservation the Government made on the recommendation of its Minister for Lands was a reservation of 40 miles, and not 25; but as this telegram has been written for a specific purpose, and the motion is introduced to serve that purpose, the precise distance named in the telegram has been adopted. In reply to the member for Dundas, I may say the question of pastoral leases is not affected in any way by this motion; and should applications of the nature indicated reach the Government, they will be dealt with on their merits. I do not think it is necessary to add anything to that statement.

Question put and passed.

On farther motion by the PREMIER, resolution transmitted by message to the Legislative Council, and concurrence desired therein.

MOTION—HARDWOODS INQUIRY, FOREIGN DEMAND FALLING-OFF.

MR. A. J. WILSON (Forrest) moved:

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the causes affecting the falling-off in the foreign demand for local hardwoods. He said: On the face of it, such a motion should commend itself to this Chamber. We are all unfortunately familiar with the very serious falling-off which has taken place in the demand for local hardwoods in foreign markets; and in consequence unfortunately of that falling off in the demand, between 750 and 1,000 men who had been employed in this industry have been thrown out of work.

Certainly some of these have been engaged in other temporary employment, which for the time being has somewhat relieved the strain that would otherwise obtain in the labour market. Many of them found their way down the Great Southern line to the bark-splitting industry going on there at the present time, but we have always to bear in mind that this industry can only be carried on for a period of about six months in the year and, as I am reminded, probably not quite so long as that. The time, I understand, will cease during the month of November, and consequently when that takes place we may expect to again see a very considerable number of men thrown into the ranks of the unemployed of this State. We regret the falling-off in the demand for our local timber and the consequent dearth of employment which has followed in the wake of that falling-off. I think members of this House will be agreed that the timber industry is by no means one of the least important industries of this State, and if we can possibly do anything to ascertain what has been responsible for this falling-off in the trade, it is the duty of the House to do so, and, having found it out, to try and institute a remedy for the purpose of overcoming the evils. Some have suggested—but it is a view which I personally do not agree with—that the people controlling the industry at the present time have simply adopted these tactics for the purpose of securing some ulterior object. It does not seem to me feasible that a company which has such large interests as this company, would be guilty of closing down their revenue-earning resources merely for the purpose of satisfying some small or insignificant caprice, or for the purpose of doing some injury to the State, or to the credit of the State, or to the workers engaged in that industry. We must always bear in mind that the capital represented in these mills which are lying idle is something enormous, and the number of horses to be kept by the company and fed is also a very considerable item in regard to this matter. There may be some revival in trade, and in consequence of an anticipated or prospective revival it is not possible for a big company of this kind to dispose of the very large stock which it has to maintain in various parts for the purpose of carrying on its business. Viewing

it from that standpoint, it seems to me we are not justified in coming to the conclusion that what has been done in regard to this matter is some trick on the part of the "combine." But at the same time the seriousness of the whole situation is so apparent and so appalling that it does seem to me that we are justified in at least making some movement with a view to inquiring into the cause of this condition of affairs, and I am honestly of opinion that the best way to do that is to appoint a select committee of this House for the purpose of making investigation as to the situation, and for that committee to make recommendations to this House. I am not in a position to say it would be possible for a select committee to find out all it is necessary to know with regard to this matter. That will be a matter on which the House will be advised by the committee appointed. It may be necessary to go farther and collect certain evidence probably beyond the limits of this State. It may be necessary to go farther and appoint a royal commission. It is well, perhaps, to remind members that although there was a royal commission in regard to the timber industry some time ago, that commission did not deal with this particular phase of the question, because this phase of the question has arisen since that commission sent in its report, and consequently was one which could not and did not engage the attention of that commission. It may be that a select committee will, at any rate, find out the reason why this falling-off has taken place. It may be they will find that the falling-off in trade has been occasioned by the fact that there has been excessive competition in hardwoods from the Eastern States or other portions of the world which are produced at a lower cost and placed on the different markets at a lower cost than we can produce our own hardwoods at in this State. That may be found to be the reason, and in that event inquiries may be instituted for the purpose of discovering whether, for instance, the high freights which are said to be charged for the carriage of timber on our railways, or the high wharfage dues which are charged for the handling of timber at our different ports, are not, in some measure, responsible for preventing these large orders coming to

this State, and so affording employment to people in the State.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: They have not been increased, have they?

MR. A. J. WILSON: That may be so, but it does not necessarily follow that because they have not been increased they are not too high. I am not saying they are too high. I am saying the committee may find its way clear and justifiable to make some recommendation with regard to that phase of the question. I am not in a position to say what is the cause of the falling-off in trade. If I were, I should not want the House to appoint a select committee to inquire into the matter, but should simply place it fairly and squarely before the Government, and expect them to take action. The matter is not a new one, but has been before the country for a considerable time. I have approached the Government and I know the Government have been doing all they possibly can to try and remedy the evils which have followed the closing down of mills in this State; but with the meagre information at their disposal it has, so far, been impossible to really institute any effective remedy for the evils existing at the present time. If a committee were appointed to go into this matter, it would be able to find out, by getting evidence, the actual origin of the whole trouble, and would also be able to make recommendations to this House and to the Government of the day, so that they may deal with the evils which, I am pleased to say, have, for the time being, been more or less minimised owing to other temporary avenues of employment being open, but which are bound to occur when those temporary avenues cease to employ the men at present engaged. I therefore formally move the motion.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND JUSTICE (Hon. R. Hastie): I do not intend to oppose the appointment of the committee; and if they can accomplish any of the objects indicated by the motion, I shall be delighted to hear their report. Candidly, I must admit that I do not anticipate too much from their inquiries. That idea seems to have occurred to the mover also; for he said the committee might have to be turned into a royal commission, and that the commission might not be able to get the

desired information in this country, and might have to send abroad for it. The position seems to be that the largest supplier of West Australian timber is the Millars company. The company have their head office in London, from which most of the West Australian orders are received; their representatives here are solely dependent on the information they get from the head office; so I feel certain that these representatives are not in a position to give us all the information the hon. member desires. However, if he anticipates that any useful information will be obtained from the select committee, I hope the House will appoint a good committee, who will try to report as soon as possible. I should like to refer to one remark of the hon. member—that the reason our timber companies cannot compete in the world's markets may be our excessive railway freights. I may say that was one of the points dealt with by the Forestry Commission, and by myself in particular; for when on that commission I tried my best to ascertain whether any other country in the world had lower timber freights than Western Australia. But I could not find any such country; and I think the hon. member will be forced to the same conclusion as I, that our railway timber freights are the lowest in the world. A member mentions coal. Our coal freights are not the lowest; for some other countries charge the same. As to wharfage charges, I am unable to say whether ours are on a par with those of other countries; but I am bound to admit that I have not hitherto heard them seriously objected to. However, the information obtained on inquiry will probably be useful to us; and I hope we shall have it as soon as possible.

MR. N. J. MOORE (Bunbury): I agree with the mover that the falling-off in the timber trade is a serious matter; and I am glad also to hear that the hon. member does not indorse the opinion advanced that certain mills have been closed to satisfy the caprice of one company. I think it is recognised by all who take an interest in the timber trade that the falling-off is largely due to the competition of some of the new countries now being opened up—the Philippine Islands, Borneo, and other places—and in my opinion to the greatly improved

machinery now in use at Vancouver and other parts of America, and no doubt to the big stocks in hand. It is due also to the fact that English vestries and councils are not using so much paving timber as they used some years ago. At the same time, I should like to advance the opinion that our timber freights are now too high. Two years ago the freights were greatly increased; and I think, considering the present state of the market, they may well be reduced. Moreover, the wharfage charge is out of all proportion to the cost of earning it. For instance, timber is brought some 25 or 30 miles to the port for about 2s. 6d. per ton; and yet 2s. 6d. per ton is charged for hauling that same timber one mile from the railway station to the ship's slings. That is about 3s. 6d. per load.

MR. DIAMOND: Does that include wharfage?

MR. N. J. MOORE: That is wharfage. In most places, with the exception of Fremantle, where the wharfage dues go to the Harbour Trust, they go to the Railway Department, and are credited to the department and not to the port which earns the wharfage.

MEMBER: The railways are now run on business lines.

MR. N. J. MOORE: I think an alteration should be made, so that where wharfage is earned by any particular port, that port should be credited with the wharfage.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: And then you would not ask for a decrease in the wharfage charges?

MR. N. J. MOORE: Yes; if they were so high as to affect the timber trade. As to the company who have closed certain mills, it is well known to a considerable number of people that the company have not only closed mills, but have reduced the salaries of all their principal employees; thus showing a recognition of the absolute necessity for trading on the most economical basis.

LABOUR MEMBER: Managers' salaries as well?

MR. N. J. MOORE: Yes; on a sliding scale: 20 per cent. off the £1,000 salary, down to three per cent. off the £150 salary.

DR. ELLIS: What about the directors?

MR. N. J. MOORE: I believe they have altogether dispensed with local

directors. I understand the local director has resigned. From this it is evident that the company intend to do all they can to reduce expenses. I do not know that the select committee will be able to get very much evidence; but the committee can do no harm, and therefore I hope the motion will meet with support.

Question put and passed.

Select committee appointed, comprising Mr. Hayward, Mr. Horan, Mr. Keyser, and Mr. N. J. Moore, with Mr. A. J. Wilson as mover; to report on the 3rd November.

MOTION—COAL REPORTED AT CARNARVON, INQUIRY.

MR. H. GREGORY (Menzies) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, a Commission should be appointed to inquire into the reported discovery of coal in the Carnarvon district.

There was no desire that a Royal Commission should be appointed; but a magistrate with powers to take evidence on oath, or a geologist with the same powers, should be sent to the Carnarvon district because of certain rumours in reference to the discovery of coal in that district. He was first informed that a Government bore when being put down at Carnarvon had passed through a rich seam of coal at a depth of 1,000 feet. There were rumours also that there had been a discovery of coal in a bore put down by Mr. Butcher; and there was a farther report, which was made very public, that some distance inland there had been a discovery of coal at a shallow depth. Knowing that wonderfully rich iron deposits exist in that country, and also that the district was carboniferous, it would be wise if some special information were obtained by the Government, not only in reference to the reported discoveries, but also in reference to the mineral wealth of the district. It was his intention to withdraw the motion on an assurance from the Minister for Mines that at the earliest opportunity a geologist would be sent up to Carnarvon with a view to confirming or repudiating the rumours that had been current some time. Efforts were being made to induce people to invest money on these reported discoveries, and it should be within the province of the Mines Department to make inquiries into the matter as speedily

as possible. It was known that the Geological Department was short-handed at present, and that it would be impossible to make a systematic investigation of the district now; but having heard from the Government Geologist that in the ranges in the Carnarvon district there were the richest iron deposits in the world, and knowing that the country was carboniferous, he thought we should have definite information with regard to these reported discoveries at the earliest opportunity. After the Minister had replied, with the concurrence of the House he would withdraw the motion.

MR. A. J. DIAMOND seconded the motion.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. R. Hastie) was pleased that the member for Menzies did not propose that a Royal Commission should be appointed to consider the question. We should not be called upon to appoint Royal Commissions upon every question that came up, more especially when it was a question regarding geology. At the present time people in a dozen places in the State were anxious to get the Government Geologist to go and tell them whether they had coal anywhere within their borders; but, obviously, it would be impossible to send a geologist to every district, unless we had in the service of the State at least four or five additional geologists. In reference to Carnarvon, some boring had recently been carried on there. One bore went down to a depth of 2,474 feet, and the Geological Department said in reference to this: "The records of the strata passed through by the bore up to a depth of 2,474 feet have been filed in the office. No coal, however, was met with, or strata containing carboniferous matter." Yet the member for Menzies assured us that there was a report that, at a depth of 1,000 feet, this bore went through a seam which was seven feet thick.

MR. GREGORY denied having said so. The Minister had evidently heard the report also.

THE MINISTER had heard the same report from the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Butcher), who had farther informed him that he heard the report from Warden Finnerty, of Kalgoorlie. Warden Finnerty, on being asked for a report, replied to the effect that his informant

evidently considered the information to be correct, but that this informant was then outside the State. The warden evidently did not attach any particular credence to the report, because he only assured us that the man who told him evidently believed it. It need not be pointed out to those who understood deep sinking or boring that it was practicably impossible to go through a 7ft. seam at a depth of 1,000ft. without anybody knowing about it. It was inconceivable; and if there were anything in it, it was that the bore went through something nearly as black as coal; but he did not think it was anything of the nature of coal. There were other instances in which substances resembling coal and indications of coal had been found in the Carnarvon district; and he had already promised the member for Gascoyne that, whenever a geologist was available, one would be sent to the district to see if there was any reasonable prospect of obtaining coal of a good character. The same step would be taken regarding other districts when there was an opportunity of sending a geologist to them. We had a tremendous area of ground that might contain coal, and several districts had already been visited by a geologist. Carnarvon was a district to which a geologist would be sent as soon as ever his services were available. Mr. Maitland, the Government Geologist, would be back in Perth by the end of the month, and he would be consulted to see if there might be any chance of a discovery being made in the Carnarvon district, and also as to when a geologist would be available for that district. He hoped the member for Menzies would accept this assurance and withdraw his motion.

MR. H. GREGORY (in reply): The assurance was all that he desired. Apparently the Minister knew all about the reports which were circulated about the House. A report was assiduously circulated some years ago when a bore was being put down to find artesian water and to prove if the country were carboniferous or not, it being stated that a discovery of coal had been made, but had not been reported to the Government. There was no desire for a Royal Commission to be appointed. He simply wished, if any credence were being given to the reports, that a magistrate with power to take

evidence on oath should go up and find out if there were any truth in the reports. It was the duty of the Government, when reports were spread about and endeavours were made to induce the public to invest their money, to make investigations. Knowing what value to Australia the discovery of coal in this district would mean, the Government should assist prospectors in sending a geologist to the district. He asked leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

PAPERS—CATTLE IMPORTED OVER NORTHERN BORDER, ADDITIONAL PAPERS.

MR. E. P. HENSHAW (Collie) moved:

That there be laid on the table all correspondence between Mr. James and the Audit Department in connection with importations of cattle by Messrs. Forrest, Emanuel, & Co. over the Northern Border, on which duty was recovered and subsequently refunded.

On a previous occasion he had asked for certain papers in connection with this matter, and expected that all the correspondence would be laid on the table. Certain papers were laid on the table, and on examination he found that the file had been divided into two sections and only one section dealing with a particular phase of the question was laid on the table. He desired the second section to be laid on the table; and that section dealt with the protest that was made by the Auditor General against the refund of certain duties. The Audit Department, during 1902, first raised the question as to the evasion of certain duties on the importation of cattle. The matter was brought before Parliament and a select committee appointed to inquire into the question. That committee made investigations and reported that it was a matter for the Crown law authorities to take up. The report was adopted, and in December, 1902, the Crown law authorities recovered from two of the firms—Forrest, Emanuel, & Co., and Connor, Doherty, and Durack—a sum approximating, in round figures, to £500. The strange part of the matter was that almost immediately after the amount had been recovered by the Crown law authorities a portion of

the amount, roughly one-half, was refunded to the firms named. The Auditor General made a spirited protest and questioned the legality of the refund. He (Mr. Henshaw) did not know if that had a direct bearing on the question or not, but shortly after this the Auditor General was retired. Seeing that the Auditor General was responsible to Parliament, members should have a full knowledge of the correspondence that took place between the Auditor General and the late Premier (Mr. James) in connection with the matter. Members had a right to know for what reason the money was refunded; therefore he moved the motion.

MR. W. NELSON (Hannans) seconded the motion.

THE SPEAKER: The House had already ordered that all papers in connection with the matter be laid on the table. If that had not been done, the hon. member's proper course was to bring forward the matter as a question of privilege. The motion could not be put, as already a similar motion had been adopted by the House.

MR. HENSHAW: There were two phases of the question, and the papers having been divided into two files, he had expected the whole of them.

THE SPEAKER: The House had already ordered that the papers be laid on the table. If the hon. member had reason to believe that some papers in connection with the matter had not been laid on the table, he should have brought the matter forward in the way indicated. Under the Standing Orders, the motion could not be put.

THE PREMIER asked leave to make a statement. When the previous motion on the subject was carried, he in ordinary course called for the papers from the department where they chanced to be, and having obtained them he placed them on the table of the House in the usual fashion. The member for Collie subsequently informed him that the file was not complete. He told the hon. member that to the best of his knowledge the file was complete, and that he had already laid on the table all the papers in the matter that had been brought to him. He was not aware of the existence of any papers other than those forwarded

to him. However he had promised, if the member would drop him a line, to look into the question and endeavour to ascertain if there were other papers relevant to the issue. The hon. member did write to him, and inquiries were made which resulted in another file of papers being forthcoming. These papers arose out of the original papers that had already been laid on the table, but they were regarded as not being relevant to the issue out of which the original papers arose. The papers were in his possession, and he had informed the hon. member that he was willing, without farther motion, to lay them on the table and intended to do so. The hon. member however had already given notice of the motion, but he (the Premier) was not aware of that at the time. He recognised that members, wherever they might sit, had the full right, when the House demanded the production of papers, to see that they were produced. He wished to make an explanation in regard to the statement that possibly this correspondence had something to do with the retirement of the late Auditor General. He (the Premier) was not responsible for the retirement of that officer; but he did not for a moment hold the opinion that the correspondence which he was about to place on the table in any way led up to or was connected with the retirement of the late Auditor General. It was his duty to make that statement on behalf of the gentleman who preceded him in office. He would hand the papers to the Clerk, to be placed on the table.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Schedule of amendments made by the Legislative Council considered.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. BATH in the Chair; the MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND LABOUR in charge of the Bill.

No. 1.—Clause 2, Subclause (2), line 4, strike out “twenty-five” and insert “one hundred”:

THE MINISTER moved that the amendment be not agreed to. In the event of the amount being increased from £25 to £100 that would mean an increase

in the contributions of members of friendly societies. Some friendly societies might elect to pay the higher amount, which would cause competition amongst other societies, and in the event of many claims being made, a society might not be able to meet those claims; therefore it was not desirable to provide for the larger amount. It seemed strange that two years ago the Legislative Council passed a measure somewhat similar to the present Bill providing that only one amount of £25 should be paid; while the present Bill provided that the amount of £25 could be paid not from one fund alone, but from different funds. The amendment would necessarily mean that the contributions would be increased, and if contributions were increased in friendly societies at present, that would prevent a considerable number of members from remaining in those societies: therefore it would not be wise to increase the contributions.

MR. GREGORY: One could not understand the objections raised by the Minister in saying that if this amendment were allowed to remain, a lot of people would not be able to join friendly societies. Friendly societies could make the payment as small as they chose. If the Minister would suggest a compromise, he would be only too pleased to assist the hon. gentleman, but, if not, members must try to have the Council's amendment carried.

THE MINISTER: The matter was gone into very carefully by the Registrar of Friendly Societies. In no case had request been made by friendly societies to increase the amount beyond the £25 specified. The intention was to put the amount in the Act instead of leaving it in the regulations. Provision had already been made for friendly societies to have two funds if they chose—a widows and orphans fund as well as a burial fund.

Question (not to agree) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	20
Noes	...	...	...	16
				—
Majority for ...	...	...	...	4
				—

AYES.

Mr. Angwin
Mr. Bolton
Mr. Daglish
Mr. Ellis
Mr. Hastie
Mr. Heitmann
Mr. Hanahaw
Mr. Hicks
Mr. Holman
Mr. Horn
Mr. Keyser
Mr. Lynch
Mr. Moran
Mr. Needham
Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Troy
Mr. A. J. Wilson
Mr. F. F. Wilson
Mr. Gill (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Brown
Mr. Burgess
Mr. Carson
Mr. Cowcher
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Hayward
Mr. Layman
Mr. McLarty
Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Frank Wilson
Mr. Gordon (Teller).

Question thus passed, and the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 2—Clause 2, Subclause 2, line 5, strike out "fifteen" and insert "fifty":

THE MINISTER moved that the amendment be not agreed to, for the same reasons as already given.

Question passed, and the Council's amendment not agreed to.

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

Committee of three prepared and brought up reasons for not agreeing to the Council's amendments.

Reasons adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

PRIVATE BILL MESSAGE — KALGOORLIE AND BOULDER RACING CLUBS.

Message received from the Governor, giving consent as regarded the interest of His Majesty or the Government, for the House to deal with the Bill as it might think fit.

Message to be considered when the Bill was before Committee.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL. IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from the previous day; HON. W. C. ANGWIN (honorary Minister) in charge of the Bill.

Postponed Clause 11—Repeal of Subsection 2 of Section 94 (voting in absence):

THE PREMIER: The clause dealt with absent voting. The member for Bunbury (Mr. N. J. Moore) having given notice of an amendment, he (the Premier) promised to recast that amendment; and accordingly he had placed on the Notice Paper a proposed new clause. Subsection 2 of Section 94 of the Act

provided simply that the returning officer should cause a certain number of voting papers to be printed in the form described in the 8th schedule. If the Committee favoured the new clause on the Notice Paper as the sole provision for absent voting, they should pass Clause 11 now in the Bill. Virtually the new clause would not permit of absent voting, but of voting by persons able to attend before the returning officer between nomination day and election day. If the present system of absent voting were to be retained, Clause 11 must be struck out.

MR. KEYSER: The returning officer should be given power to appoint a deputy.

THE PREMIER: Under the principal Act, he had that power.

MR. N. J. MOORE accepted the Premier's new clause. This provided that persons wishing to vote before the day of election must vote in the municipality. By the present system an absentee could send his vote from a distance.

MR. GREGORY: Better pass the clause, and deal with details when discussing absent voting.

Clause (as in the Bill) put and passed.

Postponed Clause 21—Amendment of Section 323 (system of valuation):

MR. BROWN moved as an amendment:

That Subclause (a) be struck out.

With the Government proposal to rate on the unimproved value he entirely agreed; but unless they promised that this should be the sole mode of rating, he would oppose them. He wanted to strike out the alternative (annual value) system of valuation.

THE PREMIER opposed the amendment. If the hon. member wished the Bill to become law, he should allow municipalities to choose either of the two systems. The Government desired to give municipalities full power to govern themselves, and the clause was in accord with the principle; but we must avoid the danger of carrying a clause which might not be obviously applicable to some few municipalities. There were a few municipalities where rating on unimproved values could not be successfully applied; and as these municipalities informed us that they could not carry

into effect this principle, we should make provision to meet their cases. Several municipalities had made strong representations in favour of obtaining optional powers of rating; and he could not shut his ears to these representations when providing machinery to meet the case of all municipalities.

MR. MORAN: If the system was a good one, surely it could not be incompatible to make it apply everywhere.

THE PREMIER was of the same opinion; but the municipalities had asked for an option.

MR. MORAN: That objection was raised to every financial alteration in legislation.

THE PREMIER: The best thing was to have an object lesson; and those municipalities who could apply rating on unimproved value successfully would provide an object lesson to the other municipalities. All municipalities had been consulted with regard to the principle, and many were willing to adopt it; but others asked that the system should be made optional. The Geraldton council very strongly advised this, and the Mt. Malcolm municipality recognised that the principle should be optional, while the Municipal Conference recommended that it should be optional. In the circumstances it would be injudicious to lay down a hard-and-fast rule. During last Parliament a measure providing for optional rating on unimproved values for roads boards passed the Assembly; but very strong objection was raised by the member for Boulder against the provision for rating on unimproved land values, on the ground that even the option provided in the Bill would find disfavour in another place. The measure passed through another place, but it was doubtful whether it would have done so had unimproved land value rating been compulsory. Similarly, in this Bill we should insert the option, so that the measure should find acceptance in another place.

MR. A. J. DIAMOND supported the amendment. He simply carried out the ideas which had governed the best part of his life. In South Australia he had helped in the fight on this question, and had never seen any reason to alter his view. He believed in the system of rating on unimproved values, and could not help thinking that the Labour party

were making a mistake in attempting to alter one of the planks of their platform. They should stick to their guns. He could not see how they could agree to the option even if they carried it. Objection to the principle was only raised by a few municipalities who did not think the rate of 4d. in the pound would balance their revenues; but an amendment to increase the amount beyond 4d. could be passed, for a municipality need not make use of the full amount fixed. On the other hand, it would not be well to make municipalities abide by a small amount. Rating on improvements was a vicious principle, and a discouragement to enterprise.

MR. R. G. BURGESS: What was the good of building houses that were not wanted?

MR. DIAMOND: There was no objection to the owner of land not building; but the owner should pay the same taxation as the man who did build houses.

MR. BURGESS opposed the amendment. Rating on unimproved values would not work satisfactorily in the country. A man might get a good corner block and spend £1,000 on it in building an hotel or a store; but surely the land all round, which was not required for buildings, should not be taxed. People should not be compelled to put up houses when there was no use for them. It would be better to leave the clause as it stood, and allow municipalities to tax on improvements if they thought it better to do so. It appeared that the idea of taxing unimproved land values was to compel people to put up buildings where they were not required.

MR. C. J. MORAN: It would give York a nasty jar with its wheat fields in the main street.

MR. BURGESS: It would also affect mining towns. It would work unreasonably in Menzies, he was informed.

MR. N. J. MOORE: Rating on unimproved values in municipalities was not a new system. Provision was made in paragraph (f) of Subclause 1 of Clause 24, by which the annual value of unimproved land was to be taken at not less than $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and not more than 10 per cent. on the capital value. He would point out the difference that would accrue to the revenue of a municipality by

adopting the two systems. The member for Perth said that 2d. in the pound would be ample for Perth to bring the revenue to what it was under the present system.

MR. H. BROWN: Too much.

MR. N. J. MOORE: On a block valued at £100 the revenue at 2d. in the pound on unimproved value would be 16s. 8d. Under the present system, 10 per cent. of the capital value would be £10, and the revenue at 1s. 6d. in the pound would be 15s. So there was provision under the optional clause to get at the man who did nothing with his land. That man could be rated at 10 per cent. on the capital value.

MR. MORAN: Was it 10 per cent. or $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.?

MR. N. J. MOORE: It was $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and not exceeding 10 per cent.

MR. MORAN: What was it in the old Act?

MR. N. J. MOORE: Not less than $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The person who would be affected if we insisted on unimproved land values would very often be the business man who could very well afford to pay an annual value.

MR. MORAN: Why should a man who had a business pay?

MR. N. J. MOORE: Under the present rate the small man who owned a block of land of the value of £30 had to pay 3s. 4d., the minimum rate, but under the unimproved capital value system such a man would pay 10s. A municipality had to derive revenue from the small man, also from the man who owned unimproved property in the centre of the town or adjacent to business premises. It was quite right to tax these persons, but there was provision to tax these individuals under the optional clause. Take the case of an hotel which at present was producing £35 15s.; under the unimproved system, that hotel at 4d. in the pound would produce a revenue of about £16, there being a difference of £19, which amount would have to be made up from the small man and the man who had an unimproved property in the centre of the town. The man who owned moderately improved property would not be affected in any way. He (Mr. Moore) had worked out the system in regard to several blocks, and he found that one block not improved or built upon to any extent, of the annual value of

£300, was rated at £22 10s.; while on the unimproved system, with a capital value of £200, that property would bring in £33. In that case the unimproved system was a good one. He was thoroughly in accord with the argument of the Premier that if municipalities had to find the money they should have the right to say by what system they would raise it.

MR. MORAN: The party now in power unanimously, and other members individually, had preached the doctrine for years that one of the worst principles to-day in taxation was to tax industry in the form of buildings on land. We were delegating the power of the Chamber to the creatures of the Chamber to do right or wrong. Was it right or wrong to adopt the unimproved principle? The Labour party said it was right because it prevented land speculation, but they would not enact it; the consequence being that in a town like York there were wheat fields in the main streets, and the town was scattered over an extent of miles necessitating miles of streets where quarter miles would do, distributing services of all kinds, and the greatest drawback to sanitation and complete buildings existed. People held on to big blocks in the towns of Western Australia, mostly in the older towns, and would not carry out any improvements, while other people who had to live were forced into the suburbs without streets and lights to get land, at the same time land speculators holding half of a town and growing wheat upon it. Members were placed in a very illogical position.

MR. H. BROWN: We had the assurance of the Premier that he did not intend to stand by the plank of the political Labour party and vote solely for the unimproved land values, but he (Mr. Brown) intended to vote for the principle that the disciples of Tom Mann believed in. At present the municipality of Perth raised £27,727 7s. 6d., and with a rate of one penny and eleven-sixteenths in the £ it would only remove the sum of £487 11s. 2d. If the unimproved value system were adopted it would be the greatest relief to the workers, at all events of Perth. Those persons occupying large blocks of land with small tenements upon them would contribute in a greater degree. Take the

north and east wards of Perth, which were essentially the homes of the workers. In every case the adoption of the unimproved land value system would be of benefit to the workers, for the contributions would be considerably reduced. In the north ward there were properties rented at 14s. 6d. a week, the annual value being fixed at £23 on a block of land worth £110. The contribution at the present time would be 34s. 6d. on a 1s. 6d. rate, while on the unimproved system the contribution would drop to 15s. 6d. In other cases where the rents were 18s. 6d. a week, with the annual value fixed at £29 a year and houses being built on blocks worth £80, the rate would drop from £2 3s. 6d. to 11s. 3d. In the south ward there were villas rented at 50s. a week—but nearly all these properties were occupied by the owners themselves, therefore it was hard to arrive at the rental value—and in several cases these villas were valued at £80 per annum, the capital value of the land being from £1,500 to £2,800. Take one instance in point; the present contribution under the 1s. 6d. rate was £5 12s. 6d., and on the one penny and eleven-sixteenths rate the amount would increase to £14 1s. 3d. These were good villas built on large blocks of land; but if a person could afford the luxury of being surrounded by a huge block of land he must be prepared to pay. In other cases we had houses at £3 4s. per week, the annual value being £100 and the capital value £2,500. That would increase under the unimproved land value, which was £7 10s. at present, to over £17, or an increase of more than £10. We came now to the workers' ward of the city, the east ward, and we found that in every case there would be a decrease of taxation by adopting rating solely on the unimproved land value system. A man paid a rent of 18s. 6d., the annual value was £29, and the land capital value £120. The amount of the rate under the present system would be £2 3s. 6d., which would be reduced under the unimproved land value system to 16s. 10d., or a benefit to the poor workers of £1 6s. 8d.

MR. H. E. BOLTON: What was the hon. member's sympathy with the worker?

MR. H. BROWN had sympathy with the worker as against the political Labour

party. We had rent in the east ward at £1, the annual value being £31, and the house was built on land worth £90. We had there, at 1s. 6d. in the pound £2 6s. 6d.; whereas under the unimproved land value system the contribution would be 12s. 8d., so there would be benefit of £1 13s. 10d. In the west ward similar conditions prevailed. Rating contributions on a house let at 15s. 6d. per week would amount to £1 14s. 6d. which under the unimproved land value system would be reduced to 12s. 7d.; and so it continued right through. These were authentic figures taken from the rate book at present in existence in the city. The political Labour party should stand to the principles enunciated. It would be stated that we gave power to rate on the unimproved land value by giving the dual system; but why should not the Labour party be forced to stick to their principles as they intended to do when on the hustings? He believed the York Roads Board had adopted the system of rating on unimproved values, and that nearly every roads board had done so. His intention was, if the principle of rating on the unimproved land value was carried, to move that for the city of Perth 2d. should be the maximum the rate should be allowed to strike, and that people could rate up to 1s. for any other municipality in the State. From what had been published we saw that with only one or two exceptions all the municipalities of this State objected to the dual system. Every municipality would agree practically that with a shilling rate they could raise the same amount under the unimproved land value system as they were doing with the 1s. 6d. rate at the present time. On the goldfields the purchase price of property was about three years' rental, whereas the purchase price of land in Perth was about 15 up to 20 years' rental. He would not say that the Government, because the Government objected to the single system, but as to those gentlemen behind the Government who had gone to the country, they had their platform. The trades union held their resignations, and would call upon them to resign if they went back from their platform.

MR. E. NEEDHAM: The assertion made was wrong.

MR. H. BROWN: It would be the nearest subterfuge to go back to their constituents and say, "We had the power to carry out our principle of rating on the unimproved land value only, but we were afraid to carry that principle, and agreed to the dual system."

MR. C. C. KEYSER: The hon. member (Mr. H. Brown) was getting quite used to making false insinuations.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must withdraw that.

MR. KEYSER withdrew the remark. The hon. member stated just now that each member of the Labour party had erred in his resignation.

MR. H. BROWN: The majority, he said. There were one or two who would not sign the planks of the Labour platform.

MR. KEYSER: No one had sent in his resignation. He was totally in favour of the adoption of the clause. He believed in the unimproved land tax, but if there were some municipalities that did not believe in the principle and were opposed to it at the present time, why should we thrust the principle upon them? If the principle were adopted it would, after it became law in some municipalities, be an object lesson to their municipalities, and be the best evidence possible of the soundness of this particular principle. He believed the object of the member for Perth was to wreck this Bill. It was not that he was opposed to the object of the clause; but he knew that if we sent this Bill to the other place without having the option the other place would throw the Bill out immediately.

MR. DIAMOND: The member for Perth had withdrawn his opposition.

MR. KEYSER: Not so. Some of his speeches of recent years were totally opposed to land taxation on unimproved values. The member for Perth had mentioned an instance in which instead of £7 10s. being paid the amount would be increased to £17 under the unimproved land taxation system. That proved too much, for it proved that the alurers at the present time were not doing their duty.

DR. ELLIS: Apparently members on the Opposition side had developed a great desire for advanced legislation which they had ample opportunity of introducing before, but did not. This made one

chary of accepting the "gifts of the Greeks," which might prove dangerous. The member for Perth seemed anxious not to allow any option.

MR. H. BROWN: If the Government assured him they would stick to their platform, he would support them.

DR. ELLIS: Another Greek gift; but "in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird." The Opposition were frightened that another place might not agree to throw out the optional clause, but might reject a straight-out proposal for unimproved value rating as too drastic. Did Opposition members when in power compel the roads boards to accept that system? No; they allowed an option. Some members, like the member for York (Mr. Burges), said plainly they objected to the new system; and with these honest objections we could sympathise. He (Dr. Ellis) would not bind agricultural towns to the new system. In Coolgardie it would be at once accepted. This was the first attempt of the Opposition to "go one better" than the Labour party. The Opposition professed to be frightened that the Government were not going fast enough; but many old agricultural municipalities would want time to see how unimproved value rating worked in other municipalities before adopting it themselves; and it would be hard to deny such places some time to form an opinion. According to the member for Perth, only two classes of owner would have to pay more on the new system—owners of villa residences on large blocks of land, who were not now properly rated for the streets and roads round their premises, and speculative holders.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS: Would Perth and the goldfields towns adopt the new system at 4d.?

DR. ELLIS: That could be discussed on the question of the rate. The clause would lead to a great development in municipal life. In goldfields towns the vacant corner allotments were entirely disproportionate in number to other vacant allotments; yet the former were the most expensive to the municipality. But in such towns as York, where wheat flourished alongside the footpaths, the new system might prove harsh, as the agricultural land between the houses would be rated as municipal land. To

allow an option to such towns would be safe and fair.

MR. HOPKINS: No need appeared for an alternative; assuming that the Government would, for goldfields municipalities, increase the rating power from 4d. to 1s. in the pound, or thereabout. The Boulder municipality would be satisfied if by the new system they could collect the revenue they now received from an annual value rate of 1s. 6d. in the pound. The member for Perth made it clear that 2d. in the pound was sufficient for Perth; but the goldfields and other outside municipalities would probably need a higher rate; for it appeared that there, from figures quoted, that 9d. in the pound on the new system was equivalent to 1s. 6d. on the annual value. If the positions of Subclause (a) and Subclause (b) were reversed, he (Mr. Hopkins) would insist on one system only, the unimproved value rates. Why respect the opinion of a small conservative municipality? Where was the logic of members who one day asked for a wider franchise to secure progressive measures, and now declined to pass such measures? He had been accused in a daily paper of trying to confiscate property because he suggested a rate of 1s. in the pound. Evidently the writer did not appreciate the difference between the capital value of land in a goldfields town and the value in Perth. Every one of his (Mr. Hopkins's) statements was confirmed by the return the Premier had received from various municipalities, showing the rating required for their purposes; and to permit of our considering that return the Premier ought to report progress. He (Mr. Hopkins) did not seek to make capital out of his being the first to bring before the House this phase of the question. If the Bill fixed the rate at 4d. on the unimproved value, that would be of no use to his constituency; and he protested against passing laws to benefit Perth and Fremantle while country municipalities were neglected.

THE PREMIER: While prepared to report progress when the amendment was disposed of, in order that time might be given to members to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the replies received from the municipalities, yet these replies, except in one or two cases,

did not deal with the question of whether municipalities should have the option of rating on unimproved values or on capital values.

MR. HOPKINS: Because the municipalities were not asked.

THE PREMIER: Because he was satisfied with their views. But some of the municipalities had gone out of the way to give an answer that they thought it was essential an option should be given.

MR. H. BROWN: In only two cases.

THE PREMIER: No municipality expressed the opposite opinion to the view expressed by this new and worthy disciple of Tom Mann, the member for Perth! There was no necessity to report progress so that hon. members might consider documents that did not deal with the question. As soon as the amendment was disposed of, progress could be reported.

MR. MORAN: There was no necessity to report want of progress at that hour (10.30 o'clock). Some of the advocates of the dual system should say whether an optional system was required.

LABOUR MEMBER: Because some of the municipalities were against the unimproved value system.

MR. MORAN: If that were the only reason, we should go farther. Why were some in favour of the system and some against it? This was not a party question. However insincere the member for Perth might be in some things, the hon. member was absolutely sincere in this particular. The hon. member had advocated it when seeking election, and that was a very fair test.

THE PREMIER: had not questioned the hon. member's sincerity.

MR. MORAN: But it was questionable and it was not fair to do so. The hon. member, as mayor of Perth and member for Perth, was entitled to speak authoritatively on this question. The hon. member was speaking authoritatively and was backing his argument with figures taken from calculations which had never been questioned. Why was the dual system required?

MR. HOPKINS: Only one reason was given by himself, that the Boulder municipality would be ruined with a 4d. rate and must have power to rate up to 1s.

MR. MORAN: That was not a requirement for the dual system, but for extending power under one system.

MR. HOPKINS: Quite right.

MR. MORAN: Why did the member for Coolgardie want a dual system?

DR. ELLIS: Out of consideration for the old West Australians.

MR. H. BROWN: On a division being called, which was certain, he must vote for his convictions on unimproved land value only.

MR. MORAN: No advocate of the dual system had the courage to give reasons. The reasons were not on the surface. If the Committee could not be informed of the reasons, we were in a foolish position. The unimproved system had been advocated theoretically far and wide. Why was it now requested that the old and vicious system should be left in the Bill?

MR. A. J. H. WATTS: The member for Albany had given fairly good reasons for the attitude of Government supporters in regard to this clause. Despite the fact that the member for Boulder said he had no respect for the opinions of conservative municipalities, the opinions of those municipalities that desired the old system of rating on capital values should be considered to a certain extent. He was not prepared to go into argument as to why these municipalities supported the old system; but they evidently had sufficient grounds for giving it their support; and they had some rights to have their opinions respected. The member for Perth claimed that Labour members as a body should support rating on unimproved values alone; but the hon. gentleman seemed to be the member for one idea, and was constantly trotting out what the political Labour party would expect of Labour members with regard to this matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: That was not relevant to the clause.

MR. WATTS: The member for Coolgardie mentioned the municipalities of York and Northam; but Northam favoured rating on unimproved values.

MR. BURGESS: And York also.

MR. WATTS: At the same time, the Northam municipality asked to be given the option to apply the system which had been in force for so long, or the new idea before the House.

MR. MORAN: Why did Northam want an option?

MR. WATTS: The Northam people had their own ideas, just as the member for West Perth had.

MR. MORAN: What were they?

MR. WATTS would not go into them.

MR. H. CARSON: The electors of Geraldton would not dictate to him in this or any other matter, but would leave such matters to his discretion. He intended to vote for the dual system because every opportunity should be given to municipalities to see how the system worked. The Municipal Conference at Bunbury, at which some 50 municipalities were represented, advocated that it should be optional whether the improved or unimproved system be adopted.

MR. W. NELSON: While believing that unimproved land values should be made compulsory, he feared, particularly from what he had seen already in Parliament, that if the Bill were passed with the unimproved system made compulsory, the measure would be rejected in another place. Because he believed in a tax on unimproved values and because he believed the Bill, even if it contained the optional provision, would enable that principle to be adopted in a large number of municipalities in the State, he was doing the wisest and best thing for unimproved land value taxation by supporting the clause in its present form.

MR. MORAN: Let the Committee examine the reasons given by members. The member for Northam said that some municipalities desired the unimproved system, and amongst them Northam desired it, but the hon. member would not tell the Committee why. The member for Geraldton had given as a reason for voting for the clause as it stood that municipalities should be given an opportunity of seeing how the systems worked. That was the first time he had heard of that principle being introduced into a system of taxation. The member for Hannaus feared to tread on the corns of a sacred institution known in parliamentary parlance as "another place." The hon. member had endeavoured to introduce into the Bill the principle of single voting in municipalities, and no doubt the Government would recommit the Bill to insert that provision, which was ten times more likely to wreck the Bill than the proposal now before the Committee. The optional system of voting was, we were

told, left in this Bill to placate another place. That was the only reason given by the hon. member. The true reason, however, was that members of the Committee were afraid of the voting power represented by the municipalities in their electorates. It was the old argument, and he was certain it was so in the case of Northam and Albany. It was the influence of those in the municipalities who wished to have power to tax the very people these gentlemen believed should not be taxed—those who put up improvements. Was it not more just to give full powers to raise the necessary revenue under a wise and just form of taxation, rather than continue to raise that amount of money on an unjust basis? The roads boards of York and other country towns had adopted the unimproved value system. Why? Because they were big landowners and big farmers, and they made improvements. The very men who held the improved land were on the roads boards, the men who also held the unimproved town blocks. Vacant blocks in York were owned by men who also held the biggest farms outside, and they did not want their town blocks taxed, nor did they want their lands outside to be taxed.

MR. BURGESS denied the statement.

MR. MORAN could give names to the Committee, but that would be an invidious course to adopt.

MR. HOPKINS: The roads boards were generally accepted as conservative institutions. They were, he thought, more conservative than another place. The Minister in charge of the Bill might at least tell the Committee how many roads boards there were in Western Australia, and how many of them imposed a rate on unimproved land values; also how many of them had chosen the capital value. At the outset he had to complain because the Minister introduced the Bill without any knowledge on this important question.

MR. H. BROWN: There was not one which did not rate on the unimproved value.

THE PREMIER: Earlier in the evening, before the member for Boulder was present, he as far as he was able to judge fully justified the attitude of the Government in submitting this optional provision.

MR. HOPKINS: What he asked for was definite information.

THE PREMIER was not prepared to give the hon. member definite information with regard to roads boards.

MR. HOPKINS: One understood that the Bill was introduced by the hon. Minister, and it was to that Minister his remarks were directed.

THE PREMIER: Presumably the hon. member would not urge that he (the Premier) had no right to reply to his remarks.

MR. HOPKINS: Not at all.

THE PREMIER: The question did not affect the issue before the Committee, which was whether we should provide an optional system. On a previous occasion the hon. member very strongly opposed giving roads boards an option. [MR. HOPKINS: That was explained the other night.] The ground of the hon. member's opposition was that even if the option were inserted in the Roads Bill, another place would reject the measure. If that were true as to giving roads boards the option, it was far more reasonable to assume it in regard to making the imposition of taxation on unimproved values compulsory so far as municipalities were concerned. He believed the effect of carrying the amendment by the member for Perth would be either the rejection of the Bill or that another place would make the rating on the annual values compulsory. He (the Premier) was above all things anxious to give municipalities power to tax on unimproved land values; and very large majority of the municipalities were begging for that power, and anxious to take advantage of it as soon as they could get it. It was with a genuine desire to see this principle introduced into municipal rating that the Government had proposed to make the power optional and not mandatory. That was the whole ground on which they based their stand on this question. He believed the member for Boulder was as genuinely desirous as himself of seeing the principle adopted.

MR. HOPKINS: The argument which applied to what might have happened in another place in days gone by did not necessarily apply to the present, inasmuch as a general election had taken place.

since then and another place had been considerably liberalised.

MR. NELSON: How many new members?

MR. HOPKINS: The fact that certain members submitted themselves for re-election had an educative effect on them; and new members were returned for constituencies previously represented by Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Saunders, and Mr. Glowrey.

THE PREMIER: One of those changes occurred before the Roads Bill reached the Upper House.

MR. HOPKINS: When that Bill was introduced in the Assembly, he was not a member of the Government; but he accepted the responsibility of getting a select committee appointed, and worked for three months as chairman of the committee. That Act had since given considerable satisfaction. When that committee was inquiring as to this principle for the Roads Bill, he was warned by good authorities of the danger he was running; hence he at first stood aloof from the proposal. But when the House determined to adopt it, he represented members' views to the persons interested, and those views were ultimately indorsed. This he had tried to make clear in speaking on the second reading of the present Bill. If we decided now to empower a municipality to rate on the unimproved value, and to raise the same revenue as accrued from the old system, we should do so without fear of what might be done by members of another place who, as the Government maintained, were elected on a most conservative franchise. Unimproved value taxation he had always voted for, and he attended what he believed was the first conference held on the subject in the Perth town hall in 1898, when he pointed out that on this system goldfields municipalities would need a rate of 1s. in the pound. The Boulder council now reported that 9d. in the pound on unimproved value would be equivalent to 1s. 6d. on annual value, and the council said the power of rating on unimproved value would need to be increased to 1s. in the pound. If a general rate of 1s. 6d. did not now provide a sufficient revenue for municipal works, loans might be raised, and loan rates up to 1s. 6d. could be struck. If, however, we gave power to strike a rate on the unimproved value up

to 1s. in the pound, he believed loan rates would be practically needless.

THE PREMIER: Municipalities must have separate loan rates.

MR. HOPKINS: It was questionable whether the whole of Australia should go into pawn at once. It would be well to force some municipalities to find revenue for their works.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was out of order.

MR. HOPKINS: The Boulder municipality raised a loan of £3,000, and repaid it in three years by annual instalments of £1,000. As the clause needed careful consideration, he asked that progress be reported.

MR. MORAN: Had the municipalities asked for this clause?

HON. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. The member for Boulder's action was surprising. The hon. member had long been known as a strong advocate of the unimproved value tax, but had subsequently stated that municipalities had not asked for power to impose it. The clause would give general satisfaction throughout the State.

MR. THOMAS: Some remarks of the member for Boulder must not pass unchallenged. One would imagine that the James Government, before the hon. member joined them, should be credited with inserting in the Roads Bill a provision for unimproved value rating.

MR. HOPKINS: No. That provision was due to members then in Opposition.

MR. THOMAS: True. The tax on unimproved land values was strenuously opposed by the late Premier and his colleagues, and credit was due to the Opposition alone for introducing that system in the Roads Bill. He was surprised at the attitude of some members in regard to this principle. Many remarks were heard from men outside the House, like the member for Hannans and the member for Coolgardie, two noted socialists, who in season and out of season urged legislation of this sort so as to force municipalities to tax unimproved land values; but now that they had the opportunity, we found them arguing that we should make the principle optional. Though it was said the principle would work harshly in some municipalities, it was clear that many small towns in outlying districts should not have been

allowed to become municipalities; and if they could not enforce this principle, the sooner those municipalities lapsed into road districts the better. He was glad the Government had the courage to bring in a proposal for unimproved land values taxation; but he regretted that Labour members were not staunch in their advocacy of this principle. He wanted a straight-out proposal making the principle compulsory, and he was not going to hedge or trim on the matter.

MR. H. BROWN: It was the most pitiable sight he had witnessed to see the platform of the political Labour party outraged as it appeared to be to-night. As the member for Dundas said, two such socialists as the member for Hannans and the member for Coolgardie, who did not believe in a person owning an inch of property—[Interjections]—sank their principles and voted against the amendment. How did these gentlemen consider municipalities when they supported the one-man-one-vote principle in municipal elections? No option was given then. This was the first time he had heard members of the Government consider the capitalist or the land owner. [Interjections.] We had heard that one plank of the Government platform was the construction of public works by day labour, and the Minister for Works stated that he intended to carry it out. Now there were 15 to 20 members in the House who were not willing to carry out the principle of unimproved land values taxation expounded by the Labour candidates during their elections. He challenged Labour members to stick to the platform enunciated during the election campaign.

MR. NEEDHAM: What was the hon. member's object?

MR. H. BROWN: No object at all. Labour members treated this with levity; but he was serious. [Interjections.]

THE CHAIRMAN: Members must not interject so persistently. Under the Standing Orders, interruption of speakers was absolutely forbidden, though a certain amount of latitude was allowed. If the interruptions were continued, he would strictly enforce the Standing Orders and prevent members interjecting at all.

MR. H. BROWN: At the Recreation Ground the member for North Perth

spoke on the "christianity" of the Labour party.

MR. F. F. WILSON: The remarks of the hon. member were not relevant to the clause.

MR. H. BROWN: This was a sample of the "christianity" of the Labour party—deference to capitalists. Unimproved land value taxation was one of the planks on which he agreed with Labour members. No Labour candidate, if asked the very pertinent question on the hustings whether he would be prepared to adopt a dual system of rating, would have agreed to it. He challenged Labour members now to stick to their convictions.

THE CHAIRMAN (after a short pause) began to put the question.

MR. THOMAS rose to speak.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before putting the subclause and stating the question time was allowed by him for members to rise and address the Committee. It was a gross discourtesy to the Chair for a member to sit while that opportunity was given, and wait until the Chairman rose to put the question before rising to speak. Hon. members should consider the Chair. If they wished to speak they had ample opportunity before the question was put. On four or five occasions he had waited to give ample opportunity for members to rise and speak; yet after he had risen to put the question, some member rose to speak.

MR. THOMAS: The moment the member for Perth resumed his seat, he (Mr. Thomas) rose to address the Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN had waited some time after the member for Perth resumed his seat, before rising to put the question.

MR. THOMAS: The Premier has stated that if the Committee adopted the unimproved system of taxation the Bill might be objectionable to another place. Members should stand to their guns, and take the chance of losing the Bill. Whether the question of unimproved land value taxation was being discussed in the last Parliament in connection with the Road Bill the member for Subiaco stated that the strongest possible exception should be taken to the House passing legislation not favoured by itself, but of which another place approved, for the growing tendency to bow down to another place had shown itself, and as soon as the

Assembly constituted the entire Legislature the better it would be for the State. Those were the remarks of the Premier last session, and the Colonial Secretary, when sitting on the Opposition side of the House, denounced the Government for being afraid to pass legislation which would not find favour in another place. Immediately these members occupied the Treasury bench, they were not so strong in their denunciations; they changed their opinions. These members, now they had the power, were not carrying their principles into practice, and as the sole excuse for making the proposal before the Committee optional it was stated that the Upper House might throw the Bill out. If members believed in the principle of unimproved land value taxation let them pass it, and allow the Upper House to do as it liked. This House had seen fit to give way on the score of expediency on too many occasions. We had not stuck to our principles regardless of consequences. As private members, each occupant of the Treasury bench had strongly advocated the principle of unimproved land value taxation, and had never attempted to pass any motion or clause to suit another place, so that it might be easier for a measure to pass. When the late Premier had asked members to agree to amendments made by another place, the present occupants of the Treasury bench denounced the then Premier for giving away to the dictates of another place. We found that when we gave the party an opportunity of governing this country, one of the chief planks in their platform was practically thrown away, because they were afraid that another House might throw the Bill out if they stuck to their guns. If a fight had to come between the two Chambers over a vital principle, if the majority of members of this House were in favour of it, let that fight come, and the sooner the better, so that we should know where we were. The Labour platform did not give the right to rate on annual value. He stated before the last election that he was in favour of taxing unimproved land values, and he promised his constituency at the last election that, if returned to the House, as no doubt he would be, he would, on any occasion which offered itself, vote for such tax. He intended to vote for that and

that only. He begged the Premier to stand firm on the matter. He was sure the other members of the Labour party in the House would be only too glad to be able, if the Premier would allow them, to vote in conformity with the pledges given to their constituents.

MR. H. BROWN quoted from a speech delivered by the present Premier (as member for Subiaco) on the Roads Bill two years ago, to show the attitude then taken on the system of rating. In the course of that speech the member for Subiaco said:—

The discussion would not have evolved the heat it had done if the select committee which inquired into the Bill had only recommended the principle of rating on unimproved land values. . . . The member for Boulder wished to send Bills to the Upper House warranted harmless, warranted to have provisions which were not obnoxious to another place; he wished to label them "Caution: not to be taken by members of the Council." We were to understand that the proposal, in the hon. member's opinion, would be poisonous to members of the Council. The hon. member had hitherto objected when other members, supposed to be more timid than himself, hinted that the Council would raise objections to a Bill. The member for Boulder had been a warm advocate of principle and not expediency, yet to-night he had weakened in his professions.

Did anyone, he asked, ever see a greater change of front than that indicated by the speech of the member for Subiaco two years ago, and the speech delivered by the Premier to-night? This climbing down was the greatest he had ever witnessed.

[HON. M. H. JACOBY took the Chair.]

MR. GREGORY: The Committee were discussing an unknown quantity, and ignoring the real question—what power should be given the municipalities to raise sufficient revenue? The Government proposed, first the old system of rating, and second the option, after a period of three years, of trying the unimproved value system. The member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas) became annoyed because certain members did not adhere to the principles they advocated on the public platform. He (Mr. Gregory) had always favoured the unimproved value rating; but recent information led him to believe that its introduction might place the burden on the poor instead of

the rich. Nevertheless, the optional power to tax on that system should be given municipalities, and he agreed with the Government proposal. It would be wrong to compel the councils to adopt a new system not proved to be sound. In asking for it the councils were not unanimous; hence the option. The difference between the Labour platform and the Government policy was not the question. The Government should have the working of the system investigated by experts. The return received from municipalities showed that some of the town clerks did not understand the new principle. Surely no one anticipated that the Government would introduce to this House every plank of the Labour platform.

MR. NEEDHAM: Had they abandoned any plank?

MR. GREGORY: Did the hon. member believe that all municipalities could exist if unimproved value rating were made compulsory? To give councils three years for investigation, the Government proposal should be supported.

THE PREMIER thanked the last speaker for his support. The enthusiasm of the member for Boulder (Mr. Hopkins), and the mild support by the member for Menzies (Mr. Gregory) of unimproved value rating, were as interesting as were the complaints about lack of information. For the last six years the subject had been publicly discussed in councils and municipal conferences. The James Government were in favour of the unimproved land value tax—some of them passively in favour of making it mandatory; and the hon. member (Mr. Gregory) believed in bringing forward legislation to introduce the principle.

MR. GREGORY denied having said anything about introducing legislation to give the power.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member believed in the principle, but did nothing while in office to secure its application. The member for Boulder was likewise passive except on the Roads Bill, and then he actively opposed the principle. The time being now devoted to this clause was regrettable. Seeing that parties were divided, why import such heat, why make such long speeches with long extracts from *Hansard*? The Government welcomed the challenge of the member for

Dundas to stand firm for the principle advocated in the last Parliament and inserted in the Roads Act. He had always advocated the right of local ratepayers to govern and tax themselves as they thought right. In the cases the member for Dundas quoted, he (the Premier) was supporting a Bill to give road boards the option which he now proposed to give to municipalities; and the member for Dundas voted with him (the Premier) to give road boards power to tax either on annual value with improvements or on unimproved value of land. The member for Dundas had not then proposed any farther amendment, nor had he read long extracts from *Hansard* for the purpose of taking up the time of the House.

MR. THOMAS: On a point of order, was the Premier right in saying that he (Mr. Thomas) had read *Hansard* to take up the time of the House? The Premier inferred it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The words were not quite in order, and should be withdrawn.

THE PREMIER withdrew the statement that the hon. member had not read from *Hansard* to take up the time of the House; but members gathered a certain impression.

MR. THOMAS: The Premier was again making an inference, and he (Mr. Thomas) objected to such insinuation.

THE PREMIER could only withdraw a statement, but could not withdraw an inference which the hon. member himself supplied. Seeing that the statement gave offence to the hon. member, it would be cheerfully withdrawn. It was to be regretted that the hon. member did not take the same attitude in regard to this matter that he took in regard to the Roads Bill.

Amendment (that the alternative system of valuation be struck out) put, and a division taken.

THE CHAIRMAN directed Mr. Moran to be teller for the Ayes.

MR. MORAN said he could not act as teller, since his vote would be challenged. He had paired with the member for Toodyay right through this Bill, and had forgotten it for the moment.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must vote.

MR. MORAN: Yes.

MR. GORDON challenged the vote of the member for West Perth, who had paired on this Bill with the member for Toodyay.

THE CHAIRMAN: The House took no notice of pairs. The member for West Perth must act as teller for the Ayes.

MR. SCADDAN claimed the vote of the member for Dundas, as the hon. member had said "aye," and called for a division.

THE CHAIRMAN: The member for Dundas must vote with the Noes.

MR. THOMAS claimed that the member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Troy), having said "aye," must vote with the Ayes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Had the hon. member voted "aye" or "no"?

MR. TROY: "Aye," but by mistake.

THE CHAIRMAN: As the hon. member was not one of those calling for a division, he had still the right to vote whichever way he liked.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	...	...	...	3
Noes	...	...	...	26

Majority against ... 23

AYES.
Mr. Brown
Mr. Layman
Mr. Moran (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Burges
Mr. Cowcher
Mr. Daglish
Mr. Ellis
Mr. Gill
Mr. Gordon
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Hastie
Mr. Heilmann
Mr. Henshaw
Mr. Holman
Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Lynch
Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Nanson
Mr. Needham
Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Troy
Mr. Watts
Mr. A. J. Wilson
Mr. F. F. Wilson
Mr. Frank Wilson
Mr. Nelson (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

On motion by the PREMIER, progress reported and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at two minutes after midnight, until the next afternoon.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 20th October, 1904.

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THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 7:35 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR LANDS: By-laws of the Municipality of Fremantle.

BILLS (2), FIRST READING.

FREMANTLE LOANS VALIDATION, introduced by Hon. M. L. MOSS.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT, received from the Legislative Assembly.

INSPECTION OF MACHINERY BILL.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from the 13th October.

HON. G. RANDELL (Metropolitan): I have little to say with regard to this Bill. Having voted for the Machinery Bill last year I shall vote for the second reading of this Bill, which is virtually a reprint of the whole of the Bill of 1903, with some few amendments. I think some of them are improvements and others are not. The penalties have been reduced in some cases, and in other cases they have, although not attached to the several clauses of the Bill of 1903, been provided for in Clause 77, and are here doubled, being increased from £10 to £20. I think the principle of the Bill is all right. I have often expressed the opinion, and am free to express it again, that all the inspection in the world will not prevent accidents taking place by machinery; still, the Government of the day, who are responsible for the lives and property of persons, to some extent, at any rate, should endeavour by enactment to do as much as possible to prevent them, and I believe that sometimes there have been cases in which the

inspection of a boiler has prevented some serious accident from taking place. But no inspection and no certificate which may be given of first, second, third, or fourth class, as the case may be, can provide against a drunken or careless engine-driver neglecting the engine and serious results ensuing. I believe that the principal part of accidents to machinery are due to those causes which cannot be provided against by inspection. I think the only persons who could provide against them are the employers themselves. If they find a man drunken and untrustworthy, they should take the responsibility at once of removing him from a position which enables him to inflict loss and it may be injury to life or limb. I am glad to think the inspector has to be examined, and I trust it will be a very searching examination, as to his efficiency. I would like the examination to go a little farther, from my knowledge of inspectors, to ascertain how much common sense they have in the carrying out of the Act. I am afraid that cannot be provided for in the four corners of the Bill. The man appointed should have some knowledge of the business world or of the conflicting claims between employer and employed, and between the Government and machinery holders, and he should be able to exercise the best of all gifts I think a man can have, the gift of common sense. I believe it would remove many defects and objections to some of these Acts if we secured the services of that class of man for the performance of the duties of inspector. I did not intend to say as much as I have done in regard to this Bill. I think it is more especially a Bill that should go before Committee and be dealt with there by those men specially interested in some of the particular clauses of the Bill. It applies to all classes of machinery, with some little exemptions, and gives the Governor certain power to make regulations. There is the addition of one subject in this Bill which was not in the measure introduced in 1903. That is a provision prescribing how and under what circumstances certain engines may be driven by non-certificated persons. Several clauses have been rearranged and I think, from my point of view, they read better and express the intention of the Government in

the matter better than the old Bill. In that respect the present Bill is an improvement on the old one. The repeal of Acts which it is proposed to repeal will become necessary, and an amendment will be made in the Boat Licensing Act consequent on the passing of this measure. With regard to Sections 32, 33, 35, and 36 of the Factories Act, this Bill renders them unnecessary, and it is only right that they should be repealed, as the inspection provided for here is that at present provided for in the Factories Act. I do not think I need say more at present. I shall be prepared to deal with some of the clauses in Committee, and I feel sure that other members also will deal with some of them. Some of the clauses are very stringent, and possibly members interested in machinery apart from agricultural machinery—mining machinery—will suggest amendments to these clauses. On the whole, I think the Bill is necessary, and it is very largely a consolidating measure, which to my mind is a recommendation.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: As I do not see any members interested in mining present, I move the adjournment of the debate until the next sitting of the House.

HON. R. D. MCKENZIE: I second the motion.

Motion passed, and the debate adjourned accordingly.

TRANS-AUSTRALIAN RAILWAY, TO RESERVE LANDS.

Message received from the Legislative Assembly, requesting concurrence in the following resolution:—

That, in the opinion of this House, the Government shall at once reserve from sale all rural Crown lands for 25 miles on each side of the proposed route of the Trans-Australian Railway between Kalgoorlie and the eastern boundary of the State, with a view to facilitating the construction of the said railway, and that the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth be so advised.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. M. Drew): I beg to move that the Standing Orders be suspended to allow of this Message being dealt with at the present sitting of the House. In doing so, I may state that the matter is one of extreme urgency. A few days ago the Government received a telegram from Mr. J. M. Fowler, representing Perth in the

House of Representatives, stating that if the Government of this State reserved land along the proposed Trans-Australian railway route it would greatly facilitate the carrying of the Survey Bill through the Federal Parliament. I immediately recommended Cabinet to reserve 40 miles of land on each side of the line, and Cabinet adopted and approved of my recommendation. Since then we have received a telegram from Sir John Forrest to the following effect:—

Re Railway Survey.—Please consider whether you can approve and pass through your Parliament the following resolution:—"That the Government of the Commonwealth should be informed that this Government agrees to reserve from sale all rural Crown lands for 25 miles on each side of the proposed route of the railway from Kalgoorlie to the eastern boundary of the State, for such time as the Commonwealth Government may consider necessary, with a view to such land being available for negotiation between this Government and the Commonwealth Government, should the construction of the railway be approved by the Commonwealth Parliament." If you can do this at once it will greatly help us in getting the Survey Bill through. In my opinion, there is not the least objection to your doing this, as it will not interfere with leasing of land for mining or pastoral purposes or the selling of town lots. If you approve, wire to the Prime Minister and to me at once.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: I thought you said 40 miles.

THE MINISTER: Previous to receiving Sir John Forrest's wire, I had reserved 40 miles on each side of the line.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: The wire says "25 miles."

THE MINISTER: That is the step recommended by Sir John Forrest.

SIR E. H. WITTENOOM: It is far too much. About ten miles would do.

THE MINISTER: The result of the reception of this telegram is that this resolution has come from another place for our adoption. If the resolution be agreed to, this land will be reserved, and Parliament alone will have the power to open the reserve. Only land suitable for rural purposes will be reserved. So far as I can see, there will be no objection to selling town blocks; so that in the circumstances I think this resolution should receive the hearty approval of this Chamber.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Will it affect pastoral leases?

THE MINISTER: No; I am informed it will not.

Question passed, and the Standing Orders suspended.

THE MINISTER farther moved that the resolution received from the Legislative Assembly (as read) be concurred in.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): The hon. member is aware that there are alternate routes. As a matter of fact there are three routes, or parts of routes. Do the Government intend to reserve land on all these routes, or to wait until the survey is completed?

THE MINISTER: We had very little information to go upon; and we simply took the advice of the experts of our department and reserved 40 miles on each side of what we considered would be the proposed line.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The northern route, or the route direct to Eucla?

THE MINISTER: The route direct from Kalgoorlie to the South Australian border; not to Tarcoola.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: *Via Eucla.*

THE MINISTER: I think so.

HON. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan-Suburban): It is my intention to support the resolution. I think that the congratulations of this branch of Parliament, indeed of both branches of Parliament, are due to Sir John Forrest and the Reid Government for having, at such an early stage in their existence, pushed forward matters in connection with this railway to the condition in which we now find them. In expressing my opinion that these congratulations are due, I think I can express my personal regret, and a regret which is widely felt throughout the State, at a certain action taken by the municipal council of the chief city of this State the other evening when, after passing a vote of congratulation to Sir John Forrest, they absolutely refused to pass a like motion with regard to the Reid Government. I do not wish in any way to detract from the great work, more especially in this direction, that Sir John Forrest has done for this State; but I think that where honour is due, there should be honour paid; and I feel that if the action of the Perth municipal council goes forth to the Eastern States and to the world without its being put on record that the people of Western Australia at

all events, if not the people of Perth, show a due appreciation of the efforts of the Reid Government in this direction, this State may be misunderstood. I do not propose, nor do I think it is the place, to make any amendment to the resolution before the House; but I desired to take this opportunity of expressing my opinion at all events upon the action lately taken by the Perth municipal council.

Question put and passed.

MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from the 18th October.

HON. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan-Suburban): So far as the first two clauses and the fourth clause of this Bill are concerned, I have no exception to take, and have nothing but praise for the Bill; because these clauses are clearly an advantage, and give additional powers to inspectors of mines with regard to mine managers; but in regard to the third clause, it seems to me to be totally out of place that in a Mines Regulation Bill, which is formulated for dealing with matters relating to protection of life, we should find a clause relating to the payment of wages. More especially do I object to this clause when we find that it is placed in the power of the Governor-in-Council, that is the Ministry of the day, to regulate when and at what intervals wages should be paid. It seems to me absolutely unnecessary to have such a clause at all; and it is ridiculous that we should have it in a Mines Regulation Bill. Surely the decision as to what intervals at which wages should be paid is solely for the Arbitration Court. I do not see that we are at all called upon to pass Clause 3; and unless farther information is brought to bear upon the subject than we have hitherto had, I shall feel very much inclined, when the clause is in Committee, to move that it be struck out on the ground that the payment of wages, both as to the amount to be paid and as to the method of payment, can be better decided by the Arbitration Court than by the Governor-in-Council. Furthermore the Arbitration Court is supposed to be, and I trust always will be, above political influence. I should far sooner trust to a body of independent

men on the Arbitration Court than to any Government—and I am not referring to the present Government—the question of giving decision in a matter of this kind. I beg, with the reservation I have made, to support the second reading of the Bill.

HON. Z. LANE (Metropolitan-Suburban): The hon. member has just said what I intended to say; but I think he has omitted the principal objection to Clause 3. Where we have struggling mines in the back country, it may be impossible to pay fortnightly without cleaning up fortnightly, and in some places banks are so far removed from the scene of operations that it will be a serious matter indeed to have to pay fortnightly. The big mines with capital in the big centres can pay fortnightly; but the most serious objection to the clause is the fact that struggling mines with no capital will have to clean up fortnightly in order to pay fortnightly. This is one reason why I object to the clause; and I shall support the hon. member if he moves to strike it out.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (in reply): There has been a strong demand for a provision of this nature throughout the State. In almost every district of the State there has been a demand, not only from the workers but from the business people, who desire special legislation in this direction. I think it is particularly appropriate to include such a provision in a measure of this kind, as it is called an Act to amend the Mines Regulation Act. It is not intended that this provision shall apply to every mine throughout the State. The Government will have to exercise a great deal of discretion.

HON. W. KINGSMILL: Every Government may not.

THE MINISTER: Every Government worthy of the confidence of the people, and having the confidence of the people, will exercise reasonable discretion and will only apply the provision where it is deemed desirable. At present the Government cannot insist on fortnightly pays, and business people are forced to give men a month's credit. Some dishonest men get credit at the stores and boarding-houses and at the end of the month depart.

HON. M. L. MOSS: People are not forced to give credit.

HON. Z. LANE: They can do that fortnightly just the same.

THE MINISTER: I think after consideration members will see this clause should stand.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Inspector may give notice of dangerous and defective matters not provided for:

HON. Z. LANE moved an amendment:

That in line 2 the words "or any other machinery and plant" be struck out.

We should not have two classes of inspectors. All machinery should come under the Inspection of Machinery Bill.

THE MINISTER: If these words were struck out it would be necessary to strike out a line and a-half.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It would be absurd to agree to the amendment. If the words were struck out, then the clause would only apply to a shaft or a drive in a mine. It was known that the greatest number of accidents occurred through the breaking down of machinery and not through accidents in a shaft or drive.

Amendment put and negatived.

HON. G. RANDELL: What was the meaning of the words in the first paragraph, "addressed in general terms?"

THE MINISTER: It may be a legal phrase.

Clause passed.

Clause 3—Bi-monthly payment of wages:

HON. W. KINGSMILL: The arguments used by the Minister had great force; but this provision should not be contained in the Bill. If regulations were to be made and decisions arrived at, not only as to the amount of wages but how they were to be paid, there was a tribunal in Western Australia to arrive at these decisions. He moved that the clause be struck out.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could vote in the negative.

HON. C. SOMMERS: Harm might be done if it were made compulsory for mines to pay fortnightly. Still hardship

was done to business people by monthly pays. No doubt the Government would use their discretion.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: This was a bit of grandmotherly legislation. Next we should have the Government bringing down a Bill providing for the time we should have our meals or retire to rest at night. This was a question between employer and employee; and as far as business people were concerned, they should use their own discretion as to giving credit or not. We should not legislate as to whether the employer should pay wages fortnightly or monthly. He would vote against the clause, and against any radical legislation brought down to the House. He would oppose it tooth and nail, not fencing with it at all.

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

Ayes	...	...	6
Noes	...	...	11

Majority against ... 5

AYES.
Hon. J. M. Drew
Hon. E. D. McKenzie
Hon. M. L. Moss
Hon. G. Randell
Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. J. A. Thomson
(Teller).

NOES.
Hon. E. M. Clarke
Hon. C. E. Dempster
Hon. J. W. Hackett
Hon. W. Kingsmill
Hon. Z. Lane
Hon. J. W. Langsford
Hon. E. McLarty
Hon. R. F. Sholl
Hon. Sir E. Wittenoom
Hon. J. W. Wright
Hon. V. Hamersley
(Teller).

Clause thus negatived, and struck out.

Clause 4—agreed to.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment, and the report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 8.32 o'clock, until Tuesday, 1st November (the National Show intervening).