

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 4th September, 1907.

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

Prayers.

QUESTION—FEDERAL BOUNTY, AS TO ASSISTANCE.

Mr. STONE asked the Premier: 1, What amount has this State received from the £500,000 provided by the Federal Bounty Act to assist State industries? 2, What is the nature of the industries to be assisted by the said Bounty Act? 3, Has the State Government made any application or recommendation in connection with the Federal Bounty Act? 4, If so, what is the nature of such application or recommendation?

The PREMIER replied: 1, None as yet. The Act is still before the Federal Legislature. 2, Cotton, New Zealand Flax, Jute, Sisal Hemp, Mohair, Copra, Cottonseed, Linseed, Rice, Rubber, Coffee, Tobacco Leaf, Preserved Fish, Dates, Dried and Candied Fruits, Combed Wool. 3, Yes. Jute and dates, in addition to items proposed in the original schedule circulated by the Federal Government. 4, This State was represented at the Conference and co-operated in drafting a report for the consideration of the Federal Government.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURE, PURCHASE OF COWS.

Mr. WALKER asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Has the Agricultural

Department paid Mr. H. Gull any money as (a) honorarium. (b) commission, (c) travelling expenses in connection with the purchase of cows in Victoria for Western Australia? If so, how much? 2, Can he supply the names of any other person or persons who have received any subsidy or other form of payment from the department in connection with the purchase of the said cows? 3, Under the heading of "General Expenses," is there any cover for any honorarium or payment of any kind granted to any member of this present Parliament?

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. J. Mitchell) replied: 1, Yes. From the 18th May to the 31st August—salary, £60 13s. 4d.; travelling expenses, £59. 2, No other person has received any subsidy or other form of payment from this department in connection with the purchase of the said cows. 3, No.

QUESTION—STEAMER "*BIA*," REPAIRS.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has the Public Works Department entered into contract with the agents or owners of the s.s. *Bia* for repairs to that steamer at Fremantle? 2, If so, what was the contract price, and what was the cost of the work? 3, If not, why did the Works Department carry out the repairs, and under what conditions? 4, Was there any financial loss or gain to the Department?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, Representations were made to the Minister on Sunday, 11th August, that the matter was one of great urgency, and that, so far as could be ascertained, no Engineering Works had the requisite plant to carry it out. The Minister gave instructions on the Monday that, assuming the Engineering Division indorsed these representations, the work was to be done by the Department for the local foundry. 4, Neither. Only actual cost of the work charged.

PASTORAL INDUSTRY INQUIRY—
MOTION TO DISCHARGE COMMITTEE.

Order read for the select committee to report.

Mr. JOHNSON : Pending the result of the motion which appears later on the Notice Paper, I move that this matter be postponed until this day week.

Mr. SPEAKER : If the member is desirous of proceeding with his motion he can do so at this stage, for it would be ridiculous to postpone the matter when the motion on the Notice Paper may or may not be carried.

Mr. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford) : I move—

That the Select Committee appointed to report on assistance to pastoralists, etcetera, be discharged.

Members will remember the other evening when the question was under debate, the member for Pilbarra (Mr. Underwood) notified his intention of resigning from the committee. This was the second resignation received from a member of the committee. When the member for Pilbarra notified me officially, as mover of the motion, that it was his intention to resign, I came to the conclusion that it would be undesirable to proceed with the investigation. Apart from the resignation of the member for Gascoyne and later on that of the member for Pilbarra, the bitter party spirit displayed in the discussion on the motion for the select committee, and later on the motion for the discharge of the member for Gascoyne, leads me to question very much—in fact convinces me—that no good will result from the deliberations of the committee. I do not wish to say more, for I believe the question has been sufficiently debated. I would emphasise the point that I am still convinced of the necessity for an inquiry. I am convinced the Government have not sufficient information on this great question, nor is it possible, except by a strict inquiry, for members to gain that information. I am convinced the information cannot be gained by the present committee, owing to the bitter party spirit

displayed. I do not feel personally disposed to proceed with the inquiry, and that being so, I feel it will be unworthy of me to impose the task on others; so rather than move that the member for Pilbarra and I be discharged, I move that the whole committee be discharged.

Mr. SPEAKER : Before putting the motion it is necessary to point out to members that when a member is appointed on a select committee he is in duty bound to act. In other words, if he fails in that duty he commits a contempt of the House, which controls and directs such proceedings. The hon. member (Mr. Johnson) is perfectly justified in moving this motion, but what he has stated cannot form an adequate reason for refusing to act on the committee. I have no desire to concern myself with the debate on the motion for the appointment of the committee, but I feel it my duty to draw attention to the rule.

Mr. G. TAYLOR : I second the motion.

Mr. W. B. GORDON (Canning) : Since I was elected a member of the committee I have not received any notice from the mover, the member for Guildford (Mr. Johnson), and I was rather surprised to see by his notice of motion that he wished the committee to be discharged. The hon. member's excuse that the member for Pilbarra (Mr. Underwood) would not act is no excuse at all; because, as mover for the committee, he (Mr. Johnson) never issued a notice calling them together. Had he done so, he must have asked the member for Pilbarra why he did not attend; or if he refused to act, why he refused. It seems extraordinary that a member should move for a select committee, that the motion should be debated a whole afternoon and part of the evening, the committee being eventually appointed, and that the mover should then have the effrontery to come to the House, and, because one member of the committee will not act with him, say that the committee must be discharged. Is that a direct insult to the other 49 members of the House? Are there not members who

might have taken the position that the member for Pilbarra refused to accept; members who could have filled that position quite as well as that giant in debate? I fail to see why the committee were moved for at all if they were to be treated in this paltry manner. The whole House should take exception to the present motion, for the mover finishes his explanation by saying an inquiry is still desirable, as he does not think the question has been sufficiently investigated.

Mr. Taylor: The constitution of the committee is bad.

Mr. GORDON: But it was not bad while it included the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Butcher). Was that member the instigator of the motion for the committee? Did he ask the member for Guildford, a Labour member, to move for the committee?

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Guildford is certainly justified in any course he likes to take.

Mr. GORDON: Apparently he does not know what course he does take. He seeks a recourse. There are the facts. I should not say the member for Gascoyne asked the member for Guildford to have the committee appointed; because there is no reason why the latter should ask for a committee on such a subject. Unfortunately, now that the member for Gascoyne is not on the committee, the mover appears to think he cannot run it; it is too much for him. That is the absurd side of the question. It is a serious matter that any member can have a select committee appointed, and ask for its discharge because one member refuses to sit. I appeal to members to say whether that is fair or reasonable; that because one member says he does not care to act, the mover should ask that the committee be discharged, and in addition should finish his explanation by saying he still thinks there should be an inquiry. He says this is a party question. Even if it is, he, as mover of the motion, would in accordance with custom have been the chairman. Was he not capable of bringing forward what evidence he liked? Would he not have presented the report; and if the other members did not agree

to his report would they not have had to give reasons for disagreeing? In these circumstances there is no reason for the motion that the committee be discharged, unless the mover means a direct insult to other members of the House by insinuating that none of them is capable of filling the position of the member for Pilbarra. Or it may be that the mover is dissatisfied because he has not a majority on the committee. We know from the discussion on the motion by which the committee were appointed that while the member for Guildford asked for the committee, not one member in Opposition favoured the establishment of freezing-works in the North-West. Nearly every one of them who spoke was absolutely opposed to freezing-works.

Labour Members: No.

Mr. Hudson: When did you become inspired with that idea?

Mr. Underwood: Look up *Hansard*.

Mr. GORDON: Are you in favour of freezing-works?

Mr. Underwood: Certainly.

Mr. GORDON: The member for Pilbarra is at last favourable to something.

Mr. SPEAKER: The discussion wandered very much when the motion for freezing-works was before the House. The question now is whether the committee shall or shall not be discharged. The question of freezing-works should not be again discussed.

Mr. GORDON: Very good, sir. I simply ask whether the excuse which the member for Guildford gives to the House is one that the House can accept.

Mr. T. WALKER (Kanowna): The member who has just sat down (Mr. Gordon) has misinterpreted the meaning of the member for Guildford. I should consider that no member could come to any other conclusion from the speech made by the member for Guildford than that he was taking his present action owing to the excessive party spirit exhibited in the election of the committee. Incidental to his argument he stated that he desired the discharge owing to the fact that one member had objected to sit on the committee. That, however, was purely an incidental reason. [*Mr. Gor-*

don: Was it also an incidental reason that actuated him to say the same thing in an interview that appeared in the *West Australian*? It is quite possible; but the speech just delivered cannot be interpreted as being based on any other than the substantive reason that an undesirable party spirit had been exhibited in connection with the appointment of the committee. As a matter of fact the member covered more than the resignation of the member for Pilbarra in alluding to the party spirit exhibited in the composition of the select committee. As we all know, the primary reason was the resignation of the member for Gascoyne. The receipt of this resignation resulted in a resolution to substitute the member for Mount Magnet. This, however, was rejected, and there was a struggle, as we all know, as to the appointment of the member for Katanning. The feeling exhibited in the House during the course of that debate could not be described as any other than the height of party feeling. [*Mr. Bath*: There was the statement of the Minister for Works.] Yes, there was the definite, clear statement of the Minister for Works that the Government had their policy to protect, and that there were interests in the North-West to which they were pledged, and they had, therefore, good reasons for getting their nominees upon the committee. [*The Minister for Works*: Read *Hansard* and refresh your memory as to what I said.] I was here when the Minister spoke and know that what I have said is correct. There was, moreover, in connection with the appointment of the committee, a definite statement from the Minister for Mines in which he contended that the majority had the right to use their power to get a preponderance of their own supporters upon the committee; there can be no getting behind that. [*Mr. Gordon*: There was no dispute until the member for Gascoyne resigned.] At that stage feeling had not been aroused, and no party tactics were adopted until during the first ballot for the appointment of a successor to the member for Gascoyne. Up to then there had been no exhibition of the party spirit. I regret to say that this spirit

was exhibited by one of the members of the select committee. Canvassing went on—[*Mr. Gordon*: Never]—and even something more, namely, dictation on the part of the Government to get their own nominees upon the committee. I submit that the member for Guildford is perfectly right to say that, in these circumstances, any inquiry that might be conducted by that committee would be regarded with the utmost suspicion. It would be supposed that it was nothing less than an agency of the Government to screen their conduct in the past or to get some help in carrying out those measures which they had pledged themselves to introduce. The member for Guildford said, and I am now interpreting what his speech meant, that he could not be associated with suspicions of that kind, and therefore desired to have the committee discharged.

The Premier: By the smile on the face of the member for Guildford I do not think you interpret what he means.

Mr. Johnson: I looked across at you, saw you smiling, and smiled in sympathy.

Mr. WALKER: It is easy to understand the smile then, for none can look at the Premier and at his good-natured face without smiling also. My interpretation is a fair one of the speech delivered by the member for Guildford. If that hon. member had not taken the course he has done, it would have been a wise course for some other member of the House to adopt. The clear expression of opinion by members of the Government during the last debate on this question could not be regarded to mean otherwise than to appoint a committee to screen them in the conduct they intended to take. (Ministerial laughter.) I can quite understand this laughter coming from the member for Canning and other Ministerial supporters. It is well for that member to try and cast every kind of scorn and ridicule on a motion of this kind. I will not go farther and say there are few members of this House, or few citizens outside of it, who would have confidence in a committee on which was the member for Canning: if I said that I might be going a step too far. The mover of the motion feels that the com-

mittee under the present circumstances, composed as it is, could do no good and would not pay the disinterested attention to the work expected of a committee of that very important description. All he is justified in doing, therefore, is to ask for their discharge. [Mr. Gordon: He is weak enough for that.] Where is the element of weakness? Any person seeing the spirit of this Assembly, knowing the history of the appointment of members of the committee, recognising that the report will not be worth a snap of the fingers in the estimation of the public, will realise that the chairman—[Mr. Gordon: Shows the white feather]—No; for it is a very courageous thing to come to this House and say "In these circumstances I will not have my name associated with such a committee." It requires far more courage to do that than to dawdle the time away. The hon. member could have allowed the matter to pass, and there would have been no more said about it; but he takes the manly course and comes to this House and asks for the discharge of the committee, and to be exonerated from all association with party strife of this character. He asks the House to allow the committee to be discharged. Although I admit it is the duty of every member appointed to a select committee to devote his time to the service of the committee, the House, and the country, and that no private disinclination should actuate him in refusing to act thereon, yet in the circumstances, when one comes with this disinclination to the House and asks the House to grant permission to be relieved from all connection with the committee, then the House is at liberty to grant the request. It is the right and proper course to take to come to the House in that manner, and the hon. member for Guildford is quite justified in the motion he has introduced.

Mr. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Pilbarra): I have no intention to enter again into the bitterness of debate introduced when the matter was previously before the House. After the debate took place last time I felt that I could not do justice to that committee, and therefore I re-

quested the member for Guildford to move to discharge my name therefrom. I desire now to say that owing to unacquaintance with the rules of the House, I made what I have since been told was a mistake in saying I would not sit on the committee. However, the fact that my remark was not in order does not materially alter the case. I still hold, after the debate which took place and the party feeling introduced into the discussion, that I could not do justice to the subject into which the committee was appointed to inquire, and would therefore like the House to discharge me from that duty.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): I regret exceedingly that the proposer of the committee has deemed it wise to adopt the course of moving that the committee be discharged, more especially as in the first instance he made out such an excellent case for the appointment of a committee. However, if the members of the committee are unwilling to go into the matter thoroughly, it would certainly be better to discharge the committee than that the investigation of a question of such importance should be delegated to gentlemen not disposed to give it the time and attention which its great importance deserves. I do not desire to go into the matters resulting in the raising of party heat on the previous occasion. As the member for Guildford is now aware, the whole debate was the result of a mistake on the part of the member for Gascoyne.

Mr. Johnson: No; the party spirit was evidenced before that. I do not object to the second debate; but I do object most strongly to the first.

The PREMIER: No useful purpose would be served by going into the question again; and I will now say merely that I regret the course taken by the mover. In the circumstances, perhaps it is well to agree to the motion.

Mr. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret): Having regard to the very bitter party feeling displayed on the motion for the appointment of this committee, and in the subsequent debate on the motion by the member for Guildford to discharge

the member for Gascoyne and substitute the name of the member for Mt. Magnet, and to the attitude taken by the Premier on the latter occasion. I think the House would act in its best interest were this motion to discharge the committee agreed to. When the motion appointing the committee was carried, it was not intended there should be any party feeling imported into the question; and it was known to most members that it was not intended by the mover of the motion that the member for Canning (Mr. Gordon) should be on the committee. The inclusion of that hon. member was the ground of the application made for the discharge of the member for Gascoyne from the committee. While the member for Gascoyne was willing to serve on the committee at the outset, he was unwilling to act after the inclusion of the member for Canning in the surreptitious manner adopted.

Mr. GORDON: On a point of order, I would like to know the authority for that statement. Does it mean that the member for Gascoyne refuses to serve on any committee with me? The member for Mt. Margaret has made the statement that the member for Gascoyne retired because I was put on the committee.

Mr. Taylor: What is the point of order?

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no point of order. If the member for Mt. Margaret made the statement attributed to him, it was a reflection on the member for Canning and must be withdrawn; but I did not hear him make the statement.

Mr. TAYLOR: If I have reflected on the hon. member, or in any way transgressed the rules of the House, I have no objection to withdrawing the statement.

Mr. TAYLOR (resuming): I would remind the hon. member of his own remarks this afternoon with reference to the refusal of the member for Pilbarra to act on the committee, expressing the opinion that the committee would be unable to probe this question properly without the assistance of the member for Pilbarra. With all due respect, I submit

the whole of the trouble in connection with this question has resulted from the inclusion in the committee of the member for Canning.

Mr. Gordon: Because he knows too much about the subject.

Mr. TAYLOR: I say that fearlessly. I debated this question when feeling ran high in the House, when the Premier moved to insert the name of the member for Katanning (Mr. Piesse). I know that action of the Premier caused some pain to the member for Katanning, and I am not going to renew it; but I am not going to sit quietly when I hear the member for Canning (Mr. Gordon) putting forward ideas and comments which in my opinion are not relevant to the position. The position is that the member for Guildford desired the appointment of a committee to inquire into the position of the pastoralists in the North-West, a matter that directly affected the freezing-works proposition of the Government in that part of the State. The committee was agreed to by the House, and the mover of the motion decided, as do the movers of all motions of a similar character, as to which members from both sides were most capable and willing to act on the committee. But the member for Canning was never decided on.

Mr. Gordon: I was decided on. The House decided that I should go on the committee; therefore I ask that those words be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member contradicts the statement, the member for Mt. Margaret must withdraw it.

Mr. TAYLOR: To conform to the rules of the House I will withdraw; but other members have made the statement in the House. The member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) put the point clearly that the bone of contention and the reason for the trouble and pain caused to members on the occasion of the last debate was the inclusion in the committee of the member for Canning.

The Minister for Works: But why should it be so?

Mr. TAYLOR: Because anything done surreptitiously, in a manner not above-board, will create anger. The Government desired to use their power on this

question. Both the Minister for Works and the Minister for Mines urged in effect that "We have a big stake at issue; we must be justified in the undertaking we contemplate." One Minister went so far as to claim that the Government, on account of their majority, were justified in bludgeoning the House into accepting the position of being ruled by a majority who do not think for themselves. That was the position, and the House will now only be doing justice to itself by discharging from the Notice Paper the item under discussion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Price): I do not desire to prolong this debate, and rise simply to clear up a couple of misconceptions, possibly unwitting, which members have made on the Opposition side respecting my remarks in the previous debate on this question. If members wish carefully read my speech in *Hansard*—

Mr. Taylor: There is no need; I heard the speech.

The MINISTER: It is useless the hon. member contradicting. What a member says in this House is taken down by *Hansard* reporters, and there is ample opportunity for other members to see whether the statement I make now is correct or otherwise.

Mr. Bath: *Hansard* reports are subjected to revision, sometimes.

The MINISTER: The Leader of the Opposition knows perfectly that no member is allowed to so correct his speech as to alter the meaning he conveyed to the House.

Mr. Bath: It should not be.

The MINISTER: That is a mean insinuation on the part of the Leader of the Opposition and should not be made. The suggestion contained in the insinuation is that, by correcting the report of my speech, I wilfully and deliberately altered the meaning I had conveyed to the House when speaking. I venture to say that were such a thing attempted, the Chief *Hansard* Reporter would not permit it.

Mr. Bath: It is remarkable that most members took that impression from your remarks.

The MINISTER: I pointed out that this was a committee in which the Government must take a great interest, as one of the matters to be inquired into was a proposition which had been cried down by members opposite—and the member for Mt. Margaret has just stated that the freezing-works question was one of the subjects to be inquired into—and that we were entitled to see that the ripest opinion in the House, in so far as pastoral matters are concerned, was represented on the committee. I went on to say in that speech that one of the most unbiased men in the House was the member for Katanning.

Mr. Walker: Did you not say something to the effect that the majority in the House ought to have a majority on the committee?

The MINISTER: I said it was not unreasonable that the members on that committee should have some relation to the size of the respective parties in the House. I especially commended the member for Katanning as one of the most unbiassed men on either side of the House, one who had least of the party spirit, and that his services would be of the greatest advantage on the committee. To say I contended that this should be a party inquiry is most unfair, in view of that speech. I fail also to see why, because one member expresses a disinclination to act—[*Mr. Bath*: Two]—that this should be considered a sufficient reason for discharging the committee.

Mr. Walker: Do you remember saying something like this—"Are we supposed to submit to having two members, when we have a majority in the House?"

The MINISTER: If the whole of my speech be read, it will show distinctly that in advocating the appointment of the member for Katanning on the committee, I did so on account of the unbiased nature of his mind.

Mr. Walker: But did you say the words I have just quoted?

The MINISTER: I am not going to submit to having a part of my remarks quoted, thus distorting the text, which is a favourite dodge of some members opposite. Let the speech be taken as a whole, and see if my remarks on that

occasion were a recommendation that a party committee should be appointed. I disclaim that; it is absolutely incorrect; and I feel certain that if members will read my speech, they will find there was nothing in my remarks which advocated a party committee.

Question put and passed; committee discharged.

MOTION—LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Bath, leave of absence for one fortnight granted to the members for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) and Boulder (Mr. Collier), on the ground of ill health.

MOTION—MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES INQUIRY.

Mr. DAGLISH (chairman of the select committee moved—

That the hon. member for Sussex be discharged from serving on the Select Committee upon Western Australian Manufacturing Industries, and the hon. member for Collie be appointed in his stead.

The Treasurer was unable to attend meetings of the committee at the present time, without interfering seriously with his duties as Treasurer.

Question passed.

BILL—INDUSTRIES PRESERVATION.

Mr. BATH introduced a Bill intitled "An Act for the Preservation of Western Australian Industries and for the Prevention of Combinations in restraint of Trade."

Bill read a first time and ordered to be printed.

BILL—COLLIE-NARROGIN RAILWAY AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Premier, and read a first time.

BILL—STATE TRADING ACCOUNTS.

Introduced by the Treasurer, and read a first time.

MOTION—LABOUR BUREAU, FARES.

Mr. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison) moved—

That a Return be laid upon the table of the House showing—(1.) Railway and other fares advanced by the Labour Bureau since the year 1900 and remaining unpaid. (2.) To whom advanced. (3.) By whom guaranteed.

He said: My reason for moving this motion is that I desire to obtain certain facts, because in my opinion the present administration of the Labour Bureau is not at all satisfactory, and some other method should be adopted than that which obtains at present so as to give everyone who desires assistance by having railway fares advanced an equal opportunity, which has not been the case in the past. I know full well were I to secure the return it would entail a great deal of labour, but I have seen the Premier and he has assured me that at any time I can see the papers in connection with this matter. I do not desire that the department shall be put to a great deal of work and expense in furnishing the return. I desire to say that I will not press the motion as it is. I shall be satisfied with the information the Premier can give me and which will not entail a great amount of work.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): I have had an opportunity of pointing out to the hon. member that to give him the whole of the information he desires would entail a large amount of work indeed, and necessitate a considerable amount of overtime, as most of the entries are made in three different books. To give some idea of the work this motion would entail I may say that during last year from Mr. Longmore's report it will be seen that no less than 688 persons were assisted by railway passes from the central office, to obtain employment, at a cost of £529 8s. 8d. The information the-

hon. member will be able to obtain from the books, and he can acquire all the facts he desires under paragraphs 2 and 3 of the motion : as to information desired under the first paragraph in which he asks for the railway and other fares advanced by the Government Labour Bureau since the year 1900 and remaining unpaid, he will be able to obtain the number of persons and the amount, and he will have an opportunity of seeing the books of the department which will be made available to him when he so desires.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, PAPERS.

Mr. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison) moved—

That all papers in connection with the Lockout on the Potosi Consolidated G.M. Co ; the alleged Lockout of or strike by the Collie Miners' Union ; the alleged Strike of Engine-drivers on the Cosmopolitan Mine ; and the Lockout or alleged Strike of the Timber Workers, be laid upon the table of the House.

He said : I do not anticipate any opposition to the motion, for I shall in all probability deal with the matter later on, therefore I do not intend to deal with the matter now. One reason I have for moving this motion is that in reply to a deputation, as I have already mentioned on the Address-in-Reply, certain statements were set out by the Premier which were absolutely inaccurate. I am perfectly well aware that the Premier is not responsible for the statements, but I intend to go into the matter to find out who is responsible. In all probability the papers will give a great deal of information to members and will allow us to come to some definite decision as to what will be the best means of dealing with industrial troubles. This is a question I have taken in hand, and all members should exert every possible effort to prevent work ceasing by locking out men or by striking on the part of the workers. In my opinion the administration of the Labour Department during

the past few years, dating back before there was a Labour Department in Western Australia, will give some idea of the best method to be adopted in dealing with the Arbitration Act, and it should result in the Act being made more workable. As far as I am concerned it is my intention to go into the matter and see if some means can be devised to bring about a satisfactory settlement. The Premier has informed me that there will be no opposition to the motion, and as I intend to deal with the matter again I merely move the motion standing in my name.

Mr. C. A. HUDSON (Dundas) : I second the motion.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore) : As I have already informed the member, it is not the intention of the Government to oppose the motion. I shall be able to place the papers on the table of the House during this week.

Question put and passed.

MOTION — INDUSTRIAL UNIONS AND POLITICAL ACTION, PAPERS.

Mr. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison) moved—

That all papers in connection with the refusal of the Registrar of Friendly Societies to register the rules of unions under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1902, in which provision was made for political action, be laid upon the table of the House.

He said : Statements have been made in another place that are apt to lead people to believe that the Labour Ministers when in power were responsible for the action the registrar has taken. I want the papers on the Table to show that whatever action was taken by the registrar in refusing to register unions, in the rules of which provision was made for political action, Labour Ministers were not responsible. The action was taken by the registrar and was in keeping with the several actions of that official. There will be an opportunity of dealing with this question, but I wish to show that statements which have been made were not true. I believe action was taken

during the time the Labour Ministry were in power in connection with this matter, but the Labour Ministry at that time were in no way responsible. More than one member in another place has referred to this matter and it is necessary to show the public that the statements made are not correct.

Mr. F. J. WARE (Hannans) : I second the motion.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—LABOUR BUREAU, ENGAGEMENTS.

Mr. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison) moved—

That a return be laid upon the table of the House showing—1, All engagements through the Government Labour Bureau for the year ending 30th June, 1907. 2, Names of persons engaged. 3, Names and addresses of employers who engaged same. 4, Whether railway fares were paid or advanced by the Bureau. 5, Whether same has been repaid.

He said: I recognise this return will entail a considerable amount of work, and I have spoken to the Premier on the matter, and he has given me permission to go to the department at any time and peruse the books and records in connection with these matters. That being so it will not be necessary for me to go more fully into the matter, and I will content myself with moving the motion. I specially ask that no extra work shall be entailed or expense incurred in drawing up the return, because all I want is information.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore) : This return will be very similar to the one already asked for, and as I then pointed out, if the whole returns were prepared it would entail a large amount of labour. At the same time I think the hon. member can get the information and it will be better if he withdraws the motion, because if the motion is carried by the House it will cause the department to compile the information. To give some idea of what this return will mean,

from the 30th June 1907 up to the present, no less than 1,050 railway and other fares have been advanced by the Labour Bureau. These railway passes are granted for various reasons. In some instances passes are given and it is not anticipated that the Government will be repaid. In the case of the unemployed who have been working at ring-barking all the men were given railway passes, and as they were absolutely destitute and unemployed it was not considered advisable to take their railway fare from the money earned. In other instances railway passes are granted when it is shown definite employment has been obtained. An agreement is signed by the person obtaining the pass to refund the amount within a certain time. The information which the hon. member has asked for can be obtained and he can see the books, but I think he should consent to withdraw the motion.

Mr. J. B. HOLMAN: I withdraw the motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

MOTION—RAILWAY PROJECT, NANNINE TO MEEKATHARRA.

Mr. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison) moved—

That in the opinion of this House it would be in the best interests of the State, and especially of the Mining Industry on the Murchison and Peak Hill Goldfields, if the Government would immediately construct a railway line from Nannine to Meekatharra.

He said: This matter to my mind is of great import to the whole of Western Australia, seeing that at the present time the mining industry is not progressing as we would like to see it, and knowing as we do that during the past few years the gold yield in Western Australia has been falling tremendously, it is absolutely necessary that every possible effort should be put forward to encourage the mining industry wherever possible. Only a few days ago perhaps one of the strongest deputations which ever waited upon the Premier in connection with any matter had the honour of interviewing him. The

deputation was supported by nearly 30 members of Parliament. I do not think any member can say I have ever unwarrantably pushed forward this matter. The persons concerned have waited until they had an absolutely strong case, and one that could not be contradicted or undermined. When I quote the figures showing the gold yields in that part of the State, I think members will agree that this is absolutely the strongest case ever made for the construction of any railway. There has been more gold returned from the district which this railway will benefit than from any Western Australian district before it was served by a railway. The deputation which waited last week on the Premier presented a petition signed by about 600 people in favour of the line ; but we did not use that as an argument in its favour, nor do we ask that it be constructed on the strength of a petition. We ask that every possible inquiry be made ; and as I have always agreed to the appointment of a competent board of inquiry into such projects, I shall be pleased if the Government will immediately appoint a board to inquire into the advisableness of building this line. In my opinion there can be but one decision—that the railway should be immediately constructed. The prospects of the Murchison District are now better than they have ever been in the history of gold-mining in Western Australia. I am speaking of the portions which the railway will benefit. The immediate construction of the railway, if it is to be of any use, is absolutely necessary. For a few years past we have heard much in this Chamber and outside of the absolute necessity for encouraging local companies to take up and work mining properties, seeing that the majority, I may say nearly the whole of the best mines in this State have drifted from the possession of our people into the hands of people in foreign countries. This railway will not benefit the foreign mine-owner, but locally owned companies and our own prospectors. At the present time, throughout the district which the line will benefit, there are only two foreign-owned companies working. All the other properties are held by local

parties and by prospectors, and when I read the figures showing the returns from those districts, members will be gratified to know that the whole of the gold yielded goes into the pockets of people who for many years have prospected the country and have worked hard to open up the various fields.

Mr. Butcher: Have you a plan to show the position of the different centres?

Mr. HOLMAN: A plan is unnecessary. The proposed route is direct from Nannine north, a distance of some 24 miles. The line will traverse level country with no engineering difficulties, and there is no "battle of the routes." I shall be pleased to show any member a map, or to give him full particulars. This line if carried out will be it is hoped the first section of a railway to Peak Hill direct north from the present terminus. Furthermore, as I have already stated in this House, the time has come for considering the project of a railway through the Gascoyne and Pilbarra districts from Peak Hill. In those districts much auriferous country remains to be opened up ; in fact, mines have been worked there, but owing to the heavy costs and the impossibility of getting supplies to that part of the country, the prospectors have had to abandon their properties. To give members some notion of the position of Meekatharra itself I will mention the quantity of stone crushed and the yields in ounces of fine gold during the past few years. Seven or eight years ago Meekatharra itself was a very small place, but it has since progressed as no other place has progressed in Western Australia. The population some seven or eight years ago was about six ; there is now a population of between 700 and 800, and nearly all those men are working properties of their own. The crushings at the State battery Meekatharra, were as follows: 1901, 3,063 tons for a yield of 3,028 ounces; 1902, 3,611 tons for 3,486 ounces; 1903, 5,668 tons for 4,394 ounces; 1904, 3,830 tons for 6,069 ounces; 1905, 4,302 tons for 8,008 ounces; 1906, 4,501 tons for 11,006 ounces. For the first six months of 1907 4,510 tons for 6,298 ounces; for the first seven months of 1907, 5,210 tons for 6,920 ounces. Since that return was prepared

for last month the Fenian and other mines have crushed 601 tons for 1,474 ounces, which considerably improves the yield from the State battery. These totals are for the State battery alone; and when members recognise that during the first six months of this year more stone was crushed at that battery than during the whole of 1906, they will admit the place is going ahead. I may explain the reason for the extra quantity crushed. In past years the battery was always short of water, and therefore had to work much less than half time; but towards the end of last year the Garden Gully water scheme was completed and the battery had a full water supply, with the result that the quantity of stone crushed is now more than double that crushed in previous years. The total quantity of stone crushed at the Meekatharra State battery till the end of July of last year was 30,185 tons for 42,911 ounces, perhaps one of the best averages ever obtained in this State. No sands and slimes, or but very little, have so far been treated; hence it will be understood the return is excellent. I may say there are thousands of pounds worth of gold locked up in the sands and slimes because there is no plant to treat them. I believe there is a cyanide plant now at work there, but in the near future we can look for a big increase in the output from that district. The returns I have just quoted were from the State battery alone; but during the last two years other batteries have been erected, and I will now quote the returns for the past three years, to show how the place is going ahead. In 1904 the total tonnage crushed in the whole Meekatharra district was 3,813 for 5,737 ounces; in 1905, 4,238 for 7,255 ounces; 1906, 12,057 for 15,944 ounces—an increase of over 100 per cent. on the previous year; and for the first six months of 1907, 12,609 tons for 10,006 ounces, showing year by year a tremendous increase of output unparalleled in the history of any district of similar size in Western Australia. During this year it is quite probable that the total output from Meekatharra alone will be from 20,000 to 25,000 ounces; this too in face

of the fact that the people are working under great difficulties, that men have had to hold their properties idle because they could not get their stone crushed, and that timber, like every other mining requisite, was very dear, showing that if the place has gone ahead so rapidly during the past few years, there is every reason to believe that with fair encouragement and railway facilities it will go ahead much more rapidly. The railway will benefit not only Meekatharra but the whole of the gold-mining centres in a northerly direction. First we have Abbots, 25 miles from Meekatharra. Total output from Abbots till the 30th June, 1907, was 34,661 tons for 36,355 ounces. All the totals I quote are for fine ounces. Abbots is not now in such a flourishing condition as we should like, but that is owing to the high cost of mining material and the scarcity of mining timber and other requisites. The construction of a railway to Meekatharra will considerably lessen the cost of mining at Abbots, and we can look forward to greater progress at that centre. The line will considerably benefit Peak Hill also, which has so far crushed 313,257 tons for 208,058 ounces, while the total yield in fine gold from the Peak Hill goldfield has been 210,011 ozs. to the value of £892,234. The crushing for the Meekatharra mining centre has been 46,625 tons for 50,667 ounces, having a total value of £215,224. The yield of Abbots has been 36,355 ounces, a total value of £154,428. The total quantity of stone crushed in the whole of these districts has been 394,554 tons for a total yield of 297,034 ounces, having a total value of £1,261,886. That is to say, the gold returned from these centres has been of greater value than that from any centre for which railway facilities have been requested. Meekatharra alone, which has returned £215,224 worth of gold during the few short years for which it has been worked, improving all the time, has returned considerably more gold than the whole of the Phillips River Goldfield, in which a railway is now being constructed. When that Railway Bill was passed the total output from the Phillips River Goldfield was only about £163,000 worth of gold and copper.

The total output from the district which this projected railway will benefit is £1,261,336. The enormous cost of taking supplies to this district shows clearly how necessary it is that a railway should be constructed there. The position in this respect is very different in Meekatharra from what it is at Phillips River, for in the latter place they have ample mining timber supplies. It is impossible to mine properly at Meekatharra owing to the enormous cost of carting mining supplies and timber. I have here a return prepared by the Mines Department showing the progress which is being made in the district, and the number of leases which have been taken up from Nannine to Peak Hill. It is as follows :—Meekatharra, 56 leases, comprising 750 acres ; Eight-Mile, 10 leases, 130 acres ; Abbotts, four leases, 54 acres ; Nannine, 74 leases, 756 acres ; Peak Hill, 40 leases, 337 acres ; total 184 leases, 2,027 acres. In addition, in the Nannine district there are seven mineral leases, comprising 195 acres, and at Peak Hill there are 11 miners' homestead leases comprising 1,840 acres. These figures do not include prospecting areas, lode claims, alluvial claims, or any of the other varieties of claims which are only registered locally. At the present time almost every prospector who goes out there takes up prospecting areas as they are cheaper and better in the early stages of mining than gold mining leases. Scores of men are doing that now, but these leases are not included in the figures I have just given. The figures I have quoted show that great development work is going on in the district. The railway line would extend over a distance of between 24 and 25 miles from Nannine. Meekatharra itself covers an area of about 10 square miles, and a great deal has been done on some of the properties which are down as deep as 250 feet. The whole district shows perhaps greater promise than any other mining centre in Western Australia. One property alone, the Ingliston Extended Gold Mines Limited, has crushed 16,693 tons, and there are several batteries erected in the district. A great deal of machinery is being put up and on the

road, while the lodes are tremendous, and their width shows their permanence. As there is no timber obtainable nearer than the coast these properties cannot be properly opened up. At the present time, in addition to having to pay the ordinary mining charges, it costs a company £5 per set for putting timber in the levels. As it takes a set of timber for every five feet, it costs £1 per foot for timbering the drives alone. This shows the enormous expense mine owners are put to in that district. The huge formations extend over great distances and along the Ingliston Extended line along the lode goes for a distance of one and a half miles, while the line of leases extends over a distance of three miles. At Nannine an experiment has recently been made with producer gas in order to see whether the great expense of firewood can be obviated. The line if constructed would be a commercial success from the start, and this can be clearly proved if a return is compiled showing the quantity of stuff which goes forward monthly to the mining district in question. Had the companies which opened up the properties there some time ago been larger and the movement for the line been pushed forward earlier the probabilities are that a railway would be constructed there to-day; but in my opinion it is unwise to ask for a line to any centre unless it is absolutely necessary. This line is now one of the most important works that could possibly be undertaken; it would assist to a very great extent the development of the mines in that part of the State, and owing to their excellence great good would result to the State as a whole. Unfortunately the ground at Meekatharra is what we call "rotten" and it takes a forest of timber to mine properly there. Without cheaper timber the probability is that the mines will either have to be closed down, or sold to foreign investors, or worked on a system that will not allow proper development. To give an idea of the cost of the carriage of machinery, ironmongery, stores, etcetera, from the coast to Meekatharra, I will read a return from one mine in the district, namely the Ingliston Extended Gold

Mines Limited, for the year ended June 30th, 1907. That mine obtained in stores, machinery, ironmongery, etcetera, 351 tons. On this the railage cost £1,064, while the cartage and forwarding charges from Nannine to Meekatharra, a distance of only 24 miles, totalled £933. These figures show the large amount of money that is practically thrown away in cartage from the coast to Meekatharra, and the major portion of which would be saved if the railway were constructed. If the line were built the goods would be able to be landed at the mine at a very slight increase on the charge for railage at the present time. It costs a very large sum to get mining timber from Geraldton and the neighbourhood. The company to which I have referred some time ago obtained 74 sets of morrell from Three-Springs, situated on the Midland line. The invoice price of the timber was £44 4s., the freight on the same for railage to Nannine amounted to £72, while the cartage and charges from Nannine to the mine amounted to £136; making a total railage and cartage of £208, and the total cost of the timber £252 4s. The cartage and railage added over 500 per cent. to the invoice cost of the timber, and therefore it can easily be understood how mining in that district is almost prohibitive. It is altogether prohibitive in so far as the small prospector is concerned, for it is impossible for him to find the money necessary for obtaining timber for his property. To land oregon from the nearest port (Geraldton) at Meekatharra is also very expensive as 100 super. feet cost 7s. 9d. in railage to Nannine, and 6s. 5d. in carriage and charges, making a total of 14s. 2d. added to the invoiced price at Geraldton. To land jarrah costs 19s. per 100 super. feet in freight, cartage etcetera. If timber could be secured cheaper there would be a great deal more used on the mines. After heavy rain has fallen in the district the roads are almost impassable, and it has occurred on occasions that as much as £5 per ton from Nannine to Meekatharra has to be paid in order to get carters to take machinery, galvanised iron, etcetera, to the Ingliston Extended Gold Mines, where these sup-

plies were being waited for. If the line were constructed from Nannine the amount of saving would be immense. As an instance of the extent of the saving, it may be said that those 74 sets of timber to which I referred, and which cost £136 for the cartage would, if the line were constructed, only cost from £20 to £30; thus there would be a saving in that one instance alone of over £100. To give an idea of the transport charges, I have had a return prepared by the Ingliston Extended Gold Mines Limited, showing the cost of machinery, stores, timber, etcetera, brought to the mine from different places, from January 1906 to March 1907. During that period of 15 months the average per month was 26.5 tons, or equal to 393 tons for the period, and the cost of this, for rail and transport charges, was £2,095. Included in the goods were old machinery from Austin, 142 tons 14 cwt., railage charges, £141 13s., cartages £368; stores, etcetera, from Cue, 14 tons 17 cwt., railage charges £16 18s., cartages £38 7s. 6d.; stores from Geraldton, 87 tons 2 cwt., railage charges £267, cartages £228 10s.; timber from Three Springs and Geraldton, 65 tons 6 cwt., railage charges £130 12s. 6d., cartages £163 19s.; stores, etcetera from Fremantle, 83 tons 14 cwt., railage charges £518 6s. 7d., cartages £221 2s.; showing a total of 393 tons 13 cwt., railage charges £1,074 10s. 1d., cartages £1,019 18s. 6d. The transport charges on oregon and jarrah I have already quoted. It is absolutely impossible for those mines to work at the present cost of cartage of timber. If the line is constructed the charges for administration will be very little more than they are at the present time with the line terminating at Nannine, and the goods can be run straight through to Meekatharra, and thus time and money be saved. With the construction of the line all the mining properties will be able to be properly developed, and the output of gold will increase considerably, and thus help to build up the yield which has fallen away so much of late years. To give an idea of the amount of goods required in the district and which would pass over the railways, I will quote some totals given to me by people

in the district. In the case of the Fenian Gold Mine, during the past 12 months it cost the company for freight and cartage of stores the sum of £200 19s. 2d., and this does not include firewood or mining timber. It is estimated that that Company alone would burn about 25 tons of firewood a week and use about five tons of mining timber per week. There are other properties which are in about the same position that would require from 15 to 20 tons of goods a week. Some of the storekeepers estimate that they will require a larger quantity of goods if the railway is built, and that the railway line would consequently derive a considerable amount of revenue in freights immediately the rails are available for use. In arriving at estimates like this it would be unwise to give figures from what the people themselves say, but I think it would be wise if the Government were to obtain from the railway authorities at Nannine an estimate of the goods likely to pass over the proposed new line. The Premier will doubtless be able to obtain the exact figures. If the line is constructed the amount of mining timber and firewood, mining stores, machinery, etcetera, that would go forward to Meekatharra will be considerable, and a great advance even on the quantity that is now being obtained for the district. One storekeeper alone at Meekatharra gives an estimate of the amount of goods that he would be likely to require and which would pass over the railway. He states that during a period of six weeks he obtained 61 tons 8 cwt. of goods for his store alone. Others receive 10 tons a week, some receive eight, others five tons, besides which there are a number of mines getting supplies sent forward, so that the total is considerable. If this railway were constructed, the whole of the stores for Abbots and Peak Hill, instead of being landed at Nannine as at present, would be carried to Meekatharra, effecting a considerable saving in cost to consignees at both those places. The mining properties at Meekatharra are at the present time looking better than in any other part of the State. It is unnecessary for

me to go into that phase of the question, for we have only to turn to Mr. Montgomery's report for last year to get an idea of how the mines there are looking. The best criterion of the stability of those mines is to be found in the actual gold returns for the past few years, and these show that the yield in that district has been increasing [I may say almost 100 per cent. higher year by year than a few years ago, and is still increasing. Of the mines that have crushed stone at the State battery, not one is idle at the present time, a record unequalled by any mining district in any other part of the State, in none of which can it be shown that every property taken up and which has crushed stone at the battery is being worked now. The length of the lode is about three miles, and the gold-bearing area extends over ten square miles, with good prospects throughout the whole of that area. Returns from properties at the S-Mile have been splendid, and the properties in that centre (eight miles from Meekatharra) are opening particularly well. Only to-day I received word from one lease at the S-Mile that the reef is 14 feet wide, and is estimated to crush 17dwts. to the ton, a trial crushing having returned that average. I have been down most of those properties myself, and have always been impressed with the possibilities of the district. Mining experts and other visitors to that part of the State have formed favourable opinions of the field. The best criterion of the opinion of the prospectors themselves as to the prospects of the district is to be found in the fact that they refuse to sell, only one property to date having changed hands and been floated into a company in the Meekatharra district. In one instance £30,000 was refused by the prospectors for their property; and when we find this position we should give every encouragement possible, because the more properties held locally the better for the mining industry and the better for the people of the State. To win the gold and keep it within the State is better than to send away £2,000,000 in dividends every year to speculators in foreign countries. The prospects of Meekatharra are brighter

perhaps than those of any other centre ; but we have not only to depend on Meekatharra—both the 8-Mile and the 4-Mile are opening up well. The discovery at 4-Mile is only recent, but the prospects are excellent. Again, this line would benefit Abbots (which has returned a considerable yield of gold), Peak Hill, Mount Fraser, Mount Pleasant and other places, which are being worked at the present time, but not in the way they should be. There is ample scope for development in that part of the State providing facilities are given for obtaining stores, mining timber, etc., and for public crushing. I do not intend to touch upon the question of the pastoral areas, though extensive areas are held by pastoralists in that part of the country, and the line would benefit many of these. The present population of Meekatharra is about 750 ; Peak Hill about 450 ; Abbots and the other places to be served about 200. Thus the population to be served by this line is about 1,500 ; and I am safe in saying that there would be a great influx of population if that railway were built, as there are many small mining areas at present undeveloped which could then be taken up. The high cost of transporting mining timber at present prevents the proper opening up of a number of mines. A phase of the question that has to be remembered is that unless mining timber can be readily obtained it is an impossibility to work mines as they should be worked. No later than two weeks ago two men were crushed to death by a fall of earth in a mine in that district ; and unless facilities are given for getting suitable mining timber on the mines we must look forward to farther accidents of this character in that part of the State. Then there is another point of view. If properties are opened up in such a way as to allow the earth to give way at the start there is afterwards considerable difficulty in keeping the mines open. I have known mines at which the old workings have had to be abandoned from this cause, and fresh shafts sunk and drives put in because of lack of precaution in the matter of timbering in their early stages. I have

dealt with the question of the cost of working this railway, and shown that the extension of the line to Meekatharra would not involve much additional cost ; in fact, it might be found possible to work with the same staff and at practically the same or little more expense, while the line would yield a good return from the laying of the rails, which is a consideration. From Nannine to Meekatharra the distance is about 25 miles, over level country and without engineering difficulties. The greatest expense would probably be the transport of sleepers and rails. From Meekatharra to Abbots is another 25 miles. The cost of cartage from Nannine to Meekatharra is over £2 per ton ; and if the railway were constructed there would be a saving to consignees of at least £2 a ton to Meekatharra, a similar amount to Abbots and £3 per ton to Peak Hill. From Nannine to Peak Hill by the present road is about 125 miles, but *via* the telegraph line, the direct route, it is only 90 or 91 miles.

The Premier : 92 miles from Meekatharra ; and there would be 25 miles off that ?

Mr. HOLMAN : Yes ; leaving about 70 miles if a direct road is cut through to Peak Hill, and I believe steps are now be taken in that direction. It would save over £3 per ton in the present rate for cartage to Peak Hill, which amounts to from £7 to £9 per ton, a very heavy charge. And if the 25 miles of line were constructed and a direct road through obtained, it would save about 50 miles in the cartage of stores, machinery and so forth to Peak Hill, which would mean a large saving in time and money to consignees, who now have to pay for cartage over 125 miles as against 75 if the line were built. Those members who have been in the back country will recognise what a saving of 50 miles in haulage means. Peak Hill, it is true, has been under a cloud for the past two years ; but I am pleased to say that its prospects are brighter just now than they have been for years, and I confidently anticipate a large increase in the gold returns from that centre. The mulga and gums growing in that part of the

country are entirely unsuited for mining timber. Where they have been used in mines it has been found that they will not hold the ground at all. This timber under strain snaps like a carrot; and many accidents have occurred, proving that the use of mulga as a mining timber is not safe. The whole of the mining timber from that part of the State will have to be brought from around Mullewa or from Three Springs, whence it is now obtained. At Meekatharra and the 8-Mile the lodes are tremendous, but the ground is rotten and requires considerable timbering. At the present time eight and nine-inch timber costs from 1s. 6d. to 2s. per foot landed on the mine; hence members will see the impossibility of prospectors being in a position to lay out sufficient money for timbering. This line if constructed would give prospectors an opportunity of retaining their properties, and we would have locally-owned mines. This work is absolutely urgent; the line should be constructed at once. When we know the total gold yield has of recent years been decreasing year by year, until there is a prospect of the yield for 1907 being less by two million pounds value than for 1903, we must take the position into consideration and see whether we can, by throwing out lines of railway such as this, encourage people to open up their properties. I think the Minister for Mines will agree with me that no centre has progressed more than Meekatharra during the past few years. In all probability, having been there on several occasions, he will be able to give members useful information. I believe that if he had his way he would push forward this important work. I need not delay the House farther, because the Premier has promised that inquiry will be made, and I anticipate he will secure such information as will enable him to give a definite reply, if not to-night, in the near future. In my opinion we should in the interests of the mining and every other industry encourage the development of that part of the country by constructing a railway to Meekatharra, and if possible the work should be put in hand this year. I commend

the motion to the House and hope the Government will do all possible to assist the prospectors who are opening up that country to retain their properties, and that cannot be done unless this line be built. I refer members to the total gold returns published in to-day's papers as showing that year by year the State yield has decreased; and I would like to see something done to assist this part of the State, which to my mind is best able to keep the gold yield buoyant.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

At 6.15, the Speaker left the Chair.

At 7.30, Chair resumed.

MESSAGE—STATE TRADING ACCOUNTS BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read, recommending that appropriation be made in connection with the State Trading Accounts Bill.

HANSARD REPORTS, HOW DISTRIBUTED.

Mr. T. WALKER (Kanowna) moved—

That in the opinion of this House the limitation of the distribution of Hansard by the Printing Committee is undesirable. He said: I move this motion principally because from all parts I and other members of the House, to my knowledge, have received letters from their constituents complaining of the way in which they have been served by the Printing Committee. Institutions that have been in receipt of their *Hansard* for a number of years and have looked upon them as one of the privileges of living in an enlightened country have suddenly, without any notice, been deprived of their customary pleasure and their customary instruction, and all I believe on the score of economy. I believe it has been considered a very extravagant thing to send *Hansard* to certain bodies hitherto accustomed to receive them. I am making my protest to-night against that course being pursued, even on the score of

economy, on the ground that more injury is done in this way than any compensating benefit there may be in the way of saving a few shillings in the printing of a few extra *Hansards*. There has been an admission of the right to distribute *Hansard*, or the wisdom I should say of distributing *Hansard* in retaining on the free list a number of institutions. For instance, I notice that a vast number of the agricultural bodies still receive a free *Hansard* every time it is issued.

The Premier: Free?

Mr. WALKER: Free, I understand. I have a copy here, which I have requested from the Clerk, of the list as it was and as it has been revised. There have been quite a number of subscribers or rather recipients of *Hansard* hitherto, crossed off; no longer a copy of *Hansard* is sent to the Aborigines Department; no longer is one sent to the Public Service Commissioner; and we find even the Weld Club, formerly in receipt of a free copy, no longer gets one; I say quite right there, they can afford it. Professor Stephen Bauer, Director of International Labour in Switzerland, has been cut off the list; the *Western Mail* has been cut off the list, but the *Daily News* gets one; the *Morning Herald* and the *West Australian* get one still, also the Attorney General. I notice that all the agricultural halls, and I presume that means the agricultural societies, get copies. The agricultural halls of Newtown and Narragin, they are public bodies I know, are retained on the list. I need not go through the list, but there are many bodies who receive *Hansard*—Meckering, Mundijong, Blackwood, Jarrabdale, Jandakot, Harvey, Grass Valley, Gooseberry Hill, and Coogee, all get their *Hansard*. What looks rather conspicuous is that every body or association of men that has the slightest tinge of labour organisation about it no longer receives a free copy of *Hansard*. I do not know of any centre of greater intellectual activity of its character than the Trades and Labour Council of Kalgoorlie; it is a body that comprises practically through its representatives the whole labour organisations of that city, and whilst I admit they have a mechanics' institute

and other sources of daily information about current public topics and general literature of the hour, yet no body is more keenly alive to public activity than the Trades and Labour Council of Kalgoorlie. They are in touch with every political movement, they are in touch with every industrial movement, and with what concerns labour in all its multifarious aspects; to them a correct report of the proceedings of and the dealings and doings in this House is of the utmost importance; it is a necessary item of their existence; their work would be in the dark without some knowledge of what was done here; yet that body is not thought worthy a copy of *Hansard*. In my electorate, in the chief town, Kanowna itself, there is a branch of the Amalgamated Federal Miners' Union, and it is in that union where prospectors, mine workers and workers generally, meet and discuss the questions of the hour. To them a copy of *Hansard* is almost inestimable in its value. They require it for basing their conduct and the shaping of their laws and movements, their agitations, their petitions and requests, *et cetera*, upon what is done and what is reported as being done here. It is a live active political body as well as an industrial association, but it has no copy of *Hansard*. A local hall or a local body of agriculturists in Coogee can get a copy, but we cannot get a copy in this organisation at Kanowna. And in other towns and other centres in my electorate the same complaint exists, and it is not only in my electorate but I can go farther afield to the most distant electorates represented in this House where workers are concerned, where there are a number of men in the far outposts of this great State, earning their livelihood by toil, where they can meet together, there, depend upon it, they are discussing the progress that this State is making, basing their opinions and discussions on what is reported as having taken place in the House. Yet from the farthest outposts down to our nearest centres where there are bodies that have the slightest political tinge of that character, they are deprived of their *Hansard*.

The Treasurer: Have they not a mechanics' institute in their electorate?

Mr. WALKER: Suppose they have, not everyone is a member of the mechanics' institute. There is too much, I am bound to say, in most of these institutions, too much altogether of the class. It is not of these bodies that I am speaking, but of where the more intellectual spirits of the workers congregate together; it is there where they have a sort of freedom not only in reading, but then and there debating. I consider the educational value of this is not to be under-estimated. I care not what is thought by people in the State of the activity and progress in industrial, social and other political acts. I do not care what is thought of these. There is no feature to my mind, no more promising feature of the future of the State than that the working people, the young men and the old men together, are discussing the welfare of the State from their own standpoint on information furnished to them from the various Parliaments of Australasia. I look on that as a great safeguard of the future of the State. Far more, you find amongst those who have done a hard day's toil at their tasks, those who in the evening meet their comrades and discuss the most important problems of the day and throw an intellectual light on them, and by resolutions and public meetings guide the very sentiments of the House. Where that can take place we have no loafers in our country, but we have zealous energetic people whom the fatigue of the day does not exhaust; who yet have intellectual vigour enough left to participate in the discussions and controversies that are aimed at the welfare of the State. I look on that as a healthy sign, and I look on it as a very selfish miserable step to deprive them of the means of this discussion, more particularly when I contrast what has been done by the Federal Parliament in this respect. That distant Parliament does not begrudge a few *Hansards* to this State. If I am correctly informed every individual member both of the Senate and of the House of Representatives is allowed a dozen copies

of *Hansard* to send to the institutions the bodies and to the individuals that he pleases. But here how do we really advertise publicly our position? I admit we go to an enormous expense, as is our duty, to publish the proceedings of this House; yet we pretend we are too poor to provide copies of *Hansard* for the bodies hitherto receiving them. I cannot think of anything that will make us look meaner as a State. It is most undignified to tell bodies of working people that because the State is too poor they cannot any longer have copies of *Hansard*. [Mr. Stone: Poverty is an awful crime.] No; but the admission of poverty is sometimes most humiliating and disgraceful. If we are to have economy, let us have it in some quarters where it will not involve an element of meanness, where it will not be conspicuous. At all events, let us not appear to be putting out the lights of Parliament and making the House sit in darkness in the name of economy. If we publish *Hansard* at all, let it reach the farthest possible centre in the State. If there is one thing in the world that ought to be free to everybody, it is *Hansard*. It is not merely for the preservation of individual members' speeches that *Hansard* exists; it is to inform every elector, as he has a right to be informed, of what is transpiring in this House. It is for this very reason that some States have made contracts with the daily papers to publish a *Hansard* report of parliamentary proceedings, so that it may be laid every morning on each breakfast table. Such States have recognised their duty. There should be no ignorance of what happens in Parliament. And while I have nothing to say in this respect about the publicity given generally by the Press in this State, we must all admit that the Press reports are imperfect. Sometimes they seem to me to be partial; sometimes they have a semblance of colouring; they do not always give a fair reflex of what happens in the House; and the only way in which the workers and citizens generally can gain a correct notion of what takes place in the House is by the perusal of *Hansard*. We have curtailed the *Hansard* issue—and why? On the score

of expense. And yet on that score this State has little to complain of. Last session when in Committee on the Estimates, I drew attention to the low cost of the publication of our *Hansard* report as compared with the cost in the other States and for the Commonwealth itself. It may be interesting to read what I said:—

"In answer to the statement that there was an exorbitant expenditure on *Hansard*, and in justice to the *Hansard* staff, and in order to draw the attention of the Government to the necessity to increase the staff and its pay rather than have any reduction, he (Mr. Walker) desired to compare the payments made to the *Hansard* staff in Western Australia with the payments in other States and by the Commonwealth. Members would then have an appreciation of the work performed by *Hansard*, not only in connection with the reporting of speeches, but also in connection with select committees and other work connected with the proper carrying out of the reportorial services in both Houses. In the Commonwealth Parliament there were ten reporters, the Chief Reporter at £700 per annum, a second reporter at £600, and eight reporters at £500, the total cost of salaries for the reporting staff of the Commonwealth being £4,000 a year. In New South Wales, where the speaking was about what it was in this House, the Chief Reporter was paid £865, the second reporter £675, three reporters £533, two reporters £457, and three reporters £438. Those reporters also reported select committees. That brought up the salaries of the New South Wales *Hansard* staff to £5,613. Here we voted £1,850. In Victoria there were six reporters, the Chief Reporter receiving £600, the second reporter £525, one reporter £460, three reporters £430; and they did not perform the work of reporting select committees. Therefore extra money had to be expended in Victoria on a special staff for reporting select committees. For this work there was a Government Shorthand Writer at £610, an assistant at £600, also a clerk

and assistant shorthand writer at £485, and a clerk at £210."

So also in Queensland.

"In New Zealand the *Hansard* reporters did not report the select committees, which was an extreme tax on the energies of the reporters. In addition there were two committee reporters in New Zealand at £300."

Moreover, there were special allowances in New Zealand. So that in every State in the Commonwealth, and for the Commonwealth Parliament itself, the cost of the *Hansard* staff is vastly in excess of the cost in this State. Ours is absolutely the cheapest; and while we are paying these low salaries—[Mr. Taylor: For long hours]—occasionally for long hours—while we are working with a low-salaried staff, a weak and undermanned staff, putting more work upon them than is justified by the salaries, getting men of training and education for a miserable remuneration, considering what similar workers are paid in other States, we are told that we cannot afford to print a few extra copies of *Hansard*. Let members read the free list furnished to me; notice the number struck off, and calculate the saving. Why, it is not more than a few shillings. Practically the only extra charge can be a few shillings for postage. To cease supplying these *Hansards* is miserable cheeseparing. It is the initial cost that counts. Once we have paid our reporters and our printer, set up the matter in form and put it on the machine, the work of printing *Hansard* is practically finished. [Mr. Gordon: There are postages.] I say there may be a few extra shillings for postage; but is the State to lose its magnanimity and to cease to be just in order to save a few postage stamps? Can we no longer afford a few postage stamps to public bodies? Let any member take this list and calculate the cost of supplying the *Hansards* that have been cut off, and he will see how paltry is the saving. It is not worth while to earn the stigma of meanness and poverty for the sake of so small a sum. I think we make ourselves look ridiculous when we deprive citizens of their accustomed supply of intellectual diet—I do not say that satirically—when

we deprive them of their privilege of reading of what is being done in this House. Undoubtedly the very fact of keeping from them copies of *Hansard* may have in some quarters the appearance of depriving the working people in this State of a knowledge of what happens in Parliament; and from the earliest days of constitutional Parliaments it has been their privilege, taking the example of Great Britain itself, to publish their proceedings to the world. It is the right, the prerogative, the privilege of Parliament to provide for the publication of what transpires therein, and *Hansard* is the official publication of parliamentary proceedings. If I were to suggest any alteration at all, it would be to make *Hansard* entirely free to everyone who wants it. Every citizen should be able, without any cost to him, to have access to the official report of the transactions of this Parliament. But to deprive of their copies those societies, those congregations of men who look on the reading and the discussion of *Hansard* as part of the business they transact, or of their official constitution, necessary to them for their guidance, to shape their conduct and to keep abreast with the times, is inexcusable.

Mr. Gordon: The daily papers furnish reports for nothing.

Mr. WALKER: The daily papers do not go everywhere in the back-blocks, and are not published for nothing. Moreover, let me tell the hon. member that in the out-back mining districts the people will not quote a passage from the morning papers or from any Perth paper, and say, "There is a faithful report of what so-and-so said, or of what was done." They insist on going to the original source; they are not willing to be guided by the editors or the reporters of newspapers; they want to see for themselves what their member or other members said, or what happened; and we cannot blame them. They are away from public libraries, from public meetings, from other great assemblages of people, from large collections of books; they have to get what information they can from such literature as is available. They look on *Hansard* as a standard report of the

legislative progress of the State; they find in *Hansard* what they have to anticipate, what burdens are to be lifted from them or to be placed upon them. They treasure this as highly as they treasure any other published document. No document that could come into their hands is more welcome. I have personally seen men in small gatherings take this report and read it out to their fellows speech by speech; I have seen them listening patiently to the reader, and have afterwards heard them calmly discuss every speech in sequence.

Mr. Gordon: That accounts for the high death rate in the back-blocks.

Mr. WALKER: It is the healthiest part of Australia. Nothing can live so long as the old prospector. He is soundest in limb, soundest in mind, in every way a pattern and example; and if I wished to reform certain members of the House I should sentence them to twelve months in a prospector's camp. If I wished to elevate their characters, to make men of them, I should send them to live with prospectors. The truth is, nothing whatever worth saving is saved by this mean policy, and I cannot understand what influenced the Printing Committee, unless it was one of those fits that goes about, that is as catching as measles, when once a cry is raised for economy. Every petty body in the State has been talking of economy, forgetting that what sometimes appears to be economy may be not only mean but anything rather than economical. Whatever decreases the intellectual vigour of the community is not economy. Keep the people in ignorance, deprive them of their supply of literature, bar them off intellectually from the rest of the world, and you make of them worse men, less capable, less energetic in body and mind. And though it may seem a small thing to deprive the out-back man of this journal, the deprivation may have that effect. I do not say the effect will be disastrous; but every step towards it is an injury; and if we stop such influences in their beginning, we stop leakages before they become torrents; and that is what I wish to do in this instance. I am not moving this merely on my own initiative; for as I

said, I have received letter after letter, and I do not suppose there are any members representing far-back constituencies who have not received similar letters from all the largest centres of their electorates; and therefore we speak for these people, who feel they have been deprived of something they valued highly and which they obtained previously to this step on the part of the committee. I cannot see how the saving of a few paltry shillings will justify the limitation of the circulation of *Hansard* on principles hitherto in force in this State. There may be discriminating judgment exercised wisely, as in the refusing to send *Hansard* to the Weld Club—although I admit they have as much need there of political knowledge as anywhere else in the country. [Mr. Buicker: They have as much right to get it there as anywhere else.] Yes, but there is not the same justification as in the case of the bodies in the out-back goldfields. Where people have access to *Hansard* easily I would not plead for them; but there is very little literature in those out-back centres and very little to furnish material for mental exercise. It is there where *Hansard*, coming in their midst, is looked upon not only as a necessity but also as a species of luxury which they highly prize. To deprive them of that happiness on the score of economy is mean and, I was going to say without desiring to be vulgar, contemptible. I cannot see the wisdom of it. There is not much saved by it and there is harm done. How much is saved by it? [The Treasurer: Anyone can get *Hansard* for 10s. 6d.] Why should they pay that sum when they previously got it for nothing? Why compel these small bodies of men to pay? You give copies to the mechanics' institutes, where they have a chance of raising money by membership for the purchase of documents, books, and magazines; you give it to them for the reason that it might be read by the members in order to encourage the study of political matters; because, in short, it is a stimulus to the intellectual activities of the place. That is why it is sent there, and if it is sent there on those principles its value is equally evident when it is sent to those bodies I

have mentioned, such as the miners' union at Kanowna. I guarantee to say there is more controversy, more rubbing together of minds, more comradeship in thought, in a union of that kind than in a mechanics' institute. You go into a room in a mechanics' institute and you will find that one man gets hold of *Hansard*, sits down and reads it, perhaps monopolises it for the whole night, and if he likes a page very much he tears it out and runs away with it in his pocket. At least that is done in some of the institutes, but not those on the goldfields. In a mechanics' institute a man has to sit quietly and read *Hansard* while others are reading other papers and documents. In the organisations such as I have mentioned, at night when the comrades and the mates meet together a copy of *Hansard* is opened, the speeches are read, they are analysed, discussed, approved or condemned, by those workers. It is a stimulus to more than one mind, it is food for more than one intellect; and I venture to say if any hon. member—even one sitting on the Ministerial benches—were present at one of those meetings, where the great things of State were being discussed by the working miners, he would learn something, and something to his advantage. They are not the ignoramuses generally thought, but men who bring mature brains to bear on the questions; men of the world who have travelled, who have gained opinions from more than one State, and who delight to bring their knowledge into comparison with what is uttered in this House. [Mr. Gordon: Why do not they bring it to Parliament?] They do that by sending their representatives here and they are quite satisfied with them too; that shows their good judgment. To leave all badinage aside, is it not just that these men should reasonably expect to be informed of what is going on here? If every man can get *Hansard* for 10s. why compel those institutions hitherto receiving it free, now for the first time to pay for it? Why not do to others what is being done to them; make every institution pay for *Hansard*? Why should the agricultural halls at Kojonup, Jandakot and other places get their copies free? I

have no objection to their getting them free and I am glad that these people are considered; but if they do get them for nothing, why not the miners' unions of Kanowna, Leonora, Mt. Magnet and Mt. Margaret? There is no justice, reason, or fair play in the discrimination. It is merely a matter of judgment or choice, which may err. If the principle is uniform, if you send *Hansard* to the agricultural halls, to the miners' and mechanics' institutes, send it also to the bodies who have hitherto been in receipt of copies. Many complaints have been received by me and I desire to enter my protest on the matter and ask the House to say "We are liberal enough to be just in the distribution of *Hansard*," and to approve of the resolution.

Mr. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison): I second the motion.

Mr. A. J. WILSON (Forrest): Having regard to notice of motion No. 20 on the Notice Paper, I move the adjournment of the debate.

Debate adjourned.

MOTION—HEITMANN-LANDER INQUIRY.

Debate as to the Finding.

Mr. E. E. HEITMANN (Cue) moved—

That in the opinion of this House the report of Commissioner Walter on the Heitmann-Lander Inquiry is inconsistent with the evidence.

He said: In moving this motion I am actuated by a desire to give to members of this House and to the public, more especially to the public of the goldfields of Western Australia, a true statement, or at all events a true statement as it appears to me, of this case, which has been before the public for some considerable time. In doing so, I may be permitted to go back to the time when I first made these charges. My reason for making the charges was that from time to time, ever since I have been a member of this Chamber, and in fact previously to that date, I have received complaints not only from one party, not

only from one part of the Murchison, but also from many people and from different parts of the Murchison, about the administration of this particular inspector of mines, Mr. Lander. I desire too to emphasise this, that it has been by no means a matter of personal feeling with me. No personal spleen has actuated me in making these charges. In 1904, the first year I entered this Parliament, I complained that this inspector was not, according to my idea, and in the opinion of many people on the Murchison, doing his duty. In 1905 I again called the attention of this House to the matter and in 1906 I repeated the complaints. I do not think anyone can accuse me of being actuated by personal feelings or spleen in this matter. Had I desired to take an underhand course in accusing this man or laying charges against him, I certainly should not have come to this Chamber to do it. I have known several cases where men placed in similar positions to myself have, instead of coming before the public or before this Chamber to ventilate their grievances, gone by a back way to the Minister's office. I had no desire to do that, but rather to bring the matter before the public and the House. After I had made charges several times, and similar charges had been made by other persons, without any notice being taken of them. I was determined to force the hand of the Minister in charge of the Mines Department by making statements from the public platform. I did that and challenged the Minister to refute my statements, with the result that shortly afterwards a commission was appointed to inquire into the charges. Since the report of the commissioner, I have suggested more than once that I did not get fair play throughout the inquiry. To back up my statement I desired to go through the file dealing with the appointment of the commissioner as well as the appointment of the previous commissioner which was subsequently cancelled. I am well aware that there is little in this file at all events which will go to show that any undue influence has been brought to bear upon the Minister or upon others in charge which would indicate that any

endeavour has been made to defeat me; but at the same time there is correspondence here which puzzles me and gives me reason to think I was not far wrong when I declared that I did not get fair play. First of all, after making my charges, the matter was ventilated to some extent by the Minister through the Press, and he declared there was no foundation in the charges. A little later on he altered that opinion and declared that the charges were altogether too serious to be allowed to go by the board. I notice by the file that, after the appearance of a cutting from the newspaper of my speech, there is a telegram from the inspector of mines at Cue to the State Mining Engineer, Perth, in which he states, "Letter posted you; accusations of Heitmann libellous and would like fullest investigation be made. Inspector Lander." After this wire from the inspector there are several minutes from the State Mining Engineer and from the Minister for Mines himself. In these minutes there are some decided untruths. In one minute it states that Heitmann had on more than one occasion made charges against this inspector. Well, this was quite true, but it states that I on one occasion made charges against the inspector and the Fingal mine of doing work in a certain way. He was not satisfied with that, but went out of his way to say, "Heitmann publicly apologised to the mining company, and promised to do the same before Parliament." That is absolutely untrue. It is in a minute by the State Mining Engineer, and the Minister also carries the responsibility of it, for he repeats it. But it is absolutely untrue. I at no time promised to apologise to the manager of the Great Fingal Company, nor did I apologise. Later on we find a letter in the file from Mr. Lander, and I place considerable importance on it. The date is February 5th; three or four days after my charges were made. It says:—

"*Re* speech by Heitmann, M.L.A., at Miller's Hall, Day Dawn, on February 1st, 1907.—Attached please find two clippings from the *Murchison Times* of 5th February, 1907, in which there are distinct charges made against

my administration of the Mines Regulation Act in this district. It is stated by Mr. Heitmann, M.L.A.—first, that I had not sent in true statements relating to accidents to the hon. the Minister; second, that on one occasion I went to the Cue hospital in company with the representative of the Great Fingal mine and took statements from an injured man, and was only too ready to put words into his mouth, which were used against him when he sued the company for compensation. These statements have so affected the public mind that the editor of the above paper has written a leading article on the matter. These charges are positively untrue. As regards the first charge, I have never knowingly misled the hon. the Minister, neither have I altered in any way a statement made by an injured man. The signed originals are at my office and can be compared at any time. I never took a second person to the hospital, excepting one to act as an interpreter in the case of Italians."

I want to draw special attention to this statement by the inspector. He declares emphatically that he had never taken the representative of the company, or any other man, with him when he went to take a statement, except an interpreter when taking a statement from an injured Italian. Later I will refer again to this, for the commissioner in his report shows that I produced evidence proving that on two occasions at all events—I could mention more—the inspector of mines was accompanied by representatives of the company. I will also give later the inspector's version of how he happened to be accompanied by those gentlemen. The inspector having emphatically declared a certain thing, I will show by reading portion of this letter what value can be placed on Mr. Lander's statements in his dealings with truth. I have here a minute by the Under Secretary for Mines, in which he says he considers it necessary to recommend the appointment of Warden Troy, and he goes out of his way to give that officer what I consider to be a splendid testimonial. He says that Warden Troy being unconnected with the

department, he feels sure it would be satisfactory for him to sit as commissioner, and that the verdict would carry weight and be satisfactory to all concerned. The Minister also minutes on this, concurring with the minute by the Under Secretary for Mines.

The Minister for Mines: Did you say "unconnected with the department"?

Mr. HEITMANN: Yes. I will read the Under Secretary's minute to the Minister:—

"I think the most satisfactory way to arrive at the truth in this matter would be to appoint Warden Troy as a Royal Commissioner. He is unconnected with the branch, and his verdict would carry weight."

Beneath this there is a minute by the Minister to the Premier:—

"Please, approve the appointment of Mr. Warden Troy as a Royal Commissioner to investigate the charges of biased and improper actions made by Mr. Heitmann, M.L.A., against a local inspector of mines at Cue. It is felt that a mere departmental inquiry will not clear the case, and a Royal Commission will give us full powers to insist upon witnesses being present and giving evidence, and the cost will be no greater than a departmental inquiry, whereas the result by a Commissioner will be more satisfactory."

These recommendations were not made within a few hours of the making of my charges; not made on the spur of the moment. [*Mr. Taylor:* When were they made?] Some five or six days afterwards. The recommendation came first from the Under Secretary, but doubtless his attention was called to the matter by an officer under him; then it was passed on to the Minister, from the Minister to the Premier, and I suppose Cabinet also dealt with it—in fact I know they did. Surely during this time the Minister, or the powers that be in the persons of those officers who had charge of this matter, had ample time to arrive at an opinion as to whether Warden Troy was or was not a suitable man to adjudicate on this matter. On the 18th February I find there is a letter

from the manager of the Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation, Perth. I can quite understand this manager for the company drawing attention to the fact that certain cases were pending before the court, in which he was interested. He thought, as did the inspector of mines and many others in Cue, that my charges rested only on those cases then before the court. But I cannot understand why the manager of a corporation such as this should go out of his way to give the Minister a testimonial to the discretion of the inspector of mines, whose duties are to administer the Mining Act. After drawing attention to the fact that these cases were before the court, the letter goes on to say:—

"In the second case, that of Brown, the mines inspector was called, and virtually confirmed the evidence taken by him at his inquiry as required under the Mines Regulation Act, and also confirmed the statement made by Brown, which statement was taken at the hospital, that it was a pure accident. Under severe cross-examination by the plaintiff's counsel, Mr. Lander gave evidence to the effect that in all cases it was his invariable custom, before examining an injured man and obtaining evidence from him whilst in the hospital, to obtain his doctor's or the matron of the hospital's permission to see him in reference to the accident. As a matter of fact, in Brown's case we understand Mr. Lander was accompanied by his clerk, who took a longhand note of the evidence given whilst Mr. Brown was being questioned by Lander, no one else being present at the time."

If I desired to go so far as to impute motives for this letter, I think I should be justified in doing so. And we know, these insurance companies really take upon themselves the responsibility of the mining companies under the Workmen's Compensation Act; and it is really these guarantee insurance companies who are the defendants when a miner sues for compensation. Therefore why this company should go out of its way to give a testimonial to the inspector of mines is

beyond my comprehension. On receiving this letter, the Minister wrote a minute to the effect that it was desirable to adjourn the holding of the commission. That is minuted on again by the Under Secretary, who writes to the Minister thus :—

“In the Nankivell case, as the Full Court has only to decide on points of law, it is clear that the commission’s report cannot affect the result; and as to Brown’s case, the Full Court would not, except under very special circumstances, admit fresh evidence.”

The minute goes on :—

“I think, however, before issuing the commission it might be wise to consider if it would not be better to appoint some person not resident in the district as commissioner. The appointment of Warden Troy might place him in a somewhat unpleasant position, in that he may have to criticise the work of a brother officer resident in the place; and though I am sure Warden Troy would not hesitate in discharging any duty imposed on him, there does not appear to be sufficient reason to ask him to act in this case, if someone else can be obtained.”

The Minister writes on this a minute :—

“I concur with you that every confidence may be placed in Warden Troy; but it is apparent that very strong feeling exists, and Warden Troy’s appointment would not give the public that confidence which is desirable. Please allow the matter to stand over till next week, when I will look carefully into the question. In the meantime please ring up Crown Law Department on point raised by Mr. Farquhar.”

Mr. Taylor: That is a distinct libel on Warden Troy.

Mr. HEITMANN: I am not concerned in whether it is a libel on Warden Troy or otherwise. I do not desire to compare the wardens, and have no desire to reflect on either of them. But I would like to ask, what information was given the Minister or the Under Secretary to induce them, in so short a time, to alter their opinions of Warden Troy? I would like farther to ask, what information was

given the Minister as to lead him to say, “It is apparent that strong feeling exists? I should also like to know what he means by saying that strong feeling existed, inferring the existence of feeling so strong as to prevent any warden from doing his duty fearlessly. Did that strong feeling exist between the inspector and myself, between the warden and the inspector, or between the warden and myself? I should, in short, like to know what actually took place between the appointment of Warden Troy and the penning of this minute. Unfortunately I cannot prove this next statement, but I am informed on the authority of an officer high up in the Mines Department that about this date a certain gentleman of high standing in the mining world of Western Australia interceded on behalf of Mr. Lander. Be that as it may, I have reason to believe that some pressure was brought to bear—I do not say on the Minister, for I see the minute came first from the Under Secretary, and I think it a strange proceeding in this connection that the Under Secretary should take the initiative. After both the Minister and the Under Secretary testifying to the fair-mindedness of this particular warden, they suddenly find he is not, for some reason or other, a fit and proper person to act on this case. We then find that, after many delays, it is decided to cancel the appointment of Warden Troy and appoint Mr. Walter in his stead. The case gets so far and a commission is appointed. In support of my complaint and my suggestion that I have been unfairly dealt with in that I had a combination working against me, I would like to show at least I have had officers of the Mines Department doing their utmost to prevent my getting a fair deal. I can prove to the Minister of Mines that the officers were capable of falsifying statements, and I will leave it to the judgment of any member to say if this statement was not falsified, and if they say it was not I will withdraw the statement and all the charges I have made. In the course of my investigation of this matter—I may say here that one of my charges was that the inspector had taken statements from men who were not in a fit

state to give them—I went to the Mines office at Cne and asked for the file in connection with a man who had been injured, named J. T. Pollard.

The Minister for Mines: The difficulty was to pin you down to a statement when you were before the commission.

Mr. HEITMANN: I will reply to that interjection by saying that the charges I made in the first instance were charges of maladministration in the Mines Department, and I believe part of the programme was to try and pin me down to something, as is shown in the report, outside these charges, and I may say that the commissioner says not a word about the charges which I made, in fact he goes the other way about to try and hide up the weak spots. I went to the Mines Department and asked for the file dealing with the Pollard accident. My reason for looking at the file was that I had complaints made that the man was in a bad way on the day the statement was taken from him. The man was injured on the 28th or 29th December, 1904. I was told at the hospital that the statement was taken from the injured man on the 30th or 31st December, and I went to the Mines Department to get the file to find out the date the statement was taken, so as to compare it with the hospital books, to find out the man's condition on that date. I found the statement, and I remarked to the clerk in charge that the statement was not dated. I looked on the copy and on the original and neither was dated. I remarked that this was a peculiar way of taking statements, and I asked whether there was a diary referring to the inspectors so that I could find out the whereabouts of the inspector on that day. I found the officer had a copy of the diary in his letter book, which proved conclusively that it must have been on the 30th or 31st December that he took the statement.

Mr. Taylor: What year?

Mr. HEITMANN: The year 1904. As a matter of fact it stated that on the 31st inquiries into this particular accident were concluded. I went back some two weeks later in company with a friend of

mine and asked for the same file, and I found to my surprise that instead of there being a blank as far as the date was concerned, in the meantime the document had been dated; not only the copy but the original, and anyone can look at that document and see that it has been faked. It is dated January 2nd, and instead of putting 1905 the date 1907 has been inserted. Here is the file, and I want to know how anyone in writing down a date could put 1907 instead of 1905. Can anyone imagine a clerk accustomed to typewriting or to office work post-dating a document two years. Could anyone to-day date a document 1909? I am satisfied that I had to fight to get evidence, for in a matter of this description it was hard to get miners to give evidence, they were afraid of their jobs, and I will prove that before I have finished with my statement. Not only were they afraid of the mining managers but of the inspector of mines. I now come to the commissioner's report and it is true, as the Minister for Mines said, the commissioner had a hard job to pin me down to any particular charge inasmuch as I complained time after time generally on the administration of the Mines Act in my district. I will read portions of this report. The commissioner says:—

“I encountered some difficulty at the beginning of the inquiry in determining exactly what were the charges made by Mr. Heitmann, inasmuch as there was a difference in the evidence of different witnesses as to the literal accuracy of the newspaper report of the speech in question. I came to the conclusion, after hearing the evidence on this point, that the substance of the charges was this:—(a) That in consequence of the inspector having taken statements from men who were not in a fit state to give them, incorrect reports of accidents had been sent to the Minister. (b) That the inspector had put words into the mouths of the men who had been injured. (c) That the incorrect statements were capable of being used against men who were suing for compensation.”

I think the commissioner was going out

of his way, and it appeared to me to be one of the links in the chain that there was some fixed idea from the start to prevent my getting a fair trial.

Mr. Taylor: Getting justice.

The Minister for Mines: Other people want justice also.

Mr. HEITMANN: I have endeavoured to mete out justice, and I shall endeavour to do so on every occasion. The Commissioner says in his summing up:—

“As regards charge (a) I do not consider that the evidence shows that any incorrect statements were taken or sent to the Minister as a result of men being unfit to give them. As to charge (b), there is nothing to support it, except that the inspector seems to have at times advised men that it was useless to give as part of their statements opinions at variance with the statements of their fellow-workers. In my opinion, though no harm seems to have resulted in any way, this advice should not be given, but men should be allowed to express their opinions in whatever form they chose. As to charge (c) it naturally follows that, as no incorrect statements have been given, none could be used.”

I shall endeavour to deal with these statements as they appear in the report—the charges and the replies. The first charge is that in consequence of the inspector having taken statements from men not in a fit state to give them, inaccurate reports of accidents were sent to the Minister; and in reply the commissioner states:—

“As regards charge (a), I do not consider that the evidence shows that any inaccurate statements were taken or sent to the Minister as a result of men being unfit to give them.”

I will prove to the House and to the public that inaccurate statements have been taken and sent to the Minister, and I am positive inaccurate reports have been sent to the Minister as to various accidents, and if they have not been the result of men not being fit to give those reports, what conclusion can I arrive at, but that the inspector has not written down the statements as they were given?

I will take the first case, that of a man named Andrews. This man was injured in the Fingal mine and lost an arm. In dealing with this, the Commissioner in his report says:—

“In this case the man was injured by an accident at the Great Fingal mine, losing his left arm, and that it is alleged that not only was he not in a fit state to have a statement taken, but that a representative of the company was present, and that Mr. Lander was thereby influenced against the injured man. I formed the conclusion that this man's troubles have so excited him as to almost unhinge his mind. There is nothing apparently incorrect in the inspector's report and it does not appear that the presence of the man from the Fingal had any influence. Andrews has received compensation from the company and is now in their employment again in a job that he himself says he does not complain of.”

While on this matter I would like to say the commissioner has placed altogether too much importance on the fact that no great injury has occurred to the man through false statements being sent in. I venture to say the commissioner was not appointed to find out what was the result of the statements, but rather to find out whether my charges were correct or not. I do not go so much on the actual results following the inspector's statement, but rather what might possibly have happened under some slightly different circumstances. I will read the inspector's report on this accident. He says:—

“I beg to report on the above accident, I visited the mine on January 2nd, and inspected the scene where Andrews had been working. I obtained a statement from P. Valli, and Charles Denton, these two men were working with Andrews at the time of the accident. I also visited the Cue hospital and had an interview with the injured man. I enclose a statement taken from Andrews. At the time of the accident Andrews was in charge, in connection with the erection of three girders, when two fell a dis-

tance of about 19 inches, one fell on the injured man's arm, crushing him between the end of the girder and a large vat."

That is sufficient for my charge. It goes on to describe the accident. He states here that at the time of the accident Andrews was in charge of the erection of three girders. It has been proved and can be proved over and over again by looking at the Fingal books that Andrews was not in charge of the gang; he not only had a man immediately over him but there was a man in charge of the whole job. This may seem of little importance but there is a possibility of this arising: if Andrews was to put in a claim for compensation and Andrews happened to be the foreman of a job, under some of our Acts at all events a foreman is a responsible officer, and it could be pleaded against him that he was guilty of contributory negligence. It may have been possible that Andrews may have sued, and I venture to say in assessing damages in a case like this the jury or the assessors would have taken into consideration whether Andrews was in charge of the job or was a common employee. Here is the first misstatement, and there is no reason for the mistake. It was quite simple for him to find out, in fact he must have known, and I am certain he knew that this man was a mere common labourer receiving the lowest wage of any of the men, and that there were men above him. Farther in respect to Andrews I would like to say that when Andrews was hurt, or a few minutes after the accident—this is what he told the commission, and it was supported by independent evidence—he exclaimed to the engineer that had a certain horse or trestle been bolted the accident would not have happened. The trestles carried the girders which fell on the man. He informed the commission he was thinking of his family, of his position. He has already lost an eye, and now, being deprived of one of his arms, he had to consider the future; and he stated clearly that he told the engineer if the horse had been bolted the accident would not have happened. The

engineer replied, "I suppose not," or "Perhaps not." [*Mr. Taylor*: Have you that in evidence?] Yes, and had I interfered in any way with the witnesses, had I schooled them to give their evidence, I should be somewhat doubtful about moving this motion. I visited them, it is true; but not in one instance did I show them the written statements they had made, nor in one instance did I ask them to stray from the truth. Andrews stated that he had informed the inspector, and we find the statement was borne out by a man named Collier who happened to be in the hospital at the time, and he supported it on oath before the commission, for he declared he had heard Andrews tell the inspector that he (Andrews) had made that statement. Yet we find in the written statement of Andrews appearing on the file no mention whatever of that statement; in fact, there is really nothing of any importance, and this particular statement, which is or might have been of most vital importance, is omitted. The evidence is here, and it is supported by the independent evidence of a man who was not one of the workers, but a publican of Cue who happened to be in the hospital at that time; yet the commissioner investigating these charges declared that no false statements were sent in. That is one. The next is in a matter of an accident to one Stickland, at a place called Cuddingwarra, where he was one of a party of miners engaged in sinking a shaft at the Victory United mine. On the evening of the accident he was in the plat, and the penthouse covering the miners was put in on that very day; it had been in about ten hours, and was built of timber that any sane man with mining experience would have at once condemned. The timber was stretched across a shaft of at least 10 feet in width, and was 6 by 6 oregon. On the day when the penthouse was placed in position the men were employed sending up stuff from the bottom of the shaft, some 25 feet in depth, to place a covering on the penthouse; and after firing at about eight o'clock the men went back to work, and Stickland was standing on the plat using the

knocker-line. Suddenly he heard the timbers give way, and penthouse, timber, and about ten tons of stuff with him on top of it, fell to the bottom. The inspector examined the place, and it appears to me he had a notion that the company should be prosecuted; and I am satisfied that if the Minister for Mines had been there he would have ordered the company to be prosecuted for having unsafe workings. Anyone acquainted with mining must know the folly of placing such small timber in such a position. Fortunately, the men were not seriously injured. Stickland, in making his statement to the inspector, said he thought the timber was unsafe, and also that the matter had been discussed by the men some few minutes before the accident. There was a general discussion among the miners, and one of them said he did not believe the timber was safe, and he thought the whole lot would be in on them before very long. When Stickland made this statement Mr. Lander refused to take it. Stickland said he was speaking to his mates; and this is the evidence:—

"Bruce said the timber was not safe. He mentioned it to Crawford, who was shift boss at the time. Crawford reckoned it was safe. After crib time they went to work as usual.

"What did Mr. Lander say after that?—He said 'It is no use your thinking of going into court in this case. The other three men are against you.'

"Did you say anything else?—It stopped at that time. I said 'I have no intention of going to court, but you came to me for a statement; I am giving it to you.'

"Did you make any farther reference to it?—Yes; he said 'You will be getting yourself disliked, not only on the mine where you are working, but you will get black-balled right throughout the Murchison.'

Yet in spite of that, the commissioner declares that no false statements were sent in. What else could this be but a false or incorrect statement, when the inspector refused to take the statement of this

man? That statement would have had a strong bearing on the case had there been any subsequent litigation. It appears to me that the inspector could see the weakness of the company's case; for undoubtedly, had that been a fatal accident, the company should have been prosecuted for manslaughter at least. The inspector, seeing the weakness of the company's case, seems to have tried to smother it up by refusing to take these statements. This was in the statement of only one man, but another man declared exactly the same on oath before the commission; and in view of these facts, surely I am justified in saying the commissioner's report is inconsistent with the evidence given. The commissioner said there were no false statements sent in, or no wrong or untrue statements. The evidence is here for members to peruse, and I am satisfied false statements were sent in on more than one occasion. Then there was the case of Harry Grant, at the Cue One mine. The following is the inspector's report:—

"The above accident was reported to my office in the usual way. I visited the mine and found that a piece of galvanised iron 2 feet by 3 feet had been nailed at the plat (which is about 100 feet from the bottom of the shaft) for the purpose of collecting water, and to prevent it from falling on the men working in the bottom of the shaft. This piece of iron had evidently been struck by stones which had been blown up from the last round of shot, and loosened. These had not been noticed by the men, and on their return whilst going down to the bottom of the shaft, in the bucket, they heard the piece of iron falling. In order to try to dodge the piece of iron Grant reached for the knocker-line, to signal the engine-driver to stop the bucket. Grant was standing on the edge of the bucket in the usual way, when he reached for the knocker-line, which is in the corner of the shaft and easily got at. When he grasped the knocker-line he evidently let go the main rope, and fell to the bottom, a distance of 40 feet, dislocating and breaking his left ankle very badly.

It is quite evident the engine-driver was lowering the bucket in a proper manner, for Grant makes no complaint about the way he was being lowered, and I can only conclude that the injured man lost his head. I had an interview with the injured man, and I enclose his statement. In my opinion there is no one to blame but the injured man himself for the accident." The evidence has shown, and it can be proved by simply visiting the mine to-day, that the report is absolutely incorrect; and the most vital point, the point which would carry weight in any court of law, is that whereas the inspector states the knocker-line was in the usual position in the shaft, the knocker-line was not in that compartment at all, but in the other compartment. Here were men working in a shaft without any means of communicating with the engine-driver. The fact can be borne out by the owner of the mine himself. Even to-day it can be ascertained where the knocker-line was. Grant swears that the inspector's account of the accident is not true, and so far as I can see there is no doubt about the position of the knocker-line. I venture to say, had Grant sued the company he would have had no trouble in proving to any jury that the accident resulted from the absence of the knocker-line in the compartment. It appears that Grant was going down after firing, and the engine-driver had neglected to stop at the plat, which was about 300 feet from the bottom. The men usually stopped at this plat for the purpose of seeing, after firing, whether any stones had been blown up and were likely to be dangerous to them when they were in the bottom of the shaft. On this occasion the driver failed to stop; the knocker-line from the plat down was not in the compartment in which the bucket worked. The timber was in 40 feet below the plat, and from that point the shaft was without timber; so from the plat to 40 feet below the plat, had anything happened to the men in the shaft, they had no means of communication or of signalling to the engine-driver as to their condition. Grant wanted, as he was forced to do, to get to the bottom of

the timber before he could stop the bucket and go back to the plat. He had succeeded, with the aid of his spider or candle-holder, in reaching out some five feet to the knocker-line. He stopped the bucket, and was just about to knock himself up to the plat, when he heard a piece of tin falling. This was the piece of iron referred to in the inspector's report. Naturally the man wished to get away as quickly as possible from that shaft, and in jumping back suddenly he fell off the bucket. The inspector states that the knocker-line was in the usual place in the corner of the shaft, and was easily got at. This point is very material. Instead of being in the corner of the shaft as usual, it was not in the same compartment, and was in the corner of the extreme end of the shaft. This was an 11-foot shaft, and to reach the knocker-line from the centre of the shaft a man would have to reach about 5 feet 6 inches. Instructions should have been given to prosecute this company. In face of this report Mr. Grant, the man who was injured, put in a claim against the company under the Workers' Compensation Act. He was only entitled to receive under that Act about £250, but they settled it before the action went to court and gave him about £550. This was in face of the statement of the inspector who is there to represent the workers as appointed by the Government to administer the Act, and yet tells a deliberate falsehood. The report is a falsehood from beginning to end, and this is emphasised by the fact that the insurance company took no notice of it but were prepared to settle out of court and pay the injured man twice what he was entitled to. One of the charges I made was that statements were obtained from injured men when they were not in a fit condition to give evidence. In Grant's case this was particularly apparent. He was injured about 8 o'clock in the evening, at 11 o'clock he was in the hospital, he was put under chloroform and operated upon at 8 o'clock in the morning, and because he had passed a very bad night and was in great pain at 8.15 o'clock a.m. he was given one-sixth of a grain of morphia. At 10

o'clock of that day the inspector of mines took his statement. Not only do we find a report in the hospital books to that effect, but there is also a statement by the doctor who says that in his opinion the man was not in a fit condition to make a statement. It must be apparent even to a layman that, in circumstances such as I have described, the inspector of mines should never have taken a statement from that man. I will give another instance of an incorrect statement having been sent to the Minister. This case is well known on the Murchison seeing that in fighting the man's case it cost the workers of Cue and Day Dawn about £340. It is the case of the man Nankivell who was injured at the Great Fingal mine. It appears that the driver made a statement in the case to the effect that on the day of the accident a few minutes before it occurred the cage was at No. 10. He received a signal to go to No. 9 and from there was signalled back to No. 10. Within a few minutes he went to No. 9 again, thence to No. 7 and on to the surface. On reaching the surface he found a truck in the cage, and seeing that he had not been signalled in any part of the shaft that the gates had been put in, and as it is a recognised rule in all mines to place the gates in before the truck is put upon them, he was justified in thinking the cage came from No. 10, the last place he was upon the chairs. The truck was taken from the cage and Nankivell got in. The braceman signalled, and the driver, thinking the shaft was clear to No. 10, started out with the idea of going down. When he got to No. 9 he found someone had put in the chairs there and naturally the man who was in the cage was smashed up. To-day that man is unable to walk, and from what I can hear he will never be able to walk again. The inspector came to the Fingal mines and took the statement of a man named Gurst. He endeavoured by all possible means to force Gurst to admit that he was responsible for the accident, but that man declared he had received no "knocks" and believed the shaft was clear to No. 10, therefore he was not responsible. The platman gave evidence before the Supreme Court to

the effect that he had never "knocked" the cage on to the chairs. The witness said to the inspector that this course had been followed many times previously and also that the truck had been frequently sent away in that manner. When he said that, the inspector at once ejaculated "No, no, we will not take that statement." Unfortunately perhaps for me I have only the evidence of the engine-driver concerned, but I would point out that in company with the inspector of mines that day was a clerk of the Fingal mine who took down the statement in shorthand. If Mr. Lander wanted to disprove the evidence of Gurst he could have called this clerk; but as he knew that one of my charges was that he had taken representatives to the mines with him to take down statements from injured men he was afraid to call him. This also may appear nothing, but when one is acquainted with the fact of this hiding of evidence by the inspector one can expect anything from him. When the case went before the Supreme Court, it was ruled out on a point of law. It appears that under the Employers' Liability Act the company is not responsible for an accident caused by a mistake of a common employee. In my opinion, however, and in the opinion of at least two legal gentlemen, if such an irregularity as occurred had been going on for weeks or months it must have been with the knowledge of the responsible officers of the company, and had that point been brought out in evidence and had it been proved that the accident was due to a defect in the workings which had been in existence for months to the knowledge of the responsible officers Nankivell would have won his case. It appears that in every one of these instances I have brought forward the inspector has shown the acuteness of a lawyer in at once picking out the weak points in the company's defence and hiding it. It is remarkable that later on, when the solicitor of the insurance company was in Day Dawn, after Nankivell had entered the claim against the company, he called the employee to his office and strange to say questioned him on the very point which the inspector had tried to make

him admit. The result of this investigation was that the man instead of altering his original statement and admitting what the lawyer and inspector wanted him to do, threw up his job and has not worked on the Fingal since. This statement of mine can be borne out by reference to the evidence. The inspector when being cross-examined by the solicitor appearing for him, admitted in court and it is in evidence here, that Gurst did mention the fact that it had become the custom in the Fingal to send up trucks in the way adopted on the day of the accident. Then he tried to excuse himself and said he did not remember. Now, as to the inspector putting words into the mouths of injured men. The inspector went much farther than that, as we find in the Stickland case, when he refused point blank to take the statement of a miner. Not only did he try that but he attempted to intimidate him, and to force him to strike out certain parts of the statement, which he eventually did. He also threatened the man that he would be black-balled upon the Murchison if he made such statements, and that he would make himself disliked not only on the mine but throughout the whole district. When we were discussing the subject in the House which was the original reason for my making these charges, the Minister declared that it was not possible for a mine manager to blackball any man for doing his duty. We find that not only was the mining manager prepared to do that, but even the Government servant appointed to look after the interests of the workers, who forced the men by every possible means to bend to his wishes. As to a man not being in a fit state to give evidence, I have mentioned the case of Grant, where the doctor declared that he was not fit, and where the hospital books showed that the man had no right to be examined. Now I will refer to Pollard's case. In this case the commissioner appears to make much of the fact that the men were not affected by the action of the inspector. I could not trace Pollard in Western Australia but I have the evidence of the hospital books and that of an independent witness who happened to

be in hospital at that time. The books declared that on the day the statement was taken the man was semi-delirious. It is also shown that on the following day he was slightly delirious, probably owing to the pain he suffered through having torn off his bandages. This showed that the man was not in his right senses when examined by the inspector, and additional evidence of this is provided by another patient who said that when the inspector had gone the injured man asked him who was the doctor. The state of the man's mind was clearly shown by the fact that he thought the inspector of mines was a doctor. As showing the inspector had some knowledge that this man was not in his right mind, or at least that he suspected such to be the case, either the clerk or the inspector altered the date of the statement, which to me at all events seems suspicious. My charge accused the inspector of sending incorrect statements which were afterwards capable of being used against men suing for compensation, and one has only to look at the files to prove this. In the case of Grant, an urgent wire was received from the Mines Department asking for the statement. A copy was sent, but the court would not accept that, and another urgent wire was sent asking for the original of the statement made by Grant. That statement the evidence proves to be incorrect; yet it would have been used against the man had it not been that the company was prepared to settle the case out of court. I desire only to say in conclusion, that were it possible for members of this Chamber to go fully into the matter they could verify every statement I have made to-night. They could prove that on more than one occasion incorrect statements and reports by the inspector of mines have been sent in—in the case of Grant, of Stickland, of Nankivell, also in the Pollard case, in which it is proved that the man was delirious when his statement was taken, and in several other cases it can be proved beyond doubt that incorrect statements were sent in, and absolutely false reports made to the Minister. In view of that, am I not justified in moving that the report of the commissioner is incon-

sistent with the evidence, and am I not justified in asking that something farther be done in the matter? My earnest desire is not to trouble the commissioner—I have nothing to do with him—but to see justice done in this case, and prevent similar action in the future by this inspector. I could, if I desired to go outside the evidence, bring forward similar cases which have occurred since the date of those I have dealt with. In fact there are papers now on the table which prove that mines inspectors have acted contrary to the Mines Regulation Act. Only to-day I asked a question in reference to that. But I have no desire to go outside the papers, a glance at which will verify every statement I have made this evening. I beg to move the motion I have read to the House.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): The motion submitted by the hon. member asks the House to agree that the report made by Mr. Walter, acting in the capacity of commissioner in connection with the Heitmann-Lander inquiry, is inconsistent with the evidence. I trust members will not accept the wild statements made by the hon. member to-night as being anything more than the—

Mr. Holman (holding up a document): Than the wild forgeries here.

Mr. Heitmann: Yes; Those are absolute forgeries.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cue was given a most patient hearing, and I must ask the same for the Minister.

The MINISTER: We have heard much about the wicked things done by the inspectors. In 1904 the member for Cue made charges against the inspector of mines in that district; speaking in 1905, he said he had previously made charges which had been deprecated by the then Minister for Mines (Mr. Hastie) and the member for Menzies (myself); and he then reiterated those charges. Again last year he displayed a decided antipathy to this inspector, making charge after charge against him, but there was nothing substantial in those charges. I can assure members I would not have gone to the expense of a com-

mission to inquire into the charges made by the hon. member, had I known they would be cut down as they were when the commission sat. Although the hon. member made certain charges in the House, he said that he would not go behind the back of the inspector or any other person, would not go to the Minister and tell what those charges were, so that a definite charge might be made against the inspector, preferring to make them in Parliament or on the public platform. In passing, I may say in regard to the appointment of Mr. Walter as commissioner to make the inquiry, the facts are as disclosed in the file. When the Government decided it was desirable that a commission should inquire into the serious charges made, it was with the object of ascertaining their truth or otherwise. Serious charges had been made, and the inspector should be either exonerated or dismissed. If the hon. member's statements in regard to the inspector were true, that officer was unfit to remain in the public service; if on the other hand they were untrue, the inspector should be exonerated. A departmental inquiry would not be of a nature to insist upon sworn evidence, and in the circumstances it was wiser to appoint a commission, because, as is pointed out in the file, while a commission is more costly than a departmental inquiry, its results are more far-reaching and its findings should be more conclusive. The reason why a change was made in the appointment of Mr. Troy was simply because of the fact that he was a brother officer of Mr. Lander, that as they were, in the ordinary course of their duties, in constant communication, we did not desire after the case had been heard to have it said the case had been heard by a brother officer instead of by someone who was a stranger to the district. Therefore we sent Mr. Walter, a gentleman highly respected by everyone who knows him; and I am certain the public resent the uncalled references to that gentleman made by the hon. member (Mr. Heitmann) in this House a few weeks ago.

Mr. Bath: Refer to the remarks made to-night. That is the subject you should deal with.

The MINISTER: Mr. Walter has had an honourable career in the public service of this State for close on 20 years.

Mr. Holman: Refer to the Judge's recent remarks on that gentleman.

The MINISTER: Remarks on Mr. Walter?

Mr. Holman: Yes; not on this, but on another recent case.

The MINISTER: I do not know of any statements made by a Judge in regard to Mr. Walter.

Mr. Bath: This is the case we want to hear about.

The MINISTER: Anyhow, when the commission had been appointed and it was sought to get down to some definite charge; where was the hon. member who to-night has been making these charges and who has from time to time referred to the inspector so disparagingly? Where was the hon. member when the commissioner appointed to take evidence on oath—not the gabble we have listened to to-night—asked him to substantiate his charges?

Mr. Heitmann: Where is the evidence?

The MINISTER: I will read the evidence given by Mr. Heitmann at the inquiry, and I think it will satisfy a good many members after having listened to the remarks of the hon. member to-night. The hon. member has an advantage of me in this matter, in that I have not gone through all these hundreds of pages to dissect the evidence. It is impossible for me to find time to go through hundreds of pages of evidence merely to see whether a gentleman who had been a magistrate in this State for 16 or 17 years was so biased against the hon. member as to bring in a false report, in his capacity of commissioner.

Member: Who was the commissioner?

The MINISTER: Mr. Walter, who was warden at Greenbushes for nearly 15 years and is now magistrate at Geraldton—an absolute stranger to both the parties. I desire to say, in the first place, that when the commission sat, one would expect that the hon. member would give every assistance possible, that he would be prepared to say what his charges were. But he obstructed the commissioner in

every way, and in no instance did the commissioner receive assistance from the hon. member in connection with the inquiry. I want to get the evidence which the member for Cue gave on that occasion.

Mr. Heitmann: Here is the evidence.

The MINISTER: At the inquiry, and in reply to questions put by Mr. Tobin, who appeared as his attorney, Mr. Heitmann answered as follows:—

“Question: At a public meeting held at Day Dawn on the 1st February you made certain charges against Inspector Lander?—Answer: Yes.

Is the newspaper report (indicated) a correct report?—No.

In what respect is it incorrect?—

In the first place, it states that I declared that Inspector Lander had sent in incorrect statements, or not true statements. That is incorrect.”

Mr. Heitmann: Read the whole of the evidence.

The MINISTER: I shall do so; but that is what the hon. member told the commissioner when stating his evidence. He said that the report which appeared in the newspaper was incorrect. [*Mr. Heitmann*: Read on.] The commission was appointed on account of the strong statements reported to have been made by the hon. member. He had asserted that the inspector of mines had not sent in true reports to the Minister; and he had alleged that on one occasion the inspector of mines went to the Cue Hospital in company with a representative of the Great Fingal mine and took a statement from an injured man, and was only too ready to put words into his mouth that were used against him when he sued for compensation. Now the hon. member says that is incorrect. At the inquiry he was asked by Mr. Tobin—

“In what respect is it incorrect?—

In the first place it states that I declared that Inspector Lander had sent in incorrect statements or not true statements. That is incorrect.”

What has the hon. member been trying to induce the House to believe, in the whole of his statement to-night? Has he not tried to induce members to believe that this inspector was so vile as to try,

with the object of assisting the mining companies or the insurance companies in Perth—because, as the hon. member has himself stated, it is not the mining companies who are liable to pay the compensation awarded in connection with these accidents, because they are all insured in some outside insurance company, some organisation in Perth—he had stated that this inspector was going specially out of his way to commit a fraud on a poor working man by sending in an incorrect statement to the Minister. And when the member was asked if that statement in the Press, which he had not contradicted, was a true statement, he said, “No, it is not correct.” He also said at the inquiry:—

May I be permitted to make the remarks again which led up to this statement?

The Commissioner: I think you had better leave yourself in Mr. Tobin's hands, and answer the question.

By Mr. Tobin: What did you state?—I stated that in consequence of Mr. Lander taking statements from men not in a fit condition to give them, incorrect reports of accidents had been sent to the Minister.

That was entirely different; that because a man just after a severe accident is asked by the inspector while the man is dazed or, as the hon member says, through having had chloroform administered, is in a condition too bad to know what he is doing—because the inspector has gone to a patient who is in a dazed condition and got a statement that he otherwise would not have got, it is said that he thus sent in an incorrect statement to the Minister. Here is another extract from the hon. member's evidence—

“Farther down in the report it is said that these statements ‘were’ used against the men who had made them when they were suing the company for compensation. Did you say that?—No, I did not.

What did you say?—I said that these statements ‘could be’ used against the men in suing for compensation.”

Members may remember I pointed out that in 1904 the member made com-

plaints; that in 1905, in 1906, and again in 1907, he made charges against this inspector; and he was asked at the inquiry by his own lawyer this:—

“At the time you made that statement, you had no specific instances in your mind in which they had been used?—No, I had not, not to my own knowledge.

When you made the statement that incorrect reports had been sent down to the Minister had you any specific instance in front of you, or had you any reason for making that statement?—Yes, I had received a communication from the secretary of the Cue Miners' Union.

In your capacity as member of Parliament?—Yes.

Was it as the result of these communications and part of what you considered to be your duty to your constituents that you made this statement?—As a result of that communication and a communication I received in reference to a previous case.

Since you made this statement have you made it your business to find out if statements made to the inspector have been actually used in cases?—Yes, I have.

By Mr. Palfreyman: Do I understand you to say that it was purely on hearsay that you made this statement?—If you can call a communication from the union secretary—

Was that in writing?—Yes.

Could you produce the letter?—No; but I could produce in the minutes in the union books where the injured men complained to the secretary.

You mentioned the second letter?—That was a verbal communication.

The Commissioner: Is the man who made the verbal communication being called as a witness?

Mr. Tobin: I think that is one of the witnesses who is in the hospital.

Witness: The man who made a statement to me and gave a full explanation was a patient in the hospital at the time the statements were taken. He was ex-police constable Joyce. He came to me in Perth. He has since

died. He died in the Perth Hospital. I saw him there two or three hours before he died, and he repeated what he told me before.

By Mr. Palfreyman : When was it that you received this verbal communication ?—Some time in 1905.

Mr. Palfreyman : Mr. Commissioner, are you quite convinced as to the charges which are being made in this inquiry ?

Then the commissioner goes on to deal with what he considers were the charges that should have been made. That is mostly what I want to say in regard to that matter, and it just shows the hon. member's different statements when before the commission and those which he has made here to-night. The hon. member has pointed out several other errors in connection with this case and he wants members to believe that in connection with the files where a date had been placed on a file by a clerk, that the date had been placed there with a view of inflicting some injury upon him. The hon. member knows that when dates are pencilled in afterwards they have no connection at all with the accident and no bearing on the case, other than that the document was not dated at the time but that the memo. was placed there, from what I can see, when the member called.

Mr. Heitmann : The clerk swore on oath that the dates were there previously.

The MINISTER FOR MINES : I have not seen that. The error here is typed "1907" and of course I could not explain anything of that sort. One would require to read the evidence of the clerk first. I was trying to wade through that evidence when the hon. member was speaking. Very likely an accident of that sort would happen or probably the date has been put there afterwards. The hon. member admits fixing that date and "1907" has been placed on the document instead of "1905."

Mr. Bath : No one would date a document 1907 when it was 1905.

Mr. Taylor : Even the original was altered. It is necessary that some inquiry should be made into that. It was

the outcome of the hon. member's interview in the office some time previously.

The MINISTER FOR MINES : The hon. member said a great deal about the inspector trying to force words into the mouths of men after an accident had taken place, and the member tried to make members believe that the inspector would wantonly go out of his way to get a report which was advantageous to a company. As I have pointed out, it would be advantageous only to the insurance company and only in the case of an action for compensation. One could hardly assume that the inspector would go so far out of his way as has been described by the member in connection with a trivial accident. In dealing with the case of Stickland about which the hon. member had so much to say, here is Stickland's evidence which the inspector does not admit—there are always two sides to every question.

Mr. Heitmann : There are two witnesses.

The MINISTER : I will read both. Here is the evidence of the man, who says he is a miner employed at the Cuddingwarra mine ; he was employed there as platman at No. 4 level, and he met with an accident. He gives lengthy evidence as to how the accident occurred. He complains that Mr. Lander was not taking down his statement, admits he corrected it when objected to, says Mr. Lander said it was no use taking the case into court, the other three men being against him. He says Lander said he would get himself (witness) disliked and black-balled. He says the statement does not contain what it should have contained, the statement *re* weakness of timber being left out. He admits his signature to statement. His chief complaint is that there were omissions in his statement, but it was correct substantially barring the matter of the engine-driver hoisting. He admits he glanced over it and signed the statement. He admits his signature to the statement. His chief complaint is certain omissions from the statement, but he says it is correct substantially, barring the reference to the engine-

driver hoisting. That is what the man says. It was a case under the Mines Regulation Act. The inspector, according to Caddy's evidence and that of Stickland's, was prepared, if the member would stick to the statement as to the weakness of the timber, to bring a charge against the company for an offence under the Mines Regulation Act; but the man preferred to have these remarks withdrawn from his statement. There is the evidence given by the two persons.

Mr. Taylor: What does Caddy say farther on?

THE MINISTER: He admits that about being disliked and black-balled. He says the reason Stickland had for signing the statement was that it was correct. He says Mr. Lander said that the fact of the men previously discussing the question of the strength of the timber made it his duty to take the matter to the courts, but not for compensation for Stickland but a Mines Regulation case for neglect in not having the pent-house secure. The talk about proceedings had nothing to do with compensation. Apparently the conversation which the inspector had with Stickland was not on the question of getting a statement from him with a view of Stickland suing for compensation, but the inspector was making inquiries with a view to a prosecution under the Mines Regulation Act. But there is the evidence of three other men, and according to this evidence I notice that some of the men felt quite satisfied that the timber put in was strong enough. Probably the timber was struck by a huge stone and broken. We can never tell what happens in these cases. It is a matter I cannot discuss. The question is whether it can be considered a case fit for the court. When the conversation took place between Stickland and Caddy it was as to the strength of the timber, and the inspector probably advised him that it was unwise to make the statement because the evidence of the others was against him and it would get him disliked in the district.

Mr. Taylor: Do you think that was proper advice in the circumstances?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Perhaps it was not. The inspector evidently tried to get as near as he could to the clear facts of the case. The other men had made statements to the contrary, and the inspector was sitting with the injured man discussing the question. The main point is, the injured man willingly signed the statement he had made. If he had disagreed with it, all he had to do was to say, "You must include the fact that I said the timber was not safe, and that its weakness was the cause of the accident."

Mr. Taylor: But the man may have been incapable at the time.

THE MINISTER: But Caddy admits this was a trivial accident; and the inspector and Caddy were at Caddy's home, probably having a glass of whisky together, when the discussion took place. It seems peculiar that Stickland made no complaint until Mr. Heitmann called on him a few weeks prior to this inquiry. I do not purpose going through all the evidence. Some of it shows that the hon. member and his friends who were with him on the platform at the public meeting are quite satisfied that he did not use the words reported by the newspaper. The newspaper report, containing the serious charges said to have been made by the hon. member, has not a word of truth in it, according to the evidence which the hon. member gave to the commissioner. The commissioner, therefore, had to boil down the hon. member's statements as follows:—

- "(a) That in consequence of the inspector having taken statements from men who were not in a fit state to give them, incorrect reports of accidents had been sent to the Minister.
- (b) That the inspector had put words into the mouths of men who had been injured.
- (c) That the incorrect statements were capable of being used against me who were suing for compensation."

The commissioner in his summing up states in regard to charge (a)—

"I do not consider that the evidence shows that any incorrect statements were taken or sent to the Minister as

a result of men being unfit to give them."

The commissioner was in a position to deal with evidence which he must have studied and sifted. I think, therefore, we can be satisfied as to that point.

Mr. Bath : You cannot get away from the question of the knocker-line, in the case of the accident to Grant. The knocker-line was in a different compartment from the bucket.

The MINISTER : I am not dealing with Grant's case. The file I perused had not the evidence taken in Perth. As to paragraph (b), that the inspector put words into the mouths of men injured, the commissioner says :—

"There is nothing to support it, except that the inspector seems to have at times advised men that it was useless to give as part of their statements opinions at variance with the statements of their fellow-workers. In my opinion, though no harm seems to have resulted in any way, this advice should not be given."

With that I quite agree. Statements made to the inspector may have to be cut down considerably, for members know how some witnesses ramble "all over the shop."

Mr. Bath : Miners are usually men of few words.

The MINISTER : I do not know. If so, they are not like their representatives here. I quite agree it is no part of the inspector's duty to advise injured men what sort of evidence they should give. In this case the inspector gave advice, but I am quite satisfied he has never done more than give generous advice to injured people.

Mr. Bath : That was one of the complaints against him at Kalgoorlie.

The MINISTER : The hon. member should not say that ; because there is no official complaint, nor was any complaint against that inspector made in a newspaper during the whole time he was there.

Mr. Taylor : The Minister knows that is not true.

The MINISTER : I can go back through the whole of the files relating to that officer while he was in Kalgoor-

lie ; and I feel sure there was never a single charge made against him.

Mr. Taylor : Why was he removed ?

The MINISTER : I was the Minister who removed him ; and I thought—and members have often said the same thing here—it was wise to change the inspectors, so that if they made too many friends in one district they should be transferred to another. And probably in the near future we shall have to make another change of inspectors.

Mr. Johnson : Does the Minister say that the members representing the Kalgoorlie district did not complain of this officer's administration ?

The MINISTER : I do not think the files show any complaints.

Mr. Taylor : The records of Parliament do.

The MINISTER : No.

Mr. Johnson : Mr. Reside and I repeatedly complained to the Minister officially about the administration of that inspector.

The MINISTER : I will look up the files. I am sure the hon member is wrong.

Mr. Johnson : I remember it too well. I remember different complaints.

The MINISTER : The hon. member's charges will, I think, be found to have been made in the lobbies and not in the office.

Mr. Johnson : They were made officially too.

The MINISTER : I think the hon. member is mistaken. Anyhow, I will bring here the private file for members to examine. The commissioner says :—

"In my opinion, though no harm seems to have resulted in any way, this advice should not be given, but men should be allowed to express their opinions in any form they choose."

He is quite right there, in saying the inspector should have taken down anything, no matter what, said by the injured man. The commissioner considers that the inspector sometimes advised these men. For instance, in Stickland's case he advised Stickland that it would be unwise to make a certain statement. It must be remembered, however, that if the patient had insisted on his com-

plaint appearing in his statement, it would have had to appear; and during the whole of my term of office I have never received from any man a complaint that an inspector had ever refused to take down the exact statement made. Of course members will recollect that an injured man may make a statement, and subsequently, if he sues for compensation, may find that the statement is a rather awkward piece of evidence against himself in court; and there may have been a little of that in the complaints made by the member for Cue. As to charge (c), that the incorrect statements were capable of being used against men who were suing for compensation, the commissioner says:—

“It naturally follows that, as no incorrect statements have been given, none could be used. Though no concrete charge was made on the subject, it was also suggested in the course of the inquiry that the presence of employees or their representatives while statements were being made by injured men had an adverse influence in some way, the nature of which was not exactly defined. There were two instances of such persons being present, but there is nothing to show that their presence had any influence whatever. It would be advisable, however, in view of the extraordinarily suspicious temperament of some miners, that more care should be taken to avoid this. In conclusion, I find that Mr. Lander has been guilty of no wilful maladministration whatever, nor of anything worse than slight errors of judgment, which have had no prejudicial effect upon the miners concerned.”

The commissioner thinks it will be wise that neither the employer nor any person connected with him shall be present when statements are being made by injured men: and members will recollect that in our last amendment of the Mines Regulation Act we inserted a special clause to the effect that no persons other than the inspector and his clerk should be present with the injured man. But the events now under notice occurred prior to the passing of that clause. The presence of strangers was no violation of

the Mines Regulation Act. In one instance Mr. Heydon appeared at the hospital; he was not actually present at the interview. He was not there with the knowledge of the inspector.

Mr. Heitmann: Read the inspector's evidence.

The MINISTER: I may have misread it. Mr. Heydon went there to see how the injured man was getting on. But all these events occurred prior to the passing of the amending Act. To sum up; so far as appears to me, the inspector has on one or two occasions apparently advised men as to the statements they should make. He may have acted unwisely, but that he would do anything else, that he had the slightest desire to act contrary to the interests of the injured men—well, I think I can ask members not to believe that for a moment. Members must look for a motive. A workman may be stricken down and probably injured for life. Surely, if an inspector has one spark of pity in his composition, he will try at that moment to do the best he can for the victim.

Mr. Taylor: That is why this inquiry was asked for.

The MINISTER: But are we to assume that the inspector would for the sake of some insurance company purposely try to injure the workman? The inspector has no right, in the position he occupies, to do any wrong to the employer or the insurance company; but on the other hand, if when taking the statement he had an opportunity for any display of sympathy, I am satisfied that he, like everyone of us here, would desire to assist the person injured. I do not like saying it, but I do think that the hon. member (Mr. Heitmann) has been somewhat biased against this inspector. Year after year the hon. member has made these statements. I do not like saying this; but if we go through the evidence taken by the commissioner—I have not been able to read the lot—I think we can come to no other conclusion than that the hon. member has allowed his tongue to carry him away to some extent.

Mr. Taylor: That is hardly a fair statement in face of the evidence.

The MINISTER: The hon. member has not, I presume, read the whole of the evidence.

Mr. Taylor: The hon. member (Mr. Heitmann) quoted the evidence.

The MINISTER: If the hon. member is right, then we must find the motive by which the inspector was actuated.

Mr. Taylor: Because you cannot find a motive you are not justified in making that statement against the hon. member.

The MINISTER: My statement was that on the public platform the hon. member let his tongue run away with him, and made somewhat wild statements. Even the member interjecting is sometimes guilty of that. I must ask the House to reject this motion. Having due regard for the position Mr. Lander holds, I should prefer the hon. member to withdraw the motion. I think he has fully ventilated his case. I feel that we ought to show that we have unbounded faith not only in the innocence but in the integrity and the administrative capacity of Mr. Lander; and I think we ought to go farther by expressing ourselves as satisfied that no human being, let alone one in the position of Mr. Lander, would be so callous as to go specially out of his way for the purpose of doing him an injury at a time when he was suffering severely from the result of an accident. The discussion is not a pleasant one, and I hope the hon. member will withdraw the motion.

Mr. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): Owing to the hon. member having had the reports for some time, and as I have been unable to read through the evidence, I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

I desire to read the evidence owing to the fact that the portion of it which the hon. member has quoted is sufficient to make it necessary to my mind as a mining member, to go through it all.

Motion put, and passed on the voices. Division called for.

Mr. Holman: On a point of order, I contend there was only one "no," and a division cannot be called for.

Mr. Speaker: There was more than one "no."

Mr. Layman: I called "no," as well as the member for Canning.

Mr. Bath: Before hon. members oppose an adjournment, I would like them to give due consideration to what they are opposing. I stated that I had no time to go through the evidence.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member cannot address the House, as a division has been called for.

Mr. Bath: I would appeal to the Minister to allow an adjournment.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is out of order in discussing the matter.

Division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	14
Noes	20

Majority against .. 6

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Angwin	Mr. H. Brown
Mr. Barnett	Mr. Butcher
Mr. Bath	Mr. Cowcher
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Davies
Mr. T. L. Brown	Mr. Draper
Mr. Holman	Mr. Eddy
Mr. Horan	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Harlwick
Mr. Smith	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Taylor	Mr. Layman
Mr. Underwood	Mr. Male
Mr. Walker	Mr. Monger
Mr. Heitmann (Teller).	Mr. N. J. Moore
	Mr. Price
	Mr. Stone
	Mr. Vervard
	Mr. A. J. Wilson
	Mr. F. Wilson
	Mr. Gordon (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. JOHNSON: On a point of explanation, I desire to say I regret that the adjournment was refused. I would point out that I have tried to get the evidence, in order to go into the case, but have been unable to do so owing to the fact that the hon. member for Cue has been preparing his case, and consequently I have been unable to see the papers. It will now be necessary for one of us to read the whole of the evidence so that the others will be able to know what evidence was given. I hope Mr. Speaker, that you will therefore give every latitude to that member in reading the evidence.

The Treasurer: Have not the papers been on the table for a fortnight?

Mr. Johnson: Yes; but we have not been able to see them, and this is only a

most miserable attempt to burk discussion.

Debate continued.

Mr. BATH: The error made by members of the House in refusing the reasonable request for an adjournment was exemplified by the attitude taken by the Minister for Mines, who in the course of his speech to the motion confessed that he had not made full acquaintance with the papers or the evidence which was taken by the Royal Commission. The want of acquaintance with the papers and with the evidence was proved by the fact that in attempting to reply to the member for Cue the Minister did not touch on one of the points which that member made in his speech. It was only natural to expect that the Minister for Mines would have dealt with the statements brought forward. It was unsatisfactory and absolutely useless as far as the House was concerned for the Minister for Mines to go into heroics and try to turn ridicule on the member for Cue in order to avoid answering the charges made by that member. He (Mr. Bath) had not had an opportunity of going through the files, because only last night when desirous of seeing the papers the member for Cue had them preparing matter for his speech. The matters brought forward by the member for Cue were sufficiently serious to warrant investigation by every member, especially those representing mining districts. The position in regard to the case was that long before the member for Cue ever made a statement on the public platform or in the House the workers in the Cue district became dissatisfied with the work of the inspector.

The Minister for Mines: The papers had been on the table since the 6th August.

Mr. BATH: The workers in the Cue district had complained against the administration of this particular inspector; and it was owing to no personal objection or bias on the part of the member for Cue, but because of the objections raised by his constituents that this action was taken in the House and on the public platform. The electors of Cue were not

alone in their objection to his maladministration, because they were objecting in common with the miners on the Eastern Goldfields, where this officer had previously been employed. And it was because of their objections, backed up by representations by members for the Eastern Goldfields, that the Minister for Mines removed the inspector from the Kalgoorlie district to the Cue district, which practically amounted, so far as the importance of the matter was concerned, to a reduction of his position. In the first place we had it stated by the member for Cue that reports were submitted by the inspector of mines to the Mines Department which were not in consonance with fact. The hon. member not only made that statement but had amply supported it by evidence adduced before the inquiry. As to the accident to H. Grant, the report made by the inspector of mines was as follows. (Report read.) Here the inspector of mines, with plenty of time at his disposal, and accustomed for years to make out reports and send them down to the Mines Department, stated deliberately that the man reached for the knocker line which was in the corner of the shaft and easily got at, when the whole of the evidence on the file went to show that the knocker line was not in that compartment at all but in the next compartment, five or six feet away. The man reached for the knocker line, standing on the edge of the bucket, and something falling down the shaft he tried to avoid it and fell off the bucket. Yet the inspector said the knocker line was in the corner of the shaft and within easy reach of the man. If that was not an incorrect statement, then what would members characterise as a correct statement? If one wished to look for the best motive one might assume that the inspector was suffering from temporary aberration at the time. That was one case that the member for Cue proved up to the hilt; but the Minister carefully avoided referring to the facts, and excused himself by saying that he had not read the evidence, and he asked the House to pronounce a verdict on the matter when he himself had not read the evidence and could not

refute the member's statements. In Stickland's case the inspector reported that the stone from one of the last round of holes fired so weakened the timber of the penthouse that it fell to the bottom of the shaft, taking Stickland with it. [Extract read, describing the accident.] Here we found the inspector solicitous after the accident to see that the new penthouse was properly constructed; whereas if he had properly administered the Act he would have made inspections at regular intervals to prevent accidents. Yet after the accident the inspector recommended that no farther notice be taken of the matter. That one paragraph of his report proved his unfitness for his position. [Evidence of shift boss read.] The shift boss said in his examination that after firing he could not find the defect; hence the penthouse collapsed.

As to Procedure on Adjournment.

Mr. Holman: On a point of explanation, I would ask the Premier if he would allow the Leader of the Opposition to resume his speech at any time, in the event of the debate being adjourned now.

The Treasurer: He could easily do it on an amendment.

Mr. Holman: It is most unfair to compel the Leader of the Opposition to read all through the evidence while he is making his speech.

Mr. Bath: Will the fact of my having made portion of my speech now prevent me from moving an amendment?

The Premier: It is a question Mr. Speaker might decide whether, if the debate were adjourned now, the Leader of the Opposition would be able to continue by means of speaking to an amendment?

Mr. Holman: The Leader of the Opposition might be prevented from speaking to the general question. There is a precedent for the course I propose, as Mr. Hopkins, when a member of the House, was speaking one evening and resumed his seat and was allowed to continue his speech on the following day.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Brown Hill could be allowed to continue his speech by leave of the House, but the

point is not provided for in the Standing Orders.

Mr. Holman: Mr. Hopkins was allowed to continue his speech by leave of the House.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the wish of the House that the hon. member be heard at a later date?

The Premier: In the event of the hon. member being allowed to resume, will he have to continue his speech immediately the House meets to-morrow?

Mr. Speaker: The question will come on in the ordinary way.

Mr. Walker: A member is allowed to resume his speech every day after the tea adjournment if he has not concluded before the adjournment.

The Premier: What I was wondering was whether it will be necessary, if the debate is adjourned now, for the hon. member to resume his speech immediately proceedings are started to-morrow.

Mr. Speaker: If it is intended to adjourn the debate, I can put the question as to whether leave shall be given to the hon. member to continue. If the House gives him leave to continue his speech, then he will do so when the motion next appears on the Notice Paper in the ordinary course.

Mr. Bath: So far as I am concerned, it is not so much a question on my part of wanting to resume the debate. If I had secured the adjournment the points I would have put before the House would not have occupied more than 20 minutes or half an hour. All I wanted was an opportunity to go through the file and to refer to the points which I had taken from the speech of the member for Cue.

Question (as to whether the House would grant leave to the hon. member to resume) put and passed.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will be allowed to resume his speech when next the motion as it appears on the Notice Paper is reached.

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

RETURN — GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY, MUNDARING WEIR.

On motion by *Mr. Butcher*, ordered—That there be laid on the table of the House a return showing—1, Date that the water first flowed over the Mundaring Weir this winter. 2, Total number of millions of gallons of water estimated to have passed the weir this season to date of return. 3, Estimated flow per 24 hours for each day included in return.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10.38 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 5th September, 1907.

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

Prayers.

QUESTION—PORT HEDLAND, STEAMER AGROUND.

Mr. BUTCHER (without notice) asked the Premier: Has his attention been drawn to a paragraph appearing in to-day's *Morning Herald* as follows:—

Roebourne v. Port Hedland.—We received yesterday following telegram from *Mr. Teesdale*, Roebourne: "Previously denied by agents 'Bullarra' ever neaped Hedland. Again neaped since Monday; got off this morning, but on bank again. Likely to be a nice port for railway starting."

The **PREMIER** replied: No.

QUESTION—MEAT SUPPLIES, TENDERS FOR GERALDTON.

Mr. T. L. BROWN asked the Premier: 1, Why was no tender accepted by the Tender Board for meat supplies for the hospital, gaol, and old men's home at Geraldton? 2, On whose recommendation was it resolved to purchase said supplies in open market, and why? 3, What is the price being paid for meat at the present time, and what is the saving effected by comparison with tenders sent in and not accepted?

The **PREMIER** replied: 1, Owing to a complaint from the Superintendent of Public Charities that the contractors for 1906-7 had carried out their contract in an unsatisfactory manner. 2, In view of this complaint the Tender Board decided that it was advisable that departments should obtain their supplies in the open market. 3, Corned beef, 5¼d. per lb.; Beef with bone, 6d.; without bone, 7d.; Mutton, 6d. lb. Saving effected by non-acceptance of tenders, ¼d. per lb.

QUESTION—ALL-NIGHT SITTINGS, AS TO BEDDING.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Premier: 1, Were the blankets and other night conveniences recently placed within the precincts of the House provided by private members? 2, If not, will they be available for members sitting on both sides of the House? 3, If provided by private members, is storage charge being levied? 4, If not, will the Government arrange for free storage for beds etc. owned by members sitting in Opposition?

The **PREMIER** replied: 1, The information can doubtless be obtained from the House Committee. 2, 3, 4, The matter has nothing to do with the Government.

QUESTION—MINING ACCIDENT, FINGAL, AS TO SUNDAY WORK.

Mr. HEITMANN asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Has his attention been drawn to the papers laid on the table relating to the inquiry into the death of the miner *Zanardina*, who was killed in