

set an example in the administration of the legislation we have against the admission of people under contract; but here they are the first to set an example to private individuals in the violation of the law against the importation of people under contract, or as very often proves, under false pretences. Though I do not know whether they secured any authority from the Federal Minister controlling this department, certainly there was laxity on the part of those controlling the hospital and on the part of the Federal authorities to permit such a thing. I have moved for the papers to ascertain exactly what moved them to take this step, and if I find in those papers that the position is as it is claimed to be, and evidently is according to the evidence I have, I intend to move a farther motion in this House in regard to the matter. At present I content myself by moving for the production of the papers.

On motion by *the Premier*, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER, in moving the adjournment of the House, said: There are one or two motions appearing on the Notice Paper in the names of hon. members who are absent, and as those hon. members are anxious that the motions should not lapse, it is desirable to adjourn.

The House adjourned at 8.25 o'clock until the next Tuesday.

## Legislative Assembly,

*Tuesday, 6th August, 1907.*

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

Prayers.

### QUESTION — CAMELS IMPORTATION.

Mr. HOLMAN asked the Premier: 1, In reference to the alleged permission to import camels into Western Australia, has any compensation or grant of any kind been given to Faiz Mahomet? 2, (a.) If any, what was the amount granted? (b.) When was the grant made? (c.) What were the reasons for making the grant?

*The Premier:* Does the hon. member refer to the Faiz Mahomet transaction which took place some years ago?

*Mr. Holman:* Yes.

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, Compensation was paid to Faiz Mahomet on the 7th March, 1906, to the amount of £2,000, being the estimated actual out-of-pocket loss incurred by him in consequence of the Government, in October, 1900, having authorised him to import between 400 and 500 camels, and of the revocation on the 7th June, 1901, of the Order-in-Council of the 24th May, 1901, authorising the importation of the said camels. Compensation was recommended by a Select Committee of this House and by His Honour Mr. Justice McMillan in the case of Faiz Mahomet v. The Crown.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

*By the Minister for Mines:* Commission of Inquiry into Heitmann-Lander case—papers.

*By the Premier :* 1, By-laws of the Municipality of Wagin. 2, Report of proceedings of the Boards of Conciliation and Arbitration, 1906.

*By the Minister for Works :* 1, Supply of Water Meters in Metropolitan area—Return to order of the House dated 1st August. 2, Lease of Rocky Bay Quarries to Messrs. Briggs & Rowland—Return to order of the House dated 31st July.

### BILL—THIRD READING.

Permanent Reserve Revestment, transmitted to the Legislative Council.

### BILL—LAND TAX ASSESSMENT.

#### *Machinery Measure, Second Reading.*

The TREASURER (Hon. Frank Wilson) in moving the second reading said : Last session when introducing the Land Tax Assessment Bill, I endeavoured to put as clearly as possible before the House the necessity for the Bill and for increased taxation. I went farther, and tried to show that the incidence of land taxation was a just incidence, and also that the exemptions which the Government proposed were in the interests of the people generally. The Bill is exactly as it left this House last session the last time. It is introduced again to-day as it was after it had been dealt with in Committee, and the amendments or suggestions rather of another place had been considered, and certain of them adopted. Members will find it is exactly as it left the Assembly on the last occasion we considered it during last session.

*Mr. Johnson :* You have adopted the amendments inserted in Committee.

The TREASURER : Yes ; all the amendments approved of last session are in this measure as members have it before them. Before passing from that, let me say I have had several papers printed, in order to avoid if possible tedious repetition, showing examples of the incidence of the taxation at 1½d. in the pound as adopted last session. These appear as sheets Nos. 1, 2, and 3, and will be handed round with the measure. On sheet No.

2, members will see how the amount is arrived at which we anticipate will be received in the first year, if the measure passes. [*Mr. Taylor :* You will have to watch the man from Mokine.] In addition to that there is a report from the Treasury examiner who, under instructions, was despatched to the Eastern States to inquire into the working of the different offices in connection with land taxation and in connection with income taxation in the other States. This will give farther information to members and will obviate the necessity, as I said before, of explaining at length what is the course taken in the Eastern States and how taxation will work out in the different cases. It is not necessary to-night, and I do not intend to probe into the ancient history of the ownership of land in Western Australia as requested by the member for Guildford last session, because I am not personally concerned as to how people got their land, but as Treasurer I am concerned and very earnestly concerned that we shall get some revenue out of the land, which I think is a fair subject for taxation. Last session I think I proved up to the hilt that this tax was a necessity, and I propose this afternoon, as briefly as possible, to endeavour to show that after 12 months have elapsed it is still a necessity, and that we must have taxation on the lands of the State. In doing that I may have to repeat a few figures which have been used in the debate on the Address-in-Reply, more notably the figures used by the member for Subiaco, who made a very excellent financial speech which almost took the character of a Budget pronouncement, and therefore if I have to use figures which members have heard before I hope I shall not be guilty of what I may term tedious repetition. I should be happy indeed this afternoon if I could point to a large increased revenue as our neighbours in the Eastern States of Australia can to-day. I congratulate them on their return to prosperity. They have had many years of bad times, and now that the flood-tide of prosperity has set in once more we can afford to congratulate them. I hope some of that

prosperity will reflect on us in due course. If I could point to such a condition of affairs perhaps there would be no need to introduce this measure, but as we cannot do that we must ask both Houses of Parliament to assist us in raising extra revenue to take the place of that which has been displaced through Federation, and also to take the place of the loss of revenue. Although our financial position—and I am proud to maintain this statement to-night—to my mind is relatively much stronger than in any of the States of the Commonwealth, I think there is increased need for revenue. Our revenue for last year was £190,000, to use round figures, below the estimate, and month after month as the revenue showed it was shrinking one could not but be impressed with the importance and the necessity of looking round for sources from where to increase that revenue. In addition to that it was £157,000 less than the previous year of 1905-6. The Leader of the Opposition referred on several occasions to the deplorable condition of the finances, and based, as far as I can gather, his argument that the finances were in a deplorable condition—which I dispute—on the fact that we had a deficit during the last year's transactions. Of course I recognise we had a deficit, and if it is too large it is certainly something that requires adjusting, and I think members will give the Government credit at any rate for the fact, that when they realised this deficit was increasing as the year went on they took every means and every step within their power to counteract the deficit by cutting down their expenditure. I think I can prove that our financial position is very much sounder from this deficit point of view than the other States, when I briefly mention that the other States, although to-day they revel in unbounded revenue, I may say largely increased revenue, yet have large deficits gradually being extinguished. For instance, in New South Wales I find there was on the 30th June, 1906, an accumulated unliquidated deficit there of £1,814,000, and in Queensland they had an accumu-

lated deficit unliquidated at that date of £1,130,000, and in Victoria they have an unliquidated deficit of £1,459,000.

*Mr. Johnson* : It is rather uncharitable to use that argument.

*The TREASURER* : It is not uncharitable. I am merely stating the facts to show that notwithstanding the fact that we have also had a deficit during the past year we cannot say our finances are in a deplorable condition, but we can say it shows the necessity for increased taxation. These deficits in the other States do not, it is true, appear on the balance-sheets because they are covered by Treasury bills issued from time to time, the proceeds of which are utilised to extinguish the deficits temporarily until funds are raised by increased revenue, which is now going to the Eastern States, to pay them off. That is the position as far as we are concerned, we have an accumulated deficit which represents to-day £208,000, yet compared with the other States it is very much less, being only 16s. per head of the population as against 41s. in Queensland, and 22s. in New South Wales and Victoria. The point I want to make in regard to this deficit—I will deal with our own—is that if the deficit has been caused through reduced duties or if it has been caused through increased production of goods or products which were previously imported, it does not necessarily mean a sign of distress, nor does it mean a deplorable state of our finances. On the contrary it is to some extent a sign of prosperity, and although we cannot exactly say, as the member for Subiaco pointed out when making his speech, who has got the immediate benefit or advantage of the abolition of duties—I refer more especially to the special tariff now non-existent—yet we can come to this conclusion that the State as a whole has received the advantage, and that therefore we should be justified in changing that incidence of taxation to some extent in order to equalise our revenue and expenditure. We do know that during the past five years from the special tariff we collected £869,000, and we know that notwithstanding the fact that this was a sliding

scale decreasing year by year, as members are aware, by 20 per cent. until it disappeared altogether last year, it averaged £173,000 per annum, and that the goods from which this revenue was derived are now of necessity either produced in the State or being imported free. Therefore to that extent the people are benefiting by the abolition of that special tariff. The uniform tariff in the meantime has fallen away from £1,162,000 in 1902-3, the first full year of Federation, to £953,000 in 1905-6, the difference being £209,000. I may point out one item in that shrinkage which perhaps members can hardly realise and which accounts for £30,000 per annum. It is the reduction of the duty on spirits. If we had the old duty on spirits of 16s. per gallon instead of the duty of 14s. per gallon which is collected under the Commonwealth tariff, we should receive in Western Australia some £30,000 per annum more than we receive under the uniform tariff. If we add the £173,000, the average per annum that we have lost through the abolition of the special tariff, to the £209,000 lost on the uniform tariff, we have a total loss of £382,000 per annum under the tariffs as affecting Western Australia. The surplus returnable to Western Australia is considerably more than that, and we find on looking into the figures that the difference between the year I have referred to, 1902-3, the first full year of Federation, and last year represents a falling off of £475,000 per annum in the amount returned to Western Australia. This of course includes the special tariff to which I have just referred. On the other hand, not only have we had that shrinkage but the Commonwealth expenditure has increased considerably, about £50,000 in the same time. For instance, in 1901-2 the Commonwealth expenditure was £339,000, in 1902-3 it was £365,000 in 1903-4 it was £424,000, in 1904-5—when "other" expenditure was for the first time charged per capita—it went down to £400,000, and in 1905-6, the latest figures I have, it went up to £414,000; so that on the one hand we have a decreasing revenue collected, and on the other hand we have this ever-increasing

expenditure on the part of the Federal Government, which of course reduces the amount we receive.

*Mr. Bath:* Is not that accounted for by services taken over?

The TREASURER: Yes, it is partially accounted for on that head. I want to point out that we have lost since 1902-3 £475,000 in the per annum amount which is returned to us from the Commonwealth Government, including of course excise and customs revenue. If we had to stop at that position, surely the Treasury condition would be deplorable, but I have on the other hand figures to show that during the same five years, ending 30th June last, the State revenue has increased by £492,000. The principal increases are: Under *Taxation*—dividend duty £31,000, stamp duty £19,000, probate duty £20,000, totalisator tax £7,000, wines, beer, and spirit licenses £13,000—I am taking round figures in this instance also. Under *Services Rendered*—railways £70,000, land £73,000, water supply £100,000—of course that is the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme which came into existence only some four or five years ago—harbour dues £46,000, State batteries £43,000, Royal Mint £15,000. So we have this position, that the shrinkage of the Commonwealth returns is more than counterbalanced by the increase in our State revenue. Our population has increased by about one-third in the meantime, by 67,000 people in the five years; and as that necessarily means increased administrative expenditure and of course expenditure in many ways, we are to that extent to the bad. Moneys have to be borrowed for public works. As our population increases and the people's needs expand we have to borrow money, and of course our interest and sinking fund bill has gone up enormously. The expenditure of our Education Department I may mention has increased by £67,000 per annum in the same period. It shows that although our State revenue has equalled the shrinkage in the Commonwealth revenue, yet so far as our people's wants are concerned we have not had the increased revenue with which to meet requirements. Again, we have this position so far as our loan interest and sink-

ing fund bill is concerned: in 1901-2 it amounted to £602,000; last year, 1906-7, the bill amounted to £864,000, showing an increase in that period of £262,000. So if we strike a balance and set one off against the other we have this position: The decrease in the annual Federal surplus between the years I have mentioned amounted to £475,000, and the five years' increase in our interest and sinking fund bill amounted to £263,000, a total of £738,000. Against this we have an increase in the State revenue of £492,000, showing a shortage of revenue available for general expenditure of £246,000. To that extent we are worse off to-day than we were five years ago, and I say at once that it is no wonder that the expenditure on our public works and buildings, that is permanent public works and buildings, out of revenue, which has formed a main factor in our Budget announcements ever since Responsible Government in this State, has fallen off. Five years ago, with only two-thirds of our present population, we were able to expend £273,000 out of revenue on these works; last year we could only expend £192,000. Sorry as I would be to see this amount reduced, I may say at once that we shall have no other course but to cut down this item unless we can get increased revenue. Much has been made of this matter from time to time, and it has been made a charge against the present Administration by members of the Opposition that we have not expended sufficient out of revenue upon these permanent public works. Of course I do not wish to treat this phase of the question from a party point of view. I simply say we would be only too happy to expend all the money possible out of revenue were it available. It is clearly shown by the records of the Treasury that not only have we been unable to spend as much money as we would like out of revenue on permanent public works, but that our friends opposite when in power were in a similar position. I find that the Daglish Government expended during the financial year 1904-5 the sum of £117,000 on permanent public works, buildings and mines in excess of our disbursements in 1905-6. [Mr. Scaddan: That is the

"mark time" Government.] Do not forget this aspect, that the "mark time" Government had less interest and sinking fund to pay by £57,000, and a greater Commonwealth surplus by £154,000, making a total of £212,000 which they had to handle more than the present Government, and they might therefore well expend £117,000 more than we have on public works, buildings, and mines. Of course the fact that we have a deficit, which apparently up to the present no Government have been able during the past few years to square up, although all Ministries in power did their utmost to achieve this result, points conclusively to the fact that we must introduce this land tax and endeavour to raise revenue therefrom. [Mr. Angwin: There was no surplus when the Daglish Government took office.] The surplus at the beginning of the year 1904-5 was £83,000; the deficit at the close of that year was £46,000; so that the Daglish Government went to the bad to the extent of £129,000. The Rason Government, who took office three or four months after the beginning of the financial year 1905-6, began that year with a deficit of £46,000, which had increased to double the amount when the Ministry actually took office; that financial year ended with a deficit of £119,000, so that the Rason Government went to leeward to the tune of £73,000. We began last year with a deficit of £119,000 and ended with one of £208,000, the increase for the period being £88,000. [Mr. Bath: You have started the new financial year badly.] Not so badly; the redeeming feature being that all but about £2,000 is caused by the decrease in the Commonwealth revenue returns. I desire to be fair and just, and it is only fair for me to state that Mr. Daglish estimated to finish his year with a deficit of £52,000, so that he really concluded a few thousand pounds better off than he estimated. It is surely also fair to me as Treasurer and to my colleagues to state that we did not receive £60,000 from the land tax which should have been passed last year, and that there was, as hon. members will bear me out in saying, something which we could not foresee owing to the losses caused by the timber trouble to the ex-

tent of at least £30,000 on railway revenue. Had there been that land tax and no timber trouble, we should have ended the year almost exactly as we estimated, so far as the deficit was concerned. These are facts and they can be inquired into, and I am bound to say they cannot be controverted. Without the Budget figures before me it is impossible to forecast with any degree of certainty or exactitude what the future will bring to us. We cannot for instance for a moment say what will be returned from the Federal Government. A new tariff is being brought in which might be anything and which might cause greatly decreased revenue to us. Then, according to the present Federal Government or the Acting Prime Minister, the States are receiving too much revenue already from the Federal Government, in the shape of returned duties. There is also the fact that the Federal expenditure is increasing, as we see, year by year, and therefore, taking all these facts into consideration, it is impossible for any Treasurer at this stage to say exactly what the future will bring forth. We possess, however, certain figures and facts, both as regards the State and the Commonwealth, which I think we may safely work upon and which appear to show conclusively that taxation is inevitable. [Mr. Bath: You exercised powers of prophecy in the 1905 elections pretty freely.] I am not aware that I prophesied anything that did not become absolutely true; I think all of my statements have been borne out by results. Let me draw attention to this fact. Our State revenue last year, as compared with 1905-6, showed a falling off of £64,000. That proves to me that I shall have to be very cautious indeed in counting upon receiving any larger revenue during the present financial year than last. The figures display a tendency to a falling off, and therefore I shall be fortunate if, without taking into consideration any new taxation, I succeed in reaching last year's figures. The latter included one item of £18,000 in connection with the proceeds of the sale of a smelter which will not come in again this year. We must face a considerable falling off, I think,

in Commonwealth revenue. Last year we had the fag end of the special tariff which gave us some £16,000 during the few months it was in existence after the financial year had commenced. That has now disappeared. Then we have a new tariff which is likely to be protective in its incidence. If it is, and I think it is bound to be from the statements of different public men in power, then it must increase the imports from the Eastern States and decrease the oversea imports. This will of necessity mean a decrease in the revenue we obtain from our customs-house. It may also mean increased production within our borders. If that is so, of course it would be meeting a very much desired want, for increased production of every kind is something we wish to have within our country. I am bound, however, to this view, that any increased production in Western Australia will be from the land. It will be the agricultural products that will show an increase, and therefore, as these have been in the past and are now being practically all imported from within the boundaries of the Commonwealth, it would not have a very great effect. At any rate I think that, in view of the fact that we are sure to have this protective tariff, it would be unsafe to anticipate receiving a sum within £50,000 of what we collected from the Customs last year. To sum up these figures we have the item of £16,000 which we know has gone, and £50,000 which we must, I think, admit we are unlikely to receive this financial year. In addition we have a penny postage suggested, and I believe that although it was not carried last year in the Federal Parliament, it will be carried this year. We would be unwise if we did not take this probability into consideration in a forecast of the present position. If the penny postage is established it will cost us £12,000. Last year the Commonwealth expenditure increased by £42,000, and I suppose we may expect in the natural order of events that it will be still farther increased this year. If we take a very favourable view and put the increase for this year as compared with last at £30,000, we may expect a shortage in our revenue due to the decrease in the sum returned and an

increase in the expenditure, of £108,000. Not only have we this sum which we must expect, but locally we have our interest and sinking fund bill. The increase for the year 1907-8, due to the charges on the one million pounds which we floated during the beginning of the present year, will amount to the sum of £27,000. That is the difference between what we paid in interest on that flotation in the past financial year and what we shall have to pay during the financial year 1907-08. On new raisings we shall have at least £5,000 to provide, while with the sinking fund on both local debentures and inscribed stock we may calculate the sum of £6,000 in addition, making a total of £38,000. This, added to what I said we may safely estimate will be the decrease as far as the Commonwealth is concerned, gives a total shortage of £146,000 which we must anticipate for this financial year. Of course there are some items which may be termed a set off. They are non-recurring items of expenditure of last year which need not be taken into consideration in coming to a conclusion on this important question. Last year we expended on the purchase of copper ore £1,140; then for the retrospective increases to civil servants there was a sum of over £3,000; while we paid away to municipalities, over and above the amount provided on the Estimates, about £35,000. These items total about £40,000 in round figures which will not recur during the present financial year, so that we are justified in deducting that sum from the shortage to which I have referred. This will probably leave a shortage during the present financial year of £106,000 apart from the general economies which we are endeavouring to carry out and to bring into existence. This shortage is based on the transactions of last year, which themselves show a shortage of £88,000. I want hon. members and the people of Western Australia to understand the position clearly. The people are in some doubt as regards the real position, and perhaps are justified in so being, owing to the fact that many contradictory statements are made. No

matter what figures are published, someone is sure to get up and put a different aspect on the case. If we raise the same State revenue this year as last and if our expenditure prove exactly the same, plus the increased interest and sinking fund bill to which I have just referred and minus the £40,000 non-recurring items, and excluding the land tax and loss through the timber trouble, the accumulated deficit at the end of the present financial year, namely, on 30th June, 1908, will amount to about £314,000. Of course there are, I admit, a lot of "ifs" about it, and as I have said, it is impossible to give accurate figures until we know by our Estimates exactly what our future expenditure will be. I think this is a position that no one will view with any sort of favour, but I maintain, and I believe the Leader of the Opposition will bear me out, that the anticipated result cannot and must not be. We must endeavour, by moderate taxation combined with just and fair economy in the public departments, more especially I think in our Railway Department, so to adjust our finances that we shall be able at least to balance the year's expenditure. That is my position. That would have been effected last year had our taxation proposals been made law. I may say at once that we propose in this Bill to levy taxation on exactly the same lines as those of last year; we propose a tax of  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the pound on the unimproved value. The new returns which I have secured in order to ascertain whether there is any probability of collecting a greater amount than we anticipated in our figures of last year, show that we cannot hope, during the first year at least, until special assessments are made, to collect anything more than the £60,000 then anticipated. I have obtained returns from municipalities and roads boards throughout the State, showing the unimproved land valuations of their districts, and I find that those returns do not differ materially from the previous returns which we already had in our possession. The total for municipalities is given as £8,659,165 and for roads boards as £5,806,212; and last year the figures

were : for municipalities, £8,614,315 ; and for roads boards, £5,831,367. Members will see at once the difference is so slight that last year's estimate of the proceeds of the tax will hold good this year, should the House pass the same taxation Bill. We are in a state of transition ; and it stands to reason that even apart from Federation and the effect it has had on our revenue through customs and excise, our population, which twelve years ago mainly consisted of consumers, is to-day rapidly becoming much more largely composed of producers ; and I hope the proportion of producers will continue to increase. Thus, apart from any effect of Federation, the incidence of taxation must be altered. Of course it is quite natural that people should be opposed to taxation. I suppose there are men in this State who would oppose all forms of taxation, and I may say I should be much better pleased if I could avoid taxation. But I am in favour, and I wish hon. members and the people of Western Australia to be in favour, of paying our way ; and the first thing we must do to keep the ship of State moving and to see that the policy we have laid down is carried into effect, is to raise money sufficient at least to pay our bills as we go along month by month. The suggestion of the member for Claremont (Mr. Foulkes) that we should approach the bondholders to gain some relief from sinking-fund contributions, and thereby increase the amount at our disposal for revenue, is impracticable. It would be a wrong procedure if it were practicable, and one to which I should be no party. Western Australia will not repudiate her liabilities. Western Australia has borrowed money under certain conditions ; she will maintain those conditions and honourably fulfil her compact ; and there is no reason why she should do otherwise. I am sorry there should be any misunderstanding about the matter. The Premier's remarks with regard to the half-per-cent. sinking-fund contribution in connection with the proposed transference of the State debts to the Commonwealth have been misinterpreted ; and it would appear, though I hope this is not so, that

they have been wilfully misinterpreted by the Press in the Eastern States. The Melbourne *Argus* appears to have gone out of its way to misinterpret those utterances. "The State investors," that paper said, "would object to any tampering with the sheet anchor." There is no intention of tampering with the sheet anchor.

*Mr. Johnson* : Everybody in the State understood that you desired to tamper with it, that you were prying out a feeler.

The TREASURER : Then everybody in the State interpreted it wrongly ; and members of this House, I am sorry to say, have implied that the sinking fund was to be absorbed for revenue purposes. [*Mr. Walter* : What was meant ?] Simply that, if there was to be a transference of State debts to the Commonwealth, then, at the time of the transference, it would be fair to make with the Commonwealth Government an arrangement whereby we should pay only the same sinking-fund contribution as the other States paid. We must maintain our sinking fund, we have no intention of doing otherwise ; and as to tampering with the existing sinking fund, I maintain it is out of the power of the House or of any Government to tamper with that fund, which is in the hands of independent trustees in London. Those trustees are not under the control of Government or of this Parliament. The existing sinking fund is intact, and cannot be tampered with.

*Mr. Bath* : Yes ; but you can allow deficits to accumulate as a set-off to the sinking fund. There are many ways by which you can virtually tamper with it.

The TREASURER : No ; there are no ways in which we can tamper with the existing sinking fund. There is £1,300,000 or £1,400,000 in the hands of the trustees, to retire certain State liabilities ; and no one can interfere with that fund.

*Hon. F. H. Piesse* : I think the reference is to future sinking-fund contributions.

The TREASURER : Exactly. This is the position. The *Argus* and other newspapers have drawn the inference



that we wish to take possession of that sinking fund and use it for our own purposes. That I emphatically deny. If the Federal Government take over our State debts, then we maintain we shall be in a position to ask for certain terms. We can say, "Yes; we agree to our State debts being transferred, but you must put us on exactly the same footing as the Eastern States with respect to the sinking fund. If the Eastern States are to pay a half-per-cent. sinking-fund contribution, then you must put us in a position to pay a similar contribution."

*Mr. T. L. Brown:* How many of the Eastern States have sinking funds?

**THE TREASURER:** This is an altogether new arrangement, and has nothing to do with existing sinking funds.

*Mr. T. L. Brown:* That defeats your own argument.

**THE TREASURER:** This is the whole thing in a nutshell. Some people speak as if Western Australia were compelled by law to transfer her State debts to the Commonwealth; and she is not. She is compelled to transfer only portion of the State debts—the liability that existed prior to Federation. She has a right to make certain conditions if she thinks fit, to transfer the whole debt; and it would have been better for Western Australia had she imposed conditions earlier, when she joined the Federation.

*Hon. F. H. Piesse:* But those conditions could not have been made without the concurrence of the bondholders.

**THE TREASURER:** This has nothing to do with the bondholders. The Federal Government would pay sinking-fund contributions exactly the same as are now paid by the State.

*Mr. Bath:* The Commonwealth would take over every State obligation.

**THE TREASURER:** They would take over all our obligations. The condition would be that the Federal Government would make those sinking-fund payments year by year, but would collect from us only a half per cent. instead of one per cent., and the rest would be repaid, by instalments extending over a period of years, to the Federal Government. That is a condition to which anyone might

honestly agree, provided it was mutually satisfactory to both parties. I do not say it would be satisfactory; but I wish to allay the feelings amongst some members and the feeling outside, especially in the Press, that there is any suggestion whatever, any notion, that we should interfere with the sinking funds which were stipulated in the Acts authorising the loans we have already raised, or that we wish to interfere, even if we had the power, with the sinking fund which already is in the hands of trustees in London. There is no intention of doing such a thing, and I think we may say at once that we do not want any of these alarmist statements; that we do not want any wrong construction put upon what was a fair, open, and above-board business suggestion—merely a suggestion that if certain things happened we might take the opportunity of making certain conditions which would be favourable to this State. The financial position of Western Australia to-day, as I have pointed out, is all right. It is perfectly sound. We cannot absolutely judge our financial position by the amount of our overdraft at a given time. Our assets are good. We have proof of our good credit in the recent loan flotations, with an abnormally high bank rate of 5 per cent., and the numerous applications we are constantly receiving for local inscribed stock. We have also evidence of the thrift of our people in the fact that our Savings Bank deposits are increasing every month, have increased considerably. I admit at once that the interest which depositors collect has something to do with this increase, and that the deposits may for the time being be drawn from other banking institutions; but the fact remains that the money is there, and the people are depositing it in the Savings Bank. Then we must remember that our herds and flocks are increasing, that the acreage under cultivation has largely expanded during the past year or two; and if we take all these conditions into consideration—if we are to develop our country and to carry out the works which have been projected, not only in the recent policy speech, but last year—then we must ask the people, and they must

be satisfied, to give us some additional revenue. Why, when we think of the development that awaits us in the North-West through the construction of that railway which will practically open up a new territory; when we think of the capacity of the Black Range district, which will be opened up by the iron horse so that the miners may develop their properties and may live cheaply; when we consider all the possibilities, and they are enormous, of our great South-Western districts for the dairying industry; when we know that we must encourage the export of perishable products by the establishment of freezing-works and cool storage: then it must be evident to anyone who has the interests of the State at heart that the people must be content to contribute reasonably through this means of taxation. If not, what are we to do? As I said, our deficit must naturally increase if we do not raise more revenue. We must tax the people somehow, and we are not taxing them to increase their load, but are replacing on them a load which has been taken away by the removal of certain customs duties—indirect taxation; and we are substituting direct taxation.

*Mr. Walker:* The people have to pay those customs duties to the Federal Parliament.

The TREASURER: The hon. member has not followed my argument: that the people are not now paying the duties which before Federation were collected on certain produce which came from the Eastern States and still comes from the Eastern States. Those duties have all disappeared, amounting in the highest year since Federation to some £233,000.

*Hon. F. H. Piessé:* That is a disadvantage to our producing community, and that is why they object to pay this extra tax—because you have taken away from them the advantages they possessed in the customs duties, and you are about to tax them in another way.

The TREASURER: The hon. member will agree with me that the removal of the customs duties can be no disadvantage to our producers when they are exporting, when they have overtaken the local demand, and must look to the

world's markets to get rid of their produce.

*Mr. Bath:* It makes a lot of difference, when they were making the consumer pay for it.

[Interjection by *Mr. Butcher.*]

The TREASURER: No. I am asking the whole of the people who own land in Western Australia to bear this tax. I explained last year, and I repeat it to-night, that some people should be assisted; we must assist the man who is fashioning his home, the man who has his block of land, and we must assist the man who is going on the land and endeavouring to bring forth the wealth it will produce. [Several interjections.] That is the position, and I intend to maintain that position, and I hope the House will endorse the action of the Government in bringing in the Bill exactly as it left this House last year. I farther hope that the House will pass it without amendment and send it to the Legislative Council. I beg to move—

*"That the Bill be now read a second time."*

*Mr. Bath:* I would like to ask the Treasurer about those printed papers. They are not on the table yet, and I would like to know when we shall receive them.

On motion by *Mr. Bath*, debate adjourned.

## BILL—BANKERS' CHEQUES.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 1st August.

*Mr. T. H. BATH* (Brown Hill): In regard to the second reading of this Bill, I wish to say the measure introduced by the Attorney General has my hearty approval, and I hope wiser counsels will also prevail in the Federal Parliament in regard to the measure there, and that they will make provision in connection with bankers' cheques, making the responsibility or the obligation on the part of bankers more binding than it is under the measure as introduced. We have to recognise that bankers are in the position of trustees or custodians of the money entrusted to them, and in the case of current accounts they not only have

the use of that money, but in Western Australia they make a fairly stiff charge for the keeping of those current accounts; and we should not give them the power, as under the Federal Bill, to practically repudiate that responsibility because of some slight error on the part of a drawer of a cheque: we should not relieve them of their duty as trustees. The position is at the present time that if we relieve them of their obligations to those who utilise the banks, there would be no necessity, no obligation, no penalty, as it were, in compelling them to enforce due care and vigilance as to their customers' accounts. But if we say they have to make a stipulation as to the way cheques should be drawn, then if a customer disregards those specific instructions, we possibly may be justified in casting on the customer the blame and making him bear the responsibility of the loss.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment; report adopted.

**BILL—STATISTICS.**

*Second Reading.*

Resumed from the 1st August.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

Clauses 1 to 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Statistics to be collected:

Mr. W. D. JOHNSON: In reference to Subclause (e.) relating to factories and manufacturing industries, it was desirable in this State to let people know the number of Chinese factories and European factories. It was not well known that practically the whole of the furniture manufactured in this State was made by Chinese in Chinese factories, and it was well to insert some provision to let people know the number of British factories and Chinese factories, and the number of Chinese workmen and British

workmen. We should then know to what extent the Chinese had a grip of the manufacturing industries of Western Australia. As a member of a select committee which sat last session, he was astonished at the hold the Chinese had, especially on the furniture manufacturing industry.

*The Premier*: Had not the Chinese to mark their furniture?

Mr. JOHNSON: That was where the difficulty came in. If the recommendations of the select committee which inquired into sweating had been adopted, then the difficulty would have been overcome.

*The Treasurer*: Would not regulations under the clause carry out the object?

*The ATTORNEY GENERAL*: It would be possible by regulation under the heading of factories and manufacturing industries to set out the number of employees in the different industries and their nationality.

Mr. T. L. BROWN: It was necessary to have some particulars as to the Chinese working in the manufacturing industries. Only in this morning's newspaper a magistrate had stated that it was monstrous that a Chinese who had been working in one of the Eastern States for years could not come to Western Australia and work in a West Australian factory. This matter required urgent consideration.

*The PREMIER*: This was practically the same measure as was introduced in all the States of the Commonwealth in accordance with the desire of the Commonwealth Government. It was on all-fours with the Commonwealth Act. However the object the hon. member desired might be attained in the regulations by providing that the form should show the nationality of the proprietors of these establishments.

Mr. BATH: Paragraph (t) (any other prescribed matters) was a drag-net under which all possible classes of statistics might be obtained. In the near future some effort should be made to bring our Statistical Department into line with those of other nations of the world where statistics were provided in regard to the wealth per head of population.

The PREMIER: Under the original Act provision was only made for collecting statistics in regard to agricultural, pastoral, and industrial matters. The schedule in this clause was framed as the result of a conference of the various Statistical Departments of the States of the Commonwealth, but the Government were not anxious to adopt it because it would entail a considerable amount of expense to collect all the information asked for.

Mr. Bath: Practically all these headings were published in our *Statistical Abstract* every month.

The PREMIER: Information was not supplied in regard to forestry, fisheries, water conservation and water supply.

Mr. ANGWIN: This was no matter to be left to regulations, particularly on account of the matter mentioned by the member for Geraldton, a magistrate having considered the action of Parliament as monstrous in bringing in a measure to prevent Chinese working in this State. We should have some definite clause dealing with the subject, otherwise there was a possibility of the desire of the people of the State to prohibit the employment of Asiatics being overridden.

Mr. BARNETT while agreeing with the remarks of the member for Guildford, would go farther. The Leader of the Opposition should impress on the members of unions the necessity of discouraging as much as possible the use of Chinese manufactured articles and of discouraging Chinese traders as against European traders.

Mr. WALKER: The discussion should be adjourned so that time might be given for framing a suitable amendment. There should be a clear instruction to the statisticians that the character of the manufacturer should be set out. In New South Wales when the freetrade *versus* protection controversy was raging at its highest, Mr. Reid, desirous of showing that there were more factories in New South Wales than in Victoria, had quoted a vast number of so-called factories that were employing say the proprietor and his wife and little children, that were lolly shops and ginger beer factories and all kinds of institu-

tions that never deserved the dignity of being called a factory or the dignity of having their products called manufactures. We should be able to decide at a glance by our statistics whether the manufactories in our midst were really beneficial to the State or not and whether they were worked by our own people or by imported people. Such information would be of immense value in enabling politicians to shape the future course of the country.

Mr. JOHNSON: If the clause were postponed, an amendment could be drafted by to-morrow. It was right to give the people of Western Australia the opportunity of knowing the number of factories worked by Chinese and the number of Chinese operatives in those factories.

The PREMIER: The Bill could be recommitted.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 9 to 12—agreed to.

Clause 13—The Colonial Treasurer may withhold moneys when statistics not furnished:

Mr. ANGWIN: Under Clause 8 the statisticians might call upon the local authority to take a census. Was it the intention to withhold payments to the local authority if the instruction of the statisticians in such a regard were not carried out?

The PREMIER: On account of some municipalities and roads boards neglecting to furnish returns accounting for the expenditure of public moneys it was thought advisable to insert this clause. The idea was that the Treasurer would have the opportunity of seeing how money granted to local authorities by the Government was expended. The clause would keep the local authorities up to the mark.

Mr. ANGWIN: It was to be hoped that was the only object. One local authority received word from the Treasurer that payment would be withheld until certain information asked for had been given. As a matter of fact no information had been asked for and the first notification the local authority had of the matter was from the Treasury.

Mr. JOHNSON questioned the necessity for the clause. It was drafted in such a way that it would have the opposite effect to that desired by the Premier. We could not go on much longer subsidising municipalities as we had, and in the near future there was a possibility of no subsidies being paid to municipalities. Then we would be in the position that the municipalities could refuse to give the information desired and there would be no power to enforce a penalty. It would be better to impose a penalty as in the other clauses of the Bill.

The PREMIER: It was advisable that the Treasurer should be in a position to know how money granted for a specific work was expended. It would not apply in the same way to subsidies because, under the system the Treasurer proposed to introduce, subsidies would be paid on the balance sheet of the preceding year.

Mr. T. L. BROWN: We could not entertain the proposal to do away with subsidies to municipalities. As long as the local authorities were prepared to tax the ratepayers in something like a reasonable manner the Government should give assistance.

The Chairman (Mr. Daglish): The hon. member was travelling somewhat outside the scope of the clause.

Mr. T. L. BROWN: The clause as framed was very vague. It would be unfair to make the municipalities or roads boards suffer for mistakes made by their officials, and if any penalty were to be imposed it should be upon those officials. He would prefer to see the clause struck out.

Mr. WALKER moved an amendment—  
“That Clause 13 be struck out.”

If the clause were retained, a great amount of injury would be done to the roads boards. The clause would penalise local authorities, by setting out that if those bodies did not provide all the statistics required, the ratepayers would have to pay the penalty, although the mistakes might have been made by the secretary or other permanent official. [The Premier: Discretion would always be exercised.] Only one person could be guilty for the non-provision of the

statistics, and if he neglected his work he should have to pay the penalty. If the clause became law, the position would be that a town council or roads board would have to go short of its subsidy merely on account of the mistakes of an officer. [The Attorney General: The subsidy would not be forfeited, but be withheld for a time.] Because the Government wanted to collect statistics, they would here withhold their obligations to the local bodies. Subsidies were granted because they were required for good government, and it would be an injury to the people if this assistance were withheld or refused. The penalty should be inflicted on the wrongdoer.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The local authority was placed under obligation to provide certain returns. It had been suggested that instead of making the local authority responsible, the penalty should be inflicted on the individual making the mistake. It was clear that if these returns were necessary, machinery should be provided in the Bill for their collection; and the question was whether the local authority or the officer at fault should pay the penalty if the statistics were not forthcoming. Clause 22 provided that all penalties had to be recovered in the ordinary way, by prosecution in the police court. It must and did happen often that officers failed to carry out their duties; and if the Government withheld grants due to local bodies making default, those bodies would quickly see that their officials carried out the work required.

The TREASURER: The system of withholding grants until certain information was received was already in vogue in the Treasury, if certain financial returns needed were not sent in. The money set apart as grants to those bodies was kept back, and the result was that the information was soon obtained.

Mr. T. L. BROWN: The remarks of the Treasurer showed that the clause was unnecessary; for if the system was in use now, where was the necessity for putting it in the Bill?

The Treasurer had referred only to information required by the Treasury on

financial matters, whereas Clause 13 referred to all statistics.

Mr. T. L. BROWN: Councils and roads boards had to rely on their officers; and therefore a penalty for non-compliance should fall on the paid officer in fault, and not on the council or roads board, and through them on the rate-payers. The clause should be struck out.

At 6.15, the Chairman left the Chair.

At 7.30, Chair resumed.

Mr. WALKER: The clause was new in principle, and unnecessary. Since 1898, statistics had been gathered, efficiently and without friction, under the existing Act, of which Section 14 specified the persons, including public bodies, who were to give the information, while Section 15 rightly imposed on the person and not on the corporate body a penalty for default, the penalty being recurrent for each offence. Persons who had applied for forms and not received them, or who had posted returns within the time limited, were excused. Had it ever been necessary to impose these penalties? The statistical branch worked admirably. The Bill in attempting to secure uniformity with the Acts of sister States would give a dangerous power to the Treasurer, who might at his option deprive some local bodies of their subsidies.

The Premier: Only till the required information was furnished.

Mr. WALKER: But why punish a local body as a whole, while other defaulters were punished personally? Clause 13 should be struck out, and Section 15 of the existing Act substituted.

The PREMIER: By Clause 9 we had already provided a penalty of £10 in case of default by individuals. If Clause 13 were struck out, the machinery of a court must be moved in every case of default by a local authority. The last speaker objected to the Treasurer having the right to decide whether a penalty should be inflicted. This could be met by agreeing to strike out the words "or information," and inserting "in regard to the expenditure of public

moneys." That would confine the clause to one distinct subject.

Mr. Walker: There was no objection to that.

The PREMIER: This practice was in vogue at present by the Treasury. It did not apply so much to subsidies as to special grants for specific purposes. The Treasurer desired to find out if the money was expended on the particular work for which it was granted.

Mr. ANGWIN: What had the Commonwealth to do with the granting of money to municipalities or roads boards? The Commonwealth statistician could put local bodies to considerable expense. There would be no objection to the clause, if regulations were framed to prevent the Commonwealth statistician from putting local bodies to expense.

Mr. TAYLOR: If the Treasurer intimated to the mayor of a municipality or the chairman of a roads board that certain information had not been supplied, and that until it was given the grant would be withheld, that would be a preferable way of obtaining information rather than by instructing the Crown Law Department to issue a summons.

Mr. WALKER: If the Premier moved the amendment indicated, it would cause information which related to the expenditure of public moneys from our own Treasury to be obtained. He objected to a different principle governing roads boards and municipalities from that which governed other local bodies. The object in view was to enable the Treasurer to know if special grants were legitimately expended; but without the clause the Government could do that, and were doing it now. If a grant were made to a roads board and the Auditor General discovered that the amount had not been devoted to the purpose for which it was voted, the local body could be prosecuted. There would still be the objection of using what was practically a Commonwealth Act to secure the more easy working of the Treasury. If the Government wished to improve the Treasury administration, that could be done by an Act dealing with that branch of the public service. He objected to legislation that made fish of one and flesh of

another for the same offence. He would accept the Premier's amendment, not because it would do any good, but because it would not do the same harm or cause the same distinction which would be caused by the Bill as it now stood.

The PREMIER : The amendment was suggested as it was necessary from the Treasurer's point of view that these returns should be supplied. He moved an amendment :—

*"That in lines 2 and 3 the words 'or information,' be struck out and 'in regard to the expenditure of public moneys' be inserted in lieu."*

Amendment put and negatived ; the clause passed.

Clauses 14 to 24—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment ; report adopted.

#### BILL—PORT HEDLAND-MARBLE BAR RAILWAY.

*Second Reading (moved).*

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore) in moving he second reading said: It is my privilege to move the second reading of this Bill, which I feel sure if assented to by both Houses of Parliament will have a great bearing on the future prosperity of Western Australia, more particularly that district known to us as the North-West. The Government have been prompted in their desire to extend railway facilities to this important district by the honest conviction that the construction of this railway will remove many of the disabilities under which miners and others engaged in various occupations in the district labour at present. There is no doubt the district has for a considerable time been languishing through the want of these facilities, and mainly owing to the fact that the cost of transport is a serious item, it follows that only those propositions which carry very high values can be worked at the present time. In placing information before members I will necessarily have to take advantage of the various reports that have been made by the different officers who have been sent to that district to report not only from an engineering point of view

but also from a mining point of view, and I shall have occasion to give the opinions of those gentlemen who have a thorough knowledge of the locality as well as that of my colleague the Minister for Mines who has had a recent opportunity of making a close investigation of the district. This district was explored in 1837 by Mr. George (afterwards Sir George) Grey, but he did not go any great distance from the coastline, and it was not until 1858 and 1860 that Mr. F. J. Gregory made an exhaustive examination of the country. He traversed the DeGrey River and its tributaries as far back as the proposed terminus of the present railway, but it was not until four years later (1864) that any attempt was made to settle the country, when Mr. John Withnell, who may be described as the pioneer pastoralist of that district, landed at Port Hedland with a certain amount of stock with the idea of taking up an area for pastoral purposes. Unfortunately he was not able to find a sufficient amount of surface water to warrant his carrying out the project, and he afterwards removed to the Roebourne district. As members are aware the De Grey and Pilbarra districts have been settled for a considerable number of years, and have proved from a pastoralist's point of view to be all that could be desired; but it was not until 1882 that gold was first discovered at a locality known as Mallina. *Aprpos* to that discovery, there is a little story told which may be interesting to hon. members. A Mr. Withnell, son of the original pioneer of this district, one of whose outstations was located at Mallina, on arriving at camp one day took up a stone to throw at a crow, and on looking at the stone he discovered that it showed gold. He made farther investigations in the neighbourhood, and as a result found some rich quartz specimens. He took them into Roebourne and reported the discovery to the Resident Magistrate, Colonel Angelo. Colonel Angelo was very elated at this new discovery, and in his desire to communicate the pleasing intelligence to the head authorities he rushed to the telegraph office and sent a wire which certainly did not express his meaning. The

wire was "John Withnell picked up stone to throw at a crow." The Colonial Secretary replied, "Indeed; what became of the crow." I am informed that was the first discovery made on the Pilbarra Goldfields. Alluvial gold was afterwards discovered in 1888 and a rush followed. The same year the Pilbarra Goldfield was declared, and the first warden appointed was Mr. Surveyor Nyulasy, who unfortunately died a few months later, the present magistrate at Bunbury being then appointed warden. It is unnecessary for me to dilate on the many possibilities of this district from a pastoralist's point of view. There are other gentlemen here who are able to speak from local knowledge of its stock-carrying capabilities. The townsite of Port Hedland was surveyed in 1896. It was proposed in the first instance to call the town Withnell, in honour of the pioneer settler, but after giving the matter consideration the Government of the day decided to call the town Port Hedland in honour of the captain of a trading vessel who for many years visited that port. In the same year town lots were put up for auction, and at the first sale in December, 1896, the blocks realised the large sum of £2,642. On different occasions proposals have been made in regard to this railway by various Governments with a view to securing its construction by private enterprise, and the idea has been favoured by more than one Government; indeed it formed an item of the Governor's Speech some two or three years ago. However the present Government have decided that it would be advisable that this line, if it is to be constructed, should be constructed by the Government and worked by the Government. In looking up the information dealing with this question, I found that it was first brought forward in Parliament by Mr. Kingsmill, who was then member for Pilbarra. He was familiar with the country to be served by the railway, and brought forward a motion affirming the desirability of the Government giving early consideration to the railway. The motion of which he gave notice was:—

"That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that the Government should

at an early date take into consideration the construction of a railway from Port Hedland to Marble Bar."

However, the motion was subsequently discharged from the Notice Paper. Speaking on that occasion, Mr. Kingsmill said:—

"This railway was not simply and solely to be looked at from a goldfields point of view, because it would assist in a very large degree the pastoral industry. The North-West portion of the colony had always been looked upon as one of the best squatting districts in Western Australia, and there were several large stations which would be greatly benefited by the railway, amongst these DeGrey, Mulgie, Ben Dhu, Tarree, Warrawagine, Branside, Warralong, Coogan Downs, Corrunna Downs and Roy Hill. There was a vast extent of country . . . waiting to be taken up . . . on the stock route overland from Kimberley to the Murchison; and Northern members could no doubt be looked upon as certain supporters of the motion, while representatives of the Murchison and Eastern goldfields could not deny to others advantages which they had enjoyed for so long, and which had brought them so much prosperity."

Later on a motion was brought forward on the 19th September, 1900, to the effect that, failing immediate action of the Government, offers for the construction of the line should be received from private persons. This motion was carried, but nothing farther was done until in October, 1903, the Assembly adopted a practically similarly worded motion by 14 votes to 8, the suggested line however being from Port Hedland to Nullagine, instead of from Port Hedland to Marble Bar. In connection with the proposal to connect Port Hedland with Marble Bar, many private offers were made by various people, most of the offers containing a stipulation that the Government should agree to guarantee four per cent. on the estimated cost of the railway. The cost varied from something like £500,000 to £700,000. However it was felt by the various Governments of the



day that it was impossible to consider such a proposal. One of the first proposals made was by Messrs. Baxter and Sadler. They offered to construct a line to Nullagine at £3,000 per mile or a total of £500,000, or to Marble Bar only, approximately £345,000, the Government to guarantee a return of 4 per cent. Messrs. Allan & Co. also made a proposal to construct a line at a cost of £550,000, while the British Exploration Company offered to build a standard line to Nullagine at a cost estimated to be between £600,000 and £700,000, subject to the issue of four per cent. guarantee railway stock or bonds, interest to be secured by the Government under certain conditions. Messrs. Pauling and Company offered to construct a line to Nullagine for £770,000, subject to certain alterations in the specifications lodged with the tender. None of these offers were, as we know, accepted. There was also an offer made at a later date by Messrs. Hargreave, Chinn and Company, very much on similar lines. All these proposals were to construct a line at a cost in the neighbourhood of half a million. There is no doubt to anyone who has given the subject any thought at all that if there is one district in the State languishing through want of railway communication it is this district we are referring to to-night, and I am informed by my colleague the Minister for Mines, and by others who have a thorough knowledge of the district, that it is a case of either giving this particular district railway communication or it will be abandoned. And when we consider the immense possibilities that may be opened up by a line there I think members must realise that it is our duty to give to that portion of our territory the same facilities that have done so much to develop the more southerly portion of our State. Mining timber has now to be transported from the coast at a cost varying from £10 to £12 per ton—the member for the district can inform me whether I am right or not—and firewood is also very costly. These difficulties, with the high cost of living, render mining propositions that would otherwise return handsome

profits in more favoured districts, absolutely non-payable. The only solution therefore is to see whether it is not possible to provide these people with those facilities at a much reduced cost. A large sum of money has been spent in this district. One company alone—the British Exploration Company—expended something like £150,000 in addition to the proceeds of gold won, and only £15,000 represented the outlay outside the State. The mining industry in this district has not progressed for some years owing to the excessive cost of working and the lack of carriage facilities. Apparently the best that mining companies and small parties can do to make both ends meet is to practically pick out the eyes of the mine being worked, the bulk of the proceeds being expended in overcoming, as far as possible, the immense cost of working; whereas in the more favoured localities the low grade with the high could have averaged successful results, considering the average high yields per ton obtainable. In regard to the present line, I may say that our proposal is for the construction of a pioneer railway. We have already made provision in the Loan Bill, which secured Parliamentary authorisation last session, for this line to be constructed at a cost, including rails and fastenings, of something like £225,000; of this cost the construction will be approximately £70,000, and the cost of rails and fastenings £148,000, or a total cost of something like £1,940 per mile. This is allowing for steel sleepers. The Government have not decided as to whether it would be advisable to adopt steel or jarrah sleepers, but they are now making inquiries on this point. Needless to say, if it is found possible to use the local article we will do so, and at the same time there is a saving of 3s. per sleeper, or a total of approximately £36,000 if the jarrah sleepers are used instead of steel. The advantages of the latter as against the jarrah in this particular district are owing to the fact that white ants are so prevalent. At the same time when the line is put down, the steel sleeper does not form so good a bed for railway as jarrah. I have received in-

formation that the steel sleeper has proved successful in the Northern Territory of South Australia, except where the line passed over salt country, when it had to be renewed at intervals. The line there has been constructed for 16 years and has given every satisfaction. In considering this proposal I may say that the line which we propose to adopt is the one proceeding generally south-easterly from Port Hedland for about 90 miles, thence in a generally southerly direction for 25½ miles and terminating at a point in or near Marble Bar townsite. The gauge is the standard one of the State, namely three feet six inches, with a 45-foot rail, while the ruling gradient will be one in 40. The line is so located, however, that, with a very nominal expenditure, it can be converted into a line having a ruling grade of one in 80. It is thought advisable until the traffic warrants otherwise that we should proceed with a pioneer line. It will be constructed to suit the country; it will follow the contour of the country, and, as you will understand from the fact that we have only allowed £78,000 for the cost of construction, it will be a surface line. There is every reason to believe that the estimate made by the Works Department will be very near to the mark. The departmental estimates with regard to other lines recently authorised have also proved to be accurate. We have had to-day the example of the Hopetoun-Ravensthorpe line, a tender for which has been accepted at £27,000. The departmental estimate for the line was £28,000, so that members can judge from the works that have preceded the present one that the estimates made by the Engineering Department are not very far wrong. It is the desire of the Government to extend these facilities to the various districts of the State, but at the same time we are anxious to secure as great a length of line as possible at the cheapest cost. In regard to the route adopted, it was only after giving the matter every consideration that we decided to advise this route, which is designated as No. 1 on the plan in the lobby. Looking at it from a mining standpoint, this line does not get into auriferous country until it reaches the

74-mile peg; back from there to Nullagine it is more or less auriferous the whole of the way. The second line marked on the plan, according to the report of Mr. Riches, the officer of the Mines Department, offers no difficulties from an engineering point of view, but the deviation traverses country of very little mineral prospect. The line will be something like 25 miles from Wodgina and would be too far from that centre to be of any practical use. In four of the different lines for which trial surveys have been made it has not been found possible to get into touch with Wodgina. Good judges who have a knowledge of that locality state that it will be absolutely necessary for this line to be brought into touch with the seaboard at Ballaballa. The present line is a considerable distance from Wodgina and will not serve that particular district. All the other lines referred to are of a longer distance than the one the Government have adopted, and offer very great engineering difficulties, and it seems to me the consensus of opinion of those who have had an opportunity of inspecting the country is that the present surveyed line, which was surveyed by Mr. Ankerell, will serve the district generally much better than any of the other lines surveyed. After having decided on the necessity for giving railway facilities for the district the Government mind was naturally exercised as to which proposal it would be advisable to recommend Parliament to adopt. After giving the matter every consideration we felt satisfied that we were justified in recommending the route set out in the present Bill, and at the same time allow for a deviation from the present surveyed line of 20 miles on either side of the railway. It will be seen from the maps which have been prepared for members that the line the Government have decided to adopt is 150 miles long. The No. 2 proposal is 141 miles long, while the No. 3 proposal, which will go *via* Lalla Rookh, North Pole and Just-in-Time and then on to Marble Bar, is 122 miles long. The fourth proposal has been found to be practically impossible to adopt owing to the fact that the country lying between Tank

Well and North Shaw is of a very rugged nature. Since this proposal has been under consideration Mr. Anketell has been instructed to see whether it is not possible to secure the continuation of the survey made from Pinnacle Well in a southerly direction, with a view to giving facilities to Cooglegong and Old Shaw, thence north-easterly to Marble Bar. This, however, would entail the construction of a line of 190 miles in length, and at the same time the line would be some 10 or 20 miles from Wodgina. After giving the matter full consideration it was decided to adopt the line originally surveyed shown in the plan as No. 1. In bringing a proposal of this nature forward it is necessary that we should be in the position to give members, as far as possible, an idea of the estimated traffic, the cost of construction, and the working cost. The goods traffic with Port Hedland for the year ended 30th June, 1907, was as follows:—Inward—general 6,211 tons, bales of wool 2,806, bales of skins 92. Outward—general 2,373 tons, bales of wool 2,065, bales of skins 353, bales of hides 292, cattle 1,363, sheep 16,994, bulls 45. Estimated tonnage existing between Port Hedland and Marble Bar, approximately 7,000 tons per annum. I asked the Works Department to give me some idea as to what they considered would be the probable returns from such a traffic, and as a result I have been supplied with the following information. The population of the district which will be served is now about 1,200, and it is estimated that to serve a population of that size the traffic would probably amount to 7,000 tons, and 7,000 passengers, with a total traffic return of £15,000. The probable cost of maintaining the line and working expenses is approximately 60 per cent of the traffic and this would amount to about £10,000, leaving a profit of £5,000. As against that we have the interest on the capital expended, at four per cent., making a total of £10,000, so that on this estimate the probable loss on the first year's working of the railway would be £5,000. This estimate was given by the Engineer-in-Chief, and I think is approximately correct. Taking the cost of

the expenses I worked it out on the basis that there would be trains twice a week from Marble Bar and that some 40 or 50 men would be required for maintenance, and this cost would work out approximately the same as the Engineer-in-Chief's estimate. This is, however, placing the matter in an unfavourable light; in all probability once the traffic opens returns would be very much higher. The Railway Department estimate the revenue from the traffic mentioned in the report as follows:—Traffic to Marble Bar, £12,777; to Port Hedland, £7,814; making a total of £20,591. The department consider that one-third should be taken off to allow of a mean journey instead of the full 115 miles, as allowed for in the first figures above. This would mean that the revenue would be—traffic to Marble Bar £8,518, traffic to Port Hedland £5,210, total £13,728. In addition, seeing that the railway will be so far away, there is every probability that the freights will be higher than on the lines of the present system. Allowing for a 50 per cent. increase on existing tariff, the returns would then be—traffic to Marble Bar £19,165, to Port Hedland £11,721; total £30,886. Surely, however, we are not going to assume that the population will remain stationary; if it does so and that district is not going to develop by railway, then it will not be advisable to spend a quarter of a million pounds in giving additional facilities. The line we propose to construct will cost approximately £225,000. I do not intend to deal with the mineral point of view, as the Minister for Mines will have an opportunity at a later stage of giving you information in regard to this particular aspect of the question. But I should like to say before concluding that the various gold centres in this district have turned out, up to 31st May 1907, 128,204 ounces valued at £544,572, the tin centres have yielded 3,288 tons valued at £271,865, and the tantalite centres 71 tons valued at £8,925. Mining activity has so far been chiefly devoted to the auriferous deposits. I should like to refer also to a report just received from Dr. Montgomery, State Mining Engineer, who, as members are aware, accompanied

the Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory) on his recent tour of inspection. Dr. Montgomery's report, submitted this evening, states:—

In my opinion, the Pilbarra goldfield has been sufficiently proved to show that it contains many very valuable districts, but these are languishing because under present conditions working costs are so inordinately high that they cannot be profitably worked. Not only are all necessary mining supplies very expensive in first cost, but there is great delay in obtaining them when required, and the loss of time so occasioned is ruinous, being of immensely more importance than the actual cost of the supplies. The Marble Bar, Warrawoona, Bamboo Creek, Yandicoogina, Nullagine, Mosquito Creek, and other goldfields contain very numerous valuable reefs, which ought to be extensively worked, and which are capable of supporting a large population. Much of the bad repute into which they have fallen is due to the necessity that there has been for the prospectors to work only the richest portions, or "pick the eyes out" of the mines, systematic working of the lower grade quartz having been impossible under existing conditions. The tinfields of Moolyella and Cooglegong have proved very profitable, and are likely to be found very extensive, and there is much promise that tin lodes of workable size will be found. Other valuable minerals exist also, asbestos near Cooglegong, copper ores at North Shaw and Yandicoogina, and antimony near Nullagine. These are within the region that would be served by a railway terminating at Marble Bar. Such a railway would enormously facilitate mining in all these centres, and I am of opinion would lead to rapid developments which would make the railway a profitable undertaking. The direct route from Port Hedland to Marble Bar is the shortest and quickest way of serving these districts, of which Marble Bar is the natural centre. There are valuable mineral districts along a route extending from Cooglegong through Tambourah, Wodgina, Station Peak, and Croydon to Roebourne, but with the exception of Wodgina and inland therefrom they are fairly easily accessible from the coast from the landings at Balla Balla and Point Sampson, and are not in the same urgent need of railway communication as the inland centres. A separate railway from Balla Balla or Roebourne to serve them will deserve consideration as time goes on. The important district round Wodgina cannot be served by the direct route from Port Hedland to Marble Bar without a long detour to the southward. Though likely to be a very valuable mining field, I cannot say that at present it is sufficiently proved to justify a detour from the direct route, and the question of railway facilities to it seems to me best to be deferred until farther developments have

taken place in the mines. Wodgina might be made the terminus of a line from Balla Balla or Roebourne, serving a number of promising districts *en route*, which would be of more general service than a branch line from the Port Hedland-Marble Bar railway. A railway route from Roebourne to Nullagine, through Croydon, Station Peak, Wodgina, and Cooglegong would be through mineral country nearly all the way, but would be much longer than the Port Hedland-Marble Bar route, and would not serve the principal centres or the Pilbarra goldfield so well. Port Hedland is now, though a tidal port, workable with steamers of fair size, which discharge directly on to the wharves, whereas considerable expense would be required at Point Sampson and very large outlay at Balla Balla to make either port a suitable terminus for a railway. I am strongly of opinion, therefore, that it is in the best interests of the country that a railway should be made on the route already surveyed from Port Hedland to Marble Bar as soon as possible, and though the present population of the districts to be served is quite insufficient to make it a paying line, I am very confident that the opening of the country will very soon lead to such development as will make the railway a profitable proposition.

My colleague informs me this is an interim report. Dr. Montgomery is now drawing up an exhaustive account of the examination he made in his recent tour. It is proposed to collect all that information, issue it in pamphlet form, and send it broadcast all over the world, so that people may know that the district has every possibility of becoming one of the greatest mineral areas in Australia. I feel sure that if Parliament assent to this proposal it will have a great influence on the future prosperity of Western Australia, and that the district in question, which has for so many years languished for want of railway communication, will be given an impetus which will not only prove beneficial to the district, but will open up a market for the southern districts, which will then be able to send to the North-West their flour, potatoes, and mining timber. I am satisfied, after giving the matter full consideration, after consulting with those best qualified to judge, that the proposal if given effect to will be in the interests of the State and of the community at large. I move—

*"That the Bill be now read a second time."*

Dr. HICKS (Roebourne) : I move that the debate be adjourned.

*The Premier* : I understand some members are prepared to proceed with the debate.

Dr. HICKS : I am one of two who have something to say against the Bill, and I should like to speak first before members commit themselves.

Motion put and negatived ; debate continued.

Mr. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Pilbarra) : I rise with pleasure to support the Bill. From my personal knowledge of the district I feel this line will be a really good investment of the State's money. I can conscientiously support the project, and should be prepared to do so not only as member for the district and as a West Australian, but also as an Australian. I think it is our duty to do everything we can to assist the northern portion of this country. I have many arguments for this line, but I do not intend to make a long speech, which I think is unnecessary. All that has previously been said regarding the project has been said in its favour ; at least I have never heard any fair reason given for opposing the work. Just a few words regarding the routes mentioned by the Premier. The proposed 20-mile deviation provided in the Bill will I think fairly meet the case of Wodgina. So far, all the requests from that centre have been to the effect that the line should be taken as far as possible over the heavy sand in the vicinity of Port Hedland ; and if a deviation is made after crossing the causeway over the heavy sand at Hedland, the route will be most favourable to Wodgina. As to the other suggested routes marked on the map outside the Chamber, I quite agree with the Premier that the cost of construction on any of them would be quite unwarranted. Once we go off the surveyed line, or go south of Lalla Rookh in the Wodgina district, we come to very heavy country indeed ; and a line constructed in that direction would cost three or four times as much as the line proposed. I think we must recognise that the proposal for a line from Roebourne is not practical ; in fact, it is generally conceded by the people of

Pilbarra and West Pilbarra that taking the line from Roebourne would be dragging it over a considerable area of unprofitable country.

*Dr. Hicks* : How much mineral will you have between Port Hedland and Marble Bar ? Absolutely none.

Mr. UNDERWOOD : We shall have practically as much mineral between Port Hedland and Marble Bar as we should between Roebourne and Marble Bar. The only difference will be, we shall get to Marble Bar from Hedland after a journey of 116 miles, whereas from Roebourne we should have to travel about 200 miles. To bring the line from Roebourne would practically make it unpayable, as the freights would be too high for those out-back to pay, and to build it thus would really be bringing it about 100 miles farther from an inferior port to support a town that does not require and does not deserve the railway. As I said, I think the Premier has made out a really good case ; in fact, a case has been made out for many years past, and I am sure it is only the great distance of the district from the metropolis that has prevented the line from being built some considerable time ago. On almost every occasion when the project was before the House there was a large majority in its favour, and I feel sure that majority still exists. Geologists and engineers have made numerous reports on the district, and in every case they have been most favourable ; therefore, when we have the unanimous opinion of geologists and engineers on a question I think we can fairly afford to act on that opinion. As to the mineral-bearing capabilities of the district, as most members know, it produces almost every known mineral in greater or less abundance. Gold, the output of which will in my opinion be greatly increased by railway facilities, is a rather secondary consideration. The large quantities of tin now being produced are certainly making the district known practically throughout the Commonwealth. Recent discoveries have been made, or rather old discoveries are being worked again for copper, silver, asbestos, and other minerals, but there is one mineral that seems to have been for-

gotten that is found in the Wodgina district, and that is tantalite. This is one of the most important metals, and will in the future be the most important of the baser metals. From what we can learn regarding this particular metal I believe very great importance depends on its future development. I may say in regard to tantalite that it was only discovered at the beginning of last century or about one hundred years ago, and the best scientists have not experimented to any very great extent with it owing to the supply not being great, but at Wodgina, the first year it was found—that was in 1905—more tantalite was produced than had been previously produced in the world. As a matter of fact, the world's supply of tantalite is at Wodgina. The Minister for Mines will probably bear me out when I say that as far as paying propositions are concerned, the lodes at Wodgina will commend themselves to anybody who knows anything about lodes. It is advisable that Australia should do its utmost to experiment with this mineral, for there seems to be no limit to what may be done with it in making guns, armour for ships and everything of that description. Over and above its great value for hardening and improving steel, it is proved that tantalite can be used in place of diamonds for diamond drills. I feel certain that in the very near future the tantalite mines of Wodgina will make the North-West of this State famous all over the world.

*The Minister for Mines* : I have more faith in the tin.

Mr. UNDERWOOD : Of course the tin is showing better just now. I do not want to go into any very great description of Wodgina, but I would like to say apart from tantalite in my opinion and in the opinion of those more capable than I am of judging, there is one of the greatest tin propositions of the State at Wodgina, and there is a possibility of Wodgina being one of the great tin producers of the Commonwealth. The extent of this district is considerable. From Wodgina on the west side for fully 150 miles pretty well in a direct line to Mallina there are silver and lead

discoveries. Travelling in the other direction we come to Lalla Rookh and Mosquito Creek a distance of 150 miles, pretty well north and south, the other district I have been speaking of being east and west. The whole of that country is auriferous and mineral bearing, but over and above this there is an extent of country beyond Nullagine and Mosquito Creek, which is auriferous and stanniferous country. There is a belt of mineral country extending from Nullagine to Peak Hill. In regard to this matter, members no doubt know that a prospector can only go a short distance inland, he cannot attempt to go beyond Nullagine for it is too costly, but with the line to Marble Bar and eventually to Nullagine, other fields will be opened up. Eventually I feel sure there will be mining centres right across the continent, extending right across this State, connecting Dundas with Marble Bar. As to the district from a pastoral point of view, there is little doubt about that. The pastoral industry as also the mining industry is only in its infancy ; it is scarcely known, and the capabilities of that country will not be known until it has been properly worked. The pastoralist up to the present has not had the opportunities of improving the country to show what it is capable of. It has been proved that no matter what the seasons may be nor what drought there is, the stock can always live on the spinifex. As long as there is a supply of water there is no fear of the stock in that district dying, and I am sure that when the great value of spinifex becomes known, and when the country is thoroughly opened up and water supplies are secured by the holders of the pastoral areas, the district will be among the best pastoral country in the Commonwealth. The Premier in speaking of the difficulties of the North-West mentioned that it cost £12 a ton for the carriage of mining timber, that is only to Marble Bar from Port Hedland. The rate for carriage at the present time to Marble Bar is about £12 a ton, but in the event of a rush and the amount of cartage being in excess of what it is at present, the price will go consider-

ably beyond that. The Federal Government were offering recently £13 a ton to carry telegraphic material to Moolyella district, about 12 miles from Marble Bar, and they were unable to get the carting done at that price. The stuff remained at Port Hedland for some time because the Commonwealth Government would not go beyond £13 a ton for the carriage. This will give members some idea of the difficulties there are in regard to carriage. I may say I have been over a great deal of this country, and I have never come across a road so heavy as the roads in the North-West of this State, and in regard to mining timber it is almost impossible at the present time to carry on any real deep mining on account of the heavy cost of mining timber. Members must understand that Marble Bar is only the beginning of the belt. Most of the places are beyond that. There are batteries at 20-Mile Sandy and Nullagine, and the cost of the cartage is £20 per ton. I do not know what the cost of the timber is, but the battery was timbered with jarrah, I know, which came to a considerable sum. [Mr. Bolton: 2s. 4d. a foot.] In regard to timber the usual price at many of the centres is 1s. per running foot for 6-inch stuff. That will give members who know anything about putting in timber an idea of what it would cost to timber a mine in those parts. As to the estimated traffic along this line, I think the figures given by the Premier are very favourable indeed. I would just point out to those who are in any way sceptical about the line paying that there are very few lines which are shown to pay from the start, but it is generally shown that the impetus given to a district will cause increased traffic which makes the railway pay; that is what will no doubt occur in connection with this line. I would only say in conclusion I support this line, and from my knowledge of the country I think the railway thoroughly justified and it is one of the best proposals the Government have so far brought forward.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND RAILWAYS (Hon. H. Gregory): In

dealing with the construction of this railway in the North-West, it is well known that for many years there has been an agitation for the construction of this line.

*Dr. Hicks:* By whom?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: By the hon. member.

*Dr. Hicks:* No; never.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I always understood the hon. member favoured the construction of a railway in the North-West. The only difference he has is in regard to the starting point of the railway, and there are differences of opinion about that, probably differences that may be justified, but there is no doubt that for many years there has been a strong agitation for the construction of this railway. It has been stated that offers have been made to construct this line by private enterprise, and we know of requests being made for the construction of a line from Port Hedland to Marble Bar and Nullagine, but not such as would meet with the approval of the Government and the Parliament of the day. Reports came in which were sufficient to induce the Government to make as full inquiries as they possibly could into the resources of the North-West field. The Government Geologist was sent there, and for two seasons he made full and complete inquiries in regard to the geological formation and generally on the mineral construction of the North-West. Then there was the Parliamentary party who visited Port Hedland and travelled through that area, returning *via* Roebourne. They came back fully satisfied that the Government would be justified in constructing this line. In their report they say:—

“After meeting and considering the claims advanced by parties of the two routes, and comparing notes on individual observations taken on the trip, and weighing the statistical information, we are unanimously of opinion that Port Hedland is the point from which the railway to Nullagine should start. The main factors in guiding us to this conclusion, the objectives being Marble Bar and Nullagine, are—(a) shortness of distance by 100 miles, ap-

proximately; (b) an excellent supply of water for railway purposes; (c) fewer engineering difficulties, and the lower cost of construction consequent upon the diminished distance—enables us to arrive at the conclusions already stated, without entering upon the question of the reliability or otherwise of the Point Sampson jetty."

That was the report of the Parliamentary Committee that traversed the district. I only wish to point out that the opinion of those members was that the construction of a railway to that district would be justified. Then last session provision was made on the Loan Estimates for the construction of this railway; but after the various geological reports and even after the reports obtained by various Governments, there still seemed some doubt as to whether we would be justified in spending this money. The population of this country was small and very little mining was going on, and the question for us to consider was whether, as a Government, we would be justified in taking the risk of asking Parliament to accept this Bill. So I was asked to make a Ministerial trip to that field, and to take with me the State Mining Engineer. I would like to refer to an innovation also. I asked for a representative of the Press to accompany us, so that the various reports in connection with that trip might be made available. I feel pleased that that representative of the Press came with us, because no doubt the information published from time to time by the Press representative in regard to the resources of the country must have given the district a particularly good advertisement. There were two questions for me to make a recommendation on—first, whether the railway was justified, and second, if the railway was justified where should it start. The districts of Pilbarra and West Pilbarra cover an enormous area. Roebourne, Whim Creek, Station Peak, Wodgina, Marble Bar and Nullagine are all very large districts, with great distances separating them; and the question of where the railway should start required serious consideration. I went first to Port Hedland, travelled to Marble Bar and Nullagine, then

to Wodgina and down through Whim Creek to Roebourne. Although we saw the greater portion of the mineral area, I cannot say that we were able to come away with the best or the worst impression, because our trip was necessarily a hurried one; and in addition, owing to the difficulties that those who have invested money in mining there or who are prospecting there have to contend with, for a greater portion of the trip we travelled through abandoned fields. One had to consider what the potentialities of the field were and not what the actual present prospects were. If we deal with the present condition of affairs only and are not to assume that by the construction of a railway population is going to increase, and that there is not to be an immediate improvement in the mining conditions in that part of the country, I would say at once that a railway is not justified, and that we are not justified in constructing it; but taking the records of the mineral districts throughout that large area and seeing the great values that have been won, and after visiting the prospecting shows and seeing the marvellous richness of the ore being won in so many places, the conclusion I have come to is that if we give these people the same facilities as we enjoy down here there will be a great future indeed for the North-West of this State. The member who represents the district (Mr. Underwood) spoke of the pastoral resources of the district; and no doubt too much cannot be said of the great value of that country as a pastoral country. Exceedingly rich fortunes are being made there, and I am quite satisfied that with better facilities for taking stock to market the value of the stock in these pastoral areas would be more than doubled. But taking the mining aspect of the country—because only with a view to assisting the mining industry would this railway be built—let us look at some of the yields. At Lalla Rookh, the first district that would be reached by the railway, 6,200 tons of ore have been treated producing 7,400 ounces—considerably over an ounce to the ton. [*Mr. Taylor: What is doing there now?*] Nothing whatever; there is no work at all. It



is a reward claim, and they have had exemption for about ten months past. Marble Bar we found almost abandoned so far as mining propositions were concerned. There are only two or three shows working, and they are only in the prospecting stage; but these districts are exceedingly interesting. The shows in Marble Bar have crushed 10,700 tons and have won 24,000 ounces of gold. That is a marvellous average. [*Dr. Hicks*: How much is left after that is taken out of Marble Bar?] It is not to be assumed that there will be only these rich chutes of gold and that they do not continue to a depth. It is not one mine but half a dozen mines have been large producers, and they have given an average of nearly 2½ ounces to the ton for all the stone treated there. At Bamboo Creek we were shown stone from the 400ft. level, the greatest depth attained in the North-West. It was exceedingly rich indeed. At Bamboo Creek they have crushed 10,000 tons for 17,000 ounces; but at present I do not believe there are 20 men employed there. Then take the Warrawoona district. They have crushed 5,700 tons for 17,000 ounces, over 3 ounces to the ton, but when we were there, there were not twenty men employed. One lease had a battery and a winding plant; but I do not think they were down more than 200ft. The show gave 2 ounces to the ton, but the tributaries had to throw up their tribute because the mine was so expensive to work. [*Mr. Taylor*: What was the cause of the expense; timber?] Yes: timber, and the very heavy inflow of water. At Yandicogina, it was exactly the same; it is quite abandoned; but they have crushed 2,100 tons for 5,700 ounces. Then there is the Nullagine district. It is practically abandoned to-day; but it is a district which, I think, should have a big future. Those banket formations, conglomerates, are enormous bodies, and there are great possibilities before them. From Nullagine 24,000 tons have been treated for 47,000 ounces of gold; and when we see large areas extending in an easterly direction through 20-Mile Sandy and Mosquito Creek, and when we

see the enormous records of the gold won, we cannot fail to come to the conclusion that there must be something beyond the fact that these reefs are not rich: that there must have been some reason for the abandonment of these areas. And it is not only gold-mining—if we had to pin our faith to gold-mining alone there might be some danger in agreeing to the suggestion now before the House—at Moolyella there are between 500 and 550 men working tin, and tin lodes have been proved to exist. The stanniferous country extends for many thousands of square miles. There are enormous areas which must be exploited in the future. In addition to that, copper is being worked in many districts, and so far as we saw the shows are exceedingly rich. Then there has been the later discovery of chrysolite asbestos. The developments so far have been very small; there is little to report beyond the fact that a lode has been proved by a shallow shaft and a few costens. We know little except that asbestos of a high value has been discovered there; but there are immense possibilities before it, and the opening up of these areas will certainly mean something big in the way of providing population and in the exploitation of that part of the country. These are the principal portions of the field which would be assisted by a railway from Port Hedland to Marble Bar. On the other hand we have that new discovery of tin-fields and tantalum at Wodgina. I think that district will employ a large number of people in the near future. There is no doubt not only that lodes exist, but that they are marvellously rich in tin. Only the other day we saw in the Press that one block of tin weighing 250lbs. was broken out. I saw a block weighing 92 lbs., and I saw another in the lode, which had not been broken out, but looked to me as if it would weigh over 100lbs. At Wodgina the prospectors have been able to get sufficient loose tin to carry on the development work of their mines; and I predict that there is a great future in store for the place. The lodes extend some 30 miles south, and have also been proved about 20 miles farther east. From Wodgina towards Roebourne there are

Station Peak, Mallina, Croydon, and Whim Creek. At Station Peak there is a large body of ore being worked; and according to the statistics, 12,000 tons of ore have yielded 11,000 ounces of gold. I do not know what the value of the mine is to-day; but it certainly had the appearance to me of being a mine which, if judiciously worked, would be a profitable proposition; and there were only three men on it. I think that with reasonable facilities it should be employing from 100 to 200 men. Then there were the copper and antimony propositions in the other districts we travelled through, including Hong Kong and Egina, but they were almost deserted and we were unable to learn the real value of these places. At Whim Creek there is no doubt as to the great richness of the copper deposits, and when we reached Roebourne and saw the development there one could only wonder how it was that these rich shows had been left undeveloped for so long. I have seen a good deal of criticism in the Press as to the intention of the Government to construct a tramline from Point Sampson to Roebourne. I have shown hon. members a photo. which I had taken which revealed 6,600 bags of copper ore deposited at the wharf at Cossack. That ore had been carted from the mines to the present tramway, had to be trammed thence to Cossack, and then lightered in small lighters out to any boat that might be waiting at Point Sampson. If the tramway is built, goods will be able to be handled cheaply, and fair and ordinary facilities be given to the people. As far as Roebourne itself is concerned, there is little doubt as to the future mineral prospects of the field there. Then the question arises as to the starting-point of the railway. If it is to be from Roebourne to assist Marble Bar it would have to be carried a distance of about 200 miles from the Point Sampson Jetty. There is this argument in favour of it, that it would traverse Whim Creek, and there would be the whole of the mineral belt towards Wodgina; but if we carried the line to Wodgina we would have to proceed north, and the distance the line would traverse would be in that case a

good deal more than 200 miles, for the northerly route would have to be taken owing to the precipitous nature of the country between Marble Bar and Wodgina. If we desire to assist the greater portion of the mineral belt, and that is I think the desire of hon. members, the line must be constructed from Port Hedland. I wish to remove the impressions which have been created as to the Point Sampson Jetty. Many have said that the expenditure on this work has been useless, and that the jetty will be blown away by the first willy-willy in the North-West. The position has been summed up by some who say that the money has been absolutely wasted. I think that that jetty will do a great amount of good. There is a magnificent roadstead, as good I take it as Fremantle was before we had the harbour built there. The roadstead, I have been informed by authoritative persons in the district, is such that for only about 10 days in the year is it impossible for boats to lie alongside the jetty. With the ordinary facilities of a tramway, considerable assistance will be given to the Roebourne district. If it is necessary or thought advisable to construct a railway from Roebourne as against Port Hedland I feel quite satisfied that the facilities at Point Sampson would be quite sufficient for that railway. Then there is the harbour at Depuch Island. It is a magnificent harbour and for about a mile and a half there are almost natural wharves along the island. There is a great depth of water, and the Government have sent a survey party to chart the harbour and enable the boats to come into the island and take away ore from the Whim Creek district. Then there is the Port Hedland Harbour, and there is no doubt that although small it is one that would satisfy the requirements of the Pilbarra field for many a long day to come. Unless the trade increases to a very great extent it would be quite sufficient for the trade of the Pilbarra district. Taking all things into consideration, viewing the difficulties of railway construction in many parts of the State, I think if we desire to assist the greater portion of the mineral belt this railway should start from Port Hed-

land. Of course another question arises when we consider the advisability of assisting that large mineral belt extending from Whim Creek to Wodgina. It is quite possible that in the future before any effort may be made for the purpose of giving railway communication to Wodgina field we must consider whether it is advisable to construct a railway from Roebourne or Depeuch Island to assist that large mineral belt. To assist the Marble Bar and Nullagine districts there is only one place the railway should start from, and that is Port Hedland. On the present developments of the country, its population and its trade, we would not be warranted to ask permission to construct this railway; but there are such great possibilities before the country. They have almost every known mineral, and there is no mining district, outside of the Kalgoorlie belt, in Western Australia which can compare in regard to records with the Pilbarra field. The district is marvellously rich in tin, with thousands of square miles of stanniferous country; and there are lodes which in the near future must be worked. Copper exists, there are asbestos, good mica specimens have been brought in, enormous lodes of antimony, and small diamonds have been discovered. A good deal of doubt has been expressed as to the discovery of diamonds in the North-West, but there is no doubt that small ones have been discovered in the battery boxes in crushing the conglomerates. The State Mining Engineer has pointed out to me that in the Government Geologist's report there is mention of a rock new to the Western Australian goldfields, known as gabbro, which is also discovered on the Kimberleys in South Africa, so that it is just possible that at some future date diamond deposits may be discovered in the Nullagine field. From the records, and from what I have seen of the country, there is an enormous auriferous area, large areas containing tin, and huge possibilities in connection with the whole of that vast country, and these facts were sufficient for me to urge the Government to bring forward this Bill. I feel sure that after the construction of this rail-

way a new State will be opened up. It will take time; but the country will improve enormously with population, more capital, and of course facilities. There seems to be abundance of water, and it is not difficult to obtain supplies, in fact very few of the wells are sunk to a greater depth than from 40 to 50 feet. There is good water for drinking, and so far as the general water supply is concerned no great difficulties will accrue. If we have the people and capital brought in to assist in the development of the country, the outlook is very bright. I recognise the impossibility that exists of developing it in the present conditions, because it is next to impossible to carry on mining operations without mining timber and fuel. We might possibly for many years manage without the fuel, for there is a certain amount of that procurable; but hon. members know how great a necessity it is in opening up a large mine to have plenty of the very best timber for mining operations. At the present time that timber is not available, but if the facilities are given to the people in that district to obtain timber at fair prices, and also to secure all the necessary adjuncts to mining, so as to enable them to push on with the work, good results will follow. What is necessary is that these mining adjuncts should be obtainable at the time they are wanted, for it very frequently happens that far more actual loss is occasioned by the inability to obtain these requisites at the necessary time than the value of the requisites themselves. It has been owing to the great distance of these mines from the coast and the great expense attendant upon working them that the industry is in the state it is at the present day. We have to consider these two questions; either that this part of the country shall be abandoned, or that it shall be given the facilities which other places enjoy. I am sure of the future of this part of the country, if these facilities are given. There is little doubt to my mind that the railway will prove a success, although there is to some extent a slight gamble in connection with it. Great interest is now being shown in the district. There is already a large in-

crease in the population, and one has only to look at the great trade now being done with that part of the country—and I am hopeful that people will soon be able to get cheaper and better facilities—to realise the great and increased attention which is being paid to these northern fields. If we get population and more capital there, there is no doubt as to the great future of the country. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

On motion by *Mr. Angwin*, debate adjourned.

## BILL—DISTRICT FIRE BRIGADES.

*Money Clause—as to a Message.*

*Second Reading.*

Resumed from the previous day.

*Point of Order as to Procedure.*

*Mr. J. Scaddan* (Ivanhoe): On a point of order, I desire to draw attention to Clause 34 of the Bill, which makes a direct charge on the Consolidated Revenue. The clause states:—

“The amount of the estimate made pursuant to Section 33 shall be contributed and paid to the board as follows—(a) One-ninth thereof by the Colonial Treasurer.

I contend that this makes a direct charge on the Consolidated Revenue, and requires a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending an appropriation of money. Section 67 of the Constitution Act, on which I base my contention that this Bill is out of order, reads as follows:—

“It shall not be lawful for the Legislative Assembly to adopt or pass any vote, resolution, or Bill, for the appropriation of any part of the Consolidated Revenue Fund or of any rate, tax, duty, or impost to any purpose which has not been first recommended to the Assembly by Message of the Governor during the session in which such vote, resolution, or Bill is proposed.”

I would point out, too, that a similar message embodying almost the same words in connection with the contributions to the Fire Brigades Board was introduced in Victoria in 1893 by *Mr. Deakin*, and

prior to the introduction of that measure he brought down a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending the appropriation of moneys from the consolidated revenue. As showing, too, that this custom should be adopted, the Bill to which I have just referred, and which was known as No. 1, was afterwards withdrawn and a second brought down, and again the same procedure was adopted by *Mr. Deakin*, of bringing down a message from His Excellency the Governor. In New South Wales in 1893 a Bill called the Labour Protection Bill was introduced and had been read a second time, when *Mr. Wright*, the member for Paddington, rose to a point of order on similar lines to that which I have brought up to-night, saying that the Bill made a direct charge on the consolidated revenue and required a message from His Excellency the Governor. The Speaker said that the objection was fatal, and the Bill was withdrawn from the Notice Paper.

*Mr. Bath*: That is a Standing Order precisely similar to ours.

*Mr. Scaddan*: Precisely similar, and so it is in Victoria. I cannot find any instance where a Bill which makes a direct charge on the consolidated revenue has yet been introduced in any of the States without a preceding message from the Governor. In view of that fact I raise a point of order, and ask the ruling of the Speaker as to whether the Bill is in order in appearing on the Notice Paper to-day.

*The Attorney General*: I wish to direct attention to the fact that it has been the practice, and I submit the right practice, to allow the message from the Governor to be brought in at any time before passing the Bill. Though I have not been in Parliament so long as some members, yet while I have been here that has happened on more than one occasion.

*Mr. Scaddan*: Mention those instances.

*The Attorney General*: I cannot charge my memory with them.

*Mr. Walker*: You are thinking of the secession motion of the member for York (*Mr. Monger*).

*The Attorney General*: No; I am speaking of a Bill brought in by the

Government. The message was not produced at the time, but subsequently. I am speaking to a House consisting of members some of whom have had more experience than I, and they can easily recollect a similar occasion. [Mr. Walker: No.] The hon. member has had no longer experience than I. Let me point out the language of the Standing Order:—

“It shall not be lawful for the Assembly to adopt or pass any vote, resolution or Bill for the appropriation of any part of the Consolidated Revenue Fund”—

“Adopt,” of course, refers only to a resolution.

Mr. Scaddan: We adopted a resolution when introducing this Bill.

The Attorney General: The passing refers to a Bill, the adopting refers to something not in the nature of a Bill. The language may cover both a resolution and a Bill. It has been the practice, and a proper practice of the House, to hold that if a message from the Governor is handed to the Speaker at any stage before the passing, that is quite sufficient to comply with the provisions of our Constitution Act; and the passing of the measure is a distinct stage which is subsequent to the second reading. I submit, therefore, that both the practice of the House and the language of our Constitution Act warrant the Speaker in holding that at any stage prior to the motion that the Bill be passed it is open to whomsoever is in charge of the Bill to produce to the House through the Speaker a message from His Excellency.

Mr. Bath: In supporting the point of order I submit that the practice which has obtained in the other States is precisely similar. The wording of the Standing Orders in New South Wales and Victoria is precisely similar to the wording of Section 67 of the Constitution Act, under which the rulings given by various Speakers in both those colonies, as they were then, were that such a Bill could not be introduced without a message. And I submit it would be departing from a safe precedent for us at

any time to allow that the message could be introduced just prior to dealing with the particular clause in which this specific appropriation of money out of Consolidated Revenue was made.

The Attorney General: Prior to passing the Bill; not when dealing with a particular clause.

Mr. Bath: I say, it would be altogether wrong and contrary to the procedure which is adopted everywhere, according to the ruling given in Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia, and also given in this House by preceding Speakers—the ruling that such a Bill or such a resolution appropriating money or levying a tax or impost should be preceded by a message from the Governor. And I give as my reason for saying so the necessity for avoiding the waste of members' time in discussing a Bill and going through a number of clauses, when, if we reach the particular clause in which the appropriation is sought to be made, we may not be able to secure the message from His Excellency authorising the appropriation, and thus the whole time occupied by the Assembly in dealing with the Bill will be absolutely wasted. I say we wish to avoid waste of time, and if it is essential, as the Constitution Act provides, that such a Bill shall be authorised by message from the Governor, then I say it is a safe constitutional practice for the House to adopt to have that message preparatory to the Assembly entering on the discussion of the Bill. The New South Wales section under which the ruling of the Speaker of that State was given is as follows, and if the Treasurer will turn up the section in our Constitution Act he will see it is precisely similar. Section 46 states:—

“It shall not be lawful for the Assembly to originate or pass any vote, resolution, or Bill for the appropriation of any part of the said Consolidated Revenue fund or of any other tax or impost to any purpose which has not been first recommended by a message of the Governor to the said Assembly during the session in which such vote, resolution, or Bill shall be passed.”

The wording is similar in Victoria, where the two decisions quoted by the member for Ivanhoe (Mr. Scaddan) were given, which decisions clearly laid down that the message had to precede the introduction of the Bill.

*Mr. Daglish* : The word "originate," in the section you have read, is not in our Constitution Act.

*Mr. Bath* : I therefore submit that in order to avoid any waste of time or any foolish procedure in this House, we ought to follow the same, and as I hold the safe, procedure of preceding these Bills by a message from the Governor. I would point also to a ruling given only last session by the Speaker, which prevented me from introducing a clause in one of the Railway Bills because the Chairman ruled that it could not be introduced without a message from the Governor ; and at the Chairman's request I appealed to the Speaker, who ruled that the message was necessary.

*The Premier* : That was in Committee.

*Mr. Bath* : In Committee.

*Mr. Walker* : The Attorney General has twitted me with having had no more experience than he. [*The Attorney General* : Of this House.] Of course ; we came in together. But I have had more experience than he of questions of this kind. In New South Wales I have seen Bill after Bill, and one particularly will ever remain in my memory—

*The Attorney General* : Was the language of the Standing Order the same as ours?

*Mr. Walker* : The same language. And more, we have taken this ruling from the House of Commons, as the Attorney General knows. He ought not to argue for the purpose of gaining a point ; there is nothing to be gained. We ought to preserve our Standing Orders. Our Orders being taken from those of the House of Commons, our procedure is regulated precisely as in that Chamber. At any stage after its introduction, a Bill may be ruled out of order that seeks to impose any burden on the people. That is a well-recognised ruling in every Parliament in the British dominions.

There is no exception. If there be an exception in this House, the exception is an innovation. But I submit that under the Constitution Act, no matter how we try to strain the reasoning, we cannot be allowed the privilege of carrying on a Bill that would impose a burden on the people. In spite of the Attorney General's having read the section, permit me to read it in its plain common-sense English : "It shall not be lawful"—therefore the Bill if passed would be unlawful, and would be declared unlawful by a court of law—"It shall not be lawful for the Legislative Assembly to adopt or pass any vote."

*The Attorney General* : What is the meaning of that?

*Mr. Walker* : It means that the measure shall not reach any of its stages. It shall not pass. No vote shall be taken upon it. What does the Minister, with all his sneers and ironical laughter, mean by "pass?"

*The Attorney General* : When does a Bill pass?

*Mr. Walker* : When does any resolution pass, when does any vote pass? This section deals with more than a Bill. The Attorney General cannot make that distinction.

*The Attorney General* : Is not the passing always the final step?

*Mr. Walker* : Is there not a final step to every stage—a final step to the motion that a Bill should be introduced? That is a final step. The section goes on, "to adopt or, pass any vote, resolution or Bill"—it meets the hon. member at every stage. At no step can you do this. You cannot pass a vote to introduce the Bill. You cannot do it when a Bill is introduced by any inadvertence and comes before the House. At no stage can you continue if the error be once pointed out ; that is, if the Bill would appropriate any part of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, or seeks to impose any rate, tax, duty or impost for any purpose which has not been first recommended to the Assembly by message of the Governor. And I wish the hon. member to perceive that it must first be recommended—not after the vote, resolution, or Bill has been introduced, but

first. No language could be plainer. The first step towards such a proceeding is a recommendation by His Excellency. That is clear; no amount of laughter can alter the fact, and I am surprised that the Attorney General does not treat such a matter more seriously. The section concludes, "by message of the Governor during the session in which such a vote, resolution or bill is proposed." That is to say, first before "proposed." We cannot avoid that language. We have it distinctly laid down in the Imperial Parliament that this course must be taken. I know there is one exception, and possibly we may be misled by the exception given in *May*, which I propose to read to show that even the exception bears out my contention. The paragraph is headed, "Bills creating a charge"—a lesser charge than a direct charge; that is, when the charge in the Bill is subordinate to other main features. I am now reading from *May*, 10th Edition, page 528:—

"When the main object of a Bill is the creation of a public charge, resort must be had to this procedure before the Bill is introduced; and upon the report of the resolution of the Committee of the whole House thereon, the Bill is ordered to be brought in. [That is clear.] If the charge created by a Bill is a subsidiary feature therein resulting from the provisions it contains, the royal recommendation and preliminary committee are not needed in the first instance, and the Bill is brought in on motion."

This is the point which makes the present Bill still out of order, even if the charge which the Bill seeks to create were not a direct claim on the revenue, and even if the charge were really subsidiary to the main feature of the Bill. Even then it would be out of order according to *May*, which continues:—

"Before the clauses and provisions for the creation of incidental charges —[which this Bill does]—can be considered by a committee on the Bill, those clauses and provisions must be sanctioned by the resolution of a committee appointed upon the recommen-

dation of the Crown, and agreed to by the House."

And we have a note to this point on page 529:—

"When the scope of a clause exceeded the power given by the resolution on which the Bill was founded, the Chairman declined to put the question thereon."

Moreover there are other conditions. To my mind I should rest there, but lest there be a possibility of its being said I am not reading sufficiently carefully, let me go on:—

"And in the presentation copies of the Bill, the clauses and provisions which create these charges are printed in italics."

That has not been done in this instance: there can be no deceiving the House. Supposing this were not as I believe, does not the Bill directly come under the procedure of the legislation creating a charge? We should not have the House deceived if there be a clause in it directly or indirectly creating a charge on the public purse: that portion should be printed in the presentation copies of the Bill in italics, and if that course has not been taken we do not consider the Bill, and the Bill on that score is rejected. These clauses should be printed in italics, marked that way, or they do not form part of the Bill. In this Bill they are not distinguished from other parts of the Bill. *May* also says:—

"And no question can be proposed thereon unless vitality has been imparted to those provisions by a committee resolution, and amendments to Bills which are not thus sanctioned are not proposed from the Chair, or if agreed to inadvertently are cancelled. The Speaker also has declined, in like manner, to put the question on an amendment which would have varied the incidence of taxation."

I submit, you cannot find stronger language than that. It is the course followed in the English Parliament, and it is the course adopted, to my knowledge, in other places. I have been reading from pages 528 to 529 in the 10th edition of *May's Parliamentary*

*Practice.* I have never heard the matter questioned until I came into this House. In New South Wales I have repeatedly seen Bills ruled out of order, and I have mentioned one of the most important measures in one session of the New South Wales Assembly when Mr. Copeland, who was afterwards Agent General for that State, was Minister for Lands, and the question was raised by Mr. Crick; and Mr. Speaker Abbott, who was in the chair, had no hesitation in ruling an important public measure of that kind out of order. The consequence was that the Bill had to be withdrawn and a second one introduced. The same course of procedure has been followed in Victoria, and I know of no Parliament in the world that has not adopted this practice, which is the practice in the British dominions. I am loth to believe that this Legislature has been guilty of a dereliction of duty in that respect.

*Mr. Daglish :* I believe the practice has prevailed ever since I have been in the House of allowing a measure to reach the second reading stage, and then if the measure requires a Message, it is necessary that the Message should reach the House before the Committee stage is entered on.

*The Minister for Mines :* The Bill has been allowed to get to the Committee stage.

*Mr. Daglish :* Yes.

*Mr. Scaddan :* Give us an instance.

*Mr. Daglish :* I could quote many instances, but it is not necessary to my remarks to do so. I was under the impression that the words quoted by the Attorney General in Section 66 of the Constitution Act quite justified that practice; but having since very carefully read the section it seems to me the words in the latter part govern the whole :—

“It shall not be lawful for the Legislative Assembly to adopt or pass any vote, resolution, or Bill for the appropriation of any part of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, or of any rate, tax, duty, or impost to any purpose which has not been first recommended to the Assembly by message of the Governor during the session in which

such vote, resolution, or Bill is proposed.”

It seems to me these words, particularly the word “first” really govern the whole clause; therefore the practice that has been adopted seems to have arisen out of a somewhat loose interpretation of the section which appears not to justify the practice which has prevailed here, at all events since I have been a member of the House. I believe under the wording of the section any member might construe the section to mean that the message must precede the Bill.

*The Minister for Mines :* I would like to draw attention to the section which has been read by the hon. member, for he has evidently misunderstood it, because the words “first recommended to the Assembly” refer to the previous paragraph which says that it is not lawful to pass a vote until first recommended. We admit that that has been the procedure in this Parliament and the ordinary practice in regard to money Bills, that of bringing down the Governor’s message first. It has been ruled time after time by the Speaker that the practice which the Attorney General has cited should be followed. The member for Subiaco is wrong altogether in the interpretation of the section.

*Mr. SPEAKER :* The rule controlling this point of order is certainly contained in Section 67 of the Constitution Act. It is not necessary to read it, for it has been read by members. I propose to follow the practice which has been adopted here ever since Parliament has been in existence, and I have been a member of it nearly the whole of that time, and on every occasion when this matter has cropped up the same course has been followed as the Government have adopted on this occasion. I need only refer to a couple of instances, notably in 1903 in connection with the Administration Bill, the second reading was moved on Thursday, the 16th August, but the message did not arrive until Tuesday, the 11th August. Again in 1903 the second reading of the Government Railways Bill was moved on the 27th October, and the mes-



sage was received on the 3rd November. The procedure followed in the House of Commons and other Parliaments is that the message is considered in Committee of Supply, but that course has never been followed in this Parliament except in the case of Supply Bills. The message has been received at any time during the passage of the Bill, and that is the precedent which I shall follow, especially when it has been adopted by such a competent authority as the late Sir James Lee Steere. But I shall assume that this message will be forthcoming; therefore I suggest to the Minister in charge of the Bill that he move the adjournment of the Order of the Day until some other sitting day, because strictly speaking had there not been this precedent for years past, I should have been governed by the words mentioned by the member for Subiaco "having been first recommended"; that means on the introduction of the Bill. It is specially provided by our Standing Orders that no debate can take place on the first reading; merely the title of the Bill is read. I am now following the precedent which has existed for the last 17 years, and which has been established in this Parliament.

*Mr. Johnson* : May I ask a question? Are we to understand, because I want it a little more definitely, that in the future in this House if we can point out there has been a precedent for doing a certain thing, even if it is contrary to the Standing Orders, you will endorse our contention in that direction?

*Mr. SPEAKER* : No; I certainly do not intend to take everything as a precedent; if I did so I should be a mere figure-head. I am guided by the practice which has long been in existence and has never been questioned before, and I have quoted two instances—I could give dozens of others if necessary. I know very well that this has happened on many occasions; but I hope the Government will adopt the suggestion I have made, because unless a message is forthcoming I shall rule the Bill out of order.

*Mr. Bath* : There is another point, even if that course is adopted in regard to this provision. Section 34 contravenes the practice adopted in other cases, be-

cause the clauses dealing with the appropriation of money are not printed in italics.

*Mr. SPEAKER* : That is an exception. I desire also to say in reference to the contention of the Leader of the Opposition, that on the occasion when the Chairman ruled him out of order, that was in Committee, and it was a vote which had been proposed. I do not consider that case parallel with the present case.

*Mr. Walker* : Do you rule now that the Bill is out of order, on the ground that certain portions are not printed in italics?

*Mr. SPEAKER* : I say that if a message is not forthcoming, I shall rule it out of order. Perhaps the Order should be postponed.

*Mr. Scaddan* : Do you rule that a message is not necessary now?

*Mr. SPEAKER* : I rule that it can be brought down, according to precedent, at any stage. Perhaps the wiser course in the future will be to adhere to the word "first," but I am following the precedent that has been adopted for years past, and I think I am putting the proper construction on it; unless a message does come forward before we reach the second reading stage.

*Mr. Scaddan* : I give notice that I shall move to-morrow that your ruling be disagreed to.

*The Attorney General* : I hesitate to differ altogether from the ruling of Mr. Speaker; therefore, as suggested, I move "That the debate be adjourned."

*Mr. Holman* : There is a precedent. It occurs in relation to a Bill bearing the same title as the present one. It was in 1898; the Bill was introduced in June, the second reading took place in July, and the message came down in August after the second reading had practically been carried.

Motion (to postpone the Order) put and passed.

*Mr. SPEAKER* : Does the member for Ivanhoe desire his notice to be ac-

cepted as a formal notice for to-morrow?

*Mr. Scaddan* : Yes.

*Mr. SPEAKER* : The hon. member can move now, if he wishes.

*Mr. Scaddan* : Are we working under the old Standing Orders?

*Mr. SPEAKER* : The proposed Standing Orders have not yet been approved by the House.

*Mr. Scaddan* : Then in the circumstances I am prepared to let the matter drop.

*Mr. Walker* : As precedent can never override our Constitution, we should understand that henceforth we will absolutely follow the course prescribed by our Constitution, and now let the matter drop.

### ADJOURNMENT.

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

## Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 7th August, 1907.

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

Prayers.

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Report of Proceedings before Boards of Conciliation and Court of Arbitration, 1906. 2, Wagin municipal by-laws.

### QUESTION—CADET FORCE, INCREASE.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, What increase to the Cadet Force at present existing in this State is proposed under the new Cadet Regulations? 2, What will be the estimated cost of such increase, and over how many years will this cost be spread? 3, Have the Government agreed to this increase; or if not, what action have they taken? 4, Will the Minister lay upon the table of the House the whole correspondence dealing with this question?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, The proposed increase from 120 to 510 Senior Cadets, being an increase of 390, and from 1,527 School Cadets to 2,036, being an increase of 509. 2, The estimated cost of such increase is £1,181. The full increase will not be reached for, say, three years; but when the proposed establishment is complete the annual increase will be £1,181, as above. 3, The Government have not concurred to this up to the present, *vide* the Hon. the Premier's note of 6/7/07, in which he says:—"We are doing more than any of the States to encourage the cadet movement, by franking the boys over our railways, but I will not approve of any additional expenditure being entailed in connection with the proposal to increase the establishment." 4, Papers are herewith.

### QUESTION—SEWAGE FILTER BEDS.

Hon. C. SOMMERS asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, What effect has the submerging of the filter beds on Burswood Island by the present flood in the Swan river had upon the foundations? 2, What effect will similar submergings have on the working of the beds when the sewerage system is in full work?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, The foundations for the filters have been in water for the last four weeks, and there has been no appreciable effect. 2, Similar floodings, which will occur almost every year, will not have any prejudicial effect upon the treat-