

referred to by the hon. member for Nannine, a good deal of it is like what our notice papers are printed on—paper. The proportion of cash to the face value of these companies which come to West Australia at the present time is very absurd. Speaking in the interests of the workers on our goldfields and investors, I say that when people are engaged in a payable industry, that industry can be carried on with advantage to workers and investors; but if you compel people to employ one man to three acres, and sink £1,000, possibly on a “duffer,” the industry, nine times out of ten, will end in disaster. The object of the hon. member is to assist the industry, but if he will withdraw the motion, he will find it will not have done harm, and possibly secure happy results to the industry within a reasonable time.

On the motion of **MR. HASSELL**, the debate was adjourned until the next day.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10:37, p.m., until the next day.

### Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 2nd September, 1896.

New member—Mining machinery: abolition of duty on  
—Agricultural Lands Purchase Bill: third reading  
—Constitution Act Amendment Bill: committee—  
Streets and Roads (Greenmount and Marble Bar)  
Closure Bill: first reading—Post Office Savings  
Bank Bill: committee—Excess Bill, 1895: committee—  
Companies Act Amendment Bill: committee—Coolgardie  
Goldfields Water Supply Loan Bill: second reading;  
adjourned debate—Streets and Roads (Mullewa and  
Busselton) Closure Bill: first reading—Agricultural  
Lands Purchase Bill: Legislative Council's amendments—  
Adjournment.

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

#### NEW MEMBER.

**THE PRESIDENT** (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) reported that he had received a telegraphic return to the writ issued by

His Excellency the Governor for the election of a member to serve in the Council for the North Province, and that from such return it appeared that Mr. Donald McDonald McKay had been duly elected for the said province.

The Honourable Donald McDonald McKay, having taken the oath required by law, took his seat.

#### MINING MACHINERY—ABOLITION OF DUTY ON.

**THE HON. R. G. BURGESS**, on behalf of the Hon. J. H. Taylor, asked the Minister of Mines, Whether it was the intention of the Government to abolish the duty on mining machinery.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) replied: Yes.

#### AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE BILL.

##### THIRD READING.

**THE HON. F. M. STONE**: I rise to a point of order. When the report of the Committee was put to the House, its consideration was adjourned for the purpose of introducing a fresh clause. When the House again met, a motion was made that the report be adopted. Upon that, the Hon. the Minister for Mines moved that you do leave the chair for the purpose of considering a new clause. The House divided on the question that the report be adopted, and the motion was lost. Then a motion was put that the clause be added to the Bill. I find, sir, in looking into the procedure, that it is laid down in *May* that no clause can be offered on the report stage of a Bill unless notice thereof has been given, and it has been held that the notice must contain the words of the clause. *May* says:—“By Standing Order No. 38, no clause may be offered on the report stage of a Bill unless notice thereof has been given; and it has been held that such notice must comprise the words of the clause intended to be proposed; and where a clause has been offered, differing materially from the notice, it has not been entertained. Nor can this defect of notice be supplied by an amendment being proposed to the clause by another member, as the clause cannot be amended until it has been received and read a second time.” I

may point out that this clause, as given notice of, read as follows:—"The Minister may, if he shall think fit, with the approval of the Governor, clear, drain, fence, or otherwise improve any of the land acquired under this Act prior to disposing of it, and the cost of such clearing, draining, fencing, or other improvement shall be added to the price paid for the land: Provided that the amount spent under this section shall not exceed (£20,000) Twenty thousand pounds." In the clause which was proposed the proviso relating to the limit of £20,000 was left out, and I submit, therefore, it was not competent for the House to deal with it. You, sir, drew my attention to the fact that I could not make any amendment to the Bill because I had not given notice. There is another question. *May* lays it down as follows:—"New clauses are first offered, priority being given to clauses moved by the member in charge of the Bill, after which amendments may be made to the several clauses of the Bill as reported by the committee. A clause that is moved on the consideration of the Bill as amended is read a first time without question put; and, before this stage, the member who proposes the clause may speak in support thereof. The question is then proposed from the chair, 'That the clause be read a second time,' which is the proper time for opposing the clause, and the member proposing the same can address the House. If this question be affirmed, amendments may then be proposed to the clause." If that procedure had been adopted there could have been no objection to it. I submit, therefore, that this Bill cannot be proceeded with further at the present time, and I should like your ruling on the point. I may say that it is with considerable reluctance that I have drawn your attention to this matter because I have been a strong opponent to the Bill. At the same time, I think it is our duty to draw attention to such matters as these so that we may see that the proper procedure is carried out.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shen-ton): I may point out to the hon. member that in this case I have followed the procedure which has hitherto been adopted in this House. We have pre-

cedents showing that where a clause has been struck out, in committee, it has been reinserted on the report stage. I would call the hon. member's attention to Standing Order 271, which governs the practice of this House.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I move that the Bill be now read a third time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

## CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

### IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 16 put and passed.

New clause:

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I move that the following new clause be added to the Bill, to stand as Clause No. 6. "Notwithstanding anything contained in section 8 of the Amendment Act, the seats of the members elected at the first election of members for the North-East Province (which seats would, by the said section, be vacated on the completion of a period of two years from the date of election, and each succeeding period of two years) shall be vacated on the 21st day of May in the years 1898, 1900, and 1902, according to seniority to be determined as provided in such section." The object of this clause is a simple one. It will be remembered that when this Bill becomes law next year, elections will take place under it for members for the North-East Province. If they are elected for two years, as now provided by the Bill, it will place them a year beyond other members. It is desirable, I think, that all elections should take place at the same time, and therefore it is provided by this clause that the first election under this Bill will entitle members to sit for one year less than they otherwise would do.

THE HON. R. G. BURGESS: It seems to me an extraordinary thing that a clause of this kind should be brought in without hon. members having a chance to see it.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: I can see nothing to object to in it. It seems to me plain enough for everyone to grasp. I hope, however, that when the new members are elected some better provision will be made for seating them than the present shanty we have.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I am quite in accord with the hon. member that notice of amendments should be given, but I was unable to give notice of this owing to the House not sitting. The clause is purely technical, and I hope hon. members will agree to it so that we can complete the Bill to-morrow.

**THE CHAIRMAN** (Hon. Sir G. Shenton): I may say that when this Bill came up to us I drew attention to the omission which is supplied by this clause, and in consequence of that the hon. the Minister has now proposed this amendment. It only places hon. members who are elected for the first time under this Bill in the same position as members who might be returned to fill vacancies through the death or resignation of other members.

**THE HON. R. G. BURGESS**: The explanation is satisfactory enough, but I think we should have an opportunity of seeing all amendments in print before we are asked to pass them. I move that progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

Clause agreed to.

Schedules agreed to.

Bill reported, and report adopted.

#### STREETS AND ROADS (GREENMOUNT AND MARBLE BAR) CLOSURE BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly, and was read a first time.

#### POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 2—Amount of advances:

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): At our last sitting I moved that progress be reported so that I might consider the question which was raised by the Hon. Mr. Parker that the maximum amount advanced should be increased from £7,000 to £10,000. Since then I have made enquiries and I find that the sum of £7,000 has been arrived at by a compromise, and I myself am now inclined to think that £10,000 is rather too high a sum. We must remember that properties are now inflated and a Government might be induced to let out more money upon them than would be justified. I hope, therefore, hon. members will pass the clause as it

stands. I beg to move that the words "shall be," in the first and third lines be struck out, and that the word "is" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported, and report adopted.

#### EXCESS BILL, 1895.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

This Bill was considered in committee, agreed to without amendment, reported, and the report adopted.

#### COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY'S AMENDMENTS.

The Order of the Day for the consideration in committee of the Legislative Assembly's Message No. 18 on this Bill having been read,

**THE HON. F. M. STONE** moved that the amendments be agreed to.

Question—put and passed.

Amendments agreed to.

#### COOLGARDIE GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY LOAN BILL.

##### SECOND READING—ADJOURNED DEBATE.

**THE HON. D. K. CONGDON**: When I moved the adjournment of the debate I did not do so for the purpose of delaying the consideration of the Bill. I saw there was but little probability of bringing the debate to a close that evening, and I thought that in these circumstances it might be more beneficial to us if we were afforded an opportunity of hearing the Budget Speech in another place. I thought we might hear the reasons why certain moneys had been placed on the Estimates, and that this would help us when the various matters came before us. As far as the Bill itself is concerned I may say that I view it with a great deal of favour. I think the scheme is a good one. I have made enquiries among engineers and surveyors, and I am informed that it is thoroughly practicable.

**THE HON. R. G. BURGESS**: No one denies that.

**THE HON. D. K. CONGDON**: At all events the hon. member wanted some amendment, and the Hon. Mr. Crowder said that through my thickheadedness I could not grasp all he was putting before hon. members. I may say, however, that

I prefer to accept the opinions of the Engineer-in-Chief rather than those of the Hon. Mr. Burges or the Hon. Mr. Crowder. The Engineer-in-Chief has given us a scheme which has also been carefully considered by the Government before they endeavoured to commit the country to it, and I think they deserve our best thanks for their efforts. Although it will increase the amount of our indebtedness it will in no way increase our taxation, but rather the reverse. It will reduce the taxation of the people on the goldfields because they will now be able to get water much cheaper than they do at present, and for much less than they could do under Mr. Wilson's scheme. The present price of water, I believe, is between £30 and £40 per 1000 gallons, and under this scheme it will be reduced to 3s. 6d. per 1000 gallons. Some hon. members advocate that this work should be done by private enterprise. I think that this would be a most suicidal course to adopt, for surely we have had enough of private enterprise. We have only to look at the Perth Water Works, the Midland Railway, and the Great Southern Railway to show us how suicidal it would be to allow private enterprise to carry out such a scheme as this. In my opinion I believe private enterprise would fail in what the Government will carry out. If this scheme is carried out it will enable those who have invested their money at the goldfields to get it back, and it will be a means of attracting still more money to the colony. I think it is unfair to say that this scheme will not be carried out for the money. The Engineer-in-Chief has given us an estimate, and from what we know of his work—take the Fremantle Harbour Works as an instance—we shall probably find that this scheme will be carried out for less than the estimate. Even for the sake of the women and children on the fields this scheme is a necessary one. Perhaps hon. members will think I am egotistical when I say that I was instrumental as mayor of Fremantle in obtaining the first water supply for that town. I induced the Governor of the day to put on the estimates the then very handsome sum of £7,000 as a nucleus of a water supply scheme for Fremantle, and I can only say that the benefits which have been derived from it are untold. I intend to

support this Bill and to oppose its reference to a select committee.

THE HON. S. J. HAYNES: I take somewhat of an opposite view to that expressed by the hon. gentleman who has just sat down. I think it would be to the interest of the colony if the scheme were carried out by private enterprise. While I appreciate the anxiety of the Government to provide an ample water supply for the goldfields I differ with them as to their mode of carrying it out. The scheme provides for supplying 5,000,000 gallons of water per day at a cost of £2,500,000. This sum for a small colony like this is a very large one, especially when we consider that we have no other information before us than the report of the Engineer-in-Chief. Undoubtedly he is a man of great ability and indomitable energy and perseverance but, in this instance, he may have made mistakes as he has done before.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON: Where are the mistakes.

THE HON. S. J. HAYNES: I need not go into them, but he has made mistakes; there are few men who have not. However, I say this is a scheme which we are asked to agree to on the word of one professional gentleman, and to corroborate him the Government bring forward an extract from a letter from the consulting engineer in England, Mr. Carruthers, and another letter extracted from the *West Australian* newspaper. I say this is not sufficient to warrant us in passing this scheme. While admitting the ability of the Engineer-in-Chief I do not think he has had the time to give mature consideration to a work of this kind seeing that he has so many other things in hand. He has the Fremantle Harbour works, railways in all directions, and any quantity of public works in hand, and he has therefore had but little time to mature his scheme. Even looking at his report we see that he emphasises the fact that it is not his scheme, and he recommends that some specialists in England shall be consulted before it is carried out. It seems to me that this ought to have been done before the proposal was put before the House. I do not believe the Government are convinced as to the success of the scheme, but that they are simply going blindly on the opinion of the Engineer-

in-Chief. Of course this is essentially a matter for engineers, but it does not prevent us criticising it from a business point of view. Seeing the large amount of capital this colony has attracted to it, I do not think it would be difficult to get private individuals to invest still further and carry out a water supply scheme. It has been said that in this way we should create a monopoly, but I cannot follow that because it is a thing which can easily be prevented. Another objection I have to passing this Bill is that I think further time should be given, so that the matter could be more carefully considered throughout the length and breadth of the country. As far as I know, no one is clamouring for this scheme at present, and if we put off the passing of the Bill until next session no great harm will be done. By that time many of the mines may find plenty of water upon their own areas. £2,500,000 is £20 per head for every man, woman, and child in the colony, and although I think our prosperity will continue, I do not think we are justified in involving ourselves to this extent. If, however, the majority of the people are against private enterprise undertaking the work, I think we should offer a good bonus for the best scheme for supplying the fields with water. This would be better than adopting the uncorroborated scheme of one man. I know that at the present time, capable engineers have doubts about the scheme, and I should like to see a little further delay so that the fullest enquiries may be made. I do not propose to oppose the second reading, but I shall vote in favour of the Bill being referred to a select committee. If however this is not agreed to, and the Bill is passed, I hope the colony will not have cause to regret it. At the same time I must repeat that I think we are going too far, and are acting too hastily in the matter.

**THE HON. J. E. RICHARDSON:** It will be recollected that upon the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech I expressed the opinion that it would be well for us to wait until we had the details of this scheme before expressing an opinion upon them. We now have them. No one will deny that the fields require a water supply, and the only question is which is the best and cheapest way of providing it. The Government have brought

forward a scheme, and there seems to be a little difference of opinion about it, but on the whole, I think the majority are in favour of it. It is said that the amount involved is so huge that it will create a burden upon the whole colony, including the Northern and Southern portions, which derive no direct benefit from it. As, however, the scheme is to be a reproductive one, I do not see where the taxation part comes in. Even if the colony were taxed a little to keep the goldfields going, everyone would participate in the benefit of it. Already the goldfields have done much for this colony. They have provided a market for the cattle and sheep of the North, and they have raised the price of land in Perth enormously. It is said that private enterprise should carry out this scheme. I do not think private enterprise could ever provide a large enough supply, and I believe that the fields will take all the water that the Government and private enterprise combined can place at the disposal of the people. Then it is said that water can be got by boring. Salt water may be obtained in that way, but then there will be the expense of condensing it, and there is no saying how long even that supply may last. In a scheme put forward by private enterprise the supply is to be dependent upon the rainfall; but I can only say that if there is as little rainfall as there is in the district I come from there will not be much. Another point raised is whether the scheme is practicable. Anyone who knows anything about pumping must be aware that it is no difficult thing to raise water 200 feet or 300 feet. All that is required is power and money. The Hon. Mr. Burges has raised the question as to whether the route selected is the best one. I think before the Government finally decide the matter they should make enquiry, and get the opinion of more than one engineer. I can only say in conclusion, as one of the Northern members, that, although this is a scheme for the benefit of the Southern part of the colony, I do not intend to oppose it.

**THE HON. C. A. PIESSE:** Before making a few remarks on this Bill I should like to draw attention to a statement which the Premier made at Coolgardie. He said that he intended to try and win the fair maid of Coolgardie;

and I believe he is now trying to carry that out, for at any rate he proposes to give her plenty of water to wash her face with. There is no doubt that a water supply is needed, but the question is whether the Government are adopting the best means of providing it. I am not an engineer, but it seems to me that there is no other means of providing a water supply, if we are to believe the reports of those who have had experience in these matters, than by the scheme proposed by the Government. Possibly a supply might be found nearer Esperance, but to take it to the fields a railway would have to be constructed for the carriage of the pipes, and to this the country at the present time would never agree. To my mind the only point we have to consider is whether the estimate is a correct one. Here again I may say that we are not in a position to go into the matter, because our past lives have not been such as to give us experience to calculate what pipes will cost or what excavations take to make. Therefore to a certain extent we are in the hands of the officers of the Government, who are paid to advise us on such matters as these. With regard to private enterprise, I am entirely opposed to anything of the kind. We have had enough of private enterprise. We begin by giving a concession, and end up by having to buy it back at an exorbitant advance on the value of the work. It has been said that when once the goldfields people get a supply of water they will endeavour to get the price reduced as they have done the railway freights. I maintain that the people had a right to insist on the reduction of freights, because they were such as to pay more than was necessary to the Government, and when the time comes that this scheme will pay to supply the water at a lower rate the people will have a perfect right to ask for a reduction. The Hon. Mr. Burges has raised an important point as to the direction in which the pipes should be laid. He says that in time we shall have to duplicate the present line, which is a disgrace, and that it will be better to adopt a new route up the Helena than to lay another set of rails alongside the present ones. There is a good deal in this, especially as those who have to travel up and down the present line recognise the dangers they are

exposed to. Another point in favour of the Hon. Mr. Burges' proposal is that more good agricultural country will be opened up and that a shorter route will be provided by it for the people who wish to travel from Albany to the goldfields. I think this is a matter the House should give some attention to, for it will be a good thing for the colony if we can serve the purposes mentioned by the hon. member and provide a water supply at the same time. I know there are many objections to the Bill, particularly among my own constituents, but as I consider this scheme is one of a national character, it is my duty to vote for it. If we are afraid to face matters of this kind we shall never make this colony a great nation. If we cannot develop the fields they ought to be taken from us. I have nothing further to say, except that I should like hon. members to consider carefully the proposals of the Hon. Mr. Burges.

THE HON. D. M. MCKAY: I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill, because it is a measure having for its object the welfare of the goldfields and the progress of the colony. It will not be of much direct benefit to the North, but it will materially add to the prosperity of the colony as a whole.

THE PRESIDENT then left the chair for an hour.

On resuming,

THE HON. F. M. STONE: Although the speech of the Hon. the Minister for Mines has not convinced me as to the necessity of passing this Bill, I must congratulate him on the able way in which he introduced it to the House. There is one point I take it we are all convinced of, and that is the necessity of a water supply for the goldfields. So much, however, has been said on this point that I need say nothing myself; but the question which we all have to consider is how is the necessity to be met. Is it to be met by the Government or by private enterprise? If by the Government, then we have to consider whether the present scheme, which is the only one before us, is practicable, that it will only cost the sum which is mentioned, and that it will be completed in the time which is stated. We must consider whether we are satisfied that it will pay, or whether there is any likelihood of

the whole colony, in the course of time, having to bear the burden of it. I will deal firstly with the question of whether the scheme should be carried out by the Government or by private enterprise. If private enterprise could find the means of supplying the people on the fields with water, I should be the first to vote in favour of it; but if it is found that private enterprise cannot come in with a scheme, then I should like to see the Government undertake the work. I am not so sure but that, if this question of supplying the fields with water were left to private enterprise, we should not find several persons or companies coming forward with a scheme or schemes. We have heard already of one scheme. I refer to that put forward by Mr. Wilson. It is well known that many companies have joined in that scheme; and, if we find companies willing to come forward in connection with one scheme, there is no doubt they would come forward in connection with others. If we found that private enterprise would not come forward, then we might go to the Government. My objection to the present scheme is that I do not think the whole colony should be taxed for the benefit of one particular district or one particular goldfield. We have goldfields in all parts of the colony; and if we can get private enterprise to come forward and bear the burden of supplying the water, by all means let us take advantage of it. It is said that, if we let private enterprise come in, we shall be granting a monopoly, but it is easy to prevent anything of the kind. In any agreement which is made the rights of the public can be fully protected, and steps can be taken to guard against any monopoly. We know that in other parts of the world such schemes as these have been undertaken by private enterprise. I will refer hon. members to the Broken Hill scheme. Has any monopoly been granted there or has there been any complaint as to the scheme. If in a rich mineral part of Australia such as Broken Hill private enterprise has come forward to undertake the work why should not private enterprise come in here. We know that a tremendous amount of English capital is involved on our goldfields and we may be sure that every effort will be made to provide water with which to work the

mines, even if the Government take no steps in the matter. If, as I have said, private enterprise will not come in then let us go to the Government. In that case we must see if the scheme which is put forward is a good one, that it will cost the money which is stated, that it will be finished in the time mentioned, and that it is a practicable scheme. The scheme before the House is a Government one and the report on which it is based is that submitted by the Engineer-in-Chief. I ask hon. members are we justified in committing this colony to such a large amount as £2,500,000 on the report of one gentleman only. Before we commit this colony to this extent we should be perfectly satisfied that the scheme is practicable, that it will cost only the money which is asked for it, and that it will be completed within the time which is stated it will be. As to its practicability I admit there is no doubt. It is perfectly practicable. Then comes the question whether it can be constructed for the money which is stated and whether it can be completed in the time mentioned. If we are going to commit ourselves to £2,500,000 we should be satisfied that that is the total amount which will be required and that we shall not have to be continually borrowing in the future in order to complete its construction. Now, with reference to the report of the Engineer-in-Chief, I would ask whether this is the only scheme that can be found by the Government to supply these fields with water. I do not question the capability of Mr. O'Connor in the matter, but if we look into his report we shall find that it is a very guarded one. I will refer hon. members to page 4 subsection 5. He says:—"The character of the country in the Greenmount Ranges is much more favourable both as to gathering areas and ground capable of holding water, and construction of weirs, than any place which we know of in the vicinity of Coolgardie." Hon. members will see that he starts by confining himself to the Greenmount country and Coolgardie. I should like to know from Mr. O'Connor whether there is any other vicinity nearer to Coolgardie than the Greenmount ranges from which the supply can be obtained. Then, if we turn to Mr. Hodgson's report

we find that there are seventeen places from which a supply can be obtained. If hon. members will turn to page 18 they will see that he says, "The respective merits of the other streams I purpose reporting on later on," and if hon. members look at the questions I have put to the hon. the Minister of Mines they will see that the reply I got was that Mr. Hodgson's report on these other schemes was in hand and could not be completed for some time. On an important matter of this kind when there are seventeen other places from which the supply could be obtained surely the report should have been placed before the Government and before this House before we were asked to accept the scheme of the Engineer-in-Chief. If we turn again to page 4, paragraph *h*, we find it stated that there are no other sites in the Coolgardie district anything like the sites in the Greenmount ranges. Here again it shows how guarded the Engineer-in-Chief is. Mr. O'Connor does not say there are no other sites, but he simply confines himself to these two places, Greenmount and Coolgardie. I should like to be satisfied from Mr. O'Connor, as to whether any of these 17 places which are mentioned might not be taken in preference to the one he suggests, or whether any of them are not nearer. These are matters I think we should be perfectly satisfied upon before we commit the country to such a large amount as this. Then, if we look at paragraph *m*, we find it says, "To sum up, therefore, as regards the "question of the most favourable site for "reservoirs (in the event of reservoirs "being adopted as the source of supply), "there cannot, I think, be the slightest "doubt that the results from reservoirs in "the Greenmount ranges would be vastly "more satisfactory, in every way, than "any results which could be reasonably "expected from reservoirs in the vicinity "of Coolgardie, and, in this connection, "there is one most grave and important "consideration, which should never be lost "sight of, viz., that whereas a continuous "supply of large magnitude from reservoirs in the Greenmount ranges can be "looked upon as a matter of absolute certainty for an easily ascertainable cost, the "results to be anticipated from reservoirs "in the vicinity of Coolgardie, and the "cost of such reservoirs, would be abso-

lutely impossible of ascertainment from "any data which we have got now, or "could hope to get within any reasonable time." There again the Engineer-in-Chief is still dwelling on the difference between Coolgardie and Greenmount. Thus we find three paragraphs written very guardedly, and only referring to two places. No mention is made of any other places which might be within nearer distance of Coolgardie than Greenmount, and therefore it behoves this House, before adopting the present scheme, to go carefully into the matter and obtain the fullest information on it. With reference to the cost, this is also a matter which the House should be perfectly satisfied upon before passing this Bill. If we turn to paragraph 37, we find that Mr. O'Connor is again very guarded. He says, as regards the estimate, he believes the works can be carried out for the amount which is stated. In paragraph 40 he says: "There is ample evidence "that they can be constructed for the "amount set down. See Mr. Hodgson's "memorandum to me, dated 15th inst." Then paragraph 41 says: "As regards "the other items in the estimate, which "are for works of an ordinary and everyday character, there is no reason to "doubt that the ordinary prices, at "which they have been valued, will be "found to be sufficient." So that again we see three paragraphs of the report in which Mr. O'Connor is very guarded. He does not say I am of opinion that so and so is the case, and I stake my reputation upon it, but he says I believe so and so, thus giving him a loophole if it is afterwards found that the works cost more than the estimate. Then I come to the question of time. In paragraph 53 he says: "There is, I think, only one "more point which I need touch upon, "viz.: as to the estimate that the work "can be completed in three years, concerning which I have to state as follows: "We have been assured by steel pipe "manufacturers that the whole of the "pipes required could be made in two "years." Then he says: "As regards "the pumping engines and sheds, there is "no reason that I know of why they "could not be procured and erected and "constructed, respectively, within three "years." Later on he says: "The "reservoirs would have to be designed



"with great promptitude, and put in hand as soon as possible, in order to be completed within three years, but there is no reason that I know of why they should not be completed within that time. So that as regards time he is also very guarded. These are matters, therefore, that the House should further enquire into, and hon. members should have from the lips of Mr. O'Connor his reasons for the various matters contained in his report. What I understand from the report is that the pipes will be taken to a point near Mahogany Creek and then they will be carried to the track by a short line of railway which is to be built. When we find that private persons cannot get their goods along the line, that ships have to go away from Fremantle without being discharged, owing to the block, I should like to know from Mr. O'Connor what is proposed to be done when the time comes for the delivery of the pipes. This is a question I should like to ask Mr. O'Connor, for it seems to me that upon the arrangements that are to be made will depend whether the scheme can be carried out in three years or five years. Then I come to the question of whether the scheme will pay interest and sinking fund and working expenses. In paragraph 43 of his report Mr. O'Connor says "the estimated price "at which the water can be delivered, viz., "3s. 6d. per 1,000 gallons, is simply an "arithmetical resultant from the total "estimated working expenses per annum, "on the basis that 5,000,000 gallons (on "the average) will be sold, daily, during "365 days in each year: but, as regards "the 'on the average' element in the "matter, it is only right to say that this "result would not accrue if the 5,000,000 "gallons per diem failed to be sold for "several days running, as the estimate "only provides for a storage reservoir at "Mount Burges capable of holding two "or three days' supply." Here again we find him very guarded. He bases his estimate on 5,000,000 gallons being sold every day. No provision is made to compel the companies to take a certain quantity of water nor is there any provision by which the towns which are to be supplied can be made to pay for it. Will it be found that the mines are able to supply their own water and that the towns are able to supply their own? If

so, we shall have the water provided by this scheme with no one to take it. The working expenses, interest, and sinking fund will then have to be found out of the general taxation of the colony. If a stoppage, as Mr. O'Connor puts it, for a few days will be a serious matter to the revenue, what would it be if for a few months no water is required from the scheme. Supposing we find during the winter months of the year that there is a good rainfall on the fields, neither the companies nor the inhabitants will require to take water from this scheme, and if there is no compulsion on the companies to pay for it, or no rates levied in the towns, a serious loss must ensue. I asked a question on this point for the purpose of seeing if I could be satisfied, and with a view of ascertaining whether there would be any risk owing to the non-use of the water. The reply I got was that the matter had not been fully considered, but that probably the Municipal Councils would take the water from the Government at their boundaries, and levy a rate to pay for it. I cannot see why the Government themselves should not enforce a rate for the water. These are matters upon which there should be some further enquiry. Do we find when towns are supplied with water that any risk is taken. In any Water Supply Bill power is given to strike a rate so that if people do not take the water they still have to pay for it, and thus prevent any loss on the scheme. We know that, as soon as there is a good season on the fields, water will be obtained for domestic and mining purposes from the rainfall, and a loss must at once accrue. Then it is said that the water which may be obtained from the mines will be salt. Admitting this, it will be usable for battery purposes, and only a small supply for the boilers will be required from this scheme. Then, again, directly this water is taken to the fields, an agitation will arise for the purpose of forcing the Government to lower the price, as was the case in connection with the railway freights. Then we shall have to supply the water at a price that will not pay, and by-and-by, there will be a further agitation for the purpose of getting the Government to supply cheap fuel, because there is no doubt that in a short time, timber suitable for both mining purposes

and for fuel will run out on the fields. I have referred to the report of the Engineer-in-Chief, and have said that it is a guarded report, and anyone who looks through it must come to a similar conclusion. In these circumstances I wish to make some further enquiries. Then taking the question of the thickness and cost of the pipes. I have already asked whether any opinion, other than that contained in the Engineer-in-Chief's report, has been obtained as to the most suitable thickness of the pipes. I shall refer to Mr. Hodgson's report as furnishing another opinion which had been given. I will show what that opinion amounts to. Mr. Hodgson says: "Respecting the estimates of cost of the scheme, it is unnecessary to say much, as they are based upon your general instructions, and contain nothing original on my part. In the matter of the main pipe, however, I may point out that the minimum thickness of metal adopted (for the 30 in. main) is three-sixteenth of an inch and the maximum five-sixteenth." Is there any opinion there. I have been told that, in America, after several years' use, these steel pipes had to be taken up and replaced with cast iron pipes. Surely, in a scheme of this kind we should be careful to have every opinion before us before we come to a decision. Now I come to another question. I ask if the Engineer-in-Chief would give a further assurance than that contained in paragraph 32. The answer given to me was, "See the report of Mr. Hodgson and the letter of Mr. Percival Fowler." Mr. Hodgson's report says: "Respecting the estimates of cost of the scheme, it is unnecessary to say much, as they are based upon your general instructions, and contain nothing original on my part." Again I say there is no opinion in that. Then with regard to Mr. Fowler's letter, I say that no letter written by a professional gentleman to a newspaper can be considered as of any value. If the opinion contained in it is worth anything it should have been paid for. If the Government have to depend, for the purposes of their scheme, on letters written to a newspaper, then they cannot have very much faith in it. Then we have Mr. O'Connor, at the tail end of his report, saying: "In conclusion (and in reference to observations by members of

the legislature on the subject), I would wish to mention, that it has always been my intention, in the event of this pumping scheme being adopted, to recommend the Government to arrange for a consultation of high class specialists in England, more particularly as regards the height and distance which it would be most desirable to adopt between the several pumping stations, and consequently the location of the said pumping stations, and the consequent number and power of pumps, which it would be most desirable to adopt for each such station, and, in evidence of this, I attach hereto a letter which I addressed to our consulting engineer in England, Mr. Carruthers, dated 3rd March last, and also extracts from his reply thereto." I cannot understand the Government having that paragraph before them and then saying that the scheme can be constructed for £2,500,000, and that it will be carried out in the space of three years. Should not the Government, before they brought forward this scheme, have consulted and obtained the opinion of those specialists referred to by Mr. O'Connor. There is another paragraph which throws a little light upon the subject, and it is that which is contained in Mr. O'Connor's letter to Mr. Carruthers. He says: "These particulars I am merely giving now for the reason above stated, that there may be a mighty hurry-scurry about the matter some of these days, and in order that I may then be in a position to cable to you about it without delay, and I only hope that by sending you this letter I shall not be putting you to a lot of trouble without anything resulting therefrom." We are getting into part of the mighty hurry-scurry now, and I ask hon. members to let us have Mr. O'Connor before the select committee so that we may get a little more information about the scheme than we have at present. If the Government believe the scheme is as good a one as they state they will have no objection to the fullest information being obtained about it.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): There is no use in wasting time.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: Is it waste of time to obtain all the information we can? Does Mr. O'Connor think it waste of time when he recommends that the

opinion of specialists should be obtained? Mr. O'Connor wants to be as guarded as he can so that the Government cannot afterwards turn round upon him and say that he gave such and such an opinion which has proved incorrect. What did the Government do in connection with the harbour works? Did they come in with Mr. O'Connor's report alone and ask us to rush the proposal through the House as we are asked to rush this scheme through? No, they referred the question to a select committee. Was any question then raised about hon. members daring to question the opinion of Sir. John Coode or Mr. O'Connor. No, the whole matter was referred to a select committee which went fully into the details and satisfied themselves as to the scheme. In connection with the Fremantle Harbour Works did we not have plans weeks and weeks before the scheme was introduced, but in this case the only plan we had was placed on the table in such a manner, during the Hon. Mr. Burges' speech, as to show that the Government were somewhat ashamed of it. Without that plan before us, I ask could any hon. member follow the Hon. Mr. Burges in his remarks. It was only after we saw the map at the conclusion of the hon. member's speech, that we were able to grasp what he intended to convey to us. Why should the Government endeavour to keep back information from the House? Why should we not be allowed to question the Engineer-in-Chief? What are we here for? If the Government are to bring in reports by the Engineer-in-Chief and ask the House to swallow any scheme they refer to, all I can say is that this House is of very little use. I take it that we are here to enquire into matters that are brought before us and to see that the country is not saddled with large expenditures unless we are satisfied that the schemes are such that the country should undertake. I have shown that such a course as is now proposed was not followed in connection with the Harbour Works. If the scheme is to take three years there will not be much loss in a delay of a couple of months, so that hon. members may make further enquiries and obtain more information. Having made these enquiries and obtained further information, then, if we

are satisfied that the scheme can be carried out for the money and in the time mentioned, by all means let us vote for it, but do not let us take for granted everything which appears in the papers before us. We are not here to vote blindly, and I ask the House, therefore, to support me in getting this matter referred to a select committee. Then, if the report of the committee after full enquiry is favourable to the scheme, I shall support the Government. We have a very grave responsibility. It is all very well for hon. members to say that we should not dare to question Mr. O'Connor, or dare to do this or that. I am here, and am prepared to dare to do anything, and to question the highest opinions if necessary. What I want to feel is that I have done my duty, and I am not prepared to swallow a scheme of this magnitude without full enquiry, and without being fully satisfied upon the points I have mentioned. If I cannot be so satisfied, I shall be prepared to take the responsibility of throwing the scheme out, rather than burden the country with a large expenditure in the interests of one particular district. I know I shall be met with the argument that this scheme is for the benefit of the whole colony, but we know that the life of a goldfield is from ten to fifteen years.

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: What about Bendigo and Ballarat?

THE HON. F. M. STONE: I say the average life of a goldfield is from ten to fifteen years, and that being the case it is necessary that provision should be made to repay the whole cost of the scheme within that time. The Engineer-in-Chief, as I have shown, is very guarded throughout, and I ask hon. members to vote with me in favour of the appointment of a select committee, so that we may obtain more information. If we adopt that course, a course similar to that followed in schemes of lesser magnitude, this House will then have done its duty.

THE HON. J. H. TAYLOR: I do not think I should be doing my duty if I did not say a few words on this Bill, which is one of the most important that has ever come before this House, or is ever likely to come before it. It not only affects the interests and welfare of the goldfields and of the colony of Western

Australia but to some extent it affects the whole world, insomuch that a sufficient and unlimited water supply will increase the output of gold and so help to settle a great coinage question which is causing so much attention in commercial circles at the present day. In discussing this Bill several hon. members have referred to the hurry-skurry which has attended the passage of it. They have accused the Government of trying to rush it through Parliament, but I might remind them that already this measure has been before us for two weeks during which time very little debate has taken place upon it. One hon. member has spoken three times, and on two of these occasions he moved the adjournment. I cannot see, therefore, how it can be argued that there has been any hurry-skurry. It seems to me that the magnitude of this enterprise has been greatly exaggerated. It has been called an enormous scheme by some members, others have called it stupendous, and one hon. gentleman referred to it as a monstrous scheme.

THE HON. R. G. BURGESS: For the population.

THE HON. J. H. TAYLOR: That is increasing every day. I think the Premier made a slight mistake when he gave the forecast of this Bill in a speech which he delivered at Northam. He said he was going to stagger us, and naturally everyone has been looking forward for something of a staggering character. Had, however, the Premier but asked for £2,500,000 in the same manner that the Hon. the Minister for Mines asked for £200,000 for the purposes of the Perth waterworks the other day, I feel sure this Bill would have been passed a long time ago. There is a great deal in the manner in which a thing is done, and in the present instance the method which has been pursued in putting forward this scheme has stimulated considerably more debate than if the amount had been asked for more as a matter of course. This is not after all such a great scheme as the opponents of it try to make out. It is simply a series of small pumping schemes. I can refer hon. members to pumping schemes of such magnitude and size compared to which this is a very small affair indeed. I might mention the Standard Oil Trust of the United States.

In Pennsylvania petroleum is pumped in all directions from the oil wells to New York, Baltimore, and Philadelphia on the coast, and to Chicago and other places inland. It is pumped over some of the most mountainous parts of the States—over the Catskill and Allegheny Mountains. The pipes go over mountains and valleys, a total distance of about 25,000 miles, and, so far as I know, water is no more difficult to pump than oil. Compared to the scheme I have just mentioned what is such an one as this, which runs over flat country nearly all the way and is to be constructed near a railway line which is already laid? Another argument in favour of the practicability of this scheme is that a number of private people who possess capital or who can influence capital are prepared to take it up. I know one gentleman who, when he says he can raise the money to carry it out in a month, is able to do so, and I take it that an offer coming from such a person shows that there is nothing difficult in connection with it. It is not, however, in the interests of the goldfields, or in the interest of the colony, that a scheme of this kind should be in the hands of private individuals. If private enterprise undertakes the work the water will not be charged for at the rate of 3s. 6d. per 1,000 gallons, but 10s. per 1,000 gallons is more likely to be the price, and this is surely not in the interests of the fields or of Western Australia. Such a scheme, I maintain, should be in the hands of the Government, who will work it in such a manner as to give the people the full benefit of it. No doubt, as has been said, private enterprise would be willing to undertake the work because there is money in it. It has been stated that Mr. O'Connor has been very guarded in his reports on this scheme, but I think it will always be found that people, whose opinions are worth having, are as a rule, always more chary in expressing themselves than those whose opinions are not worth having.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: What about Mr. O'Connor's opinion on the harbour works?

THE HON. J. H. TAYLOR: I do not know anything about the harbour works, and, therefore, I cannot answer the hon. member, but I know that the Engineer-in-Chief has a high reputation, not only

in this colony but out of it. I have every respect for his opinion, and I believe that he is extremely careful how he expresses himself. If, however, hon. members desire to have anything more emphatic, let them speak privately to Mr. O'Connor, when I am sure they will hear more than they will find in the report before us. Besides this, we not only have Mr. O'Connor's opinion, but we have, through him, the opinions of many of his professional subordinates. The reports which are adverse to the scheme only emanate from those whose opinions are not of the same value as Mr. O'Connor's—they are not of the same commercial or monetary value; in fact the majority of the adverse opinions are the result of no experience whatever. One great point about this scheme is its certainty. I have travelled about the country and have seen what splendid catchment areas there are in the Darling Ranges; I know what a magnificent rainfall there is, and I do not think it has been argued, even by the opponents of this scheme, that there is any doubt whatever about the supply. I have been on the goldfields for some six years, and during the whole of that time there has been nothing but a battle with the water question. All sorts of makeshifts have been resorted to—people have tried to catch water from their roofs, they have tried sinking on the lake, and, in short, there has been one continuous fight for water. The Southern Cross mines, which have been longer in existence than any others, have proved that there is only a certain quantity of subterranean water available, and it appears that whichever mine in a locality is deepest down drains the rest of the mines. It has been found that when the Fraser's South mine has had plenty of water, the adjoining mines, the Fraser's Central and Central Extended have been drained. At Coolgardie there are thousands of leases all close together, and one drains the other. Obviously, therefore, we must get more water from somewhere. As to the price of 3s. 6d. per 1,000 gallons, I do not think that will, in any way, be a stumbling block against people taking the water. I know any amount of syndicates that would take all the water the Government could supply if they had the right to retail it at a higher price. Two or three hon. mem-

bers have suggested that when the time comes, the goldfields people will object to pay for the water. I consider that a most unwarrantable and unjust remark to make. With all their faults, there is one thing about the people of the goldfields, and that is, that they can pay and pay well. It is hardly worth arguing such a point as this, because the answer to it is so apparent. Take the telegrams, for instance. The people on the goldfields do not mind what they pay, provided only they get despatch. For years most of the telegrams from the fields have been sent at urgent rates. Something has been said about the reduction of the freights on the railway. Up to last July, the people on the fields paid double the rates to those charged in any other part of the colony, and all that was asked was not that they should be charged less than anyone else, but that the people on the fields should be placed on a level with those in other parts of the colony. As far as the goldfields are concerned, they are the wholesale customers of the Government departments, and the rest of the colony constitute the retail customers, and all that was asked was that the wholesale customer should be placed on the same footing as the retail customer. There is only one fault I can find about this scheme, and that is, it is not big enough. The water will never get beyond Coolgardie or Kalgoorlie. I do not blame the Government for this, because no doubt they saw they would have some difficulty in getting even this scheme through, but I believe that the time is not far distant when it will have to be considerably added to. A great deal has been said about involving the colony in an expenditure of £2,500,000. I admit it would have been a large sum had not Coolgardie been discovered, but at present it is a mere bagatelle compared with the benefit that the colony will derive from its expenditure. There is one thing more, and that is, that for every pound the Government spend, the British public will spend five times as much; and, as a matter of fact, they have spent more than that already, and you cannot offer a better inducement to the British public than for the colony itself to invest its money in reproductive works of this kind. There is one matter in which I agree with the Hon. Mr.

Stone. I think with him that it would be a fair thing if the Government had some guarantee that they could get 3s. 6d. per 1,000 gallons. I do not think there would be any difficulty in arranging this among the towns and mines. One idea has occurred to my mind, and that is, I think the mines which want water should be compelled to construct tanks which could be filled from time to time. In that way they would always have plenty of water. It seems to me a bad system to pump straight from the reservoir into the companies' batteries. There are several opponents to this scheme who argue that it cannot be constructed in the time mentioned, and that before the scheme is finished the water question will have been solved. Should this turn out to be correct we shall find that Western Australia has become the richest country the world ever dreamed of, because it is so intersected with gold-bearing reefs and deposits which, given a sufficient water supply to treat them, would make the output of gold enormous. I am not speaking in an exaggerated manner, because we have not only the reefs which are exposed, but numbers of deposits are daily being discovered below the surface of the ground. At one place a reef was felled and a reef was discovered under the stump. At another place, in cross-cutting, a reef which had not before been known was discovered. At Fraser's mine two of the best of their reefs did not outcrop at all. The whole country is full, not only of outcrops, but of hidden reefs. The more water there is, the more stone can be treated. It is absurd to say that 5,000,000 gallons or 10,000,000 gallons will be sufficient. Even when this scheme is finished should it be found that so much water has been discovered that these 5,000,000 gallons will be unnecessary, the cost of this scheme to the country, even if altogether lost, will be nothing compared to the wealth which will have been obtained through the mines having been in a position to treat the gold bearing ore. I have heard a great many people say that the scheme cannot be carried out in the time, but I do not see how they can know that. There is only one way of finding it out, and that is by working at it. One argument struck me as being clever. One hon. member said he would bet it could

not be carried out in three years. I said I would take that, and bet him £50. He said no, I will bet you a new hat. Fancy waiting three years for a new hat. Then some hon. members say that there is a coolness on the fields with regard to this scheme. There has been a certain amount of opposition, but that was caused by the fear that the fair claims of private enterprise would be opposed by the Government. It was only necessary for the Government to assure those connected with private schemes that they would not offer any opposition to anything which was reasonable, and that they were prepared to assist private enterprise in obtaining a water supply. I do not consider that the water rights in connection with boring are as liberal as they should be. If private individuals run the risk of boring they should be given greater protection over the surface and underground if they are successful. At the present time if an individual sinks a bore, and is successful, he is immediately surrounded by others who tap his supply. If greater encouragement were given there would be more private schemes. The hon. the Minister for Mines has promised that he will support any legitimate private enterprise which is brought before the House, and thus the great objection which was levelled against the proposal of the Government has been removed. I hope the Government will make more liberal provisions for encouraging people to sink for subterranean water. Mr. Wilson's scheme, which has been referred to, will not interfere with the Government scheme. His scheme will supply the Northern portion of the Coolgardie goldfields, while the Government scheme, I am perfectly confident, will not get beyond Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. I am strongly opposed to any further delay by the appointment of a select committee to consider this Bill. I am aware that Mr. O'Connor has said that he advises consultation with some of the leading engineers in England, but that simply refers to questions of details which can easily be dealt with after the Bill is passed. I consider it of the utmost importance that this Bill should be passed. It will have a wonderful effect upon the London market. If we can only show that the Government have faith in the fields, and

that they are about to take water to them, no matter at what expense, it will have a salutary effect on the British capitalists, and will lead them to have still more confidence in us. Although I think the magnitude of this enterprise has been exaggerated, I nevertheless think this a plucky scheme for a colony such as this to undertake. If, however, we look back we shall see that in a very short time the population has doubled, and I am sure that during the next five years it will again far more than double itself; indeed I do not think I should be very far out if I said that by that time we might be able to put a nought on to the 125,000. People are streaming over here every day. I heard an old miner, who has been stationed at Southern Cross for some time, remark that he had been through a few rushes, but that there was one thing about this one which he had never noticed at others, and that was that so many had gone to it and so few had come back. I hope there will be no more delay in connection with this Bill, and that the idea of referring it to a select committee will not be seriously entertained by hon. members. I shall support the second reading.

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: As at present advised, I shall support the second reading of this Bill. It is said that this is a matter of considerable magnitude, and in consequence of this hon. members seem somewhat afraid to approach it. But I take it, sir, that however gigantic this scheme may be, it is necessary we should pass it. We can only use our best judgment, and then if we err we cannot be blamed. Firstly, we have to consider whether we are satisfied that there is a demand for water on the goldfields. So far as we have heard, this has not been contradicted. Then we have to consider whether the fields are permanent. We have now no doubt about that, whatever opinions may have prevailed in regard to them in the past. Then what scheme are the Government to adopt? Are they to test by boring, or depend upon dams, or are they to adopt the scheme which is now before the House? With reference to artesian boring, I do not know that I can do better than refer to a letter of Mr. Stubbs, who is the manager of the Tarcoola gold mining leases at Southern Cross. He seems to

have had considerable experience, and he goes into the question of artesian boring, and says it will not do. He says:—"An artesian well of, say, 1,000,000 gallons of water per day, which is not excessive, would be to its possessors a better thing than the Great Boulder. All those who came were satisfied of the improbability of getting artesian water, and have returned to Sydney. This, I think, is one of the strongest arguments against the possibility of getting artesian water on the goldfields. As to the Government scheme, provided there is sufficient rainfall on the catchment area, there is no engineering difficulty in the way of getting it to the goldfields; it simply becomes a matter of detail. All that they propose to do has been already done in other countries; there is not, therefore, the risk of failure as there might be in propounding theoretical ideas." In addition to this, we have the report of the Engineer-in-Chief, who has given a definite opinion that a supply of artesian water cannot be looked for. Then, no person I have met with is mad enough to believe that a water supply can be obtained by catchments. The Government have already spent a considerable amount of money in erecting dams in the past, but we know with what effect from the painful telegrams that were sent from the fields last year, which told the story of the sufferings of both men and animals to a sufficiently harrowing extent to induce us to prevent a repetition of them, if possible. The population is increasing, and it is idle, while there is not sufficient water for men and animals, to expect to get enough for mining purposes. Therefore it seems to me that the only feasible scheme is that which has been propounded by the Government. It is said why not leave this matter to private enterprise. Unless precedents are worthless, we must look to our own past experience in connection with the undertakings of private companies. We know that as soon as the undertakings of private enterprise get into working order a demand is made upon the Government to purchase them. As far as my experience goes these private undertakings adopt objectionable measures, which cause the people to agitate, and eventually force the Government to purchase at their own price.

What has been our experience of the City of Perth waterworks. Has it been a happy one? We know that the Government recently had to purchase the works for more than they are worth. It is said why not adopt Mr. Wilson's scheme. A curious part about that argument is that some hon. members seem to have no doubt about the practicability of that scheme. They will take Mr. Wilson's figures and swallow them, but directly we come to a scheme which is on all fours with it, only a little larger, all sorts of objections are raised to it. These hon. members will commit the country to Mr. Wilson's scheme on Mr. Wilson's figures, but refuse to commit the country to the Government scheme, on the figures of the responsible advisers of the Government. It is said that we could bind up a private company by an agreement in which there was no loop hole. This is a large undertaking. Up to the present we have had many agreements in this country, but loop holes have always been found in them. I do not know how an agreement is to be drawn which directors cannot get out of if they desire to do so. To my mind Mr. Wilson's scheme seems to be a visionary one. I believe that recently it has been found that the levels which have been taken, have been proved to be incorrect, and I am afraid that as soon as Mr. Wilson got his scheme completed he would urge the Government to take it over. Then I come to the question of whether the scheme which is proposed by the Government is a practicable one. It is a golden rule, I think, that we should be guided by our responsible officers. We have the opinions of the Government engineers and Mr. O'Connor. The Hon. Mr. Stone says we have Mr. O'Connor's report alone, but the Hon. the Minister for Mines in introducing this Bill, referred also to a letter of Mr. Hodgson. To that the hon. gentleman did not refer. The Hon. Mr. Haynes said that Mr. O'Connor had made mistakes, but when questioned as to what they were he did not tell us but said that all people made mistakes. Probably so, and perhaps the hon. member was making one when he made this statement. The Hon. Mr. Crowder says the scheme is impracticable, but I ask him for his authority for that statement. If it is impracticable, is it not likely that

its impracticability would not have been pointed out long before this by some of the many lynx-eyed people we now have in the colony? We have, in support of the hon. member's contention, some statements which have appeared in the Albany paper and in the *Daily News*. Against him we have the facts and figures supplied by Mr. O'Connor; we have a letter from Mr. R. Montague Brown, who is an engineer of considerable standing, and he says that the price stated is a reasonable one. We have also the letters of Mr. Fowler and Mr. Cox and the opinion of Mr. Hodgson. It is said that we cannot accept some of these opinions, because they are contained in letters to a newspaper, but it is remarkable that no person has thought fit to answer the allegations, and consequently they stand uncontradicted as being the opinions of persons who are capable of forming them. Then we have Mr. Jobson's report, and he says that the only way to supply the fields is by pumping; but he takes a different source for his supply. Mr. O'Connor says that 5,000,000 gallons per day can be supplied, and as this has never been questioned it is only fair to assume that to that extent the scheme can be carried out. Then can it be completed in three years. On that point Mr. O'Connor has given a definite opinion. True, it is a guarded one, but still it is definite. The Hon. Mr. Crowder says it will not be carried out in three years, and the Hon. Mr. Stone says it will take nearly five years. What is the use of bald statements of that kind when we have a contrary opinion expressed by persons who have experience and who are skilled in their profession. I understand it would take ships arriving at Fremantle once a week, each carrying 1,000 tons of pipes to keep the work going; that it would take six locomotives and 48 trucks, running an average of three trips in two days, to enable the pipes to be laid in three years. These are the figures on which the estimate has been based. I obtained these figures from an authentic source in reply to inquiries I have made. The Hon. Mr. Crowder says it will take three times the number of trucks stated, because it is impossible to carry the pipes at dead weight. On that point probably the hon. gentleman has been misinformed, or he would not have been led into making



such a dogmatic assertion. Then he said the scheme would take five years, and that it would cost twice as much money as is stated in the Bill, and in support of that he cites some scheme in Wales. I do not know that anyone ever goes to Wales for experience. My impression is people generally leave Wales in order to learn something. I understand that the Liverpool waterworks referred to by the hon. member did not cost twice the amount of their estimate, although the cost of the scheme was increased by actions at law for interference with riparian rights. Then it is said that the pipes cannot be laid in the time. In Sydney 49-inch pipes, 27 feet long, weighing 5 tons 3 cwt. each, were laid at the rate of 80 per day, and if the pipes here are laid as rapidly the work will take two years and seven months to complete. In Sydney the pipes were laid from the Prospect reservoir to Botany, over mountainous country, but here the pipe-track follows level country nearly all the way, and with a railway line alongside. Then I come to the question of price. Mr. O'Connor says the works can be constructed for the money, and his statement does not seem to have been attacked except by the Albany paper, the *Daily News*, the Hon. Mr. Crowder, and the Hon. Mr. Stone. The Hon. Mr. Crowder says he wants more details. He says the estimate is based on a rate of wages of 7s. per day, and that the rate ought to be 14s. a day. On inquiry at the proper place I am informed that the estimate is based on a wage of from 10s. to 12s. a day. Then it is said that the freight to be charged on the pipes is 11s. 3d. per ton, whereas it should be £2 15s. 6d. per ton. On inquiry at the Works Department I find that the mineral rate has been estimated at being a double rate. Then the hon. gentleman said that no provision had been made for unforeseen circumstances. I never heard of such an objection as that. Who ever heard of a person being able to make provision for unforeseen circumstances. Then it is said the scheme would cost £5,000,000. On that we have Mr. O'Connor's word against that of the Hon. Mr. Crowder. The Hon. Mr. Stone said that there were no outside opinions. On that I may point to the letter of Mr. Hodgson, who says

he has no doubt about it. The Hon. Mr. Crowder says that the Government know that this scheme cannot be carried out for the money, and that he knows it, but he does not say how. The question then is, are we to take Mr. O'Connor's opinion, backed up by Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Hector, Mr. Cox, Mr. Fowler and others, or that of the Hon. Mr. Stone and the Hon. Mr. Crowder, backed up by the Albany paper and the *Daily News*. As business men, I ask hon. members which of these opinions they would be guided by if the work were their own. It is said that Mr. O'Connor has made mistakes, and the Fremantle Harbour works have been referred to. Now, what was the estimate for the North Mole? I made enquiries and found that it was 4s. per cubic yard. The actual cost has been 3s. 5½d. What was the estimate for the removal of the rock bar? 10s. per cubic foot. The actual cost was 4s. 6d. As to the time estimated for the completion of the work—eight years—Mr. O'Connor says he now sees no reason why the work should not be completed within that time. These facts surely dispose of the objections as regards the Fremantle Harbour works. Hon. members now want to get Mr. O'Connor for a couple of hours before a select committee so as to badger him; but I say if they will not believe his report, they are no more likely to believe him under examination. If Mr. O'Connor is put under cross-examination I am sure hon. members will make little or nothing of him, because he will be dealing with a subject he knows something of, while hon. members will be probing in the dark.

THE HON. R. G. BURGESS: We ought not to be here then.

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: That may or may not be; that is for the electors to say.

THE HON. R. G. BURGESS: You ought not to be here.

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: I shall be here longer than the hon. member. The Hon. Mr. Stone says that if the people of the goldfields get the water at 3s. 6d. per 1,000 gallons, they will soon want it for less. I do not think that, in any case, the Government should ask the people to pay more for the water than is sufficient to cover the working expenses, interest and sinking fund. If 3s. 6d. is too

much, by all means let them have it for less. It is said the railway freights were reduced. That is not the point. The question is, whether the rates which are charged will pay. If the fields are permanent, as is now generally admitted it would be inequitable to charge a higher rate of freight than necessary. The Hon. Mr. Stone said why not compel the people to pay for the water whether they use it or not. There is power under the Water Works Act enabling municipalities to levy a tax whenever water is laid on, and as regards companies, it would be useless to levy a rate, because it would only be binding so long as the company existed. The next question is whether the country is opposed to this scheme. No opposition has been manifested to it, and I am pleased to see that some hon. members representing the North have expressed their willingness to vote for it. The Hon. Mr. Stone has referred to the report of Mr. O'Connor, but he has brought forward no facts against it. The Hon. Mr. Crowder says he knows the report is wrong, but that is no argument. I take it that any objection that could be urged would have been urged before this. The measure comes before us from another place, where it was passed without a division by those who are more directly responsible to the people than we are, and I take it that the Government having made out a *prima facie* case, the onus of proving that it is not a practicable scheme, that it cannot be done for the money, or in the time mentioned, is upon those who oppose it. Allegations which are not traversed are taken as admitted. The balance of probability and argument are in favour of the scheme and the opposition must fail unless they prove the conclusions are bad. In these circumstances I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill.

THE HON. E. McLARTY: I do not intend, sir, to prolong this debate, or to go into the details of the scheme, because I do not feel competent to criticise the figures of the Engineer-in-Chief. There are, however, one or two matters on which I should like to express an opinion. To my mind the price at which the Government propose to supply the water is altogether too low. Considering the great cost of these works the price at the start might have been made higher, and

as population increased and the demand for water increased, then the rate might have been reduced. During this debate there has been some question raised as to whether or not water could not be obtained by artesian boring. I think in those districts which are to be supplied by this scheme, boring should now be stopped. It is stated that it will take years to put a bore down to any depth and that when it is done it will be of very little use. It is unfortunate that the colony should have to go to this expense to supply water, but I can see nothing else for it. I do not believe that we shall ever get an artesian supply, and there is very little chance of obtaining a supply from the interior, consequently, the only means of supplying the fields and townships *en route*, is by pumping the water, which exists in abundance, at this part of the colony. At first, I thought the matter of private enterprise was worthy of consideration, but after thinking over it carefully I have come to the conclusion that it would be a great mistake if this work were carried out other than by the Government. As to the practicability of the scheme, it seems to me that it is only a question of money. One point which seems to have escaped hon. members is that it is already costing between £30,000 and £40,000 a year for water for the railways. In a few years this cost will be doubled, and it seems to me to be a strong argument in favour of the scheme, that the greater portion of the interest will be saved in the working of our railways. It is said that a better route might be followed. I cannot express any opinion on that, but, if as the Hon. Mr. Burges says his scheme will save any distance and give other advantages, I think it would be well that inquiries should be made before the work is undertaken. No one has a higher opinion of Mr. O'Connor than I have. I cannot call to mind any mistakes he has made, and I believe, as regards the harbour works, they are being carried out for less than the estimate. In these circumstances I shall give my support to the Bill.

THE HON. A. B. KIDSON: I do not propose to prolong this debate, as it has already occupied considerable time without much profit. It seems to me that hon. members have been talking a great

deal upon matters concerning which they understand little or nothing. What can hon. gentlemen know, except they are professional engineers, about a scheme like this. I confess I do not understand much about it, and therefore if I said it was a practicable scheme, or an impracticable one, I should be stating what I know nothing about. I congratulate the Government, however, on introducing the scheme, and so as to allay the fears of the Hon. the Minister for Mines, I may say at once that I intend to vote for the second reading of the Bill. I may also congratulate the hon. member on his able speech in introducing this Bill, and I feel sure that the preparation of it must have cost him considerable anxiety and occupied much time. I do not think, however, that this matter has received the serious consideration it should have done. Some hon. members do not seem to consider £2,500,000 anything. The Hon. Mr. Taylor said, what is £2,500,000. To him it may be nothing, but for a small population, and considering that it is proposed to add another £3,500,000 to it, it seems to me a matter of some moment. At the present time, with perhaps the exception of the Hon. the Minister for Mines, I do not believe that there is one hon. member who is satisfied that the scheme is a practicable one, that it can be done for the money, or be completed in the time mentioned. The Hon. the Minister for Mines told us that the Government felt the grave responsibility which fell upon them in connection with this scheme. I also feel the grave responsibility of it, and I do not think we should come to a decision until we are satisfied in every particular. I believe it is a fact that every member of the Ministry, when the scheme was first brought forward, was opposed to it, and that it was only after long argument and inquiry that the members of the Government were convinced that the scheme was a right one. Why should hon. members be placed in a different position to the Government? I may say that I am not satisfied to accept the bare statements of the Hon. the Minister or the Engineer-in-Chief. I consider hon. members should exercise quite as much caution in dealing with the finances of this colony, as they would those of their own business. I am sure

no hon. member would agree to undertake a scheme of this kind on the opinion of one man. A suggestion has been made to refer the Bill to a select committee. If that were done, we should be able to examine not only Mr. O'Connor, but other engineers as well. The Hon. the Minister will no doubt tell us, that we already have other opinions, but I say we have none. Two or three letters have been published in the newspapers, but I do not know whether hon. members are prepared to accept these as opinions on which they should commit themselves to the scheme. I do not say the scheme is not a good one, but I do contend that hon. members are entitled to have more information about it, if they so desire. The Hon. Mr. Taylor stated that this scheme would have a wonderful effect on the London market, but I would ask what has this House to do with the London market? The question of the London market is one of secondary consideration only. We have first to satisfy ourselves whether the scheme is a right one, and whether no cheaper and better scheme can be brought forward. The Hon. Mr. Burges has brought forward an important matter and I think hon. members should have an opportunity of inquiring into it before committing themselves to this particular scheme. Then, I have been assured that one line of pipes will not be sufficient, and if this is so the cost will be proportionately increased, and with it the price of water must be raised. This is also a matter which a select committee could satisfy itself upon. There is one argument that has been used as to why we should support this scheme without going into too many particulars, and it is that it has been passed by another place without a division. No doubt hon. gentlemen of the House were led away by the statement of the Hon. the Premier that this scheme was going to turn the howling desert into a smiling plain, but somehow or other the Hon. the Minister here forgot to follow the argument of his chief. Perhaps, however, he thought hon. members were not quite so soft as to take it in. I have gone into this matter and find that with all the water which can be pumped in twelve months only about 35,000 acres of desert could be turned into the smiling plain. We are told that the whole future of the colony depends

upon this water supply, and that if this Bill is not passed the colony will go to the dogs. I have too much faith in the colony to believe that the future rests on anything so slender. I feel confident, that if the Government do not take the matter in hand, the colony will in no way suffer, because private enterprise will come forward and carry out the work. I may say that I am not in favour of private enterprise, but I do not wish to see that, before the Government enter upon a work of this magnitude, it shall be shown that it is a right one, the cheapest and the best. The Hon. Mr. Haynes referred to various letters from Mr. Cox and Mr. Box as to this scheme. We do not want the opinions of Cox and Box, but the genuine reports of eminent engineers. The Hon. Mr. Taylor told us that this matter was not being rushed and that it had already been delayed for a month. If it were delayed for 10 years we should be no better off unless we took some steps to gain information. I do not propose to say any more because, as I say, I do not understand the question, but I desire before finally passing it to have the opportunity of making some further inquiries. Hon. members cannot digest these written reports. They want to ask questions of engineers, who understand the subject. The Hon. Mr. Stone referred to a remark made by the Engineer-in-Chief that there would be a mighty hurry-scurry some day. It seems to me that the mighty hurry-scurry had commenced. I have been approached by a large number of persons in connection with this matter, all of whom have expressed the opinion that this matter should be inquired into more closely. Even the Engineer-in-Chief proposes to refer it to high-class specialists in England, and, if he has some doubt about it, surely hon. members cannot be blamed if they wish to obtain more information.

Question—that the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE BILL.

##### QUESTION OF PROCEDURE.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton): I have to make a statement to the House with reference to a measure which has just been passed. When the Bill

was under consideration I mentioned to the Hon. the Minister for Mines that one of the amendments should go to the Legislative Assembly by way of suggestion. Since then I have carefully considered the Statute, and I now think the Bill should be sent to the Legislative Assembly with a message requesting them to make the amendments. Perhaps the Hon. Mr. Stone will move to that effect.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: I beg to move that the amendment requested by the Legislative Council in the Agricultural Lands Purchase Bill be transmitted by message to the Legislative Assembly and their concurrence desired therein.

Question put and passed.

#### ROADS AND STREETS (MULLEWA AND BUSSELTON) CLOSURE BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly and was read a first time.

##### ADJOURNMENT.

The House at 10.25 o'clock p.m. adjourned until Thursday, 3rd September, 1896, at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 2nd September, 1896.

Question: Blocker system of land settlement in South Australia—Question: Drainage of land in South-Western district—Report of Joint Select Committee on Meat Supply—Motion: Scarcity of labour for farms, &c.—Motion: To import trained boys and girls—Roads and Streets (Mullewa and Busselton) Closure Bill: third reading—W. A. Turf Club Act Repeal (private) Bill: second reading negatived—Powers of Attorney Bill: Legislative Council's amendments agreed to—Motion: To relax labour conditions on goldfields: debate resumed; motion withdrawn—Annual Estimates, 1896-7, in Committee of Supply; debate on financial policy resumed—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.