

barked. We all know that is simply the preliminary step towards bringing the land under cultivation. This is in every sense a wheat and chaff-growing area; and I feel sure that in passing the Bill we shall add to our railway system a line which in the near future may be relied on with a fair degree of certainty to become a reasonably paying proposition. Moreover, it will give railway facilities to many settlers now located at distances so great from the existing railway as almost to prohibit them from carrying on their ordinary avocation with profit to themselves. I commend the line to the favourable notice of the House; and if members desire any other information I shall be glad to give it in replying. I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by MR. BATH, debate adjourned.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Railway Plans, Greenhills-Quairading, Coolgardie-Norseman, Donnybrook-Upper Blackwood.

ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the PREMIER, the House adjourned at seven minutes past 10 o'clock, until the next evening at 7:30 o'clock.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 5th December, 1906.

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THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 7:30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

SITTING DAYS, EXTRA.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly) moved—

That for the remainder of the session, in addition to the present days of sitting, the House do meet for the despatch of business on Mondays and Fridays at 4:30 p.m., and sit until 6:30 p.m., and from 7:30 p.m. onwards.

He was moving the motion in case it might be necessary to sit next Friday and on Monday. The Government hoped, as they had already announced, to be able to close the session on the 13th December, and in order to do that it was thought well to provide that we should sit on Fridays and Mondays in addition to the days on which we already sat. Of course, if there was no business and no necessity to sit on Monday, the House would not meet; but this motion was moved so that in case of necessity the House could sit.

Question put and passed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by the Hon. J. T. GLOWREY, leave of absence for the remainder of the session granted to the Hon. W. Oats, on the ground of ill health.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—LOAN, £2,467,000.

SECOND READING MOVED.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): It gives me much pleasure to move the second reading of this Bill, which is part of the

Government proposal to initiate and carry out a vigorous public works policy. I may explain that, as members will see by the title, this is a Bill authorising the Government of the day to borrow £2,467,000 for the construction of certain public works which are set out in the schedule. This Bill is merely authorising the borrowing. Then again a loan schedule will have to be brought down for the financial year, and will have to be passed. Moreover, in the case of railway Bills, a Bill has to be brought down for each particular work, so that before the major portion of that money is spent it has to pass the House three times; that is to say, you first authorise the Government to float a loan, then you pass these items in the loan schedule, and then thirdly in the case of railways a Bill is brought down for each particular work. The first part of the Bill consists of course of the ordinary machinery clauses. If members will refer to the loan schedule they will see set out there exactly what this money is proposed to be borrowed for. The greater portion, by the way, is for the construction of railways, the sum for this purpose amounting to £1,193,400. Out of that you will see on the top part of the schedule additions and improvements to opened railways, the Collie-Narrogin line, the Goomalling-Dowerin line, the Katanning-Kojonup line, and the Wagin-Dumbleyung line. These are lines already under construction or in some cases finished. There is something like one hundred and seventy and odd thousand pounds, I think, for those particular lines. The Collie-Narrogin line is not finished. The first section, from Narrogin to Darkan is finished, but the second section is in the course of construction. The other amounts are made up, as you will see set out in the schedule, by the Coolgardie-Norseman railway, £91,000; Bridgetown towards Wilgarup, £12,100; Busselton-Lower Blackwood, £13,700; Donnybrook-Preston, £38,000; Greenhills-Quairading, £16,000, and so on. You will see exactly by the schedule the works proposed to be carried out when this loan is floated. Of course it is not proposed to float the whole of the loan at once. It will probably extend over two or three years, and just as much as we shall require will be

floated each year. For instance, there is the amount which will be required for the lines I have named, the lines in course of construction, and also certain railways for which Bills will be brought down; and the amounts will appear in the Loan Estimates, and later in the Bills for the construction of the lines themselves. These lines are the Coolgardie-Norseman, Hopetoun-Ravensthorpe, Donnybrook-Preston, and Greenhills-Quairading, Bills for which are now before another place, and which we shall receive in due course. Then there is a farther amount of £224,500 to be borrowed for improvements to harbours and rivers. These are all necessary works which will be gone on with as time will permit, when they are found necessary. There is just one item in the schedule I would like to draw attention to, namely Item 36, lighthouses £33,800. That item is rather a big amount to spend on lighthouses in one year, but the reason is this. It has been admitted for some time that the North-West coast is insufficiently lighted. As members know, the time is fast approaching, in fact it may be almost any day, when the Federal Government—they passed a Bill last session enabling them to do so—will be taking over the lights and lighthouses on the coast. In the past it has been extremely difficult, the seat of Government being so far away from us, to get that Government to undertake any public work. The State Government, recognising the seriousness of this, think it would be well that these works should be undertaken, so that they would be well in hand and the contract let for the different lighthouses before the Federal Government got hold of them.

HON. W. KINGSMILL: Where are they to be erected?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I cannot remember the particular ones. I can give the particulars later on when we get into Committee. [Interjection by HON. F. CONNOR.] They are all in the North. It is thought well to get all these lighthouses built so that there will be no doubt. If the lighthouses are built the Federal authorities will maintain them, but it will be quite another matter, if they are not started, to try to impress those authorities so as to see the necessity of building these lighthouses; therefore

we have provided in this Loan Bill for the amount I have just mentioned. If members will turn over the page they will see how it is proposed to spend the balance of the money. Some members do not think it altogether wise that we should continue borrowing, but I think the majority will admit that borrowing is in this case absolutely necessary for the construction of the proposed public works, more particularly of the railways. A good, sound public works policy will show the investor that the Government and the Parliament have confidence in their own State, and will give him renewed courage to invest again, thus relieving the depression from which we are suffering. I do not for a moment mean that the loan is to be floated with the idea of creating a boom. These works are all necessary, and in a good many cases will be remunerative. I say, when the investor sees we have confidence in our own State and intend to open up its vast resources, he will again put faith in the State and invest his money. It always follows that when the Government are spending money on sound public works, the investor gets rid of his nervousness and once more comes forward. He is influenced by the example of the Government; for naturally, a man residing in another country does not see the good points of this country which are visible to those who live in it. Some members may think that particular parts of the country are not so well treated as other parts. Naturally that feeling will always be present. But the Cabinet never for a moment allowed that consideration to have any influence. They planned the works they thought would benefit the country as a whole, and that is how the schedule was compiled. I should like to point out the effect this Bill will have on the indebtedness per head of population. The total loan authorisations till the 30th June, 1906, were £18,273,253, of which we have redeemed £214,700. Our accumulated sinking fund was £1,320,603, making a total of £1,535,303. Our net indebtedness, therefore, was in the financial year ending the 30th June last £16,737,950, equal to £64 3s. 8d. per head of population. If we raise this proposed loan of £2,467,000, our net liability will be £19,204,950, increasing the debt per head of present population by an extra £9 8s. 6d. But, as I have already

pointed out, the flotation of this loan will extend over two or three years, and it is fair to assume the population will increase at the same rate during the next two or three years as it increased in the past two or three years. If the population increases in the same proportion this will be the position—on the 30th June, 1904, the population was 238,000; on the 30th June, 1906, it was 261,000; and if we allow for the same rate of progress during the next two years, we shall have at the end of June, 1908, an estimated population of 283,000. In addition we shall have annual accretions to sinking fund, amounting say in 1906-7 to £232,567, and in 1907-8 to £245,960, making a total of £478,527; therefore, our net liability at the end of 1907-8 will be £18,726,000, allowing for sinking fund, or £66 per head of the population estimated on the basis I have mentioned, so that our debt will have increased by only about £2 per head. But this is allowing for the whole of the £2,467,000 loan being floated by the 30th June 1908. It is not at all likely that the whole of the loan will be floated by that date, because that period, commencing from the New Year, will be only 18 months; hence it is fair to assume that by the time the whole of the loan is floated the indebtedness per head of population will be no greater than it is to-day. On referring again to the schedule, members will see that the works set out are necessary. They will tend to open up, encourage, and develop the country, and for such purposes I think we are always justified in borrowing money. In fact, with our falling revenue this year it is almost impossible to do much work out of revenue, therefore it is a question whether the country is to stand still, a country that is well worthy of development, or whether we must borrow some money for the sake of development, for the sake of attracting a big population, and of considerably increasing our national and individual wealth. All the items in the schedule will come up at least once for revision in the Loan Estimates, whether this year or next year. The railway items will come up again this session when the Railway Bills are introduced. I commend the Bill with every confidence to the House, and I formally move the second reading.

HON. M. L. MOSS (West): It is not my intention to make a long speech on this Bill, but I think it my duty to my constituents to draw attention to some of the items in the schedule, and to state my position in regard to them. Generally speaking, I have not the slightest objection to authorising a loan for necessary public works; for it is quite obvious that if this country is to progress it must be opened up so that it may be properly developed. But in this loan schedule are items which from the jump I have no hesitation in condemning. There is the Coolgardie-Norseman Railway for which I see a proposed allocation of £81,000. There is no justification for the construction of this railway. First, it will be a big piece of a wedge to be ultimately thrust home by extending the railway from Norseman to Esperance. Secondly, the development of the Norseman Goldfield and its population of I believe some 1,600 do not in any way justify our spending any money on the line. I will call later on for the whole of the Public Works Department papers relating to the project, and I venture to say there is enough information on the file to show the scheme to be entirely unjustified. I think it has been shown that there is not a good harbour at Esperance; but even if there were a harbour fit at all seasons for shipping business, and we constructed a railway from Coolgardie to Esperance, that railway would compete with our Eastern Railway from Fremantle to the goldfields.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: I think the hon. member is not in order in speaking of the Esperance railway. This is the Coolgardie-Norseman project.

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. member can use the other project as an illustration.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I suggest that the hon. member take a map of Western Australia and note the positions of Coolgardie and Norseman. I think he will then agree with me that the construction of a railway to Norseman will make its ultimate destination Esperance. He will find there is little in his point of order. The railway from the west coast of the State to Kalgoorlie and Boulder is probably a fairly good paying proposition, as railways go in this country; but to construct a line from Coolgardie to Norseman, which will ultimately go to

Esperance because of the agitation and clamour for its completion that we have to-day for building it to Norseman, would give us two railways competing with each other, and both would fail. I do not think that railway is justified. Sixteen hundred, I understand, is the population of this field, and there is not the slightest hope of this being a re-productive work within a reasonable time. I see one railway on this schedule, the Port Hedland-Marble Bar line, which I certainly think ought to be made; but I wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that there is an appropriation of £75,000 to construct a line that will cost nearer half-a-million; and inasmuch as this Loan Bill practically represents the loan commitments of this State for the next three years—because I think in the state of the market to-day and bearing in mind the population of the State and the *per capita* indebtedness, members will agree that we dare not go on the market again inside of three years—the placing of £75,000 in the schedule of this Loan Bill in connection with the construction of the Port Hedland-Marble Bar Railway is merely playing with that work; it might just as well have been left out of the schedule. The point I want to make as far as hon. members are concerned is that it is useless to make that or any other railway unless you make it to a point where it will be a paying proposition.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is also the item "rails and fastenings."

HON. M. L. MOSS: I am aware of that—£440,000 for rails and fastenings in connection with the whole of these lines. I will assume that a reasonable part of this £440,000, say £50,000, goes to rails and fastenings for the particular railway. Then I have no hesitation in making this statement which no hon. member can take exception to, that with £100,000 or £120,000 for building that line, the work will not be satisfactorily completed, and will not achieve the results which the public understand will be achieved by the making of a railway from Port Hedland to Marble Bar. We have been led to believe that the construction of that line would open up a new mineral area—[HON. F. CONNOR: And some good pastoral country]—and also pas-

total country, I am reminded. If that be so, sufficient money should have been asked for to put it in a fit position. How different is the treatment when looking at the South-West District. I find—"Bridgetown to Wilgarup, £12,100; Busselton-Lower Blackwood, £13,700; Donnybrook-Preston, £38,000"; a total of £63,800; also, "Bunbury Harbour Works, £14,000," making a total (leaving out rails and fastenings) of over £100,000 that Bunbury and district get out of this two-and-a-half millions of money. That is a very fair slice out of it. It will be interesting to me—and I shall watch with great curiosity when the Bills dealing with these lines come before the House—to see what expectation the Government have of these lines yielding interest and sinking fund on the cost of construction. I do not at the present juncture profess to know very much of the reasons which are held to justify the Government in recommending the construction of these three lines; and, as I say, I will await with a good deal of interest and curiosity to learn the reasons held by the Government in justification of the construction of these lines in that district.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The reasons were given in the Premier's speech in another place.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I am referred by Dr. Hackett to the Premier's speech; but it may be as well for the hon. member to recollect that twelve months ago he took a member, Mr. Kingsmill, very much to task for introducing railway proposals to this House without sufficient information being supplied here.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Those Bills were introduced at the last moment without any explanation.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I do not think the explanation afforded to members this evening on the introduction of this Bill is sufficient regarding the items contained in the schedules. I notice an item "Lighthouses," which I think the Government are amply justified in inserting in the schedule. In the ordinary course of events all these lighthouses will be taken over by the Commonwealth, and I agree that it would be an exceedingly difficult matter to get the Commonwealth, in view of the treatment meted out to this State in the past, to do their

duty towards this State; therefore, I think the Government are amply justified in proposing to construct these works. But there is one matter for regret in connection with it, and it is that while we were led to suppose at the time Federation was in the air that there would be a large amount of money returned to this State for the transferred properties, I do not think any of that money has so far come to Western Australia; therefore, so far as the expenditure in connection with these lighthouses is concerned, it will be, I presume, in the same position as all the other transferred properties. Whether or not Western Australia will ever receive a penny in this connection I am at a loss to understand; but I do not expect that she will get very much better treatment in the future in connection with these works.

HON. J. W. LANGSFORD: Does the Commonwealth pay interest on the amount owing on those properties?

HON. M. L. MOSS: I do not think it does. So far as my own constituency is concerned, there is an important matter referred to in the schedule which I cannot help saying is a keen disappointment to me, and will be also a keen disappointment to the people of the Fremantle Province. Needless to say, I refer to "Fremantle Dock and Slip £50,000." I noticed in the newspapers, either this morning or yesterday, that a statement has been made by the Minister for Works of what he and his Government have done in connection with this important work, and saying how little I and the Government with which I was connected did in connection with the same work. The history of the Fremantle dock dates back to 1896. In the Loan Act of that year there was included an authorisation of £150,000 as a first instalment towards the construction of this necessary work, the Fremantle dock; but that money was not expended for the purpose, except £2,000 or £3,000; the balance of the money in the Loan Act of 1896 being reappropriated later for other purposes, with the result that there remains an unexpended balance of £59,000 in the Treasury in connection with this work. In the present schedule £50,000 is allocated, and with the £59,000 unexpended we have £109,000 available for the prosecution of this work

in the future. With regard to the preceding Government, I think that Captain Laurie will be able to confirm this statement that as a result of a conference attended by all the Fremantle members of this and another place, a deputation, which was not open to the Press and took place in the office of the then Premier, Mr. Rason, laid before him a scheme formulated by those members by which the dock could be built without the expense of its construction burdening the consolidated revenue of the State. Mr. Rason and the members of his Cabinet agreed that it was desirable to construct the dock in the way suggested, if the construction could be undertaken without the consolidated revenue being burdened. The result was a promise to give increased powers to the Fremantle Harbour Trust, to enable them to borrow the necessary amount of money to construct the dock on the lines I have indicated.

HON. J. W. WRIGHT: Who would be responsible for it?

HON. M. L. MOSS: Never mind who was to be responsible. Mr. Rason resigned I think in May, some two or three months after the deputation waited on him, and he had therefore no opportunity of meeting Parliament again. The present Ministry were then formed, consisting of some of the members of the former Administration; and they were were so far in agreement with what Mr. Rason had promised that they crystallised into a Bill the proposition made by the members for Fremantle, and that Bill has been introduced in this Chamber and subsequently withdrawn and introduced in another place this session as part of the policy of the Government, to authorise the construction of this necessary work on the lines I have indicated. Ministers now recede from that position, owing largely to the attitude that the *West Australian* newspaper assumed in connection with this work, that on a broad question of policy it was inexpedient that the Harbour Trust should be entrusted with the raising of so large a sum of money. I have no objection whatever to the attitude assumed by that paper, a position perfectly defensible, and the paper was justified in taking up that attitude; though I do not say I agree with the sentiments expressed in those articles. It would be idle for me

to say that, inasmuch as I was one of the deputation that persuaded the preceding Government to do what they did, and what the present Government did by introducing the Bill first in this Chamber, and later in another place. I say it was due to the influence of the *West Australian*—powerful journal as it is and very powerful it certainly appears to be in regard to the present Government—that the flag has since been hauled down with regard to that measure; and now we find the proposal of the Government crystallised in the schedule to this Bill, as a work to be carried out by the Government. And I take this opportunity of saying that with their great majority in another place, and this being part of the policy of the Government put into the mouth of His Excellency in the Speech from the Throne at the beginning of the session, when the second reading of the Bill was moved in this House by the Colonial Secretary and supported by Captain Laurie, and with the large majority on policy measures the Government had, that measure was as good as passed into law. But no; we find that the pressure of the *West Australian*, and the pressure no doubt of members supporting the Government in another place, has induced the Government to abandon so important a part of their policy as that outlined in the Harbour Trust Bill. It is an open secret that the papers the Government have in their possession with reference to the construction of a dock show that a floating dock—which the present Government, I understand, are now pledged against—would cost nearly £200,000. It will repay hon. members to peruse the speech by Captain Laurie, in which he pointed out that there has to be added to that the cost of the extensive dredging that has to be gone on with and other things, which will make the cost of that work something like a quarter of a million of money. It is an open secret in regard to the graving dock that half a million is nearer, if not under, the cost that the work will ultimately entail. The position I assume is that putting a paltry £50,000 on the schedule to this Loan Bill and adding to it the £59,000 of unexpended money will give the Government £109,000; but seeing that the Government are pledged for the next three years not to go on the

market again after this authorisation, it is a fair proposition, a fair statement to make that this Loan Bill will result in the shelving of the dock for Fremantle.

[Interjection by DR. HACKETT.]

HON. M. L. MOSS: The hon. member need not anticipate that the construction of a dock at Fremantle will be a profitable undertaking for some considerable time.

HON. R. LAURIE: Are the Bunbury Harbour Works a paying proposition, or the Pinjarra-Marenap Railway, in this schedule?

MR. PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. M. L. MOSS: My position is that I do not believe, and I do not think members of this Chamber or of another place or the people of this country believe, that the construction of a dock at Fremantle will be immediately a remunerative undertaking. But that is not an argument that ought to be used to justify only £50,000 being put here. The hon. member interjected that "the money will be forthcoming when you prove it to be a remunerative undertaking." Look through the length and breadth of this country and see the magnificent works which have added to the prosperity of the State, but which are not remunerative undertakings. We have only to refer to the Coolgardie Water Scheme, costing this country £80,000 over and above what it earns to pay interest and sinking fund. Is there in the country anyone brave enough to say we were not justified in constructing that work? (Interjection.) I agree that it was an absolutely necessary work. I have already said on another occasion that when we find our means limited and our revenue shrinking, other works, including the Fremantle Harbour Works, should be made to pay their way, to lessen the burden on the shoulders of the Government of this country, and I do not think it is a season to have reduced prices in connection with the sale of water on the goldfields. My position was that there was a possibility, if the scheme which the Government originally introduced had been prosecuted to finality, of a slight increase being made in the wharfages, which would have spread the burden of this dock evenly over the shoulders of the people of this State, without burdening the consolidated

revenue. The work undoubtedly could have been carried out by those means. While the Government thought fit in their wisdom to abandon the policy contained in that Bill, there was nothing to prevent them from dealing with the construction of a dock at Fremantle in an altogether separate Bill; dealing with the question apart altogether from the general Loan Bill, and enabling the Government to raise money from time to time, and automatically increase the wharfage dues, so that the Government could construct the dock without any additional burden on the consolidated revenue and carry out the policy laid down by the members for Fremantle and the Government. I would like to see the £50,000 eliminated from this Bill. I would rather see the Fremantle dock treated on a separate basis, so that I could know as a representative of that province that there would be a fair probability of the dock becoming an accomplished fact this side of the next five years. I am not going to be blinded by the insertion of a paltry amount of £50,000 in this loan schedule. I am not going to believe for one moment that there is a possibility of constructing this dock within a reasonable space of time, with the allocation of such an amount as we find in this schedule. The Minister for Works makes a statement to the Press as to what he has done in connection with this matter, but the Minister did no more up to the time this Loan Bill was introduced than other members for Fremantle did. He acted in harmony with us in getting this policy first foisted on to the Rason Government, and I have no doubt he did his duty admirably as a member of the present Government in endeavouring to get the Government to announce it as part of their policy, which they did by the introduction of the Bill I have already alluded to. But this is a very poor substitute indeed. This is absolutely shelving the construction of a dock at Fremantle. It would have been far better if the Government had brought Bill in separately, as they did in 1896, when they authorised the construction of the Coolgardie Water Scheme. My complaint is that this Loan Bill would have been coming just the same if the power had been given to the Fremantle Harbour Trust, and the only complaint I under-

stand from members in both Chambers is that it is an unexpedient thing to allow a body not responsible to the electors of this State to construct so large a work entailing an expenditure of so large an amount of money. I candidly admit that this is a fair proposition. So far as the people of Fremantle are concerned, it would have been a very good thing had we got the harbour trust to do it; but we cannot complain of the attitude of the Press, and we cannot complain of the attitude of the supporters of the Government here and in another place when they induced the Government to withdraw it. My complaint is that they expressed a genuine desire in that Bill, or led us to suppose they did, to construct the work. I say I want that genuine desire expressed in the same manner as it was expressed in regard to the Coolgardie Water Scheme in 1896. This matter should have been dealt with in a separate Bill. The powers intended to be given to the harbour trust should have been retained by the Government. The Government can carry out the work to-morrow on the lines I have indicated, and without burdening the consolidated revenue one fraction. There could have been a clause in a Bill such as I have stated, compelling the harbour trust to automatically alter these wharfage and light dues at Fremantle, so that as the money was expended, sufficient should be paid to meet interest and sinking fund; and the Bill could have contained the conditions which were in the amending harbour trust Bill, saving that the Government would have had the construction of the work and the expenditure of the money instead of the harbour trust.

HON. J. A. THOMSON: It would increase taxation all the same.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Of course it would. But apparently the hon. member does not grasp the point I am trying to make. We started this session with a statement of policy in the Governor's Speech that a graving dock should be constructed at Fremantle, and we are going to end up by an expression of opinion such as is contained in the schedule of this Bill, that a dock at Fremantle is not going to be constructed; for I have no hesitation in saying that the expenditure of £109,000 is a possible total expenditure for the next three or four years, because with the

state of the market at home and the fact that we have here $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions authorised, and I understand there is close upon another half million authorised and not raised, so the Government will have to go to the market for three or four millions of money, and it is possible within the next three or four years for them to dare to come to Parliament for another authorisation.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: You will get the dock all right.

HON. M. L. MOSS: We were told that in 1896. We are in 1906 now.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Floating dock.

HON. M. L. MOSS: No; not a floating dock. I sat in the Assembly in 1896, and money to the extent of nearly four or five millions was authorised, a large sum being for the construction of the Coolgardie Water Scheme, and a large sum for public works throughout the State. We were told we were going to have a graving dock. In a number of conversations I had with the late Mr. C. Y. O'Connor, he also indicated to me the place where the dock was going to be located. Prior to the last general election when Mr. James delivered his policy speech in the Queen's Hall, there had recently been to this State a gentleman, Mr. Keele, who came from the Public Works Department in New South Wales, to make reports about many available sites in the river for the construction of the dock. As the result of all the information he gave to this State, Mr. James, in his policy speech in the Queen's Hall, stated that the Government pledged themselves to the construction of a dock at Rocky Bay. There had been therefore an expression of opinion by the Premier of the State, with gentlemen in his Cabinet who are in the present Administration, with gentlemen in his Cabinet who were in the preceding Administration, pledged to the construction of a graving dock, and it was only during the time that the Labour Government held the reins of power that as a matter of expediency, on account merely of the enhanced cost of a graving dock, they said it was in the best interests of the State to put a floating dock at Fremantle. The country expressed itself in strong terms of condemnation of a floating dock. This Government, the last Government, and

the James Government pronounced themselves in favour of a graving dock. You do not find the expedient of a floating dock resorted to except in such localities as those where it is impossible to put a graving dock. My complaint is that this Bill indefinitely postpones the construction of the dock at Fremantle, because it does not provide the sinews of war to enable the dock to be constructed. In another place, as an indication of the way in which this matter is being played with—I must not refer to what took place in another place, but a question was asked the Treasurer some time ago as to whether the Government had decided on the kind of dock and the place where it was to be constructed; and the answer was made that the kind of dock had not been decided upon, nor had the place where it was to be located. I am very much afraid that there is more than a deliberate attempt to shelve this question. The Government pledged themselves at election time, and the Minister for Works when he went up for re-election, to the construction of a dock at Fremantle. The statement was made by him and other of his colleagues. And whilst he says he has done a great deal in connection with the present, when this matter is boiled down in plain English it comes to the insertion in this 2½ millions of authorisations of a paltry £50,000. Of course I may be accused by members in this Chamber of speaking strongly upon this question because it affects my own province. That is certainly a fact, but the construction of a dock at Fremantle is not entirely a Fremantle matter. Whilst I am prepared to admit that Fremantle to a large extent will benefit by it, Fremantle can never be the great port it is destined to be unless it is properly equipped to perform every service up to date which it is capable of performing. To be capable of taking in great ocean liners going between Sydney or perhaps Melbourne and Singapore, and away west to Capetown, it is absolutely essential there should be ample facilities afforded at Fremantle, and not in the dim and distant future, but at once. This work should be put in hand, so that within a reasonable time we may see that the harbour is capable of performing the work expected of it. I have little hope. I cannot expect that the Government will

strike this £50,000 out of this schedule and bring down a Bill constructed on the lines they themselves advocated when introducing the amending harbour trust Bill, leaving it for the Government to spend the money and construct the work under its own supervision.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Is it not a question of surveys largely for the next six months?

HON. M. L. MOSS: The interjection is really too absurd, for this reason. Whilst it is quite true that they may be only able to survey these lines during the next six months, can I shut my eyes to the fact that we are also authorising 2½ millions to be borrowed which will shut this country out of the money market for a very serious period of time? The Colonial Secretary says that the whole basis of authorisation is that, given an increase of population, the indebtedness *per capita* will not be greater than it is to-day. The question of survey has nothing to do with it; but if surveys were the only thing to do with it, there is enough information in the Works Office, there are sufficient surveys, there is enough expression of opinion by the best experts which the Government have been able to procure to enable this work to be started as soon or sooner than any work contained in the schedule; but I venture to say that if the other works contained in the schedule are all authorised, they will be completed before the Fremantle dock is started. My complaint is that £50,000 is put down for a thing which is going to cost half a million of money. I do not want to draw invidious comparisons, but my friend Mr. Connor refers to Bunbury. I notice that in this schedule £44,000 is down for Bunbury Harbour Works, which I have no doubt will be spent within a reasonable time after the money is raised, against £50,000 for a work of national importance, absolutely necessary to make Fremantle what all in this House and in the country admit it is entitled to be.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The Bunbury work is simply an extension.

HON. M. L. MOSS: But the Fremantle dock is a new work, first authorised in 1896. When will it become an old work? I cannot see any possibility of its ever being anything but new. It is one of those things which are being

kept steadily in view by Ministers, and I am afraid it will be kept steadily in view till the end of the chapter. All I have said is a mere protest. I should be wanting in my duty to my constituents did I not take this opportunity of drawing public attention to the fact that the dock question is not being fairly dealt with. It would be much better if the Government made an honest declaration as to this scheme, saying plainly that the status of Fremantle and the position of the country did not justify the construction of a dock. To say that truthfully would be impossible; for there is no chance whatever of the dock becoming the slightest direct burden on the consolidated revenue of the country. I will not quote statistics. Captain Laurie has already mentioned the tonnage of the port of Fremantle, showing that the port is the third in the Commonwealth, and showing that by the very slightest of increases, which will not be felt at all by the country, the work can be carried out without imposing any appreciable burden on the people. It is not only upon the cargo coming into and going out of Fremantle that it was intended to place these imposts. The interstate and other shipping companies trading to Fremantle and deriving benefit from the harbour works were to be called on immediately to pay a harbour improvement rate. It is open absolutely to the Government to impose that to-morrow. There are ample means of finding the money; therefore it is not a question of the Government being in any difficulty, or being obliged to abandon their policy in the Governor's Speech, and their policy when a Bill was introduced to give increased power to the Harbour Trust Commissioners. I cannot refrain from alluding to two other items in the schedule. Of course I do not wish in any manner to disparage the desire of the Government to complete the rabbit-proof fence, but I will express my great regret that it is necessary to take out of loan moneys for this purpose the sum of £126,000. However, I suppose there is no alternative. The Government cannot find the money out of revenue, and the fence is absolutely essential to prevent the country being overrun by this pest. The last item to which I will refer is "Public Buildings, £175,900." During

the term of office of the last Government—and I think they were about a month in office when they were obliged to meet Parliament with a policy—there was in a Loan Bill the sum of £75,000 for public buildings. I do not think I am revealing any Cabinet secret in stating that a promise was made in Cabinet by members of that Administration that loan moneys were not to be spent on public buildings if those buildings could by any possibility be dispensed with, or could be constructed out of revenue. It was very bad to have the item in the loan schedule, and its presence was a matter of great regret to me; but I hoped that would be the last occasion when we should see "public buildings" figuring in the schedule of a Loan Bill. Loan moneys should be used for reproductive works, works that will return interest and sinking fund; but it is absolutely staggering to find an enormous sum like £176,000 set down against loan for the construction of public buildings. The country is absolutely unjustified in spending loan moneys in this manner. Up to date we have been able to pride ourselves on the fact that each of our loans has had a sinking fund, and on the small proportion of loan moneys used for such purposes as public buildings; and it is a matter for great congratulation that such large amounts have been spent out of revenue on our buildings, and that we have been able to save Loan Bills from such disfigurements. I shall need considerable information regarding the buildings it is intended to construct with this £176,000.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Your own Government spent a lot of it.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I am not aware of that.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not half of it remains to be spent.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Well, we ought not to authorise any more; and I think members who have held Ministerial office will agree with me it is absolutely impossible for every member of a Cabinet to get his own way on every question. One has to bow to the opinion of the majority; but I was always strongly opposed, and am still opposed, to spending loan moneys on public buildings; and when I am free from the fetters of

office it is my duty, and the duty of every member, to protest against such expenditure. [HON. J. W. HACKETT: To reform.] It is not a matter of reform, but of reverting to the old state of affairs.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: You were a member of the Government who introduced the Norseman Railway proposal.

HON. M. L. MOSS: The hon. member does not know what he is talking about.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: You were a member of the Ministry who supported it.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I was not a member of the Ministry who supported it. The hon. member is making a most incorrect statement. I have been a strong opponent of that project, and of spending any money which would be the means of connecting with Esperance the existing railways of the State. The hon. member ought to withdraw that statement, for it is calculated to do me considerable injury with my constituents.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: I am not obliged to withdraw what is true.

HON. M. L. MOSS: The hon. member ought to have the decency to withdraw the statement. I have been an out-and-out opponent of that scheme from beginning to end of the chapter. I rose principally to express my opinion of the treatment of my province in the matter of the Fremantle dock. I have entered that protest, and I hope that those who in the Press and through other channels take credit to themselves for having done so much, and accuse me of having done so little, will admit on calm reflection that the boot is on the other foot.

HON. F. CONNOR (North): I wish to say, continuing Mr. Moss's argument as to the Fremantle dock, that he might with justice have applied his remarks to other items in this schedule, items quite as important as the Fremantle dock, though I recognise its great importance. He might have applied the bold and powerful speech he has just made to the treatment meted out by the present Government to the North of this country generally. I will give specific instances before I sit down. One instance is the projected railway to Pilbarra from Port Hedland, or Roebourne, or Balla Balla, or Lepuch. To

my mind there is no work more necessary for the successful development of this State than the construction of a railway inland from the North-West coast of this country. The position of the commercial community of Perth and Fremantle is at this moment serious and precarious. That is not an exaggeration. In the history of Western Australia, since the advent of Responsible Government and since the development of the goldfields, the commercial community have never been in such straits as at this moment. That is my honest conviction, and I am probably as closely in touch with the commercial community as any other man here. As a public man I make that statement in all seriousness. In my opinion, if the Government had pursued the policy of trying to develop the farther-out districts, where great developments might have been possible, as in the district I have mentioned, they would have done more to assist the commercial community, thereby ensuring the success of the country generally, than they have done by introducing a great number of the items appearing in this loan schedule. What we need in this country is settlement either on the agricultural areas or on the mining fields. With regard to the Pilbarra line, I am not tied to any particular coastal starting point, whether Point Samson, Port Hedland, Balla Balla, or Depuch; but I think Depuch is the best proposition. Balla Balla is the port of the mainland, and Depuch is an island near Balla Balla.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: You cannot start a railway from an island.

HON. F. CONNOR: You can. Only four and a-half miles of causeway are needed between Depuch and the mainland: and I assure members there is enough loose stone waiting to be pulled out of the hill on that island to build the causeway.

HON. W. KINGSMILL: That is true.

HON. F. CONNOR: That causeway could be built without any blasting of the rock. That is information that Mr. Sholl perhaps does not know. [HON. R. F. SHOLL: I know it only too well.] The most important work that could be undertaken, one at any rate that I will class with the work Mr. Moss was speaking of, the Fremantle dock, at any rate a most useful and the most success-

ful work that could be undertaken by the State to-day would be the development and opening up of the mineral resources of the North-West. Not only would that be done, but a line inland from any of the ports on the North-West coast would open up some of the finest pastoral country in any part of Australia. There is a qualification to be made there. Unfortunately we have not the same rainfall. We have the soil and feed enough if it were necessary to carry stock through a drought; but we have not sufficient water. Geologists tell us that in that country there is an artesian basin, and that it is only a question of putting down sufficient bores to secure sufficient water. It is another argument why the work which I am advocating should be carried out even before some of the other works on this schedule. I said I would not take up the time of the House to any extent and I do not intend to do so, but I dare not sit down without offering my thanks, as one of the representatives of the North Province, for the generosity shown by the Government in allocating the magnificent sum of £500 to the Kimberley District. For what? Will somebody tell me, because I do not know? The Honorary Minister, speaking the other night on a matter affecting the North—I refer to the Taxation Bill—explained how generous the present and past Governments had been to the North. We have this magnificent amount placed in the schedule of this Bill to show the appreciation this great Government has for the efforts made by the settlers in the North of this State.

HON. R. D. MCKENZIE: What about your lighthouses?

HON. F. CONNOR: The hon. member is trying to direct my attention to a fact that I had perhaps just as well forgotten. The lighthouses are supposed to be north of Fremantle, but I think one of them is to be between Fremantle and Albany.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: No; they are all north. I will mention the sites later.

HON. F. CONNOR: Then the Government are going to put down another amount for a lighthouse at Cape Leeuwin. It is just that another lighthouse should be put there. For 14 years, when I was a member of another place, it was my duty and pleasure every time I spoke

on the Address-in-Reply or in connection with the Estimates or any question dealing with the finances, to suggest that there should be lighthouses erected along the North-West coast, and I now compliment the Government on the step they are taking in this direction. The Government have done some good things, not many, except this £500 for Kimberley. The sum of £75,000 is set down for the Port Hedland-Marble Bar Railway. We will be told by the Leader of the House, I suppose, that another £70,000 will represent rails and fastenings in connection with the work. If it came to my knowledge, and I believed that it was not the intention of the Government to start active work in connection with the formation of that railway in the near future, I would oppose every item in connection with the Loan Estimates if I could; but as this item appears here I can only criticise what appears to me a silly proposition, to start a line with £75,000. I desire to protest against the fact that the Port Hedland-Marble Bar Railway Bill does not appear in another place in conjunction with the other four Bills. There is an item for additions and improvements to jetties, tramways, and rolling-stock in the North-West. We have had no explanation on that point. Does it mean opening up an overland route? If so, it will not benefit the people of the Far North. It will benefit the people down here to a great extent. There is also £41,500 set down for boring for water along stock routes. We have had no explanation with regard to that. What benefit will be received from that expenditure? Then I come to the item of £500 for Kimberley. I would rather it were cut out than see it here. People talk of sops. This is no sop. I am one of the representatives for the North Province, but I was previously a member of another place representing Kimberley, and I resent this item. I want to know what it is for. I say it is an insult. I know what it is intended for. It is intended for artesian boring and the artesian boring it is intended to cover has already been carried out at Broome. I compliment the Government for having done that boring at Broome. More power to them for their success, but it was put down at Broome just before I had to fight for my seat in the

Lower House, and the plant which was successful at Broome was originally packed and addressed to Wyndham, but the Government then in power changed its destination just before the election took place, and that change of the destination put me in this House. Members may probably think it would have been better to have the "bore" in another place. There is an item in connection with the rabbit-proof fence. Though I am not opposed to the building of the fence or the upkeep of it from loan expenditure, I want to know how often on our Loan Bills this item is to appear? If we are to do the work why cannot we do it out of revenue? This will not be a reproductive work. I do not see how we are going to get any revenue out of it to pay interest and sinking fund on £126,000. I am not objecting to the item, but I want something practical from the Government. I want the Leader of the House to tell us whether another item will appear on the next Loan Bill, if there is any in our time, for this rabbit-proof fence. I think it is bad administration and want of knowledge that makes it necessary for an amount like this to appear in the Loan Bill. I have nothing more to say in connection with this Bill except to again heartily, on behalf of my constituents, thank the Government for the magnanimous way in which they have treated Kimberley.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY (South): I would like to say a few words, more particularly in reference to the attack made by Mr. Moss on the Coolgardie-Norseman Railway. I think that Norseman is one of our oldest goldfields; certainly it is in the southern part of Western Australia; and so far as I can remember, for the last ten years this railway has been promised by every Government that has come into power with one exception. When the Bill comes before this House, as I hope it will, I am sure that those supporting the railway will be able to bring forward plenty of facts and figures to show that the field is more prosperous to-day than it has been at any time during the last seven or eight years. The district has produced something like one and a-half million pounds' worth of gold. That fact combined with the fact that the field has existed for the last 12 or 13 years, is surely abundant evidence why the district

should receive some consideration. Mr. Moss said that this was the first part of the Esperance Railway. I am somewhat surprised to hear that statement from a gentleman like Mr. Moss. I am sure he made it without thinking, because it is only proposed to build a light railway line, and it would be quite impossible for the line to carry the goldfields traffic, even supposing it were built straight away to Esperance. The sleepers will be much shorter than usual. In fact, I am told the line is to be almost a *fac simile* of the Goomalling-Dowerin line, which some of us went to inspect this week. I am sorry that Mr. Moss should have taken note of the interjection that I made when I said that he was a member of a Cabinet that supported this railway. The hon. member was certainly a member of the Morgans Ministry, and Mr. Morgans was pledged to support this railway line.

HON. M. L. MOSS: If you are referring to those dead bones, I denounced Mr. Morgans for his statement.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: I was quite justified in my statement.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I rise to a point of personal explanation. I now know what the hon. member was referring to. When Mr. Morgans became Premier he went to Coolgardie to fight an election, and without any authority from anybody else, because he was put into a corner, said that he was in favour of building the line to Norseman. At the same time he had two of his Ministers, myself at Fremantle and Mr. Wilson at Perth, condemning his proposal. I said that I would not stop 24 hours in his Government if he had made that statement. Of course I did not have the opportunity. Mr. Glowrey ought to know that was simply an ordinary electioneering prank, which was resorted to not to put Mr. Morgans in a hole, but the members of Perth and Fremantle in a hole with the Government, which they did very successfully. But when the hon. member attributes to me support of the railway to Norseman on that account, I think he is in duty bound to make ample retraction.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: I am sorry my remark should have caused Mr. Moss any annoyance.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It does not cause me annoyance.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: I can only say that a Minister should not indulge in this kind of prank. The statement was made by the Premier of Western Australia for the time being, that he would take the earliest opportunity of constructing this line. I was not aware that Mr. Moss was opposing that part of his policy.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It was not part of his policy.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: It was the Premier who said it, and I presume he announced his policy in Coolgardie. I felt it my duty to make these few remarks with regard to the Norseman Railway. As to the Port Hedland Railway, I am sure members will agree that the line will open up quite a new territory. I shall also support the Ravensthorpe Railway. In regard to the agricultural railways, I presume the Minister will be able to give the House the fullest information, and I have no doubt we shall find those lines are equally justified.

HON. W. T. LOTON (East): On this occasion my remarks will be brief, like those of all other members. In the first place I only saw the Bill when I came into the House this evening. With regard to the loan itself, and the amount of the loan, I do not propose to offer any objection whatever. We must all recognise that with an extensive territory like we have, much progress cannot be made unless cheap lines of transit are gone in for. I am somewhat in a dilemma to find out the policy underlying this Loan Bill. It seems to me almost that the Government perhaps have been approached either by members or other individuals throughout the whole State, and have endeavoured to comply with the requests by saying, "We are going to build railways all over the State, or nearly so; at all events we are going to start." My view is, that the Government would have done very much better, if they had the information and knowledge, to have had a somewhat stiffer back, and to have arranged to start some of these particular public works and to provide for their being carried through, because a great number of them will probably be of very little use if started a short dis-

tance and not completed. As pointed out already, if we pass this Loan Bill it means that no farther loan can be considered within the next, I think I may say, two or three years. The four or five first items are for railways existing or under construction at the present time, and I presume those lines not completed will be finished. With regard to new lines, I would like the hon. gentleman to tell the House whether the sums set down here are proposed to finish the works, or whether it is only proposed to partially complete them. [MEMBER: Partially.] I suppose it is partially. I think it would have been much better if some of these items had been omitted and larger sums provided for completing a portion of the items. I would like to draw attention to Item 20. After providing for certain sums for various new lines, we have the item "Railways Generally, £100,000." What is the item for? Are the Government to have a free hand with this £100,000.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Certainly not; before any of it can be spent it has to be authorised by Parliament.

HON. W. T. LOTON: Then it would have been much better if we had had the information. We are asked practically to pass this Loan Bill in the dark. I am not complaining about the amount, but surely members are entitled to information. Perhaps the hon. gentleman will tell us what it is proposed to do with this very small item of £100,000 for railways generally. I do not intend to criticise any other items. I would like to say I am pleased to see No. 39; that the Government apparently are determined to face the question of expenditure for sewerage in Perth and Fremantle, a sum of £278,000 being provided. That is a fair instalment, I suppose, for the work. But, like the member for Fremantle, I regret very much that the Government have considered it necessary and reasonable to put £175,000 for public buildings in this Bill. I certainly think that public buildings should be constructed out of revenue. Frequently in the past works have been undertaken out of revenue. Some railway works have been undertaken out of revenue. I think we should avoid as far as possible, in every instance, building unproductive works from other moneys. When we borrow

money it should be for reproductive works.

HON. C. SOMMERS (Metropolitan): I, like other members, am pleased to see that the Government intend raising this loan for these very necessary public works. As one representing the Metropolitan Province, I am also pleased that the sewerage of Perth and Fremantle is to be pushed on. As to this Item 31, the Fremantle dock and slip, I regret to see it there at all. I cannot see that for many years we will be justified in building a dock. It will cost a great deal of money, and as far as I can see it will nothing like pay interest and sinking fund. I do not think we shall have any use for the dock to justify the expenditure which I believe will be necessary for a dock worthy of the country. It would be far better to wait until we can afford it better, and we have greater justification for it.

HON. R. LAURIE (West): It was not my intention to rise. We have heard quite enough of the Fremantle dock from my honourable colleague; but a member has spoken in almost a parochial spirit on a question which has been before this country for years. That hon. member himself belonged to a Government which promised this dock. I would not be guilty of such a thing as opposing the line from Coolgardie to Norseman because the line might subsequently go on to Esperance. If that district requires the railway for the purpose of farthering the interests of the district, I would not oppose it because it might take something from Fremantle. But we have had a representative of the Metropolitan Province saying that this £50,000 towards the Fremantle dock should be taken off, although for ten years, year after year, Government after Government, including the Government in which he was Colonial Secretary and Leader of this House, have favoured the construction of a dock. It has been interjected to-night, "You will get this dock when you can show it will pay expenses." No doubt that argument will be used later on. But this dock would indirectly return more to this country than the interest on the money that would be expended.

HON. C. SOMMERS: Will you tell us how?

HON. R. LAURIE: I will tell you how it is to be done. I dare say you want to know, and it is just as well to give you a little education on the subject. I can assure the hon. member that while the country beyond has to pay some portion of the expenditure, the dock will not be placed at Perth.

HON. C. SOMMERS: We do not want it at Perth.

HON. R. LAURIE: I only want to reply to the interjection, or rather the statement made, that this £50,000 should be struck off. If my friend will give me a few minutes I will show that the interest and sinking fund will be paid. Mr. Moss has pointed out that the harbour trust should have extended powers; but probably through the Press, which is a great educator, the Government have been made to feel that this country would never permit a body of five men to borrow £500,000 to build a dock; and probably they are quite right. As one who has done something towards making the Fremantle harbour a paying proposition, I welcome the fact that the Government themselves are not going to give that power to the Fremantle Harbour Trust. I welcome it not for the reason that I think the money would be better spent by the Government of the day than by those five men, but for the simple reason that this country generally does not take sufficient interest, and has not sufficient faith in the men who are prepared to give the whole of their energies for the development of any one department in this State; for that reason only. I have been asked the question, how, will this pay? People have only to look around and they will see the position of this country at the western end of this continent. If they have a look round they will see that we have a warship at Fremantle. Give us the facilities and there will be a number of these ships coming here, three or four at a time. We have made the Fremantle harbour something to be proud of, and commanders of ships who come here say there is only one thing required, and that is to have a dock.

HON. J. A. THOMSON: Would they use it?

HON. R. LAURIE: Would they use it? When it was intended to carry the railway beyond Southern Cross, did it pay? But has it paid since?

HON. J. A. THOMSON: What have the shipmasters to do with it? It is the owners.

HON. R. LAURIE: My dear friend, I may call him that because he is one of my own countrymen, says, what has the shipmaster to do with it? I want to ask him who has to do with the business he is managing in this country? Is it the employer? I say no. He is the representative of the employer; he is the company he belongs to for the time being. If we want information we do not go to the man in the old country, but the man travelling all over the world; we go to the man who can give information. I am satisfied with the action of the Government in not giving these powers, for it appears the Government have been led to believe the proposal would not have been acceptable to the people.

HON. C. SOMMERS: Tell us how the dock will pay.

HON. R. LAURIE: It will pay indirectly. It was said the Fremantle harbour would not pay, but we in Perth and Fremantle have the cost of that harbour back again in our pockets. It did not pay at first; and it is only within the last few years that it has paid, under proper management.

HON. C. SOMMERS: To tell us that the dock will pay indirectly is no proof.

HON. R. LAURIE: My friend is continually interjecting.

HON. C. SOMMERS: No. You are wandering from the subject.

HON. R. LAURIE: The hon. member rose to speak with one object. I do not know whether he was put up. He touched nothing but that particular point, and he dealt with it badly. He rose to reply to Mr. Moss, and he did it about as weakly as he ever did anything in this House. I say this dock will pay indirectly, and will be of benefit to the country. Charges should be made on the goods passing through that port; and then sums of £50,000 or £100,000 would not be needed in the Loan Bill, because the money spent on the dock would be returned through the Harbour Trust, together with interest and sinking fund.

The charge could be 2½d. per ton, or 6d. per ton on general goods.

HON. J. A. THOMSON: Who would pay the charge?

HON. R. LAURIE: The men who use the harbour, the merchants.

HON. C. SOMMERS: Would not the merchants pass on the charge to the consumer?

HON. R. LAURIE: I would ask the hon. member, what is 6d. a ton on general goods, particularly in a port such as Fremantle, where our charges are perhaps lower by 9d. than the Sydney charges? To my mind it is absolutely absurd to ask for or even to moot the idea of striking out the £50,000.

HON. C. SOMMERS: Your explanation is splendid.

HON. R. LAURIE: It is perhaps a little more than the hon. member can grasp; but I have pointed out how the money can be repaid. For the last ten years each Government has done almost what is being done now, but I have much greater faith in the personnel of the present Government than to think they will shelve this dock question. I will not go so far. I believe a site for the dock will be fixed within the next six or twelve months; and if that site is not then fixed, my faith in human nature will be much shaken.

HON. M. L. MOSS: If you are satisfied to see the site fixed, you will be easily satisfied.

HON. R. LAURIE: I shall be satisfied to see, within the next twelve months, one-fifth of the total cost of the dock expended. I shall be satisfied to see a proper start made. That is what we have never seen yet, though we have waited for ten years. A start would be an earnest of what the Government might be made to do, whatever Government were in office. A start would be more than a pledge. If a start be made, the country will perhaps be able to see that when Governments make pledges they will have to carry them out. If one fifth of the cost be incurred within the next twelve or eighteen months, I shall be satisfied.

HON. C. SOMMERS: How much?

HON. R. LAURIE: Say £100,000. When the dock question was previously before us it was made clear the money would not be required all at once, that

the work would take four or five years. Even in England such undertakings are not completed in less than three or four years. My faith in the present Government will be much shaken if they do not carry out the promise now made, by putting this £50,000 in the schedule, which together with the £59,000 available will enable them to make a start with £109,000 within the next twelve or eighteen months. I am surprised at the objection of a member of the metropolitan district, in spite of amounts in the schedule like £81,000 for the Coolgardie-Norseman railway, other amounts for the South-Western lines, and other lines all over the country, including £500 for a Kimberley railway, with which I shall find no fault. I am perfectly satisfied that the Government intend to spend £109,000 on the dock, and that they will make a start within the next twelve or eighteen months.

HON. G. RANDELL (Metropolitan): I do not think it of much use fully to discuss the Bill, the schedules, and the information afforded by the Government. I may be permitted once again to express my fears as to what will be the end of this continual borrowing. I know it is popular throughout the State; I know it can be argued that the State should be developed, that we are unable to do so from revenue, and that therefore it is absolutely necessary to borrow money from outside. There is considerable force in these arguments, but they have not overcome my repugnance to this continual borrowing. For many reasons a borrowing policy will suggest itself as dangerous. Australia as a whole has, I think, borrowed nearly to the extent of its possibilities, and we occasionally hear that the same opinion is entertained outside, where it is thought Australia is borrowing too freely. Practical experience acquired since 1890, since the first big loan was floated for public works, shows us that much of the money is apt to be wasted, squandered in different directions. Sometimes it has been abstracted by the treachery of Government officers who have sold themselves to the contractors carrying out certain public works, especially on the goldfields. That is a matter of notoriety, or I should not have referred to it. And it is deeply

ingrained in the nature of such men that they should make all they can out of any moneys borrowed for the construction of public works. I do not know if I need refer to that farther; but that is one of the reasons why I have a strong dislike to an extensive borrowing policy. The Colonial Secretary has stated we have now an indebtedness of £64 per head, and that if certain events happen, even if we borrow the sum proposed in the Bill, we shall not be worse off at the end of two or three years than we are now, except to the extent of £2 per head.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In less than two years.

HON. G. RANDELL: I remember, some considerable time ago, the Premier of the day anticipated within a certain time we should have a population of 250,000, and that argument was used for borrowing a considerable sum for works to be extended over a considerable number of years. He was greatly disappointed in his prophecy. The population did not come along, and it has only just reached that figure, while for the last month we have had a slight set-back in the population. I do not wish to dwell on that set-back; I hope it is not an indication that our population is coming to a standstill. I have an opinion that the borrowing policy and the large public works in progress attracted people here with the hope of profitable employment, and the expenditure of the loan now proposed may result in an increase of population. But our population is not increasing at the former rate; and at the end of two or three years we may be disappointed in finding that we have not 280,000 people in the State. I hope we shall have them. Population is our main requirement, and is the only reasonable ground for increasing our responsibilities. We are responsible for paying back the borrowed money; and though the loan may be for a long term of years, it will always be a burden on the people. We are now, I think, more heavily taxed than any other Australian State, and probably more heavily taxed than any other people in the world. That cannot go on for ever. The profits made here have perhaps enabled us so far to sustain the burdens laid upon us; but with the indications that the Government are seeking

new avenues of taxation, which will necessarily involve heavier burdens on the community, I think it is high time carefully to consider the position. Personally, I should like to see all these proposed works constructed out of current revenue; and I think there is immense room for economising in various departments of our administration. Some people have estimated that £83,000 could be saved at once in administration. To-day I saw a letter in a morning paper, quoting statistics which I had no time to check, and which may be open to refutation by those competent to deal with them. At any rate, the expenditure in many directions is larger than it ought to be; and certainly, if the figures quoted in the letter in this morning's newspaper be correct, the facts reflect no credit on the administration of the railways. And I say the policy of extending spur lines into the country is one of extreme danger. I understand that in the other States, and I believe every other member is better acquainted than I am with the facts, spur lines have generally proved failures. The other day we saw an amusing account in the *West Australian* of a visit paid by the Colonial Secretary and members of both Houses to the Goomalling-Dowerin Railway. Whether we are to take the newspaper report as an effervescence due to the hot weather, which developed a humorous vein in the mind of the writer, I am not prepared to say. Anyhow, there seemed to be in the report an undertone of disparagement of the country through which the railway runs. We know that very serious objection has been taken to one or two of the lines in the south. I do not intend, however, to refer to that just now, as I believe there is going to be an inquiry by a select committee or other means into one line of railway. I must congratulate the Government—although the Leader of the House repudiated any endeavour on the part of the Government to placate the various constituencies throughout the State—on having begun at Hopetoun in the south and gone right to Wyndham in the north; they go from Fremantle to Norseman eastward, and from Geraldton to the Murchison District. I think, therefore, I may safely say that the Government, without any intention apparently, have

very widely distributed these important works. I quite acquit the Government of any endeavour to conciliate the various constituencies of the country which are participating, or about to participate, in the expenditure in regard to this loan. There are one or two other points in the public works proposed to be undertaken. We are to have a line of railway from Port Hedland to Marble Bar, and as far as the information I have been able to gather enables me to judge I am strongly of opinion that that work should be undertaken as soon as it is possible to do so, as it will develop country which is rich in minerals and which also, I understand from Mr. Connor, contains some very good pastoral country. While I do not know this particular part of the State, I know that there is some good pastoral country very close to it. But in connection with that railway there must be a separate cost—you must have workshops and repairing shops and machinery there to keep the engines and plant in order and that will be away from headquarters and be a separate establishment altogether from the one at Midland Junction. And the same remark applies to the railway from Hopetoun to Ravensthorpe. Then those who fear the construction of a line from Coolgardie to Norseman may have a little addition made to their fears by the fact that if a line is run out from Hopetoun to Ravensthorpe it will be approaching somewhat nearer to Norseman and may eventually result in the connection of the two. I do not like to prophesy—it is said one should never prophesy unless one knows, and prophecies are often wide of the mark—what will be the effect on the country of this loan policy of the Government from the construction of the various works they propose to undertake. But I think it only right on my part, feeling as I do in regard to these works, that there is—and I think every man who thinks at all on the subject must realise it—an extreme danger in adopting the policy we are now asked to adopt. I will give the Government credit for a desire to develop the country, and we know it cannot be developed without means of internal communication, and that we must have harbours opened along our coast for the purpose of exporting and importing, and if these works contained in the Bill will tend to promote the development

and progress, then I think the Government are to be heartily congratulated. Although we have made considerable progress during the past ten, twelve, or fourteen years, I think anyone who thinks on the matter can see that it has not all turned out exactly as we anticipated. At the present moment there is a considerable absence of employment in the State, and there is I think not such a prosperous state of affairs as existed a few years ago. I think that may possibly be accounted for by the extreme expenditure in which we indulged and the necessity which has arisen for increasing the taxation, which will have the effect of deterring people who look into these matters from coming to our shores. A great many of those who come here, no doubt, will not realise these things and will be guided more by other circumstances which come to their knowledge. I do not propose or suggest that any amendment be made in the Loan Bill before us; I do not know that anyone could do so with advantage. The policy, I suppose, has been very carefully considered; I take it that Ministers, realising their responsibilities, have adequately considered the proposals from every point of view. But I regret that only £50,000 can be allotted to the Fremantle dock. That port cannot be complete, as Captain Laurie has said, until it has a good graving dock capable of taking the largest ships likely to come to Australia or many years to come; and when the dock is constructed it should be with a view to its enlargement at any future time should it be required. But I also think it necessary that we should progress slowly in this matter and consider carefully and with great deliberation the matter of where that dock should be placed. I believe the James Government did make preparation to this end by purchasing land on either side of the river, so that in the future the country should not have to pay large sums in compensation for the resumption of the land that might be required. I think that in this they were wise in their day and generation, though they were subjected to a good deal of criticism at the time. I hope and believe that the Government will have the benefit of the large knowledge and experience, and I think I may

add the sound judgment, which Captain Laurie has displayed in many instances, in advising on this question. We have had the advice of experts who came here, and one of them, Mr. Keele, advised Freshwater Bay as a site for the dock. No doubt Freshwater Bay would be the best site in that it would be difficult for an enemy's ships to damage a dock at that site; but I think there is no necessity to go so high up the river; I believe that a site can be had nearer to Fremantle, though I am strongly of opinion that no suitable site can be found below the bridges. However, that is a matter upon which we may have a difference of opinion. I notice—and I cannot help referring to it in consequence of what has happened; and a certain wonderment has crept into my mind in regard to one or two items. I have been wondering whether the Government became frightened at remarks made by one or two gentlemen with regard thereto—a threat was made that the Government would suffer, would be turned out of office, if a certain line was not constructed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That had not the slightest effect.

HON. G. RANDELL: Some hon. members have suggested that the Government are somewhat pliable in the back and were not very strong in this matter; but I hope it is on account of the intrinsic merits of the line that it has been included. I regret to have seen those remarks appearing in the public Press in regard to that line—they seem to me to be out of place. I must support the remarks of Mr. Moss and Mr. Loton with regard to the expenditure of loan moneys on public buildings. This is a great departure from a principle which has obtained since the inception of our borrowing policy in 1890—the erection of public buildings from loan funds. I think it unwise and improper to adopt this policy, especially to the extent it is proposed to do in this Bill. I believe so because it will have an effect in the place from which we borrow the money. It will convey an impression—perhaps a wrong one—to the minds of investors to find the State approving the necessity for borrowing money for public buildings which cannot in any sense of the term be considered reproductive. If we must

borrow, we should borrow for railways and works for the internal development of the State, for the construction of harbours on our coast and for lighthouses. I am quite in agreement with that policy, but when we depart from that principle we are getting on to dangerous ground. I have opposed it during the whole of my political career, and I think I have done so with a considerable measure of success. I am egotistical enough to think that I have had some influence with the various Governments of the day in regard to this. I remember on one particular occasion that it was the desire of the Government to borrow money for this kind of work, and so strenuously was it opposed that the Government finally gave way; and a very small amount has in the past been borrowed and expended on works of this description.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The expenditure has been much heavier than is proposed this year.

HON. G. RANDELL: I am not referring to the immediate proposal so much as to the adoption of the policy. The present Government are virtually a continuation of the previous Government; the Premier is changed, it is true, but the personnel of the Government is pretty much the same as that of the previous Administration. These are remarks which I have thought it my duty to bring under the notice of the House and of the country; and although I know that a borrowing and spending policy is extremely popular in the country, still at the same time I consider it a policy of extreme danger. If we tide over a difficulty now by borrowing money for the construction of public works, the difficulty always is that once that policy is started upon it is being continually returned to. It may be replied to, and perhaps with some force, that the development that has already taken place requires farther development to make that which we have already undertaken pay, and to open up the country to settlement. We are all anxious that the country should be settled by an agricultural population, to a large extent developing our resources in that direction and in the many other directions in which the country can be developed; and perhaps to some extent it will be necessary to borrow the money to do so. There is little doubt but that it

will take the Government some little time to secure this money: the English money market is not at the present time in a favourable state to approach it for the purpose of raising a loan. I understood the Treasurer to say that he has hopes of raising the money within the Commonwealth. Possibly he may be able to do so, and it would be a very good thing if he could; and it would be even better could he raise it in this State, though he cannot hope to raise such a large sum as that within the State. But there is also another side of the question. If you withdraw money from investment in private businesses and industries, for the purposes of the Government for the development of the country, to a certain extent you are reducing the ability of the country to develop. While the Government are developing the country, we want at the same time to ensure the confidence of investors, within and without that we have possibilities here which will be brought to a successful stage. Then when we can secure that by wise government, by not venturing on a line of policy, passing Bills which have limiting, restricting, and debarring effect we may look forward to signs of prosperity and success to the State. I do not propose to offer objection to any of the items by moving that they be removed from the schedule. I content myself by expressing my opinion on the different points I have mentioned to night.

HON. W. PATRICK (Central): I congratulate the Government upon their courage in introducing this Loan Bill, but I am quite confident after going through the different items and reading the loan expenditure for the coming year in connection with it, that Perth is, in the estimation of the Government, more to the south of the Swan than to the north of it. There are two railways mentioned in the list in the Central Province, the Mt. Magnet-Black Range railway and the Upper Chapman railway. I have no hesitation in saying that among all the railways on this list there are none more likely to pay than the two I have mentioned. I was rather taken aback when looking through the proposed Estimates of expenditure for the year ending 30th June 1907, to find that a

the money to be expended during that period on railways in the Central Province was £2,000. There is no mention of expenditure on the Upper Chapman railway, so that as far as I can judge from the matter we have before us and the information given to us by the Government, all the money that is to be spent on railways in the Central Province for the year ending 30th June 1907 is the sum of £2,000, and during that same period there is to be spent on the Oomalling-Dowerin line £6,590.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is ready spent.

HON. W. PATRICK: Well, the £2,000 on the Black Range railway has not been spent. Of course we must all support the Bill, which is necessary for the development of the country; but I must be judging from the expenditure which is to take place during the present financial year in the Central Province on railways, the amount is not only totally inadequate, but that our portion of the State has been very shabbily used by the Government. I expected at least that a commencement would be made with the Upper Chapman railway, as well as with the Black Range railway. Certainly a large commencement cannot be made with £2,000. I speak very strongly on the question of railways in that portion of the State I have the honour to represent, knowing that a large sum of money—as far as I remember £60,000—was voted by the Government of Western Australia, and of course it is no reflection whatever on the present Government because it was some years ago, and it was years before the money was voted that it was spent. I refer to the Cue-Nannine railway. The fact of these items for my strict appearing on the schedule is nothing, unless we have a definite pledge from the Government while the Bill is going through that the work will be commenced within a short time, for we have no guarantee that the voting of the money means the money being spent. I have no hesitation in saying that money would be justifiably expended on these railways.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: There was no confidence in Nannine at the time.

HON. W. PATRICK: No doubt there is some truth in that remark. When we had £4,000 set apart for the Newcastle-

Bolgart railway, any one who knows anything about that bit of country, also the tremendous developments that have taken place in Black Range, it is perfectly absurd to say that it is justifiable on the part of the Government to expend £6,000—because this is all new expenditure on a comparatively insignificant railway such as the Newcastle-Bolgart line. If so the Government ought to expend something like £20,000 in the Central Province.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY: They have not spent the money yet.

HON. W. PATRICK: They have not spent the £2,000 on the Magnet railway yet, and I say if the Government are justified in spending £6,000 on such a comparatively insignificant railway as the Newcastle-Bolgart line, they would be justified in spending £20,000 or £30,000 on the Magnet-Black Range Railway.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is only a sum of £2,000 for the Newcastle-Bolgart railway on the Estimates.

HON. W. PATRICK: Then it is £1,000 more than it should be. The Black Range district has a large population, and a more important population than the Norseman field, in reference to which a Bill is going through Parliament at present. Development is going on there which leads us to expect that we have one of the greatest goldfields in the State in the Black Range district. We know we can pass this Bill, and I congratulate the Government in introducing it, but I would like on behalf of the province I represent to have some promise that the railways scheduled for the Central Province will be commenced and carried out within a reasonable time, and not shelved from time to time to make room for railways in other parts of the State, such as if it happened to be for people to the south of Perth. I say this not in antagonism to the people of Perth, but my part of the State has been very much neglected in the past. Our wants are great, if not greater than the developed portions of the State, and the Government might pursue a more energetic policy than has been hitherto pursued in the Central Province of the State. I repeat that I expect from the Colonial Secretary, when he replies, a definite pledge that the railways scheduled to be constructed in the cen-

tral portion of the State will be commenced within a reasonable time.

HON. J. M. DREW (Central): I move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion put and negatived.

HON. J. M. DREW: I have not had ample time to consider this matter. I was waiting for an explanation from the Leader of the House as to the justification for the various loan proposals brought forward, and I should think in a measure which contemplates the borrowing of something like $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions of money that he should have given the House an opportunity of carefully considering the various items before the Bill is put through.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: You said you were prepared to finish the Bill to-night.

HON. J. M. DREW: After hearing the debate I think it is desirable there should be farther consideration. It is scarcely creditable to the House that we should in a few hours pass a Loan Bill authorising the expenditure of over $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions of money.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: All the works have to be authorised.

HON. J. M. DREW: I know, but there should be ample opportunity for adequate discussion. I do not intend to say more on the matter. My protest is against the House in a few hours passing a Loan Bill for over $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions.

HON. W. MALEY (South-East): I am not surprised at the protest lodged by Mr. Drew on this occasion in regard to the haste with which it is proposed to rush a Bill through the House for the expenditure of $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions of money. We hear that at present there is a financial crisis in Perth, that times are very bad, and that mercantile pursuits are hampered in many cases. That is practically the consensus of the remarks which have been passed by members to-night. I am not an alarmist; I have always been an optimist rather than a pessimist; neither am I trembling for the future of Western Australia. But I do tremble for the immediate future of Western Australia. I tremble because I know the disabilities the agriculturists are labouring under in the high railway freights which they have to pay, and the

hardship which presses on them in cultivating the lands of the country. The agriculturists at the present moment are attempting to turn the lands to a profitable use, and I say without hesitation this is a time when caution should be exercised, when the Government of the State should hesitate to borrow money at all. This is the time the Government should put their finances in proper order. I as a business man would hesitate to show to the world such a balance-sheet if I could do so as the Government have to show. I should hesitate to show it to my banker before asking for a loan, and I say it is a crying shame in the country that administration should have dropped to the low level it has done. We have heard the Government advocating that no new measures of legislation should be proceeded with, but that there should be administration. That has been the parrot cry in the past for policy and for pay. Now we have at this juncture, when the crisis is at its worst, the Government coming down to borrow $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions of money, and before borrowing that money they come down with a proposal to tax the lands of the country, when only 2 per cent. of the lands have been alienated or are in process of alienation. And because the House rejects the proposal they come back to the House and hammer again at the doors of this Chamber and say, "You must pass this Bill into law." What an appalling advertisement for the finances of the country—the Government propose a special session in February—that there should be this enormous expenditure and a special session for the purpose of passing a Bill which will enable them to raise from the pockets of the people, hard-pressed as they are at the present time, the sum of £60,000. With such a position as that, and with such a balance-sheet as they have to present to the pawnbroker, who in Australia or in England is but a pawnbroker, he will take every advantage of the situation to extort the best terms, and he will be quite right in doing so. The Government of the country have prejudiced the credit of the country by their action in dealing with this matter of taxation. They have prejudiced the country by not marking time for the moment. I have as much interest in this country as most

people, and I shall suffer as much as others will. I am as fully prepared to pay a tax as is any other person present; but I do protest against this loan being launched in conjunction with a taxation proposal; I protest against one proposal being as it were dependent on the other, and against our being confronted with the statement that we must not reject either. I say, let us wait for our public works. We have a glorious country that can afford to wait; but we cannot afford to waste our revenues in reckless administration, in employing unnecessary labour. I am not opposed to labour *per se* but I say we must get value for the money expended in all our public departments. After the flood of parochialism which emanated, to my regret, from some hon. members, I rise to say that the province I represent is not benefited in any degree by this Loan Bill. Ministers know they are doing their best to take everything to Bunbury. This schedule contains no railway proposals in respect to my province, but those intended to benefit the port of Bunbury. We have a beautiful port at Albany, but there is nothing in this schedule to inaugurate a railway that will connect with Albany. There is not even a statement by the Government as to what will be done with that useless line now in private hands, the railway from Albany to Denmark, nor anything to lead one to believe that Albany is to receive any benefit whatever from the loan proposals of the Government. If we are to proceed on these parochial lines, if sops, and it appears to me these are nothing but sops, are to be given to various parts of the country, where does Albany come in? This is not my method of dealing with the financial problems of the State. This is not my attitude as a politician. But I have listened to the remarks made to-night, and though I will not take up a parochial stand, I say the country in the vicinity of Albany is the best agricultural land in Western Australia, and that the land between Albany and Busselton is the best dairying land in Western Australia. We should have had some provision made for those wonderfully fertile lands referred to by the Honorary Minister as resembling the land in Tasmania and in Gippsland, land flowing with

milk and honey. Yet nothing is proposed. Why? If I had a voice in the Cabinet, I would open up to the world a country which I should call New England, lying between Bridgetown and Albany; I should endeavour with the aid of the British Government to settle on it British immigrants in preference to any others, and I am satisfied I could settle there immigrants who would grow enough foodstuffs for consumption in Western Australia, leaving all that is now produced available for export. Sir John Forrest has said something to that effect, and he is an authority.

HON. J. M. DREW: The settlers would have to get rid of the timber.

HON. W. MALEY: The timber is easily got rid of. Members know the difficulty of clearing timber in Gippsland, and our karri is no bigger than the Gippsland timber; and it burns rapidly, whereas the Gippsland timber burns slowly. I have seen both.

THE PRESIDENT: I remind the hon. member that the question is the Loan Bill.

HON. W. MALEY: I am speaking of railways, and of the possibility of their paying; of the improbability of the Government being successful in the money market, and of the misconception of the whole scheme, seeing that such an important tract of country is left out, though that country is acknowledged to be the best in the State for dairy farming. I say it is a crying shame, and something for which the Government will have to answer to posterity. That may not trouble them, but it is something they should answer in the present. I do not want to stand still, and notwithstanding my dissatisfaction with things as they are, if the Government will take this risk, if they wish to imperil Western Australia, I feel myself powerless in the matter; but I must express my opinion. The Government will have to take the responsibility; and I am inclined to assert they take a very grave responsibility, considering the present state of our affairs. As a member of Parliament, apart altogether from my province, it is my duty to express my honest conviction. I did not intend to speak; I did not prepare any speech; but I could not sit here and listen to what has been said, in view of

the Government proposals, without rising to protest.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East): Somewhat like Mr. Maley, I did not intend to speak; but as reference has been made to a small matter on which I feel it my duty to support the Government, I must express my pleasure at seeing one item in this list of railways, and I must support the inclusion of that item, for it has been spoken against by Mr. Randell and by Mr. Patrick, who referred to it as an insignificant proposition.

HON. W. PATRICK: As compared with the Black Range railway; not insignificant in itself.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY: I can assure members it is not an altogether insignificant railway, and that it deserves a place amongst the other railways set down for early construction. The project was supported by previous Governments; it has been frequently before the public, and quite recently it was thought of sufficient importance to elicit a strong article from the leading paper of the State. I am quite satisfied that, like the railway project mentioned by Mr. Patrick, this project has not received public consideration, and is not well enough known; and therefore it has been postponed from time to time until the people interested feel somewhat warmly on the question, and are inclined to throw a certain amount of censure on those whom they consider responsible. I assure the House that the utterances reported in the Press as being made on a certain occasion in the district concerned were not reported exactly, and that through a certain degree of misrepresentation in the reports, a grave injustice has been done to several people interested in the construction of the Newcastle-Bolgart railway. I am satisfied the Government themselves have realised that; but it is necessary for me to make this announcement to clear the Government of the accusation that they were induced by fear to place this amongst the new lines in the schedule. There is no foundation for such a charge, as will be seen when the statistics showing the settlement that has been and is being effected along the route are placed before the country. As the hour is late and other members wish to speak, I shall not refer to any other items in the schedule.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (in explanation): When I refused an adjournment a few minutes ago, I did so because Mr. Drew had informed me that he quite agreed the second-reading debate should be finished to-night; that it was rather unusual to have a discussion on the second reading of a Loan Bill; and that the discussion should take place in Committee. Passing the second reading is not passing the items in the schedule; it is only authorising the borrowing of two million-odd pounds. But I have no desire to force the Bill through the House, though as the session is drawing to a close I thought we might as well finish the second-reading debate. If it is the wish of the House, I shall move that the debate be adjourned.

HON. J. M. DREW (in explanation): What the Leader of the House says is quite correct; but after I had spoken to him, a speech was made by my colleague Mr. Patrick, and in consequence of that speech I deemed it necessary in my own interest to address the House on this Bill. That is my sole reason for seeking to have the debate adjourned. Mr. Patrick made certain assertions and used certain arguments, and I deemed it necessary as a representative of the Central Province to support him by every possible means. If Mr. Patrick had not made that speech, I should not have attempted to secure the adjournment of the debate. I am sorry the Colonial Secretary did not realise the position at the time, and accept my suggestion. I have been many years in the House, and I do not think I have done anything to obstruct business. When I have tabled or have moved a motion, I think members have realised I had a reasonable object in view.

On motion by the HONORARY MINISTER, debate adjourned.

EXCESS BILL (FIVE YEARS).

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10:16 o'clock, until the next day.