

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 21st December, 1911.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Works: 1, Return showing railways constructed departmentally and otherwise (ordered on motion by Mr. Heitmann). 2, Annual Report and Balance-sheet of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Department.

By the Honorary Minister: 1, Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Fisheries, 1910; 2, Annual Report of the Bunbury Harbour Board, 1911.

ELECTORAL ROLLS—LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker): I desire to make a statement to the House in connection with the compilation of the rolls of the Legislative Council. The other night, in answer to a question by the leader of the Opposition, I stated that it had been decided to strike out all the names which were upon the roll before 1907, all the names that were there prior to that date, and then to send out cards, notices, instructions, and directed envelopes, for the purpose of enabling those who are qualified to vote to send in their names and become enrolled. I have given the matter fresh attention since, and this morning, in consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer and the Colonial Secretary. I deemed it advisable to make an alteration in the

plan whilst maintaining the principle laid down. From the beginning, the purpose had been to get a pure and complete roll. By the Act we are entitled to strike out those whose qualifications cannot be attested, but prior to 1907 we had, and we have now no means of attesting the qualifications of those who have been on from the commencement of the Council rolls. That there might be nobody omitted, neglected, or wrongly excluded from that roll, I have now, no means of attesting the qualification in each town, or municipality, or place where a roads board is, a conference between the electoral officer of the place, if there be one, the town clerk of the place if there be one, and the secretary of the roads board if there be one, and that those people shall go into the rolls, examine them, and, where they can testify or where they hold the conviction that the names upon the roll are entitled by qualification to appear again on the rolls those names shall go over automatically into the new rolls being compiled at the present time. Those names that cannot be approved by those people resident in the place and acquainted with its conditions and with its residents shall go off the rolls, but the procedure already indicated shall be taken in regard to them. That is to say, they shall receive claim forms, directed envelopes for replies, instructions how to vote, forms showing by practical illustration how it is done, and, in fact, supplied with all the particulars. And none of the other particulars which I detailed shall be neglected. That is to say, there shall be posters placarded in all the towns, and circulars everywhere shall be sent out, the object being entirely and only to make these rolls such that we can honestly say they represent those entitled to vote at the forthcoming elections for the Legislative Council. The reason why I cannot agree to the suggested canvass by the police is that, whilst that form might be practicable in the metropolitan area it would not be practicable in outlying provinces, and experience has proved that canvassing by the police has never been satisfactory. In no instance has satisfaction been obtained

by that means. The police have many other duties to perform, and whilst probably there is no body of canvassers who would be more confidently relied upon for integrity and honesty, yet the calls upon them are so enormous, and the facilities that even they have for obtaining information are so limited that we could not rely upon their being able to complete the work before the next elections. The task would take six months to complete if we had to do it in that way. In respect to the centres where the population is relatively dense my advice is that those who are interested in seeing a complete roll should voluntarily come to the assistance of the department in the building up of the roll.

Mr. Allen: That is the duty of the Government I take it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is our duty to get as complete a roll as we can, and we are going to do it. In regard to all those who have the residential qualification, it is proposed to get their names from the Legislative Assembly roll, and verify their qualification as far as possible. We intend to leave no stone unturned to get all on the roll that we can, and we are equally anxious that we shall put on none without qualifications.

Mr. Allen: There are different qualifications.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Whatever the qualifications we are anxious to do the right thing. We shall consult the officers of the local authorities, and the ratepayers' rolls.

Mr. Allen: They are not on the rolls unless they have paid their rates.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Quite so, but we shall scrutinise the rolls and take the advice of the municipal and roads boards' officers and the electoral officers. I desire to impress upon the public the fact that the completeness of the rolls depends upon the watchfulness of the citizens. It is the duty of every citizen having these qualifications to see himself that he is enrolled, and, it being his duty, I trust every person interested in securing com-

plete rolls will become active in furthering the object of the Government in this respect.

QUESTIONS (2)—FRUIT PACKER. APPOINTMENT.

Local Applicants' Qualifications.

Mr. GEORGE asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Has any appointment been made in regard to the position of fruit packer, etc., advertised in the Eastern States' papers? 2, Is the Minister aware that among the applications sent in there were two from packers in Western Australia whose qualifications for the work are recognised as first class by the fruit growers of this State, and whose experience cannot be disputed? 3, Is the Minister aware that the standard of packing in this State is acknowledged by export buyers to be higher than that practised in the Eastern States? 4, Will the Minister instruct that, before an appointment is made, the claims and pretensions of local packers shall be fully investigated and consideration given to same?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Not yet; 2, Not as disclosed in the information supplied by applicants. One appears to have good qualifications; 3, No such expression of opinion has been submitted to the Minister; 4, This has already been done, and the merits of the local applicants are being given full consideration.

Test of Competency.

Mr. TURVEY asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, How was the decision arrived at that all the applicants for the position of fruit packer in Western Australia did not possess "adequate experience"?; 2, Were applicants submitted to any test?; 3, Was there among the local applicants one who had had considerable experience in fruit packing in America?; 4, Is the Minister aware that one of the local applicants is considered by many of our leading orchardists to be one of the best fruit packers in Australia?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied : 1, No decision has yet been arrived at regarding the appointment of a fruit packer. I stated in reply to a question in this House on the 30th November that as none of the applicants was considered quite suitable the appointment was being advertised in the East. The position was that the expert in charge of the fruit industries branch of the Department of Agriculture advised that though one applicant appeared to possess the requisite experience, his health rendered it unlikely that he could efficiently fulfil the duties of the position; 2, No ; 3, Yes ; 4, Yes.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. HEITMANN, leave of absence for one fortnight granted to Mr. A. A. Wilson on the ground of urgent private business.

BILL—VETERINARY.

Read a third time and returned to the Legislative Council with amendments.

BILL—MARRINUP BRANCH RAILWAY.

In Committee, etcetera.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

MOTION—PERTH TRAMWAYS, NATIONALISATION.

Adjourned debate on the motion by Mr. Lewis, "That in the opinion of this House the Government should immediately enter into negotiations with the Perth Tramway Company with a view to nationalising same as early as possible," called on.

Question put and passed.

PETITION—WICKEPIN-MERREDIN RAILWAY ROUTE.

Petition received from Kurrenkutten and Kuminin settlers praying that the Wickepin-Merredin line might be constructed not further west than the route,

the latest abandoned, or if possible, as far east as Emu Hill as engineering difficulties would permit, now considered.

Mr. MONGER (York) : I beg to move—

That a select committee be appointed to consider the question of the route of the Wickepin-Merredin Railway.

I have only to call the attention of hon. members to the fact that nearly twelve months ago this Parliament authorised the construction of a line of railway from Wickepin to Merredin. Since that Bill was passed by Parliament, various deputations have waited on the gentlemen who have successively occupied the position of Minister for Works, and numerous routes have been recommended. Prior to the present Minister going into office arrangements had been arrived at with the late Minister, and an absolute promise given by the then Government that a certain route would be adopted ; and whilst I have to admit that in the late Government's regime various surveyed routes were exploited from time to time, until about last June no absolute and definite decision had been arrived at by the Government. On every occasion on which a deputation waited on the Minister for Works practically the only request of the deputation was that the route as recommended by the Advisory Board should be followed. The petition I have to present asks that, at all events, the route recommended by the Board shall be adhered to, or if that be not possible, that the line be taken further east as proposed in the attempted survey of the route. I am sorry that the Minister for Works is not in the Chamber, because it will be necessary for me to refer to the reply given by him to a deputation since he has been in office, and I would like him to hear the construction which I place, and which I will ask hon. members to place, on the reply he gave to that deputation. The petition contains a paragraph on which I desire to lay particular stress—

Moreover, your petitioners submit that the plans issued by the Lands Department at the time the various subdivisions were thrown open for selection, and the prices charged for the

land, do not permit of any deviation of the line to the westward.

I have here a plan of the sub-division of Kuminin area showing various allotments then offered to the people. The prices varied from 14s. to 23s. per acre, and the locality plan shows a railway along a certain route, which I contend was agreed to by the last Parliament. I am told that it is the intention of the present Minister for Works to alter the proposed route almost in its entirety, notwithstanding the reply he gave to the deputation, and notwithstanding the plan to which I am referring. I am going to ask hon. members to inspect this plan, and to take particular note of it. It refers to land open for selection on the 25th April of this year, just three months after the passing of the Bill by Parliament. I am told also that the present Government intend to lay particular stress upon the promise given last session with reference to the straightening out of this line. At the time this Bill was being considered in this House a new discovery at Bullfinch was receiving considerable attention at the hands of the speculator and the mining investor. We were all hoping that in Bullfinch we had another great mining proposition, and that the discovery would give a great impetus to prospecting throughout the State. As a result of that prevailing opinion, Mr. John Ewing wrote a letter to the *West Australian* in reference to this Wickepin-Merredin Railway, and suggested that it would be a good idea for the Government to put down weightier rails and make this line not only an agricultural railway, but also one which would carry cheaper fuel to the goldfields of Southern Cross and Bullfinch. It was on the strength of that letter that there was any difference of opinion on the route as suggested by the Advisory Board. In support of this, it will be necessary for me to quote from the second reading debate, which took place in this House on the 18th January last, and which covers two and a half pages of *Hansard*. The whole debate was occasioned by the letter which appeared in the Press, signed by Mr. John Ewing, and which was quoted in extenso by the mem-

ber for Collie, Mr. A. A. Wilson, whose absence this afternoon, by the way, I regret. At all events in quoting this letter the member for Collie read it all, but I am only going to quote a portion as follows:—

The course of this line should be in as direct a line as possible from Wickepin to some 40 miles south of Merredin, and I believe that once Collie coal gets on to the goldfields market it will be found necessary to continue the whole section in a north-easterly direction to Southern Cross, and that the trade will assume such dimensions as to warrant of its own trade alone the construction of the direct line from Collie to Southern Cross. The proposed deviation from Wickepin to Kunjinn and the laying of 45lb. rails will effectually destroy the hope of the colliery owners of Collie of opening up a trade profitable to Collie, the railways, and the State. I hope that the Government will give this important matter due consideration before definitely deciding the route.

After having read that letter the hon. member for Collie spoke as follows:—

May I say that I agree generally with the contents of that letter, and as the Advisory Board have advised that the line from Brookton to Kunjinn should be constructed at an early date, I see no reason why deviations should be put forward to meet the Kunjinn people at the present time. If there was a straight line built it would save 10 or 12 miles of railway, and 10 or 12 miles is a large item, and it is also a big item in the question of freights for coal or timber for the fields.

I am afraid it will be a long time before the question of the coal supply for the Bullfinch proposition will ever be a matter for much consideration by this House or even the State. The member for Collie went on to say, "When the Bill is in Committee it is my intention to move an amendment with regard to the deviation." The member for Coolgardie also made some reference, practically a general endorsement of the remarks of the member for Collie. The member for Collie stated

that he was going to make some amendments in Committee as he considered the exigencies of the case warranted. The Bill then went into Committee within a few minutes of the time the member for Collie had made his speech, and in Committee on the Schedule, the member for Collie asked the Minister whether he intended to take full advantage of the ten miles' deviation, or whether he would attempt to remove the twist from the route. That was all the member for Collie said in Committee after declaring on the second reading that it was his intention to move an amendment with regard to the deviation. The Minister for Works speaking in reply on the second reading endeavoured to make it clear that he desired to straighten up the line as far as possible. If there is going to be any opposition to the remarks I am making, I regret that the Minister for Works considers this matter of such little importance that he does not think it necessary to be present. As I have stated, numerous deputations from time to time waited upon the Minister for Works after the passage of the Bill. On the 29th August last the present Minister for Works joined a deputation, and one of the speakers there stated that the Kuminin people were trying to get it where the Advisory Board recommended. They did not mind on which side of the lake it was taken. In reply to that deputation Mr. Daglish informed them as to the probable route that the line would take, and confirmed the wishes of that deputation by practically assuring them that the Advisory Board's route would be the one adhered to. The next deputation is one that took place since the present Minister entered on his duties. In reply to various remarks, the Minister, Mr. Johnson, stated that the Government recognised that there was a large area of first-class wheat-growing land in the locality where the line was asked for. He said he knew the country surrounding Kuminin very well and it was some of the finest in the State, and he was exceedingly sorry that there had been so much trouble over the railway. However, he had decided to build the line as early as possible from

Quairading to Nunagin, and he was going to do it departmentally. It was also proposed to build the line from Wickepin, or the first section of it, to a point in Kurrenkutten, and also the first section of the Yillimining route from Wickepin to Kulinn, but the terminal point had not been fixed. The Minister's reply to the deputation gave them satisfaction. I was present at that deputation, and it is only necessary for me to say that I left the Minister with those ideas impressed upon my mind. A few days later some reference to this question was made in the newspapers, and afterwards the Minister stated that there had been some mistake. I have not with me the copy of the letter the Minister wrote. There also appeared in the *Sunday Times*, at about that time, a letter from a settler in that locality, and a portion of the letter stated—

The present Minister for Works told a deputation from Emu Hill that the Government intended to build the line to a point in Kurrenkutten before they decided which route they would follow, but we do not know when they intend to start. We cannot go on carting 50 and 60 miles for ever; it wastes too much time."

The answer given by the *Sunday Times*—and where they got their information from I do not know—was as follows:—

It is always a pleasure to publish such sensible letters as this, but there is very little to answer in it. The Minister's promise was definite enough that the line would be built to Kurrenkutten right away, and there is no reason to think that the promise will be broken.

The Minister for Works: You know well that the Minister did not say that.

Mr. MONGER: I am sorry for that interjection, but I see no note on this file that the Minister objects to this. I remember the Minister writing to the paper, and I do remember the conversation in which he said that a mistake had been made. If there was a mistake in the report on the part of the typist, or on the part of the shorthand-writer who was present, I think before the Minister sent his reply to the paper, he must have gone

through this report, and I think he would have made some note of it. I do not want to throw the slightest doubt on anything that the Minister has written or said, but I think I am right in saying it is strange, notwithstanding the Minister's letter to the Press, that there is not some memo. on this file with regard to the copy of the notes of the deputation. I admit that a conversation did take place between the Minister and myself after the appearance of the letter I have referred to in the *West Australian*. At that time I had not seen the *Sunday Times* reference. I showed this to the Minister yesterday, and he said "You know better than that. I told you something to the contrary before." I see no remark at all events on the file pointing to that, and I must say that it does appear strange to me that the shorthand-writer who was present when that deputation was received by the Minister should have made so vital an error which those who were present on that deputation considered had been made, because in the course of an interview the next day a member of that deputation practically stated what we see now on the file. Subsequent to that the Minister sent his denial to the *West Australian*. But where did the *Sunday Times* get this information from? The reply I think is a most generous one, and I am in accord with it. They stated "The Minister's promise was definite enough that the line would be built to Kurrenkutten straight away." Where did they get the information from? Would they make a definite statement of that sort without having something of a reliable nature to back it up? We have had examples during the past few weeks of gentlemen who, occupying seats on the Ministerial benches, have been led away; we have had one instance of a pitiable misunderstanding on the part of one who sits on the Ministerial side of the House. And whilst I am not going to say that I have the slightest doubt as to the Minister's intention, yet it does seem strange that wherever there is a vital point which may not be in accordance with the desires of Ministers it is always shown that a mistake has taken place in that one vital point. If the shorthand

reporter—not a shorthand reporter from the Press, but a departmental officer—if the shorthand reporter misinterpreted the Minister's reply to the deputation the Minister has my sympathy. I think hon. members will agree with me that these people who have gone out and settled under the representations made by the previous Government, and on the strength of a plan like this—

Mr. Lander: What is the use of the plan?

Mr. MONGER: Let the hon. member keep quiet for a moment. I suppose somebody has squared somebody else to issue this plan? I might mention that in this locality there must be 200,000 acres of land, and I contend that the bulk of the settlement has recently taken place on the strength of plans of this kind having been furnished by the Lands Department. I am not here to say why the Lands Department thought fit on or about the 25th April last to issue a plan like this unless it was the full intention of the Government to carry out that line as soon as practicable along the route recommended by the Advisory Board. I have mentioned to hon. members the gist of the only deputation received by the Minister; I have mentioned as briefly as possible what took place in Parliament on the second reading of the Wickiepin-Merredin Railway Bill; I have referred briefly to the various promises made by the late Minister for Works as to the route the line would take, and I ask hon. members to consider the petition I have presented and which, although containing only 82 signatures, is representative of as fine a type of back blocks' settler as one could wish to fall in with in any part of Western Australia. When I was out there a few months ago it was my pleasure to come into contact with a lot of young English settlers who have made that part of Western Australia their home. In the course of conversation they said, "Yes, we have struck a bad season. We had hoped to get a little bit of hay to see us through next summer, but it seems we are not going to get it. However, we have come to Western Australia to make it our home,

and we intend to make a success of it if possible. We hope for better luck next season." This is the type of men down there, men who have settled in the district on the strength of the promises made by the late Government to give them railway communication. They ask in this petition that the route recommended by the Advisory Board should be adhered to. And who constituted the Advisory Board? I do not think any hon. member would make the slightest aspersion against any one of the gentlemen who signed that report. I refer to Mr. W. Paterson, Professor Lowrie, Mr. H. Johnston, and Mr. John Muir. Could you get a finer body of men for the purpose of making a recommendation as to the route of a railway? Notwithstanding this there is in circulation a rumour, there is a feeling existing among these people outside that the present Minister for Works is going to give instructions that the line is not to be built in accordance with the Advisory Board's report. Why? Because when the Bill was passing through Parliament there was a difference of opinion as to the advisability of straightening out the route. I have explained the reason why there was the slightest difference of opinion, and now I ask, do we for one moment consider that the question of carrying Collie coal over this railway deserves the slightest consideration at the hands of any section of the community? Do we for one moment anticipate that Collie fuel will be necessary for the requirements of the Eastern Goldfields? I have nothing to say against Collie coal; I would like to see hundreds of thousands of tons of it being used throughout Western Australia. But what I contend is that the points raised by those in opposition last session were based on the desire to assist this Collie coal industry. I say, and I think hon. members will agree with me, that at the present moment we are not taking that into consideration. The feeling has gone out that the Minister intends to deviate from the route recommended by the Advisory Board, and I ask those gentlemen who sit on the Ministerial side of the House whether it is fair and reasonable that power should be

given a Minister to alter a line of railway already agreed to by Parliament?

The Premier: Hear, hear. We have been asking that for years.

Mr. MONGER: Do not interject too much. Is it reasonable to think that the Minister can give to the people of these particular localities a better route, one more in the interests of the people, one more in the interests of Western Australia from an agricultural railway standpoint or any other standpoint—is it reasonable to suppose that the Minister can, on his own initiative, say "I can and will select a better route than that submitted by the Advisory Board?" I am going to ask the House to support me in protesting against any deviation of this line from the route recommended by the Advisory Board and sanctioned by Parliament last session. Let the Minister and his colleagues decide upon men of the stamp of William Paterson, John Muir, and Harry Johnston to make the alterations in the route if any alterations be deemed necessary; then if these gentlemen say, "The circumstances have changed, the conditions in the locality have changed, and notwithstanding our earlier report we consider the route should go in another direction," I shall be satisfied. If instead of taking the whole onus, the whole responsibilities, and the whole of the odium on himself the Minister will refer this matter back to those gentleman who then constituted the Advisory Board—with the exception of Professor Lowrie who has, of course, left the State—I will abide by the decision those gentlemen come to. And I will go further and say that if it be necessary to go back from the recommendations of the Advisory Board the only thing which any person occupying a high and honourable Ministerial position can do under the circumstances is to say "I shall refer the matter to an independent outside body of men in whom not only I but the country generally have confidence." In order to be absolutely formal in accord with the request that consideration be given to this petition, I have formally to move that a select committee

be appointed to consider the route of the Wickepin-Merredin railway, and in doing so I ask Ministers and members to support the route and recommendation of the Advisory Board, and if they cannot send the Advisory Board back again, I ask them to state the reasons why any alteration should be made.

Mr. FRANK WILSON (Sussex): I think the House will readily understand that the only trouble in connection with this matter of the Wickepin-Merredin Railway is that the Minister for Works feels himself bound to some extent by a promise that was given by his predecessor when the Bill to authorise the construction of the railway was in Committee in this Chamber. I am quite sure that the Minister for Works is wishful of constructing the line on a route that will serve the best interests of the greatest number of settlers in that locality, and that he is further wishful, I believe, to construct the railway in accordance with the express wish of Parliament, and I do not think that he or the Premier or any one else desires to do other than mete out justice to all concerned. There is no wish to show any favouritism to any number of settlers over others. We passed a Bill during last session of Parliament authorising the construction of a line from Wickepin to Merredin, and we defined in that Bill the route the line would follow. The schedule of the Bill read as follows:—

Commencing at a point in the Wickepin station yard on the Narrogin-Wickepin railway and proceeding thence in a generally north-easterly direction for about 36 miles; thence in a generally easterly direction for about 34 miles; and thence in a generally northerly direction for about 50 miles and terminating at a point in or near the Merredin station yard on the Northam-Southern Cross railway as more particularly delineated and coloured red on the map marked P.W.D., W.A., 15285.

I admit that ever since the Bill was passed, in view of the promise given by the then Minister for Works, there has been some little doubt as to where that

line should run, and the consequence has been that several surveys have been made—the Minister tells me that five have been made—in order that the then Minister for Works might come to a correct conclusion with regard to the route and with regard to the promise he made to Parliament when the Bill was being passed. Now, let us look into this promise. In January, 1911, when the Bill was being adopted, Mr. A. A. Wilson, the member for Collie, asked that the line should be straightened out. He quoted Mr. John Ewing's letter, which appeared in the Press, a letter which clearly set forth that the line should be straightened out between Wickepin and a point 40 miles south of Merredin somewhere in the vicinity of Emu Hill. The words used by Mr. Wilson bear this out clearly. He wished to have the westerly curve straightened out. The curve the Minister for Works is taking exception to is the curve to the east of the proposed route he thinks it ought to follow. Mr. A. A. Wilson was not making any reference to the curve which the Minister for Works thinks is the one that needs to be straightened out. Mr. A. A. Wilson asked, "Would the Minister state whether he intended to take full advantage of the ten miles deviation or whether on the other hand he would attempt to remove the twist from the route." He said "twist," not "twists." The Minister in replying evidently understood which twist was referred to, for he said he had endeavoured to make it clear that he desired to straighten out the line as far as possible. He agreed that Kunjin would be well served by the construction of the proposed line from Brookton to that place. Mr. A. A. Wilson had used that as an argument also, that the line was going from Brookton to Kunjin, and consequently there would not be much necessity for the curve to the westward about Kunjin on the route under consideration, That was the gist of the whole thing. The people of Kunjin were considered, even if the line were carried to the east of Kunjin instead of tapping it as was first considered. That being so, I think it is necessary to put the matter clearly

before the Minister for Works and he will agree, especially if he inquires carefully into the matter, that in the best interests of the greatest majority of the settlers in that district the line ought to be carried in as straight a line as possible from Wickepin to a point somewhere 40 miles south of Merredin. I remember during my absence in the Old Country this matter was brought before Cabinet and fully considered. There is a Cabinet minute on the file signed by the Acting Premier, Mr. Gregory, and I presume that the late Minister for Works was present on that occasion and desired to get definite instructions from Cabinet in regard to the matter. That minute gave definite instruction in language which is unmistakeable that the survey should be made in a due southerly direction from Merredin 40 miles, and then that it should go in a south-westerly direction to Wickepin. That is all that the petitioners wish to see carried out. The Minister for Works has courteously promised to carry the line a certain distance in this direction; but then he stops and says he will then further consider where the route is to go; and his present feeling, I think, is that the railway should be carried some considerable distance to the west of the salt lake country instead of to the east of it. That is where the difference of opinion comes in. If the line is to be carried some miles to the west of these salt lakes then the whole of settlers, numbering, I believe, 200, to the eastward of these lakes and extending back some 50 or 60 miles will have to cart their produce across the lakes to strike the railway. It might be argued that the same will apply, if the line be constructed to the east, so far as the settlers on the west side of the lakes are concerned; but when it is remembered that we are already pledged to and are constructing a railway from Quairading to junction with the Wickepin-Merredin railway to the north of this district, and that we are already pledged to construct a railway from Brookton through Kunjin to junction with the Wickepin-Merredin railway to the south of this portion of the district, it will easily be seen that any

settlers to the west of these salt lakes are well served by the two railways to be constructed to the north and south of them, and that none of them will be further away from a railway than 10 or 12 miles. If that is so, then I think we are justified in asking the Minister for Works to pledge himself, at any rate, to carry this railway to Kurrenkutten and then round the eastern side of the salt lake country in order that the settlers far to the east of that salt lake country may have the advantage of getting railway facilities, without having to go across the salt lakes, which are impassable in wet weather, or having to go north or south to get around those salt lakes. The argument may be adduced that in doing this we are serving one or two considerable landlords. I know a certain amount of suspicion is cast on the project because of the fact that Mr. Hedges, a member of the House of Representatives, has a large holding to the east of this salt lake country; but I want to point out it is not Mr. Hedges only, but his brothers, and numerous members of his family, who have taken adjoining blocks in that neighbourhood, and they have spent a very large sum of money in developing and improving their land—I think it runs into something like £25,000, the expenditure up to the present time. I know he told me on one occasion that he had 80 men employed in clearing and preparing the land for cultivation. I hope the House will agree with me that a person like that is to be encouraged. These are the sort of men we want to open up the back blocks, men who have the capital, and better still men who have the inclination to invest it in work of this description. So far as I am concerned, provided it is not injuring others, who may have equal claims, notwithstanding they do not hold anything like the same area of land, I am always prepared to assist men of this description who are putting their money into our lands, and bringing forth the wealth of the land for the benefit of the whole country. I hope some notice will be taken by the Minister of the plan which the member for York has placed before the House, and I would

remind hon. members that this plan was issued on the 25th April, 1911, several months subsequent to the passage of the Bill, therefore it cannot be argued that the promise in Parliament was given subsequent to the issue of the plan. The plan was issued by the department, and it showed the route exactly as the member for York has described it. The low lying land due north-east from Wickopin through Kurrenkutten around the east side of the salt lake, and thence northerly to Merredin, was sold as shown on this plan at very fair prices as far as the Government were concerned, and although I believe every settler has got full value for his investment, and will receive full value for the price he had to pay, I do not think we can burke the position that the selections were taken up in good faith that the railway line would run approximately, as shown on the locality plan. I would not have thought so much about the proposed deviation had it not been for the extensive salt lakes, that is the bar. If we are to cut off a large number of selectors who have selected land for a great distance through this country, extending eastwards—they tell me, 60 miles—if we are to cut them off from railway communication by making them cross the salt lakes, which are impassable in the winter months of the year we shall be doing a great injustice to these settlers. Apart from that we shall be acting detrimentally to the best interests of the State, because after all is said and done, if we are to make our State prosperous it will be agreed by all that we must endeavour to make our settlers prosperous first. Let me say in conclusion I am satisfied the Minister for Works, from the conversation I had with him yesterday, is desirous of serving the best interests of the State and the greatest number of settlers. All I ask him to do, is if he has any doubt as to the course he ought to pursue, then to refer this matter to a small select committee, converting the select committee into a Royal Commission without fees after Parliament is prorogued, and let them go fully into the question, take evidence and report to him; or if, on the other hand, he does not care

to take that position I ask him, as the member for York asked him, to refer the matter back to the Advisory Board. Let them once again consider the question, no matter what may be spent over surveys, never mind if there have been mistakes in the past, which are conceded by the member who asked the question in the House during the second reading debate or Committee stage last session, or by the then Minister for Works, it matters not, never mind that. Let us try and get at the true position as we find it to-day. The Minister may be satisfied in the course he is adopting that he is doing the best in the interests of the community at large and doing an injustice to none.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson): I am not convinced that there is any need for further inquiry as far as the Advisory Board is concerned in connection with this proposed railway. Neither do I propose taking up much time of the House in going into the details of this much debated question, but I want to lay this down as my guide, that Parliament is the place to instruct and decide. The member for York refers to the report of the Advisory Board eulogises, and justly so, these departmental officers personally, and commends them for their report. But the member for York failed to point out that Parliament discarded that report, and would not adopt the report submitted by the Advisory Board.

Mr. Frank Wilson: It is in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Advisory Board's report was in the Bill and on the plan submitted to Parliament, but it was because Parliament did not like the Bill and the plan suggested by the Advisory Board that Parliament called on the Government to alter the route. I need not do more than state that the Minister himself did. After he had given the report to Parliament, this was in January, a very short time after the Bill was passed, when all the circumstances were fresh in the mind of the Minister (Mr. Daglish), a deputation waited on Mr. Daglish, representative of those in whose interests the member for

York is bringing forward the motion. Those are the people on the east side of the route as surveyed by the departmental surveyors. According to instructions originally given that line had to be sent as straight as possible between the two points. When the deputation waited on Mr. Daglish, he said—

I wish to say that at present I cannot add anything to what I have said to Parliament. A definite statement was made by me in the House that the first object of the Government would be to get a 1-in-50 grade in this line, and at the same time, while serving the greatest possible number of people and the greatest area of good land, the line would be made as reasonably direct as possible. I do not know that at present it would be possible to say more. I need hardly tell you that my assurance to Parliament must be carried out, and I am not now in a position to say to what extent that assurance would in any given instance affect the interests of the people of Kuminin. I may say that the representations made in Parliament in favour of some reduction in these curves were very strong, and that the promise I gave was one that was very much welcomed by the members of the Legislative Assembly. Of course you will understand that it is impossible on a land plan to indicate precisely where a railway will run.

The Minister had previous to that instructed the surveyors to survey the route in accordance with the promise given to Parliament, and the surveyors were surveying at this time and they were going, as he promised Parliament it should go, direct from Wickepin to Merredin, but the agitation was started, and although there is much on the file in the way of petitions and letters, and representations to the Minister, it is not until August that he starts to make an alteration in those opinions. In August the selfsame Mr. McGibbon, this time with Mr. Hedges and others, to whom he had previously conveyed his decision that he would carry out what he said to Parliament, waited on him, and he then said—

He could easily understand the difficulties they felt they were labouring under in regard to this matter. He wrote to Mr. McGibbon (as stated by him) some time ago, and it was his intention, and is his intention that the contents of that letter shall be carried out.

I cannot find a copy of the letter on the file. The Minister's reply goes on—

That is approximately, allowing for a little straightening of the line as shown on the plans submitted by the Advisory Board.

That little straightening has been causing all the difficulty ever since. He started doing a little straightening, farmers complained, and then he did a little further straightening in another way, and he went on until he got five surveys out. When I became Minister I simply stopped all the surveys. I think one of the first things I did as Minister was to ring up the Engineer-in-Chief to stop the surveys. I afterwards wrote as follows:—

I have already verbally instructed the Engineer-in-Chief to stop all surveys between Merredin and Kurrenkutten and to complete the Quairading-Nunajin line survey.

There was no difference of opinion up to that point, but where he turned around to go into Kurrenkutten the differences of opinion started. I told the engineer to stop from then and complete the survey of the Quairading-Nunajin line. I wrote—

It is to be deplored that so much money has been expended, one could say wasted on the survey of this line, and I would like to read the instructions given for the various alterations made in the survey. If the instructions are on this file, kindly tab them; if they are not, please have them attached. Also please let me know original estimated cost of survey and the actual cost up to date. The stoppage is purely to give me an opportunity to look into this matter.

Then I got his reply as follows:—

I put up herewith the original centre line plan that was submitted to the

House for the Wickepin-Merredin railway, and which is the line that was recommended by the Advisory Board. The survey of the line was commenced in August, 1910, and after we had been at work until January, 1911, and had completed about 50 miles, instructions were issued by Hon. Minister to as far as possible straighten up the line.

Mr. Frank Wilson: How far had it gone then?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: About 50 miles. He continued—

This was in accordance with the promise made in Parliament that so far as engineering considerations would allow, the line would be made a direct one between Wickepin and Merredin. This followed on a letter by Mr. John Ewing which appeared in the *West Australian* on the 16th January, 1911. The straightening up of this line started from about 27 miles from Wickepin. After completing upwards of 60 miles on the new route, instructions were again issued in May for the line to be taken easterly so as to tap Kurrenkutten, the line to then go in a straight line from Kurrenkutten to Merredin. The survey was then completed up to Merredin.

Evidently in May they started to bend the line. The straightening started 27 miles from Wickepin, and they then made a bee line for Merredin. Then in May evidently an alteration was made. The under secretary continues—

On 24th August, 1911, a deputation was received, introduced by Mr. Monger, M.L.A., at which were present Mr. Hedges, M.H.R., Mr. Brown, M.L.A., and Mr. McGibbon, and others interested in the railway. The Minister advised the deputation "that Cabinet confirms the decision allowing for a little straightening of the line as shown on the plans submitted by the Advisory Board," and instructions were given that a survey should proceed almost due south of Merredin for a distance of about 40 miles, then turning south-west to join the original survey. This was confirmed by the Hon. Acting Premier in his minute dated 27th July last.

On 7th September a conference was held between the Hon. Minister for Works, the Minister for Lands, and Mr. Stoddart, Assistant Inspector Engineering Surveys, who was instructed to take an intermediate course between the direct south line and the original survey. The length of this line is approximately 120 miles from Wickepin to Merredin. The original estimate for the survey was £2,500. Up to the present vouchers have been received for £2,977, and it is anticipated that it will require another £400 to meet outstanding liabilities.

Then I simply wrote a minute, "We have spent about £1,000 over the estimate and have not got a survey yet." The survey had cost an enormous amount of money, and the whole expenditure was caused by the fact that the Minister had not carried out the promise he gave to Parliament to straighten the line. The member for York states that the line should be taken round in accordance with the plan marked by the Lands Department, but he forgets that others have got land on the other side on a plan marked with a different railway route.

Mr. Monger: The Minister cannot show a plan such as he speaks of.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must resume his seat.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Apart from the plans altogether, it will be clear to members that if we take the line five or six miles westward we will be taking it away from the people to the east. The whole of this area is populated.

Mr. Frank Wilson: They would be served by the other lines.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They will not be served by the Quairading or Brookton-Kunjin lines. There is a big area between them.

Mr. Frank Wilson: There is only 30 miles between them.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Are these people to cart for 15 miles and Mr. Hedges to have a railway at his back door?

Mr. Monger: On a point of order. In the petition I have presented the name

of Mr. Hedges, or any member of his syndicate, is not mentioned.

The Minister for Lands: Is the hon. member in order in making speeches by way of interjection?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Wherever we put this line, somebody is certain to be 12½ miles from it, and the question is whether we should build it on the route promised by Parliament and carry the line to the east, or whether it is to be carried westward, and the people to the east are to be deprived of it. The only instruction I have as Minister is the instruction given by Parliament, and I am going to take that instruction given through my predecessor, Mr. Daglish. Moreover, I am going to take the instruction, not as interpreted by the member for York or by the leader of the Opposition, but as interpreted by Mr. Daglish himself. When he gave a promise to Parliament he immediately afterwards gave his instruction to the engineers. Those engineers were instructed, after Parliament had expressed its wish, to go as direct as possible to get a line with a one in 80 grade between Wickepin and Merredin. The survey was commenced, and after getting a certain distance on the straight line as promised by Parliament—

Mr. Monger: Will you show that promise was given?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have already read the reply given to Mr. McGibbon and others by the Minister himself. The position is that I am going to carry out what was promised by Parliament, namely, that the line would be straightened as far as possible.

Mr. Frank Wilson: If it is wrong you will not do it, will you?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Parliament said that it was right, and the Government of the day have said that they are going to make inquiries to see if there is anything wrong with the direct route. The engineers say there is nothing wrong, but I have promised to go through the district and meet the people, and see if there is any justification for altering

what was promised by Parliament, namely, a straight line between Wickepin and Merredin. A deputation from Emu Hill waited on me and I replied that I was going to construct the line to the point at which the difference of opinion arose as to its ultimate direction. I said that I would take the line towards Kurrenkutten, but the shorthand notes said to Kurrenkutten; that was wrong. The Press representatives were not there, and they obtained their report from the shorthand notes, and it appeared in the Press that the line would go to Kurrenkutten. When I read that in the Press, I made a statement correcting it. I want to show how unfair the members of the deputation were in regard to my reply. They knew perfectly well that I said towards Kurrenkutten, because I took the plan down and marked the spot at which the line would stop, but because the report appeared in the newspaper that the line would go to Kurrenkutten, they have been hammering at it ever since and trying to make out that I would take it into Kurrenkutten. Even if my statement was wrong they had the map, and on the map I showed exactly where I proposed to take the line, and from which point I was making inquiries as to the ultimate route. There is no need for Parliament to consider this matter any further. A definite promise was given by Parliament, and the late Minister had given definite instructions to the engineers to straighten the line. I take that to be the wish of Parliament, and as far as practicable it will be carried out.

Mr. McDOWALL (Coolgardie): I have occasion to vividly remember the Wickepin-Merredin railway line. When the matter was before the House last session I spoke only a few sentences, but those sentences were so pregnant with meaning, according to the opinion of some of my constituents, that at the last election the only thing they could find to bring up against me was my speech on that occasion. I was supporting the member for Collie in having the line straightened as much as possible, and my words were—

When a line can be constructed which will serve the agricultural districts and

also supply fuel to the goldfields, this dual purpose should be taken into consideration.

My opponent went to the expense of having a special article published in the *Sunday Sun* and a thousand issues of it distributed amongst the Kurrawang woodcutters in my constituency, to prove that I was untrue to the cause of labour, inasmuch as I advocated the construction of this line for the conveyance of fuel to the goldfields during any strike. Notwithstanding the absurdity of talking about building a line within a week or two to interfere with a strike, and notwithstanding the interjection made by the present Minister for Lands on that occasion, it was published in every direction that I advocated this line for the purpose of bringing cheap fuel to the goldfields. In those circumstances I have had occasion to very seriously consider the matter. When I spoke in connection with this project last January I was unaware that Mr. Hedges had property there; in fact, I have heard that for the first time this afternoon. However, I am not interested in who owns property there; that has nothing to do with the question so far as I am concerned. The broad principle with me is that the Wickepin-Merredin line is largely intended to be a main trunk line.

Mr. Heitmann: Purely agricultural; it can never be anything else.

Mr. McDOWALL: The member for Cue is an authority on most questions, especially health, but when it comes to a question of this being only an agricultural railway, I ask him why were 60lb. rails ordered for it?

Mr. Heitmann: It is a waste of money.

Mr. McDOWALL: That is the hon. member's opinion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. McDOWALL: Realising its importance as a trunk line, I supported its being shortened as much as possible. It is a remarkable thing that the leader of the Opposition and the member for York have both overlooked the introductory remarks in connection with this matter. Mr.

A. A. Wilson's speech was extremely brief.

Mr. Monger: He read Mr. Ewing's letter.

Mr. McDOWALL: He only read it in order to show Mr. Ewing's opinion; he did not say that he agreed with it.

Mr. Monger: He did.

Mr. McDOWALL: He only said that he largely or generally agreed with it. If we were to confine the request to the extent the hon. member said, I would bring *Hansard* to show that the late Minister for Works promised the line. I would not advise the hon. member to stick to that line of argument. The hon. member, speaking on the second reading of the Bill, actually said—

I notice on looking at the plan that there are certain twists in the line, and if it is intended to make a connection between the goldfields and the coalfields it is essential that the twists should be taken out.

Then the hon. member went on to quote Mr. Ewing's letter, with which I have nothing to do. It is only the opinion of Mr. Ewing, and does not bear on this particular question. After reading that letter, the member for Collie continued—

May I say that I agree generally with the contents of that letter. And as the advisory board have advised that the line from Brookton to Kunjin should be constructed at an early date, I see no reason why deviations should be put forward to meet the Kunjin people at the present time.

Does the member for York consider that meets with the views expressed in the letter? Then the member for Collie continues—

If there was a straight line built, it would save 10 or 12 miles of railway, and 10 or 12 miles is a large item, and it is also a big item in the question of freights for coal or timber for the fields.

I could go further on, but it is immaterial. The member for Williams also advocated the direct line. Then the Minister for Works spoke on the question, and I think

his remarks are certainly to the point. He said—

I desire to say that the plan submitted is a plan prepared by the advisory board, and is of course subject to survey, and therefore there may be a certain amount of deviation. In this case 10 miles' deviation is provided for. The Government recognise the desirability of, as far as possible, straightening up the line as hon. members desire—

The desire that was expressed by hon. members at that particular period—the desire of hon. members that caused them, after the explanation of the Minister, to vote for the construction of the line. The Minister went on—

The Government themselves desired to make it as short as it reasonably can be made—

He is speaking for the Government; he does not take it on himself—

but the first object in making the survey will be to find, if possible, a 1 in 80 grade. That must be the first consideration in order to have cheap working, and if that consideration can be met while taking a more direct route than that marked on the plan, the more direct route will be adopted.

Not "may," but "will" be adopted.

Since introducing the Bill I have made inquiries in regard to the saving in length to be effected by laying down an approximately straight line. The total saving as compared with the line on the plan submitted would be approximately eight miles, and therefore the length of line would be reduced from 120 to 112 miles. This, of course, would represent not only a saving in freight to the producers, whether of fuel or agricultural products, but would represent a saving in working expenses to the Railway Department and would be of great advantage, especially when it is considered that it would further reduce the distance between the goldfields and, respectively, Albany, Bunbury, and Collie. If this direct route can be adopted the total saving in distance between Merredin and, respectively, Albany, Collie, and Bunbury would be about 71 miles. The total saving in distance be-

tween those places on the route submitted by the advisory board would be about 63 miles. The saving in cost if this direct route is proved practicable would represent somewhere about £12,000.

That is practically what the Minister for Works explained. It shows distinctly and emphatically that it was the intention of the Government to run that line as directly across to the goldfields line as possible. In Committee the Minister for Works made these remarks in reply to the second reading debate, that he had endeavoured to make it clear that he desired to straighten out the line as far as possible. It is emphatic from every point of view that it was decided in the last Parliament that the line should be made to run as directly as possible to the goldfields line. The leader of the Opposition states that no promise of that kind was made. After looking through *Hansard* everyone must realise that that was the intention of the last Ministry, and it seems to me remarkable that the leader of the Opposition should now endeavour to deviate absolutely from what was the intention of his Government at that particular period. I maintain that the file shows lamentable vacillation in connection with the matter, and that the Government were just on a pivot, one might say. When I was attacked on this question in connection with the last general elections I pointed out exactly what I had done, and before one of the largest audiences in Coolgardie I stated that under similar circumstances I would do exactly as I had done on the previous occasion. I was returned and I can only assume that my constituents were satisfied with my action. I have not personal acquaintance with this territory or the people there, but I desire to say that I sincerely hope that considering this is practically a main trunk line with 60lb. rails, and that eventually it will be associated with the goldfields, it should be made as straight as possible.

Mr. LANDER (East Perth): I do not think this is a question that requires very much consideration. We have only to take the opinion of the past Government, and what has been outlined from

Hansard, and we find that there is only one course to follow. We must take the course which was decided upon, and which is recorded in *Hansard*, and that is to run the line direct from Wickepin to Merredin. When this line was under discussion many plans were placed before the people, so as to give them an opportunity of taking up land, and many selected land in close proximity to the route which it was thought would be decided upon. Since then, however, there have been no fewer than five surveys made. So far as I am concerned, I shall give my support towards getting the interests of these settlers properly served.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin): The people of the Great Southern districts learnt with pleasure when the Wickepin-Merredin line was projected that the Government were going to build that important railway along the shortest possible route. It is a trunk line and, whilst it is being to serve the people between Wickepin and Narrogin, it will also be largely used for the conveyance of goods and produce from the coast to the goldfields. Moreover, it will be an important factor in the direction of shortening the distance between the goldfields and the ports of Albany, Bunbury, and Busselton. Of course the Government are running the Yillimining line 25 miles due east of this line, so that all settlers in that district will be within 12½ miles of a railway.

Mr. Monger: Do you disagree with the Advisory Board's report?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I do. I believe in straightening out the line. The hon. member who interjected disagreed with the majority of the report of that board a few days ago when he voted against the construction of the Esperance railway. Reference has been made to serving the interests of an individual named Hedges, and I hope this Government will not take that wealthy man's wishes into consideration. The crowded state of the benches on this side of the House, and the fact that a change of Government took place, was a direct indication of the people's wishes that less consideration than has been shown in the

past should be paid to the desires of people of the Hedges' type. A remark has been made concerning the promise given by Mr. Daglish, and I see that on the file, under date of 21st January, Mr. Daglish wrote the following minute:—

When dealing with the Wickepin-Merredin line in Parliament I promised that so far as it was possible, having due regard to engineering difficulties, I would instruct the surveyors to straighten up this line, and to make it a direct connection between the two termini. I informed the House that the first consideration would be the getting of a favourable grade (1 in 80, if possible), and the next the securing of a line representing the shortest distance between the two points. Please instruct the Engineer-in-Chief accordingly.

That was the promise under which the Bill was authorised by Parliament and I hope that the Government will not depart from that understanding without the utmost possible consideration. This line is going to be a very important one in taking produce to the goldfields.

Mr. Heitmann: What kind of produce?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Everything that the people of the goldfields eat. In the farming districts of the Great Southern we can produce flour, which already goes from those districts to the goldfields at the present time. Then we can send up fruit and all sorts of things.

Mr. Heitmann: The main product will be wheat along the whole of this line.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: At any rate this line will effect a saving of 71 miles between the goldfields and our southern coastal districts, and I hope the Government will keep to the shortest possible route, and not take that which, while possessing the advantage of serving a gentleman like Mr. Hedges, will reduce the saving in distance to 63 miles—unless indeed there are very grave reasons for taking this course which have not hitherto been adduced. A plan has been produced during the debate to-day, showing the railway as surveyed. I am pleased to see that members on that side take some notice of official plans issued by the Lands Department. The other night I

produced an official plan from the Lands Department showing a permanent survey of the Esperance railway put down in 1902, and yet those hon. members who to-day bring forward a plan as a reason why a departure should be made from the course resolved upon by the Government, voted against the construction of the line permanently surveyed in 1902 and shown on the plan of the Lands Department. I hope, if possible, the Government will stick to their intention in regard to the Wickpin-Merredin railway and build it on the route 112 miles long, instead of the route of a length of 120 miles. At any rate I intend to oppose the motion for the select committee, on the grounds that the Minister for Works has promised to visit the district. The Minister's idea is to see the railway built in such a way that it will serve as many of the settlers as possible, and if reasons can be adduced for altering the surveyed route I am sure the Minister will do what is right. For my own part I shall be very much disappointed if the Minister decides to alter the route to one which will impose an extra eight miles on the people of the Great Southern visiting the goldfields, and on the people of the goldfields visiting the coastal districts, and also on the trade passing between the two districts.

Mr. MONGER (in reply) : I understand from the Minister's remarks that it was his intention, before finally deciding upon the route to recommend to Cabinet, to pay a personal visit to the district. Was I right in understanding this to be the intention of the Minister?

The Minister for Works : You have taken the matter out of my hands, and you will now put up with the consequences.

Mr. MONGER : All right. When referring to the request contained in the petition I took special care to make mention of no names, to make no reference to people who might have some little personal axe to grind. I was not surprised to hear the member for Williams-Narrogin, who can never make a kindly speech, can never lose an opportunity

of casting a nasty aspersion at someone—when a young fellow like that—

Mr. SPEAKER : Order !

Mr. MONGER : When the member for Williams-Narrogin holds himself up as a greater, wiser authority than his own respected father, what can be thought of him ? The Minister for Works has a property very near the terminal point of the Quairading-Nunajin railway and in close proximity to wherever this line is to go; whether it goes to the east or to the west of Kurrenkutten it is going to pass pretty close to the Minister's holding. Gentlemen like the Minister for Works do not as a rule make very good settlers. We have heard Mr. Hedges and his partners criticised by the member for Williams-Narrogin. Mr. Hedges has, I think, carried out the conditions under which he took up land in that locality; he has spent his money and if he ultimately makes a loss he is not the man to squeak. But the Minister for Works has 1,000 acres in that locality, 160 acres of which is under homestead lease.

The Minister for Works : No it is not, worse luck.

Mr. MONGER : Then it was. Until I asked a question in the House only three or four days ago the proposition owned by the Minister was held under Section 55. I will take his assurance, although the maps of the Lands Department, and the *Government Gazette* showing the rents paid, do not support him. At all events, until I asked the question with regard to his holding he was the holder of a homestead block, although he never complied with the residential conditions.

The Minister for Works : That is untrue.

Mr. MONGER : Not with the conditions required by the Act. I will admit the hon. gentleman was up there occasionally, and I say he is perfectly justified in availing himself of any privileges of the Act. What I object to is other names being mentioned in the House in such a way that one would think those gentlemen were undesirable

settlers. I say that the gentleman whose name has been hurled across the Chamber has proportionately done considerably more good in the way of developmental work in the eastern portion of the York district than has the Minister for Works.

The Minister for Works: I do not know whether he has done so proportionately.

Mr. MONGER: Yes, it is so. The hon. member holds a block there, and I compliment him on having being generously dealt with by the late Government, who sank a dam on his boundary.

The Minister for Works: On a point of explanation. The dam was put down before I selected, and I got my block after going before the land board.

Mr. SPEAKER: Anyhow the discussion has nothing to do with the motion. While allowing the hon. member every latitude, I desire that he shall get back to the motion.

Mr. MONGER: When other names were mentioned no notice was taken of the digression.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is a reflection on the Chair. Other names were mentioned, certainly, but I have allowed the hon. member latitude in which to refute anything said against Mr. Hedges. The hon. member has spoken at some length on the point, and I have given him more latitude than was allowed to other hon. members. I hope there will be no reflection upon my fairness.

Mr. MONGER: I apologise. Mr. Hedges' name was mentioned so frequently that I thought I would be perfectly justified in giving an illustration from the other standpoint, by pointing to the associations of the Minister for Works with the land. In the course of his reply the Minister distinctly referred to the only reply given by him to a deputation, and he has told the House this afternoon that the reply as interpreted by the shorthand writer conveyed a meaning different from that which he intended.

The Minister for Works: He only made a mistake of one word.

Mr. MONGER: It is strange that whenever the present occupants of the

Ministerial benches make a reply to a deputation, or a reply to a question, they have some sort of an excuse to offer. I have no desire to cast any reflection on the Minister, but the file records that he told the deputation the line would be taken to a certain point, where there was no difference of opinion. A few days afterwards one of the members of that deputation had an interview with the Press, and subsequently the Minister sent to the Press a reply to that interview. This afternoon he said the Press must have had a look at the shorthand notes, and so arrived at their conclusion. One of the deputationists waited on the Press, and on the representations made by that member of the deputation, certain statements appeared in the *West Australian*. The Press never saw those notes to make the remarks the Minister referred to; they were the impressions left upon the mind of that gentleman who formed one of the deputation. And he thought that the Minister did make that direct promise as alleged in the official report recorded on the file.

The Minister for Works: He could not because he was shown the plans exactly where it was proposed to go, and he could not have been misled.

Mr. MONGER: But it was so imbued in his mind that it was the actual reply given by the Minister that he went to the Press and make the statement. I ask the Minister—how did the *Sunday Times* give the reply they did; did they go up and look at the file; did they go to the Minister and ask for information; did they go to an officer in his department and did the officer in the department give the information? I contend they got the information from some reliable source. Who was it? If it was not the Minister how could they give the exact interpretation which would have been placed upon the Minister's promise by myself? If I had been asked by anyone outside to say what the Minister said, I would have said practically the same until after the conversation I had with the Minister when his contradiction appeared in the Press. I ask the Minister in fairness to all concerned to send out a gentleman

conversant with the capabilities of the country, not one to judge from the prospects of the line conveying Collie coal to the Yilgarn goldfields, but one to make a statement on the prospects of that part of the country from an agricultural standpoint. I ask the Minister in fairness to himself and in fairness to his predecessor of a few months ago to send a reliable and uninterested board out to the locality to report, and I ask him to abide by the suggestions that may emanate from such a body. He will be absolutely unfair and have cause to regret it in the future if he carries out any other line than the one laid down by the Advisory Board, and which, with all due respect to members who have spoken against the wishes I expressed in my opening remarks, it was at all events the desire and wish of the majority of Parliament to see carried out. I ask the Minister and his colleagues to give reasonable consideration to the board's report and if it be the intention to deviate from their recommendations to send an uninterested and reliable party to report and advise.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	12
Noes	..	..	..	25

Majority against .. 13

AYES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. A. E. Piesse
Mr. Broun	Mr. A. N. Piesse
Mr. Harper	Mr. F. Willson
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. Wisdom
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Male
Mr. Monger	(Teller).
Mr. Moore	

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Bath	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Collier	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Foley	Mr. Price
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Gill	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Green	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Holman	Mr. Turvey
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Walker
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Helfmann
Mr. Lander	(Teller).

Question—thus negatived.

LOAN ESTIMATES 1911-12.

Message.

Message from the Governor received recommending appropriation for the Loan Estimates 1911-12.

In Committee of Supply.

The House having resolved into Committee of Supply for the purpose of considering the Loan Estimates, Mr. Holman in the Chair,

The PREMIER and TREASURER (Hon. J. Scaddan) said: When the House met this afternoon I conferred with the Leader of the Opposition with regard to the desirability of proceeding with the discussion on the Loan Estimates and Loan Appropriation Bill during this sitting, and he agreed to do so. I then had the Loan Estimates for this year together with Loan Bill, which will be introduced at a later stage, distributed to members in order that they might in the meantime look over them and, if necessary, be ready to discuss them at a later stage. After all there is not a great deal to discuss in the Loan Estimates as presented, because principally they are made up of money that is necessary from Loan Funds for the purpose of completing works already in hand or contemplated in the near future and for which authority has been obtained from Parliament. On page 3 members will find a summary of the money we propose to spend during the present financial year totalling £2,457,082 from General Loan Funds. They will notice that this is an increase of £953,992 on the actual expenditure of last year and an increase of £714,450 on the estimated expenditure for that year. The present amount of £2,457,082 includes no less than £530,584 representing liabilities brought forward from the last financial year and £11,000 recoup to Loan Suspense Account. Members will also notice that the principal increase in expenditure from General Loan Funds is under the heading of Railways. We propose to spend £1,383,845 on railways. This is on new railways and also on Working Railways. It would appear on the face of it to be a very huge sum to spend in

one year, and some members may ask how it will be possible to spend such a sum of money in such a period, but a great proportion of this is expenditure on rolling stock ordered last financial year and now coming to hand. If members will follow me for a moment I shall give them an outline of the amount we are called upon to pay this financial year under the heading of rolling stock on Existing Railways. We have under order no less than 68 locomotives. Ten of these are being built at the Midland Junction workshops and 58 are being imported from Great Britain. The total cost for locomotives will amount to £251,000, which we have to find in this financial year. However that does not complete the charge on Loan Funds. For the completion of this order there will be a balance outstanding at the end of June next of £31,000 to pay for orders that have been placed prior to the present Government taking office. It may appear somewhat astounding that we should have to import and have built in one year no less than 68 locomotives, but as a matter of fact there have been no locomotives procured by Existing Railways since 1902. The number in traffic on the 30th June, 1903, was 316; and what with alterations that have been made to some of the locomotives that had become obsolete, we now have 323, or an increase of only seven in eight years. So members will see that, while we have been adding to our rolling stock in other directions, we have been calling upon the locomotives that we had in 1903 to do all the work without any attempt to add to them; and I am assured that, without the locomotives now coming to hand, we would have some difficulty in coping with the traffic on the railways, owing to the condition our locomotives have got into in recent years through the amount of work piled on them. While that is the case it means an excessive expenditure from Loan Funds during this financial year. I want hon. members to take that view when considering the huge amount of loan money which we are expending. We are building at the Midland Junction workshops four carriages

at a cost of £8,000, and at Rocky Bay 24 carriages are being built at a cost of £66,000, of which £55,000 will be required during the present financial year. That will make a total of 28 new carriages, and the expenditure this year will amount to £63,000. We are building 667 wagons at the Midland Junction workshops at a cost of £132,000, of which £74,000 will be required in the current financial year. Fifty wagons are also being built at Rocky Bay at a cost of £3,000, and 500 wagons are being built at Maylands, at a cost of £66,000, of which £30,000 will be expended this financial year, making a total, which we will have to find this year to pay for these orders by the end of June, of £107,000, leaving £94,000 to find in the next year for the purpose of paying for orders already placed in connection with the construction of wagons. We are building 19 brake vans at Midland Junction workshops at a cost of £25,000, but we will not be called on to find more than £1,000 this year under that heading, leaving an amount of £24,000 to be provided early next year. We are also building coal-boxes, tarpaulins, and sundries at a cost of £10,000, of which £8,000 will be required this year, and corridor and dining cars for the Great Southern railway are contemplated at a cost of £60,000. Members will notice when introducing the Loan Bill that we shall provide an amount under that heading. I may say that the stock which I have just mentioned is all additional, necessitated by additional traffic. Nineteen carriages and 2 brake vans in addition to those mentioned, are being built from working expenses to replace those destroyed by fire at the paint shop. Three carriages from the workshops, and 95 wagons from the workshops, and 50 wagons from Rocky Bay have been delivered since the 1st July last. Members will note, too, that there is a considerable sum on the Estimates under the heading of "Railway" which is shown in detail on page 4, for land resumption in Perth and Fremantle. This amounts to no less than £158,000. Members will recognise that

this is to complete the action taken by the previous Government, which we thoroughly endorse, of repurchasing certain land in Perth in order to enable our traffic to be run with safety to the general public, and with less expense to them as taxpayers. Members will recognise it is not part of the duty or responsibility of the Railway Department to find the money, or even expend it. The land purchase is controlled by the Works Department, and while it is eventually handed over by the Works Department as capital expenditure on the railways, on which they have to find interest and sinking fund, it adds to the total amount being expended on working railways. Again, under the heading "Additions and improvements to working railways" £150,000 is provided, and I will endeavour to explain some of the details in connection with the expenditure of this huge sum of money. We are at present undertaking the regrading of the line between Fremantle and Midland Junction, and during this year we expect to spend £17,000, and by the time the work is completed it will cost £65,000. Again, we are providing further buildings at the Midland Junction workshops on blocks 2 and 3, on which we intend to spend £20,000, leaving an amount of £22,000 to be provided after 30th June next, making a total of £42,000 on the extension of the buildings at Midland Junction. I may say at once I agree entirely with the expenditure under this heading. It is regrettable that the previous Government, and I expressed this opinion last year, did not foresee the necessity of extending the workshops in view of the fact that they were extending the railway system year after year to such an enormous extent. If they had done that we should not have had to send out of the State to place orders abroad for 58 additional locomotives as we had to do last year. I may say too we are providing for machinery £33,000, but only £7,000 will be charged in this year's Loan Funds, leaving a balance of £20,000 to be provided next year. Again, we are making improvements at Geraldton, and this will necessitate a charge this year of

£15,000. Yalgoo and Northern Gully water supplies will cost the department £20,000. We are providing at present marshalling yards at Midland Junction at a cost of £20,000; this year we shall expend £10,000 out of a total of £20,000. We are making improvements at Merredin, which will cost this year £8,000. Fencing generally is estimated to cost the department £3,000 * during the current year, and £3,000 almost immediately after 30th June next. We are providing a telephone line between Northam and Merredin, but that will not be a charge in this financial year, still we are making provision in the Loan Act for £3,000 for that work. We are providing camps for fettlers on the lines recently opened, or nearly constructed, and this present year that will cost £3,000; the total cost of the work contemplated being £6,000. Members will note, too, that the working railways have a timber mill at Dwellingup. They have now under construction another mill, and the second mill he known as No. 2, which will cost, including machinery and works generally, £21,000, and this ought to be found during the present financial year. Other works not particularly mentioned will cost £16,000, or a total in round figures of £140,000, which we are providing on this year's Loan Estimates. There are other works contemplated which we have decided must stand over for the present, but they are all essential, and I may mention them in order that members will see we are not overlooking the necessity, but there is such necessity in other directions to stop these being carried out. The works which are to be carried out, and which are necessary are rolling stock and necessary additions to opened lines, but we have had to allow them to remain over until another year. We contemplate making a start in some directions mentioned after June next. We are going to provide £10,000 in providing a loco. depôt between West and East Perth, and also the cost of the Melbourne-road bridge. The total cost under that heading is £225,000. Authority has been issued, and the Government have to find the money; we are only finding

£10,000 under that heading this year in order that some of the works may be taken in hand at the same time as the re-grading. That will facilitate both, and will be less cost to the State eventually. That will leave a new sum to be provided on the Estimates next year for the purpose of completing the work. Again, I believe approval has been obtained for the expenditure in connection with central offices. It is essential that new central offices should be erected in Perth if the scheme approved by our predecessors in connection with the resumption of certain land there is going to be completed, and it will run into an estimated cost of £75,000. Then we propose to extend block No. 1 at Midland Junction workshops, and to extend the foundry there. This will cost £61,000. Water supplies on our railways is a very heavy charge at present, and we propose to provide £30,000 in the new Loan Bill, which we shall commence to spend after 30th June. Other lesser works are anticipated to cost £22,500, but it is necessary they should stand over for the time being. Members will find under the heading of rails and fastenings a sum of £150,000 is provided. I may explain that only £48,000 of this amount is required for the working railways, the balance being absorbed in the construction of new railways, which have been authorised by Parliament already. In connection with the rails and fastenings, I may explain the bulk of them are required for the purpose of relaying the line to Kataning. The rails are already on the ground; the cost will be £30,000. Then there is Geraldton station yard, £5,000, a line to the timber mill at Dwellingup, £4,000, which also includes sidings, and works in other directions £9,000, making a total of £48,000, leaving a balance of £150,000 for rails and fastenings on new lines. The total estimated requirements for the present year on the working railways are as follow:—Additions and improvements to open railways £150,000; land resumptions £158,000; rails and fastenings £48,000; rolling stock £430,000, making a total of £786,000 under that heading. The balance of the vote for

railways, items 11 to 46 included, is £597,845, and is required to continue the construction particularly in agricultural districts, water conservation in connection therewith, and this will amount to about £43,500. I regret we find that while the previous Government were building railways and handing them over to the working railways they were not taking into account the necessity of providing water supplies before handing these railways over, with the result that the railways are called on to find a considerable amount of capital from Loan Funds for water supplies along the lines. I know this. We are assured by the working railways that the provision for water supplies for railway purposes on these lines is totally inadequate, and last year all that was expended in that direction was £6,940. This year we are called on to provide no less a sum than £43,500. I am stating now the opinion we have received from the working railways. They are by no means satisfied with the manner in which the new railways have been handed over to them, particularly in connection with the water supplies.

Mr. Frank Wilson: And they never will be.

The PREMIER: The hon. member must recognise this, that in some districts on some of the new lines one-third of the load carried by the railways is made up of water, not for settlers but for the working railways themselves; one-third of the load, that is all over new lines, for the purpose of providing water for the railways to operate.

Mr. Frank Wilson: Because the dams are empty now.

The PREMIER: That does not matter. This expenditure is provided for conservation of water when they do not get rain. No provision was made by our predecessors in that direction.

Mr. Frank Wilson: That is wrong.

The PREMIER: We have to provide £43,500 under that heading. I have explained already the great bulk of the expenditure this year in connection with the railways, in reference to new railway lines and additions to existing railways. Provision for extending the workshops,

providing rolling stock and making additions and improvements to opened railways, these total £1,383,845. I might explain, too, that under most of these headings there is an increase this year as compared with the expenditure last year, and it will be found that under the heading "Development of Agriculture" there is a considerable increase, mainly owing to the dry season in some portions of our agricultural districts. At a later stage the Minister for Lands will be able to tell this Committee what we are doing in the way of assisting those of our settlers who are suffering owing to the dry season experienced this year, and to prevent those who have been induced to take up land from leaving their holdings and seeking work in the towns and other places. We are providing a very large sum of money on the Estimates to assist them to remain there and prepare their next year's harvest, and while that will be a benefit to them it will also be a benefit to the State by giving us a much larger harvest next season. In view of those unfortunate circumstances, we have taken what I might call a bold step to provide a huge sum of money for this purpose. The details of the expenditure are shown on page 5, and the summary shows how the Government intend it to be expended. I cannot do better than draw the attention of members to the details and the summary at the back of the Estimates, which will give them some information in regard to our proposals for loan expenditure during the current year. There is one item, however, under the heading of "Development of Agriculture" that I should like to make some remarks upon, and that is the expenditure of £85,000 for the purpose of bringing in agricultural immigrants. I want to assure members of this Committee that the present Government are of opinion that we can induce people to come to Western Australia to assist us in opening up our agricultural districts, but, whilst that is our opinion, I regret to say that those now sitting in Opposition, when they were in power, used the vote provided on the Loan Estimates for the purpose of bringing agricultural im-

migrants into the State, to bring out other than agricultural immigrants. Moreover, at the very time when we were complaining about the influx of town workers, who were obtaining employment on our railways, and when the then Ministers were denying that charge, the records show that a direct instruction had been given to the Agent General to induce railway workers to come to the State.

Mr. Frank Wilson: Read the instruction; I know nothing about it.

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition says he knows nothing about it, and I am not a bit surprised; the way in which he allowed the Immigration and Tourist Department to carry on is no credit to him, or his colleague, the late Colonial Secretary. The Premier was so little concerned how the money was expended, that he allowed the Immigration Department to communicate direct with the Agent General on all such matters, and thus he is in a position to-day to say he knows nothing about this instruction. Certainly he knew nothing about it, because he had absolutely no control over the department. There is not the slightest doubt that a great deal of the money provided by Parliament for the introduction of agricultural immigrants was expended without warrant from Parliament, for the great bulk of immigrants who have been brought into the State never had any intention of becoming farmers, or going into the agricultural districts. In addition to that, at the request of the Railway Department, the Immigration and Tourist Department sent to the Agent General in London to ask that he should induce railway workers to come to Western Australia, and assured them that there was plenty of work for them on our working railways. Not only that; they were also inducing artisans to come to the State under the disguise of being agricultural immigrants, and, at the same time, they were telling people that it was necessary to have a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the advisability of importing artisans into the State. In fact, they did appoint a Commission, to cover up their tracks. But, at last, the day has arrived

when the people have an opportunity of seeing what has been done under the guise of attracting agricultural immigrants to Western Australia. As soon as the present Government found out what was going on, we took the first opportunity of telling the Agent General that there was no opening in this State for railway workers, and that all such workers who were required could easily be obtained within the State. As a matter of fact, there are many more applications for work than can be dealt with at the present time. We are not responsible in any regard for the expenditure of this £85,000 this year, and I want hon. members who may object to the measures adopted by our predecessors in connection with immigration, to understand that we have to keep faith with those whom the previous Administration had entered into arrangements with and we must carry out the contracts entered into by the Agent General in behalf of the Government. A certain number of contracts have been entered into, and since 1st July we have received 2,375 assisted immigrants, 2,255 nominated immigrants, and 295 domestic servants, making a total of 4,925 immigrants who have arrived in the State since July 1st. As far as we know, the number of nominated and assisted immigrants who have been approved, but have not yet arrived in the State, is 4,926, but the latest advices from England are some weeks old.

Mr. Foley: Are they all from the British Isles?

The PREMIER: Yes. Several weeks have elapsed since information was received of the number of assisted passages approved by the London office, but we estimate that 5,500 approved immigrants will arrive in the State during the balance of this financial year.

Mr. Frank Wilson: Hear, hear.

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition is desirous of applauding that fact, but he did not tell the country that, at the time when the Colonial Secretary was denying the statements in regard to the overstocking of the labour market, his officers were struggling very hard to find work for immigrants, even though

they were putting them into billets at the expense of old residents in the State. They even went so far as to provide relief works for immigrants.

Mr. Frank Wilson: When was that?

The PREMIER: It was this year: since July last.

Mr. Frank Wilson: Not since I came back. Where were the works? Were they cracking stones? What were they doing?

The PREMIER: I do not know what they were doing. All I know is that the hon. member's colleagues were put to their wits end to find work which would absorb the immigrants, who were becoming a burden in the metropolitan districts, and it is on record that the Government did find work for them.

Mr. Nanson: Where are the relief works?

The PREMIER: The hon. member will get all the relief works in time. Does the leader of the Opposition deny it?

Mr. Frank Wilson: You are making the assertion. Go on.

The PREMIER: I am making an assertion; is it denied? If it is denied, I will bring proof of it.

Mr. Frank Wilson: Go on; bring your proof.

The PREMIER: Moreover, the late Government also established country agencies, but they practically restricted those agencies to providing work for immigrants, and they paid agents 5s. for each job they obtained for immigrants, but they were not prepared to find anything for residents who had been 40 and 50 years in Western Australia. It is that differentiation that we complain of. It has been denied, time after time, by Ministers, when this accusation has been made, but, to-day, the proof is to be found in the various departments that what we asserted was actually being done. I want to say that it is not desirable to bring so many immigrants into the State as we have been obtaining in the past, but we have taken up the attitude that in order to be fair, not only to this State but also to the people in the old country, we should keep faith with the contracts entered into by the Agent

General in the name of the previous Government. Thus it is we have to find this sum of £85,000 this year for agricultural immigration. We believe that next season will be an average one in Western Australia, and, if that is the case, we can absorb a greater number of agricultural immigrants than we can obtain during the next few months, because we are easing off a bit by bringing out only those who have been contracted for, and are not entering into any new contracts just at present. We have also made it clear to the Agent General that the class of immigrants we require are those who will go into the country and work in the agricultural districts, and I have expressed the opinion, on behalf of this Government, that, provided the Agent General is certain that the immigrants do belong to the agricultural class, we can absorb all he can send out. Immigrants must be clearly informed that this Government will not encourage them but will discourage them from finding work in the City; that we have sufficient town workers already, and that if we become short of them we will take steps to notify the workers in England and ask them to come here. We have had repeated evidence of where men who had built up their homes in the City, and in other industrial centres, have been put out of employment and a few days afterwards their places have been filled by immigrants, whilst the displaced local workers have had to break up their homes, leave their wives, and go into the country. We are not going to encourage that sort of thing, and I have taken the opportunity of asking the Agent General to make it clear to those people who are desirous of coming here, and whom we are desirous of welcoming, that there is plenty of work in the country, but they must go into the country if they want assistance. We are fully justified in doing this. I have no objection to a tradesman of any class coming to Western Australia if he desires to do so, but I do object to him coming at the expense of the general taxpayer, and entering into competition with the industrial workers whose money has been utilised to bring the immigrants here.

Mr. Frank Wilson: Are you stopping the nominations as well?

The PREMIER: No; but we are taking a little care in regard to the nominations we are endorsing. We are preventing a few grooms and cooks for hotels coming out.

Mr. Harper: They are all wanted.

The PREMIER: The hon. member may want them, but there are cooks wanting work.

Mr. Harper: There are not many of them.

The PREMIER: We have commissioned the Honorary Minister (Hon. W. C. Angwin), a gentleman who has never yet raised his voice in opposition to immigration of the right kind, to go carefully through all these nominations, and when he is satisfied he will approve of them; we are approving of them practically every day, but it is for the purpose principally of getting country workers and of bringing out the wives of those who have already been assisted into the State. The late Government were so interested in the welfare of the immigrants as compared with the residents of the State that Mr. Connolly, the late Colonial Secretary, issued instructions—these would not be known to the then Premier, of course—that an officer was to go to the Labour Bureau—

Mr. Frank Wilson: What is the date of it?

The PREMIER: This year. An officer was to go to the Labour Bureau, look over the list of positions vacant, and pick out those suitable for immigrants prior to a batch arriving.

Mr. Frank Wilson: What is wrong with that?

The PREMIER: Nothing is wrong with that at all. Having expended the sum of £10 of the taxpayers' money for every immigrant man, woman, and child, introduced into the State, are we also, when they arrive, going to give them preference of employment over local workers? As far as the country workers are concerned, they will get exactly the same treatment as any other men in this State. I will not show any preference to the new arrival, or anyone else. We will assist

him to recognise that in Western Australia we have magnificent opportunities, but we will not assist him to loiter about the Esplanade, and seek employment in the hotels, where they want cheap labour, or get work upon the railway system and elsewhere, or in the industrial centres, and cause old residents to go out into the country. I only wanted to explain that, while we are favourable to getting all the assistance we require to work our industries, we will take care that these people come out under no misrepresentation. Once having arrived in the State, the Government will do everything to make them satisfied, and keep our own residents satisfied as well. Shipping provision has already been made for some time to come to bring out immigrants at the rate of 800 per month; this will mean 9,600 a year, and, at the rate of £10 per head, it will mean an expenditure of £96,000 per annum. Further tentative arrangements have been made for persons desirous of emigrating to Western Australia during the next three years, and these have been made because it is anticipated that the Orient Company will not be able to carry as many in the future as they did in the past. We are not, as a government, prepared to stand by this position for many years, and using loan moneys to bring out immigrants. It may be reproductive, but, in any case, it is not a fair charge against loan funds, and I believe as time goes on we will get the opportunity of adjusting our methods of finance, and then we shall be able to find money from revenue for the purpose. Unless we can do that, we are not justified in finding loan moneys for that object. It will be seen that on page 5, Item 82 is for the purpose of inducing domestics to come to the State. We are getting a great number of domestics, and my opinion is that £7,000 will not be anything like sufficient to cover the cost in that direction, but, as these moneys are lump sums, there is no great check kept upon that expenditure. We are giving attention to that question, and I believe we will be able to get all the immigrants we require, of the proper type, under the altered system, and that it will give satisfaction to both immig-

rants and the people of the State. I have been pestered, during the last few months, by a few immigrants—not many—who have been disgusted at what they term the misrepresentation under which they were induced to come to the State. In one case I went to the extent of providing a fare for a man and his wife to put them on to a holding, expecting that that would be the last I would hear of them. It was only last week though, and after the man had been there for a few days, that he demanded that a house should be built for him on his holding, under the Workers' Homes Bill. I pointed out to him that we had not yet passed the measure, and that moreover we were not desirous of building homes for men until they could come under the term of "worker," and that this man had not yet done so.

Mr. Frank Wilson: He was a settler.

The PREMIER: Yes, he was a settler; he used to go and settle on the doorstep of the office of my friend opposite for a time. Now I have got rid of him. And he was a nominated immigrant, too. However, I have disposed of him successfully this time. I do not propose to explain the details with regard to the vote for the development of agriculture, because the Minister for Lands, who is acquainted with all the facts, will refer to the matter at a later stage. Members will recognise, however, that there is a considerable increase, and, as I stated, it is largely due to the assistance that we are giving to agriculturists in the dry districts, and I am sure there is not a single member who will complain about that. Under the heading of Development of Goldfields and Mineral Resources we are also showing a large increase over last year, and the Minister for Mines will probably be able to justify this additional vote by the fact that our goldfields were greatly neglected by our predecessors. A great proportion of the vote will be required to provide water supplies in some of the towns which have been asking for them for years. The total amount is £112,000, which is an increase of £63,000 over the vote of last year. I do not think that hon. members will require me to give any details; they are shown on the summary at the back of

the Loan Estimates. Harbours and Rivers will require an expenditure of £255,000, which is practically £100,000 in excess of last year, but I think hon. members representing the North-West constituencies, now sitting on this side, with the member for Kimberley on the other side, will be able to justify the action of the Government in doing the work in the North-West which it is proposed to carry out, and which is essential, if we are to continue to develop the trade between the North-West and Fremantle. This undoubtedly, has been neglected in the past. We do a big trade with the North-West, and we hope to do a good deal more, and we have decided that the expenditure of the money shall be confined to putting the harbours into proper order, and providing facilities for shipping.

Mr. Price: Albany has been neglected; you have not included it.

The PREMIER: The Minister for Works informs me that the excess this year as compared with last year's expenditure amounts to no less than £40,000 in the North-West alone, and it will be devoted to doing what is absolutely essential, not in the nature of new works, but works which have been asked for for years past.

Mr. Price: Albany has been asking for some consideration which has not been granted.

The PREMIER: The hon. member will see that we have not neglected Albany altogether.

Mr. Price: Where are you allowing for Albany?

The PREMIER: On the summary at the back of the estimates. However, I am ready to admit that from what has been placed before the present government, and before previous governments as well, Albany is not comparable with the North-West, so far as shipping requirements are concerned.

Mr. Price: Is it to be compared with Bunbury and Busselton?

The PREMIER: We are committed to this expenditure in the North-West. I do not propose to go into details, except to say that of this amount of £255,000 £129,000 is being spent at Fremantle,

£75,000 on the dock and slip, and £54,000 on the harbour works. The details of expenditure under that heading are shown in the summary; the balance is provided for harbours and rivers generally, and lighthouses. For the Bunbury Harbour Works we are providing £25,000. The greater part of this balance will be required to effect necessary repairs in the North-West. Under the heading of Water Supply and Sewerage we are anticipating an expenditure of £105,730 during the present financial year. Of this amount £90,000 is in connection with the Sewerage system of Perth and Fremantle. We hold that while pushing on with the main drains in connection with the sewerage it is essential that we should also push on with the reticulation, in order that we may be able to obtain some revenue, for the purpose of providing interest and sinking fund on the capital expended. It is, in my opinion, a standing disgrace that we have had septic tanks built at East Perth and Fremantle, and in full working order for the last five years, and that they have not earned a single penny of revenue. In Fremantle, the tank requires two men to look after it, and to-day not a single drain is connected with it.

Mr. Frank Wilson: You want more men in the country.

The PREMIER: We have no difficulty in getting men to do work in connection with sewerage; we could double the work, and still find the men. Hon. members will see, if they look at the return which was presented when I introduced the Revenue estimates, it is costing this State £20,000 per annum for interest and sinking fund on the money we have already sunk in our sewerage system, and we have received in revenue something like £100 during the year. That is a condition of affairs that should not be permitted to exist very long. We are determined to do all the work necessary, and to expend the money so that it shall return revenue to the State to provide interest and sinking fund on the capital expended. It will be noticed that there is a reduction in the vote under the heading of Roads and Bridges. On Item 77, new roads and bridges in country and

goldfields districts, including feeders to railways, we are providing £30,000. We have made a decrease on our country expenditure from loan, and we propose to continue that policy until in the end we will not require to spend any more from loan on such works. We have no faith in the expenditure of loan moneys on roads and bridges, believing that it should be charged against Consolidated Revenue. Under the heading of "Sundries" we are providing £100,000 for public buildings. This is principally made up of schools in various parts of the State. Under existing conditions we are not able to find sufficient money from revenue to keep pace with the requirements of new districts opened up, and as we are determined that the children in the country districts shall have reasonable educational facilities, it becomes necessary for us to have recourse to Loan Funds, even at the risk of being charged with breaking our faith on the point of providing these facilities from revenue instead of from loan. "Salaries and Departmental" are based on the same system as in previous years, and amount to £115,937. As a matter of fact these are really based on expenditure from Loan Funds in the various departments. I do not consider it necessary to say any more in introducing the Loan Estimates for the current year. The fact that we have not slashed the pruning knife through these Estimates is evidence that at least the present Government have just as much faith in the possibilities of the country as have our friends opposite, and moreover, gives the lie direct to the assertion made during the recent elections that the Labour Party was a non-borrowing party.

Mr. Frank Wilson : It is in your platform.

The PREMIER : No. If it were possible the Government would like to do all its works from revenue; but it is not possible, and I cannot see any likelihood of being able to reduce the expenditure from Loan Account for the next four or five years if we are to provide for facilities in certain districts which for years past have been neglected by our

friends opposite. I want hon. members and the country to understand that there will be a big charge on Loan Account for the next few years. I have much pleasure in introducing the Loan Estimates for the current year, and I hope members will recognise that the large increase is due to the fact that a great number of orders previously given are only now coming in, and the money must be found. Particularly is this so under the heading of railways. I have pleasure in moving the first vote, namely, Departmental £115,937.

The CHAIRMAN : In order to afford hon. members an opportunity of discussing any question they wished it was his intention to put each vote separately.

Vote—*Departmental*, £115,937 :

Mr. FRANK WILSON : When the Premier had consulted him as to whether an adjournment of the debate would be required, it was understood that the Premier was merely going to deal with the Loan Estimates from a financial point of view, and, in consequence, the privilege of requiring an adjournment was waived in order that we might go right on and try to get the Estimates through to another place without delay, and so fall in with the desire of the Government to finish the session this week. However, the Premier had occupied at least half his time in making an attack on the late Government's immigration policy, and he (Mr. Wilson) would be perfectly justified if he were to ask for an adjournment in order to refresh his memory by looking up particulars with a view to making an effective reply. The Premier could never get on his feet without having a cut at someone, if not his predecessors in office then some among his own followers, with the result that a good deal of unnecessary heat was frequently imported into the debates. He (Mr. Wilson) was heartily glad that the late Government had committed the present Government to the immigration policy for, at any rate, the next twelve months. For the Premier to decry the immigration policy which had built up Western Australia was absurd, and would carry no weight with the people. What were the Eastern States,

and indeed all other outposts of the British Empire doing? With one accord they were seeking to acquire population. Wherever one turned in the Eastern States it was the main object of the Government, whether Liberal or Labour, to secure immigration from the mother country and the countries of Europe. It was amusing to contrast the attitude of the present Administration on this point with that of the Federal Government. We had the High Commissioner, Sir George Reid, in London to-day, urging immigration and devising new plans for bringing the attractions of Australia under the notice of the people of the old country. We had had the Prime Minister himself, during his recent visit to the mother country, confessing the necessity of immigration for Australia, and we had that hon. gentleman's colleague endorsing his action in advising miners to come out here and participate in the mining industry of Australia. As against that, we had the parochial representatives opposite who could not see beyond the Trade-Hall, nor beyond the assertion that because there were a dozen men out of work who would not or could not work, we must not bring any workers here. He would protest against such an attitude. He had looked through the report of the recent Royal Commission and found that, whereas every employer giving evidence had brought proof to show that he was short of men, on the other hand the secretaries of the various labour organisations had declared that there was any amount of labour. Where would Canada have been to-day but for her immigration policy, which was responsible for the absorption of five or six hundred thousand people every year? The natural result of this was more railways and more works, opening up greater avenues of employment for every man brought into the country. He was happy in the knowledge that the Premier's hands were tied for the next twelve months, if not for a little longer, by reason of the fact that the late Government had entered into contracts with the shipping companies, and that arrangements had been made to bring out nine or ten thousand people.

He was only sorry that the number was not nineteen, or even ninety thousand. If it had not been for that, according to the Premier's own declaration the immigration policy would have been immediately closed down upon altogether. As it was, the Premier was going to do his best to curtail it. It was not likely that the people of the country would support a policy of that sort. It only required a little more time for the Premier to get tangled up still further in his financial proposals, and to put the brake on and stop this influx of humanity, and the very people who had put the Premier into power to develop the resources of the country would be found dragging him down from his pedestal and sending him back to the oblivion whence he had come. The Premier had told us that notification had been sent to the Agent General to the effect that there was no opening for railway workers. Only a little while ago the same hon. gentleman in reply to a deputation had declared that the difficulty in regard to railway construction was the want of men and material.

The Premier: I was talking about working railways, traffic men.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: If the Premier would bring in a proposal to import a couple of thousand navvies at the State's expense he would be doing good service to the country. But the Premier was always going to do something that had never been done before, something neglected by his predecessors. It was cheering to hear the figures the Premier read out in this respect, because it proved conclusively that about one-half of the immigrants were nominated. It was gratifying to know this from the Premier's own lips, for it was conclusive evidence that the country was not such a bad place for the new comer as the Premier would make out. When we found that those who had come here in recent years were sending for their relatives and friends—

The Premier: That is not correct.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: It was correct.

The Minister for Mines: Employers all over the State are sending home for them.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: It was conclusive evidence that those who had al-

ready come here were doing well. He would resent the insinuation that the late Government had not taken due precautions in regard to issuing instructions to the Agent General. The Premier had told us that definite instructions were sent Home to import railway men, but he (Mr. Frank Wilson) had interjected that he knew nothing about such instructions, and in fact he did not. Then the Premier had retorted that the blame rested on his (Mr. Wilson's) shoulders because he really ought to have known or ought to have made it his business to know. One could venture to think it was now quite the ordinary thing that the Premier was carrying out the very same policy, and also that he did not read all the correspondence from his office to the Agent General with regard to immigration matters.

The Premier: I see it all.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: The Premier would be doing nothing else if he read all the correspondence that went to the Agent General on this matter. There was an immense amount of detail that must be written. There was an immense amount of detail on Treasury matters even in the Premier's own office that he could not see. When the Premier made charges of this description one would like him to bring the letter and read it to the Committee.

The Premier: It is here; shall I read it?

Mr. FRANK WILSON: If the Premier would pass it over he would read it. Were we to condemn the whole system because the Premier said there was a letter which asked for a certain number of railway servants? He was bound to admit that he was prepared to bring in railway servants if the Commissioner of Railways said he had not sufficient hands; in fact he was prepared to bring artisans in. As shown by the evidence of the Royal Commission there was a scarcity of artisans in nearly every avenue of employment in Western Australia. Everyone in touch with the industries of the State must have been convinced of the shortage of labour, at any rate to within a few months ago.

What the result of the policy of the new Ministry would be on the industries of the State one did not know; but if a course of restriction in this direction and of discouragement so far as immigration was concerned, was pursued, we would very soon have that unemployed difficulty to face which the Premier claimed existed in the State six or seven months ago. Then we had the complaint about agencies in the country. Of course agencies had been established in the country, agencies of the immigration bureau; and what for? In order that the immigrants should be got out of the town as soon as they arrived in the State and sent into the agricultural districts, thus enabling the agriculturists to get the labourers they required for their farms. It was a proper provision. The late Government would have been lacking in their duty if they had not made provision of this description; and, notwithstanding some points upon which perhaps the Premier could find fault, yet in the aggregate the result of the work of these agencies had been beneficial and successful in the extreme. The Honorary Minister had a nice task thrust upon him by the Premier, to have to go through all the nomination forms.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I see every one of them.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: No one doubted it. The hon. member was the most conscientious member of the Government and would burn the midnight oil and read through every nomination application, but he would know a jolly lot about it when he had finished, just about as much as the Premier would know of the correspondence of the Colonial Secretary to the Agent General on immigration matters. One could picture the Honorary Minister sitting at his task, wearied and haggard with a bundle of these immigration forms—"John Jackson, 23 years of age, worked 3 years on a farm, agricultural labourer, has had some experience in plumbing, nominated by his uncle." And because John Jackson's little experience of plumbing had been put on the nomination paper, the Honorary Minister would put his pen through

it. John Jackson must not come here because he might have had some little experience that would possibly allow him to enter into competition with a trades union. Then one could see the Honorary Minister getting hold of a paper in which a youth had been nominated and the man who had nominated him was very cunning. The nominator had said "Yes, he is my nephew, I want him here. It is true he is a blacksmith, but he will make a dashed good farmer, and his blacksmithing knowledge will be all the better when he comes to me to my farm;" but of course, knowing that if he put on the application form that his nephew was a blacksmith he would have no hope of getting assistance for a blacksmith to emigrate, and remembering that the youth had worked for six months helping with cows, he had put on the form "farm labourer, experience on dairy farm." And the Honorary Minister would read this and put his initials on it, and in would come the young fellow. This was the supervision, and all the supervision the Honorary Minister could have over these application forms for nominated passages. The proper system and the one that had been adopted by the late Government was that the Agent General and his officers in London were made responsible for these people and had to examine the nominated immigrants and pass them. It did not matter if we did get a few extra blacksmiths in the country as long as they came out to the farms. Men who had practical knowledge as carpenters or blacksmiths or in any other skilled occupation were the best men, as they made the best selectors and settlers on the agricultural lands. But we had in Western Australia a crowd of men who had been pampered and spoon-fed until they were afraid of the slightest competition. They contended that we must not have new blood from the Old Country. They knew that the men who came in had just left great industrial centres and would be up to date, and that if they came out here it would be "God help us, our occupation is gone." If a dozen blacksmiths came into the country the union would be up in arms, afraid for

their occupations, afraid for their employment. The sooner there was competition brought amongst these men the better it would be for Western Australia, and we would get a better class of men and a better class of work from them.

Mr. Heitmann: Do you mean that the Australian workman is not as good as the English workman?

Mr. FRANK WILSON: No. The main complaint of the unions was that they did not want the competition of the English workers.

Mr. Heitmann: You gave them preference.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: Never any preference at all! If we brought a number of immigrants into a new country, say 3,000 per annum as agricultural labourers, and another 3,000 nominated by their friends, we would surely get out of the 6,000 some who would remain in the populous centres; but if we made all arrangements to send them out back, as the late Government had done, to the agencies to find them employment in agricultural pursuits, which it was believed the Premier was now going to stop, the country could not suffer much harm, and the few who did remain in the metropolitan area would not do much harm to their fellow workers. At any rate a Britisher whether he be under the Australian flag, under the South African flag, under the New Zealand flag, or under the Canadian flag, whether he be born in the Motherland or in any one of the British Dominions, need never be afraid of holding his own with his brother workmen no matter from what portion of the British Empire they came. We saw by the evidence taken before the Royal Commission that half a dozen bricklayers were out of employment. The attitude taken up was that because half a dozen bricklayers were out of employment another man must not be admitted into the State, yet we knew as a matter of fact that buildings could not be put up in Western Australia for want of bricklayers.

Mr. Munsie: For want of bricks.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: Then we should bring in the men to make the bricks. If we were short of railway con-

structors and navvies, we should bring them in; when we were short of passengers on the railways we should bring in settlers and put them on the land. Every time let the thing go on, and not let the progress of the country be stopped because we were afraid of a little competition. We would never have a prosperous community or an advanced community in the State if we were afraid of a few immigrants a little above the actual requirements. There was no fault to find with due supervision, but one found fault with the cry of stinking fish which had been raised so strongly through the mouth-piece of the trades unions within the last twelve months, and one could not pass this phase of the question without again drawing attention to the scurrilous emanation from the pen of Mr. McCallum which went forth to the Motherland as a most slanderous warning to our brothers in the old land not to come here because we were overstocked.

Mr. Swan: You did not deal with him.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: No, but he would have dealt with him, and he would have liked to deal in a similar way with those who aided and abetted Mr. McCallum.

Mr. Swan: We did not let you.

Mr. Lander: Remember the third of October.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: One remembered the third of October very well. He had good reason to remember it and good reason to remember all that had become public since the third of October—the underhand methods that had been used to bring about that result, the misrepresentation that had been made right throughout the length and breadth of this country with regard to himself and his colleagues; and he was satisfied that when the third of October came around again in three years' time there would be an absolutely opposite result: and the policy which the late Government had so successfully carried out in Western Australia for the past six years, the policy of attracting immigration to our shores and settling people on the land, a policy which had made in Western Australia for

so much progress and prosperity, would be the policy for which the people would once more vote to have put into effect and continued.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: There was no reason for the Premier apologising for the vote appearing on the Estimates; £85,000, to his mind, was far too little with which to persevere in an immigration policy. He would like to see a much larger sum; double the amount would be none too much. The progress of Western Australia, and the prosperity which we now enjoyed, had been mainly due to the immigration policy of the previous Government during the past five or six years. It had been mentioned by the Premier that the immigrants were competing with the labour already within the State. That must and always would be so, to some extent, when there were some thousands of nominated immigrants coming into the country, as we had had during the past 12 months. These men must be permitted some freedom to seek work in any part of the State. In to-day's paper we saw a strike of labourers on one of our railways. They wanted an increase of wages from 10s. to 11s., and it was only natural for labourers to want to get as much money as they could for their labour, and it was only natural that those who were coming into Western Australia should endeavour to get a job on that contract. Members could read the reports of the evidence given before the Royal Commission. Turning over the report casually he found evidence of this description. Evidence was given that there was a shortage of turners.

The Minister for Mines: Turners?

Mr. FRANK WILSON: Yes; turners. Did not the hon. member know what a turner was?

The Minister for Mines: I know what a twister is.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: And the hon. member knew what a turner was from his actions on the previous day. Mr. Ives, the secretary of the Australian Society

of Engineers, in giving rebutting evidence said—

I know of no turners out of employment, though I know of one put off a few weeks ago, and who is now working as a labourer on the Fremantle dock.

That went to show we could have done with some turners in Western Australia. Although this man was working at the Fremantle dock as a labourer, probably it was more congenial employment to him and, perhaps, he was getting more money, or perhaps he was an indifferent turner; it mattered not. He was in good employment, and there was no excess of turners in Western Australia. In regard to fitters, Mr. Ives knew of two fitters out of employment, one at Fremantle and one at Kalgoorlie. In connection with machinists he knew of a machinist at present doing wharf repairs. So it went on, showing clearly that the labour market was not overstocked in connection with skilled labour, as the Premier would have members believe. It was absurd to contend that because there happened to be one or two men in a trade out of employment we should immediately close down and say that there was no room for skilled labourers in Western Australia. A diversity of causes might account for men being out of work: they were not all as skilled as they professed to be. It was idle to contend that because we had a few men who were out of employment at the time, although this evidence showed there were none at that time, we should immediately close down our portals and refuse to permit any man to come to Western Australia. This was a free country the same as any other portion of Australia, or any portion of the British dominions. He would be sorry to see any attempt made to close our doors against those who wished to throw in their lot with us. Our very progress depended on the steady influx of population, and all the better if they came from the Motherland. To turn briefly to the Estimates themselves, he had not time to go right through them, but he could say at once that the Treasurer need have no fear of opposition from him in connection with

his proposals. He proposed to expend £2,450,000 up to the end of the next financial year, and he ventured to think it would take the Treasurer all his time to spend that money. However, he hoped the Treasurer would do his best. After all said and done, we wanted these railways completed, we wanted the new railways which the House had sanctioned put in hand as soon as possible and carried to completion. We wanted the large expenditure that the Premier had pointed out in connection with existing railways taken in hand, and the improvements, and above all we wanted the rolling stock to equip the railways that had been constructed, and equip properly the existing lines to carry the traffic. The implied blame with regard to locomotives was not really justified. Although we had not imported any new locomotives into Western Australia for the past eight years, during the rush time, the boom days some 15, 14, 13, and 12 years ago, large numbers of locomotives and carriages and wagons were imported into the State to overcome the rush of those days, and as the locomotives were displaced or became too light for the traffic for which they had been imported they were piled up in the workshops yard at Midland Junction, as members who had been here a number of years could testify. On one occasion he (Mr. Wilson) counted 60 locomotives in that yard. When the late Government took office he immediately insisted that these locomotives should be put into order and utilised.

Mr. Swan: Who was responsible for their falling out of repair?

Mr. FRANK WILSON: One supposed it was the Labour party who preceded us, if one must say so. The Government insisted that the locomotives should be put in repair and utilised, and as we constructed spur agricultural lines we were able to utilise the locomotives that were considered too light for the main line traffic. In a very short time we had the whole of these locomotives running, and not one cripple was to be seen in the hospital at Midland Junction.

The Minister for Mines: You did not look very far ahead when you have to get 68 locomotives at one time.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: They were not ordered at one time, and they were not coming in all at once.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, or between now and June next.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: If the hon. member would look at the indents he would find that the orders were spread over 12 months, and the delivery was spread over 12 months. Already locomotives had been received which were ordered in our time.

Mr. Heitmann: Why not build the locomotives at Midland Junction?

Mr. FRANK WILSON: It was to be hoped the hon. member would not allow the lines to starve until we could make them.

Mr. Heitmann: That is what you did.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: That was not what we did. If the hon. member wanted 50 fitters or turners to-day he could not get them. The Premier would not allow them to come in.

The Minister for Mines: You were building hundreds of miles of railway and you should have seen the need for more locomotives.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: We did.

The Minister for Mines: The workshops at Midland Junction were not able to cope with them.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: The Minister had never provided the extension, anyhow; he had done nothing up to the present. The late Government had created a demand for this rolling stock, which the present Government had opposed every time.

Mr. Underwood: There is a great demand for more common-sense.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: And it could not be got from the hon. member. In regard to the water supply, it was true that this was a burning question, but it was due to the dry season. The settlers were languishing for want of water, and so were the railways; the two things went hand in hand. After 12 months of office the present Government would not be able to show the record that the late Government, especially the late Minister for Lands, had put up in regard to the provision of dams and water supplies in the

agricultural areas. It would take them all their time to put up a record anything like that of the member for Northam. The greatest objection to be found in the Premier's Estimates was that item in which he gloried, the cutting down of the roads vote. That was contrary to all the professions and the attacks of hon. members now on the Government side during previous sessions, and previous years. The cry had always been raised as to why the Government did not provide for roads, and now the Premier, when he was in office, had made very little provision. He had provided £34,000, and he had increased the vote on the Revenue Estimates by £7,000.

The Premier: More than £7,000; that is on subsidies alone. There are two other items.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: What was the other item?

The Premier: There is a £10,000 increase.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: That made a total of £41,000, but the late Government had provided £50,000 out of Loan Funds alone; and, therefore, in his expenditure from revenue and loan combined the Premier did not equal what the late Government had expended merely from loan. Roads were a necessity, and if the Premier was going to continue the system of railway construction—and the Estimates showed that he was going to continue the policy of the late Government—then notwithstanding his outcry against borrowing for non-reproductive works, he was bound to find money for the construction of roads, which were as essential for agricultural development as the railways themselves. Indeed, the railways could not prosper and be successful unless roads were made. He was satisfied that any Loan moneys expended on road construction were equally as productive and reproductive as the expenditure which the Premier gloried in for the development of the mining industry. It might be that we could not get a direct revenue from the roads, because the days of toll gates were gone for ever, but if we could erect toll gates the roads could be made directly productive. After all, why should the

Government refrain from expending loan moneys on road construction? Did they not bring revenue into the railway system? Every ton of produce that was carted to the railways brought additional revenue to the State, and expenditure on roads was a fair charge on the loan funds. The delay in connection with the establishment of the sewerage works in Perth and Fremantle was, perhaps, more imaginary than real. Huge works of this description took many years to successfully inaugurate, and those members who came from Victoria would know that it was over nine years before Melbourne could get the reticulation in connection with the sewerage scheme started.

Mr. HEITMANN: There is no comparison between the two places.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: There was a comparison, because in Perth the settlement was spread over a big area, and a great length of mains had to be constructed to serve a small population.

The Minister for Mines: The trouble is they constructed first works which could have been left till later.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: That was so, but that did not justify the charge made by the Premier. If the works which had been constructed first had been left for a couple of years the scheme would not have been expedited.

The Minister for Works: It would have saved interest.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: The whole amount was only a few thousand pounds. A very few thousand pounds had been spent perhaps two years earlier than was necessary.

The Minister for Mines: More like £50,000.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: The filter beds had not cost £50,000.

The Premier: Those and the other works did.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: The Premier boasted of the good work he was doing, but that was the work which the late Government had inaugurated last year. The Premier came into power when the work inaugurated by the late Government had reached such a stage that it was now coming into effect, and the whole scheme

had been carried on to such a pitch that the houses could now be connected up rapidly. Had the Premier organised the sewerage scheme? Probably he had never been inside the sewerage office, and knew nothing about it.

The Premier: How much do you know about it?

Mr. FRANK WILSON: Having organised the whole thing he knew a good deal about it. It was due to that organisation that the Premier was able to boast of the expeditious work for which he was taking credit to-day. In conclusion, he only wished to say that he would assist the Premier in passing his Estimates. He could have wished that the Loan Authorisation Bill had provided for a much larger sum; he could have wished still more that the Premier had left his paltry half a million off the local market and not jeopardised the chance of making a successful flotation in London early next spring—

The Premier: Do not worry.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: One could also wish that the Premier had taken Parliament and the country into his confidence and given the Committee the information they were entitled to as to how this money had been raised, where it had been raised, and what was the actual cost per cent. at the latest date of the maturity of the loan. That information members were entitled to have, and it was to be hoped that he would give it before the end of the session. It was passing strange that he should decline to impart information of this sort, in which everyone must be very deeply interested. It was also passing strange—

The Minister for Mines: And yet 'tis true.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: And yet it was true, that the Premier had played the game very badly when he had cried from the house tops before he went on the market that he could not get money in London or the Eastern States.

The Premier: I said nothing of the sort.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: At any rate, the Minister for Works had said it. Perhaps when the Premier had had a little

more experience he would learn when to keep his mouth closed and when to impart necessary and useful information to the House and the country.

Mr. PRICE: It was very much to be regretted that the Government, despite the oft repeated assertions of the members of the Ministerial party that they would do justice to every section of this State, had undoubtedly exhibited in their Estimates that same concentration policy as had been shown by their predecessors.

The Premier: There is £1,000 each for Albany, Geraldton, and Bunbury for improving the harbour facilities.

Mr. PRICE: Could the Premier show where the item was on the Estimates?

The Premier: It is a lump sum, and is provided to inquire into and extend the harbour facilities.

Mr. PRICE: One could accept the Premier's assurance that the enormous amount of £1,000 had been allocated.

The Premier: We have only six months to go.

Mr. Nanson: Geraldton, and not Bunbury is there.

The PREMIER: Bunbury, Albany, and Geraldton are included, and the money is for preliminary inquiries in regard to improvements to harbour facilities.

Mr. PRICE: Evidently, even members of the present Government were not able to realise the actual position with regard to the ports of this State. The sum of £1,000 had been earmarked for preliminary inquiries at Geraldton, Bunbury and Albany. What preliminary inquiries did the Premier require should be made when at the present moment he was in possession of a telegram which conclusively proved to him the urgent and immediate necessity for doing something in connection with the jetty at Albany, which was unsafe? The position seemed to be that, so long as the previous Government authorised certain works, or placed them in hand, the Government carried these out, and that it did not matter about others. It showed that the present Government were prepared to follow the previous Government rather than do justice to the port which he

(Mr. Price) was unfortunate, so far as Parliament was concerned, to represent. Year in and year out, the representatives of that port had pleaded for justice, but, unfortunately, had never been able to secure it. To-day, shipping facilities at Albany were in a disgraceful condition, and he would urge hon. members to ask themselves whether the trade did not warrant at least justice being meted out to the port. If members turned to the *Statistical Abstract*, they would find that the total trade of the various out-ports for the 8 months ended 31st August last was:—Albany, £570,236, Geraldton, £202,976, and Bunbury, £572,642. The last named total was an increase over the total trade of Albany of £2,400. Their came Broome with £103,000 and then there was a drop to Cossack.

Mr. Underwood: Are you missing Port Hedland?

Mr. PRICE: Port Hedland had the enormous trade of £32,000. From Broome, the figures dwindled downward to £20,000 at Cossack, and then further still to between £3,000 and £4,000 at some of the smaller ports. Bunbury, which had £2,000 worth of trade more than Albany, had £10,000 provided for a jetty extension, electric cranes, and a steam tug. When one port received special consideration, hon. members were told probably that that port showed a considerable return for its trade. For the six months ended 30th June, the tonnage at Albany was 616,000 tons, and at Bunbury 148,000 tons.

Mr. Underwood: You are referring to the time when the American fleet were there.

Mr. PRICE: The Assistant Whip appeared to be earning his salary by endeavouring to protect the Government. He (Mr. Price) had not previously referred to the tonnage, because it was not a fair criterion of the actual trade of a port. The trade was the actual imports and exports. The imports for Albany and Bunbury, for the first six months of the present year, were, in the case of Albany, £190,000, and Bunbury, £53,000, and the exports were Albany £379,000, and Bunbury, £518,000. It was in their export

trade that Bunbury outdistanced Albany, but the revenue was greater to the State from imports than from exports. Unfortunately for his claim, however, Bunbury had a harbour board, and consequently the representative in Parliament of that port was in the position of being able to turn up the annual report of the board to show what benefit to the State Bunbury had been, and what profits had been derived from the trade. In the case of Albany, it was a matter of impossibility for him to secure reliable information on that point.

The Minister for Mines: Bunbury has contributed to the public life of the State.

Mr. PRICE: That might be evident to the intelligence of the Minister for Mines, but certainly it was not a matter of great moment. The position was that there was at Albany practically the same trade as at the port of Bunbury, and whereas in the one case the country had been continually called upon to vote huge sums of money to provide harbour facilities and accommodation, in the other case there was a natural harbour, and all that was asked was that reasonable facilities might be provided for ships, to enable them to come in and load, and also discharge their cargo. The plea for these facilities had been continually made, yet members were now told that £1,000 had been provided.

The Attorney General: Preliminary.

Mr. PRICE: We had been asked to live for years on "preliminary."

Mr. Male: How do they divide that £1,000?

Mr. PRICE: No idea could be given by him to the hon. member. He knew, however, that the expenditure of £1,000 at the port of Albany would be absolutely useless. Was that all that they were to get for 12 months?

The Minister for Mines: Six months.

Mr. PRICE: It was 12 months, because there could be no more expenditure until further Loan Estimates were introduced.

The Premier: Oh, yes.

Mr. PRICE: It was to be regretted, exceedingly, that forcing tactics would

have to be adopted in the case of the present Government, just as they had been necessary in the past. A good case had been made out for Albany, for years past. It was well known now that the deep-sea jetty at Albany was not safe for shipping. Hundreds of pounds were being spent there, year by year, to keep the jetty even in a state of usefulness, and recently the steamer "Kanowna" was stranded in the harbour for nearly three hours; not at the deep-water jetty, but, still, at the jetty used by the inter-state steamers. The piles in the deep-water jetty were in many instances eaten right through, and three weeks ago some of them snapped under the weight of an engine, and the jetty dropped four inches. He very much regretted that he should have been forced to make this matter public.

The Minister for Mines: Have you brought it forward in any other way?

Mr. PRICE: Of course such a matter would not come under the notice of the Minister for Mines and Railways, although as a matter of fact the Railway Department drew a pretty fair revenue from the port of Albany. He trusted the Government would see their way clear to spending something more than a thousand pounds in making this harbour reasonably useful. He had no wish to draw comparisons between what had been done for Albany and the favour shown other ports, but he could not help reflecting that there had been no harbour at all at Bunbury until it was made at a cost of something like a million pounds.

Mr. Thomas: It pays good interest on the £217,000 spent there.

Mr. PRICE: Did the hon. member seriously ask the Committee to believe that the hon. member believed that £217,000 was the total cost of all the work in the Bunbury harbour? He would say again that it was a very great pity the Government had not provided a reasonable sum to be expended on necessary improvements in the harbour at Albany.

Mr. THOMAS: While in sympathy with the wants of the member for Albany he would strongly object to that hon. member endeavouring to bolster up his own

case by reflecting on the port of Bunbury. In the matter of export tonnage Bunbury stood fourth in the Commonwealth. The total capitalisation of the Bunbury harbour board was £217,000, and after paying interest and sinking fund and upkeep on the harbour they had returned a profit last year of nearly £10,000. They had paid double the amount absorbed in interest and sinking fund on that harbour, so, however good the case of the hon. member might be in regard to Albany, it was not to be improved by endeavouring to reflect on Bunbury. Glancing cursorily through the Estimates he found the Government had provided Bunbury with £25,000. It was not all that the port deserved, but still it was something. The Ministry were acting wisely in providing £1,000 for each of the two big ports, for the purpose of securing expert reports on proposed large developmental schemes before deciding upon tackling those schemes. After all, anything that was being done for Bunbury was merely a measure of justice. He hoped that before Parliament met next session the construction of an inner harbour at Bunbury would be in course of progress.

Mr. LEWIS: The Premier was to be congratulated on the comprehensive manner in which he had dealt with the railway proposals, and also upon his remarks concerning the vote for agricultural development, and the policy of the late Government in regard to immigration. It was a pity that the late Government, who had been so keenly alive to the need for population, had not turned their energies to the building of new workshops in which those 69 locomotives earlier referred to could have been manufactured, thus creating profitable employment for very many men. The present Government had already done a great deal, and it was pleasing to learn that an order for 500 railway trucks had been given to a firm at Maylands. During the last year the increased railway revenue at Maylands was £1,466 and it was likely to be doubled now these new works had started. He would like to know if provision was to be made for regrading the South-Western line and for duplicating between

East Perth and Burswood so as to give something like reasonable facilities. The Premier was to be congratulated on his statement with reference to rectifying the injustice inflicted on a large number of the railway men by the methods of the late Government in extending preferential treatment to immigrants so far as securing employment was concerned. So-called agriculturists were given preferential treatment in the Existing Lines branch. Seven engineers were recently engaged for a term of three years at salaries exceeding those of men in the service since 1891. They were given £270 for the first year, £285 for the second year and £300 for the third year, and their passages and those of their wives and families were paid, whereas for those who had been in the service for many years the maximum was £285. There were four men on £295, two on £270, two on £260, and two on £21 and their dates of joining the service ranged from 1895 to 1907. This clearly demonstrated that the immigrants, by reason of receiving higher salaries, would be senior to those who were longer in the employ of the department. That was no encouragement to the men already employed in the department and rendering faithful service for a number of years. There were also instances of preference to immigrants in the clerical staff. One man was recently put on in the Traffic Manager's office at £170 a year, and an old officer was displaced and sent away to another locality to make room for him. This man arrived about the beginning of September. Again, cadets were deprived of opportunity for promotion. Some cadets had served eight years, others a year less, and some five years, and their salaries were £150 per year for one 23 years of age, £140 for one 24 years of age, and £125 and £110 for two of 21 years of age. The immigrants being placed in senior position to these men, these cadets lost their chance of promotion, and the agreement between them and the department was absolutely repudiated. Again, in the wages scale two men a couple of days after arriving in the State presented themselves for employment with orders for them to be

given employment and to be permanently employed, resulting in casual hands being dispensed with in order to give these immigrants the preference. These orders, of course, were got by some backstairs influence, by someone in London writing to the Traffic Manager to give this preference; and old residents of the State in many instances were dispensed with in order to make room for the newcomers. A state of things like this was a disgrace to any Government, and it was pleasing the Premier was going to rectify these instances. The State needed population, and it was necessary to encourage immigrants, but to give them preference over old residents was absolutely a disgrace and should be stopped. If we could not work up an immigration scheme without adopting methods such as that, there could be no justification for an immigration policy.

Mr. GARDINER: In view of the statement by the Premier to the effect that all the North-West of the State had received consideration, it was necessary to point out that it was disappointing greater consideration was not given to the North-West, even though the present Government had probably provided a greater amount than those who preceded them. Past Ministers absolutely neglected the North; they seemed to view it as a huge wilderness with no possibilities; and even with the present proposals the means provided were altogether inadequate; in fact, the expenditure now proposed from loan was only that which was essential and could not be done without on account of the departments having been starved for money in the past. The North-West was abounding in possibilities and mineral resources which could never be developed unless there was a sympathetic Government which realised there was a good country there that well merited liberal expenditure for its development. No great country was ever developed unless a large amount of money was spent on it by the Government in encouraging people to go there and assist to develop it. The harbour facilities in the North-West were altogether inadequate, particularly in Onslow. Adjacent

to Onslow there were magnificent mines which, situated in any other part of Australia, would be employing a large number of men and would be a valuable asset to the country, but which were lying idle now because of the enormous expense involved in putting the mineral ores on the market so as to have them treated. There were large haulage charges to the port, and, after paying wharfage and handling charges, there was a charge of 15s. a ton to put the ore on a boat which probably anchored a third of a mile from the shore. Though the erection of a jetty would involve considerable expenditure it would be justified, and it was disappointing the Government had not seen their way clear to providing something for the initial cost of the work. Not only was Onslow surrounded by rich mineral resources but it was a distributing centre for a large pastoral district with thousands of sheep and a considerable number of cattle; but while the people of the metropolis were crying out for cheap meat, it was absolutely impossible for the people in the Onslow district to place the stock on the market, owing to the lack of jetty accommodation. The stock had to be overlanded to Carnarvon or Point Sampson, but that was altogether impossible in this dry season. If there should be a drought in the district the stock must remain to perish, because there was absolutely no means, even if special boats were chartered, for shipping the stock. The construction of the jetty was absolutely warranted. The expense might be great, but the possibilities of the country were great. No doubt Onslow was subject to severe blows, but that could be said of any port in the North-West. No great damage had been done by the storms to the jetty at Point Sampson.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The Government were to be congratulated on the pronouncement made in regard to immigration. It was not the people of the State who had been objecting to the immigration policy of the past, but his experience during the election campaign was that it was the people brought out by the Government who had made the greatest outcry against the system. He wished

to refer to the unwarranted and unmanly attack made by the leader of the Opposition on a most desirable citizen of the State. This was not the first time he had heard the same gentleman make an attack on this citizen. It was to be deprecated that the leader of the Opposition should, on every occasion, make an attack on Mr. McCallum, who had not the opportunity to reply in this Chamber. The letter which the leader of the Opposition stated contained so many falsehoods was published extensively in the newspapers, and side by side with the letter were comments by the late Premier, and the public had an opportunity of judging which statement was right and which was wrong, and the result was the pronouncement by the people of the country on the question at the late election. This was one of the greatest questions dealt with during the election, and his experience was the experience of every candidate during the campaign: that at every meeting he addressed the people desired to hear something on the immigration question. From the time the letter of Mr. McCallum was published he quoted it, and the people knew its contents, and the vast majority of the people endorsed the sentiments of Mr. McCallum. That letter was prompted by a very misleading statement in a London newspaper, and he wished to quote part of the letter published in London, which called for a reply by Mr. McCallum. The letter was published in the *Daily Express*, and contained the following statements:—

Vacancies exist in all manufacturing trades for skilled mechanics throughout the State of Western Australia. Those immediately interested are cabinet-makers, confectioners and sugar boilers, ironmoulders, fitters and turners, blacksmiths and bodymakers, lead light cutters and glaziers, smiths' wheelwrights, art wicker workers, chemical lead burners, flour millers, watchmakers, jewellers and engravers, cigar and cigarette makers, coopers, plumbers, copper-smiths and sheet-iron workers, typographical operators and printers.

This was the letter published under the signature of the secretary of the Cham-

ber of Manufactures, and this letter called forth the reply sent by Mr. McCallum. He would read part of the reply by Mr. McCallum, and he asked members to say if every word in the reply was not the deep feeling and conscientious belief of the great majority of the people in the State. Mr. McCallum wrote—

From reading advertisements of this nature one would naturally conclude that extensive industries in these callings must exist, and the scope for the artisan was unbounded. To place the position that the immigrant will have to face when he arrives here, a few figures as to the number of men employed in this State at some of these callings will perhaps be the most effective. That of confectionery for a start. The law of Western Australia, governing the registration of trade unions, fixes the minimum number of members necessary at fifteen (15). Would it surprise you to know that the combined confectioners and sugar boilers of this State were unable to muster 15 in order to register a union?

He asked members was that statement true or was it false? Nobody in the State would have the courage to say that the statement by Mr. McCallum was not true. He went on to say—

The same applies to lead light cutters and glaziers. Chemical lead burners are not known in the State at all. Cigar and cigarette factories in Western Australia employ practically no labour, being confined to small establishments in which the owner does his own work. In fact, I do not know of one single cigarette factory in the State. Was that statement true or false? No one would deny the truth of it. The letter went on to say—

Watchmaking is practically confined to repairs, and is mainly done by youths. Coopers tried hard here for years to establish a union, but owing to the fact that there are less than 15 employed in the State, even in the busy season, they were unsuccessful: in the slack portion of the year their numbers are reduced to six or seven. The supply of local labour for the iron trades as

a whole has always been equal, and during nineteenth of the year greatly in excess of the demand.

That statement, he thought, was also true. It went on—

This advertisement, no doubt, originated from the fact that some of these men demanded a rise in wages which the employers refused, and in consequence the men left their employ. It is to take the place of these men at reduced wages that Englishmen are wanted here. To speak plainly, the employers want to use them as blacklegs. The printing trade has never been able to fully employ the labour available.

Mr. McCallum would have practical knowledge of that, because he belonged to the trade. He (Mr. Stubbs) had been approached only quite recently by men belonging to this trade, who were walking about the streets of Perth and not able to find employment. He had precisely the same experience since he had been returned as member of the House. He found on every occasion he went out he met some man who was anxious that he (Mr. Stubbs) would use his influence to find employment for him. Did that show that there was any necessity to induce people to come to the State, or to bring them here at the expense of the taxpayers? He wished to quote one or two remarks to show Mr. McCallum had acted fairly and squarely before the people of the old country. Mr. McCallum at the conclusion of his letter, said—

Australia wants population, but she has no room for town workers. Australia wants settlers, and to be successful they must have money and be prepared for hard, solid work Our opponents have one object in view, and that is to bring down the wages. We have the same fight here as the workers have in other countries. Those who oppose us here are the ones who desire to entice Englishmen out. They will cram the towns full of workers, force up the house rents, and lower wages.

Was not that the effect that this immigration policy, which had been indulged in, had had on the State. Were not house rents at the present time out of all por-

portion to the wages earned by the people? Did we not find that wages were being decreased? Only last week or the week before the Arbitration Court fixed a rate of pay which he believed to be one of the lowest in Australia for the same class of work, namely, £2 15s. for 56 hours for hairdressers. That proved that the object of bringing workers here indiscriminately was to lower wages and to force up house rents. There were one or two other aspects of the immigration scheme he would like to draw attention to. A letter came into his possession written by a gentleman who had come to the State, and it was written even before the person reached Fremantle, when the boat was one day's journey from Fremantle. The gentleman who wrote the letter had paid his fare out, and this was what he wrote to a friend at Home, to give him an idea of this great immigration policy. The letter reads—

You can come out a great deal cheaper than I have, in fact, you can come out for £5, and have £3 returned on landing. There are 450 passengers on this ship, and only 25 of them have paid full fare, the rest are travelling as assisted passengers. The way to manage it is this: write to the Agent General for Western Australia, Queen Victoria-street, London, asking for forms for an assisted passage, and he will send you two forms to be filled up by farmers, and then you will have to get a medical certificate as to health. Then you send the lot back again to London, and in reply you will receive instructions to go to one of the agents in Manchester and pay your £5, and receive your passage papers. You will have no need to be frightened of doing this, because out of the 425 assisted passengers on this boat there are not 10 genuine farm labourers. There are all sorts mixed up in the crowd, fitters, turners, boilermakers, coach builders, moulders, in fact some of them are travelling under false names, so you see there is very little difficulty in getting an assisted passage.

With regard to medical certificates and false names, he wanted to point out the

position to members. He did not believe it was well known in the State what sort of business was being built up in London. This was one of the things the Government could well take in hand immediately. They could well abolish the system of medical examinations at the other end, and the medical examination should be made here. He believed if proper medical examination was insisted on at this end we would not have the number which, unfortunately, we had to-day coming out here and had since become a charge on the State. As to the medical examination and false names, it was well known by those who had gone into the matter that certain people were desirous of coming out here but could not pass an examination. It was an easy matter for them to get some other person to pass the examination and get their certificate, and travel under their name. He believed a fairly extensive and lucrative business was being built up in London by getting medical certificates and selling them to immigrants for Australia. This should be altered, because none of the people would attempt to come out unless they were satisfied they could pass an examination if the examination was insisted on at this end. He was pleased to hear the pronouncement from the Government that they did not intend to carry on the indiscriminate immigration policy. It was to be hoped that they would take the matter into consideration, and, perhaps, it might save this country from getting more persons here who might become a charge on the State. There was another matter he would like to deal with, and that was in regard to the sewerage system. Some mention had been made of it, but he wanted to draw the Minister's attention to a letter published in this morning's newspaper. He believed there was some truth in the letter. He (Mr. Stubbs) had paid a visit to the filter beds at Bayswater some time ago. This letter said the bacteria in the filter beds was not working, and as a consequence the solid matter that got to the filter beds was not being disposed of. The letter said that a pipe had to be connected from the water main to flush out the filter

beds. If there was any truth in the statement it was very serious. It was just as well that this should be mentioned here, so that if there was no truth in the letter it could go forth to the public. Unless the letter was contradicted in a way that it would reach the people promptly there was going to be consternation created amongst the citizens of the metropolitan area.

Mr. HARPER: It was regrettable that the member for Subiaco should complain about the Government being committed to an immigration policy. From one end of this State to the other there was a great dearth of labour.

Mr. Munsie: What sort?

Mr. HARPER: All classes.

Mr. Munsie: You ought to be looking for work.

Mr. HARPER: Miners were scarce throughout Western Australia and some mines had closed down on account of the scarcity of labour. There were many men working in the mines who knew nothing at all about mining. Immigration was the most important question before the people of Western Australia. Domestic servants were scarce and farm hands were practically unobtainable. Many people had advertised in vain for harvesters and shearers, in fact, farm labour of all descriptions, and along the Great Southern line farmers were paying 35s. per hundred to have their sheep shorn, and were giving 8s. and 9s. per day to new chums from the United Kingdom. It should be understood that farm hands were very scarce in England, Ireland, and Scotland. The conditions had changed wonderfully during recent years, and there were many other countries besides Australia encouraging English agricultural labourers to emigrate. For that reason, the Immigration Department had a very difficult task in getting suitable immigrants for Western Australia. The State must be contented to take what it could get, but at the same time picking the best that were obtainable. It was impossible to get exactly the class of workers which we required. At the same time he had recently seen a number of immigrants working on the relaying

of the Great Southern railway, and they were a credit to those who had introduced them. They were good workers and were well behaved, even on pay nights, notwithstanding that a hotel was within a short distance of their camp. He hoped that many of their kind would be brought into the State. He congratulated the Government on their bold public works policy. They were continuing the policy of their predecessors, and he was agreeably surprised. At the same time, it was absolutely useless to borrow money and pass railway measures unless we had the people to carry out the work. The lowest paid men in the building trade in this State received 13s. per day, and although much had been heard about workers' dwellings, the worker would be ill-advised to build at the present time, considering the high cost of labour and material. Those who built cottages would have to pay interest on the money they borrowed, and if they had to pay interest on the exorbitant costs at the present time rents must be high. He considered it a dangerous policy to build whilst the existing dearth of labour continued. Thousands of domestic servants were required in this State, and why should not people be able to come here where there was a good home and good pay?

Mr. Lander: What hours do they work?

Mr. HARPER: They worked very easy hours. At any rate, if they did work long hours it was their own fault, because there were hundreds of situations to choose from. A few evenings ago the member for Forrest had remarked on the magnificent wages which the timber workers were earning, but it must be recollected that those expensive conditions must necessarily affect every other part of railway construction. In connection with the railway being constructed in the Kojonup district, very few men would work for the standard wage of 10s. per day: they preferred piecework and were able to earn 17s. and 18s. per day. Bearing these things in mind, an immigration policy was a paramount consideration. The Government could not build railways unless they had labour, and as the

Premier had announced, we had three or four years of railway construction already mapped out. A great deal had been said about not getting the class of immigrant required, but it was not easy for a new arrival to fit himself at once to the conditions of this country. The imported workers had intelligence, and they and those who employed them must have patience. It could not be expected that people from a country 12,000 miles away would be acquainted with the conditions of this country; therefore, these people should be given a fair amount of consideration. In reference to the criticisms by the member for Subiaco of the manufacturing establishments in this State, prior to Federation manufacturing had been going ahead rapidly, but since Federation, owing to the opening of our ports to the products of the Eastern States, where labour was much cheaper, manufacturing in this country had gone down materially and the State had suffered to a great extent. That had been largely brought about by Mr. McCallum and those whom he supported.

Mr. Munsie: A few months ago you were lauding Federation and trying to get into the Federal Parliament.

Mr. HARPER: That was not so; Federation had always been opposed by him. Reference had been made to Mr. McCallum, the secretary of the Trades and Labour Council and, to his mind, that gentleman had done this country a great injustice. Hon. members on the Government side must know that the workers in England would take a serious view of such a statement by one who was so high an authority in labour circles.

Mr. Heitmann: You have not proved the statements untrue.

Mr. HARPER: The statements were untrue, and with regard to labour in this State the Commonwealth Statistician clearly proved that we paid on the average in Western Australia £50 more than was paid in Victoria. The exact average wage in Victoria was £68 and in Western Australia £118; and manufacturing in this State could not go ahead while our ports were open to the Eastern States,

which paid at least £1 a week less in wages.

Mr. Thomas: What are you going to do; reduce the wages here to their level?

Mr. HARPER: Endeavours should be made to raise the standard of wages in the Eastern States. The letter written by Mr. McCallum was most unfair. Whilst it was true that many of the immigrants who came into the country were not of the class we desired, still no matter what supervision or inspection was carried out, some undesirables would get in.

Mr. Underwood: They get into Parliament even.

Mr. HARPER: Some of them were before him now. There was no desire on his part to say much more on this question, except that he would like to see immigration of all classes encouraged.

Mr. DOOLEY: When the Premier introduced the Loan Estimates earlier in the evening, he, unfortunately, had not been able to be present, consequently he was somewhat at a loss with regard to many items, concerning which information had been given. One particular matter which struck him with amazement was that only £40,000 had been provided for the Wongan Hills-Mullewa railway. He did not know whether the Premier had made any reference in the direction of starting that railway line from both ends. It was a very necessary work, and one which the settlers at the Mullewa end expected would be given effect to on the strength of the fact that the late Premier gave the assurance that the railway would be started from the Mullewa end simultaneously with the Wongan Hills end.

The Minister for Lands: He certainly did not give that assurance.

Mr. DOOLEY: The information which had been supplied to him was that the ex-Premier did give that assurance. Whether the promise was made or not it must appeal to the Ministry that it was desirable that this work should be commenced at both ends. It had been said that the cost of taking material to Mullewa would increase the cost of the railway considerably. In his opinion that was not so. Sleepers could be taken from the South-

West around to Geraldton, and then sent on to Mullewa, a matter of about 63 miles, just as cheaply as they could be taken along the Eastern railway, and then to Wongan Hills. With regard to rails and fastenings, they had to be brought over-sea and it would be far cheaper to unload them at Geraldton and then send them on to Mullewa than it would be to forward them on to Wongan Hills from a southern port. We should remember that those people around Mullewa were new settlers and through the drought were suffering a considerable hardship. All were poor men, but at the same time they were a very fine type of farmer. These people would have to be given facilities to get their produce to market. At the present time they were quite without facilities, and if these were not afforded they would have to leave their areas in the near future. If the railway was started from Wongan Hills only it would mean that it would be a matter of a couple of years at the earliest before the people around Morawa would be served. There were about 100 or 150 settlers along the route of that line between 60 and 70 miles from Mullewa, and when we remembered that they had several thousand acres under crop, which of course has been a failure this year, it would be seen that they were all bona fide settlers. With regard to immigration the vote should be considerably reduced, because we had not been able to absorb all the immigrants who had been brought to this country. We knew well that our towns, not only Perth and Fremantle but the inland towns, had been swamped with immigrants who had come out ostensibly to settle on the land. These people had been tried on the land and had been found wanting. The previous Government were not long in finding this out, and the result was that to bolster up their immigration scheme they exploited various Government departments, and wherever they could get an opening they put the immigrants into those departments over the heads sometimes of men who were already there, and also in preference to Australians. That was a most unfair thing to do. Time and again it had been found

that preference to immigrants had been given. We had heard about the cry of preference to unionists; that was a bogey which would not stand analysis, but what would be said of the preference which was being displayed to immigrants? The thing stood condemned. Many of these men had been put into departments irrespective of their competency or capability. So far as the Midland workshops were concerned, there were men there who were practically learning their trade. The conditions were so different from what they had been accustomed to that these men had not proved themselves nearly so good as our own workers, and yet they were drawing the same wages. In the Geraldton electorate he had been told that the agricultural immigrant was not nearly such a capable man as the Australian, therefore it was nearly time that greater consideration was given to the question of the proper selection of immigrants. He agreed that population was required. By all means we should encourage immigration, but before people were landed on our shores we should see that there was work for them to do, and that they would not be jockeying other people out of jobs. When the Government were opening up areas they should arrange to send camps of immigrants to those areas to clear them, and make them ready for cultivation. By so doing they would be giving the immigrants some experience and prepare them for an agricultural life, and at the same time providing them with means of earning sufficient money to enable them to start for themselves.

Mr. MITCHELL: The Premier was to be congratulated on his pluck. Before the elections no one had an idea that the Premier would come down with a Loan Bill of 2½ millions. It might easily have been the Loan Bill of the previous Government. After listening to the several speeches it was clear that immigration was in the minds of all. The previous speaker suggested that the Government should employ immigrants in preparing areas for cultivation. That, however, did not answer the Premier's remarks when he said that the late Government had

established relief works. The most the late Government ever did was to ask the Works Department to prepare works as soon as possible in order that immigrants might be absorbed in the event of there being a shortage of labour. How could we fear competition in this great country which had so much work to do? Could this State progress without work?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Who is afraid?

Mr. MITCHELL: The hon. members who sat on the front Treasury bench.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We are afraid to bring people here to starve.

Mr. MITCHELL: The hon. member had declared that before he would consent to bring people out here a guarantee of nine months' employment would have to be given.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I want proof of their genuineness.

Mr. MITCHELL: The hon. member wanted to bring immigrants out under contract. How many of the English settlers had proved to be unsuitable? But very few indeed. On the other hand, if the Honorary Minister thought he could bring out 10,000 people and find all of them to be good men, he was much mistaken.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I am not going to bring out solicitors' clerks as farm labourers.

Mr. MITCHELL: Sir Newton Moore had exercised great care in the selection of the men, and our immigration policy had undoubtedly proved successful. He (Mr. Mitchell) had personally seen many of these newcomers at work on the land, bravely facing all the discomforts incidental to the early stages of land settlement. A reasonable system of immigration could not be safely stopped, for it would mean disaster to the country: to check immigration would be to retard the development of the State. The previous Labour Administration had left the country in a state of chaos.

The Minister for Lands: That is wrong.

Mr. MITCHELL: And their successors had had to start relief works with a great many fewer people in the State than there were to-day.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Those relief works were started three years after you took office.

Mr. MITCHELL: That was not so. Ministers could continue to bring in a thousand people a month without any fear of lack of employment. The more men employed, the more employment would be offering. The prosperity that had come to this country as the result of the work of the late Ministry could never have been attained had the late Ministers refused to undertake a reasonable system of immigration. Had those Ministers remained in office this policy would have gone on, notwithstanding which wages would not have been decreased by reason of competition. In the present instance Ministers were wise in checking immigration, because they foresaw what was going to happen under their policy. Ministers and their supporters had discussed these questions most unfairly, for the late Ministry had been ever anxious to have employment to give in case it should prove necessary. Last year he, as Minister for Lands, had sold two million acres of land. How was that vast area of land to be improved if he were not to be allowed to bring in workers to improve it?

The Minister for Lands: I have no trouble in getting workers.

Mr. MITCHELL: The Minister would have trouble if this immigration policy were stopped. One hon. member had complained that his rent was increased because people were coming into the country. How could we have high rents if the place were not prosperous?

The Premier: The landlords are prosperous.

Mr. MITCHELL: The Premier himself, it was understood, was now building houses. We would see how, in the course of time, the Premier regarded this question from the point of view of the landlord. The workers to-day were getting very much higher wages than they had received before the inauguration of the immigration policy. Why, then, should we not go on with the policy that had increased wages? The late Colonial Secretary had handled this work magnificently, and had left it in good going order. That

hon. gentleman had arranged for the reception of immigrants on arrival, and fortunately he had made arrangements for the passages of a large number of people still to come in.

The Premier: We have had to apply to the Federal authorities to deport a few that he brought in.

Mr. MITCHELL: Even if that were so, what were one or two out of 10,000? The Premier knew that the great bulk of the people brought out were splendid men and good citizens; that they were getting along very well.

The Minister for Lands: They would be getting along better if some of your friends paid them better wages. Some are paying them 10s. a week.

Mr. Brown: Can you give us an instance of such a wage?

The Minister for Lands: I know of a number of instances.

Mr. MITCHELL: One could understand the Minister's friends getting men for nothing at all if they had the opportunity.

The Minister for Lands: Ask your manager what he is paying on your farm outside of Meckering.

Mr. MITCHELL: As a matter of fact he (Mr. Mitchell) had no such farm. He had no interest in any estate outside Meckering.

The Minister for Lands: You did have.

Mr. MITCHELL: Years ago, but not now, and no one knew it better than the Minister for Lands. Few men in the Northam district got less than 8s. a day, which was a fair wage for farming work when paid all the year round. One heard a lot of talk about 10s. a week, but the average farmer employed very few men, and employer and employee got to know each other well, and ate at the same table, and the conditions of the employees were more satisfactory than those of men on the goldfields. The immigration policy of the present Government was an absolute sham. If they retarded immigration it would check enterprise and throw the country into a state of chaos as it was at the time of the previous Labour Administration. It was to be hoped that when the next Loan Estimates were prepared

the Ministers would not forget the need for providing a harbour at Nornalup. It was the port for country with splendid timber and magnificent soil, and the harbour should not remain unopened much longer. It was the duty of the Government to provide an outlet for the people who would settle there and for the timber that could be got near there.

Mr. Price: Is it not the best policy to attend to the ports we already have?

Mr. MITCHELL: There was no need to neglect the ports we had. We should complete the facilities at our existing ports, and at the same time open up the port at Nornalup. It was a pity the Minister proposed to spend so little on abattoirs and cold storage during the next six months. The Minister should inform the Committee whether it was intended to go on with the abattoirs at North Fremantle, and as to the intention of the Government generally with regard to abattoirs for the metropolitan area and for export. The decision of Parliament that the Government should erect their own works and abattoirs at North Fremantle, should be abided by. There was something of interest said in this connection at Midland Junction, but if Ministers consulted the opinion of the Committee they would find it was that the Midland Junction works should not be built for the metropolitan market, but that the erection of works at North Fremantle for the metropolitan supply and for export should be faced. Why was there not more money on the Estimates for the Wongan Hills-Mullewa railway? Because hundreds of farmers had settled on the route and were told they might expect a railway. The previous Government had put through the Bill authorising its construction, and it was not just that it should be delayed a moment longer than necessary; in fact the line should be started from both ends and put through just as speedily as possible. The people on the route should be told the exact intentions of the Government in regard to the matter, as to whether the line was to be built now or in five years' time. Most assuredly when Parliament passed the Bill the people were justified in going on with

their work of development, and were they now to be left stranded on that country between Mullewa and Wongan Hills? There was a provision for £30,000 for roads; but the Government must face the question of making new roads in the new agricultural areas, and they should spend a vast sum of money in making roads giving access to the railways. There were hundreds of miles of roads to make in the Avon electorate and a million of money would not be more than enough to make these roads. The Government should take the responsibility of making roads in new districts. Seeing new settlers were exempt from taxation for two years, it made the Government accept the responsibility for opening up these districts, and it was a responsibility they should face by some comprehensive scheme and by providing a substantial sum on the Loan Estimates. As there could be no more reproductive work than a road—not that it was directly reproductive, but because it made settlement possible and increased the number of taxpayers—we were perfectly justified in borrowing money for the purpose. It was certainly the correct attitude to take that the user of the road should pay for the road, but once a road was put down it was there for all time, and with the sinking fund, such as was provided, it was quite legitimate to borrow money for making these roads which people could use while the loan was being paid off. It was absolutely wrong to call upon the taxpayers, already bearing a tremendous burden in this direction, to provide all the money required to open up roads in the areas now sold and about to be sold. The roads must be made and the money must be provided somehow, and the Government should face their responsibility and provide it to make roads for the farmers. The farmers could not do it themselves, and the roads boards could not do all the work, as development was going on far too rapidly; therefore the £30,000 provided was a mere bagatelle on what was required. The Government had adopted their predecessors' policy of railway building: they should also adopt their predecessors' ideas in regard to the making of roads,

and not make railways unless they provided the people with fairly good roads. The roads were particularly bad in the Avon district, and particularly costly to make at all reasonably good. The Agricultural Bank was lending money to the farmers to develop their holdings, and they were developing them very rapidly, but very little could be done by them unless expenditure on road construction was passed. The need for road construction extended from the Murchison River to Albany, a tremendous area needing attention. It was to be hoped the Minister for Lands would carry out the irrigation schemes mentioned. The Bunbury water scheme and irrigation should be undertaken, and irrigation should be commenced at Harvey, where there was a magnificent stretch of citrous country, and where, unless the scheme was going soon, the people would suffer considerable loss. Their requirement in this direction was quite a recent discovery, but it was fully inquired into and nothing remained to be done but for the present Ministry to find the money and set the scheme going. The Premier was to be congratulated on his change of front. Before the elections it was feared that if the present party got into power most of the works would be stopped because the party platform provided that no works should be built from Loan Funds unless they were of a reproductive nature; yet on these Loan Estimates appeared every class of work, right down to buildings. The Premier did well to follow the late Government in this as he had followed them in everything that had brought credit to the Government. It would have been a sad thing for Western Australia if the policy of the country had to be stopped in accordance with the tone of past speeches of members now on the Government side. It was to be hoped the works would be put in hand as speedily as possible, and particularly there should be no delay in the construction of the railways proposed by the late Government. The farmers were entitled to ask from the present Government that the policy of the past Government in this respect should be continued, and that the railways already authorised by Parliament

should be built at once. Among these railways there was none more urgently needed than the Wickiepin-Merredin. If the Government could be induced to hurry on these works they would be doing justice to a class entitled to it. The Premier must be congratulated on the advance made in his ideas during the two or three months he had been in office.

Mr. DWYER: It seemed to him the speeches from the other side might very well be reduced to this syllogism: that an increase of population was good for the State, and the ex-Premier's immigration policy brought about an increase of population, therefore the ex-Premier's immigration policy was what was required. But that syllogism when it was examined was a fallacy. It contained this fallacious method of reasoning on what might be termed major premises, that an increase of population was good for the country. But increase of population was only good for a country under well-ordered circumstances. The time might come when an increase of population was not good for the country, when we had an overstocked labour market, and in such circumstances an increase did not pay. What we took exception to was that the increase of population brought about from external circumstances was not in the direction the country required. We required additional agriculturists but we were given additional competitors in our trades as artisans. We required additions to those who took on domestic service but we were given very frequently those who came from congested English towns and did not understand the conditions here and were not suitable for the service required. An immigration policy conducted on proper lines, broad lines, suited to the needs and wants of the country, would be good for the country, but an immigration policy conducted on the lines of the ex-Premier was not good for us. It was to be hoped the Premier would continue to advocate people coming here who were prepared to settle on the land and develop the resources, and to discourage the importation of persons who overstocked the labour market. There was no objection at any

(*Mr. Hale took the Chair.*)

Mr. Broun: You know nothing about it.

Mr. Harper: I will invite the hon. member to come with me next Thursday and I will show him over my place.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Better farming propositions than those of the members for Beverley and Pingelly had come under his notice. He repeated that no agriculturist provided accommodation for the wives and children of his employees.

Mr. Harper: Yes, I do.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Oh, tripe!

Mr. Harper: Will you come with me next Thursday?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: In Victoria and New South Wales he had never found that the agriculturists provided accommodation where married men or several married men could keep their wives and families.

Mr. Broun: There are plenty of instances.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The hon. member might say so, but that gentleman and Maud Dempster and the late Minister for Lands had said that 25s. was the top wage for agricultural labourers.

Mr. Broun: I never paid it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The hon. member had paid £1, and probably 15s. was the limit for the member for Beverley.

Mr. Broun: I never paid less than 30s.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That was not the version of those who had received the hon. member's pay. He (Mr. Underwood) had received it in his young days and left it. The farm labourers were entitled to decent wages.

Mr. Harper: What wages would you pay?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Three pounds a week.

Mr. Harper: I am paying that now.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That might be for one week and doubtless the employee worked 24 hours a day. Farmers paid 25s. a week, and no man could keep a wife and family as they should be kept on 25s. a week, even when a house was provided. His experience was that they paid 25s. and provided a tent, and in some instances he knew of, the workers slept

under a tree. Before the Government continued spending money in bringing out agricultural labourers, it should be realised that the agricultural labourer was worthy of his hire. He must be paid a wage which would enable him to live and keep his wife in ordinary comfort, just the same as a blacksmith, an engineer or a bootmaker. He strongly protested against the idea that we were only importing agricultural labourers. We had any amount of agricultural labourers, and when land owners of Western Australia recognised that their workmen were worthy of their hire they would then get the best possible labour in the State. The Government should drop the idea of importing only agricultural labourers. We required in Western Australia not only immigrants, but we required productive immigrants, so to speak, the men with wives and families, and from his experience throughout Australia, more particularly in this State, there was no possible chance of an agricultural labourer getting a wife and family. When agriculturists provided for wives and families we should provide them with work. He strongly protested against flooding the market with labourers and thereby cutting down wages. He hoped the Government recognised that the labourer was certainly entitled to live.

Mr. LANDER: A lot of requests had been made during the discussion on the Loan Estimates, and it was his intention to make a few as well. He represented a small corner of the State which did not require much. The sum of £22,000 was set down to be spent on river improvements, and he would like to collar the whole lot and spend it on the river foreshore to the north of the causeway. There existed there what might be in time a menace to health. He referred to the filter beds. We had been told that the bacteria had not been working in these beds. If that report was true what sort of germs were the Government going to let loose in that beautiful river of ours, and they would not only be in the river but also on the banks, and to his mind it would be most serious if these filter beds should ever cease working. He appealed

to the Minister to allow the dredge to go up the river above the causeway and carry on its operations there. At the present time these beds had a shallow water frontage and only a small barge could come down a narrow channel which had been cut through. It would be conferring a blessing on Perth and the whole of the metropolitan area if the river in that locality were opened up. Another thing he would like to see the Government take in hand, and which was a menace to life and limb, was that splendid advertisement, the causeway. It was always being left in a dangerous condition, and neither the City Council nor the Victoria Park Council would take any responsibility with regard to it. Although the late Government had the power to step in and make these bodies assume some responsibility they did not do so. He hoped the present Government would have sufficient backbone to step in when the bridge again became in a dangerous condition, and make both the municipal bodies carry out the work, or else do it themselves and charge it up to Consolidated Revenue. If the Government opened up the river that would be the means of destroying the microbes on these beds. The late Liberal Government had allowed the cricket association to hold 14½ acres of land unused, which should have been taken from them and converted into a park. It rested with the present Government now to do their duty and close on this property and allow the public to have the use of it. A good deal had been said about the immigration question, but the matter that he would like to bring under notice was that of the little immigrants who were born in the country and were then practically murdered. If members did their duty they would expose what was going on. There was an epidemic amongst the infants at the present time, and it was a very serious question. If inquiries were made from medical men and at the Children's Hospital it would be found that there was a serious state of affairs in existence so far as children under six months of age were concerned. A number of them were dying at the present moment from

what was known as inflammation of the mucus membrane of the intestines. Steps should also be taken to reduce the mortality amongst infants from other causes. He congratulated the Government for the step they were about to take in the direction of establishing sanatoria for consumptives. It was satisfactory to note that the Government were about to erect buildings within close distance of the metropolis, and that then both men and women would be properly cared for. These people ought to be as comfortable as possible, and not treated as though they were in workhouses or almshouses. Steps should also be taken to prevent the disease being introduced into Western Australia, and we should prohibit any person suffering from it from landing on our shores. He knew this had nothing to do with Loan Estimates, but many others had transgressed and he thought he might be allowed to do the same.

Mr. MONGER moved—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	7
Noes	..	..	..	27

Majority against .. 20

AYES.	
Mr. Brown	Mr. A. E. Piesse
Mr. Harper	Mr. A. N. Piesse
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. Allen
Mr. Monger	(Teller).
NOES.	
Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bath	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. Price
Mr. Collier	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Dwyer	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Foley	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gill	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Turvey
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Lander	Mr. Walker
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Heftmann
Mr. McDonald	(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. TAYLOR : For many years we had devoted moneys to the development of our goldfields. He would like to know

from the Minister for Mines if it had been decided to spend the sum set aside for this purpose on lines different from those which had been followed in the past. Had the Minister devised any scheme for opening up any abandoned fields known to be well worth another trial? The Committee had always been generous in devoting moneys for developmental work, whether in agriculture or mining.

(*Mr. Holman resumed the Chair.*)

Mr. McDONALD : With one or two exceptions each speaker had had a grumble. He had a slight one. On the whole, the promises of Ministers in regard to the North-West had been fulfilled, but he was sorry to see that Shark Bay was altogether unmentioned. Shark Bay was a small place, and its entire trade for 1910 had only amounted to £13,000; yet Shark Bay undoubtedly had claims, and the expenditure of two or three hundred pounds in lengthening the jetty was absolutely essential to the interests of the place. The inspector of fisheries had reported in the warmest terms on the possibilities of Shark Bay as a fishing centre. Again, it only required reasonable prospecting to bring the Ashburton and Gascoyne goldfields into striking prominence; but these fields were not mentioned in the Estimates. The Minister might reasonably do something for them. He would congratulate Ministers on their intention to inquire into the native question. The only way of treating aborigines in Western Australia was by a system of native reserves, to take the form of cattle or sheep stations; still, until those reserves were scientifically managed the expenditure of further moneys on them would be unwise. The upkeep of the aborigines' station at Hall's Creek last year had amounted to £1,600, while the only return received was from the sale of 500 head of cattle at a net price of £3 per head; so the operations of the year showed a loss of £100, apart altogether from interest and sinking fund. Too much had been said about immigration to-night. On almost every platform during the recent election candidates had been

asked their views on immigration, and were almost invariably urged that greater discrimination should be exercised in the selection of immigrants at Home. These immigrants were turned out here helpless and practically hopeless. He had recently seen five of them at Carnarvon, facing the entire North-West, with no idea of the country, and quite unable to do any work that might be offering. Two of them, in fact, could hardly speak the language. One station manager in the North-West had put off Australians at £2 a week in order put on immigrants at 30s., but after four weeks trial he had rejected the new comers and gone out in search of Australians. The Premier stood for congratulation on the policy he was pursuing in this respect.

Mr. MALE : In reference to the development of agriculture, would the Minister for Works tell the Committee if any provision had been made towards the establishment of freezing works at Wyndham.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : The main difficulty in connection with the proposed freezing works in the North was in respect to the site and the water supply. In his opinion we could overcome the question of foundations for the establishment, but it was most difficult to secure water. He proposed to try artesian boring for the purpose of locating a water supply. This he hoped to do during this financial year in order that he might have a definite proposal to submit to Parliament next session.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—*Railways*, £1,383,845; *Harbours and Rivers*, £255,000—agreed to.

Vote—*Water Supply and Sewerage*, £105,730:

Mr. McDOWALL : Apparently no provision had been made for water supplies on the goldfields.

The Premier : It is nearly all water supplies.

The MINISTER FOR MINES : The money that was to be expended on water supplies on the goldfields was not specifically set out. The item of £45,000 for the Eastern Goldfields included water supplies, and in that sum was £20,000 for

a water supply for Ora Banda, and there was provision for Yilgarn, Coolgardie, and other districts: in fact, the greater portion of the vote was for water supplies.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—*Development of Goldfields and Mineral resources*. £112,500; *Development of Agriculture*, £326,500—agreed to.

Vote—*Roads and Bridges*, £34,268:

Mr. ALLEN: What amount had been allocated to the Gosnell's roads board?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That would be found in the Revenue Estimates. Most of this vote on the Loan Estimates was for feeders to railways.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—*Sundries*, £112,302; *Mines*, £3,953; *Colonial Secretary*, £2,500—agreed to.

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

BILL—LOAN (£2,142,000).

Message.

Message from His Excellency the Governor received and read recommending the Loan Bill for £2,142,000.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan) moved for leave to introduce a Bill for "An Act to authorise the raising of a sum of £2,142,000 by loan for the construction of certain Public Works and for other purposes."

Question passed: Bill introduced and read a first time.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan) in moving the second reading said: In submitting this Bill to the House I wish to draw the attention of members to the fact that authority to raise loan money is necessary in order to provide money to carry out the works set out in the Schedule of the Bill. The authority already given to expend Loan funds under the Loan Estimates will require a further authorisation to complete these works. The total amount I am asking

authority to borrow is £2,142,000 of which £1,242,300 is provided for railways. This includes rolling stock £440,000, additions and improvements £290,000, land resumption for railways £85,000, and rails and fastenings £100,000, making a total of £915,000. With the exception of a portion of the item, rails and fastenings, £100,000, this amount is required for the working railways. The balance of the vote, £327,000 is required for the construction of new railways, principally in agricultural districts as shown in the Schedule. Of this total amount of £1,242,300, it will be seen, existing railways and various extensions will absorb £899,700 of the total authority now sought. Of the balance £275,000 is required for the development of agriculture, including what is termed agricultural immigration, for which an amount of £60,000 is provided. At present we are compelled, as I said before, to continue a very large expenditure to assist immigration in order to keep faith with the contracts entered into by our predecessors, and due to the money not being available from revenue. We hope, however, later on to be able to reduce this considerably by making some provision for any necessary immigration from revenue when given the opportunity of adjusting our finances. In connection with the metropolitan sewerage we are asking for authority to spend £105,000. Harbours and Rivers will absorb £133,450; Development of goldfields and mineral resources £48,000; sundries, which include public buildings and the purchase of the Dalkeith Estate, £65,000, and the balance then left, namely, £153,250 is required for discount and flotation expenses. At this point I would like to briefly explain the position in regard to the Loan account, and I think the following statement will demonstrate the necessity for asking Parliament for further authority on Loan account. On the 30th June, there was a balance available for flotation under the 1911 Loan Act of £1,450,000; members will recognise that on the 30th June we had authority to raise that amount, but the money had not been raised. On the 30th

September following this amount had been reduced to £1,315,000. I now desire to make public the amounts that we have raised in the various capitals of Australia in connection with the last loan of £500,000. The total amount subscribed was £577,495 and I decided to accept the whole of that amount; in fact I notified the stock exchanges just prior to the loan closing, when it appeared very evident that it would be over-subscribed, that we would allow them to take up the whole of the amount tendered for if they so desired; we therefore accepted £577,495. We have since had numerous applications from Perth and from other places for additional amounts which would have brought the total above £600,000. The amounts subscribed in the various capitals were as follows:—Sydney, £150,325, Melbourne, £228,895, Adelaide, £96,575, Brisbane, £63,000 and Perth £38,700. I may inform the House that the cost of the loan will be very limited as I have made arrangements to prevent having to pay anything in the way of cost for transferring the loans from the various States. I have arranged for the bulk of the money to be taken from the Commonwealth in Perth and the Commonwealth will take up the bulk of the money subscribed in Sydney and Melbourne. I have also made arrangements for the banks, except in Brisbane, to pay 1 per cent. interest on the amount remaining in their hands until we can arrange for the Commonwealth to take over the balance, which I think will be done in a month or two.

Mr. Frank Wilson: There will be brokerage and commission.

The PREMIER: Yes, we have not been able to make out the exact cost yet, but I am assured by the Under Treasurer that the loan will work out very favourably, so far as the expenses are concerned. Time has not permitted us to go into the full details of the flotation, but I propose next session to give these details as to the cost of the loan compared with other loans, in order to afford information to the House and to the public as to the desirability or otherwise of raising loans in this manner, or in some

other way. I made this loan largely a test, and it will be an advantage to this and any other Governments who may come afterwards to have this experience in connection with the local raising of loans. The Under Treasurer has paid a great deal of attention to this matter and I have had the pleasure of placing on record my appreciation of the work he and his officers have done in this connection. He has kept a complete record of the flotation, and it will be at the disposal of whoever may follow me in the Treasury whenever he desires to raise money in the future. At the end of this month, after allowing for the issues of local inscribed stock on account of the recent loan the balance on this account will be £610,935. The balance on the 30th June 1911, was £1,040,698, and the amount raised since £839,065, making an amount of £1,879,763. The estimated expenditure for the current half year is £803,735, making a balance available on the 31st December of £1,076,028. The estimated expenditure for the second half year is £1,673,347; and as the balance of raisings available is £1,076,028, the further amount required to be raised to cover the works and services to the 30th June next is £577,319, and that leaves me a balance under existing loan authority of only £33,616. Hon. members will therefore realise that I shall require further funds to carry on the projected works to March, 1913. I think it is desirable to obtain authority to carry on for a period until it is safe to approach the London market. I do not intend at the present time to raise the whole of this amount in London; but we should have sufficient to carry on till March, 1913, in order that we shall not have to approach London when the money is not available.

Mr. Frank Wilson: You will have to approach the London market before 1913.

The PREMIER: I am already in communication with the Agent General in regard to approaching the London market early next year; I, therefore, seek Parliamentary authority for the authorisation. In the *Public Accounts* hon.

members will find the position of the Loan Fund. They will find the amount raised, the balance of authorisation on the 30th June, and the amount of the State indebtedness, gross and net, per head, and also every information in connection with the expenditure of the money, cost of raising, etcetera, so that it is unnecessary for me to mention it in introducing the Bill. I therefore move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

Mr. Holman in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5—agreed to.

Schedule :

The PREMIER : There were clerical errors in regard to two items, "Additions and Improvements, Opened Railways, £190,000," should read "Additions and Improvements, Opened Railways, £290,000;" and the item "Rolling Stock, £340,000" should read, "Rolling Stock, £440,000." There was no alteration to the total.

The CHAIRMAN : Being clerical errors there was no need for an amendment. The alteration would be made by the Clerk.

Mr. MONGER : In reference to the item "Greenhills - Quairading Railway, including extension to Nunajin, £44,000," where would the terminal point on the Wickepin-Merredin railway be? The Minister for Works had written to him to the effect that the Quairading-Nunajin line would be constructed in a line almost direct from Quairading, to strike the Wickepin-Merredin line a little south of the point shown on some of the maps. The original schedule showed the terminal point at the western side of location 15,795. To what extent would the alteration referred to in the Minister's letter affect that terminal point?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : It was almost impossible to state the terminal point until the exact route of the

Wickepin-Merredin line was definitely decided. The information given in the letter to the hon. member was due to the fact that if we took the line to the point generally fixed on the maps it would be running parallel to the Wickepin-Merredin route for a little distance. The route should be as direct as possible. It was not of much concern where the line struck the Wickepin-Merredin route, as long as it was in the vicinity of Nunajin, or within half a mile or thereabouts from Nunajin.

Mr. MONGER : It was understood from the short debate during the afternoon that the interpretation placed by hon. members on the position arrived at by Parliament last session was that the Government had to construct a line of railway direct from Wickepin to Merredin. He asked the Minister to give an expression of opinion as to where we were. Was the line going to Nunajin? Was the Wickepin-Merredin line to go, as the member for Coolgardie had said, in a direct line or a la Czar of Russia's Moscow to St. Petersburg railway? Before we could pass the Schedule some information would have to be given. The verdict of the House during the afternoon was that—

Mr. McDowall : We should not appoint a select committee; that is all.

Mr. MONGER : Was he to understand that the Minister for Works was going to carry out what the member for Coolgardie had told the Committee that afternoon?

The Premier : That has nothing to do with it.

Mr. MONGER : Before he left the House that evening he was going to insist on having a reply from the Minister for Works. He had been told that the desire of the Minister was to carry out in its entirety the mandate of Parliament. That afternoon the mandate of Parliament was that the line should be constructed as nearly as possible in a direct line, and if that was done it would pass some 10 miles west of Nunajin. Under these circumstances he wanted to know whether the Quairading line was to go 10 miles over the Wickepin-Merredin route? Notwithstanding the noble feeling of the Premier and of his caucus-ridden gentle-

men who supported him, not one in 10 of those who voted that afternoon knew what they were voting about.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was not in order in making that statement.

Mr. MONGER: He would apologise to those caucus-ridden members, and ask the Minister to give some idea as to where the terminal point of the Quairading line, junctioning with the Wickepin-Merredin line, was going to be.

The Premier: This merely gives power to raise the money.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: It was quite true that the measure merely gave the Treasurer power to raise money; yet the member for York was perfectly within his rights in asking for an explanation as to the Greenhills-Quairading line, including the extension to Nunajin. The hon. member desired to know if the Minister was going to carry on to Nunajin or stop at the Wickepin line.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Without being required to do so he had already written to the hon. member pointing out that it was intended that the survey should go out as directly as possible from Quairading to Nunajin, and that it was to junction with the Wickepin-Merredin line at a point not yet decided upon.

Mr. Frank Wilson: Will it go on to Nunajin?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: While going into the Nunajin agricultural area it would not go in as far as Nunajin Rock, because of the engineering difficulties to be overcome; it had never been intended that it should go in there. It would strike the Wickepin line a little bit south, but this was due to the alteration in the Quairading-Nunajin line.

Mr. MONGER: It was understood from the debate this afternoon that the Minister was going to carry out the mandate received from Parliament. It seemed now that that mandate was—

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Was the hon. member in order in discussing the route of a railway on a Loan Bill? Moreover, this question had already been debated earlier in the present sitting, the hon. member himself having dealt with it by way of a motion.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was not in order in discussing the route of a railway on this Bill. There would have been ample opportunity for the hon. member to do so when discussing item 20 of the Loan Estimates. As the hon. member had failed to take that opportunity he (the Chairman) had been giving him some latitude on the Loan Bill, but he could not allow him to debate the route of the railway question any longer.

Mr. MONGER: On the second reading of the Loan Bill of last session the present Speaker had varied the debate to a far greater extent than he (Mr. Monger) had attempted to do this evening.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member disagreed with the ruling of the Chair the method of doing so was set out in the Standing Orders.

The PREMIER: It was desired to explain that under the heading of Development of Agriculture we were providing a sum of £22,000 for the purchase of seed wheat and manures for those who had lost their crops, and who, unless we were to make this provision, were not likely to be able to get in a crop for next season.

Schedule put and passed.

Preamble. Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—DIVORCE AMENDMENT.

Bill returned from the Legislative Council with amendments.

BILL—TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILWAY.

Council's Amendments.

Bill returned from the Legislative Council with two amendments which were now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Holman in the Chair, the Premier in charge of the Bill.

No. 1—Clause 3. Strike out in line three "not exceeding forty" and insert "of one hundred and fifty:"

No. 2—Clause 3, Insert a proviso as follows:—"Provided that no mining operations shall be carried on under the land so granted without the approval of the executive Government of the Commonwealth."

The PREMIER: The two amendments made by the Council might be explained together. The Bill had originally provided that the Commonwealth should own the land conceded to them to a depth of 200 feet, but the Government had then substituted 40 feet. After the Bill had been introduced the Prime Minister had wired inquiring for the full context of the measure. That information had been forwarded, and the Prime Minister had requested that 150 feet should be substituted for 40 feet, and also that provision should be made that no person should be permitted to mine on such land without permission of the Commonwealth. That request had been agreed to. When the Commonwealth were controlling the railway persons should not be allowed to mine at any depth immediately below the railway, but unless it could be shown that such operations were likely to do damage to the railway the Commonwealth would have no object in preventing them. The Commonwealth had no control below 150 feet, but to that depth they wanted to protect their railway. He was satisfied there was positively no danger; the Commonwealth seemed to have no objection at all to mining being carried on, but they wanted to be consulted before permission was granted. He moved—

That amendment No. 1 be agreed to.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: If the Committee agreed to giving the Commonwealth a depth of 150 feet that was all that was required. The further amendment would mean that the State could not allow mining at any depth below the line unless with the Commonwealth's permission.

The CHAIRMAN: The land below 150 feet belonged to the State.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: But the provision was being made that the State would allow no mining below the line at all without the permission of the Commonwealth. The depth of 150 feet was

all the safeguard the Commonwealth needed, and far more than was necessary. Why should we put ourselves in the position that the Commonwealth might at any time say, "You must not mine underneath our railway"? It would not matter so much if it was a restricted area, but it was for over 400 miles. We were legislating for all time. Numerous townships might spring up all along this route, and then we would have to apply to the Commonwealth Government for permission to go through our own land. The State ought to retain the right to deal with its own land. There was no danger at 150 feet.

The Premier: Look at the creeps at Broken Hill.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: There was ample protection with a depth of 150 feet. We should keep the power in our own hands over mining operations in our own territory. While agreeing to the depth of 150 feet, the Premier should not adopt the further amendment.

Mr. HARPER: A depth of 150 feet was quite sufficient to protect against subsidence of the line. All mining operations should be under the control of our own inspectors of mines. It would be very arbitrary if the Commonwealth Government could refuse to allow a mining company to put a connecting drive from workings on one side of the railway to the other side.

Mr. Frank Wilson: Has South Australia agreed to this?

The Premier: I do not know.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The adoption of this amendment would not prevent mining. All the Commonwealth asked was that they should be consulted before mining was undertaken along the line. It was necessary to protect their railway. A depth of 150 feet was not sufficient protection. Greater depth would not be sufficient in some parts of Western Australia. The Commonwealth officers ought to be able to make stipulations as to what sort of timbering should be adopted in mining operations under the railway, and it was not fair to assume that they would block mining altogether.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: The question was whether we were to hand over abso-

lutely to the Commonwealth the power to control mining along the line, or whether we were to retain it in the hands of our own Government. We would not permit mining where there was danger to the railway.

The Premier: If we did and damage occurred, who would be responsible?

Mr. Frank Wilson: The State. The line could easily be deviated.

The Premier: Let the Commonwealth take the responsibility.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: The amendment handed us over bound hand and foot to the Commonwealth. All we need do was to hand them over the land they required for the maintenance and construction of the railway, and give them control of it to a depth of 150 feet. Then if the Commonwealth wished to protest against any mining operations that might cause trouble, they could put the matter before the State Government, and any Government in power would see the Commonwealth were fully protected. But to give the power absolutely in the hands of the Federal Government would mean that on the slightest intimation that there was danger, or alleged danger, mining of any description could be stopped throughout the length of the railway. South Australia would assuredly not agree to this. We should report progress, and the Premier could wire to South Australia asking what action was intended there, or we could refuse the request now, and next June there would be plenty of time to effect the amendment if it was thought desirable.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They might make that an excuse to stop building the railway.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: That was not likely. The Premier could bring the matter up at the forthcoming conference of Premiers.

The Premier: We could pass the amendment now and, if necessary, take it back in June.

Mr. FRANK WILSON: That would not be fair.

Mr. FOLEY: There was nothing wrong with the Premier's idea. The leader of

the Opposition was speaking from the State point of view, but all members were just as anxious to look after the interests of Western Australia. We could depend on the Commonwealth Government to give fair treatment equally with the State authorities. There was nothing to fear and nothing to lead us to believe the Commonwealth would refuse the right to mine, as long as the mining operations did not jeopardise the railway in any way.

The PREMIER: We were only granting the land to a depth of 150 feet; below that it would remain the property of the State. If we did not obtain their consent to mine and anything should occur, then we as a State would be responsible for the damage caused, but if they had to give consent to mine on their property and anything should occur, we would get all the benefits. There was no responsibility resting on us for a single penny. It was better to allow them to give consent: they could not refuse it. The only point was that by giving consent they gave it on condition that mining would be carried on in such a way that it would be making it certain that the railway would be protected. If anything should happen to the railway there would be no responsibility to the State.

Mr. Foley: There will be no dual control?

The PREMIER: None whatever.

Mr. HARPER: The control should remain in the hands of the State. We had inspectors of mines and it was under the control of the State that mining should be carried on, because we would have better facilities for protecting the railways of the Commonwealth Parliament.

Mr. TAYLOR: If we accepted the amendment of the Legislative Council no mining at all could be carried on within the area to be granted to the Federal Government for the construction of this railway line without their permission. We were really giving them control from the surface as far down as they liked to go, and no mining could be carried on without their permission. What was the idea of putting in 150 feet? The State

was anxious to have that railway, and Parliament had no desire to prevent the line being constructed at the earliest possible moment, and we should do nothing that would prevent the work being carried out. There was no necessity for the first portion of the clause dealing with the 150 feet, and if we accepted the other we would have to get the consent of the Federal Parliament before we could go into that area to operate as miners. There was ample safety, and especially at this stage, in granting them 150 feet, and when Parliament met next session, if it was necessary, and they were prepared to fall into line, the State might give the Federal Government the sole right to say whether mining operations should be carried on or not.

Mr. Underwood: Is there any possibility of mining on that line?

Mr. TAYLOR: There might be, and if the area we had to grant these people ran parallel with the line of reefs on the Golden Mile, where would we be? There was no reason why we should forego our rights below the 150ft. mark.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2.—Insert the following proviso:—
“Provided no mining operations shall be carried on under the land so granted without the approval of the Executive Government of the Commonwealth.”

The PREMIER moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	21
Noes	..	..	..	9
Majority for	..	..	..	12

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bath	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Collier	Mr. Munste
Mr. Foley	Mr. Price
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Gill	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Turvey
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Lander	Mr. Walker
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Heitmann
Mr. McDonald	(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. A. E. Plesse
Mr. Harper	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Jeffroy	Mr. F. Willson
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Male
Mr. Monger	(Teller).

Amendment thus passed.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a Message accordingly returned to the Legislative Council.

House adjourned at 12.17 a.m.

Legislative Council,

Friday, 22nd December, 1911.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 11 a.m. and read prayers.

QUESTION — FREEZING WORKS, WYNDHAM.

Hon. M. L. MOSS (for Hon. R. W. Pennefather) asked the Colonial Secretary: Whether the Government intend to