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**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): What works, and where is the revenue?

**THE HON. A. B. KIDSON**: The hon. member will be able to answer that better than I can. We have a revenue of £2,000,000, and it seems to me that many of these works might be constructed out of it.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): All the money is allotted.

**THE HON. A. B. KIDSON**: Perhaps some of the items provided for by the Estimates might be left out and some of these inserted. I am sorry to have to say that, in my view, so long as we have the present Engineer-in-Chief we shall have these tremendous loans asked for. Since he has been here we have had a continual series of loans for public works, but I think the time has arrived when we should pause a little and not go so fast. I know the Premier does not agree with this, and when any objection is taken to his proposals, he says "Let us leave the timid and laggard ones behind." I do not agree with him, for I think this borrowing policy will eventually result in disaster to the colony. We are depending almost entirely on the goldfields, and if there happens to be a slump our position will be most serious. As regards this Bill, the information given by the hon. the Minister is very meagre, and I do not think we ought to vote for it without further explanation. We should exercise the greatest caution and not indulge in what the Hon. Mr. Parker has very rightly termed lavish expenditure. If, however, the Bill is passed, I can only hope it will result in lasting good to the colony.

**THE HON. F. M. STONE**: I move that the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and passed.

Debate adjourned accordingly.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House at 9:45 o'clock, adjourned until Tuesday, 13th October, 1896, at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

## Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 8th October, 1896.

Jury Act Amendment Bill: Message from the Governor — Question: Perth-Fremantle Road — Question: Stores Department at Fremantle, and reported removal—Motion: Standing Orders Suspended for expediting business—Waterworks Bill: third reading—Annual Estimates: Complaint of delay re Excess Bill; Railways and Works Estimates further considered — Cue-Nannine Railway Bill: second reading—Perth Racecourse Railway Bill: second reading—Kalgoorlie-Kanowna Railway Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

**THE SPEAKER** took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

### PRAYERS.

### JURY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) presented a Message from his Excellency the Governor, and the same was read, recommending an appropriation to be made out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purpose of an Act to amend the Jury Act, 1871; a Bill with that object having been introduced on the previous day.

#### QUESTION—PERTH-FREMANTLE ROAD.

**MR. WOOD** (for Mr. Solomon), in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works when there was a probability of the Perth-Fremantle Road being opened for public use.

**THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS** (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied that, at the present rate of progress, it would probably be about six months before the entire road was completed and open for traffic.

#### QUESTION—STORES DEPARTMENT AT FREMANTLE, AND REPORTED REMOVAL.

**MR. WOOD** (for Mr. Higham), in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works whether it was the intention of the Government to remove the Colonial Stores Department from Fremantle.

**THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS** (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied that there was no intention to do so at present.

**MOTION—STANDING ORDERS SUSPENDED FOR EXPEDITING BUSINESS.**

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest), in accordance with notice, moved "That, in order to expedite business, the Standing Orders relating to the passing of public Bills, and the consideration of Messages from the Legislative Council, be suspended during the remainder of the session." He said the Government had only one object in view, that of trying to expedite the business of the country; and if hon. members agreed to this motion, it would not mean that every Bill was to be rushed through, for the House would have complete control over its business, the same as in ordinary circumstances. But there were some Bills which usually passed without amendment or without much contention, and a good deal of time might be saved if these could be considered in committee without delay, and be passed through all stages in one or two sittings. Seeing that there were no very important Bills remaining on the Notice Paper, hon. members would act wisely in agreeing to this motion for expediting business, with a view to the closing of the session. The Government had no desire to hurry anything through the House that required consideration, and members might rest assured that the Government would not move in that direction at all. They would be glad to defer to the wishes of hon. members with regard to the conduct of business, and certainly would not try to force any important measure through the House without sufficient time being given for its consideration; but at this late stage of the session it would be wise to do now what was done last year, by suspending the Standing Orders with regard to Bills and messages. This course would not really affect in any way the privileges of the House, because Bills that were amended could not be passed through all stages at the same sitting, as time would be required for reprinting with the amendments. Still, some time would be saved by this more expeditious procedure; and he proposed it entirely in the interest of those members who wished to bring the session to a close as soon as possible. It was not so much for the convenience of the Government as for hon. members, because Ministers were always in their

places, and could attend to the business of the country, so that a continued attendance in the House for some time longer would be less inconvenient to them than to members who lived in the country, or at some distance from Perth. Last session a similar motion had been adopted, and the course was not found to be inconvenient. He was, however, entirely in the hands of the House in regard to it, and he would not think of dividing the House on it or of pressing the motion, if hon. members did not desire it.

Question put and passed, and the Standing Orders suspended accordingly.

**WATERWORKS BILL.**

**THIRD READING.**

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

**ANNUAL ESTIMATES.**

**COMPLAINT OF DELAY *re* EXCESS BILL.**

On the Order of the Day for going into committee of supply to further consider the Railways and Works Estimates,

MR. R. F. SHOLL said: Before the Speaker leaves the chair, I propose to move that the further consideration of the Estimates be deferred until the Excess Bill for the year 1896 be placed before hon. members.

THE PREMIER: The excesses are here, printed on the Estimates.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: No; the past year's Excess Bill is not on the Estimates, and we were told by the Premier that, according to his own showing, there is an excess of over a quarter of a million of money. I think we are entitled to have the Excess Bill brought down before the end of the session.

THE PREMIER: Why did you not think of this before? You have been asleep.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I have been thinking of it all along. We are asked by the Premier to allow the Government to do whatever they like with the funds. I think it is a bad thing for the colony if Parliament surrenders the funds and hands them over to a Minister. The excuse given by the Premier the other night, for not bringing in the excesses for this year, was that on a previous occasion the House had refused to consider the Excess Bill when he did bring

it in, without the report of the Auditor General being before it. I think the House was right not to do so. He also said there would not be time during the present session for the Auditor General to furnish his report. But I say the Audit Act allows the Treasury three months in which to prepare their accounts and forward them to the Auditor General for his report. When the Premier presented his Financial Statement to the House, he had all the figures of unauthorised expenditure; and yet we are now told the Auditor General cannot make his report because he has not received the accounts from the Treasury for examination. I say the reason why the Auditor General is not furnished with the accounts, in order that he may present his report to Parliament before the end of the session, is that the Government do not desire to have their unauthorised expenditure criticised by Parliament. [THE PREMIER: No, no.] It is absurd that an Excess Bill, amounting to £300,000 or £400,000, and if we take the loans into consideration the excesses altogether will amount to over half a million of unauthorised expenditure, cannot be brought in until 18 months after the money has been spent. It was never intended, when the Audit Act was passed, that the Excess Bill should be considered 18 months after the money had been expended. The intention was that the Excess Bill should be brought in during the current session, three months being given as the extreme limit. The financial reports of the colony are made up to the 30th June, as the close of the financial year, and there is no reason why the Treasury should require so long to make up its accounts and forward them to the Auditor General for examination, in order that he may present his report to Parliament. There is not the slightest reason why it should take three months to forward these reports and pass them on to the Auditor General, because, as we know, the accounts were made up to the 30th June, and must have been so in order that the Treasurer might ascertain the financial condition of the country before making his Financial Statement; therefore I say the Treasury must have all these figures and reports ready, and they had them ready on the 30th June

last. They have all the records of them, and assuming they are not actually correct in every detail, still the Treasury ought not to take more than a fortnight to prepare the returns and pass them on to the Auditor General. Another reason why we should have the Excess Bill this session is that we are on the eve of a dissolution of Parliament, and there will be another Parliament assembled here next year; therefore new members will come in, and possibly no member sitting here at present may be here then, though I do not think that is very probable. A fresh Parliament cannot criticise an Excess Bill eighteen months after the money has been expended; so there is a special reason why the House should, on this occasion, have the Excess Bill before the close of this session. For that reason, I beg to move that the further consideration of the Estimates be deferred until the Excess Bill is brought in.

THE SPEAKER: I should like to point out to the hon. member that he is out of order; for when the House has once been in committee on a Bill or on the annual Estimates, and progress has been reported, then according to our Standing Orders the Speaker has to leave the chair, without any question being put as to whether the House shall go into committee again or not. Therefore, although I have allowed the hon. member to proceed rather irregularly, still our Standing Orders say I shall leave the chair, as a matter of course, upon the Order of the Day for again going into committee on the Estimates, and I do not need to put the question at all at this stage.

THE SPEAKER left the chair, and the House went into committee for the further consideration of the Estimates.

#### IN COMMITTEE :

#### RAILWAYS AND WORKS DEPARTMENTS.

*Railways and Tramways, £476,950 :*

MR. R. F. SHOLL, for reasons previously given, moved that progress be reported in order that the consideration of the Estimates might be deferred until after the Excess Bill for the year 1896-7 had been placed before hon. members.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the member for the Gascoyne must have been asleep during the previous part of the session, and had just wakened

up. The hon. member had told them that the Government were afraid to bring the Excess Bill before the House because they did not want the excess expenditure to be criticised; but, so far from the Government being afraid to do so, it was a curious fact that the Estimates before hon. members showed the excesses on every single item, from beginning to end of the past year's expenditure.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: We know that is not a fact.

THE PREMIER: I know it is an absolute fact that every single item of excess expenditure for the past year is shown on these Estimates.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: There are loan moneys as well, and I want to see the excesses on the loan votes.

THE PREMIER said they were not now dealing with the Loan Estimates, which were not on the table at present. The hon. member did not seem to know the difference between the Loan Estimates and the annual Estimates of Expenditure out of the Consolidated Revenue. Loan Estimates were not in the same category at all as the expenditure out of Consolidated Revenue, because the Loan Estimates were merely a statement made by the Government to show what they proposed to spend during the current year, out of funds already voted by the House, whereas the Estimates of Expenditure out of Consolidated Revenue were sums actually proposed by the Government for expenditure on the particular works and services specified, which had not been sanctioned by the House up to that time, and which therefore the House was asked to sanction. In making his Financial Statement to the House, he had shown the excess expenditure that had taken place on all the principal items on the Estimates; and if the hon. member was anxious to know any excess which had taken place in the expenditure out of Consolidated Revenue, he could find it reported on pages 528 and 529 in "Hansard" for the current session, all the excesses on the principal items being set forth there, from the first item to the last in the Estimates, under every head of revenue. On page 529 of "Hansard" the member for the Gascovne would find all the items of excess that had taken place. The excess was mentioned by him (the Premier) with regard to each heading, and in

several cases the reason for the excess was given. The amounts of excess set forth in the speech totalled £247,626, and the remaining items amounted to £5,930, distributed over several items of expenditure. The details of each excess were not given, but all the items were mentioned. As far as he was concerned, he could bring down the Excess Bill in a few days, if hon. members were prepared to pass it without the report of the Auditor General. He could not see, however, how the House was going to deal with the Excess Bill without that report. A great deal of investigation was necessary on the part of the Audit officers to get the accounts in order, and it was impossible for the Auditor General to complete those investigations and prepare his report within three months. It was impossible, under the present system of accounts, to have the Auditor General's report very quickly after the closing of the financial year. The holding of the session of Parliament soon after the closing of the financial year was very convenient to the Treasurer, because it placed him in possession of the actual revenue received, and enabled him to make an estimate for the next year with some amount of accuracy. On the other hand, the holding of the session at that time of the year was not so convenient, because the financial returns were delayed for investigation, only the totals being given. The delay in giving the details of these returns was no doubt unfortunate, but it could not be helped. Formerly, the financial year was made to end on 31st December, and the House met sometimes early in the year, and sometimes as late as September or October, the latter months being a very inconvenient time for the House to meet on account of the hot weather. As to the other colonies, submitting the Excess Bill to Parliament before the Estimates, he could not see how they could do it so soon after the closing of the financial year. He did not speak with authority as to the practice in other colonies, but it seemed to him impossible for them to have the Auditor General's report until towards the end of the session, if even then. Usually, in this colony, the Auditor General's report was not ready until about December, towards the end of the year. Under the old system, when the financial year closed

on 31st December, the Treasurer had to estimate the revenue for the remaining part of the year, usually four or five months, and also for the following year; so that he had to estimate the probable revenue for nearly eighteen months in advance; whereas, under the present system, the Treasurer was in a better position, for he usually had before him, when estimating the revenue, the returns for two months of the year for which he was estimating, and he was thus able to make a very close estimate of the probable revenue. In 1892 he had brought down the Excess Bill in good time, for the information of members; but he had then to move for it to be discharged, with the object of bringing it forward in the following session, owing to the absence of the Auditor General's report. Mr. Parker, who was then the leader of the Opposition in this House, objected to the Bill going forward without the Auditor General's report; and the member for the Gascoyne took the same objection, pointing out that the Bill should not be proceeded with until that report was before the House. Therefore, the Excess Bill on that occasion was withdrawn. It would not be the slightest trouble to the Government to bring down the Bill now, but the report of the Auditor General was not ready, and could not be ready for some time yet.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he concurred in the view that the Excess Bill could not be considered without the report of the Auditor General; but he saw no reason why the Auditor General should not have had the accounts for investigation months ago. The accounts were made up to the 30th June. The Premier had said he had given every information in his Financial Statement with regard to the excesses, but he (Mr. Sholl) did not think so. The Premier had not given details of the excesses, nor the amount of the underdrafts—money authorised to be expended and not expended. These underdrafts would increase the excesses considerably. There were thousands and thousands of pounds that had not been expended at all, although voted by the House; and all the excesses, including loan moneys, would amount to about half a million. He (Mr. Sholl) understood the difference between loan estimates and consolidated revenue estimates. There were excesses

in both; and both, he took it, would be dealt with in the Excess Bill. It was a pity that Parliament should give up control of the public expenditure to the Government, and hon. members should jealously retain that control, and not give it up to any Government or any Premier. It was a matter for regret that the Excess Bill, together with the Auditor General's report, could not be dealt with during the current session of Parliament. He had no wish to press the motion, but he desired to enter his protest against such a system of dealing with the finances of the colony.

MR. VENN said it was a pleasure to him to hear the remarks of the member for the Gascoyne who, there was not the slightest doubt, was moving in the right direction. The privileges of Parliament should be most jealously guarded, and its rights and powers as regards the finances should be respected. If the Government were able to ask for approval of an expenditure of half a million or a million, and receive that approval without discussion, there was no reason why they should spend a couple of millions or more without authority. The Premier must recognise that the object of the member for the Gascoyne, in dealing with the question, was a laudable and proper one. The Estimates, no doubt, showed how the excess expenditure had been incurred; but the member for the Gascoyne required that the items and the details should both be before the House. The Excess Bill, for which the member for the Gascoyne had asked, would not be dealt with by the present Parliament, as a dissolution was at hand; and as many of the present members might not be in the next Parliament, it would be difficult for new members to deal with the Excess Bill. There was not the slightest doubt that the Excess Bill, together with the Auditor General's report, should, if possible, be placed before hon. members prior to the close of the session. There were great difficulties in the way, no doubt, owing to the intricacies of the public accounts, and three months was a short period to give the Auditor General for getting his report ready. The production of the Excess Bill during the session in the previous year, mentioned by the Premier, might be taken as an indication that the

Government did not desire to shirk criticism; and it was only reasonable to suppose the Government would do what they could to bring the Excess Bill before the House during the session. The thanks of the House were due to the member for the Gascoyne in having brought forward his motion, for the reason that it had in view the jealous watching of the rights and privileges of the members, and the observing of constitutional usage and the rights of Parliament.

THE PREMIER said that if they could get the Excess Bill on the table before the close of this session, the Government would do it. He could promise to place the Excess Bill on the table; but, as he had said before, he could not promise the Auditor General's report. It would not take more than a day or two to prepare the Excess Bill. The Government were anxious that the Assembly should exercise a careful scrutiny over all expenditure, and if hon. members would devote their attention to the Estimates, they would be able to deal with all items of excess for the past year, because all items of excess were shown in a separate column right through the Estimates. It was competent for any hon. member to ask for returns on any item, or to require an explanation, or even, if necessary, a select committee could be appointed to investigate. The items of excess were shown on the Estimates; for on page 60 was the item, "Wages — guards, porters, &c.; also, overtime and extra labour and departmental clerical assistance, £18,305;" while the actual amount expended was set down at £31,887, showing a considerable excess. Another item on the same page was, "Materials and incidental expenses, £3,000," whereas £4,226 had been expended, showing an excess of £1,226; and so on, right through the Estimates. This excess column did not appear on the Estimates in any of the other colonies, but it was a useful column. The member for the Gascoyne knew that all the excess amounts were shown on the Estimates, each under its proper heading, or under the headings of "sundries" and "miscellaneous." He would see what could be done towards getting the Excess Bill ready.

Motion, to report progress, put and negatived.

MR. VENN said he wished to refer to the statement of the Commissioner of Railways, made the other evening, because the attention of hon. members should be drawn to the fact that a certain amount of injustice had been done to himself in regard to the position he had held as Commissioner of Railways. He had thought the present holder of the office would have made some allusion to himself, and have given him some little credit for his past services as Commissioner, in connection with the year's railway returns. It would be known to hon. members that the term of office of the present Commissioner began about three months prior to June 30th; therefore the financial results of the administration of the railways to the 30th June were due mainly to his (Mr. Venn's) administration of the department prior to the hon. member taking office. He drew attention to that fact because the House seemed to think the financial results of the railways, if due to any particular cause, were due to the present administration. As there were certain circumstances surrounding his leaving office, the public might be led to think there had been no proper administration of the department prior to the present Commissioner taking office; and he drew attention to the fact that the financial position on the 30th June was not due at all to the present administration. No one need doubt that fact. In the previous year, when speaking on the estimates of revenue and expenditure for the railways, he had stated that a wonderful difference was likely to take place before the following session. Hon. members knew the working expenses had come down to 49 per cent. of the actual revenue, and that fact spoke volumes for the statement he had made in the previous session. His desire at that moment was not to cavil at anything the hon. member had said, but only to draw attention to the want of courtesy due to himself, in the absence of all reference to his services and the position he had recently held in the Government. It was also thought, by many, that the improvements which had taken place in several directions had been suggested and had taken place during the administration of the present Commissioner, but it seemed to him to be a case of one reaping where the other had sown. For

instance, with regard to the interlocking gear, that matter was decided upon some time ago, and the material had only arrived in the colony within the last few months. The decision to put in the interlocking gear was not, therefore, the work of the present Commissioner, but was due to consideration given to the subject before the present Commissioner took office in March last. Then, as to the duplication of the line between Perth and Midland junction, that also was decided upon and the works were in progress before the present Commissioner took office.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** The works were not in progress.

**MR. VENN** said the works were not authorised by Parliament, but the surveys were ordered to be carried out, and the work was proceeding as fast as it possibly could without the vote of Parliament. The improvements made at Perth station and at Fremantle were old improvements, for which the designs had been completed and the contracts let. The same might be said of the sidings on the Coolgardie Railway, as that matter had been decided by the Executive Council a month or two before he left office, so that this was not a new idea. The Executive had decided that the wayside crossing stations should be placed at distances of seven or ten miles. Then, in regard to rolling stock, he did not think any rolling stock was now being landed in the colony that was not ordered before the present Commissioner took office. When he (Mr. Venn) left office, orders had been forwarded for £350,000 or £400,000 worth of rolling stock; therefore, so far as rolling stock was concerned, the condition of the department to-day was due to a former administration, and if any acknowledgment to that effect had been made by the Commissioner, he (Mr. Venn) would not have spoken on this occasion. The same might be said in regard to reorganising the departments, by placing them under distinctive heads, as shown by the Estimates this year. He did not make these remarks offensively to the present Commissioner, but spoke merely to make it clear that the department was being efficiently maintained when a Ministerial change took place.

Vote put and passed.

*Public Works*, £486,240 5s. 8d. :

**MR. SIMPSON** asked the Director of Public Works whether he was prepared to lay upon the table of the House the correspondence with regard to the disorganisation of the Public Works Department, and also the return that was originally called for. In asking for these papers, he desired to direct the attention of the committee and of the country to what he was compelled to call an awful state of affairs in the Public Works Department. He had facts in his possession, on unimpeachable authority, to show that he was not overstating the case. Knowing, as he did, the integrity of the administration of the department, and the desire of the Government that the work of the department should be carried out purely in the interests of the country, he could not fail to regard this great money-spending department with suspicion, and possibly with dread. He would ask the attention of the committee while he stated some facts in connection with the Architectural branch of the department, the information having been supplied to him by an expert whose authority was unquestionable. It was information which he (Mr. Simpson) was sure was not in the possession of the Director of Public Works, and it showed that this branch of the department had drifted into a state of chaos, and that public money was being wasted at the rate of thousands of pounds a year in salaries. That was the direct waste, and there was also the compensation paid to contractors for alterations in plans, and for extras. He would ask the committee to assist him in getting an inquiry into these allegations, when a tale would be unfolded that would simply be revolting to the sense and the integrity of every member of the Assembly. Perhaps the Director of Public Works would furnish a return, showing the time that had been spent in the preparation of the plans of the Perth Museum and Library. For years Parliament had been endeavouring to reform the Architectural branch of the Works Department, but all efforts had been abortive. Now he believed they had an opportunity of getting at something in detail. With regard to the Perth Museum and Library, months ago drawings were prepared, and, after a delay of many more months, ten-

ders were invited and a contract was signed. Sixteen months were spent over those plans. Two sets of plans were prepared, and nearly 300 days were spent on the drawings, not including professional advice since the 30th June. These plans were supposed to be scrutinised in detail from day to day by the head of this branch during their preparation, and, after all, the contractor had to wait four months for his working drawings, and was still waiting. If he (Mr. Simpson) was not trespassing on the time of the committee, he would give further details of the disorganisation of the department from a statement which had been supplied to him, as follows:—

*“Perth Museum and Library.”*—Taking the above-mentioned proposed building as a fair sample of what goes on under the present want of system, I will briefly sketch its history. Some months ago, drawings were prepared, and, after a delay of many months, tenders were invited and a contract was signed on or about the 22nd May last. I am informed that 16 months were spent on these plans, off and on, and I believe I am correct in stating that nearly 300 days were spent on the drawings, not including my own time up to June, 1896. On the 12th June, Mr. Poole placed them in my hands to make certain changes he indicated on a rough tracing he gave me. The drawings were altered by means of flies, so far as that could be done to save the expense of re-drawing, submitted to Mr. Poole, approved, and traced—the tracings to be regarded as an original set, also to save re-drawing. This set of tracings was submitted to Mr. Poole on the 10th July, approved by him; and, on his instructions to me on that day, I had the usual number of copies made. In addition to this, I had entirely re-written portions of the specifications, interlined and altered the original in red, after hours, to save time, and had the three copies of the specification made on Mr. Poole’s instructions. I made fresh and complete drawings of the ironwork, in a hurry, for the contractor, in order that this portion of the work might be got under way, which was submitted to and approved by Mr. Poole. I now regarded this set of drawings as complete. During a short period, when I was absent from work on a doctor’s certificate, it came to my knowledge that Mr. Poole was still carrying on his peculiar system of making changes in the drawings, and I taxed him with this at the Claremont railway station on the first day I was able to return to my duties (the 3rd August), when he said he was doing so because the complete set of plans were never shown to and approved by him. In this, however, he was wrong, as my diary can testify. Some changes were made in the ironwork, for the worse, and then Mr. Poole could not make up his mind as to

how the gable on the entrance front should be finished, and the eaves connected with it, although I had submitted five or six sketches to him. He then altered the stair to the basement, the question of the gable remaining in abeyance for some time, until I took some of the drawings up on the 26th August, when they were left for his further consideration. Shortly before this, on the 14th August, I discovered that the piers in the basement to carry the floors, the load thereon, the superstructure, the roofs, and the wind pressure, were far too weak to do their work, having each a superficial area of 8ft. 9in. nearly, to carry approximately 90 tons, and proposed to be built of local brick in cement mortar (!); over 10 tons per foot supported on ordinary bricks, for special ones were not mentioned for this work in the specification.”

So, according to this statement, after 16 months it was discovered that after all this expense and the whole of the intelligence of this department had been devoted to the plans, the building was structurally imperfect, and that it was unsafe to erect it. Then they had the proposal of Mr. Poole that concrete should be used instead of brick. The statement went on to say:—

“I submitted this very important matter to Mr. Poole for his consideration, who suggested concrete piers (!) should be substituted, and finally agreed to have them executed in granite, on my suggestion.”

He (Mr. Simpson) was told that this proposal of Mr. Poole’s to substitute concrete piers was an absolutely unparalleled proposition for a professional man to make. The statement went on to say:—

“The remaining drawings were sent for by Mr. Poole on the 27th August, and given to his messenger. Fresh drawings or tracings are now being made of the ironwork, and other changes have been made. All this time the builder is waiting for his drawings; over four months at the time of writing (28th September). I do not propose to offer an opinion on the original set of drawings, as it would reflect to a certain extent on the officers who prepared them. The tracings of the Perth Museum are not yet finished; only one had been copied (September 28th).”

Another matter he would refer to was the Lunatic Asylum at Fremantle. If there was one class of public buildings that especially appealed to the alertness and the considerate care of those who had to carry them out, it was those which were designed for the care and relief of the insane, and therefore it might have been expected this Lunatic Asylum would have



been erected as soon as possible. The history of the building was related by the expert whose statement he was quoting, as follows:—

*Fremantle Lunatic Asylum (for women):—*

"On the 28th April, I went with Mr. Poole to the Asylum at Fremantle. On the 7th May, I submitted seven sketches of the proposed new building, in plan only. Two approved by Mr. Poole were traced on cloth and sent forward, with an estimate in detail. On the 29th May the papers were returned to me to prepare the necessary drawings, Dr. Lovegrove having approved and commended the selected design, with a trifling modification subsequently carried out by me. Shortly, the drawings were submitted to Mr. Poole at every stage, and he called at my office on the 3rd June and approved, he even determining the floor levels. The set was finished and sent up, and on the 25th June Mr. J. J. Clarke was instructed to get out an alternative design, which he did, complete, including one copy in cloth, on the 17th August. So far as I know, nothing further has been done in this matter, although the additions are urgently required. Over three months have passed since I handed the completed set to Mr. Poole (25th June)."

Next, he would cite the case of the Albany Quarantine Station, as an example of the progress of the Architect's branch. [MR. GEORGE: There is no progress.] Well, he would read the particulars which had been furnished to him:—

*The Albany Quarantine Station.*—"I was first put on this work on the 9th June. Sketch finished on the 12th June. On the 7th July, submitted plans to Mr. Poole, who approved and instructed me to get the usual copies made. I wrote the specification of these buildings. During my absence through indisposition, changes were made in the drawings, generally of a trivial character, but involving retracing as regards the copies. Subsequently it was determined to remodel the laundries. I saw the drawings lying on Mr. Poole's table on the 5th September. Work urgently required. A new design of this quarantine station is now being prepared, I believe, by Mr. Cohen" (28th Sept., 1896).

Next, take the building for the Mint in Perth, the foundation stone of which had lately been laid, and this was an undertaking which he welcomed. Of the plans for the building, the statement made by the expert said:—

*The Mint.*—"Contract drawings prepared by Mr. Henry. Contract signed 19th June, immediately after which a new scheme of 15 sheets was got out by Mr. McMullen, the copies now being made by a new process. What will the adjustment with the contractor cost?"

Take another case:—

*Eucalypt Station.*—"Plan first drawn by Mr. Ruck. Elevations then done by Mr. Haddon. Scheme sent over to South Australia, and approved by Mr. Todd. Then new scheme by Mr. Austen, handed to me to re-model. After many attempts, sketches approved by Mr. Poole; working drawings made in pencil, sent up, estimated for, altered by me, and finally prepared for Ministers. Why should the work be hawked about, from one officer to another, in this way?"

He would next refer to the Bunbury hospital, a work which would be very near to the Premier's heart.

THE PREMIER: I know all about it, I am sorry to say.

MR. SIMPSON said this was what they were told about the Bunbury hospital:—

*Bunbury Hospital.*—"Complete scheme by Mr. Kennis; tender accepted. Error of 15 feet or thereabouts in the levels, which necessitated re-casting the scheme. This was done by Mr. Clarke, who prepared 5 designs; one at last approved. Mr. Clarke's design handed to Mr. McMullen, who was instructed to make the elevations. This is a correlative evidence of the way the officers are treated. On Saturday (26th September), Mr. Clarke, on being asked to again take up these plans, refused on the ground that they were entirely disorganised by the alterations Mr. Poole was continually making. Are we never to have finality from Mr. Poole? Is every set of drawings to be made half a dozen times over, and each time by a different officer?"

The last works referred to in the statement were these:—

*Kalgoorlie Hospital.*—"Urgently required. Mr. Haddon and Mr. Abbott working on this about 19th May to June 6th; then Mr. Clarke on the 27th July. Sketches approved 25th August; completed 9th September. When will this work be commenced?"

*Warden's Office, Coolgardie.*—"Original design by Mr. Bell. Working drawings and tracings finished. Scheme requires to be remodelled (14th September), because it is too elaborate and costly."

These were some of the circumstances which he desired to bring before the committee. Were these things to go on? Recognising his responsibility in submitting the evidence, he had been careful to investigate every feature of it. His informant was a man of unquestionable character and of professional standing, whose ability had been recognised by his appointment to the public service. No man in the colony had a wider know-

ledge of his profession, and his statements showed that the money was being directly wasted at the rate of thousands of pounds a year in salaries, while there was an indirect waste arising from alterations in existing contracts. He (Mr. Simpson) would be glad if the Director of Public Works would furnish the committee with an explanation. He believed the Director had every desire to put the department in a sound and honourable position. He (Mr. Simpson) dreaded the Public Works Department, for he knew that the Public Works Departments of other colonies had, year by year, dragged those colonies into the depths of despair and of debt, and it was his wish that this colony should avoid following in the same way. He asked the committee to support him in securing either a clear refutation of the statements which had been made, or the adoption of a course which would not permit this state of things to exist any longer.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) said he wished, before any member rose, to speak on the question, and say he was now making an investigation in the Architect's branch of the department, and it would strengthen his hands if the matter was not discussed at that stage. The Architect's branch had been a source of much trouble to him, and he was endeavouring to reform it; but he had been so short a time in office that he had to fully acquaint himself with the affairs of the branch before carrying out that reform. If Parliament would give him a little time to reform the department—as many months as the member for Geraldton had said Parliament had been for years ineffectually endeavouring to do so—he would promise to bring about a drastic reform. There was no doubt the member for Geraldton had been well informed by an officer in the service. There had been a great deal of waste of time and money in this branch in the preparation of plans, but he would soon place the branch on a better footing. He had not been able to reorganise the department as quickly as he could have wished, because for the last three months a great deal of his time had been taken up with parliamentary matters. With regard to what the member for Geraldton has said about alterations in

the plans of the Mint, he might say that, immediately the matter was brought under the notice of the Government, steps were taken to prevent the recurrence of that sort of thing, and to inquire into the cause of it. Referring to what had been said by the member for Wellington (Mr. Venn) about his silence when making the annual statement upon the Railway Department, on the subject of the recent change in the administration, he desired to say now that he had not deemed it to be his duty, in laying certain information before this House, to refer to that change. But he had no desire to detract from the measure of credit that was due to the member for Wellington for his management of the department. On the subject of the Architect's branch, he would only add that, while many of the statements which had been laid before the committee were true, it was only right that both sides should be heard, as, of course, there were officers who were likely to be dissatisfied with their position. It was his intention in the future to see all the designs of the various works, and not give the head of the branch so much controlling power as he had had. There was no doubt some of the rejected designs had been better than those which had reached his (the Commissioner's) office.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he must confess there had been a great deal of dissatisfaction, both in the Legislative Assembly and among the public, in regard to the Architect's branch of the public service. He thought that anyone who had watched the course of events during the last few years must know that the branch had not been as satisfactory as could be desired, although he made no complaint against the ability of the head of the branch. He (the Premier) believed the head of the branch was a well qualified architect, probably the best qualified in this colony; but that was not the matter the committee had to deal with on this occasion. Besides, it would be possible for a man to be a first-class architect, and yet not possess organising and administrative qualities. During the last few months the Director of Public Works had brought the state of the Architect's branch under his (the Premier's) notice, and that Minister was giving attention to

a scheme for placing the department on a much better footing. As hon. members would notice in the Estimates, a change had been made, and the head of the Architect's branch was no longer styled "Assistant Engineer-in-Chief," a position which, before, had given him the oversight of the building of roads and bridges and nearly every work, leaving out railway stations and a few works of magnitude. The head of the Architect's branch had, in fact, a great deal more work than he could do, and there was no doubt there had been cause for complaint. He (the Premier) knew that the statements made by the member for Geraldton regarding the Mint, the Perth Museum and Library, and the Bunbury hospital, were absolutely correct. An architect who had artistic ideas could not be considered unreasonable when he made alterations for the purpose of improving his work. It was a fact that, in this branch, the designs for buildings were being continually changed; but the Director of Public Works was determined to put a stop to it and to re-organise this branch of the public service, and not before it was necessary. He (the Premier) held himself responsible, in a way, for all branches of the public service; and he must confess that what had come under his observation, as to changes made in the designs after contracts had been let, was certainly not conducive to economy. The Director of Public Works had brought this under his notice repeatedly, and the House might leave it in the hands of the Government with confidence, and in the hands of the present Director of Public Works, who was anxious to put all branches of his departments into an efficient state. In saying this, he did not intend in any way to reflect on the past Director of Public Works or on a past Government; but this colony had grown and the Works Department had grown so quickly, that it was only now a thorough reorganisation to meet the changed circumstances of the colony was being made. The Engineering branch had been re-arranged. The Architectural branch had formerly to deal with only a few small buildings each year, whereas now the expenditure was something like half-a-million on buildings in a year, and when the present Government took office he did not suppose the expenditure in

this branch was £25,000 a year. He was not prepared to blame any one person in regard to the past, the business having grown so quickly. If there was a weak spot, however, it would show itself eventually; and this system of altering designs after contracts had been let was indefensible, and had been put a stop to by the Director of Public Works, who brought it under his notice a few days ago with particular reference to the design for the Mint, and steps had been taken which would prevent a recurrence of that in the future.

MR. VENN said he agreed that the times were changing rapidly, and possibly the organisation of this branch of the service had been a mistake in the first instance; but it was a mistake made under strong advice, when the Government placed the Engineer-in-Chief as the head of the Architectural branch, and gave the former head of that branch the title of Assistant Engineer-in-Chief. When that system was commenced in 1892 it seemed likely to work fairly well; but it was discovered, within twelve months, that the procedure under it was not exactly tenable, and the inconvenience went on until last year, when the Government decided to make a change in the system. The estimates then before the committee showed there were distinct branches under the direction of separate heads, and that arrangement was made by himself, with the object of reorganising the department into distinct branches. Some very serious matters were under consideration by himself, at the time he left office, and he felt confidence in the action which the present Director of Public Works would have to take upon those papers. He did not say this with any disrespect to the present Assistant Engineer-in-Chief, for he was admirable in his particular branch, and at the head of his profession in this colony; but hon. members would know that in private works, when a person found an architect tinkering with a building after the contract had been let, the result must be an enormous increase in the expenditure. The great thing they all desired to have, in architectural designs, was that the buildings, when completed, should not show any extras whatever in the bill. The departmental papers would show that this practice of altering designs had led to considerable correspondence

on the subject, and he felt satisfied that, after the remarks made by the member for Geraldton, there must be considerable changes made in the Architectural branch of the Works Department.

MR. GEORGE said he had no wish to hurt the reputation of the gentleman who had charge of the Architectural branch of the Works Department, nor did he desire to embarrass the Government or the Director of Public Works. He sympathised with the Director in this matter, because it had become necessary to re-organise a branch of the department which practically had had no head over it hitherto. There were enough barnacles in the department to sink a ship, and enough red tape to hang all the heads of the various branches. Take the design for the Mint, as an example of the want of practical knowledge in preparing some of the plans. In the course of business he (Mr. George) had been applied to for a quotation of the cost of constructing a strong-room, as designed for that building, and on going into details he found it was impossible for any practical man to make out a tender on that specification. Then hon. members would observe the Ladies' Gallery in that Chamber, lately erected under contract, and he might say that the contractor, wishing to get a price for cast-iron columns as shown in the design and specified, found there was no ironfounder in the colony who had a pattern of that particular description for casting iron columns, and so it would become necessary to pay the extra cost of making a pattern from which four iron columns could be cast, although there were four or five ironfounders in the colony, besides himself, who could have supplied columns somewhat different from the design, but equally suitable for the purpose. Referring also to small buildings which had been erected at excessive cost, as compared with the purpose which they were intended to serve, he mentioned particularly the post office lately built at Jarrahdale, the design being so arranged that an architect could hardly have made it less suitable if he had tried. The door was placed in such a position that the slightest wind blew the papers about. Not the slightest common sense had been applied to the designing of that building; and he objected generally to the want of proper

adaptation in the designs for buildings of public utility, which were to be seen in many parts of the colony. The erection of the boys' school in James Street, Perth, had been arranged for before he (Mr. George) became a member of this House, and the contractor applied to him to become a surety, and he consented. He knew that alterations were afterwards made in the design, but no application had been made to the sureties to sign the altered design; and if there was any use in having sureties in connection with contracts, surely any material alterations should be signed by the surety; else how could he be expected to be responsible? He (Mr. George) knew, at any rate, that the contractor for that building was not going to lose by all the waste of time which had ensued in the construction of that building, through alterations in the design. One secret of it was that the head of the Architectural branch was hardly ever in his office at a reasonable hour in the morning; and if heads of departments did not think it necessary to be there and see that other persons in the department were duly attending to their duty, it could not be expected that those other servants would be very punctual in attendance. This gentleman might be seen any day arriving at the Perth station by train about 10 o'clock; and as he usually had a handbag, it became necessary for an assistant to be at the station to receive that bag and carry it to the office, although it was a small bag which any ordinary individual might carry for himself. This gentleman might be a splendid architect, but the country would not tolerate anyone at the head of a branch who deliberately fooled away and wasted the substance of the country. It was not merely the waste of money, but the country was calling out in all directions for the commencement or completion of buildings that were authorised and urgently required, some of them not being even commenced yet, although the money for them was voted last year. He found that this House voted last year £160,000 worth of public buildings, not one of which had been commenced, and the only expenditure incurred, according to the Estimates, on account of the works so authorised was £4 2s. 10d. This

course of action, if carried on in connection with any private business, would lead to ruin; and he must say that what could not be tolerated in a private business ought not to be allowed in the business of the State. Let the Government give this gentleman a long holiday—say two or three years.

**THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS:** If you will leave him alone, it will be allright—perhaps much sooner than you expect.

**MR. GEORGE** said the House believed the Director of Public Works would be a success in his position; but he must not be offended if members brought before him matters that appeared to them to require urgent attention. It was also his intention to speak on the Railway Estimates, simply to acknowledge the good work that had been done during the last few months. He believed the present Commissioner of Railways had done good work, and that he was getting the loyal support of the working officers in the traffic branch of the railways.

**THE CHAIRMAN** said the hon. member must confine himself to Works, at present.

**MR. GEORGE** said that, as he was going to speak of the Engineer-in-Chief, he did not know how he could speak of him if he must not refer to the railways, because they could not split the Engineer-in-Chief into two parts, although he was connected with the two departments of Railways and Works. Another branch of the Works Department which did not give such satisfaction as it might do was that of the public Accountant. There could be no efficiency in a department of State, or in a private business, which was continually changing its officers; and he was informed that within the last eight or nine months no less than nineteen or twenty changes of officers had taken place in the Accountant's branch. Where had these men gone? They had not all been discharged, but the greater portion of them had actually solicited that they might be transferred to some other department. [**THE PREMIER:** Better pay, I expect.] No; it was because they had been working under a head who was not considered by the men to be a thoroughly efficient officer to guide them.

**THE PREMIER:** There had been a new chief there for three months.

**MR. GEORGE** said these men complained that when they had a grievance

they were not allowed the privilege of an inquiry; and he understood that this privilege had been taken away from them in that branch of the service. These men felt they had not been fairly treated; and, if that was so, they ought to have an opportunity of showing it, or their complaints should be shown to be unreasonable. To burke inquiry was not the sort of thing this House would tolerate. He was informed that, with regard to the goldfields water supply branch, under the direction of a gentleman who was scientific, no doubt—because these gentlemen professed to be scientific, one way or another—a new set of books was commenced, the others being in a terrible muddle; but as these new books were not usually made in Western Australia, the scientific gentleman directed that they must be obtained from outside the colony. That sort of thing meant: "Hang the manufacturers here; let us support the other colonies!"

At 6.30 p.m. the **CHAIRMAN** left the chair.

At 7.30 p.m. the **CHAIRMAN** resumed the chair.

**MR. GEORGE**, resuming his remarks on the Accountant's branch, said that some time ago it had been found necessary to acquire a new set of books for the goldfields water supply, and an order for these books had been sent to the other colonies, whereas there were firms in this colony which could have carried out the order. It was an item of only £34, a small amount, but it showed the way the wind was blowing. When the books arrived from another colony, it was found necessary to send them to a local bookbinder to be reorganised, and he did not know how much that had cost. There were constant complaints as to the delay in obtaining payment from the department for materials supplied, and these delays could be traced to the officers of the department. Much of the trouble, no doubt, had arisen from the constant changes of officers, no less than nineteen officers in this branch having been changed in nine months. When the Auditor General's report appeared, they would find in it, no doubt, damaging statements with regard to the former Accountant, Mr. J. B. Simmons. Charges

had been made against that officer, and an inquiry had been held, but the result had not been laid before the House. These complaints were of a serious character, and he believed the inquiry showed many irregularities. It was impossible, he understood, to discover how the accounts really stood, and it was even said there was a deficiency in the cash. The House had a right to expect that the result of such an important inquiry should be laid on the table. The charges had been made in a public manner, and the result of the inquiry should be made equally public. Had he been present when the railways were under consideration, he would have had a good deal to say. For instance, he noticed that the Railway Department was sending to England for men, whereas some men in the employment of the department were working only three and a half or four days a week.

THE CHAIRMAN said the hon. member must not now refer to Railways, which were not before the committee.

MR. GEORGE said he simply wished to show there was no need for any branch of the public service to import labour.

MR. ILLINGWORTH called attention to the very efficient report which had been laid on the table in connection with the Works Department, and also the report which had been produced in connection with the Railways. It was a matter of very great satisfaction to him to read the report of these two large spending departments, and be able to put a finger upon the way in which the money was being expended. In times to come, the data supplied by the report of the Works Department would be of immense value, and he wished to compliment the Under-Secretary, Mr. Jull, on the very efficient report he had prepared. It had been his intention to speak at length with regard to the Architect's branch, and to have said some strong things. Speaking generally, he had no hesitation in saying the Works Department was simply in an atrocious condition, and that the monuments of waste and failure of the department were scattered up and down the land, from one end to the other. He wanted the Minister, before this discussion closed, to give the House an assurance that the Government were taking steps to make

radical changes in the department. He believed they were taking those steps; and, if they were, they ought to take the House into their confidence, and give an assurance that they intended to put a stop to those complaints which vexed the spirits of members from year to year. Statements had been made in the House, in two successive sessions, which ought to have aroused the Ministry to take drastic measures for reform long ago. The time had come when the House wanted something more than a simple statement that the department was considering these questions. The House required and demanded, and the country demanded, a distinct assurance from the Ministry that these things were going to cease, that they were coming to an end, and that the Government were taking all the necessary steps to bring the department within control. He hoped the Director of Public Works would be able to give such an assurance; and trusting to him to do so, he (Mr. Illingworth) did not propose to occupy further time in discussing the department. Incidentally, there was a question to which he would like to call the attention of the House. There was a danger that the heads of this and other departments were taking on themselves the absolute control of the departments, in defiance of the Ministers responsible to the House. This danger had grown up; and as it was a danger that had to be fought against in the other colonies, it would have to be fought against here. The danger was increased in colonies like South Australia, where a new Minister came into office every year. What he wished to impress upon the House and upon the Ministry was that, as far as the House and the country were concerned, it was expected that each Minister would have absolute control of his department. They did not want, in that House, to refer to civil servants or to individuals who were not members of the Government. They did hold the head of a department responsible for any *laches*; but unless the Minister had complete control, they would not be able to get the results which the country desired. There was a danger that the Works Department might be ruled by the Assistant Engineer-in-Chief; and he (Mr. Illingworth) hoped the new Minister

in charge of the department would be courageous—he had been courageous in a good many matters already—and that the Government would be courageous as a whole, in holding complete control over the various departments over which they presided. He hoped the Minister in charge of the department, who would, if the department were to be reformed, have an exceedingly trying and difficult task to perform, would feel that every member of the House was in sympathy with him in what he proposed to do, and that he would go through with the work, having the assurance that, when using his best judgment in the matter, he had the representatives of the country behind him, and that the House would defend him in any course he deemed it necessary to pursue. He did not think that, if they got from the Minister the assurance now asked for, it would be necessary to prolong this discussion or to review the vexatious questions which arose out of the Works Department. He hoped the Government would give an assurance that they would take the necessary drastic measures to place this exceedingly unsatisfactory department on a satisfactory basis.

**THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS** (Hon. F. H. Picso) said he would again assure the House that it was the intention of the Government, and particularly his intention, to reform the Works Department. The member for Nannine, and all hon. members, would know that it was difficult to deal with a very old servant, an officer who for years had been in charge of a department. He (the Minister) was not going to say the whole blame was to be attached to that officer, for part of it might be chargeable to others. If there had been disorganisation of the department, it was probable there were other causes besides the inefficiency of the chief officer. He did not wish it to be inferred that great blame did not attach to that officer, in many ways, especially in regard to complaints as to the preparation of plans, referred to by the member for Geraldton. He had yet to sheet home all the responsibility for those inaccuracies, and those instances of waste of money; but probably a good deal of it would have to be laid upon the head of the department. There was no doubt some of the com-

plaints to which reference had been made that night were made known by officers of the department; because, reading between the lines, he recognised that the information supplied to members was in some instances word for word the same as had been supplied to him in reports by officers in the department. That, doubtless, was not the right course for officers in the department to pursue; for they should let the matter rest, after having reported to him, to deal with it in the ordinary course of business. It was the intention of the Government to deal with that matter before the House again met; in fact, the affair had almost reached its final stage, and he intended to take immediate steps to reform and reorganise the department. He wished to say, in regard to the Works Department, that in his first statement he had referred to the great assistance rendered him by the Under Secretary of Works, who only very recently had been appointed to the position. Mr. Jull had been appointed by the Government on the recommendation of his predecessor; and during the time he had filled the position, he had in every way carried out his duties most satisfactorily. It was the most ambitious report ever prepared by the department. The desire had been to prepare a report that should afford the House all the information that ought to be given. It was better to let the House know all the particulars connected with the department, as far as possible, and be open and aboveboard; and the report fairly accomplished that object. He referred to this matter for the reason that he considered some little encouragement was due to the Under Secretary for the admirable report he had prepared. The report had been delayed owing to its voluminous character; but, from the experience gained in the preparation of the report, they would be able to have next year's report ready earlier, and, if possible, it would contain more information.

**MR. A. FORREST** said the thanks of the House were due to the member for Geraldton for bringing the matter before members, in the interests of the general public. They all knew that, for several years past, the Public Works Department had been in a most unsatisfactory condition. The same might be said of the Engineering branch connected with

railway construction. For instance, the contract for the deviation on the Eastern railway had been let at £48,000, and the work had cost more than double that amount. This only showed that the Architect's branch was not the only one that needed reforming. He hoped the Commissioner of Railways, in addition to reforming the Architect's branch, would also take some steps in the same direction in regard to the department charged with the construction of railways. Care should be taken that, where contracts were let, the work should be carried out for the amount of the tender, and not for double that amount. It was a singular fact that the contractor for the deviation had put in a claim for £35,000, in addition to the amount of the contract and the ordinary extras.

**THE PREMIER:** He has not got that amount.

**MR. A. FORREST** said the contractor had got £11,000 of the £35,000, and altogether had been paid nearly 100 per cent. more than his original tender. The two departments of Railways and Works were too much for one Minister, and when a sixth Minister was appointed he should be made Minister of Works or Minister of Railways, and not receive his title from one of the minor departments.

**THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS** said the report of the department showed that the increase of cost of the deviation was due to the presence of "greasy-backs" in the tunnel, and also to the necessity for lining the tunnel with brick in order to make it safe.

**MR. GEORGE**, referring to the item, "Engineer-in-Chief, £1,500," said he desired to refer to the question of railway construction, especially with regard to the Eastern Railway deviations. Those who knew anything of railway construction were aware that, before tenders were called, surveys had to be made, and that it was the duty of the surveyors to put down holes to discover the character of the material to be dealt with in preparing their estimates. The surveyors should be able to distinguish between rock cutting and sand excavation; and he remembered most distinctly that, in reference to this contract, drill holes were put down by the Government engineers. Those engi-

neers, therefore, should have been able to observe the existence of the "greasy-backs," and if they did not observe them, they did not know their business. It was the business of an engineering surveyor to report, not only on the facts easily ascertained, but on the conditions underground. With regard to the tunnel, he did not suppose there were half-a-dozen tunnels in the world that were not brick-lined. Engineers sometimes left out the lining, in order to keep down the cost in their estimates; but the tunnels had to be lined all the same. The officers of the department were not up to their work; there could be no question about that. Some time ago, reference had been made to the employment of Mr. Quirk, a representative of Messrs. Fowler & Son, of Leeds, as an expert assistant in the ordering of material and machinery. When this matter was before the House, it was said, sneeringly, that the complaint was made only by a newspaper called the *Mining Journal*. He might state that, if the *Mining Journal* had not dealt with the matter, he would have done so, as he had the information given to him at that time, and had gone so far as to speak to the Commissioner about it. The board to which reference had been made consisted of Mr. Quirk and two officers of the Works Department, and they were entrusted with the giving of certain orders. It had been said, from the Treasury bench, practically that it was not true those orders had been given; but he thought he could show that it was true, and he was going to ask the Commissioner of Railways some questions on the subject. The statement had been made that Mr. Quirk was a representative of Messrs. John Fowler & Co., Ltd., engineering and machinery manufacturers, Leeds; and he would like to know from the Commissioner who appointed that gentleman to act on the board, and whether there was any truth in the boast Mr. Quirk had publicly made that he received £10 a day for his services.

**THE CHAIRMAN** said the information asked for by the member for the Murray had already been given in the House.

**MR. GEORGE** said he thought he was within his right in making these remarks, because he was on the item "Engineer-in-Chief." He had asked a question in



reference to Mr. Quirk, and he wanted to know who appointed that gentleman. He was given to understand that the Engineer-in-Chief appointed him to act on the board with two of the officers in the department. It could not be denied that a large quantity of machinery had been ordered from England, and that an order had been given to John Fowler & Co. for engines which only that firm could supply. There was no doubt that, while these engines were ordered upon the recommendation of the committee of which John Fowler & Company's representative was a member, an order given to another firm, before the committee made their recommendation, had been cancelled. Would the Commissioner of Railways say whether that was true? Would he also say whether Mr. Quirk, the representative of John Fowler & Company, received ten guineas a day for acting on that committee, and whether the Government officers who were members of the committee were to be remunerated for their special services? Also, whether the Engineer-in-Chief was to be relieved from all connection with the management of the railways, in order that he might give the benefit of his long experience and high professional qualifications to the colony, in devising and carrying out the large public works of the colony? As the Engineer-in-Chief was going away for six or seven months on a visit to the old country to learn all he could about waterworks, and as he had expressed a wish to be relieved of managing the railways, why should the Government not relieve him in that way? If the Railway Department could be managed in Mr. O'Connor's absence, he could be reserved altogether for his proper sphere as consulting engineer.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS said Mr. Quirk had been appointed as a member of the Railway Workshops Committee on the recommendation of the Engineer-in-Chief. When appointed, he (the Commissioner) did not know Mr. Quirk was connected with John Fowler & Company; and when he found it out, he regretted the appointment, but found that the connection with that firm would have no influence upon the committee in regard to the ordering of machinery. The report of

two members of the committee was as follows:—

"To the Engineer-in-Chief.—We beg to draw your attention to an article which appears in the *Mining Journal and Investors' Review*, of the 19th inst. This article, we consider, whilst being directed mainly against Mr. Quirk as a member of the Workshops Committee, reflects so discreditably on ourselves, as members of this committee, that we take the liberty of asking you that some action be taken, either by the publication of this letter or otherwise, to formally refute the suggestions and assertions made. Briefly stated, the article asserts that Mr. Quirk, being the representative in this colony of the engineering firm of Messrs. John Fowler & Co., Ltd., of Leeds, Messrs. Appleby Bros., and the Johnson Oil Engines Co., has so influenced the recommendations of the committee as to secure for these firms orders for machinery to the extent of £30,000. Inasmuch as it was on Mr. Campbell's recommendation to yourself that Mr. Quirk was made a member of this committee, it is due to Mr. Quirk that we say we appreciate the valuable professional assistance which he has rendered on the committee; and our opinion is, after completing the task with which we were entrusted, that we were fortunate in securing his services as a colleague. Before attacking directly the allegations made, it may be pointed out that the writer of this article is apparently in ignorance of the chief object for which this committee was appointed, which was to determine the general design and arrangement of the workshops. The class or maker of the special tools which it will be necessary to order was of secondary importance in our inquiry; and it will not be suggested, we think, that the fact of a member of the committee being connected with one of the largest engineering firms in England, and being also a practical engineer of wide experience, should incapacitate him from giving reliable opinions on the buildings, general relation of same, and machinery required in a large workshop such as this. Taking the allegations as they stand: Mr. Quirk does represent Messrs. John Fowler & Co. in this colony. He has no connection however with Messrs. Appleby Bros., or the Johnson Oil Co., and never has had. With regard to the mythical order for £30,000 worth of machinery, you are aware that the committee were not empowered to order any machinery, and as a matter of fact have not ordered sixpenceworth. Further, with regard to the machinery which the committee have included in their report, as being necessary to be ordered, and which amounts to a little over £20,000, we have recommended only two small engines, of a total value of £610, to be ordered from Messrs. John Fowler & Co. These engines were selected after careful inquiry into their special suitability for the work required of them; and from the evidence which we have of their successful operation in other places, we have no doubt that, if obtained,

they will be found satisfactory. With respect to the countermanding of an order which had been sent home for an engine and boiler, this was done by Mr. Campbell, and was so done because of the alterations made by us in the previously accepted or contemplated design. The writer of this article is good enough to describe our selection for the work of this committee as "unimpeachable." We should have appreciated his commendation and logic more, however, if, with this opinion of our ability, he had realised that there was, or is, little likelihood of our being influenced in the manner he suggests. (Signed), R. B. CAMPBELL, JOHN A. McDONALD, M.Inst.C.E.—21/9/96."

This report had come to hand since he last addressed this House on the subject of the appointment of Mr. Quirk as a member of the committee. The report clearly stated the facts of the case; and it proved that an order for an engine and boiler was the only order countermanded; also that the committee had recommended the purchase from John Fowler & Company of only two small engines of the total value of £640, of a special pattern which, as the member for the Murray admitted, could not be obtained from any other firm. The committee had done good service, as the plans of the Midland Junction workshops would show, if he had been able to produce them. Mr. Quirk received five guineas a day as a member of that committee, or £330 in all; and it was the intention of the Government to give the other members of the board a honorarium of £100 each.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Are they not Government officials?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Yes.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Why should you give them a honorarium?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Because we like to recognise their special service.

THE PREMIER: It was very special service.

MR. GEORGE said he was pleased to have heard the Commissioner read the statement made by the other two members of the committee; but he could not agree with the Commissioner's reasoning that there was only one type of engine suitable for the particular purpose, and that John Fowler & Son, of Leeds, were the only firm who could supply suitable engines.

THE PREMIER said the amount was only £640, at any rate.

MR. GEORGE said he did not take it as a correct statement that it was necessary that engines of the type previously ordered should be cancelled, and that engines of the special type recommended by this committee, of which Mr. Quirk was a member, should be obtained from the firm he represented. To put on the committee a gentleman who was directly interested in engines of a particular make was a wrong course to have taken.

THE PREMIER said there were three members on the committee, and not one alone.

MR. GEORGE said it should be pretty well registered that any tipping or palm-greasing had better be stopped. One other rather important matter was that in July last, in reference to the Engineer-in-Chief, he (Mr. George) had asked the Premier to lay on the table of the House certain plans and sections and other information with reference to the Fremantle harbour works, but these had not been supplied.

THE PREMIER said he had understood the hon. member to say that his intention was to ask for them, but he had not done so.

MR. GEORGE said that was not so. The Premier had stated that he would lay them on the table, but had not produced them yet.

THE PREMIER said he did not know, even now, what the hon. member wanted, and a motion should have been made in a specific form for the production of what the hon. member did want.

MR. GEORGE said he was now going to move that the consideration of these estimates be postponed for a fortnight, because the promised plans and other information had not been provided. The Premier might lay on the table the weekly progress report made by the engineer in charge of the Fremantle harbour works, and if this were done he believed it would be found that the other statements which had been placed before this House, as showing the progress made from time to time, would be found to be incorrect.

THE PREMIER said he did not see that there could be any object, on the part of the officers of the department, in misrepresenting the facts as to the amount

of progress made. Why should the Engineer-in-Chief want to misrepresent facts?

MR. GEORGE said the Premier had put to him a conundrum, but he was not there to answer conundrums. What he did say was that the usual way, in the department, of making up the quantity of stone going into the breakwater was to measure a sample train of so many trucks, each truck carrying a certain quantity of stone, and that was taken as a sample of the rest; but it would be found that this method of computation was not reliable. The Government were doing this by day work, and he must say they had no right to do it in that way. They could not do it cheaper than by contract, and it was in fact costing considerably more by day work than it would cost if let by contract, and was also taking double the length of time. The reason given by the engineers was that the system of day work enabled them to use greater discrimination as to the material to be put into the breakwater; but he must say this was false; for under a proper contract, a schedule could be drawn which would specify the material required to be put into the breakwater. It was not for the Premier to snub any member who brought these matters before the House. As to the dredge "Premier," how much real reclamation had it done? If the facts could be got at, they would show that the statements of work done were not correct, and these statements had the effect of hoodwinking the House, by leading members to believe the work was being done cheaper by day work than it would cost if done by contract. With reference to the sand dredge, it was represented as having pumped so much sand and water in a certain number of hours; but did the actual cubic measurement confirm the amount of work which was reported to have been done? He believed it did not bear anything like the same proportion. He was told by men on the work that it was costing twice as much as it would do if done by contract; therefore the sooner this House realised that such statements as had been put before members by the engineering branch were not to be relied upon, the better it would be for the country.

THE PREMIER said he did not remember having promised to lay certain

papers on the table, as mentioned by the hon. member. Such questions as had been raised by the hon. member, in this discussion, could be better answered by his giving notice, and then the questions could be replied to in precise detail. If papers were wanted, it was easy to make a motion, and the Government were willing to give any information or produce any plans or papers connected with the harbour works at Fremantle.

MR. GEORGE said he did formerly give notice of motion in reference to this matter, but the Premier, with his unwieldy majority of seventeen blocks of jarrah, crushed him.

THE PREMIER said it was evident the majority did not want the motion. That was the explanation of it.

THE CHAIRMAN said the hon. member was out of order in talking about "17 blocks of jarrah," if he meant 17 members of this House.

Item passed.

MR. ILLINGWORTH, referring to the item, "York, middle bridge, £1,100," asked how many bridges the Government intended to build at York, as it appeared to be the intention to cover in the whole length of the river in that town. There were two bridges over the river at York; this was to be the third; and how many more did they want?

MR. MONGER said the item referred to was passed in last year's Estimates, but the money had not yet been spent.

Item passed.

MR. HIGHAM, referring to the item "Fremantle reclamation, South Beach, £6,000," asked if it was intended to extend the reclamation of the Esplanade, as requested by the Fremantle people. The money provided in this item would only finish the contract then in hand.

THE PREMIER said £6,000 was the total amount of the vote for this year; and of the £5,000 voted last year, only £1 6s. had been expended up to the 30th June last. The £6,000 would carry on the work this year, and he expected a fresh vote would have to be asked for next year, to complete the work. The intention of the Government was to finish the Esplanade, and he expected it would take another £6,000, in addition to the present vote, to complete it.

MR. MOSS said the money in this item was practically expended by this time.

THE PREMIER said the Government would see what they could do.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Unauthorised expenditure again!

MR. RANDELL, referring to the item, "Harbour improvements, Bunbury, £40,000," said the Engineer-in-Chief, in reporting on it, appeared to be very reticent, and he (Mr. Randell) asked whether the Government were convinced that the proposal to expend £100,000 for making a breakwater which was not to come above sea level was the best kind of breakwater for giving protection to shipping at Bunbury?

THE PREMIER said another plan had since been proposed.

MR. RANDELL said his opinion was that no harbour enclosed by a breakwater built on the outer reef, as indicated on the plan, would be effectual for protecting the shipping at Bunbury, and nothing short of going inside the estuary would make a complete harbour there.

THE PREMIER said he was glad the hon. member had drawn attention to this important matter, because the proposal involved a large expenditure, and it was right the matter should be approached with care, and that full information should be given to this House with regard to it. Two sets of plans had been placed on the table of the House by the Engineer-in-Chief. One was for a sunken breakwater in the estuary, and the other was for a breakwater above the sea level, the same as at Fremantle, and rising some 15 feet above the sea. Before this House could be asked to expend money on the work, it was very necessary, and certainly but reasonable, that the Government should take the opportunity of explaining how the matter stood. As hon. members all knew, the policy that had been adopted by the Government and this House, during the last five or six years, had been one of assistance in every way that was possible to the producers of the colony. The House and the Government were not afraid to spend large sums in the Northern parts of the colony for providing shipping facilities.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: You don't do it.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member had had his share, and would get a lot more if he would only keep quiet. In the northern parts of the colony, the

Government had built jetties at large expense to give shipping facilities to producers of wool and stock, with the object of encouraging the pastoral industry, and with the view to the markets being supplied by producers living within the colony. In every part of the colony they were trying to provide such facilities as would best assist the producers. There was not a single port, from Cambridge Gulf in the North to Eucla in the South, where the Government were not doing as much as possible at the present time in the way of providing facilities for producers. He regretted to say the port of Bunbury was not a very good one. It was an exposed place, suffering especially from north-west winds, which in winter blew strongly; and the only protection to shipping at Bunbury was the basalt reef running out to Point Casuarina, a couple of thousand feet. In the summer time, with south-west winds prevailing, and even with westerly winds, the place was fairly sheltered; but in the winter time, with north-west winds, it was a very exposed place for shipping. This port was the natural outlet for all that part of the country. The colony, as a whole, was not blessed with many good harbours—indeed, with the exception of King George's Sound (Albany), and to some extent Geraldton, there was no anchorage in the South-West portion of the colony that was at all serviceable. But the anchorage, such as it was, at Bunbury, had had this result, that Bunbury had become established in the early days of the colony, and now it was the only port and outlet for all that extensive district. No one would deny it was a district capable of supporting a considerable population. It was a very good agricultural district, and a fair pastoral district; it had a good climate, and a very abundant rainfall up to 30 odd inches per annum; and it was capable, he was positive, of supporting a large population. The soil being fairly good, and the rainfall quite ample to support a large population, Bunbury was at present the only outlet for one of the largest industries in this colony—the timber industry. They knew that, in years gone by, the timber industry had not been a lucrative investment for those engaged in it, consequent on the difficulties of shipping the timber and the

low price at which jarrah had been sold ; but during the last few years the timber industry had become second only to the gold industry. Leaving out for a moment the greatest industry of all, the agricultural industry, there was no industry to which they looked forward with so much hope, except gold, as the timber industry ; and he believed there was no place in the colony which was so well situated, so convenient to the coast for the export of jarrah, and there was no place where there was such a large quantity and good quality of jarrah in the neighbourhood, as the port of Bunbury. There was no place which had such a large area of jarrah near to it, and of such good quality, as the port of Bunbury. It was the nearest port to the largest and best area of jarrah in this colony. The members for West Kimberley and Wellington knew the country about Bunbury, and would bear him out in that statement. Bunbury was also the nearest port to the Collie coalfields, and as Parliament was building a railway to develop that coal, and expected great things from that industry, and as the Collie railway would also open up an immense jarrah business along its course, that business would pay for the line in itself. Bunbury was only 40 miles from the Collie coalfields, as compared with 120 miles from the port of Fremantle, and 77 miles to the Vasse ; therefore it must be evident that Bunbury must be the natural outlet for the Collie coal. Then as to the extent of the saw-milling industry, which was increasing so rapidly, take the jarrah that was now being cut at Donnybrook, where a large number of people were just beginning to be employed. He was told, the other day, that the population at Donnybrook was 500, engaged in the timber industry ; and the distance from Donnybrook to Bunbury was 25 miles as against 135 miles if the timber from Donnybrook were taken all the way by rail to Fremantle for shipment. Was any member going to advocate that, for all time, they must have a system of centralisation—a system of bringing everything to one port, whether to Albany, or Fremantle, or anywhere else? [MR. SIMPSON: Say Esperance.] They were not going to carry timber and other produce past the nearest port, because it happened not to be a very good one, in

order to ship it at some distant port where the facilities were better. That was a policy he was not prepared to accept or advocate. He mentioned this because it had been stated by some people — by himself, too — that what they should do was not to spend much money on the outports of the colony, as Parliament was spending a large sum in improving the central port of Fremantle, and that as all roads led to Rome, so the best thing to do in this colony was to run the goods by railway to Fremantle, where great facilities were being provided for dealing with imports and exports. So far as the Government and himself personally were concerned, he was determined to do the utmost in his power to make Fremantle a first-class port, and give it all the help which it was possible for him to give ; but he was not prepared, while doing this, to altogether forget and forsake the interest of other places which were entitled to have shipping facilities provided, as being the natural ports of the adjacent districts which had large quantities of produce to export. Of course, if it could not be avoided, his argument altogether fell to the ground ; for if there was no place at Bunbury capable of improvement in the way of providing shipping facilities and protection, everyone would be willing, and no one more than himself, to bring the timber and other exports from the Bunbury district to Fremantle, as the nearest good port. Following out the principle they had adopted throughout, in trying to assist the producers of the colony, the Government thought that a port like Bunbury, which was capable of improvement and was the natural outlet of a large extent of country, which was going to be the home for all time for a large number of people, and where there was an industrious population settled now and always would be settled there—the Government had agreed that, if there was a way of improving this harbour so as to make it capable of accommodating the shipping of a large producing district, and for which the harbour was naturally suited, they would only be doing their duty, with that object in view, by asking Parliament to authorise the necessary expenditure. The Government thought that, whatever they did at Bunbury harbour, they should do quickly, as the export of jarrah should

be encouraged in every way. The Government were extending the railway system to Bridgetown, which would bring into use another 40 miles of excellent jarrah forest for exportation, and the present was the time for the giving of facilities for this export trade. The Government thought, too, that the timber should be put on board at the port nearest the point at which it was cut. Hon. members were aware that two schemes had been placed before the Government for a harbour at Bunbury—one for an inner harbour, and the other for an outer breakwater. He supposed no one would argue that, if the inner harbour could be made successfully and put in working order, and if the colony could afford it, this would not be a better plan than making an outer breakwater. With an inner harbour, the ships could come alongside, whereas the breakwater would only provide a certain amount of shelter. The reason why he had not subscribed, himself, to the project for the inner harbour at Bunbury could be explained in a few words. Firstly, an inner harbour would, in his opinion, cost too much, and the expenditure upon it would not at the present time be justified. He could not believe that they would be justified in embarking on a scheme for the improvement of the harbour at Bunbury that would cost something like £400,000 or £500,000. The reason why he was in favour of the outer breakwater was that it could be done gradually, and be begun at once; that every ton of stone thrown into the sea would do its work, and would have some visible effect, and the breakwater would grow before the eyes of the people, and he believed it would be a great success. The Engineer-in-Chief, with whom he had had many conversations on the subject, and who assisted him greatly in the matter, had to base his calculations on a maximum expenditure of £100,000; because he (the Premier) told him he was not prepared to ask the House for more than that. The work, when completed, had not to exceed that amount; and the Engineer-in-Chief had to base his plans upon that limit. The inner harbour scheme, therefore, was out of the question, for very little could be done in connection with it for £100,000. A scheme for a submerged

breakwater had been proposed by the Engineer-in-Chief, the object being to extend the breakwater as far as possible into the sea, for sheltering the anchorage. Mr. O'Connor seemed to think this scheme would give the best results; but, at the request of himself, the Engineer-in-Chief prepared a scheme for a breakwater to rise above the water. He (the Premier) objected to the submerged breakwater, because it would be necessary to put the stone into barges, and in that case the stone would have to be comparatively small; also, and chiefly, he objected that, after the scheme was completed, there would be nothing visible to show for it, as the work would be all under water, so that when he visited Bunbury and was asked some day by a friend where the breakwater was, he could only indicate the part of the estuary where it lay under the water. The Engineer-in-Chief, therefore, had prepared a scheme for a mole similar to that at Fremantle, and he (the Premier) very much preferred it. There was no occasion, however, for the House that night to decide as to the plan to be followed. A mole, no doubt, would be constructed; but whether it would be exactly in accordance with one plan or another was not a matter to which he should like to pledge himself, or that hon. members need pledge themselves to. He wished the House to agree to the expenditure of £40,000 out of revenue for this year, and to the continuation of the work to the extent of £60,000 more later on. Hon. members would notice that the Government were trying to do this work out of revenue, instead of out of loan, and he believed that was a system which commended itself to the House. He had objected, as he had said, to the inner harbour because it would cost too much, the estimate being £400,000, and because there was some amount of doubt as to what the issue would be. He had lived all his youth at Bunbury, and knew the place very well. The estuary was sometimes fed by a tremendous current of water from the Collie and Preston rivers. The Collie River was very shallow in places, so shallow that it was difficult or impossible to take over a boat; and if a harbour were made in the estuary, the channel might possibly fill up. There was no doubt it would cost a great deal

of money to keep the channel open, dredges being constantly required. He was not prepared to take the responsibility of advocating the inner harbour scheme. He might add that the Engineer-in-Chief had pointed out that, even if the inner scheme were carried out, only the ordinary small steamers trading on the coast would be able to enter it, the channel being narrow and two to three miles in length. Floods in the rivers, too, were frequent every year. It would also take many years before there could be any result from that scheme, and the port of Bunbury could hardly afford to wait. They might wait five years for a big result, and it had been shown, in reference to Fremantle, that they could wait; but they had seen what length of time it took at Fremantle to carry out harbour works, even with all the resources of the Government applied to the work, and particularly the time occupied in constructing the moles and excavating the rock at Fremantle. He did not know if there would be any rock at Bunbury to excavate, and hoped there would not; but the inner harbour scheme would mean a loss of five years in time, for a doubtful result. At Bunbury, they wanted the result quickly, and wanted a scheme that would grow as the circumstances of the colony grew, so that the people would be able to see the work growing before their eyes. The breakwater to be built would give excellent protection in winter from the north-west winds. He had consulted the Engineer-in-Chief, also Mr. Hodgson, and others, and they all assured him there was nothing impracticable about the scheme, and that it was very simple indeed. A good quarry had been found a mile and a half from the Collie railway station, and there would be no difficulty in commencing work so soon as the expenditure of the money was authorised. The Government did not want to be connected with any failure in this matter, and he did not want to be associated with this work, if it was not going to be successful. He thought it was a reasonable scheme, for it simply proposed to take advantage of a natural breakwater and add to it, and the cost of the work appeared reasonable. Engineers, as was known, were very careful about figures, and he had not the slightest doubt that more work would be done

with the money than was indicated in the report. In fact, the engineer who had prepared the report said he believed a good deal more would be done with the money than was shown in the report, but that he wished to be on the safe side. As to the sum of £40,000 for this year, £20,000 of it would be spent on plant, and that plant would not be all wasted, for when these works were completed, some of the plant could be used for other works. In regard to his advocacy of the project, he might say he had approached it with some degree of delicacy. He was, on that occasion, in a position he had not often occupied in this House, for he was there as the representative of the Government, entrusted with great powers and also with great responsibilities, and he was there also as member for the district of Bunbury. It was rather a peculiar position, and not one he liked very much, as he would rather advocate the claims of other districts than the claims of his own district; hence he felt a little delicacy about the matter, for it seemed like advocating the claims of one's own family. He thought, however, he could say he had pleaded the cause of every district in the colony and tried to help every place, and now that he had to ask hon. members to help him in advocating the claims of his own district, he hoped hon. members would not think he was asking for anything that was unreasonable or that was not justified. He believed the work would be a success, and he hoped hon. members would be able to support him in his efforts to give protection to shipping at the port of his own district. He believed he was not doing wrong in asking members for their support. He certainly would not do it if he thought he was bringing a burden on the colony. He had no reason whatever for advocating the scheme, beyond that it was a deserving object; and he left it in the hands of hon. members, feeling sure they would deal with it as they thought best in the interests of the colony.

MR. RANDELL said he wished to express his unqualified sympathy with the Premier in his advocacy of a scheme for improving the harbour at Bunbury. The Premier he thought need feel no delicacy about the matter, owing to his being member for the district. Bunbury was a large and important place, and had

considerable industries which should be assisted. He hoped hon. members would be quite willing to give Bunbury a better harbour. He was pleased to observe that the money was to be provided out of current revenue, instead of loan. He was quite aware that the providing of a harbour at Bunbury was a different problem from providing a harbour at Fremantle. He spoke with some diffidence on the subject, as he did not know very much about that port, whereas with regard to Fremantle he was fully conversant with all the local conditions. He had made inquiries as to the condition of the port of Bunbury, and as to whether the proposed mole going out from Casuarina Point would be effective, and he was quite in accord with the scheme for a mole elevated above water level. He remembered being at Bunbury in moderately rough weather, when a vessel that was loading timber had to haul off from the jetty. That, in itself, was a serious disadvantage for the port, as it increased the cost of shipment. The vessel he referred to afterwards went ashore, and became a total wreck, whereas if there had been a breakwater in the harbour, she would probably have lain safely under shelter. He hoped hon. members would agree that it was necessary to carry out the proposed work, to give some protection to vessels loading at Bunbury. The interests of the Bunbury district, with its coal and timber resources, were very large, and he was quite sure members would agree with the policy of decentralisation enunciated by the Premier, although the hon. gentleman might anticipate that the argument would be used on other occasions by representatives of other places. The Bunbury district had great claims upon the colony, and it was necessary to improve the harbour accommodation of that part of the coast, especially as nature had, as the Premier pointed out, assisted in the formation of a breakwater by the reef running out from Casuarina Point, for the protection of the mercantile marine. The sum of £100,000 was a reasonable price to pay for so useful a work, especially as the House was not in the humour to expend £400,000 upon an inner harbour.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he could sympathise with the feeling of diffidence

the Premier had shown in advocating the claims of Bunbury; but after making a careful examination of the evidence in favour of the breakwater, he (Mr. Illingworth) felt bound to ask the committee to strike out the item, because he was convinced the work would not prove to be effective for the purpose for which it was intended, or indeed that it would be of any value whatever. It was remarkable that the Engineer-in-Chief, the only expert upon harbour works in the colony, and a man of great experience and ability, upon whose counsel the colony was spending large sums of money in other directions, should have said no more in favour of the Bunbury breakwater than that the estimates of cost were reliable, that the work could be carried out within the allotted time, and that it was practicable from an engineering point of view. There was not a single word of recommendation in the report of Mr. O'Connor, who was the best authority, the strongest man, in the colony upon a question of this kind. Mr. O'Connor had not said the breakwater was a desirable work, or that it would be effective when carried out. The committee ought not to pass this item until it had a proper recommendation from the Engineer-in-Chief, and proper evidence in support of that report. When the colony was carrying out the Fremantle harbour works and other large schemes, upon the recommendation of the Engineer-in-Chief, a man whose opinion the country valued, a breakwater at Bunbury ought not to be undertaken until it had the distinct approval of the Engineer-in-Chief. He (Mr. Illingworth) had good reason to believe Mr. O'Connor would not give his authority and professional approval to the scheme that was proposed. The consequence was that the committee had before them only the report of Mr. Hodgson; and when the £100,000, which it was proposed to spend upon the work, had grown to £200,000, it would probably be found that the country had been committed to an absolutely useless work. Was the breakwater to be a scheme that was to be of practical value to the colony, or was it simply to help the people of Bunbury to spend the public money? Of course the Premier had a deep-seated conviction that the breakwater would be for the good of the colony, or he would not ask the com-



mittee to carry it out; but the Premier had given his adherence to a work that would not do what was expected. If a harbour was to be made at Bunbury, that would be a much more expensive work than a breakwater to cost £100,000. He had no feeling on this matter; but, reading between the lines of the reports which had been presented to the House, the only statement which had been made by the Engineer-in-Chief on the subject might be summed up as saying that, although the work could be carried out for the sum Mr. Hodgson estimated, yet Mr. O'Connor did not think it would be any good when it was done. [THE PREMIER: He does not say so.] That was to be inferred from the report signed by Mr. O'Connor; and that being the conclusion to which he (Mr. Illingworth) had come, he had no other course open to him, if he desired to do his duty to the colony, than to move that the item be struck out; not that he was opposed to a harbour being made at Bunbury, or to expending money upon a serviceable scheme, but only on the ground that there was no evidence before the committee that the breakwater now proposed would be of any practical use when constructed. Before entailing a large expenditure, the committee were entitled to have a good deal more evidence than it had on that occasion, to justify the step. What was the pressure in this particular case? The member for Geraldton had pointed out, the other evening, that only one foreign ship had entered the port of Bunbury last year, and she never went out again. He (Mr. Illingworth) did not know whether that was the vessel that the member for Perth spoke of as having been in trouble at Bunbury; but before this item for the breakwater was voted, the committee should have a return showing the probable shipping requirements of Bunbury, and evidence showing that the scheme was one of utility. Even if there was a good harbour at Bunbury, as there was at Geelong, on the Victorian coast, vessels would still go to the principal port instead of to the side ports; and he was afraid that, if the breakwater was completed, it would not be used to a large extent.

THE PREMIER: You said you were in favour of a harbour at Bunbury. Now you say you don't want it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he was not speaking against the making of a harbour at Bunbury, but he wanted evidence that the scheme was necessary and practicable; and when the Engineer-in-Chief made that recommendation, he would vote for the item.

THE PREMIER: Whose scheme is it? Do you think I made it?

MR. SIMPSON: No one seems to want to own it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The only evidence in favour of the breakwater was that of Mr. Hodgson, a person of whom he had never heard. If it was the same Mr. Hodgson who reported on the Coolgardie water scheme, all he (Mr. Illingworth) could say was that on such works he would rather take the opinion of Mr. Hodgson than on the one under discussion. Although the Premier desired to see this work carried out, the Engineer-in-Chief did not furnish any distinct opinion in regard to the question.

THE PREMIER: What does he say? Read it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he would read Mr. O'Connor's report, if the Premier wished it. It said: "In pursuance of the report supplied by Mr. Goode, M. Inst. C.E., on the two alternative proposals for the construction of harbour works at Bunbury, I have the honour to state that I concur generally in Mr. Goode's remarks; that is to say, as follows:—(1) I think that the work indicated on Mr. Goode's plan, in the form of a submarine mole from the Casuarina Point, can be done to about the extent which he indicates for about £100,000. (2) I think that the inner harbour scheme, having an entrance from the sea in the vicinity of the Preston River, can be carried out to the extent indicated by Mr. Goode for about the sum which he names, namely, £430,000. (3) The time which the submarine mole from Casuarina Point would take to construct would probably be about three years from the date of its being authorised. (4) Both schemes are, in my opinion, quite practicable." Thus, both schemes were quite practicable, and no doubt it was practicable to throw granite into the sea; but what the committee wanted to know was whether, when it was thrown there, it would make a breakwater that would be effective for the

purpose for which it was intended; and the Engineer-in-Chief said nothing about that in his report. A more colourless report had never been placed before Parliament. If ever a report said, "I have been asked for a report upon this scheme; I do not believe in it, and I am not going to commit myself," it was this report.

**THE PREMIER:** What does the other report say?

**MR. ILLINGWORTH** said he would read the other report, which ran:—"In pursuance of the request made by the Hon. the Premier to be supplied with an estimate as to how far the mole from Casuarina Point could be carried for £100,000, if it were to be about the same height as the breakwater at Fremantle (that is to say, about 16 feet above low-water mark), as shown in the design already laid on the table of the Legislative Assembly, I have the honour to enclose herewith a set of plans, with the report of Mr. Hodgson, containing estimates, in which I can concur, to the effect that the distance to which £100,000 would carry the work on the higher level would be 3,000 feet, instead of the 4,100 feet it can be carried for the same amount at the lower level." Now, this was a report simply saying that so much granite could be thrown into the sea for so much money, and in so much time. What he wanted was an assurance from the Engineer-in-Chief that, when the granite was thrown into the sea, the result would be the creation of a mole that would shelter the shipping. He wanted to impress it upon the committee that this scheme was not fathered by the one man in the colony who was capable of giving an opinion upon it; and the committee would not be justified in committing the country to the expenditure, until Mr. O'Connor supported it. He therefore moved that the item be struck out.

**THE PREMIER** said he wrote to Mr. O'Connor, some time ago, and told him, as he had told the Legislative Assembly, that the money he would ask the House to sanction for the Bunbury harbour works would be £100,000; and he asked to be supplied with a statement as to the best means, in his judgment, of expending the money on the harbour. The result was the plans and estimates which

had been placed before the committee. He (the Premier) never suggested where the mole should be put, or in what direction it should go. He merely asked the Engineer-in-Chief to say what could be done with this amount of money, supposing it were made available for the work; and asked him to advise as to some scheme by which the harbour at Bunbury might be improved with that amount. The result was the plans and the reports which had been laid on the table. It would not be his duty, and it certainly would be far from his inclination, to urge upon any officer that such officer should report in any particular way upon any project. He should consider he was acting most improperly if he tried to influence in any way an officer as to what report he should submit to that House. No influence had been brought to bear by the Government.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** It is not suggested.

**THE PREMIER** said the only thing the Engineer-in-Chief was asked to do was to let him have a scheme which would do the most with the sum of £100,000, in order that the report might be laid before Parliament, and that had been done.

**MR. CLARKSON** said the member for Nannine had got a little out of his depth on the Bunbury harbour question. What right had the hon. member to assume that the Engineer-in-Chief had no faith in the scheme that was being discussed? It was not the first time one had heard the hon. member talking about things he did not understand.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** You speak about lambs' tails, and you will be talking about things you understand.

**MR. CLARKSON** said the port of Bunbury was the outlet for a large district, and to connect the harbour with the railway system would alone warrant the construction of the breakwater. He was sure that the committee would see reason for passing the vote, notwithstanding the manner in which the member for Nannine had attempted to attack the scheme which the Engineer-in-Chief advised.

**SIR JAMES G. LEE STEERE** said that, having a knowledge of Bunbury, he was of opinion that anyone knowing any-

thing of the locality would agree with him that the construction of the proposed breakwater would greatly improve the harbour, and that it ought to be carried out. It seemed to him that the presence of the Casuarina Reef invited the placing of a breakwater upon it. A breakwater of the same height as the one at Fremantle would be of very great advantage to the port of Bunbury. He would not have been at all inclined to support the scheme for the inner harbour, the value of which was very problematical, as there would be great difficulty in getting an entrance to it without constant dredging; but he regarded the breakwater as being very feasible, and the amount of the vote asked for was a moderate one. He hoped the committee would agree to the vote.

MR. COOKWORTHY said the facts did not bear out the statement that was frequently made in the Assembly, that a lot of public money was spent at Bunbury. The new post office and school house, the railway station, and the hospital were the principal votes, and he did not think members would object to any of them. The old hospital was a disgrace to civilisation. The district had important resources in agriculture, timber, and coal, and he believed gold would be found if it was prospected for. He considered that Bunbury was justified in getting these harbour works; but although granite would be put into the mole, he did not think it would stop there, owing to the terrific force of the storm-beat of the ocean, which was not so great a danger to the partly protected harbour works at Fremantle. If a harbour was to be properly made at Bunbury, it would have to be one like that at Colombo, where there were exactly the same conditions to contend against. At Plymouth (England) he had seen large blocks of stone carried by the sea right over the breakwater, and that was what Bunbury would be exposed to. At the same time, that was only his opinion. The Engineer-in-Chief said the breakwater scheme was practicable; and if that should prove to be the case, the breakwater would be of much service to shipping at Bunbury. The cost of the work was not excessive, and even if the mole should be a failure, it would serve as the foundation for a more permanent work.

MR. GEORGE said that, with reference to this harbour scheme, the member for Nannine was right in stating they should have from the Engineer-in-Chief something more than vague generalities as a recommendation of the scheme. Being experienced, clever, and courageous, the Engineer-in-Chief's report, written in guarded terms, was not such as they might expect from the chief adviser of the Government. The geographical position of this harbour demanded as much protection as could be given to it; and as to the timber business in that district, he believed the 500 people who were said to be employed around Donnybrook, now in the timber business, would increase within a short time to one or two thousand men, and these would support a general population of 5,000 or 6,000 people. There was a good demand for the export of jarrah blocks, and this demand had until recently been supplied by one or two mills in the colony. Latterly, sawmills in the Bunbury district had been trying to supply the demand; but what was the use of trying to do so, if the port of Bunbury was not made secure for shipping? What would be the use of ships coming to Fremantle to load timber cut at Bunbury? It was better that shipping facilities should be provided at Bunbury, rather than that timber from the Bunbury district should be brought to Fremantle. He trusted the House would pass this item; although he thought the Engineer-in-Chief should not shelter himself behind vague generalities in reference to this harbour scheme, but if he really believed in it he should give such assurances as the House had a right to expect from the consulting engineer of the Government.

MR. A. FORREST, in supporting the item, said he had been surprised to find the member for Nannine asking that this amount should be taken away from the harbour works at Bunbury. If the hon. member had visited that district during the last few months, he would realise how absolutely necessary it was, in the interests of the country, that shipping facilities should be provided at that port. No one except those who had seen it, as he had seen it during the last month, could realise the large amount of land-clearing, and the large number of sawmills lately started to work in the Bun-

bury district. The building of a railway to the Collie coalfields would be commenced shortly; also the railway to Bridgetown; and why on earth should this colony build these railways for the development of the resources of the Southern districts, if it was not also intended to provide harbour facilities at Bunbury as the natural port of those districts for dealing with products? They all knew that, within a radius of 40 miles of Bunbury they had, second to the goldfields, the largest industry of the colony, and one that would immensely increase our export trade. It would be impossible to cut the timber between Donnybrook and Bridgetown, or between Donnybrook and the Collie, and send it by rail for shipment at Fremantle, because this could not be done at a profit, in competition with mills which were situated so much nearer to Fremantle, or near to a good port. It was hoped the Collie coal would be exported largely; therefore shipping facilities at Bunbury were necessary for that. In fact, no further railways should be built in these districts, and all public works should be stopped, unless facilities for shipping produce at the natural port were to be provided. He supposed the member for Nannine would support the building of a railway from Cue to Nannine; and yet he had been arguing that harbour works at Bunbury were not necessary.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he did not say that.

MR. A. FORREST said the hon. member had said what was tantamount to it. If the House did not vote the amount for this item, they should understand that, as a consequence, there could be no more timber mills opened in the Bunbury district. As the hon. member for Nelson (Sir J. G. Lee Steere) had told them, the harbour at Bunbury was one that had been made by nature, and it only required the art of man to complete it by providing some necessary protection and facilities for shipping. That was very sound advice, coming from a member who had had experience as a sea captain, and understood the requirements of shipping.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he intended to support this item. He agreed with the member for Nannine in saying that the Engineer-in-Chief should have given an explicit and decisive opinion. It was the

weak point of the scheme that the Engineer-in-Chief should evade his responsibility by a half-hearted kind of report. However, the responsibility for carrying out the scheme must rest upon him, and if the scheme proved a failure he would be answerable, because his duty was to have stated definitely that he had no confidence in the scheme, for that was what was really meant by his vague report.

THE PREMIER: He says it is quite practicable.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the report was half-hearted. If, as the member for Sussex had said, the granite that might be tumbled into the mole would be washed away by the sea, that was a poor prospect; or if, as the same hon. member had said, this scheme was to be like the harbour at Colombo, then it would be a very expensive job. No doubt there would be a very large export of timber at Bunbury, if shipping facilities were provided; but he did not agree with the member for West Kimberley in saying the Collie coal would be suitable for export.

THE PREMIER: It is better as it goes down.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: It will take up too much bunker space in the steamers.

MR. VENN said he did not suppose they could have a more contentious question than that of harbour works, no matter what part of the coast they were to be provided for. While the remarks of the member for Nannine were very much to the point, in saying it would have been more satisfactory to have had a report from the Engineer-in-Chief directly recommending the scheme; still it would have been better for the colony, as he suggested some time back, to have referred this question to a select committee, which would have obtained for the House more information and given it more confidence. No one could be more interested in this question than himself, for during many years he had taken a keen and active interest in proving and developing the Collie coal; and he knew that extensive harbour works at Bunbury must follow, as a consequence of the development of that coalfield. Therefore, having decided on the development of the Collie coalfield, they must consider the necessity for extensive harbour works at Bunbury. It did occur to him

that, if they were to follow up the question beyond that of merely shipping timber at Bunbury, and were to go into the larger question of shipping coal there, then the building of a mole for protecting the shipping at Bunbury would not give the quiet water that was necessary for loading coal at all times. The time must come when there must be an inner harbour at Bunbury; and it would not matter whether the amount to be expended in making a harbour there was to be £400,000 or £500,000, in comparison with the enormous value of the coal deposits at the Collie, and of the coal export. In a few years time, the question of a few hundred thousand pounds would be no question at all, in view of the development of that coalfield and the increasing resources of the colony; but there was some wisdom in pausing before they entered upon the questions involved in a harbour scheme for Bunbury. The proposed mole would give a good deal of protection, in any case, and as he was anxious, and the whole district was anxious, that some work should be undertaken for improving the harbour at Bunbury, and as an inner harbour must be constructed sooner or later, they might undertake what was necessary to give such immediate protection as they could for the shipping of timber, which was becoming important. Therefore he had pleasure in supporting the item. He would have felt more confidence in the scheme if the whole question had been referred to a select committee, as they might then have obtained a unanimous vote for it.

Item passed.

MR. GEORGE, referring to the item, "Perth reclamation and dredging in Perth Water, £10,000," said that last year £5,000 had been voted for this work, but nothing expended, as shown on the Estimates. Still something must have been spent; and he should like to know under what vote the expenditure which did occur in Perth Water had been placed? The House should insist that no more proprietary rights be granted to the owners of jetties on the foreshore of Perth Water.

MR. RANDELL said this matter had been discussed the other evening.

MR. GEORGE said it was not discussed in reference to this item, and he

did not see why it should not be discussed now. Grave injustice had been done to the city of Perth, and there was an opportunity now for remedying that injustice. The reclamation, he presumed, referred to the Perth foreshore, and it was a matter of public scandal that certain persons should be allowed to occupy a portion of the foreshore and erect jetties, and yet not contribute one cent. to the rates of the city of Perth.

MR. RANDELL: Oh, dear!

MR. GEORGE said he would ask the Director of Public Works that no more of these iniquitous proceedings should be allowed. If it should be necessary at any time to give a temporary concession in regard to jetties, that concession should be coupled with the condition that such jetties should contribute a fair share to the rates of the city. The city had been deliberately swindled for years. He therefore moved, as an amendment, that the item (248) be reduced by £1,000.

THE CHAIRMAN said he could not allow any more discussion about jetties, on this item, that subject having been discussed the other evening upon a distinct motion; and if the hon. member had not then been present, he could not now be allowed to re-open the question on this item.

MR. GEORGE said the previous discussion about jetties had been on a separate motion, and not on a money vote.

Amendment to reduce the item put and negatived.

MR. CLARKSON, referring to the item, "Railway survey, Northam to Quelquelling, £1,500," said he believed it was the intention of the Government to construct an agricultural railway from Northam to Quelquelling. Goomalling was only twelve miles further from Northam than Quelquelling, and the surveyors might as well at the same time make the survey for the other ten or twelve miles. He moved, as an amendment, that the word "Quelquelling" be struck out and the word "Goomalling" inserted in lieu thereof.

MR. RANDELL said he wished to take advantage of the opportunity to call the attention of the Commissioner of Railways to the fact that, in one of the newspapers, it was reported that the state of things at East Northam station was

worse than ever. He would like to know whether the Government intended to construct the line to Quelquelling, or only proceed with the survey at present.

THE PREMIER, in reply, said it was proposed to ask the House to build a railway from York to Greenhills, and the Government thought there was no better place for an agricultural railway than the country between Northam and Quelquelling and on to Goomalling. That district was occupied by small holders who lived on their own land. A vote for the survey only was asked for now, and there was no pledge that the railway should be built; but the Government hoped they would be able, next session, to propose that the line to Quelquelling should be built. He had no objection to the survey being extended to Goomalling, but he hoped it would not be considered that the Government were pledged to construct a railway that far. It was intended to build these lines out of current revenue; and if current revenue could not provide the money, the lines would not be built.

Amendment put and passed, and the item, as amended, agreed to.

MR. COOKWORTHY, referring to the item, "Railway to Bunbury racecourse, £2,000," said he believed it was the late Lord Beaconsfield who said the turf was a gigantic engine of national demoralisation. He (Mr. Cookworthy) had had the honour to present to the Government a petition from more than fifty farmers in the Quindalup district, who asked for a railway. These men were living on their own land, which they had converted at great expense from forest into gardens. The Premier, however, would have nothing to do with that railway for the benefit of the yeomanry; but he had now proposed to build a railway for the use of blacklegs and gamblers, and for assisting in the demoralisation of the colony. In previous sessions, the Attorney General had tried to put down the gambling spirit, yet was a member of a Ministry which assisted in carrying a railway to a racecourse, so that the people could go to the devil all the quicker. He was sorry the Commissioner of Crown Lands had left the paths of peace and righteousness, and taken up with publicans and sinners, and was helping in the demoralisation of the colony by giving facilities to get to a race-

course. He was told that the railway to Quindalup would not pay. Very likely it would not pay; but, at the same time, it did not assist in the demoralisation of the country, and he would say the railway to Quindalup would be of more benefit to the country than the railway to the Bunbury racecourse.

MR. GEORGE moved that the item, "Railway to Bunbury racecourse, £2,000," be struck out. He took this step in order to call attention to the fact that the member for Sussex had accused the Ministry of all sorts of crimes, and of demoralising the country. If the member for the Murray had made those remarks, he would quickly have been called to account.

THE CHAIRMAN said the member for Sussex had been allowed to speak as he did, because it was supposed he would conclude with a motion. He (the Chairman) could not allow the member for the Murray to move for the striking out of an item and then speak against his own motion.

MR. GEORGE said he did object to this item, and did not think it was necessary to build a line to Bunbury racecourse. In fact, he did not believe in racecourses in any case. He hoped the House would not pass the item.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said the House passed the resolution in favour of sitting on Fridays and Mondays in order to expedite business, and he hoped hon. members would bear that in mind.

THE CHAIRMAN said he wished it to be understood that he would not again allow a member to do what the member for the Murray had done: to propose a motion and speak against it.

MR. RANDELL asked whether a necessity had arisen for the construction of the proposed railway.

THE PREMIER said it appeared this matter had been under consideration for a long time, and that the railway had been promised by some one, though not by himself. The present railway from Bunbury to Picton Junction went within a mile or so of the Bunbury racecourse. People went from all parts of the colony to the Bunbury race meeting, only to find that they had to walk to the course because there were not sufficient vehicles in the place. It had been suggested to the Railway Department that it would

be a good thing to put in a siding to the course. The matter was dealt with when the member for Wellington was Commissioner of Railways, and he might know something about it. He (the Premier) did not remember that he had himself ever promised that this line should be constructed.

MR. LOTON said facilities of that kind should be given, as a great many of the people of the colony were race-goers, and they got as little harm on a racecourse as in going to church. He did not think there ought to be much objection to the spending of money on this railway.

MR. RANDELL protested against the item, regarding its purpose as frivolous, and the outlay as extravagant. The time would come, sooner or later, when it would be necessary to wipe out items of this kind, and it would be well to begin at once. He moved to strike out the item.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse): The connection between the racecourse and Bunbury had been promised, and as the making of the line did not involve a large sum, he hoped the item would be allowed to pass. The Government perhaps, as the result of the protest that had been made, might not be willing to place similar lines on the Estimates in future.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said there were plenty of claims upon the public purse of a more useful and profitable character than the one in question, and he should vote against it.

MR. VENN pointed out that, unless the line were made, no one from Perth would attend the local race meeting, as visitors would have to walk two-and-a-half miles from the railway station, there not being enough vehicles on hire at Bunbury to convey a train-load of excursionists to the course. It might be well to follow the usual practice, and ask the Bunbury Race Club to guarantee the railway department against loss for putting down the line.

THE PREMIER, while not strongly in favour of the item, asked that it should be allowed to stand, as it appeared to have been promised, although he did not recollect making a promise on the subject. Perhaps he said something that had been construed into a promise. The vote would be a very small matter to ask

for a guarantee upon; and, although the pledge might be given, there possibly would be a difficulty in collecting the money. He might say that, generally speaking, he was not in favour of putting down racecourse lines; but the Bunbury course was in a very isolated position, and land was growing so valuable now that it would not be practicable for the club to get another site nearer the town.

MR. GEORGE said that, while the line would cost the country £60 per annum as interest upon construction account, the Railway Department was not likely to receive more than £25 per annum as traffic revenue from this piece of railway. He would vote against the item.

MR. CLARKSON considered that members were acting in very bad taste in opposing this small item, when it was remembered how willing the Premier was to assist other districts.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked whether the Bunbury club had done anything to help themselves. Had they a racecourse that was worthy of the name, or was it only a piece of rough bush land?

MR. VENN said the club had, during the last twelve months, spent several hundreds of pounds in improving the course, a portion of which had been laid down in couch grass.

Motion, for striking out the item, put and division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	5
Noes	...	...	...	8

Majority against 3

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Illingworth	Mr. Clarkson
Mr. James	Sir John Forrest
Mr. Randell	Mr. Loton
Mr. R. F. Sholl	Mr. Moran
Mr. George (Teller).	Mr. Piesse
	Mr. Throssell
	Mr. Venn
	Mr. Monger (Teller).

Motion negatived, and the item passed.

THE PREMIER, referring to the item, "Railway, York to Greenhills (exclusive of rolling stock), £20,000," moved, as an amendment, that the word "York" be struck out. He said he did so in fulfilment of a promise made in the House to the member for Beverley, who desired to have the question of the starting point of the line discussed by the Assembly.

It would be more convenient that this discussion should take place upon the Bill, when brought in, for authorising the construction of the line, than upon this item in the Estimates.

Amendment put and passed, and the item agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. GEORGE, progress was reported, and leave given to sit again.

#### CUE-NANNINE RAILWAY BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I beg to move the second reading of this Bill, which provides for the continuation of the Murchison railway from Cue to Nannine. I think there will be nearly, if not quite, enough money out of the present loan to do the work. It seems to me that we could not do better than extend the railway in this direction, as the line will serve the people of Nannine, and give facilities to the goldfields. It will also give assistance to the pastoral industry, by enabling the stock brought from the North to reach a railway 50 miles nearer than they can do by the present route.

**THE SPEAKER**, before putting the question, said that Section 10 of "The Railways Act Amendment Act, 1892," with respect to the laying of plans of the proposed railway route upon the table of the House, had been duly complied with.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### PERTH RACECOURSE RAILWAY BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I beg to move the second reading of this Bill. The line exists already; it runs to the river, and the proposal is to extend it to the racecourse.

**MR. RANDELL**: Are you going to cross the river?

**THE PREMIER**: Yes.

**MR. RANDELL**: What sort of a bridge are you going to have—a high level one?

**THE PREMIER**: It will be wide enough for a double line.

**THE SPEAKER**, before putting the question, said that Section 10 of "The

Railways Act Amendment Act, 1892," with respect to the laying of plans of the proposed railway route upon the table of the House, had been duly complied with.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### KALGOORLIE-KANOWNA RAILWAY BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I beg to move the second reading of this Bill, which provides for the construction of a railway from Kalgoorlie to Kanowna, a distance of 12 miles. This is a railway that will pay, going as it will from an important centre like Kalgoorlie. There is no question as to its being right to make this line. Everyone is agreed as to the necessity for this railway.

**THE SPEAKER**: I have satisfied myself that Section 10 of "The Railways Act Amendment Act, 1892," with respect to the laying of plans of the proposed railway route upon the table of the House, has been duly complied with.

**MR. MORAN**: I would like to ask the Commissioner of Railways whether it is anticipated that tenders will be called for the construction of this line, or whether it will be given at a schedule price to the contractors who have a plant at Kalgoorlie. The line is such a short one that, under the circumstances, it would be ridiculous to call for tenders for making it.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS** (Hon. F. H. Piesse): I cannot answer the question of the hon. member just now, as to whether tenders will be called for.

**MR. RANDELL**: I am satisfied that this is a very desirable Bill, and I give my support to it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### ADJOURNMENT, AND THE EXTRA SITTINGS.

**MR. RANDELL** said so short a notice had been given of the intention of the House to sit on the following day, that he did not think it would be possible to get a quorum. Would it not, under the circumstances, be well to adjourn till Monday?



MR. CLARKSON said the country members had been taken somewhat by surprise by the motion that had been carried to sit on Friday; and as they had this week made other engagements, he would asked the Premier to move the adjournment of the House till Monday.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the notice of Friday's sitting had been rather short, and he would consent to adjourn till Monday.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the House adjourned at 12 minutes past 11 o'clock, p.m., till the next Monday.

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## Legislative Assembly,

Monday, 12th October, 1896.

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Want of a Quorum—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

WANT OF A QUORUM: ADJOURNMENT.

At the expiration of fifteen minutes from the time appointed for the meeting of the House, there not being a quorum present, the SPEAKER declared the House adjourned until the next sitting day.

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## Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 13th October, 1896.

Criminal Evidence Bill: third reading—Mines Regulation Act, 1895, Amendment Bill: third reading—Bastardy Laws Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Australasian Federation Enabling Bill: second reading; committee—"Hansard" Reporting Arrangements: Legislative Assembly's Message—Loans Consolidation Bill: first reading—Waterworks Bill: second reading; committee—Loan Bill (£3,500,000), 1896: second reading; committee—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

### CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.

#### THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time, and *passed*.

### MINES REGULATION ACT, 1895, AMENDMENT BILL.

#### THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time, and *passed*.

### BASTARDY LAWS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

#### THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time, and *passed*.

### AUSTRALASIAN FEDERATION ENABLING BILL.

#### SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Hon. members will be aware that it is intended by the various colonies of Australasia to endeavour to frame a federal constitution. With that object in view Bills have been submitted to the various Parliaments for the purpose of arriving at some method of carrying out the desired end. It has been considered advisable that our colony should select some ten members to represent it at the Convention which is to be held. This Bill provides for the selection of these ten members, who shall, it is provided, proceed to the other colonies at a time to be fixed upon, and there meet the other delegates who have been appointed and discuss the question of federation, and endeavour to agree to a system which will be mutually satisfactory. With regard to the election of