

first served by a railway. I thought the Albany-Denmark Railway, which is opening up considerable settlement and which will be to the people at Denmark Inlet and to thousands at Albany a great benefit, would have been taken over. The Government have already bought the line, and the consent of Parliament is the only thing wanting. Therefore a Bill with that object could well have been brought into the House before this Bill. I have no reason to doubt the intentions of the Government in regard to this matter, but when my constituents are clamouring I am not in a position at this moment to say what my duty would be in reference to the Port Hedland-Marble Bar Railway if their requests were neglected. I am not going to do as was done last session, when several Bills were bunched together and the strongest opposition was made to the passing of one Bill in preference to another. I am on this matter going to trust the Government and allow them to confirm the compact given to the province I represent by securing the sanction of Parliament at an early date for the purchase of the Denmark Railway, then we would know where we are in regard to that matter. I cannot say I have pleasure in supporting a speculative railway in these times when economies are being effected, and when we have such difficulties ahead; but it is in these times that we need courage, and the Government are perhaps doing a bold and good thing in pushing forward a public work like this. It is a big thing and a momentous thing in the interests of Western Australia. If this one line fails it will be another white elephant to add to the already numerous ones we have in this State.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 8.30 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 28th August, 1907.

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

Prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: Purchase of Motor Launches by Government.

QUESTION — ENGINEER'S QUARTERS, GERALDTON.

Mr. T. L. BROWN asked the Minister for Railways: 1. On whose recommendation has the resident engineer's office and adjoining cottage been made into a residence for the resident engineer at Geraldton? 2. What has been the cost of same, and what amount of rent will the department draw for same? 3. What has been the cost of alteration to cottage fitted up for foreman of way and works in lieu of above cottage taken over for resident engineer, and what rent will the department draw for same? 4. Is it a fact that application has been made for the lease of offices now occupied by Lands Department, also the resident magistrate's room, for the use of the resident engineer? 5. If so, what will be the amount of rent paid for same, and cost of fitting up same, including telephone?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1. On the recommendation of the Chief Engineer of Existing Lines, based on the representations of the Resident Engineer. 2. (a) Cost of altera-

tions in connection with conversion into residence to 21st August, 1907, £36 14s. 9d.; estimate to complete, £13 7s. 8d.; total, £50 2s. 5d. (b.) 22s. 6d. per week. 3, (a) Cost of alterations and additions, £25 8s. 6d. (b.) 10s. per week. 4, Yes. 5, (a) Negotiations not yet completed. (b.) Estimated at £12 5s.

QUESTION—MINT OUTPUT AND PROFIT.

Mr. H. BROWN asked the Premier :

1. Has his attention been drawn to the working results of the Perth Mint during 1906 as detailed in the *Morning Herald* of 27th August ? 2. What has been the gain on Mint operations paid to the Treasury during the last three years ? 3. What proportion of the raw gold produced in the State during these three years was received and dealt with by the Perth Mint ? 4. What increased annual gain to the Treasury might be expected, based on the results of the last three years, if all the raw bullion produced in this State was given the Mint for treatment ? 5. Will the Government take into immediate consideration the measures necessary to secure to the Perth Mint the whole of the raw bullion output of this State ?

The PREMIER replied : 1. Yes. 2. Gain on Mint operations paid to Treasury :—

1904	..	..	£16,738	6	11
1905	..	..	12,769	2	7
1906	..	..	10,071	4	2

£39,578 13 8

3. Proportion of raw gold dealt with at the Perth Mint :—

1904	..	..	59 per cent.
1905	..	..	66 per cent.
1906	..	..	70 per cent.

4. If all the raw gold produced were sent to the Mint the revenue would be increased by about £5,000 a year. 5. The matter is under consideration.

QUESTION—LICENSING PROSECUTION, GERALDTON.

Mr. T. L. BROWN asked the Attorney General : 1. Has the recent pro-

secution at Geraldton under the Licensing Act, in which Mr. Elbert was fined heavily, been brought under the Minister's notice ? 2. If so, is it the intention to make any refund of such fines, or make any farther inquiries into the said prosecution ? 3. Is he aware that since the case was dealt with Inspector Lee has visited the hotels at Geraldton, and while visiting two of said houses he took a constable with him, and dismissed the constable before visiting the other ? 4. If not, will he have inquiries made as to who asked for or who ordered the constable to go with the inspector on his visit to the said hotels, and why he was required ?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied : 1, No. 2, Answered by one. 3, Yes. 4, It is not necessary to make inquiry. The constable accompanied the inspector to secure corroborative evidence.

QUESTION—EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, MARRIED WOMEN EMPLOYED.

Mr. BATH asked the Minister for Education : 1, Is he aware that there are a number of married women, with husbands holding good positions, in the employ of the Education Department ? 2, Does the employment of such married women militate against the promotion of other teachers not similarly situated ? 3, If so, will the Minister cause inquiries to be made into the matter ?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied : 1, I am not aware that such is the case. There are married women in the service of the Department—(a) in charge of small schools ; (b) as relieving teachers engaged from week to week ; (c) and a few of the older teachers who have been many years in the service, and retain the positions they formerly held. 2, No. 3, Answered by Nos. 1 and 2.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Agriculture : 1, When do vacancies for officers in the Agricultural Department, including the Agricultural Bank, occur ?

2, Are the vacancies made known by public advertisement? If not, why not? 3, Did all applicants for any office, casual or otherwise, in the department, submit their applications for any office applied for to the Public Service Commissioner? 4, Has any officer been appointed without having his application placed before the Public Service Commissioner? 5, If so, do such officer or officers hold important positions in the department, and what was the reason the appointment was not made by the Public Service Commissioner?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, Vacancies are submitted to the Public Service Commissioner, who directs the manner, under the Regulations, in which they shall be filled. They are advertised by the Public Service Commissioner when necessary. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, Yes. With the exception of applicants for casual employment, who are not deemed to be public servants under the Act. 4, No. 5, *Vide* No. 4.

QUESTION—PHOSPHATES PROSPECTING, HOW ASSISTED.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Agriculture: Has he any intention of assisting financially, by Government grant or subsidy, or in any other manner out of public funds, any company or individuals who are now or have previously been engaged in prospecting for "phosphates" in the Recherche Archipelago or other islands? If so, who are the company or individuals, and on what grounds are they being assisted and to what amount?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, Yes. 2 (a) The Australian Phosphates Co., Ltd.; (b) To prospect for rock phosphates known to exist; (c) An advance to the extent of £500 on the basis of £ for £ paid by the Company as the work of prospecting progresses.

QUESTION—LAND BOARD DECISIONS.

Mr. H. BROWN, for Mr. Hardwick, asked the Minister for Lands: On what principle do the local Land Board give

their decision between contending applicants for land?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: As no specific instance is given, I can answer only generally. On the principle of giving the land to the applicant who from the evidence appears most eligible, or to have the strongest claim to it.

MOTION—FACTORIES AND EARLY CLOSING INSPECTIONS, RETURN.

On motion by Mr. Troy, ordered: That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing—1, The number of factory and early closing inspections made by Inspectors Bradshaw and Fleming since 31st December, 1905. 2, The names of Health Officers or Local Board of Health Officers who have been appointed Inspectors under the Factories and Early Closing Acts. 3, The total number of inspections made by such officers since their appointment, together with the number of reports submitted to the Chief Inspector. 4, The amount of overtime worked by officers in the Department since its establishment or for the past twelve months. 5, A list of registered and unregistered factories in the State, with the date of the last visit of an Inspector. 6, An approximate statement showing the number of scheduled and unscheduled shops coming under the purview of Inspectors.

PAPERS—POLICE SERGEANT HOULAHAN.

Mr. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill), who had moved for the production of papers concerning the services of Police Sergeant Houlahan in the police force, said that as the Premier had stated the House would have an opportunity of seeing the papers, he did not intend to deal farther with this motion now, but would inspect the papers before taking action.

RETURN—LOCOMOTIVES, SALE AND COST.

Mr. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill) moved—

That there be laid upon the table of the House a Return showing—1. The num-

ber of locomotives sold by the Government from 1900 to the present date, with the name of the purchaser, and the price paid in each case. 2. Whether all the locomotives thus disposed of have been paid for. 3. The cost of repairing each locomotive, prior to purchase, and by whom borne. 4. The first cost of each locomotive to the Department.

He said the Minister for Mines had stated he was willing to supply this return, so discussion was unnecessary.

Question put and passed.

The Minister for Mines laid on the table the papers asked for in the return.

MOTION—STATE BATTERY, WILUNA.

Mr. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison) moved—

That all papers in connection with the Wiluna State Battery be placed on the table of the House.

He had been induced to present the motion owing to the fact that there had been a number of complaints in connection with the working of the battery at Wiluna. These complaints had been forwarded to the department, but up to the present time he had received no reply to the letters he had written, although some time ago the Minister promised he would have certain information supplied to him. He desired to see the papers in order to ascertain what had been done with the complaints. [*Minister for Mines: How far back were the details required for?*] The information he desired applied to the last two years. The dissatisfaction at the management of the battery was so acute that a large number of men would not crush there under the present conditions and with the present manager. Grave disabilities were placed on the men in that part of the State owing to the unsatisfactory treatment of cyanide sands and slimes. In a great many instances at Wiluna fifty per cent. of the gold went away in the sands and slimes and, in his opinion, the Government should erect a cyanide plant at the battery. There was a plant there owned by a private individual, but he also had given great dissatisfaction. Complaints had been made

that the manager of the battery and the owner of the cyanide plant had been working in conjunction with one another. Up to the present time, however, those complaints had not been substantiated. Some time ago a petition setting forth the complaints of the prospectors and signed by almost every worker in that part of the State was sent down to the Minister. Although that was some months ago he had not yet received an acknowledgment of the receipt of the petition, nor any information as to how the matter was being dealt with. Wiluna was one of the farthest out goldfields of the State, and in such circumstances complaints coming from that quarter should receive more, and not less, favourable consideration than those from persons living nearer to the metropolis who were better circumstanced generally. At Wiluna the workers laboured under great disabilities and he hoped the department would give them better appliances for the treatment of the sands and slimes. He admitted that no matter what kind of manager was put in charge of a battery someone was sure to growl, but he had never before heard of a case where everyone in the district complained of the manager. It was a matter for regret that where complaints had been made in the past against the manager, the official appointed to make inquiries had gone first of all to the battery manager instead of to the prospectors, and had refused to adopt the point of view of the latter. When numerous complaints were received as to a battery, the department should send an officer unknown to the battery manager to make inquiries concerning the whole affair. He did not make any charge against the manager in question, and all he knew definitely was that grave dissatisfaction existed. He wanted to see what he could do to remedy the position. [*Minister for Mines: Remove some of the prospectors.*] It seemed to him probable that the acts of the Minister would result in many of the prospectors having to leave the district, and possibly leave the State. About 40 of these men signed a petition, and certainly he would much rather remove the one man against whom such objection was taken, than remove the

40 prospectors who were doing good work in that far distant part of the fields. Owing to the action of the Minister in failing to look after the department as he should, such difficulties had been placed in the way of the prospectors that they could no longer remain there. He contended that when an important matter was forwarded to any department, it was a courtesy due to the member for the district that he should receive a reply and obtain information as to what had been done with regard to the complaints lodged, instead of being allowed to remain in ignorance as to what was being done. Unless this conduct on the part of the Ministers and departments were altered there was sure to be far more acrimonious discussion in the House than there should be. Ministers should try to show due respect to the members for the districts.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory) : There was no objection to the papers asked for being laid on the table of the House. In reply to the remarks made by the hon. member he would refer briefly to the complaint made concerning the battery which was situated many miles distant from the railway system of the State. There had been many complaints, some of which were couched in respectful terms and others in terms not so respectful. Serious complaints had been made against the manager of the battery, and on two, if not three, distinct occasions he had caused inquiries to be made by members of the staff in whom he had every confidence. Mr. Howe, inspector of batteries, had proceeded to Wiluna, and had made investigations in regard to the complaints made by certain prospectors, and since then another officer had made inquiries into practically the same matter. In every instance in which inquiry had been made the manager had been exonerated, and it was therefore his duty, seeing that the manager was a man in whom the department had confidence, and there having been reports made by two different officers of the department, to arrive at the conclusion that the manager was carrying out his duties in a proper manner. There were occasions when it was ascertained that in

certain districts there existed small cliques which were endeavouring to obtain control of the Government plant, and the impression he had formed with regard to the present case was that a certain section desired to get greater power in connection with the running of the Wiluna plant than was allowed by the regulations, and that this was causing the trouble. If the hon. member desired to see the reports submitted by the departmental officials, he could certainly have them. He did not know that discourtesy had been shown by the department in the direction of not answering communications, but surely the hon. member did not expect that he (the Minister) could sit down and write those replies himself. He would never have time to do that sort of thing. One would think that when a member required a special report which had been made concerning a matter affecting his district, he would ring up the department and ask for a copy. If the hon. member had done that in the present case he would have received copies of the reports. The department were only too pleased always to give a member for the district the fullest information on matters of that description, and if the member for Murchison asked for reports, he could have seen them and decided whether to place full reliance on the complaints which had been made or uphold the management of the battery. It was quite possible that had the member seen the reports he would have felt that in the present instance the prospectors of the district were to blame. He would only be too pleased to place the papers on the Table of the House. Whether or not it was owing to the action of a certain section of the community of Wiluna he did not know, but the manager of the battery had recently resigned from the position and it rather looked as if this result was brought about by the action taken. It had been his intention to make alterations so far as the various managers were concerned, and to shift them about from district to district, as he thought it unwise to allow a man to remain in one district for a great length of time. It had been proposed to make certain alterations at Wiluna. A new manager

would in the ordinary course have gone up there, but when the complaint was lodged by a certain section of the local community and the manager had been exonerated by the official report, he had thought it would reflect on that officer if they moved him from Wiluna at that time. However, the officer had now resigned, and a new man would have to be sent up in his place. There was no objection to placing the papers on the table; and though it might not have been the intention of the mover to reflect in any sense on the manager of the mine, it was to be hoped that any such impression would now be removed, after what he (the Minister) had said. So far as was shown by the reports, the manager had discharged his duties faithfully. The papers would be laid on the table as speedily as possible.

Mr. HOLMAN (in reply as mover): It had not been his intention to reflect on the manager, who at any rate during his first year's service at Wiluna did good work, and it was not until the cyanide plant was let to a private individual that cause for complaint arose. His desire was merely to point a warning against the letting of cyanide plants to private individuals, this practice being often a cause of serious complaint in connection with State batteries. The manager having now resigned his position, it was not necessary to follow the subject so far as he might otherwise have done. The manager had during part of the time shown he was a good workman and did his work well; but towards the end of his term the leaseholders and prospectors were, without exception, disappointed at the manner in which his duties were performed. As for the respectability of the complaints made, he had himself perused the complaints and investigated them on the spot, therefore he was sorry to hear the Minister question their respectability. None that had come through him were questionable in that respect. Those men were in the habit of speaking pretty plainly and strongly when they had occasion to make complaint. On one occasion he was asked by the leaseholders to meet them in order that this matter might be placed

before him. He met the leaseholders as desired, and afterwards received a most insulting letter from the manager of the State battery, complaining that the meeting had been held without his having been advised. To that letter he sent a suitable reply, as in his opinion it was not within the province of a State battery manager to dictate to the member for the district as to when and where he was to meet his constituents. That was the only occasion on which he had personal reason to complain of the manager, and then he was able to take his own part. He was pleased that the Minister agreed to place the papers on the table, and hoped the result of the motion would be that in the future more favourable treatment would be meted out to the leaseholders and prospectors, and that the people of that district would be supplied with cyaniding facilities which should have been given them years ago.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR WORKSHOPS.

As to Tenders for Works.

Mr. H. BROWN (Perth) moved—

That there be laid upon the Table of the House a return furnishing an account of all engineering and ironfounding work carried out by the Fremantle Harbour Works for departments other than their own for a period of two months from 1st May, 1907, and the price charged for such work; also stating whether the local engineering firms had an opportunity of quoting for same, and if so, when.

The reason for the motion was that serious complaint had been made by the Chamber of Manufactures as to the manner of calling for tenders for this class of work. The debate in this House last evening on the industries of the State bore on this subject in this way, that until within a few months ago the practice was to obtain quotations from engineering firms in Perth, he thought also in Fremantle, for engineering work required by the Public Works Department. This practice had latterly ceased, to the extent that where formerly two

or three inquiries per day were made as to quotations for work, such inquiries now were not more than one in a fortnight. The State workshops at Fremantle now did practically all the iron-foundry work for the Public Works Department; and now when times were dull, those persons who had put considerable sums of money into the engineering business complained that they were debarred from obtaining a share of this branch of Government work, which they were anxious to secure so as to obtain some return on their capital outlay.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Price) could not exactly understand the intention of the mover; but if the papers were placed on the table, members would be able to satisfy themselves that quotations were asked for in regard to all important work carried out in the public workshops at Fremantle. The motion called for "a return furnishing an account of all engineering and iron-founding work carried out by the Fremantle Harbour Works for departments other than their own for a period of two months." The Fremantle workshops formed portion of the Public Works Department; and was he to understand that the mover required a return showing all the work done in those workshops for departments other than the Public Works Department?

Mr. H. Brown: All departments other than the Harbour Works.

The MINISTER: The workshops did not belong to the Harbour Works. In the present form of the motion it would be most difficult to prepare the return, inasmuch as he failed to understand what departments were intended other than the Fremantle Harbour Works. If the mover would clearly state what was desired, he (the Minister) would gladly have the papers laid on the table. He had officially dealt with documents suggesting that quotations be obtained for several items, and as he had approved the recommendations it would be seen that opportunity was thus given to private firms and individuals to secure some of the work. He desired, however, to add that in connection with some

of the work done in the workshops, quotations might not have been obtained, the urgency of the work not permitting of quotations being called for. If the papers were made available the mover would find that his supposition scarcely covered the methods adopted in the department in this matter. Would the mover indicate clearly the nature of the return desired?

Mr. H. BROWN (in reply as mover): After the Minister's explanation, it was apparent that any motion introduced by him was always misunderstood by Ministers, and that every such motion would be opposed.

The Minister for Works: The Government were not opposing the motion.

Mr. H. BROWN: In the circumstances, he asked permission to withdraw the motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

MOTION—MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, CONDITIONS IN WEST AUSTRALIA.

To Inquire by Select Committee.

Mr. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco) moved—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the condition of Western Australian Manufacturing Industries, with a view to ascertain—

(1.) *The condition of existing industries and the possibility of assisting their expansion.*

(2.) *The possibility of establishing new industries.*

(3.) *The methods by which the foregoing objects can be achieved.*

(4.) *The cause of any recent decline which may have occurred in existing industries.*

(5.) *The reason why the number and importance of our industrial establishments have not grown proportionately with the increase of our population.*

He said: In recommending this inquiry to the consideration of the House, I do not desire to initiate what might be a long and elaborate discussion on the question of protection *versus* free-trade, or the State's relationship to the Common-

wealth ; both of which subjects, however, must more or less bear on any inquiry of this nature. I take it for granted that every member will admit the desirability of as far as possible establishing industries to provide local work, and by doing so produce what may be required for local consumption. It has been repeatedly asserted that Western Australia is without manufactories. It was asserted no longer ago than last night, and unfortunately there is a large degree of truth in the statement that Western Australia has comparatively few manufacturing establishments. There is therefore urgent necessity for devising, if possible, some method of establishing such industries as we reasonably expect to be found in our midst, and of strengthening those already established. It has been shown in this House during the present session that some of the existing industries are languishing, and various reasons have been assigned for that fact. I do not desire on this occasion to offer any theory. In urging this inquiry, my desire is to impress on members the desirability of getting away from abstract theories on this important matter and getting down to the bedrock of fact, because it is only by getting down to the bedrock of admitted fact that we can hope to find any remedy for existing evils or any means of strengthening an existing good. I take it that all of us are federal in spirit and desirous of assisting Australian industries in their establishment, their encouragement, and their expansion ; and that we are desirous, so far as the object can be achieved, of establishing, encouraging, and expanding those industries in Western Australia. We recognise, and in my opinion we should recognise, that our first duty to the Commonwealth is to make our own State as prosperous, as thriving, and as populous a State as possible. The whole continent cannot be prosperous, if industries exist only on one side of it ; the nation cannot become great, if one-third of its territory be comparatively small in population and slight in importance, especially if that portion of its territory be urgently in need of population if only for the

purposes of defence, because of its proximity to what may at some future time be the home of an enemy. All these considerations suggest themselves as justification for this motion. In regard to the details upon which I think the committee should seek information, I have endeavoured to make them clear to members in the wording of the motion. It may be alleged that there is no possibility of Western Australia following in the footsteps of one or two of the Eastern States and fostering her industries by protective measures. We all know that the most thriving industries of the East were built up by the system of inter-State customs duties, that the State that has the largest and most thriving industries built them up by an action that now is regarded as an altogether wrong action on the part of any Australian State, by following a practice that was altogether opposed to the Federal spirit ; and we recognise that at present, whether we desire to show the Federal spirit or not, in that respect we are debarred from showing an unfederal spirit by the Federal Constitution. In other words, if we recognise that industries can only be built up by a protective tariff against a sister State we are debarred by the terms of the union from adopting that course, a course of action that was adopted throughout Australia for 40 years, from 50 years ago until as late as 10 years ago, and which during the 40 years was not only justified on public platforms, but was justified by the action of two or three of the Australian States. However while we are without the power of adopting this method of building up our industries which has proved so successful elsewhere, it seems to me quite possible that an inquiry of the sort asked for may satisfy some of us that perhaps there is a degree of truth and wisdom in some of the remarks that fell from the Leader of the Opposition last night when he told us we had hope of gaining by a protective tariff that would in the first instance more largely advantage those Eastern States that had already large manufacturing industries. It is possible there may be found a method

of giving such degree of stimulus, such degree of encouragement by the State to our industries as shall materially strengthen those that exist and shall materially hasten the establishment of others that to the present we have not. I would not like to think that the future of Western Australia with regard to industrial enterprise was entirely hopeless, that Western Australia is for all time to be debarred from manufacturing within its own borders what are needed for the requirements of its own market. Then undoubtedly the population of this State, depending as it must on the slow increase of people engaged in its primary industries, must necessarily always remain comparatively sparse, must at all events develop but slowly, and the very existence of our large metropolitan population is seriously endangered. I hope that a select committee investigating this question will find that there are other means than those which have been so far hinted at, or have been discovered and applied for the purpose of stimulating manufactures in Western Australia, and encouraging the establishment of new manufactures in the State. But apart from the practical results that may attend the deliberations of such a committee, the mere discovery of data on this question, so vexed a question at the present moment in Western Australia, would of itself be valuable in enabling us to know how to deal with the Federal authority should we at any time in the near future be forced to make negotiations with a view to getting greater consideration at the hands of the Federal authorities than we have to the present time received. I do not intend to traverse ground I have already covered in former speeches in this House; I do not intend to traverse ground that to a large extent was covered by members who took part in last night's discussion; I think I have said enough to justify my asking the favourable consideration of hon. members, and particularly that of the Government, to this motion, which I therefore submit in the hope that it will meet with the assent of a majority if not the whole of the members.

Mr. W. C. ANGWIN: I second the motion.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): The matter covered by the motion is one which is very important, and which is well worthy of being made the subject of inquiry by a select committee, or even by a Royal Commission. The debate last evening traversed to some extent this question, and there is no denying the fact that many of our industries have not been what they were when Federation was inaugurated, but if a select committee is appointed it is questionable whether it will be able to devote the amount of time necessary to make the inquiries that are set out in the motion. A limited amount of time only would be available to the committee to make these inquiries, whereas in order that the inquiry should be at all valuable it must be a searching one, and must entail a considerable amount of detailed questioning, so that I am rather inclined to think that a select committee would hardly be able to bring out the information the hon. member is desirous of obtaining. The Government do not intend to oppose the motion; but as I say, it is questionable whether this information can be obtained by a select committee, and if any member is prepared to propose that a Royal Commission be appointed to inquire into these matters the Government will have no objection. It is something we might very well spend a few hundred pounds upon, and in the circumstances I think it would be advisable if the words "Royal Commission" were substituted for "select committee."

Amendment, a Commission.

Mr. J. EWING (Collie): I think that if a select committee is appointed the attention given by members of the select committee to this matter will militate against the attention they can give to matters before this House. I therefore move as an amendment—

That the words "select committee" be struck out and "Royal Commission" inserted in lieu.

I believe that it will take a considerable time to get the information asked for by

the hon. member. It is a matter to which the members of the Commission or committee must give their earnest consideration. I feel sure that there are members of this House who would be willing to give their services on a Royal Commission without remuneration, but perhaps the Government may desire to go outside the House and get excellent men for the Commission. Of course if members of the House are appointed it rests with them whether they receive remuneration or not. Perhaps the House will agree with the amendment. I believe the business on the Notice Paper is quite sufficient to occupy the attention of members. There are already several select committees, and while I feel that this matter is of such great importance to the House and to Western Australia that there should be an inquiry, I believe that the inquiry should take the form of a Royal Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not within the province of the House to move that a Royal Commission should be appointed. The amendment should be put in the following words:—

That the words "a select committee" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu: "In the opinion of this House a Royal Commission should." Does that meet with the approval of the hon. member?

Mr. Ewing: Yes.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): I find it difficult to understand the attitude of the Premier in regard to the motion in view of his opposition to the motion moved by me last Wednesday, and to the amendment tabled on that occasion by the member for Subiaco; because by reason of the attitude taken up by members here, and also by the general public, it is plain that the investigations of the committee or Royal Commission, whichever is decided on, will largely centre round the objects which were included in the motion I moved and in the amendment moved by the member for Subiaco. The objection of the Premier to my previous motion for an inquiry was on the grounds of the ex-

pense of the inquiry, but here we find him acquiescing in a proposal which will involve a much larger expenditure. I believe that in view of the business we have before us and in view of the select committees already appointed it would be difficult for members of any select committee, should one be appointed, to give the time necessary for this investigation, or to do it in a thorough manner. So far as a Royal Commission is concerned, I think the expense of such a Commission could be avoided, while at the same time we could secure much of the information necessary to enable members to form an intelligent opinion on this question. I believe that from the various organisations—the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Manufactures, and those interested from the workers' point of view—we could secure reports and returns which could give us all the information we desire; and afterwards, having that information laid on the table, members of this Assembly could determine what would be the best course to adopt. In the circumstances, while I do not feel the same amount of opposition to the proposal of the member for Subiaco to appoint a select committee, I certainly do oppose the proposal for the appointment of a Royal Commission, because in the circumstances the expense is not warranted.

Hon. F. H. PIESSE (Katanning): The thanks of the House are due to the mover of the motion. My attention has been drawn by the Leader of the Opposition to the motion which he moved last Wednesday. It was not brought under my notice at the time, for I was not here when he moved it; but I do not think it was quite in keeping with the present motion.

Mr. Bath: I am speaking of the motion proposed to be amended by the member for Subiaco.

Hon. F. H. PIESSE: As to the motion, I think a great deal of good can be accomplished by a Royal Commission of inquiry into the subjects mentioned by the member for Subiaco. The discussion which took place last night proves

to us the necessity for establishing or encouraging local industries; and if by any possible means we can do so we shall achieve good work in the interests of the State. I feel that any expenditure in the direction of an inquiry to obtain this information will be money well spent; therefore I have, under the circumstances, no objection to the motion and shall be pleased to support it.

Mr. W. C. ANGWIN (East Fremantle): I supported the amendment moved by the member for Subiaco as to the local tariff, and I am of opinion it was a matter that should have been dealt with before the discussion on the Federal tariff last night. I oppose the appointment of a Royal Commission. Members of the House are returned to carry out duties for the State, for which they receive a certain salary; therefore I see no reason why they should not carry out the duties mentioned in the motion. In regard to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition, I believe the earlier motion moved by him referred chiefly to the removal of the local tariff.

Mr. Bath: Its effect. I was agreeable to accept the amendment then moved by the member for Subiaco as to the local tariff.

Mr. ANGWIN: This motion deals entirely with a select committee to make inquiry as to the best means of establishing or assisting industries already established, or the best way of getting new industries started in this State. I am very pleased with the motion. As I said last night, the time has arrived when we should see if something cannot be done to encourage private enterprise to establish industries in the State, or the time has arrived when the Government should provide work for the people of the State. A select committee will be able to make investigation into the whole of this matter; they will be able to inquire whether private individuals will establish manufactories in the State, or whether it will be advisable to recommend the Government of the day to establish various manufactories themselves. I maintain that a committee such as this will be beneficial to the people as

a whole; because we realise, more especially at the present time, that there are scores of young men or youths from 17 years to 20 years of age roving about the streets unable to get employment, and the time has arrived when it is necessary that something should be done to make artisans of the youths, so that in days to come they will be able to earn a livelihood in a proper manner, which to-day they have no prospect whatever of doing. Day after day I have been stuck up in the street with requests from young lads asking where it is possible for them to get a chance of employment. It is a question for every person with a family to know what to do with his boys, and the time has arrived when something should be done in regard to the matter, so that when we encourage families to come and settle in Western Australia we can provide employment for them. I have pleasure in supporting the motion of the member for Subiaco.

Mr. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret): I desire to support the proposal of the member for Subiaco. I can carry my mind back to the attitude of the House about a fortnight ago when the Leader of the Opposition moved a motion which would have had practically a similar effect to this. He desired that some inquiry should be made into the effect of the incidence of the sliding scale, and the member for Subiaco then moved an amendment to strike out certain words, and insert that a select committee be appointed to inquire into and report on the effect of the sliding scale and likewise as to any loss to local industries. In view of the fact that we were then discussing the necessity for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the industries of this State, and how the tariff has affected the State from that point of view, it seems strange to me when we could not get a select committee then, we now have a proposition placed before the House for the appointment of a Royal Commission. We all know that Royal Commissions cannot be appointed without a considerable cost to the State. As the member for East Fremantle has pointed out, there are

members in this Chamber who are quite able and capable of bringing forward facts on a select committee which would, I believe, enable the House to deal satisfactorily with this question. It has been argued repeatedly by members that Royal Commissions are practically white-washing machines. Considering the amount of heat and enthusiasm displayed in the Chamber last night and elsewhere by the free-trade element, it is necessary I think that we should have a select committee appointed to see if the other side of the picture cannot be shown to the people of the country. I am not influenced one iota by the speeches delivered in the Perth town hall last night. All one has to do is to read the names of those who took part in it; that in itself is sufficient to condemn the action at that meeting. I recognise the direction in which they intended their remarks should be received, and I expect they will be. I do not think the House should agree to the expenditure on a Royal Commission, when there is ample opportunity for the appointment of a select committee to bring forward the necessary facts. I hope the House, in view of the attitude taken up on a similar occasion, will not direct the Government to appoint a Royal Commission. We know the House cannot appoint a Royal Commission; but the Government may be directed, if the motion is carried, to appoint the Commission, and I suppose it will be appointed forthwith. I hope the House will not give that direction; but I hope the House will appoint a select committee to go into the matter. I have confidence that a select committee will be able to collect sufficient evidence and place it before the House. The committee could sit on days on which the House is not sitting, and members would then be able to deal with the subject. I have no desire to labour the question, but I hope the member will not press for the appointment of a Royal Commission.

Mr. Ewing: Members have too much to do.

Mr. TAYLOR: Does the hon. member wish the appointment of a Royal Commission of commercial men?

Mr. Ewing: Not necessarily.

Mr. TAYLOR: Or does he desire to direct the Government to appoint a Royal Commission largely from members of the House? If that be so there is only one thing for me to assume: that members of this House, in the opinion of the member who has moved the amendment, have no time to go on select committees because there is no money attached to them. But that if there is to be a Royal Commission appointed, carrying with it three guineas a day to the chairman and two guineas a day to other members, then time will be found.

Mr. Ewing: I did not say so.

Mr. TAYLOR: By his interjection, the member conveyed to me that members were too busily engaged to act on select committees. I say, does he intend to direct the Government to appoint commercial men on the Commission and not members of the House?

Mr. Ewing: They can use their own judgment.

Mr. TAYLOR: That brings me back to my previous argument, that there is, in the opinion of the hon. member, no time at the disposal of members to act on select committees, but there is time if they are appointed on a Royal Commission.

Mr. Collier: They can pick the members from the meeting held last night.

Mr. TAYLOR: If that be the object of the member, the Government can pick the members of the Royal Commission from the public meeting held last night. I am not advocating the appointment of a Royal Commission, for I say that members can do good work on select committees. In view of the attitude of the House only a fortnight ago on a similar proposition it is absurd now to accept the proposition to appoint a Royal Commission, and the argument advanced by the mover of the amendment has made the matter more ridiculous by saying that the time of members is too much taken up to act on select committees. But there is a large possibility of their being able to act on Royal Commissions. I hope the House will not accept the amendment but will appoint a select committee.

Mr. A. C. GULL (Swan): There is a great difference between the motion moved by the member for Subiaco and the motion moved previously by the Leader of the Opposition. I distinguish it in this way: the motion of the Leader of the Opposition dealt largely with the loss that has accrued through the sliding scale and its effect on the State as a whole; as a matter of fact showing what had already been lost to the State. The present motion I take it is brought forward with a view of showing what can be done in the future to assist our industries.

Mr. Taylor: That was the member for Subiaco's amendment.

Mr. GULL: No, it did not go so far as the present motion does.

Mr. Taylor: Read the motion and you will see.

Mr. GULL: I recognise that is the difference, and for that reason I do not care whether a select committee is appointed or a Royal Commission. But in view of the fact that the Government may on a Royal Commission call in outside opinion, I prefer to accept the amendment rather than the motion.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): It is idle for the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) to contend for a moment that the motion or the amendment moved to-night has the slightest relation to the motion which the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bath) moved a few nights ago. The latter was to the effect that a select committee be appointed to inquire into the effect of the abolition of the sliding scale on the prices of those articles affected by its incidence while in operation. [Mr. Bath: But I referred to the amendment of that motion.] By the amendment the words "sliding scale" were struck out with a view to inserting "local tariff," and adding "likewise the effect of this loss upon local industries." That would not have had anything like the effect of the motion we are now considering. [Mr. Bath: All Government members say the abolition of the local tariff is the one cause of the depression.] I listened carefully to the hon. member's speech, and said at

the time that I did not perceive what good would result from his motion. The Treasurer, replying to the hon. member, said:—

"There is no analogy between the select committee proposed and the select committee just appointed on the pastoral industry. That is a question of the best means of building up an industry and securing outside markets, but here we are simply asked to say whether Tom, Dick, or Harry has received any advantage from the abolition of duties."

The question to-night is to inquire, in view of the new tariff, how we can best build up our local industries. I am sure every member is desirous of building up industries within the State. Every possible effort should be made with that object, and I am quite prepared to support either the motion or the amendment. But I think it would be wise if in this inquiry we got information from outside, from people with practical and technical experience. As the Premier said, even if the inquiry did cost a little, the money would be well spent if by obtaining good outside advice we were able to build up only a few industries within our borders. Such an inquiry may have specially good results. Many similar requests have at different times been made to the Government; all sorts of advice has been offered as to the best means of assisting local industries; and if we can secure complete evidence we may possibly devise some means of giving adequate assistance. I do not think for a moment that the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) was sincere in assuming that a Royal Commission, if appointed, will be appointed to enable some members of Parliament to draw fees. I am quite satisfied many members will be only too pleased to give their services, and I should be loth to agree to the appointment of a commission comprising members of Parliament if those members were paid for their services on the commission. That should be clearly understood from the outset; and I am satisfied many members would willingly give a few days a week to a commission of that sort. The member for Subiaco

will be wise if he agrees to the amendment, so as to get on the commission some outside persons with practical business training, who would make to Parliament recommendations which no member of the House is capable of making. I am prepared to support the amendment.

Mr. J. C. G. FOULKES (Claremont): I think the speech of the member for Mt. Margaret was not so much in opposition to an inquiry as with a view to having that inquiry made by members of this House. His speech, I take it, is only an evidence of his desire to do his utmost to make a proper inquiry as to the conditions of our various industries. I do not take his speech as hostile to either motion or amendment. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the great majority of members of this House are unfortunately not men who have taken part in any business pursuits or any manufacturing concerns. I think it would be a mistake to limit to members of this House the personnel of the body who will make the inquiry. Whatever ability and knowledge we in this House possess, there are chances of finding greater ability and knowledge outside the House. We are all anxious to do justice to our industries, but members must know that a great number of men outside the House share our anxiety. For that reason I favour a Royal Commission, because the personnel of a select committee must be limited to members. No question of fee or reward can arise, for I believe any member of the House appointed on the Royal Commission will be quite prepared to act without payment; and I feel equally certain that any outsider so appointed will act likewise. There are many people outside anxious to encourage our industries at the present juncture.

Mr. Bath: You would have as much right to expect them to act without payment as to expect members of this House to do likewise.

Mr. FOULKES: Yes. I am sure the hon. member agrees with me that all members of the House are willing to act on the commission without fee or

reward. The question of remunerating the commission should not be considered for a moment. We want on the commission the best men we can get; and I will not say the best men are to be found in this House. There are scores of better men outside the House, who have a greater knowledge of our industries, who take a greater interest in them than is taken by any member here.

Mr. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford): A few words in support of the motion, because I believe the time has arrived when we should seriously investigate this subject. Last year I was a member of the select committee on sweating in Western Australian industries. The committee visited a number of factories and I was greatly surprised to find how many factories we have in and around the metropolitan area. It is true a number of them was struggling and in a very small way, but it is equally true that a number had been established since Federation. Numerous manufacturers who gave evidence before the committee prove they could compete against the Eastern States in spite of inter-State free-trade. As a matter of fact we found one or two factories that had been established even after the abolition of the scale, which certainly gave some protection to our industries. It was not the duty of the committee to inquire into the existence of manufactories in Western Australia, but as we had to consider the conditions of employment, we secured evidence which convinced me that we can do much in this State to encourage manufactures here. As it was not the duty of the committee to inquire fully into that subject, we possibly overlooked the fact that a number of manufacturers had been driven out of Western Australia since Federation; consequently I think, from my little experience last year, it would be advisable to have a thorough investigation, so that if we cannot subsidise our local industries we may lay the position fully before the Federal authorities, that they may give a little consideration to our affairs. I fully ap-

preciate the argument of some members that they cannot give enough time to a select committee to make an exhaustive inquiry. The select committee on sweating took up a considerable portion of the members' time, and at a number of meetings all members were not present. While I could attend on one day there were other days when I could not; consequently at a portion of the inquiry I was not present, and that applies to all members of the committee. Still we presented a report which, I am sorry to say, as has been pointed out by an interjection, has not had much result up to date. But in a great question such as that now before us, as in the other inquiry to which I refer, I believe we can get a sufficient number of members to devote the time needed for a thorough investigation. I do not perceive what vital difference there is between a Royal Commission and a select committee, unless the Government desire to go outside the House in order to secure on the commission men who can possibly bring to bear a little more experience than is possessed by hon. members. Still, I think we can secure sufficient members in the House who can investigate the question, not because they have a special knowledge of the subject, but because they are quite capable of taking the evidence of those who are enthusiastic experts, who will be only too pleased to give evidence from which the committee can form conclusions of great value to this House and to Western Australia generally.

Mr. Foulkes : Do you not think that such experts would be of greater assistance if on the commission?

Mr. JOHNSON : No. If they have such knowledge they can give it in evidence; consequently I am inclined to support the proposed select committee, and be it a select committee or a Royal Commission I trust we shall have an inquiry, for I feel the time is ripe for such an investigation.

Mr. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Pilbarra) : I support the motion to show my consistency. Last week I supported the motion of the Leader of the Opposition (*Mr. Bath*) which was in my opinion

exactly similar to this, or would have covered similar grounds. The only difference I can see is that one was moved from the Opposition's side of the House and the other is moved from the Government side.

Hon. F. H. Piesse : You are always finding some fault and wrongly so. Both came from your side of the House.

Mr. UNDERWOOD : I feel sure that a Royal Commission would not cover more ground than a committee. However, it appears that the Government have now decided upon an altogether different course. The Treasurer pronounced against the committee solely on account of expense but now the Government are prepared to go to a much more expensive inquiry covering the same ground. I cannot compliment the Government on their consistency in this matter. Another question that has been fairly well discussed is the cost of the alleged decrease in our industries, and I think this question was fairly thrashed out last night. We were told then that the decrease was owing to Federation and the Federal tariff. Again the Leader of this side of the House moved for a committee to inquire into that, but we could not get one. I am forced to the conclusion that there are some persons who want a job on this Royal Commission and apparently they are going to get one. Regarding the outside knowledge that can be obtained it has been urged that the men to take evidence should be expert in particular industries. The man who takes evidence requires, in my opinion, a general knowledge for he will be able to obtain the special knowledge from the experts who will be called to give evidence before him. As a rule an expert knows all about his own industry but about nothing else. I intend to support the motion for a select committee and I trust that the Government will stick to their alleged policy of economy. Let them show us that they intend to look after the finances of this State in the manner they are always prating about. I advise them also not to make a party question of everything that comes before the House.

Mr. T. L. BROWN (Geraldton) : I support the motion. Following upon the

discussion last night I may say I would be only too pleased to embrace the opportunity of endeavouring to assist in an enquiry which will tend to promote the interests of our industries. There is no doubt that at the present time we cannot be too careful or too cautious in dealing with our industries, many of which are only in their infantile stage. I prefer a select committee to a Royal Commission for I think the latter is unnecessary at this stage. As has been pointed out it would be better to have a man of good general knowledge making an inquiry of this sort rather than an expert only in some particular branch. It will be from the experts that the board will obtain their information. However, whether it be a committee or a commission I hope they will endeavour as far as possible to obtain evidence from those men who have been engaged in business the whole of their lives, and who have dealt with questions such as those included in the purview of the inquiry. If a Royal Commission is decided on I trust the House will be given an opportunity of expressing an opinion as to the personnel of the members. I am sure that whichever is appointed, a commission or a select committee, the holding of an inquiry will tend to allay to a certain extent the sort of funk that has overtaken the people of Western Australia. I trust that the board will lose no time in getting to work and will furnish this House and the Government with a report at the earliest possible date.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Price) : I desire to offer one or two observations on this question. I think that such an inquiry is particularly opportune at this moment. Last night I expressed my disagreement with the tariff proposals of the Federal Government : but if those proposals are carried there is no doubt we shall have to set our shoulders to the task of making the best we can out of them. Certainly there are some alterations, not many I regret to say, but some which will be in our favour so far as this State is concerned. For instance, all those articles which require heavy freights from the

Eastern States, such as agricultural machinery for which there will be an increasing demand here for years to come, might be manufactured with advantage in this State, and the tariff will to a certain extent help in that direction. There are other directions where possibly we also might take advantage of our peculiar position. To do that I think it desirable that we should have the very best advice available on this subject. If, for instance, we get a man—I merely thought of these names at the moment—such as Mr. Mills, of the firm of Mills and Ware, Mr. Hudson, of the firm of Hudson and Ritchie, or the President of the Chamber of Manufactures to assist the inquiry, much good would result. If these gentlemen were to go before a select committee they would give their evidence and then leave, and as far as they were concerned the matter would be done with ; but if one or more such men of experience were to sit constantly as members of a Commission when new phases in manufacturing work cropped up they would be able, on account of their thorough knowledge of the manufacturing industries, to offer excellent advice of special kind, and make the best of the new phases as they arose. I am sure we could appoint men from this House who would elicit information as well as any other five men you could select, but the question is whether the same ideas would strike men who have not been through the mill in manufacturing pursuits, as have men who have had lengthy and close experience of various industries. There is another aspect and that is that the outside public expect us to watch the interests of the State in this particular matter. If we confine the personnel of this board, committee, or commission, whichever it may be, to the members of this House I doubt whether it will have as much weight with the public as if we appointed outside individuals who are known throughout the State as men having had manufacturing experience. There is still another point to consider. There is the question of finance, which is of course involved in the issues. It may be that, acting in no way contrary to the provisions of the Constitution, it will be possible in some

directions to give Government assistance to the starting of certain industries. These are all matters which outside individuals could offer valuable information upon and inquire into. I venture to think that one, two, or three individuals could be chosen whose assistance in a matter of this sort would probably be more valuable than that of any three members of the House. I do not wish to be disrespectful as to the capabilities of members, but in some of these matters, especially such a one as the manufacturing industry, there are not many men in Western Australia who have been intimately connected with it and among them are not members of this House. I admit it would be possible to choose men from the other side of the House who would represent the interests of the consumer admirably and just as well as members from this side of the House. I have frequently objected in the past to the indiscriminate appointment of Royal Commissions, and I think that if any member of this House sits on a Royal Commission it is desirable, as has been suggested by the Minister for Mines, that he should do so without any remuneration. I think there are plenty of members who would be willing to take up that attitude. I agree that whatever sum may be fixed upon as remuneration for our Parliamentary duties it should cover all the work that we do in connection with our office as members of Parliament. I do not think that there would be any difficulty in arranging the matter as I suggest. I trust members will not think this is a party movement, for it is an honest desire on the part of this side of the House to enlarge the personnel of the board of inquiry and make it of more public usefulness so as to carry greater weight with the public. I do not look with fear upon this matter of the tariff. I think that even if we have to put up with it we shall in time adapt ourselves to it. It has always been with men of our race that where faced with a difficult position we are able to struggle through. I would like to have the tariff altered, but if it is not, we must make the best we can of the circumstances and try and find a way out of our difficulties. That is a

philosophical view of the case, and I hope members opposite will recognise that that is the way the Government look at the question. I trust that members will agree to the enlargement of the board.

Amendment (Royal Commission) put, and negatived on the voices.

Mr. J. B. HOLMAN : I hope the motion will be carried, as it is important that a select committee should go fully into this question. I am very pleased that the amendment was not carried.

Question put and passed.

At 6.15, the *Speaker* left the Chair.

At 7.30, Chair resumed.

Ballot taken, and a committee appointed comprising Mr. Angwin, Mr. Male, Mr. Underwood, Mr. Frank Wilson, with Mr. Daglish as mover, with the usual powers, and with power to move from place to place ; to report on the 23rd October.

PAPERS—MINING ACCIDENT, FINGAL.

Mr. E. E. HEITMANN (Cue) moved—

That all papers in connection with the inquiry into the death of the miner Zanardina, who was killed recently in the Fingal mine, Day Dawn, be laid on the table.

The object in moving for papers was to show that the Mines Regulation Act was being offended against at least on the Murchison by the Fingal mine at Day Dawn, and to draw attention to the system of stopeing used in some mines. Attention had been called to this case by the secretary of the Workers' Union on the Murchison, who represented the workers at the inquiry into this Italian's death. The fatal accident took place on the 28th of July. Seeing from certain papers laid on the table by the Minister for Mines during the week that no permit was granted to the mine to work on that date, though a permit was granted for the 18th August, it should have been the duty of the inspector of mines to

prosecute and the Minister to make inquiries. At the inquiry held into the death of this Italian, two of the witnesses could not understand the English language, and interpreters had to be called in, notwithstanding that one of the sections of the Mines Regulation Act passed last session stated that any man who could not understand the English language was not to be employed underground. Apparently that section was a dead letter so far as the Murchison was concerned. The attention of the district inspector of mines had been recently called to the fact that there were many men working on the Fingal mine who could not speak the English language, the secretary of the miners' union at Day Dawn having telephoned to the inspector's office to that effect. In reply the following letter was received from the inspector:—

"In reference to your telephone inquiry of a recent date, received at this office during my absence, I have to advise you that I shall make inquiry into any complaints lodged with me under 'The Mines Regulation Act, 1906,' by you, and if you supply me with the names of the Italians said to be 'working on the Great Fingal and not being able to speak a word of English,' I shall examine them as provided by the Act.—F. J. Lander, Inspector of Mines."

This was the reply of the secretary of the union:—

"I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 4th inst., and state that I am not in a position to give names of foreigners working on the Great Fingal mine that cannot speak the English language. My committee consider that as we are not vested with any power in defining who is competent to pass this test, we would not be acting wisely in forwarding names when we cannot vouch for their being correct. While not wishing to dictate to you *re* your duties as inspector of mines, my committee feel assured if you paid surprise visits you would soon be in a position to know who could pass the test or otherwise.—T.

Chesson, Secretary D.D. Miners' Union."

It was only right that attention should be drawn to these facts. It was time that the Minister instructed the inspectors what portion of the Mines Regulation Act they were to enforce. It was not the duty of members of unions to enforce the Act, rather was it the duty of the inspectors. It appeared that no endeavour was made at all events on the Fingal mine to comply with this section of the Act dealing with the language test. As regards the stoping system adopted in the Fingal mine, it appeared that this unfortunate Italian was only one of many who had been injured or late by this system. The man was engaged trucking ore from a shoot. There were really no shoots on the Fingal mine. Stopes were worked from one level to another with merely stalls put in at the level; the first sets of the shoot were put in, but after that no pass was constructed; but often the ore being broken down, sometimes tons in weight, refused to come down, and it was the practice of these Italians—the British miners refused to do it, but these Italians in their ignorance did it—when the shoot hung up, to go up the shoot and fire out the loose dirt. They went up a 4ft. opening into a huge cavern, at times with nothing but loose stones and dirt hanging about them, when the dropping of stone a half-a-pound in weight would cause the whole lot to run with no possible chance of their getting away. This Italian got into the shoot and a huge part of the wall came away with the result that he was jammed, and screwjacks he (Mr. Heitmann) believed had to be employed to get him out. The papers would show how the Act was being carried out on the Murchison and would show what system was being adopted in the stopes in this particular mine. It was not the first accident that had happened in this way. A week before another Italian was smashed up badly. There were so many accidents on the Fingal mine that the miners' union at Day Dawn was just about bankrupt. With a membership of 300, in three consecutive months the union paid out £100 a month for acci-

dents, and there were three fatal accident levies bringing the total to something like £500 in three months. Two of the accidents occurred on the Fingal mine. It was time attention was called to the many serious accidents in the State and particularly on the Fingal mine. He (Mr. Heitmann) intended to call for a return of the number of accidents on the Fingal mine during the last 12 months. It would surprise members. If the management did not send the men into the shoots to break away the stuff they allowed it to be done. It was almost suicide on the part of the men and almost equal to manslaughter on the part of the mine owners. If no permit had been granted to the Fingal mine the inspector should have at once taken proceedings against the man for contravention of the Act; and when the inspector found that Italians could not pass the test he should have been called upon to prosecute this mine. It seemed, however, and it could be said without contradiction, that so far as the big mine at Day Dawn was concerned the Act was a dead letter. He hoped to move a motion in regard to this subject in the near future.

Mr. HOLMAN seconded the motion.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): There was no objection to laying the papers on the table; in fact, he had brought them with him and was only too pleased to produce them. He would be only too pleased to make inquiries about Italians that could not speak the English language, but the department needed assistance not only from members but from those connected with mines if any instances of this sort occurred. A complaint had been made some time since in regard to the action of an inspector of mines at the Sons of Gwalia mine. Objection was raised by the secretary of the union that the inspector had not given a sufficient test; and that there were men on the Gwalia mine who could not sufficiently understand English to work below. Arrangements were then made for the warden and the inspector to hold a proper examination of the men, and the secretary of the union was asked to give assistance but

refused. No member of a union should object to giving the department evidence in connection with such matters, because it was dangerous to have these men working underground. Certain laws were passed and, notwithstanding what the hon. member said, those laws were to be enforced equally on all mines. He, as Minister, would not allow an inspector to show favour to one mine that would not be shown all round. The Act would be administered. If it was desired that any concession should be given it was done through the *Government Gazette*. Sometimes it was necessary to vary the conditions under which mines were worked, and if he, as Minister, took the responsibility, notification was made in the *Government Gazette*. Otherwise it was his desire that everything pertaining to the Act should be carried out as fairly and equitably as possible. The papers were here, and if at any time there was anything brought up in connection with the employment of these men on mines he would be only too pleased to get the co-operation of members to prevent it.

Question put and passed.

Papers presented, and laid on the table.

BILL—VACCINATION ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Mr. Daglish in the Chair; Mr. A. J. Wilson in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Exemption from penalties:

Mr. LAYMAN moved an amendment in Subclause (1)—

After the word "if," insert the words "in the case of a child born before the commencement of this Act, within four months after the commencement of this Act, or in the case of a child born after the commencement of this Act."

The object of the amendment was to allow parents of unvaccinated children to avail themselves of the privileges of this amending Bill. The exemption clause provided only for children born subsequent to the passing of the Act; the amendment would allow the same exemption for children born prior to the

passing of the Act, provided a declaration were made within four months of the passing of the Act that the parents conscientiously believed that vaccination would be detrimental to the child's health. To pass the clause without the amendment would be ridiculous.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Under the clause the parents of children born within four months of the passing of the Bill failing to avail themselves of the means of securing exemption would be liable to the penalty provided for evasions of the principal Act; but the amendment was not confined to children born four months prior to the passing of the Act, but dealt with an indefinite period, and would legalise any previous evasion of the existing Act. It would be unwise for Parliament to legislate for protecting people from the consequences of their evasion of a duty imposed on them by law. He was opposed to the Bill *in toto*, and more opposed to the amendment. If the amendment were desired by members, it should be defined to relate only to children born within four months prior to the passing of this measure.

Mr. A. J. WILSON: The Minister's objection to the amendment was not reasonable. The clause as printed provided for exemption for the first four months after the passing of the Bill, and surely the parents of children born prior to the passing of the Bill were entitled to similar relief. The principal Act provided that vaccination should be compulsory for only a limited period; and at most the amendment would give relief to a limited number of children.

Mr. BATH supported the amendment, because it was as logical that this relief should be granted in the case of children born prior to the passing of this Bill as of those born after. Enlightened medical men now recognised that they could do more practical good by warring against insanitary conditions of living than by penalising innocent parents who had conscientious objections to vaccination. Many children had by vaccination been poisoned for life; and when they were vaccinated at so much per dozen the cheap and nasty methods adopted proved

highly dangerous. We could probably do more good by insisting on rigid obedience to sanitary laws and compelling property-owners to get rid of hot-beds of disease. Antiquated laws like the parent Act penalised the wrong people; hence we should adopt the views of up-to-date medical men. He would support the amendment.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Could an amendment be made that all words after "Act," in line 2 of Subclause 1, be struck out, thus abolishing the penalty for non-vaccination?

The CHAIRMAN: No; the amendment now under discussion was in a subsequent part of the clause.

Mr. Gull: The hon. member's proposal would nullify the Bill.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: If vaccination was no good, why force anyone to be vaccinated? The conscience clause was ridiculous. If a man had his children vaccinated, he conscientiously believed in vaccination, or *vice versa*. Leave the matter optional.

Mr. LAYMAN: Without the amendment, many children would remain unvaccinated. Was their vaccination to be made compulsory, while those born four months hence, when the amending Bill would become operative, were to go free?

The Attorney General: Why not refund fines hitherto inflicted?

Mr. TAYLOR: We should not pass legislation to indemnify people who had broken the law.

Mr. Underwood: The law was no good.

Mr. TAYLOR: Then why not abolish the law, instead of patching it up with this Bill? If vaccination was necessary as a safeguard, why have a conscience clause to allow some children to remain unvaccinated? Whenever there was a scare people rushed their children to the vaccinator. Last year the Minister for Works demonstrated by international statistics that countries which enforced vaccination were considerably freer from smallpox than those where the precaution was not compulsory. Members on both sides objected to compulsory vaccination, yet were satisfied to patch up

the law and keep a public vaccinator. The existing law protected the property owner who neglected sanitary precautions. What would be the result if the parent Act were abolished altogether? Surely if that Act were not needed, it should be done away with.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. LAYMAN moved an amendment—*That Subclause 2 be struck out.*

A statutory declaration for this purpose should not be exempt from stamp duty.

Mr. ANGWIN opposed the amendment. It was only fair that in declarations for this purpose, stamp duty should be exempt.

Amendment negatived. Clause as amended put and passed.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

MOTION—HOSPITAL COOKS, HOW IMPORTED.

Debate resumed from the 1st August, on the motion by Mr. Bath for papers relating to the importation of cooks from the United Kingdom by the Perth Hospital Board.

The PREMIER: It is not my intention to oppose this motion. There are members of the Perth Hospital Board in the House, and I understand it is desired that one of them should say a word or two before the motion is disposed of. I refer to the member for Perth (Mr. H. Brown), who is anxious for the farther consideration of this motion to be postponed until to-morrow, so that he may have an opportunity of putting forward the facts of the case and the stand taken by the board. I move that the debate be adjourned.

Debate farther adjourned.

MOTION—CAMELS IMPORTATION, PAPERS.

Debate resumed from the 14th August, on the motion by Mr. Holman for papers as to the alleged permission to Faiz Mahomet to introduce 500 camels to Western Australia, and as to compensation of £2,000 paid to him.

The PREMIER: I have no objection to this motion, and will be ready to lay

the papers on the table of the House to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—WATER METERS RENT.

Debate resumed from the 21st August, on the motion by Mr. Daglish "That the charge of rent for water meters imposed by the Metropolitan Waterworks Board is an unnecessary and vexatious tax which presses unduly upon consumers, and particularly upon small householders"; also on the amendment by Mr. Angwin "That the words 'imposed by the Metropolitan Waterworks Board' be struck out."

Mr. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): I support the motion as proposed to be amended by the member for East Fremantle. We heard last night from the member for Pilbarra as to the capacity for mendacity of those who have been dealing with the new Federal tariff during the last few weeks; but I think the water meters supplied by the Waterworks Board and by the Goldfields Water Administration can beat any of those gentlemen to whom the hon. member alluded. I know from my own experience the mistakes in the registration of water meters. This occurred when I was resident at Subiaco, and while I was on the goldfields with my family the meter at Subiaco registered twice the quantity in the cool months that it did in the hot months when I was living there. Consequently as soon as rain fell and the tanks became filled I jammed up the taps with the result that no farther registration of water has taken place.

The Minister for Works: Some of the water meter experts on your side of the House say that the meters register whether the water runs through or not.

Mr. BATH: I did not allow any water to go through and therefore the meter was not given a chance of telling lies. I know of an instance on the goldfields where a man was away in the Eastern States, and the officers of the water supply formed the idea that he had been tampering with the meter. They stated the period during which the meter must have been tampered with and, as it happened, the owner was absent from the

fields seven weeks prior to that date, and for a considerable time subsequently to it. When he returned he was charged with having tampered with the meter, yet the tampering took place while he was in the Eastern States. [*The Minister for Works*: Someone else must have tampered with it.] His house was closed and he was away from the State. Without giving heed to the explanation offered by the resident in question, officials of the Goldfields Water Administration attached to the meter what they called a cover which any plumber could make for 5s., and yet they charged him rent at the rate of 12s. 6d. a year for it. This is one instance of many injustices perpetrated on the goldfields, and which are allowed to exist in connection with both the Metropolitan Water Works Board and the Goldfields Water Administration, owing to the unlimited and arbitrary powers given under the by-laws of the respective Acts. I am convinced that so far as the great body of householders is concerned the placing of a meter on their premises is unnecessary and the charge for water-meter rent is altogether an exaction which they should not be called upon to pay. For these reasons I propose to support the motion as amended.

Mr. J. EWING (Collie): A considerable number of figures are being prepared with regard to this question but they are not ready, so I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion (adjournment) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	19

Majority against .. 4

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Angwin
Mr. Ewing	Mr. Bath
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Biebler
Mr. Gordon	Mr. T. L. Browne
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Collier
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Darglish
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Eddy
Mr. Mafe	Mr. Gull
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Monger	Mr. Holman
Mr. N. J. Moore	Mr. Hudson
Mr. Price	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Stone	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Taylor	Mr. Smith
Mr. Layman (<i>Teller</i>).	Mr. Underwood
	Mr. Walker
	Mr. Ware
	Mr. A. J. Wilson
	Mr. Heitmann (<i>Teller</i>).

Adjournment thus negatived.

Amendment (to strike out words as to Metropolitan Board) put and passed.

Question as amended put and passed.

BILL—ELECTORAL.

In Committee.

Mr. Darglish in the Chair; the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2, 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Interpretation:

Mr. ANGWIN: In the drafting of this Bill, some steps should have been taken whereby the administration of the Electoral law should be either placed in the hands of the Clerk of Parliaments or some other officer removed entirely from Ministerial control. In the past the Electoral Act had been administered by a Minister of the Crown and one was not sure that the administration was carried out free from bias. There should be no partisanship in the administration of such a Bill as this. No matter what party the Minister was connected with, the Bill should be administered fairly, everyone having equal and fair consideration. We might have similar things occurring to those which had happened in the past. In a previous election some irregularity took place and although the electoral officer recommended that a person be prosecuted, action was not taken, which showed that the law had not always been impartially administered.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member was surely not serious in asking that, for a Bill of this character, there should not be some person responsible to Parliament for the due carrying out of its provisions. The Bill was so framed that nothing but Ministerial functions should be placed in the hands of the Minister, and the executive functions would be so provided for that the permanent officers appointed would not be subject in any way to improper control. It was an extraordinary suggestion to make that we should depart from the practice which was universal in all British communities of having all important matters placed in charge of a Minister who would be absolutely responsible for carrying out the law.

Mr. T. H. BATH moved as an amendment—

That the definition of "sub-district" be struck out.

Later in the Bill, provision was made for what were called "sub-districts," which would provide for divisions within an electorate, and polling places and rolls were to be prepared for these sub-districts. This was evidently copying the example set by the Federal Act, for that law contained such a provision. But experience in regard to Federal elections had shown that it was not a desirable innovation. Experience had proved that divisions and sub-districts and separate rolls for polling places within an electorate were the fruitful cause of trouble and meant that electors were put to a great deal of inconvenience in recording their votes. The provision of sub-districts would mean additional work for registrars under the Bill and would not contribute to the smooth working of the electoral law. The existing system was far preferable to that adopted under the Federal Act. Federal members had expressed their opinion that this was a provision that should be dispensed with, and they had also expressed the opinion that they would rather revert to the system in vogue in Western Australia and the other States.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL : The amendment could not be accepted. This provision would enable the Government to create several polling-places in one electoral district. A voter if allotted to one booth would then be prevented from voting twice. [*Mr. Collier* : What if his name appeared on two rolls ?] On properly-prepared rolls there would be no duplication. The object of the provision in the Commonwealth Act was to avoid the necessity for requiring the elector to present some document to be marked when he voted. Electors' rights had not been found necessary here, but the machinery should be ready if occasion arose to use them. At Kalgoorlie people had voted more than once. [*Mr. Johnson* : No.] Electors' rights were objectionable, would delay the proceedings, prevent many from voting, and would be far more

clumsy than allotting each voter to a polling-booth—a provision which would not be availed of except when necessary. As the country became more thickly settled, the number of polling places must be increased.

Mr. JOHNSON supported the amendment. The Bill appeared to be drafted to provide for difficulties which might arise in the distant future. Sub-districts could not prevent dual voting. His name had appeared on two Kalgoorlie rolls, and he could have voted at two polling-booths. Separate rolls would have prevented this. [*The Attorney General* : No. If a similar mistake was made one could vote in two electorates.] True. Then why create useless sub-districts, unnecessary in the small State electorates, though perhaps necessary in the large districts of the Commonwealth ?

Mr. TAYLOR : If a large district with seven or ten polling places were divided into sub-districts, a voter shifting his residence to a distant place in the same electorate would be disfranchised if he forgot to transfer his name to the new sub-district. Possibly that was the Attorney General's object. [*The Attorney General* : The provisions would not apply to the country districts.] That did not appear. In view of what happened at the last general election we must not trust the Government with too much power. At Menzies 270 workers were disfranchised in one batch. [*Mr. Scaddan* : A total of 567.] The goldfields people and agricultural labourers were not a fixed population, and this provision if administered like the law at the last election would disfranchise many, and could not prevent dual voting. Dual votes polled in the last ten years could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

The Minister for Works : It would tend to make the man vote in a district where he was known.

Mr. TAYLOR : The Mount Magnet district would probably be divided into sub-districts. A man on the roll at Mount Magnet might move to Black Range, 90 miles away, but still be in the same electorate, but would not be able to vote. So in outlying districts the system would be a hardship, and would

disfranchise many workers and prospectors.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The proposition seemed reasonable. It might prevent petitions which members did not care to have after the elections. Persons would not have their votes questioned or challenged if they were well known. It was to the advantage of all parties that electors should vote in districts where they were fairly well known. It was easy to get a transfer from one sub-district to another; if not, we should make it easy. The proposal would tend to have only those voting at elections who were entitled to vote, and it would prevent impersonation. It was not necessary that the provision should be forced in outlying districts, but sometimes electorates were too large and offered opportunities for unscrupulous persons to impersonate.

MR. BATH: Too many people had been prevented from voting though having the right to vote. We had in Western Australia the smallest percentage of people voting. [*The Attorney General:* In the Federal elections.] We should give people the opportunity to vote, instead of trying to restrict that opportunity by being too suspicious. We should get away from the old idea the people had no right to vote.

The Attorney General: With the experience of the Commonwealth Act, was there any extensive grievance?

MR. BATH: On the goldfields there were innumerable complaints about the system of sub-districts. It was not a successful system. If we made the electoral machinery sufficiently effective for the administration of our Constitution we would be doing sufficient; if we tried to look out for what might possibly happen the probability was that we would miss some salient features of the present Act. There was no difficulty about the old method, and no hardships were inflicted. The cases of dual voting were few, and it was preferable to put up with them rather than have restrictive provisions in regard to facilities for voting. The objection to this proposal was that the experience of it in the Federal

elections proved that it was not advantageous.

MR. T. L. BROWN: Anyone taking an active interest in the last Federal election must be aware of the difficulties of voting under the system of sub-districts. In one case a wife and husband, living in the same house, had their names on the roll for different sub-districts. [*The Attorney General:* What was the use of talking about a blunder?] We should avoid blunders in this Bill by having one roll for the whole electorate. Precautions should be taken in the matter of appointing persons to receive postal votes. That was where the evil came in. The Attorney General was wrong in saying that if a person was on the Federal roll for one sub-district it was not permissible to vote in another subdistrict. It could be done. It only needed additional officers at the polling-places. The system proposed by the Attorney General would necessitate having double staffs at the polling booths. It was all very well to say this provision of sub-districts would not apply to the country districts, but there was nothing to prevent the Minister administering the Act so that it should apply to country districts. Breaches of the Act were frequently committed, not because there was any intention on the part of the elector to vote twice or to commit fraud, but because he had been misled. Therefore the House should endeavour to simplify the measure as much as possible. If sub-districts were included the trouble existing at present would be intensified rather than lessened.

MR. SCADDAN: The idea of sub-districts was to have separate rolls, so that persons would have to appear to vote at the polling-places where their names were on the roll. He objected to that. The Attorney General contended that the establishment of subdistricts would prevent persons from voting more than once, but as a matter of fact the proposed alteration would have the result of acting as an incentive to a person desiring to commit fraud. It had been suggested that fraud would be prevented by the examination of the handwriting of an elector. There were any number

of persons whose handwriting altered very considerably, and it was quite certain that the department were not going to have attached to the staff a large number of experts in handwriting. It was evident that under the proposed alteration there would be a very good chance of duplicate voting. Again it must be remembered that there were many persons in an electorate of the same name, and such occurrences frequently gave rise to suspicion of impersonation and duplication of voting. The experience of the Commonwealth Act with regard to subdistricts was that impersonation and duplication of votes were made more easy than was the case under the State Act.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Under the Federal Act, although there were sub-districts, the requirements were different from those suggested under the Bill, for in the former case, if a man desired to vote outside of his particular sub-district, he had to make a declaration before the returning officer, and thus draw particular attention to his case. The matter was a very formal one. The clause in the parent Act provided that a man could go into a booth and say "I am John Smith and on the roll. Give me a ballot paper." Then he would be able to vote. Under the proposed alteration however, if there were six polling places in the electorate of Perth for instance, an elector would have to go to that sub-district where his name appeared on the roll. In small districts where a man would not have to go more than half-a-mile from one booth to another, it was only right that this provision should be made in order to prevent fraud. In a large and extensive district like that of the member for Mount Margaret, in which it would be almost impossible for a person to vote in one sub-district and then be able to go to another polling booth and exercise his vote again, no fear need be experienced of duplication of voting; but in a small district if some alteration were not made it would be easy, as was the case under the existing Act, for a man to go into one booth, give his name, prove that he was on the roll, and vote,

and then go into another polling booth not very far away and vote again. The course adopted by the Commonwealth of insisting on a man who desired to vote outside his particular polling booth making a declaration was a long, clumsy arrangement, and the proposed alteration of the local Act would place him on a much better footing. The effect of creating sub-districts would be excellent and would insure that an elector would only vote once.

Mr. Scaddan: The Government were given the power to create sub-districts.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Of course they were, and they were responsible for their actions to Parliament and to the people.

Mr. T. L. Brown: Would that system be more clumsy than that of making a man sign a declaration that he was entitled to vote in a sub-district?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This provision was not meant to cope with conditions that arose under Federal electorates. It was only meant to apply, and only could apply, in closely populated electorates where polling booths were in reach of one another.

Mr. ANGWIN: In closely settled districts people were better known than in scattered districts. This provision was inserted for the express purpose, apparently, of making it convenient for people to record their votes. He knew of cases where people who had removed would be compelled to walk three-quarters of a mile to record their votes when there was a polling booth near their door. The sub-district roll as far as the Federal Act was concerned had been a great nuisance. It had been said that this provision would stop people from voting twice. During the Fremantle election it was said that 13 persons had voted twice, but on a scrutiny of the official roll not one case could be found of a person voting twice. Very little of this was done. If anything was to be gained by cutting up electorates into sub-districts he would be in favour of it, but the present system had worked well and no complaints had been heard.

Mr. J. A. STUART: The provision was of a reactionary nature, and would

lead one to infer that the voting population of the State were criminals going round on election days looking for a chance to perjure themselves. That was the inference that might be drawn from this legislation. If the clause were put in operation there would be a confusion as to the boundaries of sub-districts, and it would penalise people in the back country. There was not one-hundredth part of the impersonation which was supposed to exist. A lot of the restrictions should be removed and the voting conditions amplified. There was no necessity for many of the safeguards. We should try to pass up-to-date legislation. If this clause were carried it would mean that the Bill would have to be amended farther on, for according to Clause 117 the presiding officer in the polling booth would have to ask each voter as he came up to vote whether he was well known in the district. The clause would not serve any good purpose and would not prevent duplication or impersonation.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The substantive part of the Leader of the Opposition's objection would be to Sub-clause (d.) of Clause 97, which gave power to create sub-districts. If that subclause were struck out the definition would be struck out consequentially, having in itself no power whatever. [Mr. Hudson: But the provisions for sub-districts was found throughout the Bill.] Only in Clauses 19 and 97. The Bill was drafted not by himself only but by the Electoral Department, after consideration of electoral schemes in Australia, New Zealand, and other countries with representative government. He would consult the department and ascertain fully their reasons for providing sub-districts, and when we reached Clause 97 would place all the facts before the Committee.

Mr. BATH withdrew the amendment. Better have the discussion on Clause 97.

Mr. COLLIER: The Attorney General could ascertain from the Federal authorities that they were absolutely opposed to this provision.

Amendment by leave withdrawn; clause passed.

Clause 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Registrars and returning officers:

Mr. ANGWIN moved an amendment:—

That the word "inspectors" be inserted after "such," in line 1.

Hitherto there had been an Inspector of Parliamentary Rolls, an honest officer who made one mistake by reporting illegalities.

The Attorney General: Were we here to discuss whether the claims of an individual officer had been properly recognised?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could not discuss any individual officer or ex-officer.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL opposed the amendment. The clause provided certain officers to carry out duties subsequently specified. If inspectors were appointed there would be nothing for them to do.

Mr. BATH opposed the amendment. We had enough to do to make this a workable Act for present purposes without providing for future contingencies.

Mr. ANGWIN: The Bill provided for an electoral census.

The Attorney General: And the office work would be done by clerks.

Mr. ANGWIN: In this disgraceful measure everything was attempted to prevent people from voting. Last week he found in East Fremantle over thirty names omitted from the roll at the last electoral census. He withdrew the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn; clause passed.

Clauses 7 to 15—agreed to.

Clause 16—Disqualification of officers:

Mr. BATH moved an amendment that the following be added to Subclause 1:—

But this section shall not apply to persons authorised under the Act to witness claims for enrolment.

The interpretation of "officer" would cover persons who would witness claim forms; and whatever necessity there might be for seeing that officers appointed under the Act should not hold any positions in a political organisation, nothing would be gained, but much would be lost by making the provision apply to

persons who witnessed claims for enrolment. There was no possibility of any abuse coming about through the amendment, because there were ample safeguards in the Bill. The registrar had full power to see that any claim that should not be admitted was not put on the roll.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The object of the Bill was to exclude from the discharge of any duty under the Bill those who might be political partisans, no matter to what organisations they belonged. As a general proposition that was worthy of full support. We must rigidly exclude from any duties under the Bill those who were political partisans. But the hon. member wished to evade that provision to the extent of providing that those who had the right to witness claims might belong to political organisations. There would be no hesitation in saying that those connected with political organisations should be excluded from witnessing claims. The Bill provided that justices of the peace, returning officers, postmasters, civil servants, school teachers, members of the police force, and other persons appointed by the Minister could witness claim forms. The range was so wide that one could imagine no difficulty arising from paucity of witnesses.

Mr. Scaddan: Could not civil servants be members of political organisations?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Every civil servant had a right to his political views, but his services were retained by the State, and he had no right to be in a political organisation. Members must see that officers under this Bill must be removed from any possible stigma of political partisanship.

Mr. Collier: What about justices of the peace?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: A justice of the peace who was an officer of a political organisation could not act.

Mr. Collier: Justices of the peace might be biased.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Justices of the peace were taken from all sections of the community. Certainly they were biased. If a man was not biased his views were not worth having; but a justice of the peace must not be an active member of a political association

else he should not witness claim forms. [**Mr. Angwin:** Why the necessity for witnessing claim forms?] We were not discussing that point, but the principle carried out in this clause of excluding from holding an office under this Bill any person holding an office in a political organisation.

Mr. Scaddan: Only the other day the Minister appointed officers who were members of political organisations to act under the present statute. Was not the secretary of the Trades and Labour Council, who was appointed, an officer of a political organisation?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: hoped not. If the hon. member would give assurance that the secretary of the Trades and Labour Council was an official of a political organisation—

Mr. Scaddan: The gentleman was secretary of a trades and labour organisation.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Under the present law there was no qualification; any person could be an officer, but no one was appointed at present to receive claims. The hon. member meant that this gentleman was appointed to take postal votes.

Mr. Scaddan: No, it was an appointment as assistant registrar.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That was merely for giving information. At present information was scattered broadcast through the country.

Mr. Scaddan: Did not this gentleman receive claims?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Not by virtue of the appointment.

Mr. Scaddan: Was not that the Minister's object in appointing the gentleman?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Any person could collect claims now and take them to the registrar. No appointment was necessary for collecting claims. However, we should seek in this Bill to carry out the principle of excluding from holding office any person holding office in a political organisation or who might be a partisan.

Mr. BATH: Encouragement should be given to people in every way possible to get on the roll, but it appeared from the

objections raised by the Attorney General that he was in reality taking steps which would limit the opportunities of people desirous of becoming enrolled. Any person authorised to witness claims would probably have political bias and perhaps strong political opinions, but not one of them would place any obstacle in the way of enrolling a voter, whoever he might be. The amendment only applied to the question of giving people a chance to put in their claims for getting on the roll.

Mr. HEITMANN: In introducing the measure the Attorney General said his desire was to facilitate persons getting on the roll, but if only the officers named in Clause 204 were allowed to witness claims at least 35 per cent. of the electors in Cue, if it were necessary that they should again have to apply to get their names put on the roll, would be able to be enrolled. He could see no harm in electors putting in claim forms without the applications being witnessed. Had it not been for the officers of the unions in his district there would not be one-half of the names on the roll there were at the present time. Why should the Attorney General try to prevent this, even if the officers belonged to some particular society? During the past few months officers had been in the streets at Day Dawn and Cue trying to get the rolls up to date. The Attorney General did not appear to be sincere in his expressed desire to get electors on the rolls. There were very many places on the Murchison where there were none of the persons mentioned in the Bill as being entitled to take claims.

Mr. SCADDAN: Surely a person holding a position in a political society was entitled to witness a claim. Since the Attorney General had been administering the Act he had appointed a large number of electoral agents. [*The Attorney General*: That was for the purpose of disseminating information.] Among those persons were not to be found officers of political organisations, but he could not for the life of him see why they should be prevented from being appointed electoral agents. He mentioned the case of the secretary of the Trades and Labour Council in Kal-

goorlie; that was only one case out of many. The Attorney General had not appointed these persons but he had selected the position. The town clerk at Kalgoorlie had been appointed as an electoral agent. Because a person had a political opinion and put it into force, were we to prevent that person from doing anything under the Bill? As this provision only applied to persons appointed to witness claims it should have no political effect at all.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Political agents were the disseminating means for making common knowledge to all persons in the community as to what were the provisions of the electoral law. As to any other powers than acting as disseminating agents they had none at all. The reason that it would be objectionable to have officers of political organisations witnessing claims was that it would be clearly desired by an officer of an organisation to take a very charitable view of any case, instead of doing as an officer should do, satisfy himself of the *bona fides* of a person appearing before him. An official of an organisation would not be too scrupulous about it.

Mr. Bath: The people of Western Australia were not all convicts, they only wanted votes.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was very apparent that every struggle was to be made to bring impurity into the Bill and to make it open to abuse, but he (the Attorney General) would see it was not so. The only exceptions taken to the measure were exceptions where impurity was barred, and the struggle was to open the door again. If a man transferred himself at the present time from one electorate to another the transfer had to be witnessed. In New Zealand, Queensland and New South Wales where modern legislation had been passed in regard to the electoral laws, far more precautions were taken than we took. He had taken but the minimum precautions and insisted where it was necessary that all precautions should be taken to insist on purity. He found instead of getting assistance that was where objection was taken. Wherever he strove to secure purity there he got opposition.

Was it likely to create the slightest hardship that officials of organisations were debarred from discharging this duty when there were thousands of other people who had no interest except that which every human person had for another. The officials of organisations had an interest to mislead. It was impossible for a man to be in a political organisation and not identify himself with the success of that organisation, and who would not stretch a point in its favour. He wanted to block that, whether it was the National Political League or any other league, so that electors would have no inducement offered to them to do anything that was wrong.

Mr. BATH: The Attorney General had risen with considerable wrath to say that we wanted to oppose his desire to have purity in elections, and he had attempted to bolster that absurd statement by quoting the electoral law of other communities. As far as New Zealand was concerned, if the Attorney General wished to give a correct statement to the House he must know that in New Zealand the electoral claims had only to be witnessed by another elector, and if the Attorney General wished to go to the community which had the purest rolls, the greatest proportion of people enrolled, the greatest percentage of votes recorded on election day, and the most liberal legislation, he must go to New Zealand to find it. He (Mr. Bath) was not here to attempt to give facilities for impurity in elections; he was here to prevent it. But he would not support any proposal deliberately aimed in the interest of a party of disfranchised electors. The State Constitution provided for adult suffrage, and the Bill should provide facilities for enrolment. The Attorney General's proposals for disfranchisement might be right if we were a community of convicts; but 99 per cent. of people wished only to vote once and no more. This proposal, in common with Clause 204, would mean that the leisured classes in the towns, people who worked five or six hours a day, would have no difficulty in getting enrolment, but great difficulties would confront thousands of workers. No officer of a political

organisation should be allowed to act as registrar, returning officer, or poll clerk, but great hardship would be inflicted if such a person were prevented from witnessing claims. Even the provision to compel claims to be witnessed by certain persons was reactionary. The Attorney General could not show that the existing provisions had ever been abused. In the old days of the gold-fields, men of all shades of political opinion had united to enrol the people. Why make it difficult to have claims filed? Abuses were provided for subsequently in the Bill. The claimant would have to chase a justice of the peace, schoolmaster, or other authorised person. Working men were busy while such persons were available, and after working hours must seek them in the streets or in their private residences, and in distant places would be unable to enrol at all. The Attorney General's suspicions of his political opponents might be directed to ascertain whether this was not a proposal deliberately put forward to prevent the enrolment of electors. We were here to frame a machinery Act to facilitate and not to prevent voting.

Mr. T. L. BROWN regretted the Attorney General's rage at the amendment. Such tactics would not prevent the Opposition from doing their duty. In many districts there was neither justice of the peace, school teacher, nor other Government official; and to make a sworn declaration a man must travel some fourteen miles. In the Pilbarra District officials of political leagues opposed to him (Mr. Brown) honestly and fairly did their best to enrol the electors.

The Minister for Works: What political association was there in the Geraldton district other than the Labour Party?

Mr. T. L. BROWN: There was the National League.

The CHAIRMAN: The interjection being irrelevant, the hon. member must not reply to it.

Mr. T. L. BROWN: It could not be said that the Opposition had treated the Bill unfairly, that they had done more than was their constitutional right to do. If the Attorney General would have the matter dealt with calmly he would have

a Bill passed that he would be proud of, otherwise the measure would not reflect credit on him, or on those assisting him to pass it. If we limited the number of persons before whom claim forms could be signed it would be a hardship on those who were settling on the land. Anyone should be eligible to witness a claim form.

Mr. FOULKES: It was difficult to follow the argument of members opposite. His sympathies were with the candidate, and if the National League and the Political Labour Party both sent out officers to witness claim forms, which really meant to collect claim forms, any candidate not receiving the support of either party would feel unsafe if those officers of those organisations were sitting alongside the returning officer at the count of the votes.

Mr. Bath: It was not sought to have those officers at the counting of the votes. That was not the object of the amendment at all.

Mr. FOULKES: People who went round collecting claims should not be allowed to assist the returning officer.

Mr. HUDSON could not see how harm could be done by allowing anyone to witness claims.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	12
Noes	..	..	..	17

Majority against .. 5

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Augwin	Mr. Brehner
Mr. Bath	Mr. Eddy
Mr. T. L. Brown	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Collier	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Holman	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Scaddan	Mr. Gull
Mr. Stuart	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Taylor	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Underwood	Mr. Keenan
Mr. Ware	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Heitmann (Teller).	Mr. Male
	Mr. Mitchell
	Mr. Price
	Mr. Smith
	Mr. Stone
	Mr. Layman (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. SCADDAN moved an amendment in Subclause 2—

That the word "knowingly" be inserted after "officer."

An officer might become a candidate without his knowledge, and provision should be made to prevent the clause being brought into operation in such a case. This could be done by making it necessary that the officer should be aware of the fact that he was a candidate.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL accepted the amendment.

Amendment passed: clause as amended agreed to.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past 11 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 29th August, 1907.

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

Prayers.

QUESTION—FREE FARMS FOR AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS.

Hon. G. THROSSELL asked the Colonial Secretary: In view of the importance of offering encouragement to