

compel them to make any of the improvements. At the expiration of the term, if the fencing is not done and the poison not eradicated, the lands will be absolutely forfeited to the Crown, and if members of Parliament, when that time arrives, have the same feeling that I have, this corporation will not obtain one single day's grace or the smallest concession.

Question put and negatived, on the voices.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: I should just like to say a few words in reply.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton): You are too late.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: I might, if the Colonial Secretary has no objection.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I have no objection.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton): You cannot. The rules of the House will not allow it.

EXCESS BILL, 1893.

THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time, and passed.

STIRLING STREET (FREMANTLE) CLOSING BILL.

THIRD READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved the third reading of this Bill.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON: At the second reading I took exception to the course pursued by the Government in not having consulted the Municipality in regard to this Bill. I find that I was in error, and beg now to withdraw my remarks. I find that the matter was placed in the hands of the Government by the Municipality, but it was prior to my taking office. I apologise to the Colonial Secretary.

Bill read a third time, and passed.

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time, and passed.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL.

THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time, and passed.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

FIRST READING.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 5.10 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, 19th September, at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 12th September, 1894.

Fishing with small Mesh Nets between Fremantle and Rockingham—Compensation to Messrs. E. Robinson & Co. for Lands Resumed at Mourambine—Loan Bill (£1,500,000): in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

FISHING WITH SMALL MESH NETS BETWEEN FREMANTLE AND ROCKINGHAM.

MR. SOLOMON, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier whether his attention had been drawn to the fact that fishing was being carried on between Fremantle and Rockingham by means of small mesh nets, through which injury was being done to this industry; and whether he would take the matter into consideration, with a view to stopping the practice?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied that the attention of the Government had not been directed to this matter, but it was proposed to frame regulations in regard to the size of the meshes of nets to be used for the capture of any species of fish.

COMPENSATION TO MESSRS. ROBINSON
AND CO. FOR LAND RESUMED AT
MOURAMBINE.

MR. HARPER, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands why Messrs. E. Robinson & Co. had not received compensation, claimed by them in 1889, for improvements on lands resumed on behalf of the West Australian Land Company, at Winarlin, Mourambine?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest), on behalf of Mr. Marmion, replied that Messrs. E. Robinson & Co.'s claim was forwarded to the West Australian Land Company for settlement, in the usual manner, in July, 1889. He had not heard anything from the lessees on the subject, and was not aware of the reason why the claim had not been paid. The matter would be again brought under the notice of the Company.

LOAN BILL (£1,500,000).

This Bill was further considered in committee.

Schedule (*continued*):

Item 2.—“Railway from Southern Cross to Coolgardie Goldfields (exclusive of rolling stock), £228,000.”

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) did not think it would be necessary for him to say very much more about this work than he had already said. This item, although it came before them now, had really been debated considerably in the House and outside the House, and he thought that nearly all he wished to say on the subject had already been said about it. It was acknowledged, he thought, by everyone in the House—except, perhaps, the hon. member for Albany, who had some ideas of his own on the subject—that this railway was an absolutely necessary work at the present time, and that it was becoming more necessary every day. The railway to Southern Cross, which was now being worked by the Government, was doing a large amount of business, and was proving of the greatest advantage in the development of our Eastern goldfields. Of all the items on the Schedule, he believed there was no other item that was more urgent than this one. He therefore hoped it would not be necessary to discuss it at any great length, because it was obvious

to every person in the colony who considered the subject for a moment, that the rich auriferous deposits in the district which this railway would serve must be tapped by means of railway communication. These goldfields extended to the South of Coolgardie, and far away to the North and North-West and North-East, right away to Kurnalpi, Lake Carey, the 90-Mile, Siberia, and the intervening regions; and they would all be assisted by this extension of our railway system to Coolgardie. He had not the slightest hesitation, therefore, in recommending this item to the favourable consideration of the committee. He felt that this expression of opinion on his part, as to the urgency of this work, was shared by every member of the House, and, for that reason, and seeing that they had discussed it very much already, especially on the second reading of the Bill, he felt he had no right to ask members to listen to another long speech from him on the subject.

MR. RANDELL: Is there any difference of opinion as to the route this line should take?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) did not know of any. They proposed that the line should go somewhere near where the road went now.

MR. RANDELL: Is there any doubt about the amount put down for the work being sufficient?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) believed it was quite sufficient. The Engineer-in-Chief was a careful man, and the estimate was a liberal one. He believed himself we would be able to carry out both these goldfields lines for considerably less than the schedule amounts; but this was the estimate of the Engineer-in-Chief.

MR. HARPER said, before the question was put, he wished to bring under the notice of the Government another matter, to some extent connected with the subject before them, and which in the future would be a very important matter. It was only within the last few years that people had discovered that there was a source of great wealth in a direction they had never anticipated before, in the way of fertilising agencies, and he believed that in the opinion of scientists there would yet be discovered in this arid portion of our country rich mineral fertilisers, the

result of percolation. As the securing of a return traffic was an important consideration with regard to this goldfields railway, he thought the matter he had referred to was one that should receive the attention of the Government, for, if these fertilising deposits could be discovered, they would materially increase the receipts on this line, and probably justify a reduction in the outward freight rates. He thought it was well worthy of consideration by the Government whether an examination of the country should not be made in search of these deposits. In addition to that, there was another mineral deposit, gypsum, known to exist in considerable quantities in that region. Perhaps it might not be generally known to members that the result of the clearing of land in the Avon valley during the last few years had caused a very considerable amount of alkaline in the soil to obtrude itself; some of the very richest patches of land were becoming absolutely barren owing to the appearance of alkaloids, and they were told that gypsum was the best antidote for this evil. If so, any gypsum deposits we might have in this country would become extremely valuable, and provision should be made for collecting these deposits and utilising them. He mentioned the matter so that the Government might consider the advisability of taking some steps in this direction.

MR. MORAN hoped that before the contract for this Coolgardie line was started the railway to Southern Cross would be out of the hands of the contractor entirely. He also hoped that very efficient arrangements would be made for the conveyance of the plant and material required for the construction of this Coolgardie railway over the present line, so as not to interfere with the ordinary traffic. There was another point, he thought, that was worth considering at the present moment and it was a very important one, and that was the question of water supply along this line. The Government had gone to a considerable expense in sinking wells and providing tanks for the purpose of supplying travellers by road, and they were told by the Premier that this line would probably follow the present road from the Cross to Coolgardie. If so, the contractor would probably claim the right to use the water

in these wells and tanks; and, by the time the contractor and his army of men were supplied, the general public would come very badly off, unless some steps were taken to regulate this matter. He mentioned the matter now, so that the department might be prepared for it.

MR. RANDELL said the matter referred to was a very important one, and he commended it to the earnest consideration of the Government, so as to make some provision for it in the contract. He believed he was correct in saying that after the contractor for the Southern Cross railway left Northam, he had to fall back for his water supply upon the wells which the settlers depended upon for their supply. He was informed that the contractor actually took possession of the Meekering spring, to the great inconvenience and detriment of the settlers who were located in that neighbourhood, and at least one of them was actually driven away from his location. He thought care should be taken that there was not the same difficulty with this Coolgardie line, and that the water supply provided for travellers would not be interfered with by the contractor's working parties.

MR. A. FORREST thought the hon. member had been misinformed as to the action of the contractor for the Yilgarn line; as a matter of fact there was no permanent water on the Meekering area. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. member for Yilgarn; if the Government were going to stipulate that the contractor for this railway was to have no right to use the water in the Government wells and tanks on the road, of course, the amount of the tenders would be very much increased, because there was absolutely no other water available, and the contractor would have to bring it all the way from Northam. These tanks were about twenty miles apart, and he saw no objection to the contractor having the use of a tank after the railway passed that particular place. That section of the road would not then be used much by travellers, as they would go by rail. Therefore, he hoped the Commissioner of Railways would be very careful in not stipulating that the contractor should not have the use of any of these tanks, on the ground that they were required by the travelling public; because,

as he had already said, once the railway passed one of these tanks, that tank would be no longer required by the public, if this railway was going to be opened for traffic in sections, as they were told it was. This item of water supply was a very important item for the contractor, whoever he might be, and, if he was not allowed to make any use of the wells or tanks, it would add very largely to the price of the contract.

MR. SIMPSON did not think the House need trouble itself about the contractor. The contractor would take good care to protect himself. But he would urge, as regards this railway, as he had already done in the case of the Murchison line, that the work of construction should be expedited as much as practicable, and that the time for carrying out the contract would be fixed at as short a time as possible, even although it might increase the amount of the contract.

MR. RICHARDSON said the hon. member for West Kimberley had suggested that the contractor should have the right to use the present tanks, once the railway passed any particular tank, as the public would no longer require that tank. The hon. member seemed to contemplate that everybody would then travel by this railway, and that there would be no travellers on foot, no teams on the road, nor camel trains. He thought they should be very careful in dealing with this matter. They might find the contractor charging prohibitive rates on this line, if travelling by road were rendered difficult or impossible by reason of the water supply running short.

MR. CLARKSON did not think they need fear there would be much squabbling about water, for as a matter of fact there was little or no water on this road, nor likely to be for the next eight or nine months.

Item agreed to.

Item 3.—“Railway from Donnybrook towards Bridgetown (exclusive of Rolling Stock),” £80,000 :

MR. LEAKE said he rose to move an amendment,—that the words “Albany, *via*” be inserted between the words “towards” and “Bridgetown.” The item would then read: “Railway from Donnybrook towards Albany, *via* Bridgetown.” (A laugh.) Hon. members might laugh; but would they laugh at

this statement seriously made by the Premier himself in his Bunbury speech? He was quoting the Premier’s own words with reference to this very item. His words were: “The present Government “also propose to recommend to Parliament—

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): What are you quoting from?

MR. LEAKE said he was quoting from the report of the speech in the *West Australian*, which he believed was revised by the hon. gentleman himself. [THE PREMIER: I don’t think so.] If that paper had misquoted the hon. gentleman he hoped he would deal with it as summarily as he was in the habit of dealing with members of the House. The hon. member’s words on that memorable occasion were these: “The “present Government also propose to recommend to Parliament that a sum not “exceeding £100,000 should be devoted “for the extension of the railway from “Donnybrook to the tinfields in Bridgetown. I hope this £100,000 will take “the railway the whole way. You who “know the country will be, perhaps, able “to give a better opinion than I can, but “it is not possible for the Government to “recommend the expenditure of a greater “sum than £100,000. I hope that it “will take the line a long way. I hope, “almost, it will take it all the way to “Bridgetown. The reasons that have “actuated the Government in recommending this section are that it will be a “further section of the great trunk line “from Perth *via* Bunbury, Donnybrook, “and Lake Muir to Albany, and that it “will open up a rich agricultural land, “with a genial climate and an abundant “rainfall.” Did hon. members laugh at that? He did not think there was anything humorous in those remarks. They seemed to him to have been uttered with deliberation, just on the eve of a general election, when the Premier was announcing the policy of his Government; and the words of the Premier on that occasion carried great force. They produced a very strong impression in the electorate he (Mr. Leake) happened to represent, for he remembered that in addressing the electors, prior to the Premier’s speech, he criticised this particular item as merely a tinfields railway, and said that if this Bridgetown line was going to be a

tinfields railway it would not receive his support, and, unless it was the intention of the Government to make it part and parcel of a line to Albany, he would not support the line. Then came the Premier's utterances at Bunbury, which he had already quoted; and, when he addressed the Albany electors on a subsequent occasion, — [MR. SIMPSON: You climbed down.] No, he didn't climb down, nor was he going to climb down now. He did not go back from what he had said as to its being a tinfields line; but, when he found it put forward by the Premier as part and parcel of a line to Albany, he felt that he was able to give it his support, on that ground, and that ground only. After the promise of the Premier at Bunbury, he thought he was perfectly justified in asking the Government to accept the amendment he now proposed. These words which he desired to insert simply confirmed the statement made in May last by the Premier himself, when he stated that the reason which had actuated the Government in recommending this line was that it would be a further section of the great trunk line from Perth, *via* Bunbury, Donnybrook, Bridgetown, and Lake Muir, to Albany.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the words quoted by the hon. member from his Bunbury speech accurately conveyed his intentions with regard to this railway, and he should like to explain to members exactly what his views were with reference to it. When he stated, on more than one occasion, that this line of railway from Donnybrook to Bridgetown should form part of a grand trunk line to catch the Warren and the Lake Muir country, and then on to Albany, he had in his mind that it would go through country where the rainfall was good, the climate excellent, and the soil fairly good—a country that would in the future become a good producing country, capable of supporting a large population; and his hope was that this railway would be the means, as it extended further South and South-East, of developing the whole of that immense territory. He did not intend, in anything he said, to convey the idea that this line should be extended to Albany in order to compete with the existing line, the Great Southern Railway. So far as Albany itself was concerned, it was already fairly well supplied with

means of communication with all parts of the colony; and it was not in order to provide further means of communication between the metropolis and Albany that he ever suggested this other line. His idea was that the line should go through a different part of the colony altogether, reaching Albany some day, by way of the Lake Muir country, thus bringing the whole of that territory into closer communication with the ports on the West coast of the colony, and with the great port of Albany itself. It was not likely that as we extended this line Southward all the traffic would come Northward, when there was a magnificent outlet for it at Albany. It was not to be supposed that people at Lake Muir would be content to have the traffic of that part of the colony go by way of Bunbury to Perth, when they had a market closer at hand at Albany. It would not be reasonable to expect it. Therefore, when he said he hoped that this railway to Bridgetown would yet form part of a great trunk line to Albany, he was expressing a hope that this immense but now isolated territory, with its abundant rainfall and fairly productive soil, would be connected by means of a railway with other parts of the colony. These were his views, and he had no hesitation in expressing them. But he did not agree with the hon. member in his desire to insert these words in the Schedule of this Bill, though he had no particular objection to them himself. It appeared to him there was no necessity for them. When the present object of this line was to go part of the distance to a defined point, they would be adopting an unusual course by inserting in the Bill a place that was 150 miles further on, where they had no intention of going at the present time. As to this being a tinfields line, he never in anything he said at Bunbury intended to convey that it was a railway to the tinfields. Whatever he may have been reported as saying, he never intended that. He was not so foolish as to expect that members would vote for the railway if the only inducement for its construction was the existence of the tinfields. He did not think it would be reasonable to build a railway specially for these tinfields, considering their present output; and he never intended to place the construction of this line on such narrow grounds. He

asked the House to vote for it because it went through country possessing very good soil, a genial climate, and a good rainfall—a country with possibilities of a large agricultural development, and capable of supporting a large population; and because this railway running through such a country would largely increase production. He might inform members what the intention of the Government was with regard to the route which this line should take. At present the surveys were not complete by any means, but their present intention was that it should, as closely as possible, follow the route shown on the map by the blue line, going from Donnybrook to Bridgetown, along and through the settlements that already existed there. This question of route had engaged his serious attention for a considerable time. He had read what the Engineer-in-Chief had said on the subject, and weighed his arguments as carefully as he was able to; but he felt certain that if the railway were taken by the "red line" route it would not be as good a line as the "blue" route, although it would better serve many of his own constituents on the Upper Preston. Therefore, in advocating this route he was not advocating the wishes or interests of his constituents in that part—and he might inform the House that it was in that direction that his constituents mainly resided. He hoped the hon. member for the Gascoyne would make a note of that. He felt that in advocating this "blue line," although it presented some engineering difficulties which the "red line" did not, he was advocating a line that would serve a larger number of people, and a larger extent of good country. The Lower Blackwood would be served, and the Lower Warren even would be served, and the whole country would be better served by this line than it would be by the "red" line. Therefore, the Government proposed to adopt it in the Bill which he would have the pleasure of submitting to Parliament, defining the route of this railway, with the usual margin of course for deviation. He did not think it was necessary for him to make a long speech in support of this railway. He noticed that in introducing the Bill he said a great deal about the necessity for encouraging production in every way in our power; and, again, in

introducing the Agricultural Bank Bill he dwelt at some length on the same subject. He could only reiterate every word he said on those two occasions, and that they would be only doing what was right and just towards every part of the colony by extending our railways in those directions where the productiveness of the country would be largely increased. He had listened most carefully to what members had said with regard to this railway, and the most he could gather from their objections was: we ought to delay it a little. He was not in favour of delay at this period in the history of the colony. We had an opportunity now that we never had before for pushing this colony ahead—opportunities which, perhaps, few colonies ever had; that was, in having a rapidly increasing population, which gave promise of still greater increase, affording a large and profitable market for the products of the colony. Surely it was in our interests—in the interests of every man in this country—that we should take advantage of our opportunity, and try to produce those things that were absolutely necessary to meet the requirements of this rapidly growing population on our goldfields and in our towns. There was this other incentive: we could afford it. There was no question about that. The revenue of the country was increasing at such a rate that we could easily afford to undertake this work. He did not think any member would venture to oppose this item on the ground that we could not afford it. If we could afford to spend over a million and a third in other public works, if we could afford to spend about three-quarters of a million in building railways to our goldfields, surely we could afford £80,000 in building a railway into the midst of a rich agricultural district.

MR. PIESSE said he must object to the amendment of the hon. member for Albany. No doubt the hon. member had shown a wise discretion, and that it was very politic on his part to adopt the course he was adopting in endeavouring to pledge the House to extend this railway to Albany. But those who knew the country which the line would run through knew it would be simply madness to run a railway from Bridgetown to Albany through the Lake Muir country, with its

hilly ranges and engineering difficulties, and land that was not of the best. There were much better routes, if it were necessary to have such a railway. It was, of course, useless to think of it at present; they were discounting the future in discussing it at all. It was true the Premier had referred to the subject in his Bunbury speech, but there could be no doubt that in making those remarks he had no idea of such a line being carried out within any reasonable distance of time. Although the insertion of these words "*via* Albany" might not mean very much, it would afford ground for those who were interested in having such a line constructed to agitate for it, and it would be holding out false hopes to them. The hon. member who represented the district (Mr. Hassell) told his constituents himself that he did not believe in the line referred to by the Premier. There was much better country through which such a line could be taken; but it was absurd to talk about it now, and it was as well to nip this idea in the bud. He did not wish the people of Albany to imagine, for a moment, that members, in agreeing to this Bridgetown line, were agreeing to extend it hereafter to Albany, as suggested by the hon. member who submitted this amendment. No doubt the hon. member was prompted by a good desire to gratify his constituents. [MR. A. FORREST: He can't help himself.] He had noticed that, for some time past, the Albany paper, the *Advertiser*, had been favouring this route, simply because it was a shorter route, and would bring Albany into quicker communication with Perth and Fremantle than the present line; but, if members would look at the map they would see it would only make a difference of about 16 miles. Were they going to tax the country to build a railway that would cost hundreds of thousands of pounds, for the sake of sixteen miles, when they already had a railway in existence which served all their present requirements? He thought it was simply madness to talk about building this line from Bridgetown to Albany, and he thought they should not encourage the idea, but put their foot down upon it once for all, and strike out this amendment. The hon. member must know in his own heart that if these words were inserted they would mean

nothing. But the hon. member did not care for that; he would be quite content if the Government would only *say* they would extend this line to Albany, although they might not mean it. He would then vote for this Bridgetown line. When he (Mr. Piesse) spoke upon this item the other day, he said he should want some further information to satisfy him that the work ought to be undertaken; but after hearing the remarks of His Honour the Speaker on the subject, and the information given since the second reading, he was now convinced that we ought to build this line, as we were assured by the Premier that the colony could easily afford it.

MR. CONNOR said that, like the hon. member who had just sat down, he rose to pay a tribute to the hon. member for Albany for his sagacity in moving this amendment. His idea was that when the hon. member introduced his amendment he had no idea that this item would be carried at all. As he could not support the item—there being in his opinion no present necessity for this railway—he could not support the amendment. If he could support this line at all, he would support a line going to Albany; it might then be of some use to the colony, if only as an advertisement, which probably would be about the only advantage it would be.

MR. A. FORREST could not help thinking that the time of the House was being wasted in discussing this amendment. Why it was introduced at all was more than he could understand, because the hon. member must know well enough that the House had no intention whatever of carrying on a line of railway from Bridgetown to Albany. If they did, they would never take it in a direct line to Albany; they would take it through country that would make it pay. Who ever heard of such a proposition as a line through Lake Muir to Albany? [MR. LEAKE: The Premier himself.] Then he disagreed with the Premier altogether on this point. Did any sane man think that House was going to vote, either this year or next year, or any other year, for building a line to Albany when they already had a line? Were they going to break faith with those who built that line, and to build another line to compete with it, and endeavour to draw the traffic

away from it? The Premier was wrong when he talked about a railway from Bridgetown* to Albany, by Lake Muir, and he could not support him. He supported the Government, as a rule, because he believed they were generally right. But he was in no way pledged to support them. He was as independent as any member. He would just as soon vote against them as for them. He believed he had voted against them as often as for them: He had been independent all his life-time of the Premier or anyone else, and he hoped he would continue to be so. The hon. member introduced this amendment to please the Albany people, his own constituents. What did they care for Albany? Albany already had one railway, and he was sure they did not want another. He did not believe, if they polled the whole of the colony, they would find one man who would vote for a railway from Bridgetown to Albany. He did not believe the hon. member for Albany himself would do it, in his right senses. But they knew the hon. member was expected to do these things. He went down to Albany, a Perth man, and he had to promise them all sorts of things to please them, although he must know there was not the slightest chance of carrying them. He hoped that during the recess he might have the pleasure of driving the hon. member from Bridgetown, through Lake Muir, on to Albany. The hon. member would then soon be convinced of the absurdity of talking about a railway. It was nothing more or less than a little bit of electioneering dodge this amendment, and he was surprised the hon. member should have the impudence to bring it forward.

MR. HASSELL said he intended to support the amendment. His hon. friend the member for Katanning—he begged his pardon, he meant the hon. member for the Williams, though he was generally known as the member for Katanning, because he always advocated the claims of Katanning and nowhere else—the hon. member stated that he (Mr. Hassell) told his constituents that he was not in favour of a line from Bridgetown to Albany. That was not true. What he said was that he was not in favour of the route sketched by the Premier, because he did not believe it was the

right one. He believed that a line going in the right direction would be a very good thing, and he believed it would yet come to pass. Unlike the hon. member, he was not bound up with Katanning, nor with the Great Southern Railway. He did not believe in that railway, nor in the way it was administered; and he hoped that House some day would be able to vote the money to purchase that railway, for he felt perfectly certain that that part of the colony would never go ahead so long as the Great Southern Railway people held it.

MR. CLARKSON was sorry he could not support the amendment of the hon. member for Albany. He did not think the hon. member believed in it himself. [MR. LEAKE: Yes, I do.] It was simply wasting the time of the House to discuss it, for the hon. member must know there was not the slightest chance of its being carried.

MR. PIESSE wished to say a word in explanation. As the hon. member for Plantagenet denied having told his constituents that he was not in favour of a line from Bridgetown to Albany, he must accept the hon. member's denial. He only went by the newspaper report of his speech. The hon. member, however, had no right to accuse him of advocating the claims of Katanning and nowhere else, nor to address him as "the member for Katanning." As a matter of fact, his interests were more bound up with the Williams than Katanning.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it was not his intention to support the amendment. In the first place we would be breaking faith with a company that had carried out its work well in bringing Albany into railway communication with the rest of the colony. That company, in return for constructing that line received a certain concession in the shape of land; and would it now be fair for us to go and build another line to compete against this land grant company? He thought it would be most unfair. In the next place, apart from that, he did not think it would be a wise thing to have two lines of railway running into Albany, certainly not through this Lake Muir country. He had heard the land condemned, and that the engineering difficulties would be immense, and that such a line would probably cost a million of money. The thing was absurd. Not

only that, it would be a pity to raise the hopes of the Albany people by leading them to think that either this Government or any future Government would dream of building such a line, when we already had a railway. He thought that to insert these words would lead to continuous agitation, and no end of heart-burnings and disappointment.

MR. RANDELL thought that if the amendment were carried it would be tantamount to a distinct pledge on the part of the House that this line to Bridgetown was a section of a line to Albany. He, therefore, must oppose it. He did not think it was necessary to have two lines to Albany—certainly not at present; and he was not prepared to pledge himself at this stage to an extension of this line in that direction from Bridgetown.

MR. MORAN was sorry now he did not move that the Coolgardie line should go *via* South America. It would be just as reasonable as the amendment of the hon. member for Albany, which he looked upon as a distinct breach of faith with the private company who had built the present line. He hoped those who had trusted to the hon. member's advocacy of their projects for the construction of other private railways would bear in mind the hon. member's action in this case. He did not believe the hon. member was in earnest. He had on a former occasion led them to understand he was going to support this Bridgetown line, but he now showed that he had no faith in that line, unless it could be made a stepping-stone to reach Albany. The hon. member simply wanted to please his constituents.

MR. JAMES did not see how they could consistently support this amendment. They had been crying out all along (and with justice) that they had very little information to guide them with regard to other lines, and surely they had no right to pledge the House to a line as to which they had no information whatever.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he certainly understood, on reading the Premier's speech at Bunbury, that it was his intention to take this railway on to Albany; and, for the very reason that he thought that was the intention of the Government, he, with the knowledge he then had, had set his face against this railway. For

the same reason he was necessarily against the amendment. A good deal of light had since been thrown upon the main question, but, if there was anything that would damn this Bridgetown line altogether, it was this idea that it should be extended to Albany. He thought it was the most absurd and ruinous thing it would be possible for that House to do, to pledge itself to such a line, having regard to the character of the country to be traversed between Bridgetown and Albany.

MR. LEAKE said, as he had been made the subject of some unfavourable observations, he wished to set himself right with the House. He did not hesitate for a moment to say that his object in bringing forward the amendment was to pledge the House. (A laugh.) The hon. member need not laugh. He was perfectly serious in what he did. He wished and meant to pledge the House. He could quite understand the observations of members if they thought he had brought it forward from frivolous motives, or with a frivolous design. Nothing of the kind. His belief was that if the Bridgetown railway was necessary, it was necessary only as a section of a line to Albany. He could afford to pass over the silly and shallow observations of the hon. member for Yilgarn, and to contemplate with equanimity the few remarks of the hon. member for West Kimberley, who, with his usual consistency, charged him with wasting the time of the House and forthwith proceeded to make a direct attack upon himself instead of speaking to the question before the House. But the hon. member surely forgot that when he attacked him in this instance he indirectly attacked the Government, who, through the Premier, had advocated this very line. That must be a very painful reflection to the hon. member. In the same way, when the hon. member accused him of impudence he indirectly accused his friend the Premier of impudence. Now that was very wrong of the hon. member—very wrong indeed.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) thought he had fully explained to members the view he took on this question, and he need not go over the same ground again. They must go slowly; they must not go too fast; and, if the

hon. member for Albany wanted a line built to connect our South-Western line with Albany, he would be acting wisely in agreeing to a section of railway that took him 50 or 60 miles in that direction, as this Bridgetown line would, rather than defeat the attainment of his object by pressing this amendment. As for pledging the House to carry it on, he did not suppose the House was prepared to so pledge itself. When it came within the range of practical politics, the Government of the day would have to bring in a distinct proposition to that effect. But he believed that in time this line would trend towards the South-East in the direction of Albany, and eventually bring that part of the country into direct communication with that important port. As to such a line being a breach of faith with the Great Southern Company, he thought it was rather far-fetched—absurd he called it—to suggest that to build a line of railway going through country that was about a hundred miles away from an existing line was a breach of faith. This immense intervening territory, with its fine climate, its regular rainfall, and fairly good soil, capable of great development, would never be developed unless they established railway communication to it. But he was not prepared at the present time to ask the House to support a proposition to extend this line further than Bridgetown. He certainly hoped that during the life of the present Parliament it would reach Bridgetown, but all they asked for now was for authority to construct a line from Donnybrook “towards” Bridgetown. He hoped, under the circumstances, the hon. member would not press his amendment. The hon. member had done his duty towards his constituency, and he took no exception to the hon. member doing so. It was all very well for some members to laugh, but which of them was not prepared to advocate the interests of those who sent them to the House to represent them? At the same time he thought the hon. member would be acting in his own interest, and the interest of his constituency, if he accepted this item as it stood, as a line towards Bridgetown, which was in the direction the hon. member desired it to go.

MR. HASSELL hoped the hon. member would press his amendment, and

divide the House upon it, if only to show the feeling of members towards the town and district which the hon. member and himself represented.

Question put—That the words proposed to be inserted be inserted.

A division being called for, the numbers were:—

Ayes	...	...	...	2
Noes	...	...	...	23

Majority against ... 21

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Hassell	Mr. Clarkson
Mr. Leake (Teller).	Mr. Connor
	Mr. Cookworthy
	Sir John Forrest
	Mr. A. Forrest
	Mr. Harper
	Mr. Illingworth
	Mr. James
	Mr. Keap
	Mr. Lefroy
	Mr. Marmion
	Mr. Morn
	Mr. Paterson
	Mr. Pearce
	Mr. Piessie
	Mr. Richardson
	Mr. R. F. Sholl
	Mr. H. W. Sholl
	Mr. Simpson
	Mr. Solomon
	Mr. Venn
	Mr. Wood
	Mr. Randell (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the question now before the committee being the main question, he did not know that it was necessary for him to add much to what he had already said. He had already stated that the colony was in a position to afford this railway, and no one could object to it on that ground. Then came the question, was it necessary in the interests of the colony? His own opinion, as he had stated over and over again, was that it was a necessary work. The question would occur to some members, was it necessary at the present time? Very few members had ventured to say that we should not undertake it at all, but several had advocated that it should be deferred until a more convenient season. He did not think himself there would be a more convenient season than the present time. As he had already said, we had an opportunity now that we may, perhaps, never have again, with the large influx of population pouring into the colony, increasing the number of consumers, and creating a market for our produce. If ever there was a time in the history of the colony when

we ought to strain every nerve to stimulate the occupation and cultivation of the soil, and to increase local production, now was the time to do it. The more country we opened up, provided it was capable of development, the more advantageous would it be and the more likely would we be to be in a position to meet our growing requirements. The programme of the Government, as set forth in His Excellency's Speech at the opening of the session, was to promote the progress and the development of the resources of the colony, and, simultaneously with such progress and development, to encourage the occupation and improvement of our lands, by affording increased facilities of transit, so that the markets established on our goldfields might be supplied from local sources. This railway was part of that programme. Of course there was another view, which appealed, perhaps, more to their sentiment of generosity than to their sense of justice; though he did not intend to urge that view. But there was that view. A large number of people who lived in that isolated part of the colony witnessed railway extension and other public works going on in other parts of the colony, affording facilities of transit and intercourse which they do not possess, and they naturally desired to secure similar advantages. This was a point that no doubt was deserving of some consideration, although people could not expect a railway to be built to their district unless it could be shown that it would not only benefit them but also be advantageous to the whole colony; in other words, that it would not be a burden upon the State. He must say he had been pleased with the attitude shown by several members with regard to this question; he thought they were in accord with the view taken of it by the Government, that we should increase our local production by doing all we can to open up our best lands. By-and-by our more inferior lands would no doubt be taken notice of, but at present we devoted our attention to our most profitable lands. Land that a few years ago was ignored was now considered valuable; and it would be the same hereafter,—land which we now ignored would be regarded as valuable land by-and-by. He had spoken so much with regard to this item that he really had nothing new

to add, but, in conclusion, he would appeal to members, and especially to those who had given a generous support to the Government for years, on this ground, if they were prepared to give their adhesion to the policy of the Government as regards a million-and-a-third of this loan, they should not reject altogether the policy of the Government in regard to this small item, seeing that this was the only railway on the Schedule which had for its object, its main object, the opening up and development of the agricultural lands of the colony. If this Loan Bill passed in its entirety, and the Agricultural Bank Bill became law, he believed that with these two measures working together, one supplying the money and the other supplying the necessary legislation, we would be able to convert an immense territory at present sparsely populated into a new province of production, by encouraging people to settle on the land and to cultivate it. A very small area of this land was capable of supporting a population. It was not so, unfortunately, in all other parts of the colony, where the rainfall was not so good and the soil so productive. But in this part of the colony almost everything that people required in the way of the necessities of life could be produced from the soil. He was aware there was heavy clearing, but he had seen people living out of very small areas—peasant proprietors he might call them. As he had already stated, nearly the whole of the country through which this line would pass was still held by the Crown.

MR. RANDELL: Can you give us any estimate of the probable quantity of cultivable land?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) would not like to make a positive statement on that point, as to the quantity. But there was the map before hon. members, and the whole of this land was in the hands of the Crown, with the exception of the few pieces coloured green. Although this line would not tap the whole of that immense territory, still it would open up a very large area of land capable of development; and with a railway running through it, and with our liberal land laws and the other measure now before Parliament to stimulate the occupation and cultivation of the soil, he firmly believed, as he had already said,

that we could add a new province of production to the colony.

MR. RICHARDSON congratulated the Government upon abandoning the route which he understood they had intended to adopt, the "red line" route, and mixing up this agricultural line with the Collie coalfield line. He felt he could not have supported the "red line" route because in his opinion the extra saving of £18,000 in the cost of construction would not have justified him in supporting a line which would not best serve the country, or prove of the greatest benefit to the greatest number. Though, perhaps, the present number of settlers hardly justified the construction of this railway at present, still there could be no doubt there was a great deal of good land available for cultivation. The great difficulty was the clearing difficulty, and his idea was that steps should be taken to have this land made ready for clearing by ringing it. The saving in the cost of clearing would be something enormous. Land which without being rung might cost £8 or £9 an acre to clear, could, if rung two or three years beforehand, be cleared for £3 or £4 an acre. On 50,000 acres of land this would mean a saving of about a quarter of a million in the cost of clearing. He thought the Government would be conferring a great boon upon the country, and contributing largely to the success of this railway, if they could see their way to enter into a contract to have some of this country rung, taking care, however, not to ring the jarrah, which was a valuable product. The expenditure of £3,000 or £4,000 in this direction, under judicious superintendence, would be one of the best and most reproductive works the Government could engage in. The result, in two or three years' time, would be a net gain of possibly £200,000 or £300,000; and he did not think a better investment could be made of any money which the Government would have to spend out of this Loan Bill, or from any other source.

SIR J. G. LEE STEERE did not know that he could use any further arguments in favour of this railway than those that had been brought before them by the Colonial Treasurer; and he rose principally to say that it had given him the greatest satisfaction possible to hear that the Government had determined to take

this railway along the "blue" line, instead of the "red" line or the "green" line. He, perhaps, knew this country more intimately than anyone in the House; he had been over it very frequently, and he believed that nearly the whole of the land along the proposed route was available for settlement. There had been a large agricultural area lately set apart there, and which this line would go through; whereas, if the "red" line route had been adopted, the railway for thirty miles would have gone through very poor forest country, not adapted for settlement. With reference to the jarrah country in the vicinity of the railway, he might say that when driving through that country, time after time, and observing the splendid forests of timber, he often wondered when *would* there be some means for getting all that fine timber to a market. It seemed to be a sin to have such a magnificent forest of timber remaining unutilised, because there were no means available for getting it to market; and he believed there would be a very considerable timber traffic upon this railway. He felt confident, himself, that we were just as much justified in making this railway as in making any railway we had ever constructed to any agricultural district. He would not say as much, perhaps, as some of our goldfields railways, because he thought the colony could not have prospered without those railways; but he thought we were quite as much justified in making this line as any railway we had made to tap any other agricultural district. He felt sure, after the appeal made to them by the Colonial Treasurer, there would be no opposition to this railway. He hoped himself they would not even divide upon it, but show their confidence in it by unanimously supporting it. He believed that, upon reconsideration, that would be the result.

MR. LEFROY said as he had been somewhat opposed to the borrowing of so large a sum as was proposed in this Bill, he should like to say a few words with regard to the item now before the committee. This Blackwood country had been cut off from the rest of the colony for a great number of years, and if the country could be opened by this railway and production increased, it would not only be an advantage to that part of

the colony but to the colony as a whole. He had the pleasure of visiting the district recently, for the first time, and he must say, speaking from his own personal observation and his knowledge about land, that he was very agreeably surprised with the character of the country. No doubt it was very heavily timbered, but from what he could see, he came to the opinion that the country was capable of carrying a very large population. The land is rich, and is well watered; and a very small area would keep a family, as compared with the land in the central districts of the colony. The Premier when he spoke about establishing "a bold peasantry" on the soil, as he was rather fond of doing, must have had his eye upon this district, or this part of the colony, which certainly was about the most likely part of the colony for establishing that class of settler. No doubt it would take a "bold" man to tackle this heavily timbered country, but, once he got it cleared, he would be able to get a great deal out of the ground afterwards. After seeing the country, he admitted it was necessary there should be a railway made some day towards Bridgetown, as indeed it was necessary there should be to many other parts of the colony. But, as the Premier had just said, we must not go on too fast. If he and those who sat on that side of the House sought to put the brake on occasionally, he was sure the Premier would not feel hurt. Their desire was to do what they considered best in the interests of the country.

At 6-30 p.m. the CHAIRMAN left the chair.

At 7-30 p.m. the CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

MR. LEFROY, resuming his remarks on Item 3, said the producers in the Blackwood District could not grow agricultural produce at such prices as would enable them to compete successfully against the same kinds of imported produce; and, as the economical conditions were against the growers in that district, it would be unwise to construct a railway simply for carrying cereals and other produce which could not be grown and sent to market at a profit. Land which cost £10 and £15 an acre for clearing, and

which would produce 15 to 18½ bushels per acre, could not be worked profitably. That land was capable of supporting a large population engaged in dairying and fruit growing; but the present number of the population in the district was not nearly sufficient to make the railway a reproductive work; therefore, as the railway must be a burden on the country for a considerable time after its construction, he would prefer that the work should stand over. As, however, it was now certain that the item would be carried by a majority in this House, he hoped the population in the district would wake up to the necessity of making the best use of their land, in order to create traffic for the railway and justify the work as far as they could. He could not vote for the line at present, but believed it should be certainly constructed in two or three years' time.

MR. SOLOMON supported the item, and argued that the colony was in such a deplorable condition, by producing so small a proportion of what was consumed within it, that this railway was fully justified as a means of developing an agricultural district which was capable of supporting a large population of the farming class. The development of mining and the development of agriculture should go on together. He did not think any other railway was more necessary than this one.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he would much prefer to see the construction of this railway deferred for two or three years, and such a postponement would be in the interest of the country. The Government might well have accepted the amendment of the member for Beverley, and he regretted that it had not been adopted. Before building a railway, there ought to be a prospect of sufficient traffic, but that was not so in this case. The railway must cost quite £200,000, with rolling stock. As to the suggested traffic in timber, no doubt there was good timber in the district, but where was the market for the timber if cut? If an export trade was contemplated, there must be increased facilities for shipping the timber at Bunbury; and that might entail a further outlay of £300,000 or £400,000 in harbour works.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Croak away.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that, as to sending dairy produce from the Blackwood district, he did not think the building of this railway would prevent the importation of dairy produce from outside, and, in fact, the butter now produced in the whole of that district was not sufficient to supply the town of Bunbury, where visitors usually found that imported butter was used. The district was capable of producing large quantities of fruit; and, as apples grown in that district had been carted to Perth and sold at a profit, he did not see why the farmers should not find it profitable to cart dairy produce to Perth. It was not necessary to open up more country for the production of fruit. He would vote against the item, and thought the year 1896 would be soon enough for this railway. The policy of building railways first, and expecting people to settle on them afterwards, had been a great fallacy in this country.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): In what part?

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he would show that the railways were not paying. He objected to the practice of including in each Loan Bill large items for further equipping or improving existing railways, because such additional expenditure should come out of the railway revenue. This was one reason why he did not believe the existing lines were paying on their merits, as the railway revenue was fictitious to some extent. He would like to see the construction of this line deferred until the year 1897. He also objected to the loan expenditure being exclusively for the South, very little of it going to the North.

THE CHAIRMAN requested hon. members to refrain from making interjections while a member was speaking, and said that, though some of the "fun" of debate might thus be lost, yet it would be an advantage to comply with the Standing Orders.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) asked whether an interjection, by way of correcting a misstatement or error, was an interruption?

THE CHAIRMAN said he took it to be so, according to the Standing Orders.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said it was not so in other parts of the world.

THE CHAIRMAN said that, as hon. members might speak in committee as often as they liked, there was the less necessity for making interjections.

MR. COOKWORTHY, referring to the item, said that when the South-Western Railway Bill was under discussion some hon. members objected that it would be a coast line, instead of going into the interior. The hon. member for the Gascoyne urged that objection particularly. Yet, now that the Government proposed to extend the line into the interior, that hon. member and some others opposed it. A gentleman from Melbourne, who had seen the South-Western district, offered to build a railway from the coast to Bridgetown for a grant of land at the rate of only 2,000 acres per mile, to be taken up on the S.O.L. conditions; and surely if a private individual thought that section of railway was good enough to repay his outlay, the Government would not be going far wrong in constructing a railway which would be a material benefit in the settlement of that part of the country. Settlers in that district did not produce to the extent they might do, because they could not compete against importations while low freights by sea prevailed. The hon. member for the Gascoyne generally objected to everything, and if there were many members in the House like him, there could not have been such progress made under the present Ministry as had taken place. He believed, indeed, there would, in that case, have been no railways, no telegraphs, no steam communication even with the North, and the country would have drifted back to the Crown colony system. The results of the working of the South-Western Railway had been a surprise even to those who supported that line in the first instance. Farmers could not be expected to clear and cultivate their land, when far from a market, unless they had a sure and certain hope of speedy communication by railway; but with a definite prospect of cheap transit by railway, the population along the proposed line would soon be larger than in any other agricultural district in the colony. It was said, outside the House, that some members were opposing the Bridgetown railway because they were jealous of this new competition with the producers in certain other districts. Those

members for other districts who knew the advantages of cheap transit for produce should not oppose the making of this railway for developing one of the most fertile districts in the colony. The small amount in the Schedule for this railway ought to pass without a division. Members for Southern districts had never opposed any works proposed for the North.

MR. A. FORREST said the objection to this railway came from those members who wanted it to be postponed for a year or two; but would any practical benefit be gained by the delay?

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the interest on the money would be saved.

MR. A. FORREST said members hoped that the railways were being constructed and worked on commercial principles, and that the freights would be fixed on a payable basis. Each railway should be made to pay on its own merits, and the losses on one railway should not be made up by charges on the others. An immense amount of fairly good country along this railway might, with money and energy, be brought under cultivation. The land between Donnybrook and Bridgetown was not all good, but a great deal was very suitable for cultivation, and the climate was good. Railways in America were built in advance of settlement, and that policy would be good for this country, in such a suitable district as the Blackwood. Indeed, portions of that land were better than any other in the colony. The timber along that railway was an asset which would pay the interest on capital from the day the line was opened. Saw-mills would be erected immediately, and the Blackwood timber being within a moderate distance from a port, the cutting and hauling would cost 33 per cent. less than the cost of good timber in other parts within reach of a railway. Those who had travelled in the district knew that the best jarrah grew on the Blackwood, and none of it had been cut yet. To build a branch from the South-Western railway into the timber ranges would be very costly; but along the Bridgetown line, after travelling some thirty miles from Bunbury, the good timber would be near the railway; so that even if the land there was of no particular value for settlement, which he did not admit, yet the timber export

alone would pay for the railway. But there would be a considerable traffic in fruit; and he knew of one farmer who realised £300 from the sale of one season's crop of apples off three acres of ground, that statement being no exaggeration, as persons who had visited the district could testify. The climate of the Blackwood district was different from that of any other part. As to the wants of the North, he hoped that next year, if the Bamboo Creek and Yalgoo goldfields developed well, the Government would bring in a Bill for the construction of railways to those fields; but, of course, in the purely pastoral districts of the North, the wants were necessarily small. He would vote for the Bridgetown railway for the many lovely spots that would be made accessible, for the good land, and for the carriage of timber as an export.

MR. LEAKE said he wished to give his reasons for voting against this item. After the result of the division on his amendment in reference to this being part of a trunk line to Albany, he declined to support this item for constructing a railway towards Bridgetown. He would support it only on the understanding that it was to be part and parcel of a through line to Albany; and if the Premier's assurance, previously given in his hustings speech at Bunbury (which he had already quoted to the House), was not to be relied on, then the Premier's assurance given in this House was not to be relied upon. The principal argument, in that part of the Premier's speech, was that this railway would develop the tin deposits, and would be a section of the grand trunk line to Albany; and yet, when he sought to bind the Premier to the statement made at Bunbury, as he had done that afternoon by his amendment affirming that the line should be described in the Schedule as a railway from Donnybrook towards Albany *via* Bridgetown, the Premier refused to vote for that amendment, and left him in a respectable minority of two. If the Premier had been true to his pledge, he would have voted for that amendment; but when the Premier uttered those words in Bunbury he was not sincere, and he must have known that he never intended to carry on that railway to Albany. That statement made at Bunbury was a political dodge to entrap the electors of Albany.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said it did not succeed, at any rate.

MR. LEAKE said it very nearly succeeded in entrapping the electors at Albany, but did not entrap the two members, who, fortunately, saw through it.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he did not go back from one word he had said at Bunbury.

MR. LEAKE asked why, then, did not the Premier vote for the amendment that afternoon? The hon. gentleman's action showed that he was not sincere in what he said on the hustings at Bunbury.

THE CHAIRMAN said the hon. member for Albany was scarcely justified in saying the Premier was not sincere.

MR. R. F. SHOLL did not understand that the hon. member was referring to the Premier in his private capacity.

MR. LEAKE said he was speaking of the Premier in his political and official position, and was certain that, as a private gentleman, the hon. member for Bunbury would not speak an untruth. But he regarded the hon. gentleman as a politician, and, after this experience of him, he must treat the hon. gentleman's political utterances with some distrust. The division taken on the amendment that afternoon showed that the feeling against Albany was very strong in this House; but, after all, he hoped he would be able to fight for the constituency. He must express his opinion that this railway would not go to Bridgetown; it would go only to the tinfields. Only £80,000 was provided for it in the Schedule, and if the railway got as far as the tinfields, hon. members might be sure it would stop there. If he were to vote for that, his seat for Albany would not be worth a day's purchase. The tinfields had not even been proved. There was one argument in favour of this railway, and that was that it should go on to the proper terminus; and that extension would be an excuse for another loan. He would vote against the item, if a division were taken.

MR. CLARKSON said he always felt pleasure when he could conscientiously support the present Government. He could follow them in their policy of borrowing for reproductive public works, but he must say that, in proposing the Bridgetown Railway, they had gone a little too

far. He thought this was a work which might wait. As to the good land in the district, it was expensive to clear, and he could not believe that the construction of a railway would induce people to settle on land that would cost so much to clear. Had the railways already constructed induced people to go in largely for the cultivation of the soil? That had not been so in other districts where the cost of clearing was only about one-eighth of the cost as compared with the Bridgetown district. He would support a vote of £20,000 for ringbarking that heavily timbered country, and it could be subsequently cleared for cultivation at a greatly reduced cost. He was pleased to see that, according to the map showing the proposed route, the line was not to run through a desert, but through the most populated part of the district. As to the necessity of this line for increasing production, there were within a few miles of Perth hundreds of acres of the best land for the production of potatoes. Was not the South-Western Railway made for the dairying business? Yet the production of butter had not been increased by that railway. There was no want of land for dairying and fruit growing; therefore why build this railway to Bridgetown? He spoke with great reluctance against the extension of railway convenience into a Southern district, and he was sorry the hon. member for Beverley had not pressed his amendment for deferring the construction of this railway.

MR. HASSELL said he would vote against the item, as the Government had not given a pledge to carry the railway through to Albany.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said he was surprised to find that the hon. members for Plantagenet and Albany were not going to vote for the Bridgetown Railway. The hon. member for Albany had tried to explain his inconsistency, but his reasons were unsatisfactory, and left the impression that his opposition was only captious. The hon. member had been assured by the Premier that the ultimate destination of this railway, in the ordinary sequence of events, must be Albany or some point on the Great Southern Railway. Did that hon. member expect this House would commit itself to a large expenditure, by affirming at once that

this line must go to Albany? The railway had to be built in sections.

MR. LEAKE asked for an assurance.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said the hon. member could not have a better assurance than the fact that the railway was going to be built there, in sections; and the building of the first section was itself an assurance. What better assurance could the Government give than that? He did not think the hon. members for Plantagenet and Albany could "climb down" with any satisfaction to themselves. But this item would, he felt satisfied, be carried by a large majority. He was surprised, also, at the opposition of members who knew the district. The hon. member for the Gascoyne (Mr. R. F. Sholl) had given some peculiar reasons for not supporting this railway, his principal reason being that the construction would be too early; but even that hon. member would support the item if the Government would substitute a cheap kind of railway. Yet, had any cheaper line of railway been built in the world, except the very narrow gauge, which was fit for a speed of only ten miles an hour? Railways were built in this colony cheaper than in any part of the world. The permanent way, whether for a 2-feet gauge or the ordinary gauge, would cost very much the same, but the cost of the ordinary gauge could be greatly cheapened by the use of lighter rails. If the hon. member for the Gascoyne thought the Government were going to be in a minority on this item, he would have given the Government his generous support. As to the North not having justice done to it, could the hon. member name any public work which this House would be likely to pass that had not been proposed for the North by the present Government? But, in spite of the opposition of some members for the North, the Government had dealt most liberally with the North. Did the hon. member forget the thousands of pounds spent by this Government on the Kimberley gold-fields; also at Wyndham and Hall's Creek? And what were the Government doing for the North now? They were doing all that was likely to be required for some time to come, in aiding the development of the Northern districts. As the Southern members had supported

expenditure in the North, was it too much to ask Northern members to give their generous support to the Government in bringing in a Loan Bill for developing all parts of the colony? In all the works undertaken by this Government could anyone point out a single work that had not turned out well? The Government were informed very exactly of the requirements of the various districts, and he thought hon. members should trust them in reference to the Bridgetown Railway. As to the objections of the hon. member for Toodyay (Mr. Clarkson), the Bridgetown line would pay in a greater degree than the Clackline to Newcastle; and, in making these objections, the hon. member for Toodyay had not given to the Government that generous support which he ought to give. The hon. members who had spoken against this item would do well to reconsider it, and give it their support.

MR. CONNOR said there had been promises made before for the North, which were not carried out. In connection with the first Loan Bill brought in by the present Government, there was a promise that the North should get its fair share, but not one penny of that loan money was spent in the North. When the additional loan of £540,000 was proposed, a fair share of that was promised for the North, but what was the result? *Nil*. Then they were told that in the next loan the North would get what was wanted; but, as far as this Loan Schedule had yet been considered, the result to the North was again *nil*. His own opinion was that, when they had got to the end of this Schedule, the result to the North would still be the same—*nil*. His opinion was that there was one great scheme of centralisation for all the Southern portions of the colony, as against the Northern portion. The North paid its proportion of the general revenue, and why should it not get its just rights in the sharing of the loan expenditure?

MR. A. FORREST asked what the hon. member wanted.

MR. CONNOR said it was unfair for his hon. colleague, the member for West Kimberley, to interrupt him instead of supporting him as he ought to do. On the grounds stated he would oppose the item.

MR. SIMPSON said he did not think that such a feeling of North against

South, as the last speaker had indicated, really existed in the country, and he had never observed it in that Assembly. He believed the Premier had included this item in the Bill from the best motives, but was guided a little more by his heart than his head. After the stately address from his Honour the Speaker, in favour of this railway, one had rather to control his feelings and stick to the stern dictates of reason, and do what he thought was his duty to the country. It would have been only graceful on the Premier's part to have accepted the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Beverley.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he did not suppose the hon. member would have supported this item even then.

MR. SIMPSON said there was a good deal of supposition about this railway. He believed the Ministerial bench supported this railway as one of the trunk lines to Albany; although the Ministers might not be quite in accord, and, perhaps,

*There is a rift within the lute
That soon may make the music mute*

in the Cabinet. He believed the Cabinet were not in agreement on this question, although the Premier might deny that. The Commissioner of Crown Lands, by his action the other night, had shown that the members of the Cabinet were not altogether in accord. Had the day yet come for commencing the duplication of trunk lines, there being one great railway to Albany already? The reason given that night for projecting another line to Albany amounted to repudiation in reference to the company which had built the Great Southern Railway. Much was said about the enormous imports of food products into this colony, but in fact this colony did not import from the other colonies as much as South Australia did, and yet South Australia had nearly eight acres per head under cultivation.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) asked what kind of imports were referred to—not the productions of the soil, surely?

MR. SIMPSON said he was referring to productions of the soil.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said he would bet

the hon. member anything he liked that his assertion was not correct.

MR. SIMPSON said the hon. the Commissioner had no right to turn the Assembly into a sort of Tattersall's, and reminded him that a bet was not an argument. The products of the soil imported into South Australia amounted to 54 per cent. of the total imports, whilst the products of the soil imported into Western Australia were only 48 per cent. of the whole; so that the alleged backwardness in the productions from the soil of this colony entirely disappeared. No doubt there were fine land and magnificent timber in the Blackwood district, but, in dealing with the stern question of the development of this country, with a limited population, he did not think any member of the Cabinet could show that the Bridgetown railway would pay. If this line were constructed, there would be both this railway and the Vasse railway which would not pay the working expenses. The policy of railway building at present should stop at the two lines to the goldfields. The Premier said the other night that he (Mr. Simpson) had endeavoured to poison the minds of the people of the country with regard to the traffic returns of the South-Western railway; but he challenged the Premier to take the official returns then on the table, and ascertain which statement was true—his or the Premier's. This railway was to cost £30,000 for constructing it towards Bridgetown—not for completing it—and he did not believe such a proposal was ever put in a Loan Bill before on earth. The idea of suggesting that a railway should be built as far as the money would go! According to the report prepared by the Engineer-in-Chief—and there was a good deal of politics in that report—the Thompson's Brook branch of this railway was estimated to cost £166,000, less the proportion for rolling stock included in the Loan Bill; so that hon. members had better look the whole cost in the face. If the construction of this railway were postponed, the magnificent timber which had been referred to as available for carriage and export would not disappear in the meantime. The petition from the district, asking for this line, was signed by only 70 persons, as an inducement for Parliament to expend £166,000. During his

recent visit to the district, he saw very few evidences of progress. He saw one farm which showed progress. He saw the tinfields, which distinctly exhibited progress. But, apart from these evidences, he was sorry to say there was a large amount of decay in the district, and the general complaint was that all the young men left the district. The total population of the district was 740; and was it reasonable, on such a basis, that Parliament should expend £166,000 in making a railway at the present time? Land settlement in the colony generally was going on very satisfactorily. Should they not, in these circumstances, make haste slowly, and therefore wisely? It was the duty of every hon. member to vote on this item, not merely from sentiment, but in the interest of the colony, and to advise that the construction of this railway should be deferred for some reasonable period. He would oppose the item.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said the hon. member for Geraldton was "all there" when speaking on a question of borrowing money to develop a goldfield; but he (the Commissioner) and some others had endeavoured to help the hon. member in that direction, and had brought forward ideas for developing the mining industries. But were there no other industries in the country besides gold mining? And was all the public expenditure to go towards the development of the mining interests, while all other interests were to be forgotten or neglected? He did not think the majority of hon. members, who were gifted with a cooler intellect than the hon. member for Geraldton, would think so; and when the hon. member pretended to be a friend of the Government, he would be sure to be on the other side of the House, in a minority. While the Government were endeavouring to assist mining enterprise, was there any reason why they should not also endeavour to assist that enterprise which should supply the food required for consumption on the goldfields and other parts of the colony? If those hon. members who were particularly interested in mining thought the Government should assist that industry, why should they not also assist the agricultural industry by agree-

ing to construct this railway to Bridgetown? The hon. member for Albany had been in favour of this railway at the opening of the debate; but now, because the House and the country were not prepared to go with the hon. member in giving a pledge for the construction of this line to Albany, that hon. member changed his opinion and opposed the item. He was not surprised at any change in the opinions of that hon. member; but surely, with his legal acumen, he should be able to see that if this railway got as far as Bridgetown, it would be so much on the way towards Albany; therefore, would it not be an easier task in the future, to construct a line from Bridgetown to Albany, than to do so if the line remained as at present? Would the hon. member be able to satisfactorily explain his conduct to his constituents when he went to Albany? The hon. member for Toodyay also had thought proper to oppose this item; but if details were gone into, would the hon. member expect to find that the railway which served his district was a paying one, or not? Because, if that was to be the test, it would be found that the hon. member and his district were enjoying a public work which they could hardly have got upon that basis. If the conditions of Newcastle and its district had been good enough to warrant the construction of a railway, then the conditions of Bridgetown and its district were good enough to justify the construction of a railway at the present time. The hon. member for Geraldton actually said, as an argument, that all the young men were going away from the Bridgetown district; but was there anything to be surprised at in that? Young men went away from that district because they saw there grand opportunities which they were prevented from utilising; but let them have railway facilities such as were provided in other parts of the colony, and the young men of the district would be likely to remain there. No facilities for the settlement and cultivation of the land were offered in that district at present. When it was said the settlers produced nothing, he would ask: Was not the district naturally fitted for production? Then, if so, they should give the facilities, and the rest would follow. He believed it was necessary that, while developing the

mineral industries of the colony, the agricultural resources should also be developed. If that policy were not carried out, the money obtained from the mineral resources would be sent away to pay for the food which ought to be produced in this colony. The hon. member for Newcastle had not got a district and surroundings equal to those of the Bridgetown district. The people in the Southern districts had a right to be considered. As to the scarcity of population there, he must say that railways were built in this colony because there were capabilities such as would induce population to settle there; and that was why the Government now asked hon. members to vote for building a railway to Bridgetown. It was a discredit to the country that almost everything required as food for human beings, and animals too, had to be imported into the country, under present conditions; but this railway would help to remove that stigma.

MR. PIESSE said it was often remarked that Western Australians were the greatest enemies to their own country; and after what had been heard that night from men born in the country, and from others identified with it, in condemnation of this railway and of the country as a whole, it seemed to him they were sending forth a most damaging account of the colony, by showing that the Government had proposed a railway for developing a district that would not justify the work. He believed this railway was justified by the facts brought before the House. No one had been slower to support this railway than he had; but the question of another through line to Albany having been settled by the division taken that afternoon, any doubt as to the justification for this railway was now removed from his mind, and he would support the item. The cost of the work, as estimated by the Engineer-in-Chief, was stated at £166,000, with rolling stock, for completion to Bridgetown. Knowing that country as he did, and knowing the advantages of railway communication in other districts, he thought that those who had been settled in that district, striving against great odds to make a living, were entitled to be helped in the way proposed by the Government. As to decay being evident in that district, hon. members could not

wonder at it, in view of the disadvantages under which those people laboured. He was aware of numbers of persons who had visited the Great Southern Railway district, and, being dissatisfied with wheat raising and cereal growing, had gone to the Blackwood and the Preston districts, and to other parts of the South, with a view to settlement. If they thought that part of the colony the most suitable for them, they should be afforded the facilities which settlers required. In the Williams district there were 600 people before the Great Southern Railway was made through it, and now there were 2,700 people. This great increase must be attributed to the facilities afforded by railway communication. The same should be done for the people in the Blackwood country, which had been described as the garden of the colony. The amendment proposed by the hon. member for Beverley was a wise one, but the House generally had not been disposed to accept it, and it was unreasonable now for some hon. members to blame the member for Beverley for not having pressed it, after it became evident that the House was against the idea. Young men were attracted from every agricultural district to the goldfields; but this would only be temporary, for if those young men were successful in gold-seeking, they would return to settle in their native districts, and improve the land with the money they had gained.

MR. MORAN said he would unfold a little scheme into which he had been drawn, with regard to the Bridgetown and the Collie railways. After the Loan Bill was introduced, there was a quiet confab. amongst hon. members outside the House; and at that time he was not favourably disposed towards either the Bridgetown or Collie railway. The three hon. members for Beverley, the De Grey, and the Gascoyne interviewed him; and it was then agreed that an amendment should be put forward by the member for Beverley, proposing delay in the construction of these two railways. He pledged himself to support that amendment. But it was afterwards found that other hon. members did not favour the amendment to the extent expected; and, in that state of affairs, he did not feel called upon to do so. Well, he had been rather surprised by the actions of certain hon. members

on this question that night. In giving the promise he did, he was guided in a great degree by the advice of the hon. member for the Gascoyne; but he was now ready to admit that the Government had given such assurances to the House as practically amounted to all that the hon. member for Beverley had asked in his amendment. His own desire was that the goldfields railways should be pushed on first, and that the other works in the Schedule should follow. Noting with surprise the action taken by the hon. members for Albany and Plantagenet, he must say the member for Albany had turned a complete somersault, and he was afraid the people of Albany would be likely to wind up their member. If he had been in the position of the member for Albany, he would have been satisfied to support the Bridgetown section, and so long as he was coaxing the railway on towards Albany he would not have raised his voice against the building of a section. In fact, it would have been politic for that hon. member to have taken such instalment of the through line as he could get. For himself, he admired stability in any politician, but did not believe in these circus tricks and wheels in the air. He could imagine the gigantic proportions of the member for the Gascoyne turning a complete somersault, or at least executing a neat hand-spring. After that hon. member had induced him to promise to vote for postponement, he had taken the despicable course of voting against the work altogether. In these circumstances, he (Mr. Moran) was going to support this railway; and if one thing more than another had moved him to do this, it was the advocacy of his Honour the Speaker, for he did not believe the Speaker would advocate any public work that would not be beneficial to the whole colony. He would not follow the lead of those members who had at first led him astray, but would turn round and support the item. Another reason for supporting it was that he believed in decentralisation, having seen its good effects in Queensland, where the main railways ran inland, and not coastwise. As to the claims of the North, he believed that an undue proportion of public money had already been spent there. He would not vote for the Collie coal-

field railway, but would rather support an amendment for transferring the amount of that item to the Northern districts. Finally, he asked the Government to say whether, if they found the Yilgarn railway was more than paying the working expenses, they would reduce the rate of freights to the ordinary scale.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn): Yes.

MR. MORAN said he hoped the Government would stick to that promise, and he would support them in the development of the agricultural resources of the colony.

SIR J. G. LEE STEERE, referring to the item, said he regretted that the hon. members for Albany and Plantagenet had withdrawn their support from this item, and especially for the reasons they had given. The Government would have shown great unwisdom if they had put down this item in the Schedule as a railway *viâ* Bridgetown to Albany. The unwisdom of that course was shown by the immense majority in the division taken on the amendment, that afternoon. The hon. member for the Gascoyne had said that if this railway were disconnected with the railway to the Collie coalfield, he would be inclined to vote for the Bridgetown line. The route marked green on the map showed that the two lines would not be connected.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he meant that while objecting to both these railways, yet he might vote for the Bridgetown line if the Collie line were struck out.

SIR J. G. LEE STEERE said that none of those members who advocated delay in the construction of this railway had stated any reason for the delay; therefore it was impossible to debate that point with them. They had not said the colony was not in a position financially to build the line; they had not said it was not required; and he affirmed that, until the railway was made, it would be impossible for the settlers in that district to bring to market at a profit anything they could produce, and that this could not be done until they got a railway. There was more production in that district when he first went there than at present; but the reason was that the price obtained for produce was higher, and the growers could afford to cart it over long distances; but now the only means by which the district could be developed was a railway for enabling

the growers to bring produce to market at a cheap rate. He thought a railway into that district would pay, if only for the conveyance of timber. It had been said the only portion of the South-Western Railway that was paying was the section between Jarrahdale and Perth. That was because of the timber traffic; and knowing the magnificent forests of timber in the South, he believed the timber there would contribute a great deal of freight to this railway. He did not suggest that the railway should be made for this particular purpose; but there were the agricultural interest, the timber interest, and the tin-fields interest, and these three interests combined would afford freight for this railway, and make it pay better than many of the existing railways.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked where was the market for the timber?

SIR J. G. LEE STEERE said there would be an excellent market in England. He regretted to hear the complaint that nothing had been done for the North, for there was a general impression amongst his constituents that a great deal too much had been done for the North, and that the North was the only part of the colony which had been considered. He was of opinion that half a million of the present loan was to be expended in the North; though, of course, there was a question as to what some hon. members meant by "the North," and what the people in the South called "the North." Another thing given to the North was the remission of pastoral rents.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said there was no remission of rents.

SIR J. G. LEE STEERE said there was a great concession made to the settlers in the North by the remission of rents, in consequence of the drought; but the pastoral lessees in the South had always paid double the amount of rent as compared with what was paid in the North, and yet the capabilities of their runs for carrying stock had not been one-half those of the North. The Southern lessees had always put up with that, and had not grumbled about it. He had always been under the impression, in that House, that the North was too strong, and that the South did not get justice done to it, in proportion to the population. The population in the North was very small in comparison with the

number in the South. There was no doubt the country of the Blackwood was admirably adapted for small farmers, and he could confirm the statement of the hon. member for West Kimberley, as to one settler having realised £300 for his crop of apples off three acres this year. That instance, with others, showed that the district was admirably adapted for the man of small means, and that was the kind of country which was sought to be developed by the construction of this railway. He could not understand why there was such opposition to this railway. He had always looked upon it as being a necessary part of the South-Western Railway system, which was extended to Boyanup, then to Donnybrook, and now the Government proposed to extend it towards Bridgetown. He asked hon. members to do justice to that district. He did not ask them to be generous in dealing with public money. One more thing. He would ask hon. members what would be said by the people in England, when asked to lend us this money, if they learned that the members of this House had so little confidence in their own colony that they would not risk a loan of one and a half millions for the construction of public works, and actually thought they could not afford to spend £80,000 for making a railway to one of the most fertile districts in the colony? That was an element to be taken into consideration in determining whether hon. members would vote for or against this item in the Loan Bill.

MR. PATERSON said the hon. member for the Gascoyne had one set speech in reference to agricultural railways. His own opinion was that, in the district which this railway would serve, butter could be produced and sent to market all through the summer months; and this was greatly in favour of the proposed line. The timber traffic also would supply freight for the railway at once, as mills would start cutting as soon as the railway was open. The timber traffic was, at present, paying for the newly-opened South-Western Railway, over the section between Jarrahdale and Perth. The members for Albany and Plantagenet should vote for the Bridgetown Railway, as an instalment of a future through line to Albany. The money spent on the building of addi-

tional sheds for sheltering the produce imported from outside would really pay the interest on these agricultural railways for increasing the productions of the soil. Southern members did not oppose the public works proposed for the North, and a reciprocal spirit should prevail.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the hon. member for the Murray had almost convinced him that he should vote for this railway. No doubt there was plenty of good timber in the district, but where was the market for it? It could not be brought to Perth in competition with timber obtained a hundred miles nearer to the city. If the timber was to be shipped at Bunbury for the English market, the port of Bunbury was so insecure that ships would be deterred from going there. Reference had been made to some great concession made to the North, but he denied that there had been any remission of rents, as alleged. The same assertion had been made by newspaper writers who ought to know, and did know, better, and they had led people to believe that a large remission of rents had been given to Northern pastoralists; but all the rents due had been paid up, and the concession really made was that, after a certain time, the extra amount of rent which those lessees would otherwise have had to pay, and which would have come into operation this year, should not be enforced. There was a great difference between a remission and a concession. When the rents for Northern leases were originally fixed, the liability to drought was not sufficiently understood; and after the last drought caused so much loss, the question was whether the lessees should throw up their holdings or should keep them at a lower rental than that which was to have come into force this year. Referring to the Schedules of previous Loan Bills, he contended that in the Schedule of 1891 there was only an item of £2,000 for additional shipping facilities at Carnarvon, and he did not believe the money had been spent there yet; and that in the Schedule of 1893 there was not a single item really for the North. As to the produce from the Bridgetown district, nothing but apples was brought to the Perth market; and, if apples could be carted profitably over that distance, butter might be brought to Perth in the same way. There was no land there

under cultivation to speak of, the settlers were producing nothing, and yet the House was asked to build a railway to a district which had no produce to carry.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the hon. member for the Moore, who had dealt with the question in a reasonable way, was of opinion this railway should be delayed for a couple of years, and that, when made, it would be a burden on the colony for some time. He (the Premier) was not prepared to say the line would pay the working expenses and the interest on capital at once; he did not think any railway in the colony had done so; although he hoped that next year, when statistics of the Yilgarn Railway traffic would be available, they would prove an exception in that respect. The railway from Perth to Beverley had cost the colony some £40,000 to £50,000 a year in deficiency during some years after the construction; yet no one would be found to say now that the railway to Beverley was not fully justified by the results. The railway from Geraldton to Northampton, the first line built in the colony, was not paying; but, at any rate, the building of that railway had shown that the people in the Southern parts had done all they could, at the time, to further the interests of an industry in the North. That line had continued to be a "white elephant" financially, though for what reason he could not say, because he knew the land in that district was fairly good, and was capable of agricultural development. Still, the fact remained that the receipts from that railway for last year were under £700, both for passengers and goods. That state of things required close investigation, for it seemed almost incredible that a railway should run for thirty odd miles through fairly good country, and so little revenue be received. But that was not the only instance in this colony where a railway had not produced the effect that was desired. The line branching from the Eastern Railway to Newcastle had not been a paying one, but he would not therefore say it was not justified in the interests of the colony, for if it had not paid directly, it had been no loss to the colony. Hon. members, when speaking on items in this Bill, should look close at home, and see whether the railways already made in their districts would

bear the tests they wished to apply to the Bridgetown line. The question was not whether a railway would be reproductive at once. He had no hesitation in giving his opinion in regard to the Bridgetown Railway, that it would not pay more than the working expenses, even if it would do that, during the first two or three years after construction; but he believed that, after five years, it would pay considerably more than the working expenses. That was the general opinion he had formed in regard to railways in districts where they were justifiable; and the reason of their not paying at first was easy to understand, for the construction of a railway did not make the land more prolific than it was before, but simply induced more settlement and increased the cultivation. The hon. member for the Moore seemed to have been changing front on this question. He (the Premier) liked a man to have a stiff back, even if opposed to himself, and did not like to see an hon. member turning and twisting about. Before a division took place that hon. member was disposed to vote for this railway; but afterwards some evil genius must have been tempting him. The next member who spoke was the hon. member for the Gascoyne, and he seemed to think that, by opposing everything which was proposed in that House by the Government, he thereby attained a prominence which he in no way deserved, because that hon. member had never propounded, or produced, or said anything in this House that had had any beneficial effect. He (the Premier) was aware of the hon. member's good qualities; but, as a member of this House, he had never contributed to any good Act passed through the House, because he was always a down-right croaker. The hon. member was a native of the country, which had, at any rate, produced a man of 20 stone weight. That hon. member's opposition to this railway was extraordinary. He had also strenuously opposed the construction of the South-Western Railway, but, although he now saw the results of the traffic were against him, he would not yet admit that he had been wrong in his opposition. Surely those who had opposed and those who had supported the South-Western Railway would not now say that railway was not justified? Yet the same argu-

ments which the member for the Gascoyne had used against that work, he now had the effrontery to use against the Bridgetown line—that the country was no good, that there was no settlement, that there were no people in the district, that the line would not pay, and that it was not justified in any particular. That hon. member had said he would have supported the amendment of the hon. member for Beverley in favour of delaying the work a year and a quarter longer than the Government proposed; but the promise given by the Government had practically met the view of the hon. member for Beverley. The Government had undertaken that the special bills for authorising the construction of the Bridgetown Railway and the Collie Railway should not be introduced until next session; also, that it was not intended that any expenditure should take place in regard to the construction of this railway for a year from the present time. The hon. member for the Gascoyne had also referred to a want of consideration for Northern interests. He (the Premier) preferred to take a broad view of the question. The whole country was his constituency; and he would tell the hon. member that he (the Premier) had been a better friend to the North than the hon. member had been. Let the hon. member point to any useful Act or proposal he had ever brought into this House for the benefit of the North. What did the hon. member say about the telegraph line from Derby to Wyndham? When the present Government proposed to put that line into working order, by providing for it in the first Loan Bill, the hon. member said, "Let it stop where it is, and rust."

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Are you not convinced now that I was right?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) asked the House to notice the class of members who were opposing the Government now—one of them still contending that the telegraph line to Wyndham and Hall's Creek was not justified! He would say to the members now that the Government were prepared to go further, by putting telegraph lines throughout the country districts, to every place where there was settlement. The Northern districts would never have a Ministry who were more desirous of

furthering their interests than the present Ministry. He made that statement emphatically, and hoped he would be prepared to answer and be judged upon it in the future. There was not a thing connected with this country, from North to South, and from East to West, that the Ministry did not take interest in. What interest was there in the North that the Ministry had neglected? No member of the House had put forward a reasonable request for something required for the North that had not been granted. The Northern and North-Western districts had found a friend in himself and in the present Government. He felt much obliged for the generous support accorded by the hon. members for West Kimberley and the Williams, and especially as they were practical men, and not to be influenced by outside interests. The member for West Kimberley was not beholden to him nor to the Government. What had the Government done for West Kimberley more than they had done for other parts of the country?

MR. R. F. SHOLL: What have they done for me?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the hon. member was anxious to take everything he could for himself and his district. There was one great difference between the hon. members for West Kimberley and the Williams, as compared with other hon. members who opposed this railway, that they were practical men who knew the country. The hon. member for the Gascoyne had not visited his native district of Bunbury since his birth. As to a railway to Marble Bar, the Government were as anxious and willing to introduce a measure for constructing a railway to that goldfield as they were to construct a line to Coolgardie, but the question was, had the time arrived for making a railway to Marble Bar, and had they sufficient information? He said, no; but he hoped the time was close at hand when that work could be undertaken, and before the next session of Parliament he hoped to have an opportunity of visiting that place, and judging for himself as to whether a railway would be justifiable. He now came to a very painful episode; that was the action of the hon. members for Plantagenet and Albany. They had changed

front. He believed the hon. member for Albany was very pleased to have an opportunity of changing front, so that he might be in a position to oppose the Government in reference to one item in the Bill. It was to him a happy excuse for changing and voting against the Government. He (the Premier) could not understand the hon. member's reason, unless he was under the pressure of a person who put him into this House.

MR. LEAKE: Who is that?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the hon. member had quoted from his Bunbury election speech to show that this was to be a railway to the Blackwood, and on to Lake Muir and Albany; yet, because the hon. member could not get his own idea inserted in the Bill, by way of an amendment to this item, almost every member being adverse to that amendment, he took that as an excuse for voting against the railway altogether, thereby turning a political somersault. How could any man of sense justify that conduct? The hon. member was desirous that this Bridgetown line should be part of a trunk line to Albany, but because he could not get the House to pledge itself to the whole of that railway at once, he refused to vote for any part of it. That was like a man cutting off his nose to spite his face; because, if the hon. member could prevail in this matter, he would not have the forty or fifty miles of railway made towards the very terminus he wanted it ultimately to reach. Surely it would be easier to continue a line than to commence it. But that was only an excuse for the hon. member to turn tail, and try to get back into the groove he had been in all along—that of a thorough opponent and misrepresenter of the Government. The hon. member for Plantagenet was, in this matter, following an undesirable leader. He had been carried away in this matter; because he was an honourable, sensible man, although led away now and induced to act unfairly towards the Government. As to what he (the Premier) had said in his Bunbury speech, he had not receded one iota from the position he took up when addressing his constituents on the subject of this railway. He wished now to say, for the information of those who had sent the hon. member for Albany into this House, that he (the Premier)

did not go back one word from the published report of what he had said at Bunbury about this being a section of the great trunk line which he hoped to see extended to Albany in the future. He believed that the Great Southern Railway, which already connected with Albany, supplied all the railway facilities necessary at the present time; but the immense territory in the Southern parts of the colony should be developed, and it could not be developed without a great trunk line through the South-Western portion, and which would eventually go on and on until it connected with the magnificent port of Albany. He asked the hon. member for Albany to justify his action in reference to this railway. He (the Premier) might, perhaps, appear with him on the same platform, and tell him that he had acted adversely to his pledges, and not in the interests of his district or of the colony.

MR. LEAKE: Why don't you put your opinion in the Bill?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said it was not necessary to do so. The opinion he had expressed in this House on that occasion was as good as if it were put in any Bill. Had Albany ever been treated better than by the present Government? Could an instance be shown in which the Government had acted adversely to the interests of Albany? No. Albany, of all other places, should have sent to this House a representative who was in accord with the present Government. It had not done so, though he did not know why; because self-interest should have induced Albany to send a representative who would be in accord with the present Government. He did not know why Albany should have sent a man like the hon. member. What had the Government done to Albany, that they should be treated in this way? He (the Premier) had told the people of Albany that the Government had the power, in many ways, to have retarded the interests of Albany, but they had not done so; yet Albany had treated the present Government badly from the beginning, although the Government had treated Albany justly and well. The hon. member thought he could come into this House and say the Government had an ill-feeling against Albany. He (the Premier) said the statement was a deliberate falsehood. The desire of the

Government was to forward the interests of Albany, as they had also to forward the interests of every part of the country. The people of Albany had not acted so well towards this Government as the Government had acted towards them. He hoped these points would be taken down, and printed in large type in the local Press of Albany. He regarded the action of the hon. member that night as a mere trick to slip out of the pledges to his constituents, so that he might act unfairly towards them and unfairly to the Government whom he had said he would support. The hon. member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor), who had complained of injustice to the North, was a generous-minded man, and his remarks were only prompted by a desire to do the best he could for his constituents. But that hon. member should recollect that the present Government had been good friends even to that far-away district of East Kimberley. They had completed the telegraph line to Wyndham, and a long distance it was, and the line was now working successfully, in spite of the alleged hostility of the natives; whereas the hon. member for the Gascoyne had advocated that the line should be left to rust and rot.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: And it is paying remarkably well.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he did not care whether it was paying or not, for the intention of the Government was to extend telegraphic communication to every part of the colony where there was settlement. The hon. member for East Kimberley had said he could find nothing in this Bill for the North, but he (the Premier) could find in it quite £50,000, and although that amount might appear small, yet the wants of the North, being mainly a pastoral country, were not great. There were no great public works wanted in the North that had not been already undertaken, or were being carried out. As to the suggested railway to the Marble Bar goldfield, he had already spoken on that, and he might repeat that the Government would, during the recess, examine that district with a view to ascertaining the practicability of the work and its cost, and would also consider whether it was desirable. The duty of the Government was to the whole colony.

Hon. members would find that items 8, 11, 12, and 14, in the Schedule included some works for the North, amounting to quite £50,000.

MR. CONNOR: How much in Item 8, "Development of goldfields and mineral resources?"

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said about £15,000 out of that amount would be for the North. Additional shipping facilities would be supplied as soon as possible. He asked the hon. member to trust to his friends—those who were in sympathy with him—rather than run into the enemy's camp, among persons who had very little sympathy with him. He regretted that the hon. member for Geraldton should so often find occasion to say "Hear, hear" to the remarks of members of the Opposition, and that he did not give to the Government that support which he (the Premier) had expected from him. That hon. member had said this railway was nothing but a part of a great trunk line to Albany. Thus it appeared there were members who regarded this line in a light different from that in which the hon. member for Albany regarded it, and this circumstance only made that hon. member's position the more inconsistent. As to the line of demarcation between the North and the South, the Northerners' Association, lately formed, drew the line at the Arrowsmith River, about twenty miles South of the Irwin.

MR. SIMPSON: You are doing very well for Geraldton.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) asked if the hon. member would go to his Geraldton constituents, and tell them he belonged to the Southern part of the colony, and hear what they had to say about that. They considered they were in the North. This Loan Bill included Northern as well as Southern interests. The impartiality of the Government, and their desire to do what was right and just, were shown by the item of £20,000 for schools being struck out of the Schedule; and they intended to apply £4,000 of the amount to the extension of the Geraldton jetty, and the other £16,000 to the improvement of existing lines of railway. The hon. member for the Gascoyne had more public money spent in his district than most other members, and a lighthouse was also being built for him—though

the hon. member had not been a lighthouse to the Government, but had rather tried to put them on the rocks. The objections made to this small item of the Bridgetown Railway, by some members who usually supported the Government, were not such as should come from them. Of course every member must judge for himself; but if any hon. member was wavering on this question, he might, in a small matter like this, fairly resolve the doubt in favour of the Government. He (the Premier) recognised that every member in the House represented his own constituency, and had to do his duty to the best of his ability and judgment. He asked hon. members: Was this work necessary and urgent, and would it pay? The whole matter lay in the answers to these questions. The interest on the loan would be £60,000 a year, and after four years there would also be 1 per cent. of sinking fund to provide for, amounting to £15,000 more, and making a total of £75,000 a year as a charge on account of this loan. That would be the total obligation in regard to this Bill, until the loan was repaid. Looking at the position of the colony, with its increasing revenue, he said the amount of revenue estimated for the current financial year was nearly £900,000, as compared with £681,245 received in the past year; and the Government now asked the committee to incur a liability of £60,000 a year for four years, and £75,000 a year afterwards. And, as to this Bridgetown railway item, the interest on £80,000 at 4 per cent. would be only £3,200 a year. If this item were thrown out by an adverse vote of the committee, probably the Government would propose some other item on the Schedule for appropriating this amount. But surely this amount was not too much to risk for constructing a railway into the heart of the good country, in one of the best portions of the colony for settling a large population; and this railway was one which every person admitted must be built at some time. Was this amount too much for trying to subjugate this great district, in order to make it fit for the settlement of hundreds of thousands of our own people, making a living out of the soil? Personally, he was not any more interested in this work than was any other member of the House. It would not be in his constituency. But he could say, freely,

that they must try and do something to increase the food productions of the colony; for what would be the use of building railways to our goldfields, and of attracting a large population into the colony—perhaps tens of thousands of people—if no further effort was to be made for promoting the cultivation of the soil, and for supplying a market at our very doors. The country to be opened by this railway was the most suited for agricultural development, and for carrying a large population; and he believed the committee could not do wrong, in the interests of the country, in constructing a railway for developing that district.

MR. RANDELL said he had tried to listen, with an unprejudiced mind, to the arguments with regard to this railway. Some time ago he had shared the opinion, generally felt, that the time had not arrived for the construction of this railway. He believed that opinion still prevailed outside to a considerable extent. He had the honour to represent a constituency which was interested, perhaps more than any other, in the general welfare of the colony; and he desired to do his duty not only to the constituency he represented, but to the general interests of the colony. He did not think it would be justifiable to construct this line only to the tinfields; nor would it be justifiable if the line was to be only for the carriage of timber in addition to the tinfields traffic; nor yet would it be justifiable to construct this line in response to a generous desire for assisting the struggling settlers in that district. Looking at the question in all its bearings, and believing it was the duty of this House to develop the agricultural resources of the country, while developing those of the goldfields, and believing there was a considerable amount of land in that district which could be brought into profitable occupation, he was prepared to support the construction of this railway. That was his conclusion, after very deliberate and careful consideration, feeling sure that, presently, this work would result in considerable benefit to the community at large. If they could, by this means, increase largely the production of those things which were necessary for the well-being of the community, and if they were to reap the full benefit of the public works policy, this railway

ought to be made. He was glad the Government had, to a certain extent, yielded to the expression of a feeling in favour of some delay in this work; but he could not have supported the suggested amendment, because it would have committed the House to the very thing they should not commit themselves to, for he would much rather trust to the good sense and the policy of the Government and of Parliament as to the proper time for undertaking this work. The necessity of first undertaking the construction of two very important railways to the goldfields would preclude the borrowing of the money required for this work at once, and would necessarily postpone it for at least twelve months, which would be a delay that would meet the views of most hon. members. He was glad to find himself in a position to give the Government his support in the construction of these railways; and he hoped the best route possible would be selected. He would also be sorry to see this railway stop short of Bridgetown. He hoped no hon. member would regret the length or fulness of this debate, because discussion was one of their greatest privileges. He always tried to keep his mind open to conviction, and he liked the freest and fullest discussion of these important subjects.

MR. COOKWORTHY moved that the question be now put.

Motion put and passed.

Question—That the item stand as printed—put, and division taken, resulting as follows:—

Ayes ...	...	...	15
Noes ...	...	...	9

Majority for ... 6

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Burt	Mr. Clarkson
Mr. Cookworthy	Mr. Connor
Sir John Forrest	Mr. Hassell
Mr. A. Forrest	Mr. James
Mr. Marnion	Mr. Lenke
Mr. Moron	Mr. R. F. Sholl
Mr. Paterson	Mr. H. W. Sholl
Mr. Pearce	Mr. Simpson
Mr. Piesse	Mr. Illingworth (Teller).
Mr. Randell	
Mr. Richardson	
Mr. Solomon	
Sir J. G. Lee Steere	
Mr. Wood	
Mr. Venn (Teller).	

Item agreed to.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved that the House, at its rising, adjourn until half-past seven o'clock on the morrow evening.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 11:33 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 13th September, 1894.

Loan Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7:30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

LOAN BILL, 1894.

IN COMMITTEE.

The consideration of items in the Schedule was resumed.

Item 4—*Railway to Collie Coalfield (exclusive of rolling stock), £60,000:*

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he desired to again inform hon. members as to the precise intentions of the Government in regard to this railway. They fully believed that there is a most valuable coalfield at the Collie. The reports laid before hon. members, from Dr. Robertson in the first instance, and later from the Government Geologist and others, set forth in no uncertain way the views formed by those gentlemen in regard to this coalfield. In the beginning, he had been himself somewhat incredulous in regard to this coalfield, and was not easily convinced that we had this great and rich deposit so near to the metropolis; but, as time went on, and information came in to the Government, he became convinced there was no doubt whatever

that there was a rich and immense deposit of coal at the Collie. The Government had experiments made, perhaps to some extent for the purpose of convincing himself, because he had had doubts about this coal; but these experiments, which were made as tests on the Government railways, in a flour mill at Bunbury, and in a blacksmith's forge, had been reported on, as hon. members would have seen, and had, at any rate, convinced him and convinced the Government; so much so that they had placed this item in the Schedule for constructing a railway to the coalfield. The Government were so satisfied about this coalfield that they were quite prepared to construct this railway at the present time; but, in order to meet the views of hon. members, and of many whose opinions the Government held in respect as not being unreasonable in this matter, the Government were prepared to make certain promises in regard to this item; and, in making these promises, they did not think there would be practically any loss of time, because it would be impossible for the Government, with the means at their command, to put all these works in hand at once. Notwithstanding their desire to hurry on these works, the Government felt that a considerable time would be necessary for the completion of surveys, plans, specifications, and the necessary contracts; therefore the attitude taken by the Government on this matter would not really delay this work any more than if the House passed it now without any promise in regard to it. The Government proposed that, if this item were passed by the committee, it should be on the distinct understanding that nothing whatever should be done, in the way of constructing this railway, until after a special Bill for authorising it had been placed before the House next session. In the meantime they proposed to go on with the surveys and the boring to test the coal, in order to obtain fuller information to be laid before hon. members. He would like, if hon. members concurred with him as to its desirability, to have the permanent-way material for this railway indented for; because this material would be "earmarked" until issued in due course for use in this work, and would be in the General Stores Department as a credit in lieu of cash in the Treasury, until