

member for East Perth would not have got into the terrible state of mind he did get into. Another thing has caused me considerable pain, and that is when the member for North Murchison (Mr. Moorhead) interjected on two or three occasions that there were too many office-seekers on this side of the House. I, for one, throw back the taunt and accusation with contempt. As far as I know there are as few office-seekers on this side of the House as on the other, and perhaps a good many less. At any rate, I repudiate the idea that I am an office-seeker; and I certainly do not know any other office-seeker on this side of the House. As regards taking sides, I do not want to be disagreeable or to say anything that is not pleasant, but judging from the results of the last few days or weeks, I must congratulate myself on being on the right side of the House. The remarks of the Treasurer about the Midland Railway Company quite satisfy me that I am on the right side of the House. The handling of this terrible disaster, the strike, by the occupants of the Treasury benches satisfies me particularly that I am on the right side of the House. I will not take up the time of the House longer as the hour is getting late, but I will say that personally I have nothing but feelings of the most profound esteem for the gentlemen on the Treasury benches, and as far as my support goes, when they introduce measures which in my opinion are for the benefit of the State, they will have my support.

On motion by Dr. O'CONNOR, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 21 minutes past 10 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 10th July, 1901.

Motion (urgency): Railway Workers' Strike (not seconded)—Question: Railway Stations, Official Inspection—Question: Railway Officers' Association, Official Recognition—Question: Mines Inspector, Kalgoorlie—Leave of Absence, Debate on Attendances—Papers presented—Revenue Received: Ministerial Statement—Adjournment.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

MOTION (URGENCY) — RAILWAY WORKERS' STRIKE.

HON. J. M. SPEED (Metropolitan-Suburban): I beg to move that the Council, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday next; and I do so for the purpose of referring to what I consider, and what ought to be considered by members of this House, an urgent matter—the present strike. It had been my intention to move the following motion this afternoon, after obtaining a suspension of the Standing Orders, but it is impossible to suspend the Standing Orders, because an absolute majority of members of the House is not present. The motion which I had hoped to move is to this effect:

That this House, whilst recognising the propriety of the Government demand that the differences between the Railway Department and the line repairers should be settled by arbitration, is of opinion that, owing to the long delays—caused by unavoidable political changes—which have occurred in dealing with the men's claims, and to the general admission of the justness of their demands, that arbitration should be waived in this instance, and recognise that the Government should introduce a resolution to make provision to accede to the request of the line repairers for an increase of 1s. per day in their wages.

I am sorry I am not in a position to ask the House to support such a motion, but I shall ask the House to consider the question, and, if possible, give an opinion on it, because I believe the opinion of hon. members will have some effect on public opinion. I trust members will look on this matter with a fair view, and beyond any party considerations. We know well enough that this House is supposed to be above party questions, and in a matter of this importance, it is only right and reasonable that members should waive their opinions in order to obtain a

solution of the present difficulty. We know if the strike continues it will affect not only Perth and Fremantle, but far more seriously the goldfields, and we also know that anything that affects the goldfields must eventually do serious harm here. Looking at it from the point of view of the State generally, unless some end is soon arrived at in regard to the strike it may effect us in years to come. I trust that whatever means of settlement be adopted, there will be a speedy end to this conflict, and, whether the Government or the men give way, that there will be some solution of the difficulty. I am sorry to see the Government have, to a certain extent, thrown down the gauntlet to the men by stating that unless they return to work to-morrow morning, they will be, so to speak, beyond the pale of civilisation; they will not be allowed any longer to have a *status* in the railway service. Of course the men have, in my opinion, already taken the matter into their own hands, and have left the service; and I do not know that the Government are bound to give them any such statement as has been furnished; but, if we are to have conciliation, it would have been far wiser if that statement had not been made. However, the mischief is done; and it is now for this House and the Ministry to consider whether they can come to some reasonable arrangement. I know well enough people say, "These men do not deserve any consideration; they have gone out on strike, and let them take the consequences." But, unfortunately, the strikers are not the only men who will have to take the consequences: the State also will have to take the consequences; and how about the dignity of the Ministry, if the State, through their preserving their dignity in the manner they have adopted, loses hundreds of thousands of pounds, as it may possibly do? We all know what took place in this House last session; and I am sorry the House took upon itself to change the Conciliation Bill from what it was when it came to the House, and to make it law in its present form. We find men who are under the Conciliation Act working alongside the strikers. We find the engine-drivers; and if any men could come out and change the situation, they could; yet they are loyal and law-abiding under the

Conciliation Act, and I think this shows that when one section of the workers is prepared to work in the loyal and proper manner exhibited by the engine-drivers, it is creditable to the workers and to the State, and also shows the evil effects of giving conciliation to one section of the workers and not to another. We all know the facts of this strike, and I have moved this motion more with the view of getting the collective opinion of the House upon it than to express my own opinions; because I have already expressed these. As I have said, I desire to import no acrimony into this discussion; but I should like to see an amicable settlement arrived at as soon as possible; and I believe that any statements of members in this House should have some weight with the public. I have been told they would have no weight with the public. Then the question must seriously be asked, if a House which is supposed to represent vested interests in this State, which interests are in danger of being seriously affected by such a strike as the present, cannot give an effective expression of opinion, either individually or collectively, upon such a matter, is there any necessity for that House? I regret as a member to have to ask that question; but how is it to be answered? If hon. members of this House have not considered a matter of this sort of sufficient vital importance to give an opinion on it, then why does this House exist?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot take this motion, as it has not been seconded.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): Perhaps, in accordance with former practice, the Minister for Lands is prepared to make some statement, not in reference to the motion, but on the general question, which is a matter of public importance.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; it is competent for any member to make a statement.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. Sommers): Of course, this matter has given the Government a great deal of anxiety, and naturally they have looked at it from every aspect; but, in the interests of the State, I and the Government are convinced we adopted the only possible course. I may remind hon. members that to the last two letters sent by the Government to the strikers, no

answer has been vouchsafed. An offer has been made in all fairness to the men, to submit the question to a board. The *personnel* of that board has been practically agreed to, but the suggestion that a board be appointed, the finding of which should not be binding on both sides is, to my mind, and in the opinion of the Government, too ridiculous to be entertained. The Government have taken their present stand after careful consideration; the offer is open until 8 o'clock to-morrow morning for those men to return to their usual employment; and, failing that, in the interests of the State, the Government have determined to take such steps as will allow the business of the department to proceed. At this stage, I do not think it desirable to say more. We are convinced that our course is right; we are convinced that the majority of the people of the State are behind us in the action we have taken; and all I can say is, we intend to stand firm, and to proceed on the lines we have laid down.

QUESTION—RAILWAY STATIONS, OFFICIAL INSPECTION.

HON. W. MALEY asked the Minister for Lands: 1, The number of official visits of inspection which have been made during the 12 months ended 1st inst. to the several railway stations in the State by the General Manager, the Traffic Manager, and the Engineer for Existing Lines. 2, Are such visits of inspection, if any, recorded by the stationmasters in the several inspection books kept at such railway stations. 3, When was the last joint official inspection of the railways made by the General Manager, the Traffic Manager, and the Engineer for Existing Lines.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. Sommers) replied:—1, Official visits of inspection were made during the year ended 1st inst., as follow: General Manager 5, Chief Traffic Manager 10, Chief Engineer for Existing Lines 10, Assistant Engineer for Existing Lines 19. 2, No. 3, June, 1900.

QUESTION—RAILWAY OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION, OFFICIAL RECOGNITION.

HON. W. MALEY asked the Minister for Lands: 1, If the Government is

aware that during last month 200 officers, including railway station-masters and others, formed themselves into an association for their protection. 2, If the association so formed has applied for official recognition.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied:—1, A notification to this effect has been received by the General Manager. 2, Application has been made to the General Manager.

QUESTION—MINES INSPECTOR, KALGOORLIE.

HON. T. F. BRIMAGE asked the Minister for Lands: 1, If it is the intention of the Hon. the Minister of Mines to remove the present Inspector of Mines from Kalgoorlie. 2, If any complaints have been received respecting the said Inspector of Mines. 3, If so, when, and from whom.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied:—1, The question of removing the present Inspector of Mines from Kalgoorlie has not been considered. 2, No. 3, Answered by No. 2.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE—DEBATE ON ATTENDANCES.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON (North) moved:

That leave of absence for two months be granted to the Hon. F. M. Stone, on account of urgent private business in England.

In view of yesterday's decision, he moved this with much diffidence, hoping the House would not be too drastic, for that might eventually deprive the North Province of one of its representatives. Mr. Stone, having been aware that the earlier part of the session would be short, did not think it worth while to leave England, but would be in his place when the House met again in August. With the President's remark that members, being paid, ought to attend, he (Mr. Richardson) fully concurred; but he was of opinion Mr. Stone would not draw his salary for the time he was absent.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Would it be competent to postpone the motion until the Orders of the Day had been considered?

THE PRESIDENT: Motions were usually taken first. Last night it had been suggested that certain applications for leave of absence be referred to a

select committee. If such committee were appointed, it could deal with this and other applications also.

HON. R. S. HAYNES (Central) moved :

That the application be referred to a select committee, to consist of three members, with the usual powers of inquiry, and report.

HON. G. RANDELL (Metropolitan-Suburban): Could the Minister for Lands make any statement as to when the House would adjourn over the Royal Visit? Possibly these motions would not be required. Under the Constitution Act, members might be absent for two months. By the Standing Orders of the House, they must not be absent from the sittings for over a fortnight. *

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Randell was quite right. Two months was the only period to be considered. The House might agree to let the application stand over till August, which would obviate the necessity for a select committee. If the hon. member were back in August, no question could arise against him.

HON. R. S. HAYNES withdrew his motion.

THE PRESIDENT: The case might be met by postponing the consideration of the application for a month.

HON. G. RANDELL moved :

That the consideration of the application be postponed for one month.

HON. M. L. MOSS (West): Such a course might involve danger to an hon. member for whom he had applied for leave. Under the Constitution Act, an absence of more than two months after the commencement of the session would give ground for declaring the seat vacant.

THE PRESIDENT: An absence without consent.

HON. M. L. MOSS: And inasmuch as, before the application could be considered, two months might have elapsed from the opening of this session, the absent members would be in a difficulty. An amendment was before the House that the three motions be postponed.

THE PRESIDENT: The House would have to deal with each motion separately. What he had previously stated was that the two subsequent motions could be dealt with similarly to the motion now before the House. Mr. Randell had moved an amendment that the motion be postponed until this day month.

HON. M. L. MOSS: These matters should be dealt with at once. He had no desire to detain the House, but he was prepared in regard to the motion, which he moved yesterday, to give grounds why leave of absence should be granted, and he thought then members would grant the leave at once.

HON. J. M. SPEED (Metropolitan-Suburban): Although not a believer in members absenting themselves from the House, it had been the custom in the past to allow members to please themselves whether they came to the House or not. Sometimes it was hard to get a quorum; still, if it had been the custom in the past to grant leave when a member asked, it was only reasonable that the leave should be granted now. Of course, these members would have to consider the propriety of paying back to the Treasury, the money which was paid to them for their Parliamentary duties. In fairness, the House ought to grant the leave of absence asked for, but in the future members would have to consider their position before asking for leave. Many members in the past had looked on the House as a private club more than anything else.

HON. H. LUKIN: It was quite time they were undeceived.

HON. J. M. SPEED: It was unfair to treat members differently from what they had been treated in the past.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): It was only fair that this motion should be postponed. When in town Mr. Stone was a regular and valuable attendant at the House, but this, he believed, was the third session in which Mr. Stone purposed to absent himself for the whole time Parliament was sitting. This was not a motion that should be adopted without consideration, and members should know what Mr. Stone's wishes were while he was away, and when he intended to return. There were special reasons for objecting to leave of absence for a whole session being granted precipitately in this instance. He (Mr. Hackett) did not agree with Mr. Speed, who seemed to fire his bolts at random.

HON. J. M. SPEED: Was anyone hitting now?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: No; Mr. Speed launched out his javelins in all directions in the hope that one would get home: seldom they did get home. He

(Mr. Hackett) had been in the House longer than any member except the President, he had been a member of the Legislative Council four years longer than any other member present, and during the 10 years of his (Mr. Hackett's) membership he had never asked for leave of absence within his recollection. Circumstances were different from what they used to be. He did not know that it was more difficult to obtain a quorum in this House than in the other House; perhaps it was easier, but to his mind this House applied itself more diligently to business, when business was before it, than even another place did. Circumstances were changed now; there was payment of members, and one of the chief arguments was that payment imposed an obligation on the gentlemen who took public money to attend in their places and transact the public business.

HON. M. L. MOSS: The hon. member should have supported a penal clause being inserted in the Payment of Members Act last session.

HON. J. W. HACKETT said he supported all proposals to insist on members being regular in their attendances. Another point had been made, that it was not the House, but a member's constituents who should take notice of default in duty on the part of members. The member who raised that point could not have read the Constitution Act or the Standing Orders. A constituency was powerless; public meetings might be held on every evening and every morning of the week, petitions and remonstrances might be made on the defaulting member, and yet that member could sit in his study and laugh. The only body intrusted by the Constitution to deal with questions of this kind was the House. He would support the amendment made by Mr. Randell, because it would enable Mr. Richardson to give the House a little more information in regard to Mr. Stone's absence, for the hon. member had not given any reasons whatever.

HON. J. RICHARDSON: Mr. Stone had a good record for attendance.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: How many times had Mr. Stone been absent? There was no reason why this matter should be rushed. Two months must elapse before the seat would become vacant. He raised his voice in protest against members, at

the commencement of the session, making applications of this kind as if they were simply formal matters.

THE PRESIDENT: The section of the Act relating to this matter stated:

If any member of the Legislative Council fails to give his attendance in the Legislative Council or in the Legislative Assembly, as the case may be, for two consecutive months of any session thereof without the permission of the said Council or Assembly, as the case may be, entered upon its journals, his seat shall become vacant.

The plan proposed by Mr. Randell was the best one, and perhaps by that time the members who were at present away would be able to take their seats.

Amendment (to postpone) put and passed.

DEBATE RESUMED.

Debate resumed from previous day, on the motion by Hon. M. L. Moss, that leave of absence for two months be granted to Hon. D. McKay, an account of his absence from the State through illness.

HON. R. S. HAYNES (Central): Mr. McKay had been one of the most regular attendants in the Chamber. The adjournment of the debate was moved to enable the member proposing that leave be granted to Mr. Mackay to make out his case and give reasons. The absence of Mr. McKay was unavoidable, and he would be glad to see that gentleman back again.

HON. M. L. MOSS (West): It was not to be supposed for a moment that he would support any member absenting himself from his duties in the Chamber. Anyone occupying a position in the Legislative Council should attend to his duties; he did not make that statement for the first time. When the Payment of Members Act was before the House last session, he (Mr. Moss) urged that some provision should be made in the Bill to penalise members who did not attend to their duties. It was well known that numbers of members purged their contempt by walking into the Chamber, bowing to the Chair, and walking out again. The notice of motion itself, he thought, gave a sufficient reason for granting the leave. Mr. McKay had been, and was now, in a dangerous state of health. He (Mr. Moss) held Mr. McKay's power of attorney, and Mr. McKay's state of health was so bad that it was impossible to have any communi-

cation with him on the matter. Mr. McKay had wired to him from Melbourne: "Move leave of absence; improving slightly; wire me how matters are." No member possessed a record for regular attendance better than Mr. McKay. In 1896 Mr. McKay attended 19 sittings out of 32, but he was only sworn in after the 14th sitting. In the first session of 1897 Mr. McKay attended eight sittings out of eight; and in the second session 24 out of 24. In 1898 he attended 30 out of 41, and was granted a fortnight's leave of absence. In 1899 he attended 44 sittings out of 47. In the first session of 1900, 10 sittings out of 12, and in the second 35 sittings out of 36. That was a record any member might be justly proud of; he did not think any member could claim a record of that kind.

HON. H. LUKIN (East): Thanks were due to Mr. Hackett for having drawn attention to what all must acknowledge had hitherto been an abuse—the manner in which some members absented themselves. This really affected the very existence of the House. The question had already been raised, and would be raised again, whether there were any reason for a Legislative Council; and the fact of members being absent in the old country for a whole session, not once, but two or three times, would lead people seriously to ask whether the House was necessary. Now that there was payment of members, it was evident the country would expect hon. members to do their duty more effectively, and to be regularly in their places. For the absence of Mr. McKay there was, apparently, every reason. None could command good health; and if the mover could show that the absence was caused by inevitable illness, the House would surely be glad to grant leave.

THE PRESIDENT: At the beginning of the session he had received notice that Mr. McKay was in a hospital and seriously ill.

HON. E. McLARTY (South-West) supported the motion. About four weeks ago, he had met Mr. McKay in Melbourne, and had noticed he was looking very ill indeed. A consideration of the hon. member's record of attendance would lead the House readily to pass the motion.

Motion put and passed.

Debate also resumed from last sitting, on the motion by Hon. H. Briggs, for leave of absence to Hon. H. B. Kidson.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): The adjournment of the debate had been moved to allow Mr. Briggs to produce some farther evidence, which might induce the House to grant this great indulgence to Mr. Kidson. Probably the hon. member had come prepared with such facts. Mr. Kidson had certainly been a very regular attendant during most of his parliamentary career. Farther, his term of office expired next year; so his constituents would be able to deal with the matter effectively. If a good case could be made out, he (Mr. Hackett) had no desire to prolong the discussion; but he hoped the mover (Mr. Briggs) would make out a sufficiently strong case to prevent this from being urged as a precedent for granting leave of absence to which a member was not entitled.

HON. H. BRIGGS (West): Since the adjournment, he had obtained certain figures which would afford the information desired by the last speaker. Replying to Mr. Hackett's contention that in these matters the constituencies occupied subordinate positions, and that they had no voice—

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The statement made by him was that the constituencies were helpless.

HON. H. BRIGGS: In this instance, the opinions of the constituents were voiced by two other members for that province who were now in the House, and who were the channels by which the constituents' opinions could be brought before hon. members.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Was that in the Constitution Act?

HON. H. BRIGGS: No; but there was in this case a channel of communication. The proposer and seconder of the motion represented the West Province; and any feeling in the constituency, whether expressed by petition, by meeting, or otherwise, would be known to himself and to Mr. Moss: so in this case the constituency was not so helpless.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: In that argument, the hon. member was not serious.

HON. H. BRIGGS: In 1895 Mr. Kidson had attended all the sittings possible. He attended 22 times out of 31,

as he had taken the oath at the ninth sitting of the House. In 1896 he had attended 31 times out of 32; in the first session of 1897, eight out of eight; in the second session of 1897, 23 out of 24; in 1898, 27 out of 41; in 1899, 24 out of 47; in the first session of 1900, 5 out of 12; and in the second session, 24 out of 36. True, attendance was not the only qualification for membership; but Mr. Kidson had done good work, having taken a prominent part in debates and on committees. From the index to *Hansard* it would be noticed that in 1898 he had spoken on 27 subjects, and made 127 speeches. He was a hard worker, and no doubt his legal knowledge was of assistance to the House. In 1899, the hon. member had spoken on 26 subjects, making 45 speeches. In 1900, he had spoken on 24 subjects, making 52 speeches. It was not simply on account of his children that the hon. member went to England: he had other and urgent business to transact.

HON. W. G. BROOKMAN (Metropolitan-Suburban) supported the motion. All hon. members were liable to be called away on private or public business, and leave of absence should, when required, be granted.

Motion put and passed.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR LANDS: 1, *Re* School of Mines on Eastern Goldfields; 2, Amendment of Regulations *re* importation of fruit; 3, *re* Case of James Gleeson.

REVENUE RECEIVED—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. Sommers): With the permission of the House, I should like to refer to the revenue for the month ending 30th June, 1901. The revenue for the month is £298,106 5s. 3d. The revenue for the corresponding month of 1900 was £310,949 7s. 5d.; showing a decrease in the revenue for this month of £12,843 2s. 2d. The revenue for quarter ending 30th June, 1901, was £796,089 9s. 1d., and for quarter ending 30th June, 1900, £795,860 3s. 7d., showing an increase of £229 5s. 6d. For the year ending 30th June, 1901, the income was £3,078,033 11s. 3d.; and

for the year ending 30th June, 1900, £2,875,395 8s. 5d., or an increase this year of £202,638 2s. 10d. The estimated revenue for the year ending 30th June, 1901, was £2,900,000, showing an excess of £178,033 11s. 3d.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 5.28 o'clock until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 10th July, 1901.

Question: School of Mines, Kalgoorlie—Question: Stocks (W.A.) and Investments—Question: Bunbury Harbour Works, Funds—Question: Experimental Farms—Question: Dam at 42-mile—Question: Kurrawang Firewood Company, Concession—Question: Customs Duties, Uniform—Question: Live Stock and Frozen Meat, Inspectors—Revenue Received: Statement by the Treasurer—Railway Workers' Strike: Debate arrested, Speaker's Ruling—Address-in-reply; sixth day, conclusion—Railway Workers' Strike; Premier's request (urgency); Motion by Premier Debated, division, passed (2.30 a.m.)—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—SCHOOL OF MINES, KALGOORLIE.

MR. J. RESIDE, for Mr. W. D. Johnson, asked the Minister for Mines: Whether it was his intention to immediately establish a School of Mines in Kalgoorlie.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES replied: The matter was under the consideration of the Government.

QUESTION—STOCKS (W.A.) AND INVESTMENTS.

MR. J. M. HOPKINS asked the Colonial Treasurer: 1, If it is true that accumulated sinking funds have been invested in West Australian stocks. 2, If so, to what amount. 3, If the Colonial