

matter of necessity and they have carried on the development of the State to the condition in which we find it to-day. I would like to see an authorisation from Parliament to raise three millions sterling for the purpose of building necessary agricultural railways, classifying and subduing the whole of the vacant areas suitable for settlement, and I would not want it limited to the South-West. I would like to see every portion of the State dealt with fairly and to give the same opportunities for settlement wherever the country invites it. If we were to follow out those methods, we would absorb the surplus population of the Eastern States. If a couple of pages of, say, the *Australasian* and the *Bulletin* were devoted to advertising that we had 2,000 blocks of land each of 1,000 or 2,000 acres in extent to offer to approved settlers to whom assistance would be given from the Agricultural Bank to the extent of £500, or £1,000, will anyone tell me if I went to the East armed with such a proposal that I could not dispose of the whole of these blocks in twenty-four hours? We have such possibilities, and yet we are satisfied to let them go quietly by.

*Mr. Angwin* : We are settling a good number already in the State.

*Mr. HOPKINS* : It is one thing to settle the people on the land ; it is another thing to settle them successfully. If the country cannot settle them successfully it will gain nothing by it. It would be like putting *Mr. Gordon* on to-day and putting him off to put *Mr. Walker* on next year. I want to be clear in regard to what I have said. I do not wish to see any section of the community penalised at the expense of another. I do hold that the people who are settling on the land in the South-West Division are not getting a fair deal in comparison with the licensees of the hotels or the lessees of mines on the Golden Mile, and in comparison with various other industries to which I might make comparison.

*Mr. Johnson* : Take proprietary race clubs for instance.

*Mr. HOPKINS* : Proprietary race clubs are institutions which we could do very well without. I have to thank hon.

members for the patient and kind hearing given me, almost a stranger, and I hope if I have wearied members, perhaps something I have mentioned may give reason for discussion at a later period.

Question put and passed ; the Address adopted.

*House adjourned at 8.23 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Friday, 20th November, 1908.*

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

BILL—SUPPLY. £365,579.

### *Appropriation Message.*

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with this Bill.

Ordered that the Message be printed and taken into consideration on the next sitting day.

### QUESTION—PUBLIC HOSPITAL, BEVERLEY.

Mr. HOPKINS asked the Premier: Has any arrangement been entered into with the medical officer at Beverley that would preclude the Beverley Hospital being immediately opened and utilised for the purposes for which it was erected?

The TREASURER (for the Premier) replied:—No; Dr. Butler, the District Medical Officer, occupies the Beverley Hospital merely as a "tenant at will."

### QUESTION—RAILWAY FREIGHTS ON PRODUCE.

Mr. JACOBY asked the Premier: 1, Is it true, as stated in the Press, that the Minister for Railways, who was then Acting Premier, promised a deputation from the Farmers and Producers' League, which interviewed him at Kataning last April, that a reduction of railway freights on agricultural produce would be gazetted before October this year? 2, If so, what has prevented the fulfilment of the promise, and what are the intentions of the Government regarding the matter?

The TREASURER (for the Premier) replied: 1, Yes. 2, The matter is now under consideration, and a decision will be made public in the course of a few days.

### BILL—MIDLAND JUNCTION BOUNDARIES.

#### *Second reading.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. N. Keenan) in moving the second reading said: This is the Bill which was brought before the House during the last session of the late Parliament. It was passed through all its stages, but unfortunately owing to its being presented at too late an hour in another place it was not sanctioned. The object of the Bill is to include in the municipality of Midland Junction certain property of the Midland Railway Company on which their workshops are

erected. The land is entirely surrounded by the municipality, who have to maintain the roads approaching it and incur the expense the user of the land puts them to. The Midland Railway Company do not oppose the inclusion of the land in the municipality and the latter body are naturally very desirous that the Bill should be passed. Those are the facts of the case. The member for Guildford (Mr. Johnson) is more aware of the urgent necessity of this Bill being passed than anyone else in the House, and indeed the few facts I have laid before members are extracts from a letter written by him to the Colonial Secretary.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): I have no intention of discussing the provisions of the Bill which was submitted to us during the last session of Parliament, and was prevented from going through the Upper House owing to the late stage at which it was sent to that Chamber. I desire, however, to ask the Treasurer, who is in charge of the House in the absence of the Premier, the question which I put to him prior to the meeting of the House, and that is whether he intends to proceed with the Committee stage of this Bill this afternoon.

The TREASURER (Hon. F. Wilson): In reply to the Leader of the Opposition I say "Yes." It is the usual custom when it is necessary to appoint a Chairman of Committees to do so on the first occasion possible. This has been the custom here and right through the Commonwealth, so far as I know. We intend to proceed with the Committee stage of the Bill, if the second reading is carried, and we shall then appoint a Chairman of Committees.

#### *Point of Order.*

Mr. Walker: Of course I know I am not allowed to discuss the explanation given by the Treasurer, but it seems to me extraordinary that we should be compelled to carry this Bill through its stages at this particular time. There is no immediate necessity for carrying the Bill further than the second reading. I want to point out to the Treasurer

that it would be very unfair to attempt to appoint a Chairman of Committees in a small House like this.

Mr. Monger: Where are all the members?

Mr. Bath: Where the Premier is.

Mr. WALKER: I expect they are now on their way to this House. This cannot be construed otherwise than an attempt to appoint a Chairman of Committees in a small House, and to take advantage, to put it plainly, of the absence of some members who might possibly vote against the Government. I would suggest that we proceed with the second reading of the Bill and adjourn the debate to Tuesday next, when no wrong will be done to anyone, and when all parties will have an opportunity to take part in the election of the Chairman of Committees, one of the most important duties that devolves on the House.

Mr. Bath: Adjourn the Committee stage.

Mr. Walker: Let every one be given an opportunity to take part in the election of an exceedingly important officer of the House. I hope the Treasurer will reconsider his decision.

Mr. Foulkes: On looking at the Standing Orders with regard to the motion for moving that the House go into stage, I find that it says in *May* on page 477, "Where a Bill has been read a second time a question is put 'that the Bill be committed,' which in the House of Commons cannot be opposed, being a mere formal sequel to the second reading, and a day is named for the Committee." This goes to show it is necessary that when a motion is made for taking a Bill to Committee, a day be fixed for going into Committee, unless the Standing Orders be suspended. Our Standing Orders 271 and 272 state:—

"After the second reading unless it be moved 'That this Bill be referred to a select committee,' the Speaker shall put the question, 'That the Speaker do now leave the Chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole for the consideration of this Bill.'"

"When a Bill has been referred to a select committee and reported on after

the second reading, notice may be given for the committal of the Bill; and, when it is moved, the Speaker shall put the question, 'That the Speaker do now leave the Chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole for the consideration of this Bill,' which, being resolved in the affirmative, the House shall resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House on the Bill."

According to *May* it is absolutely necessary that notice of the Committee stage shall be given, otherwise a good deal of harm might take place. The only protection members have is that full notice be given them of the arrival of the Committee stage. It may often happen that members who, while strongly in accord with the main principles of a Bill, desire to take an opportunity of moving fresh clauses in the Committee stage. That is why it has been laid down that a date shall be fixed for the Committee stage.

The Treasurer: On a point of order, are we discussing this point or the second reading of the Bill?

Mr. Speaker: It is only permissible to make a second reading speech at this stage but, as the member for Kaniowna raised the point, I thought it fair to let the member discuss the same point.

Mr. Foulkes: I thought as possibly I might have some amendments to make in the Committee stage this would be a fitting opportunity for me to appeal to the Leader of the House, to ask him to give me full opportunity to do so. If we pass the second reading to-day, we should fix a day for the Committee stage, so as to have a separate opportunity of considering the Bill at that stage, and in the interval have ample time to prepare any amendments we may think necessary, and also to let them appear on the notice paper. I thought that *May* laid it down perfectly clearly that it was necessary to fix a day for the Committee stage.

The Attorney General: What edition of *May*?

Mr. Speaker: In this instance the Treasurer would be in order in moving for the Committee stage to be taken at this juncture. *May* applies only when

our Standing Orders do not make such a provision.

*Mr. Foulkes* : I understand that, but but it shows how necessary it is that a certain amount of latitude should be given by the Leader of the House.

*The Attorney General* : You are not reading it correctly.

*Mr. Foulkes* : I do not wish to occupy the time of the House. I would like to remind the Leader of the House that it was only a formal Bill introduced by the Premier to assert the privileges of the House. It is well known that it is the practice when a session of Parliament is opened for the Premier to give notice of such a Bill, and in 99 cases out of every 100 the Bill is unimportant, and there is no pressing necessity as to whether it is passed or not.

*Mr. Speaker* : I do not think I can allow this discussion to proceed any further.

*Debate resumed.*

*Mr. JOHNSON (Guildford)* : In sup-  
porting the second reading of this Bill I would point out that the measure passed this Chamber last session, but was thrown out in another place. On this occasion I would not like to see the Bill used for the purpose of introducing any other discussion that might have the effect of throwing the Bill out once more. I would like to point out to the House that there is no great hurry for the passage of this Bill, and I can see no reason for any undue haste to take it on to the Committee stage to-day. I do not say this with any desire to induce the Government to drop the Bill because it is urgent; at least it is very necessary, but perhaps not urgent. The position is this: the Midland Railway Company own certain lands that should be inside the municipality of Midland Junction, but for some reason or other these lands have been controlled by the Swan Roads Board. As far as the roads board is concerned they are isolated, and they can do nothing in regard to maintaining the roads; yet these roads are kept in order and maintained at the expense of the municipality for the reason that on the one side of these roads is an area of land controlled by the Swan Roads Board, and

on the other side there is the town of Midland Junction. We have the town hall on the one side and on the other side is this area; consequently Midland Junction having to maintain these roads complain that they receive no rates, and they have agitated for some time with the result that the Midland Railway Company were reasonable enough to admit that this state of affairs should not continue any longer, and they agreed that they would raise no objection to the land being contained within the municipal boundary. The Bill it will be seen, therefore, is necessary. I wrote to the Government at the request the municipality recently took action and asked them to prepare this Bill. The Bill was introduced last session, it was lost in another place, and it is reintroduced now. I would also point out that the municipality recently took action against the Swan Roads Board to recover some proportion of these rates on a legal point, and I was pleased to see that they got judgment to recover a certain portion of them. But it was only a portion, and the object now is to get the whole of the rates.

*Mr. Walker* : Do you mean to say that the roads board has consented?

*Mr. JOHNSON* : Yes, all parties have consented; the roads board and the Midland Railway Company. There is no objection to the Bill. As I already pointed out there is no great haste; there is no need for it to go to the Committee stage immediately, and there is no need for the Government to force the Bill on. If we pass the second reading to-day, as long as the Bill reaches the other Chamber in good time, I, as member for the district, will be perfectly satisfied.

*Mr. WALKER (Kanowna)* : My impulse at first was to oppose the second reading of the Bill, not because of lack of interest in its existence, but because the immediate passage of it would do more injury to this State than its consideration at a later period. Perhaps I might say this, that I regard this action with some degree of suspicion because there has been no adequate explanation. I do so because it is evident to me that the day cannot be far distant when the Government will have to set themselves seriously

to work to get a comprehensive measure together, abolishing the present system of roads boards and councils, and divide the country up into shires, thus doing away with the multiplicity of these bodies.

*Hon. F. H. Piessé*: They have given notice of this.

*Mr. Bath*: But not on the lines the hon. member for Kanowna suggests.

*Mr. WALKER*: Well, it has not yet seen daylight. For that reason I look upon it as dangerous to be constantly tinkering with the boundaries of roads boards and municipalities, and moreover the very evidence that was given in support of this Bill seems to show that we should not be too precipitate. We are given to understand that there is perfect amity between the parties interested, and in the same breath the hon. member for Guildford tells us that there has been litigation, and he rejoices that the party he represents has triumphed and that they have partially succeeded in muleting the Swan Roads Board. Before we are justified in debating on a measure of this kind we should know exactly what these boundaries are that it is proposed should be altered.

*The Treasurer*: The Bill was passed during the last session of Parliament.

*Mr. WALKER*: That does not matter either. This is a new House, and I remember faintly that this Bill was passed at the tail end of the session, at the tail end of the feverish discussion on the Land Tax Bill after the excitement of the Treasurer and after this House had been put into hysterics by the attitude assumed by the Attorney General, when there was not a single member of the House, with the exception of myself, who had his head cool; and under those circumstances it is no merit that a little bantling of this kind crept through without any discussion in the Assembly. The marvel is that it did not go along without debate, especially as hon. members had been fatiguing themselves in discussing other matters of importance. A Bill of this kind would not be likely to attract much of their attention.

*Mr. Bolton*: Refer it to a select committee.

*Mr. WALKER*: That would be a sensible way of going about it. Though it seems a very small measure, not having more than three or four clauses, and not completely filling two pages in print, yet it might involve interests which this House at the present moment cannot perceive. We do not know the extent of the value of the property held by the Midland Company. We do not know what interests may be injured by attaching this particular spot to the municipal council; we do not know whether it is a barren spot, whether there are residences upon it or not; we do not know what interests may accrue under the roads board; and of all this we are totally ignorant. We know nothing excepting that this Bill got to the Legislative Council too late to be passed. If we passed the second reading we did so in total ignorance. I also say that in this respect it may have been in company with better measures. But in view of the fact prominently drawn attention to by the member for Katanning (*Hon. F. H. Piessé*) that the Government have in hand a comprehensive measure dealing with the roads boards and municipal councils, and the complete and entire obliteration of all existing boundaries of local governing bodies we are doing work which it seems to me will probably speedily be undone. It is unnecessary work, tinkering work, work that a deliberative body ought to avoid to the utmost. This might even wait until the Bill now upon the stocks is introduced to this House. If we pass it now we may allow vested interests to commence from the moment of its passage, which may mitigate the possible success of the greater Bill upon the stocks; and not only do that but may commit the State to an expenditure of money; or it may raise up opposition to the passage of that greater necessary measure for the defining of boundaries of the local governing bodies. Now as far as I know, this state of things has existed in Midland Junction ever since it was called by that name. What earthquake, then, is going to take place if we allow this state of things to continue for another fortnight, another month, or an-

other six months? The hon. member may be able to convince this House, when he has evidence, that what he claims is a just thing towards that section of his constituency but in the meantime no harm is done by waiting until that proof is forthcoming. The Municipal Council has had an action, it is true. It has won it, has got half the rates or some proportion of the rates, which, however, may be due to the roads board for all I know. Possibly if there were an appeal against this local court decision it would be upset. Even the local court thought there was some vested interest that ought to be protected. And it is the duty of this highest court of the realm to protect even the weakest bodies even against themselves. We know not what pressure has been brought against the Swan Roads Board, what inducement has been offered, what cajolery, what threat. The very fear of anticipated actions by the council may have led them to say it is much better to get rid of it, better to suffer the loss. Supposing that was so, that it was admitted to be better to take the loss; would it not be the duty of this House to step in and say no, here is a prosecuted, injured body, too weak to protect itself against the stronger body, and we are determined to see that that body is not injured. That would be the duty of this House in all these circumstances. And so it is not so trivial a matter as at first sight it may appear to be. In fact it is one of those matters which the House should want to enter fully upon. I can scarcely understand that the Government should have brought in a measure of this kind for its first effort. It has been the custom after Parliament has opened to introduce some measure merely to show its right to legislate. The most trivial measure will serve that purpose. A measure of that kind could easily have been found, but I think that what I have said is sufficient to show that this is not one of those trivial measures. It involves principles, it involves vested interests. It is a matter to which there can be more sides than one or even two, for in this matter the ratepayers as well as the two existing bodies have a right

to be heard; we have not heard from them.

*The Attorney General*: Yes we have; silence argues consent.

Mr. WALKER: Yes, but have they been consulted?

*The Attorney General*: Yes. There is only the Midland Railway Company outside the two governing bodies.

Mr. WALKER: In what way have they been consulted: have they had meetings?

*Mr. Osborn*: Yes, there has been a meeting of the representatives.

Mr. WALKER: There is the very evidence one requires. The so-called representatives have taken it upon themselves to speak for the ratepayers. That is the only evidence we have to show that the ratepayers are satisfied.

*Mr. Foulkes*: Was there no ratepayers' meeting?

Mr. WALKER: No; just these representatives. It shows how the representatives represent. They are not representing the views of the people any more than they are representing the inhabitants of Mars. They are absolutely at sea.

*Mr. Osborn*: We are getting an exhibition of it now.

Mr. WALKER: Are you?

*Mr. Osborn*: Yes.

Mr. WALKER: Have you sense enough to perceive that?

*Mr. Osborn*: Yes.

Mr. WALKER: Then you are growing. These bodies for whatever reason they may have, have consented. The roads board have for the time being given in. They have been bested in the local courts. They have lost heart. Their courage is gone, they have said we surrender. Does that prove they are wrong, that they have no case? It proves nothing. And the ratepayers behind them have not been asked, have not been convened. There has been no meeting, no petition. There has been nothing whatever to show that those who are paying the rates upon this particular area even know what their representatives have done.

*The Attorney General:* Yes, there is; the railway company have transferred the land; they are the owners.

*Mr. WALKER:* I was informed they are not the only ratepayers. The Attorney General must be aware of this. My ignorance in speaking of the Bill would be excusable if we had to depend upon the information supplied to this House. Because if that were so I would know absolutely nothing. In reply to the Attorney General I may say that he knows that it is not always the owners who pay the rates. Are there no lessees of the Midland Railway Company? Have no ratepayers taken their land or their dwellings or whatever they have in property from the railway company, and may they not be paying the rates? I am informed that there are any number of them. Have they been consulted? They are ratepayers, and therefore I say they have the right to be consulted in the matter. For anything I know they may to this moment be unaware that a Bill of this kind is sought to be passed through this Chamber. The mere fact that it went up to the House last year accounts for nothing; it passed without any notice even by those who ought to be interested. All these things considered, I move—

*That the Bill be referred to a select committee.*

*The Attorney General:* The hon. member cannot on a motion that the Bill be read a second time, submit a motion of that character.

*Mr. SPEAKER:* That is so. The motion is irregular.

*Mr. WALKER:* I thank the hon. member for the correction. Having spoken to the second reading, I presume I shall be in order when the Bill is read, to move that it be referred to a select committee. Then I shall have my reasons for so doing more fully prepared. I am reminded that Messrs. Dalgety and Company have saleyards upon this property. They certainly cannot be ignored. Have they given their consent; is there any information to the effect that they prefer the roads board to the municipal council? And they are not the only owners, for Messrs. Elder, Shenton, and Company have property and are ratepayers in respect to a part of this

area. Now, what becomes of the Attorney General's talk about the Midland Company being the only party interested beyond the two governing bodies? I have ascertained that much even while I have been on my feet, thus showing that those who are in charge of the Bill—not intentionally, but through lack of information—would mislead the House; giving wrong information, through no ulterior motive I admit, but simply because they have not made the necessary inquiries. Is it not well that all these bodies should have a chance of saying something upon the matter and that the Bill be not further considered until we know what these bodies think? But what do the ratepayers themselves think: these important ratepayers such as Elder, Shenton, and Dalgety?

*Mr. Bolton:* The rating is different.

*Mr. WALKER:* Yes, the rating is different, very different, and I can now understand the municipal council wanting to alter the rates. The rates do not satisfy the municipal council. All these people if consulted would undoubtedly object. There can be no question about that. The further reason I have for postponing the measure is that if the second reading be passed this afternoon and we get into Committee a wrong will be done to members of this Chamber, a wrong will be done to the absent, to those who have a right to select their officer in this House. The election of Chairman of Committees is more important than the second reading of this Bill. The Bill can hold over, but the other must at an early date be settled. It was not anticipated that the election of Chairman of Committees would take place, because there has been an understanding that it should not be until notice had been given.

*The Treasurer:* There was no understanding.

*Mr. WALKER:* I say it is a reason why we should not pass the second reading. It is an important public reason, a matter of public policy.

*Point of Order.*

*The Treasurer:* Is the hon. member in order in discussing the appointment of

the Chairman of Committees at this stage?

*Mr. Walker* : I am not discussing the appointment of the Chairman of Committees: I am discussing the wisdom of adjourning this measure so as not to appoint the Chairman of Committees this afternoon. I say that if the second reading of this Bill this afternoon be followed by succeeding stages of the Bill we will do a public wrong, and if the second reading can be deferred so as to avoid that wrong it would be wise to do it. That is a legitimate argument why the Bill should be adjourned at the second reading stage.

*Mr. Speaker* : I have already ruled on this point.

*Resumed.*

*Mr. HUDSON* : I move:

*That the debate be adjourned.*

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

Ayes	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	18
				—
Majority against	..			3

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Bath	Mr. Swan
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Taylor
Mr. H. Brown	Mr. Walker
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Ware
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Gill	Mr. Heitmann
Mr. Hudson	(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Davies	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Draper	Mr. Monger
Mr. Gordon	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Hopkins	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Price
Mr. Male	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Layman
	(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

*Mr. BATH* (Brown Hill): In regard to the proposals embodied in the Bill, I can speak from experience which in some instances has not been very pleasing. Practically the whole of the area which

I represent on the Eastern Goldfields is included in the district of the Kalgoorlie Roads Board, and from the time of the constitution of that body to the present there have been continual fights between the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Municipalities on the one hand and the Kalgoorlie Roads Board on the other hand in regard to the territory which they have to control. A Bill of this kind which does what has been done repeatedly on the Eastern Goldfields, that is coolly appropriating a portion of the area administered by one local governing body without due opportunity for the ratepayers or residents to give consideration to it and handing it over to another local governing body, has been fruitful of more trouble than any other I know of.

*The Attorney General*: In this instance the only ratepayer concerned is the Midland Railway Company. I have turned it up in a letter of the 1st November.

*Mr. BATH*: I know a good deal about this question, and I am not speaking in ignorance of the subject. As the member for Brown Hill I have been involved in so many deputations and so much correspondence over this question of the appropriation of territory from one body by another to realise that the member's task in discriminating between the two bodies is a very onerous one. I can tell the Attorney General of an instance with which he must be familiar, that is in regard to the portion of the territory opposite the Lamington Heights on the Menzies Railway line. At one time that area was included in my electorate and in the Kalgoorlie Roads District, but at the time of the redistribution of seats considerable pressure was brought to bear upon the members of this House, and successfully so, for the purpose of having that little portion of territory included in the Kalgoorlie electorate; and not only did the Kalgoorlie electorate secure that territory, but the very fact was afterwards used by the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council as a reason why the territory should be taken from the Kalgoorlie Roads Board and included in the municipality.

*The Attorney General* : No, it was in the Kalgoorlie municipality for a year before it was put into the Kalgoorlie electorate.

*Mr. BATH* : Then it is the other way round. The fact that the Kalgoorlie municipality had taken the territory from their weakened neighbour in a way known to the robber barons of old, was afterwards used as an argument that it should be included in the Kalgoorlie electorate. Previously the railway was a distinct boundary between the territory which I represent and that now represented by the Attorney General, but the municipality appropriated this piece of land which was bounded by three streets and it is known in Kalgoorlie to-day as Keenan's ward.

*Mr. Walker* : Keenan's wart.

*Mr. BATH* : Yes; Keenan's wart. That is only one of many instances I could give as illustrations. After a roads board has spent a considerable amount of money and rates in making improvements and in serving the ratepayers in these areas, it is hard that by means over which they have little control these areas should be taken from them and annexed by municipalities. Usually the first knowledge they have of the steps is that a petition has been sent to the Minister in charge signed by certain residents and that the request of the petition is about to be granted. Protests are made and deputations are sent down to Perth at considerable expense to the ratepayers, but the protests are practically useless: and the body that controls the area in my constituency has not only had to suffer in this way from the Kalgoorlie municipality, but has also had to suffer from the Boulder Municipal Council; and on many occasions after the annexation has been made, and the ratepayers have come to realise what was involved in it when they have to pay increased rates without any greater benefits, they have complained frequently of the fact that they were not consulted. That is the point. It is not the ratepayers who actually pay the rates and should be consulted in the first instance who are the people considered. It is only afterwards when

they find that they are transferred from a body under which they pay a shilling in the pound rate to another body which annexes half-a-crown from them that they realise what has been done, but then the deed is done, and it is altogether too late for them to protest. In connection with this measure the argument that it was passed last session, advanced as a reason why we should evince exactly the same haste on this occasion, is the best reason in the world why we should not unduly hasten the passage of this Bill through the House. This is one of those trifling little measures that are run through, all the stages being taken in the one sitting, and sent to another place. A very good example was set to us by another place. When this and other measures were sent up there at the end of the session they plainly intimated to the Minister in charge of the House that they were not going to be bludgeoned into passing legislation through without having the opportunity of giving it due consideration. While I do not very often go to the Legislative Council for an example as to the way in which we should conduct business—

*The Attorney General* : When you want to be naughty, you do.

*Mr. BATH* : I can say that in this instance the remarks then uttered by Mr. Sholl, and other members for the districts along the Great Southern Railway, as to the way business was rushed on are concurred in by me, and the action they took is an example we should follow in this House. We need go no farther than the discussion on the Electoral Bill, which has involved all those difficulties the Attorney General said he was going to avoid, to find a reason for refraining from rushing measures through. Let me point to that very provision which, if duly considered, would have prevented all this heavy litigation and bad feeling in connection with the Menzies election. I remember when the member for East Fremantle referred to the clause in that measure and asked that it should not be rushed through, the Attorney General said that it was all right, that due consideration

had been given to the provision, and that it would meet all the purposes for which it was intended. I will not say that the intentions were not honourable, for I believe they were, but the result was bad and very serious consequences resulted in the very first election held after the measure became law. What better reason could we have for adjourning the consideration of the Bill than that the member for Guildford, who is interested in it, should consult with the local authorities in the Midland Junction municipal district and the Swan roads district. It is essential that the ratepayers themselves should be consulted. It need only incur a delay of three or four days, and in the meantime the member for Guildford and the Attorney General could ascertain the opinion of the ratepayers concerning the measure, and be able subsequently to assure us that this transference of territory is satisfactory to all parties. In conclusion, I wish to say that the rushing of this Bill through in the peculiar circumstances that obtain at the present time is one of the unwiseest possible proceedings that could be undertaken. A great deal has been said as to the relative conduct of members of both sides of the House, the responsibility for the conduct of the proceedings and the facilitating of business, but there can be no greater incentive to members of this party to utilise all those opportunities which are provided, and provided rightly, under our Standing Orders, for protecting their own rights in the future, than the precedent established to-day in regard to the pushing through of the second reading of the Bill and the intimation that the Committee stage is to be proceeded with. It is the trailing of the coat tail in the dust and the invitation to members here to tread on it.

*Mr. Swan* : And they will accept the invitation.

*Mr. BATH* : The invitation is there. If it were a question of members taking advantage of the rules there have been opportunities this week, the first week of the session, which had members of this side been desirous of using them,

would have resulted in a count-out of the House.

*The Treasurer* : When ?

*Mr. BATH* : Last night and the night before.

*Mr. Walker* : Tricks will produce their reply.

*Mr. BATH* : The Government Whip was racing down Harvest Terrace chasing members last night. There is an invitation, in this slim attempt, to take advantage of the absence of certain members, which is not calculated to promote the speedy despatch of business but invites members to take every opportunity to return in kind the conduct used here this afternoon. I protest against this Bill being used as a means for the Government to steal a march on members of this side of the House. Where is the delay? It simply means that if this Bill is held over until Tuesday next we shall be following the time honoured precedent, always adopted in this House, of making the appointment of Chairman of Committees when we go into Supply to vote the necessary money for carrying on with. Ever since I have been in this House that is the occasion when the appointment is made; but on this insignificant Bill, introduced to preserve the privileges of the House, an attempt is made to steal an advantage over members on this side in opposition to the precedent in connection with the selection of a member to fill the very important office of Chairman of Committees.

*Mr. FOULKES* (Claremont) : I am sure the Leader of the House does not wish to take any advantage of the fact that some members are absent. I am quite sure he does not desire particularly to press this Bill into Committee, nor is he anxious that it should be put speedily through.

*Mr. Walker* : You do not know him.

*Mr. FOULKES* : There is no necessity at all to have any trouble with regard to this matter. As the Leader of the House knows there are a good many members away this afternoon, and indeed the Premier himself has given a pledge that the election of Chairman shall not be proceeded with without due notice.

*The Treasurer:* I do not know anything about a pledge. Do you?

Mr. FOULKES: It is not necessary that the Premier should make a pledge to his colleagues.

*The Treasurer:* He must explain to his colleagues if he has given a pledge.

Mr. FOULKES: The Premier made a pledge to one member that this appointment would not be made without full notice being given.

*The Treasurer:* Did the Premier tell you that?

Mr. FOULKES: I was informed by the member to whom the pledge was made. That member gave me the information as to the Premier's definite pledge. I am sure the Leader of the House has not been informed by the Premier regarding his promise, and evidently the fact that he made the promise escaped the Premier's mind and he forgot to tell his colleagues about it. Unfortunately the Premier is not here to acquaint his colleague of the fact that he made the promise. I am sure the Leader of the House can take my word for it, and if he likes I will give him the name of the member to whom the pledge was made, and he can ask him if it is not so. The member I refer to is Mr. Brown, the member for Perth, who has informed me the Premier made a definite pledge that this matter would not be dealt with without full notice being given.

Mr. Hudson: He told me that three days ago.

Mr. FOULKES: We must exonerate the Leader of the House in this matter. I am quite sure he has no desire to rush the matter on and evidently the Premier forgot to tell his colleague about the promise. It is well known that if ever a Minister makes a pledge his colleagues recognise the liability that lies on his shoulders to see that the promise is carried out. I hope the Treasurer will ask the member for Perth himself as to whether what I have said is not correct. I am quite sure he will accept the word of the member for Perth and, when he has obtained the information, will arrange for the postponement of the Committee stage of the Bill. No harm will be done, and when the Premier returns I

am sure he will justify any statements made by the member for Perth. Mr. Brown had a long conversation with the Premier with regard to the matter and a distinct arrangement was made. As to the merits of the Bill, I would like to remind members that there is a desire on the part of many districts, and particularly municipalities, to include various areas of ground within their municipal districts, and there is a desire on the part of the Minister in charge of the Goldfields Water Supply Administration to try and get as large an area of ground as possible included in these municipal districts. The reason for this is that so soon as a piece of ground is included therein it becomes liable to be rated for the purposes of the water supply. This means that a heavy charge is imposed on that particular district. I have had experience in this matter, for twelve months ago an agitation sprang up at Cottesloe to have the roads board district converted into a municipality. The matter was warmly discussed, and many of the ratepayers said the district should not be converted, as if so the ratepayers would be liable to a rate of a shilling for the water supply. This shows how necessary it is that the people in a district should have full opportunity to decide whether or not they will undertake the liability. Not only that, but in the North Fremantle district a short time ago the council carried a resolution that part of the Buckland Hill Roads Board district should be included in the municipal district. The roads board strongly objected on the ground that the North Fremantle Council were not in a very prosperous state, having incurred a large expenditure and having borrowed a large sum of money, and they were afraid of being compelled to share the responsibility of the liabilities. Due provision was made in the Roads Act of 1902 for a question of this kind being dealt with. I am referring to Part II. of the Act which deals with cases where pieces of ground are sought to be included in a municipal district. It is provided in the Roads Board Act that certain procedure should be adopted in order to give the ratepayers an opportunity of finding out

whether the district should be included in the municipal area or not. There it is provided that the Governor may by an Order-in-Council constitute any portion of the site chosen, as being included in the municipality, and that is the case here with regard to this area of ground that forms part of the Swan roads board district. The Governor may make an order in Council to include that piece of ground within the confines of the municipal district; but the procedure specified has to be adopted.

*Mr. Hudson*: The same as a municipality.

*Mr. FOULKES*: No doubt the hon. member for Dundas will give the House some information later. At present I only propose to deal with the Roads Board Act. Power is conferred by this Act that by publication in the *Government Gazette*, and within 21 days of the publication of the notice, any 10 ratepayers, or any 10 persons owning rateable property in the district, may petition the Governor and upon receipt of that petition the Governor may direct an inquiry to be held by such person under such conditions as the Governor may direct; and upon the conclusion of the inquiry a report shall be made to the Governor by the person holding that inquiry. Even if this Bill is thrown aside it will still be open to the people in the Midland district to take the steps outlined by this Act. So all they will have to do will be to have a petition signed by the ratepayers, present the petition to the Governor and an inquiry will be held; and when that is held full opportunity will be given to the various ratepayers resident in that district to attend and set out their views as to whether they wish to have this district included or not. In some cases especially in England, not only do the ratepayers take advantage of this opportunity, but they instruct learned counsel to appear on their behalf before the commissioner appointed to make these inquiries. I would like to remind the hon. member for Guildford, that even if this Bill is thrown out to-day, no injustice will be done to the people of his district. All they will have to do, will be to se-

cure this petition which will ask for an inquiry to be held, and if the person appointed to hold the inquiry is satisfied that it will be advisable to have this area included in the municipal district of Midland, I am sure the Governor will give consideration to the matter. I do not wish to take up the time of the House any further, because I have no doubt we will have further opportunity of considering the matter.

The TREASURER (Hon. Frank Wilson): This innocent measure has evidently occasioned a lot of trouble this afternoon. The member for Kanowna in his eloquent style tried to convince members that the Bill was passed through last session because we were all too wearied in considering the Taxation Bill and the Electoral Bill; and that he was the only member of the House who was calm and cool.

*Mr. Walker*: Quite right.

The TREASURER: I venture to say this measure is not only necessary, but it is urgent, and the hon. member forgets that we did not consider either the Taxation or the Electoral Bills during the last session of Parliament.

*Mr. Bath*: But we had a supply Bill which kept us here till three o'clock in the morning.

The TREASURER: This measure is necessary in order that certain valuable property belonging to the Midland Railway Company, which is right in the centre of Midland shall be brought into the municipality; and in order that the municipality shall derive what revenue they can in the shape of rates from that property. The statement that tenants will have to pay the rates is not correct. The whole of the buildings are owned by the Midland Railway Company, and are occupied by their employees. It is the block which adjoins the Government railway property, and upon which are erected the workshops of the Midland Railway Company, and the row of cottages which are tenanted by their employees. So there can be no necessity for delaying the passage of the Bill. That is apparent to all parties interested, and all parties interested have given their sanction to the passage of the Bill. Of course I

can understand full well that the opposition to the measure which has fallen from members was due to the fact that we purposed going into Committee, and we would of necessity have had to appoint a Chairman of Committees. That is the ordinary course taken in every Parliament, and there is no special measure which, at the first Committee stage has to be taken in view of the appointment of the Chairman. The appointment is made whenever the occasion arises. That occasion came about this afternoon, and for my purpose, and the purpose of the majority of members with whom I discussed the matter, it was agreed that we might as well appoint a Chairman of Committees this afternoon. Now I am coming to the opposition which is shown by several members who have spoken to the question of the appointment of a Chairman of Committees. Let me say that it is not a question of trailing our coats, and if it comes to trailing a coat or treading upon a coat tail, hon. members know me well enough to believe that I am quite prepared to tread on anyone's coat tails.

*Mr. Bath:* You are only too willing; that is your fault.

The TREASURER: I want here to be clearly understood, because I am not going to press the matter in view of what hon. members have stated in explanation of the opposition. I have no knowledge of any understanding that this appointment of Chairman of Committees should be delayed.

*Mr. Brown:* I gave you the information before the House met. If you cannot take my word, then—

The TREASURER: If the hon. member throws the gauntlet down, there will be trouble, that is all.

*Mr. Walker:* Now, no treading on coat tails.

The TREASURER: I repeat I have no knowledge of any arrangement. I spoke with the hon. member himself shortly before the House met; but surely it is reasonable to suppose that there may have been some misapprehension as to what that understanding was. The hon. member knew full well that if he wished me

to take a certain action he could have adopted a certain course.

*Mr. Brown:* I made a suggestion to you before the House met.

The TREASURER: Yes, only five minutes before, when the bells were ringing. Why did not the hon. member tell me last night? I could then have got into communication with the Premier.

*Mr. Brown:* I had not seen the Notice Paper then.

The TREASURER: If the hon. member had come to me I could have got into communication with the Premier and ascertained his wishes. I do not dispute that an arrangement was made. There is one thing I hope we shall always do. If the Premier or a Minister makes a pledge it should be kept by his colleagues, and I shall always endeavour to carry out a pledge that has been given by any of my colleagues; but I am entitled to know the terms of that pledge. The hon. member has told me that there exists such an understanding.

*Mr. Johnson:* You could get on to the Premier now.

The TREASURER: I suppose you would find him on the express train travelling to Perth. I want to say that I am quite prepared to accept the statement. I have no wish to force the position. I do claim it is improper for one side of the House to attempt to take advantage of the other when there is some understanding. When you think to-day that nine or ten members are absent fighting a battle against a member of the Cabinet—

*Mr. Hudson:* Fighting in the interests of the goldfields.

The TREASURER: Never mind what they are fighting about; on that account the business of the country should not be unduly delayed. I am sure the Opposition would not expect us to delay business if we had a number of our men away. I propose in view of what I have heard that we now pass the second reading of this measure, and I suppose we can do so and we will adjourn the Committee stage until the next sitting of the House.

*Mr. BROWN (Perth):* I think it is only fair that I should make some explanation. I might say I was ap-

proached by some of the gentlemen in the House who desired to know whether I would stand for the position of Chairman of Committees. I was quite open with my party, and I told the Whip that I did intend to stand, and expected the support of a section of the House. That was reported to the Premier who interviewed me and thanked me for being so open with him, he said he would give me every facility when the time for making the appointment of Chairman came about, and he would give me ample time so that any friends I may have might be here in attendance.

*Mr. Gordon:* Friends among the Labour party?

*Mr. BROWN:* I am not here asking for the support of the hon. member. The Premier was open enough when he said he would not make the question of the appointment of Chairman a party one. The hon. member has lobbied very well in his effort to make it a party question. The Premier said he would not make it a party question. He thanked me and told me that as I had been so open with him he would give me the opportunity of getting my friends here before the matter was discussed. The Treasurer, before the opening of the House, was thoroughly well aware of the conversation between the Premier and myself.

*The Treasurer:* I was not thoroughly well aware, nor am I now thoroughly well aware. I was told by the hon. member that certain things had taken place.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

## BILLS (10)—FIRST READING.

1. Early Closing Act Amendment (introduced by the Attorney General); 2, Vermin Boards; 3, Bridgetown-Wilgarup Railway; 4, Nannine-Meekatharra Railway; 5, Fines and Penalties Appropriation (introduced by the Treasurer); 6, Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act Amendment; 7, Public Service Act Amendment (introduced by Mr. Foulkes); 8, Vaccination Act Amendment (introduced by Mr. Bolton); 9, Legal Practitioners Act

Amendment (introduced by Mr. Bath); 10, Workers' Compensation Act Amendment (introduced by Mr. Hudson).

## BILL—BUNBURY HARBOUR BOARD.

### First Reading.

The TREASURER (Hon. Frank Wilson) moved for leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to constitute the Bunbury Harbour Board.

*Mr. TAYLOR:* Speaking from memory a similar Bill was passed last session.

*The Attorney General:* The session before last.

*Mr. TAYLOR:* The last session we did any work.

*The Attorney General:* A nasty way of putting it.

*Mr. TAYLOR:* The Government had only sparred for wind last session. A measure was passed placing the Bunbury Harbour under a board of management. It was called a trust in the Bill but at his request the Premier, who was in charge of the measure, altered it to a board of management. Had the Minister in charge of this measure any idea as to whether this Bill in its details was similar to the measure passed in 1907?

*The Treasurer:* I understand it is a very similar measure, if not the same.

Motion passed, the Bill introduced and read a first time.

## PAPERS—ORCHARDS DESTRUCTION, WEST PERTH.

*Mr. DRAPER (West Perth)* moved:—

*That all papers in connection with the destruction of three orchards by the Agricultural Department in West Perth in March, 1906, be laid on the table.*

The wording of the motion was probably not unfamiliar to hon. members. It had been placed on the Notice Paper about a year ago. Another motion of a similar character which he had intended to move last session was unfortunately not reached. It had frequently been said that the principal object of Parliament was to meet and redress grievances. That was his object in moving the motion. Three or-

chards in West Perth had been periodically inspected by officers of the Agricultural Department who had failed to find in them any trace of codlin moth. Early in 1906 one of the inspectors of the department thought he had found in an apple in each orchard traces of the larvæ of codlin moth. No scientific evidence was obtained on the point of identification of the larvæ, and very little inquiry was made by the department. Acting on the uncorroborated report of the inspector the department ordered the destruction of all the fruit in these three orchards.

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

Mr. DRAPER: The matter had not ended with the destruction of the fruit. Notwithstanding there was no further evidence regarding the existence of codlin moth, shortly afterwards orders were given by which about 300 trees were destroyed, the expense of which one would naturally have thought the Government would have borne. But the unfortunate owners of the orchards were charged with the expense. If an inquiry were held into the matter there might be further evidence as to whether the codlin moth was ever in existence in these orchards, but his information was that there was no authentic evidence of the existence of codlin moth in the State before or after the destruction of these trees. Evidently a mistake had been made. There never was codlin moth in the orchards. This conclusion being correct, great injury had been done to the owners of the orchards, and it was not exaggeration to say that damage to the extent of £1,000 had been done. That alone was sufficient reason for the motion, because the papers concerning the circumstances surrounding the destruction of these orchards, should be laid on the table so that, if necessary, further steps might be taken to redress the grievance suffered by these people who had no right of action against the Crown and were entitled to no redress except it be granted by the authority of Parliament.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. J. Mitchell): The Government offered no objection to the motion, but the hon.

member had minimised the risk the State ran in relation to the destruction of the codlin moth. No doubt the pest had been found in the district referred to by the hon. member, and it was unfortunate the fruit and trees there had to be destroyed, but we had to bear in mind that there were 12,000 fruit trees in the State, that fruit-growing was going to be a great industry here, that we were going to be a great apple-producing country, and that if we were to do any good to the industry it was necessary to protect it against pests that were affecting the orchards of the East. Now this pest was discovered in North Perth in 1903 and subsequently in Albany, and then again in North Perth in 1906, and in St. George's Terrace in 1908, but wherever it was found steps were immediately taken to eradicate it, though no step was taken in this direction until the department were thoroughly satisfied that the codlin moth existed, and only after careful inquiry. The Under Secretary for Agriculture was an expert in these matters, and satisfied himself before any action was taken. It was in the interest of the State that the department had determined that these trees should be destroyed. They were not the only trees in the State destroyed. Inspectors were out everywhere, and they constantly found some cause by which the destruction of trees was rendered necessary. The unfortunate owner of a tree affected by codlin moth certainly suffered the loss of the tree, but after all it was no great loss, because the tree once affected would not be of further use to him. One could not realise how the hon. member assessed the damage in his constituency at £1,000. It was hardly reasonable to suppose that Perth would have an orchard, because the land was so valuable. Probably the trees the hon. member referred to would have given place to houses in the near future. The fact that we had no codlin moth in the State to-day was because of the prompt action always taken by the department. The pest existed in South Australia, and recently steps were taken by the Agricultural Department to prevent its introduction from that State. One might reasonably expect people to

protest against that action if it was thought the codlin moth might be of use to the State. But it was a deadly pest, and the department had done right in stamping it out. A big question was opened up when we talked of giving compensation for every tree destroyed because of disease. If we decided to pay compensation for trees or animals destroyed on account of disease, where would we stop? In either case the tree or animal destroyed could not be of much value because it was diseased. Mr. Lee, the entomologist of Tasmania, had remarked that "spraying was an excellent manner of decreasing the pest, but had never exterminated it and never would." The department in acting as it did had simply acted in the interest of the fruit-growers and people of the State. It was perfectly true that apples in South Australia with the codlin moth were down to 1d. a pound, but we did not want codlin moth at any price, and that was why the department had taken the step complained of by the hon. member. The papers would be laid on the Table, but the hon. member should understand that the department had acted quite fairly by the owners of the property. The hon. member of course thought that the owners of these orchards had been aggrieved, but it was not so.

Question put and passed.

#### MOTION—LABOUR BUREAU, TO INQUIRE.

Mr. JOHNSON (Guildford) moved—

*That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the general administration of the Government Labour Bureau.*

He said: This is a motion that it is somewhat difficult to justify, because it is customary for the Government of the day to expect one to justify the appointment of a select committee, but I desire to appeal to the Government on this occasion to give me the select committee without my making any direct charges against the administration of the bureau. It is true that at a public meeting and on various other occasions I have heard from

those who come into daily contact with the bureau, charges grave enough to justify an inquiry, but the position I always take up on these matters is to point out to those who make the charges that there are always two sides to any question, and that before I can arrive at a conclusion I like to get at the other side, or to get a report from the other persons interested. However, one is debarred from getting this, because I am not justified in going to an officer of the Labour Bureau and asking him to refute any charges made against his administration or against him personally.

*The Treasurer:* The Minister will.

Mr. JOHNSON: It is impossible to get through the Minister a direct reply to given questions on given charges made, because, after all, the Minister lays the matter before the officer, and the officer by the department file through different officers submits his report, the result being that we do not get a definite reply on definite matters. Therefore, it is difficult to arrive at a proper conclusion as to whether there is any justification for the charges made; and so, without going into these matters that have been brought under my notice, I want members to believe me when I say that, after addressing a meeting of some 300 men, and after bearing without exception bitter complaints concerning the department, I got amongst them with other members of this Chamber, and heard one man after another levelling charges and complaining. In fact, generally speaking, the meeting was absolutely against the present methods of administering the bureau. My only reply to those charges was that I would try to get at the other side of the question before arriving at a conclusion, and I decided that the only means, the best and most satisfactory, was to appeal to the House to appoint a select committee to investigate these matters. When the committee are appointed, of course it will be my duty to bring before them the charges made, and to endeavour to get the men who have made the charges to substantiate them; and if they cannot be substantiated, we will then be satisfied that the administration of the department is above the criticism levelled at it. With-

out going into details on this subject I lay the matter before the House, simply stating that at a public meeting and on numerous occasions, I, and other members of this House, have had these complaints laid before us; and I ask the House to support my motion and to agree to the appointment of a select committee in order to investigate the charges.

The TREASURER (Hon. Frank Wilson) : While the Government are always ready to agree to the appointment of a select committee to inquire into any charges brought forward by members, which are serious enough for an inquiry of that description, and when a *prima facie* case has been made out, I do not think we should agree to the appointment of a committee to elucidate general complaints made by a body of men interviewed by an hon. member in the way the mover of the motion has referred to. Where there are a number of men out of employment and endeavouring to secure it, plenty of grounds will be always found by some for complaints against the avenues that have to be employed, so that they may gain their object. Everyone will agree that this department has been run exceptionally well. There has been a record, and a very satisfactory one, during the past twelve months. There has been an increased number of applicants for employment during the ten months ended the 31st October. Applications to the number of 5,799 were registered, as against 4,579 for the corresponding period of the previous year, showing an increase of 1,220. Although these figures may show that we have more unemployed now than then, it also shows that the office of the bureau is being utilised and is fulfilling the purpose for which it was created. There have been no less a number than 3,200 engagements made in the ten months; that is to say the department has been instrumental in getting employment for all those people. For the corresponding ten months of the previous year, the number employed was 2,438. This again shows the efficiency of the department. I will not weary the House with too many figures, but I may say that railway passes have been issued to 1,271

men, showing an increase of 762 as compared with the corresponding period of the previous year. When I tell the House that 70 per cent. of the sum advanced to the men by way of railway passes has been repaid to the department, it will be seen at once that the department have done the work most efficiently and that they have sent good men to good work, with good employers, for otherwise they would not have had refunded the money advanced in the shape of railway fares. The position shows decidedly an increased confidence in the bureau on the part both of employers and of those seeking employment. It is also pleasing to note in this connection that the bureau has been largely utilised by farmers for the purpose of getting men to undertake the work of agricultural labourers. All this work has been done, notwithstanding the large increase I have referred to, without any increase to the staff. The reports I have received from the department in connection with the work they have done all go to show it is a live institution which has given satisfaction and is fulfilling to the greatest extent the object for which it was created.

Mr. Johnson : Your account is like my own, a bit one-sided.

The TREASURER : No, and if the hon. member will read the extracts of letters sent in voluntarily to the department by those who have sought the good offices of the institution to engage workers, he will find my remarks are not one-sided, for there are any number of extracts from letters showing that those who use the bureau are well pleased with the results of their applications. Here is a letter that strikes me as being applicable to the point : "Your letter to hand. I am pleased to inform you that I have made satisfactory arrangements with the applicant to fill vacancy for couple, and he is now in my employ. Thanking you for the prompt and business-like manner in which you have always treated my applications for labour." Here is another : "Please send me a baker, etc., the man I got through you eleven months ago proved very satisfactory." Another

man writes: "I feel it my duty to write and thank you for the prompt way you obtained a situation for my son," and still another, "Kindly find enclosed cheque £2 1s. 9d., covering men's fares. Thanking you very much for your prompt despatch of men." Right through the same thing goes on not only in the 1906 report, but also in the later one. Then at the inception of the Bureau in 1903 one man wrote, "As one who has benefited by the bureau in obtaining suitable farm hands, I take this opportunity of saying what a boon it is to the farming community, and expressing my admiration for the way it is administered. I feel sure no Government department does its business with the same promptness and perseverance. You send a wire for a man, he is up here the next day. The Government Labour Bureau is a live institution." There are scores of other letters which go to show that the institution is doing its work well. In the circumstances is it fair that we should agree to appoint a select committee which, although perhaps not a reflection on the officers, and which indeed may ultimately redound to their credit as I feel sure it would, still leaves an impression that there are some grounds for the complaint? I think the hon. member should first of all satisfy himself that there are good grounds for complaint. He can easily do that, for we will offer him every facility. Let him tabulate his complaints, give a copy to the Minister in charge of the department and make a full inquiry. If he is refused any information by any officer in the department in regard to the complaints, let him then come to the House, and I for one will not raise my voice against his getting the select committee. To appoint a committee for every complaint one hears from the man in the street, and that is what this practically amounts to, would mean that numerous committees would be appointed, and a considerable amount of expenditure involved, for there is a certain amount of cost attached to every select committee. In the present case I do not think we are justified in incurring the expense of a select committee. I am

of opinion that the appointment would cast some reflection upon the department, which I am sure is very ably handled at the present time. If the hon. member likes, the debate can be adjourned, and then he can go to the department, probe into the matter closely, and then, if he is not satisfied and cannot get to the bottom of the matter, he can have his committee. The member knows well that a good number of the 300 men who have been hanging around the bureau during the last week or two, and a number of those he interviewed, are of the type who make complaints, but who really do not want to be satisfied.

*Mr. Swan:* A very small percentage.

The TREASURER: I will leave it to the mover himself to say, that a number of the men do not wish to receive satisfactory replies to their applications.

*Mr. Johnson:* Only a very small minority.

The TREASURER: There is a fair number of them. I hope the hon. member will not press the motion to-night, but will first of all make inquiries through the department and Minister. We will give him every facility to do so.

*Mr. Johnson:* Will the Minister assure me that I can make full investigations into the matter personally, and that later on if I am dissatisfied with the investigation, I can bring on the motion. If he does that I will agree to the adjournment. I not only want to investigate, but I want to be able to do it thoroughly and to be fully satisfied. I do not want the Minister in charge of the department to call for a report and leave the matter at that. I want to go into the question thoroughly.

The TREASURER: Do you want to be a Royal Commission? I will give you all opportunities and every facility the department can offer. You can go and ask any question you like.

*Mr. Johnson:* Can I go there and ask questions?

The TREASURER: Most decidedly. I cannot give you power to call men before you and cross-examine, but you shall certainly have every freedom.

*Mr. Johnson:* Well I am satisfied to adjourn the debate on that understanding.

*Mr. BATH (Brown Hill):* I have a few suggestions to offer. I did not hear the remarks made by the member in moving the motion but the few words I have to say will be in the nature of assisting the bureau to fulfil the functions allotted to it more efficiently. It may be true or otherwise that the department are doing all they possibly can to facilitate the search of the unemployed for work and also to help employers in securing labour. Although many complaints have been made it will be necessary for some such investigation as that asked for, either in the form of a select committee or else the personal investigation which has been offered to the hon. member, in order to ascertain whether the complaints are justified or not. The point I would urge on the Minister is, that while every effort may be made by the bureau in Perth to secure work for the unemployed—and I will not dispute that now—the arrangements with the various country districts are not of such a nature as to prevent the men from being disappointed and very frequently misled when they are sent to various districts in the State for certain work. Where the bureau fails is, that in each of its districts the work of looking after the branches of the bureau is generally extra duty imposed on someone who has already sufficient work to perform in other directions. Only very little attention, and that of a desultory character, can be paid to the work of finding employment for those needing it. Not only is it a question of finding work, but one of ascertaining if the work offering is such that a man may accept it, retain his respect, and be able to maintain himself and his family. I would like to see in each centre, in places like Northam, Katanning, Bunbury, and Geraldton, which are the centres of agricultural districts, persons in charge of the Labour Bureau who, in sending down the list of billets offering, could give the officers in charge of the central bureau a very good idea whether the wages offered for the work are decent and fair.

I have known cases where men who have been good workmen and who have been following other kinds of occupation—artisans and mechanics—would in their desire to get work of any kind have gone to these billets and have been grossly deceived. We will take the case where a contract is offering. The price is specified but it all depends upon the nature of the work. It is one thing to clear salmon gum or gimlet wood country which has been ringbarked and to clear the same country with a good amount of mallee spread through it. I am speaking from experience in this case. If we had someone on the spot who had a good idea as to whether the prices offering were fair, the men might not be deceived.

*Mr. Hopkins:* Are you referring to piece work?

*Mr. BATH:* Most of the work from the Labour Bureau is piece work.

*Mr. Hopkins:* Otherwise your arguments would not apply.

*Mr. BATH:* Under these circumstances the administration of the Labour Bureau even if it is as perfect as the Treasurer says, could be improved in the direction of greater efficiency, as far as the country branches are concerned.

*Mr. Angwin:* Are there many country branches?

*Mr. BATH:* There is one at Northam, one at Katanning, one at Bunbury, and another at Geraldton. It is a question of what time the officer who is placed in charge of these offices has at his disposal.

*The Treasurer:* Most of the applicants in Perth are sent direct to employment.

*Mr. BATH:* If you had an officer who could give attention to it in these districts, you could often provide for men to go to country districts from the central office. I hope this aspect of the case will not be forgotten in any inquiry that is made.

On motion by *Hon. F. H. Piesse* debate adjourned.

#### PAPERS—RAILWAY SIDING, STONEVILLE.

On motion by *Mr. Jacoby*, ordered:  
“That all the papers concerning the appli-

cations made to the Railway Department for the stoppage of trains, the delivery of goods, and the provision of a railway siding at Stoneville, near Parker-ville, be laid on the Table of the House."

#### MOTION—MINING REPORT. LINDEN.

On motion by *Mr. Taylor*, ordered : "That the report of *Mr. Howe*, Inspector in the Mines Department, on the Linden Goldfield, be laid on the Table of the House."

#### MOTION—FACTORIES ACT, ALLEGED BREACHES.

*Mr. JOHNSON* (Guildford) moved—

*That all the papers relating to the action taken by the Crown against Brennan Bros. for breaches of the Early Closing Act, and the reasons why the case was not further proceeded with be laid on the Table of the House.*

He said: In moving this motion I simply desire to point out to members present that the inspector under the Factories Act had occasion some time ago to reprimand Brennan Brothers for overcrowding some of their workrooms and in other ways committing breaches of the Factories Act. This went on for some time until at last it became so bad that the Crown Law Department instituted proceedings against Brennan Brothers and as far as my memory serves me—I am speaking from information I gained then—there were nine different charges made against Brennan Brothers for breaches of the Act. Then *Mr. James Brennan*—again if my memory serves me correctly—made rather a severe attack on the honesty and integrity of the inspector. He accused the inspector of exceeding his duties and gaining information through channels that were not altogether proper. The case was adjourned and we heard no more about it. As far as I know the inspector had no opportunity of refuting the charges that were made against him and the resident magistrate has not apparently had an opportunity of giving his decision upon the matter. Since then

I know Brennan Brothers have been reported time after time, again for breaches of the Factories Act, reported not by the inspector but by the employees, and I have been requested to ask the inspector to visit Brennan Brothers' establishment in order to protect the employees against the conditions under which they were working, mainly due to overcrowding. Consequently I think it is only fair that we should know why the case was not proceeded with. I heard no explanation of the matter, and there is only one way of getting an explanation and that is to ask that the papers be laid upon the Table of the House. I take it the Government will offer no objection. They have nothing to hide. Consequently I will simply content myself by moving the motion.

The TREASURER (Hon. Frank Wilson): I simply rise to say at once we have nothing to hide and we are quite prepared to allow the papers to be placed on the table of the House. As a matter of fact I am not conversant with the details that the hon. member has referred to, and I would point out that an ordinary application to the Colonial Secretary would have given the hon. member access to the file at any time that he cared to call at the office. Yet if he wishes to have the papers on the Table the Government will offer no opposition.

Question—put and passed.

#### PAPERS—IMMIGRANTS' BAGGAGE, FREMANTLE.

*Mr. ANGWIN* (East Fremantle) moved—

*That all papers relating to and calling for tenders from persons to take and deliver baggage from ship to immigrants on their arrival in this State, also all papers and correspondence between the Government and shipping companies relating to the right of the successful tenderers to board steamers on the arrival of such immigrants, be laid upon the Table of the House.*

Some 12 or 15 months ago tenders were received for the work of looking after immigrants' baggage and it was given

to one firm only. At the end of the year tenders were again called and for some reason that he knew nothing of certain restrictions were made and the lowest tenderer on that occasion refused to comply with them. Consequently the work was left to the two other tenderers. Instead of giving the work to the next lowest tenderer to carry out it was divided between the two. Later on the lowest tenderer was asked to give an undertaking not to solicit or accept any baggage from any person whatever excepting those who came out as Government immigrants. He would like to see the papers in regard to this question to ascertain whether all the tenderers were served alike, whether all were compelled to give an undertaking that they would only deal with the baggage of the immigrants and whether the shipping companies dealt with each in a similar manner. If so there would be nothing to complain about, but when tenders were called it was the duty of those calling tenders to protect the tenderer and especially protect the one who tendered at the cheapest rate if he was competent to carry out the work.

Question put and passed.

#### PAPERS—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES' GRANTS.

Mr. FOULKES (Claremont) moved—

*That there be laid on the Table of the House—1. All papers in connection with a grant of land, situate at Cottesloe, to the Fremantle Friendly Societies. 2. All papers in connection with an application for a grant of land, situate in Buckland Hill or Peppermint Grove, to certain Friendly Societies in Cottesloe. 3. All papers showing if the site of the Cottesloe Beach Police Station formed part of the same lands purchased about seven years ago for the purpose of a proposed railway from East Fremantle to Cottesloe.*

His reason for moving the motion was that he might have an opportunity of seeing all the papers in existence in connection with the grant of land to the Fremantle friendly societies and also

in connection with the application for land by the friendly societies at Cottesloe. The friendly societies at Cottesloe had tried to get a piece of land in Cottesloe and it had been refused them, whereas the friendly societies at Fremantle had applied for a very much larger piece of ground and it had been given to them. He wanted these papers so as to judge the reason for the distinction.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Price): There was no objection to these papers being laid on the Table, but at this juncture he wished to take exception to one statement of the hon. member, which was that the application for land at Cottesloe and the application for land at Fremantle were treated differently. The grant to the friendly societies at Fremantle was made some 16 years ago and the recent action had only been in the direction of changing the purpose of that grant; whereas the last application for land for the friendly societies at Cottesloe was entirely a new one.

Mr. FOULKES (in reply): What he objected to was the fact that the Fremantle friendly societies were able to get the freehold to a piece of ground, granted to them 15 or 16 years ago for recreation purposes. They had not made use of it. They surrendered it to the Government, and the Government gave them the grant in freehold of the land. It was situated opposite the Cottesloe station and contained eight acres. Strange to say there was in the Cottesloe district very little land available for public purposes.

The Minister for Works: There is a public reserve of 48 acres adjoining this land.

Mr. FOULKES: All the land available for public purposes was situated in a position very inconvenient for the public. There was not a single piece in a central position. What he complained about was that so large a piece of land should be given to the people of Fremantle at the cost of the people of Cottesloe. However the papers would speak for themselves.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—STATE BATTERY  
SLIMES, TO INQUIRE.

Mr. HUDSON (Dundas) moved—

*That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the question of claims made for payment of slimes accumulated or treated at State batteries.*

He said: This is a question I have mentioned in the House on previous occasions. It is one that concerns the prospectors of this State very greatly. When State batteries have been erected in different parts of the goldfields, and the stone treated, cyanide plants have been erected and the slimes allowed to accumulate. Up to about 1903 the slimes had accumulated at a number of batteries and had not been treated; or rather the first slimes plant was not erected, I think, till 1906 or 1907, shortly after I came into this House. But in 1901, 1902, and 1903, applications were made to the Mines Department to have slimes plants erected at several of these batteries. In 1903 at Norseman, the one battery with in my knowledge, the assays were kept of the gold contained in the slimes accumulated up to that date. The previously accumulated slimes were treated and the proceeds retained by the Government. Now the question at issue is, who is entitled to the net result of the treatment of these—shall I say old accumulated slimes, the slimes accumulated prior to the taking of assays? I am moving for a select committee for this reason: it is the only means I know of by which the point at issue can be determined. At Niagara where the same set of circumstances existed, an action has been taken against the Crown, claiming payment on the result of the treatment of slimes at that battery. And a defence has been raised that the action is brought too late; that it should have commenced within 12 months' time of the slimes actually accumulating at the State battery. I have appealed to the Minister: I have appealed through the House, and the Minister for Mines has taken up the position that these slimes were abandoned and that they really became the property of the Crown. It is

impossible for us to have that point tested while the Government raises this technical defence, which seems a good one.

*The Treasurer :* How are you going to tell who is the owner of the slimes?

Mr. HUDSON: That point was raised when first I took up the subject. Assuming the prospectors are the owners, it is easy to find out what is due to each of them. We know the tonnage of the slimes treated for each prospector, and the prospectors are prepared to accept payment on a pro rata basis. It is a very fair offer, and it points the way to a fair determination of the question.

*The Treasurer :* Had they not the right of removal?

Mr. HUDSON: They may have had. I do not want to discuss the whole question now. They may have been allowed to remove the slimes; but for some years they had the promise that the Government would erect a slimes plant. The delay in the taking of assays induced the men to allow these slimes to accumulate.

*The Treasurer :* The department have another version. The department say the accumulation of slimes induced them to put up a plant.

Mr. HUDSON: We can leave the past and consider the present. Take the case at Norseman. The slimes plant has been erected and the accumulated slimes treated, with the result of a net profit of from £1,000 to £2,000. That is the result of the work of the earlier prospectors of the field. Surely they are entitled to some consideration.

*The Treasurer :* What about the thousands of pounds of loss on the plants at Norseman?

Mr. HUDSON: There is no loss on the plants at Norseman. The figures given me—

*The Treasurer :* Some £6,000 lost.

Mr. HUDSON: At any rate the loss has not been occasioned by the prospectors. A great deal of experimental work was done there, but why should that battery be saddled with the whole of these experiments of the department in a particular direction? That is the point I take. We are in this position now that there is a question for inquiry. There is the question of determination of own-

ership of the slimes. I say a select committee cannot perhaps determine that but there are no other means of solving the difficulty except by the consent of the Government to pay the prospectors for their slimes. The pioneer prospectors of any district should be entitled to the full results of their efforts in opening up new country, and I ask the Government to accept the motion and allow a select committee to be appointed to inquire into the subject.

The TREASURER (Hon. Frank Wilson): I am going to ask the hon. member to agree to the adjournment of this debate, after I have spoken a few words, in order that I may be able to get a full report from the department in connection with the matter he has brought before the House. Hurriedly this morning I had a little conversation with the Under Secretary for Mines on the subject, knowing that the motion would come off. But I confess that I am not fully posted nor conversant with all the details of the complaint the hon. member has raised. I do know this however, that the question of these slimes and sands is one which dates back many years. In the first instance I think, when public batteries were erected, it was understood that after they had extracted all the gold they could by the ordinary methods of amalgamation, everything remaining belonged to the plant. If owners thought it was worth taking away they could take it away. They had that right; and hon. members will bear me out when I say that that applies throughout the fields. That was the position of our batteries, and until we began to add further plant for the treatment of tailings, the slimes and sands were allowed to accumulate. So things went on. Additional plants were put in and there were several methods of dealing with the matter after they first introduced filter presses and other methods of dealing with slimes. Then of course there had to be a readjustment of the methods adopted.

Mr. Heitmann: The department made over £10,000.

The TREASURER: Probably. The regulations were then altered. That was about 1904, and while they still maintained that position of ownership of anything on the ground, if the Minister decided to work a plant for treating slimes then from some subsequent date which he himself fixed he made payment for the slimes subject to certain regulations. Thus it came to this position, that all the slimes that had accumulated up to a certain date belonged to the Government, while a record had to be kept of slimes subsequently accumulating which were treated and paid for according to results. Then came in a position which I think dates back two or three years. It was found that the earlier method was not satisfactory and although they still maintained the ownership to everything that had accumulated prior to the introduction of the regulations, they began to repurchase outright. They are repurchasing outright to-day.

Mr. Hudson: There are a lot of recent accumulations not paid for.

The TREASURER: Then the owner has the right to remove them.

Mr. Hudson: He cannot remove them once these slimes are in the Government dump.

The TREASURER: Perhaps they are not worth it.

Mr. Hudson: They are worth it all right.

The TREASURER: I know the department to-day is £13,000 or £14,000 out of pocket over it.

Mr. Heitmann: They have paid on sands they have not yet treated. They are paying 75 per cent.

The TREASURER: I know I am getting applications every month for more money for this purpose. All the department maintain is that they have the right to the sands the original owners of which it would be difficult to specify. And they go farther and say that if they had not known there was an accumulation of these tailings to be treated with some value in them they would not have spent money on the plants. It to some extent was justification for the large expenditure.

Mr. Hudson: You are speculating.

The TREASURER: The hon. member seems to think there is an enormous profit attached to the matter. Let me point out, from the figures supplied to me, that the plants at Norseman, the battery and the cyanide plant, have been worked at a considerable loss from the year 1898, when the battery was first established, to 1905. There was a loss of from £132 in 1905, to £2,689 in 1900.

Mr. Hudson: That was on the plant the department experimented with.

The TREASURER: There was a profit of £239 in 1906, and there was a profit of £352 in 1907, but the total loss in connection with the battery was £5,948. On the other hand the slimes plant showed a considerable profit.

Mr. Hudson: The cost of the slimes plant is given as £2,000, but the contractor said he got little more than half that.

The TREASURER: The slimes plant cost £2,840, and £1,913 was paid for slimes. The net return from the slimes was £3,886; but including the cost of the plant and the amount paid for slimes the return from the slimes treated shows a debit balance of £867. It was a profitable venture, however, but it was needed to compensate for the enormous loss on the battery.

Mr. Hudson: That is not a policy you would argue on the goldfields when talking of granting assistance to prospectors.

The TREASURER: I would not argue a policy of making a loss of £6,000 on the battery. I would raise the rates, or close down the battery.

Mr. Heitmann: Would you apply the same argument to a railway?

The TREASURER: Yes, the railways must be made to pay. Altogether we spent £15,670 on the battery and cyanide plants and show a loss of nearly £6,000 on the working. The total quantity of stone treated, 29,214 tons, shows a loss per ton of 4s. 1d. It appears to me that unless there is something more in this business, and the hon. member seems to think so, we would be hardly justified in appointing a select committee on these figures. However, after the adjournment of the debate I will inquire from the department for a farther report on

the matter, and will endeavour to get some information on what the hon. member has, shall I say, insinuated regarding the loss on that year.

Mr. Hudson: It is not an insinuation; it is admitted by the department.

The TREASURER: I will have to find out what is admitted, and then if the hon. member pursues his motion when he gets the papers, we will see if there is justification for the inquiry he asks for.

On motion by the Minister for Works, debate adjourned.

#### PAPERS—SLIMES PLANT, NORSEMAN.

On motion by Mr. Hudson, ordered: "That all papers relating to the purchase and erection of slimes plant, and the accumulation of and payment for slimes at the Norseman State battery be laid on the Table."

#### MOTION—FREMANTLE GRAVING DOCK.

##### Report and Plan.

Mr. S. F. MOORE (Irwin) moved:—

*That Sir Whately Eliot's report on the proposed Fremantle Dock and a plan of the proposed dock be laid upon the Table. 2, That both those documents be printed.*

He understood the Minister had no objection to laying the documents on the Table and having them printed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Price): There was no opposition to the motion, but in view of the fact that the report had been lying on the Table for the best part of last session, while the greater portion of it had been printed in the newspapers, the hon. member might eliminate the second part of the motion simply on the score of avoiding expense.

Mr. S. F. MOORE (in reply): There were certain gentlemen living outside the State, but much interested in the State, who desired to see the documents, and it would be necessary to have them printed so that they could be supplied with copies.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 8.38 p.m.