

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 4th August, 1908.

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

Prayers.

QUESTION—STATE BATTERY, LINDEN.

Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Mines: 1, What was the price paid for the two-head battery erected at Linden by the Government? 2, What was the railway freight paid on same from place of purchase to Murrin Murrin or Kookynie? 3, What was the cost of carriage from Murrin Murrin or Kookynie to Linden by teams? 4, How much did it cost to erect and equip the Linden plant?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, £664 2s. 5d. (including oil engines for both mill and water shaft, also pump for water supply). 2, £184 2s. 3d. 3, £152 12s. 5d. 4, £1,250 17s. 1d. (without buildings or tools and housing transferred from Yundamindera).

QUESTION—RAILWAY TIMBER CHARGES.

Mr. WALKER asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Are the reductions on railway freights on train-loads allowed to Millar Brothers allowed to other persons, firms, or corporations? 2, Are such reductions a right that may be claimed generally as applicable to all persons, firms, and corporations engaged in the same or other industries throughout the State?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The reduction applies to Western Australian hardwoods for export in consignments of 120 tons and over handed

to the Department in any one day, irrespective of who the consignor may be. 2, Yes.

QUESTION—UNION FUNDS AND POLITICAL PURPOSES.

Mr. BATH asked the Attorney General: In view of the recent decision of the English Courts in the case against the Railway Servants Union *re* use of funds for political purposes, and of the case of Steele *versus* the South Wales Miners Federation, will he take steps to discontinue the refusal to register industrial unions whose rules provide for political action?

The PREMIER (for the Attorney General) replied: The decisions referred to have been brought under the notice of the Registrar, and in view thereof, he will not continue to refuse to register.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS MANUFACTURE.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has he gone into the question of manufacturing agricultural implements in the Workshops under the control of the Public Works Department? 2, If not, will he instruct his officers to go into the question of manufacture, and prepare estimates of cost of manufacture, with a view, if the report be satisfactory, to commencing the manufacture of such implements?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1 and 2, The matter has received consideration, and the Government are taking steps which it is believed will result in the manufacture of agricultural machinery in the State.

QUESTION—MINING TRIBUTE, YARRI.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have here the answer to a question asked by the hon. member for Hannans last week, dealing with the registration at Kookynie of the tribute agreement of the Lake View Company at Yarri. I promised that as soon as the full information was avail-

able the answer would be given. The questions were:—1, Was the tribute agreement of the Lake View Co. at Yarri, providing for royalty on all amounts earned over £3 10s. per week, registered at Kookynie? 2, Did the Warden refuse to register a tribute agreement on the adjoining lease, owned by W. Thomas, providing for the payment of royalty on all amounts earned over £3 15s. per week? 3, If so, why was discrimination shown between the two applications?

The answers are:—1, Yes; the agreement provided for a royalty on earnings from £3 10s. net upwards. 2, A tribute agreement was forwarded to the registrar at Kookynie for registration, but was returned to Mr. Thomas with a notification that the fee forwarded was not sufficient, the document not having been stamped. Mr. Thomas was also notified that the agreement did not contain a clause relative to royalties in accordance with the provisions of Clause 2, Regulation 192 of the Mining Act 1904. The matter did not come before the Warden, as until Mr. Thomas forwarded the additional fee the registration could not be effected. 3, Answered by numbers 1 and 2.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Mines: Papers dealing with the exemption on the Wheal Ellen mine; also Water Supply at Errols.

DEBATE—ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day, conclusion.

Resumed from the previous Thursday.

Mr. W. B. GORDON (Canning): It is not my intention to make many remarks on the Address-in-Reply, seeing that we will soon be on the hustings, when I among others will have the opportunity of addressing the electors. One or two questions appeal to me as being of importance to the State. One especially is the question that has been discussed pretty freely of late, the cost of living. I am glad to think the Government have seen fit to suggest that a Royal Commission should be appointed to go into this matter, for I feel confident this will be the

only way by which there can be a solution of the question that will satisfy the people. During the debate on this question I am sorry to say unfavourable comments were made as regards the price of meat. On the appearance of things, it would seem that there is a combine; but there is no certainty of this. Supposing, however, there is a combine, after all is said and done that combine may be justifiable for the reason that the raising of the prices may have been warranted; then, of course, the people have to pay these prices. The whole thing depends on whether the Government can see a way out of it; and supposing the price now being charged is considered high by the Royal Commission, then it will be their duty to point out how that cost can be reduced. I have continually advocated from my place in the House that the efforts of past Parliaments as regards the cost of living and its reduction, have been very few. The action that the present Government is taking in opening up stock routes and the settlement of land will eventually determine this question, in spite of any combine that may exist. The real crux of the question, as far as I know at present, is the cost of shipping to and from the North-West. We should give facilities for getting to our Northern ports and to the far-distant breeding places of stock. Assistance should be given so that the freights from these places can be made more reasonable. We should give reasonable facilities and first-class shipping accommodation to those who want to send stock to the market. This, with the opening up of stock routes and the conservation of water along those stock routes will do a great deal. The question of conserving water all along stock routes is one that should be gone into more thoroughly to elucidate the question of cheap meat. Attention has not been paid to this matter as it should have been by past Governments. Little notice has been taken of it by them, and even the efforts of the present Government in this direction are not nearly strong enough. There is another question I wish to touch on, and that is in regard to the manufacture of agricultural implements by the Government. It is

entirely against my politics to think that the Government are going to take up the manufacture of these implements. [*The Treasurer*: Who said they are?] It is a question that has been mooted, and one that has not yet been clearly and decisively answered by the Government as to whether they intend to take the matter up or not. At any rate I am strongly opposed to it, and shall continue to oppose it as strongly as I can.

Mr. Angwin: You would rather buy them from the other States?

Mr. Johnson: They are making them in his own constituency.

Mr. GORDON: I would strongly oppose the Government manufacturing these implements, because I can see endless trouble and difficulties for them if they take on this work; not only in the matter of price, but also in the matter of patents which the Government would have to buy before they could even have an up-to-date plough or an up-to-date harrow. The complex question that would arise in buying up patents is more than the Government should take up. On the other hand if the Government could see their way clear to assist the farmer to buy, for cash, farming implements locally made, that would be a different question altogether. Is there not enough energy and capital in this country to start this industry? As a matter of fact I know there is, and I am perfectly satisfied that with very little encouragement there are firms in Western Australia to-day prepared to undertake the manufacture of all the farming implements needed in the State, at a price considerably less than that at which they can be imported. If the Government could see their way to assist any firm by guaranteeing a certain output at a certain and fixed price that would be under the present cost, it would be the duty of the Government to do so; but it is not the duty of the Government to attempt this work themselves, or even to allow the idea to go abroad that they are likely to establish factories for the making of farming implements. I want to be thoroughly clear on that; and not only do I wish to make it clear here now, but I also intend to make it clear on the hustings. These are the two questions that

really appeal to me at present. Others will naturally crop up after the Premier has given his next speech, and then we will all be out in the cold, cold world for the time being, saying that there are things we ought to have done, and that there are things we will do, and trying to redeem pledges we have never made but are accused of having made. At present I think it is unnecessary for me to speak any farther on the Address-in-Reply, but I can hardly sit down without complimenting the Government on the drastic way in which they are attempting to override unionism, and on the energetic way in which any question that has come before them in the past three years has been dealt with cleanly and simply, and in such a decisive manner in such quick time, that it must be refreshing to Governments of the past to look over the career of the present Government. In times gone by we have had works promised galore—promised, promised, promised by all sorts of Governments and not completed. It rests with the Government of the day to complete them and to redeem the promises made by past Governments.

No other member rising to speak, several called out "Question!"

Question then put, and passed; the Address adopted.

BILL—RESERVE (YORK), REDEDICATION.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore) in moving the second reading said: This Bill, which is to enable the purpose of the reserve known as York Town Lot 211 to be changed, is a very small one. I was not aware we should have got through the business so speedily to-day, therefore the details of this measure, which are not very great, are not available. It is a small Bill similar to those which have been passed on various other occasions. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison): This is a very serious matter to deal with offhand, without information. I do not know what this reserve is, and why its purpose should be changed. It would be only right that the member for the district should explain where the reserve is, what is its present use, and what it is required for. When an important matter like this is before the House we should have plans placed before members. A few words from the member for the district might enlighten members on the question.

Mr. F. C. MONGER (York): I am quite alive to the importance of the Bill, but really, I know nothing about it.

Mr. Stuart: Where is York?

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNMENT OF HOUSE.

The House adjourned at seven minutes to 5 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 5th August, 1908.

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

Prayers.

QUESTION—BLACK RANGE RAILWAY.

Mr. TROY asked the Premier: 1, What progress is being made towards beginning the construction of the Black Range Rail-

way? 2, When does the Government anticipate having the work of construction put in hand?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Plans and specifications are expected to be ready in October for calling tenders. Tenders for rails have been accepted to-day. 2, Probably in November.

QUESTION—STATE BATTERY MANAGERS.

Mr. TROY asked the Minister for Mines: 1, When the recent transfer of State Battery managers was decided upon, was a requisition received from Coolgardie urging that the present manager be retained? 2, Was the manager retained? 3, Why were the requests for the retention of the State Battery managers at Boogardie and Norseman refused? 4, Does the Minister intend to place the papers relating to the retention of the Coolgardie manager on the table of the House?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, The transfer of the manager at Coolgardie was not recommended, but about a month after other transfers were announced a petition was received from Coolgardie requesting retention of the manager. 2, Yes, never having been recommended for transfer. 3, Owing to the fact that both the Norseman and Boogardie managers had been recommended for transfer by the Metallurgist and Engineer, State Batteries, whose recommendations or amendments regarding transfers of battery managers were not interfered with. 4, Certainly, if the ordinary procedure is adopted.

QUESTION—PERTH CO-OPERATIVE BAKERY, SUPPLY OF FLOUR.

Mr. BATH asked the Attorney General: 1, What action was taken by the Government re the refusal of flour milling firms to supply flour to the Perth Co-operative Bakery in 1907? 2, Does the Minister intend to place any papers connected with the matter on the table of the House?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1, Careful inquiries have been made and