

**Legislative Assembly,***Monday, 20th August, 1894.*

Providing wells between Cue and Coolgardie—Investment of Savings Bank Funds—Nominal Index, Land Titles Office—Discrepancy in Returns showing Railway Revenue—Compensation paid for Lands resumed at Northam for purposes of Yilgarn Railway—Wharfage and Postal receipts included in Railway Revenue—Loan Bill (£150,000): second reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 7:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

**PROVIDING WELLS BETWEEN CUE AND COOLGARDIE.**

MR. ILLINGWORTH, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works whether the Government had taken any steps with a view of providing a chain of wells between Cue and Coolgardie, *via* Lake Carey and Mount Margaret; if not, would the Government give early consideration to this matter?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied that the Government had survey parties examining and surveying the country between Cue and Coolgardie, who would fix all the springs, watering places, and other natural features, and it was intended to await their report before doing anything in the direction referred to.

**INVESTMENT OF SAVINGS BANK FUNDS.**

MR. RANDELL, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier,—

1. Whether professional valuers were employed to value all properties on which advances from "Savings Bank Funds" were made?

2. Whether he would state the amounts advanced on the securities held, giving town and country securities separately?

3. Whether any arrears of interest had accrued; if so, how much, and for what periods; and whether on town or country properties?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied, as follows:—

1. Yes.			
2. Town Securities	£42,260	0	0
Country do.	5,530	0	0
	£47,790	0	0

3. Arrears of interest previous to that due for half-year ended 30th June, now in course of collection, amount to £57 8s. 5d., viz., £40 3s. 5d. town, and £17 5s. 10d. country securities.

**NOMINAL INDEX, LAND TITLES OFFICE.**

MR. RANDELL, in accordance with notice, asked the Attorney General,—

1. If a nominal index to the Land Titles Office had been compiled? if so,

2. The cost of compiling?

3. If it had been printed; if not, why not?

4. If compiled and printed, when would it be placed in the Land Titles Office for the use of the public?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) replied as follows:—

1. A nominal index has been compiled.

2. At a cost of £160 11s.

3. It is only partly printed owing to the want of special type, which had to be imported for the purpose, and to the disturbance of the Printing Department consequent upon the building operations. The work is being proceeded with as quickly as circumstances will allow.

**DISCREPANCY IN RAILWAY REVENUE RETURNS.**

MR. LOTON, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways, in what way was the sum of £7,713 accounted for, this amount being the difference in revenue from railways during the year ending June, 1894, as shown by return laid on the table by the Commissioner of Railways, and the revenue as shown by the Treasury accounts for the same period,—

Return from Railway Department	£141,257
Return—Treasury Account	133,544
Difference	£7,713

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied as follows:—The explanation is that the statement laid on the table of the House deals with the earnings asked for by the hon. member, while the Treasury statement only deals with the actual cash received. The statement attached shows the outstandings on 30th June, 1893, and 30th June, 1894, and accounts for the difference of £7,712 18s. 9d. referred to.

*The Commissioner of Railways in Account Current with the Colonial Treasurer.*

Dr.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Station Outstandings on							
30th June, 1893—							
Eastern Railway	...	3507	17	5			
Northern do.	...	250	8	11			
South-Western do.	...	77	17	6			
					3836	3	10
„ Revenue, Year ending							
30th June, 1894—							
Eastern Railway	...	112615	7	10			
Northern do.	...	12151	13	3			
South-Western do.	...	16230	8	3			
					141257	9	4
					£145093	13	2
Cr.							
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Cash lodged with							
Colonial Treasurer, 93-94	...				133544	10	7
„ Stations Outstandings on							
30th June, 1894—							
Eastern and South-							
Western Railways	...	9102	18	5			
Northern do.	...	872	19	4			
Cash Balance in trans-							
sits	...	1573	4	10			
					11549	2	7
					£145093	13	2
Outstandings on 30th June, 1894							
Do.	do.	1893	...		11549	2	7
					3836	3	10
					£7712	18	9

COMPENSATION PAID FOR LAND RESUMED AT NORTHAM FOR YILGARN RAILWAY.

MR. MONGER: I rise to move the motion standing in my name,—“That a return be laid on the table of the House showing: (1.) The numbers, areas, and owners of all blocks of land taken for railway purposes, in and around the town of Northam. (2.) The amount of compensation claimed and offered in each instance. (3.) The amounts awarded. (4.) The amount paid for costs to successful claimants.” In doing so it will be my duty to trespass on the patience of the House by a reference to the *Hansard* reports of some years back, when the question of the starting point of the Yilgarn railway was under discussion. I do not particularly care for the unpleasant duty that is cast upon me, as it will not only involve an attack upon an hon. member of this House, but also an attack upon the Ministry for doing what I call the first piece of political jobbery under Responsible Government, in favour of a certain town in this colony. In connection with this political jobbery, I can say that the member who represents that very important constituency, for the privileges conferred on him by the Forrest Ministry, has, in my opinion—and I be-

lieve in the opinion of most members of this House, sold his independence to the Forrest Ministry for ever and a day. I hope the hon. member is listening to the remarks I am making. When I shall presently call attention to the statements made by him in the House as reported in *Hansard*—and I take it for granted that *Hansard* speaks but the truth—and also to the statements made by my predecessor, a gentleman who now holds a very high and important position in the Ministry, I am sure no one can take exception to the position I have assumed in connection with this important matter. I have no desire to detain this House by going into the whole of the preliminaries connected with the question, a question in which I, perhaps, more than other members am interested, as the representative of a town and district whose interests were sacrificed in favour of another place; but I feel bound, occupying the position I do in the House, to call the attention of members to some statements made by the gentleman who now holds the position of Colonial Secretary, and more particularly to the remarks made by the gentleman who was then the member for Northam and who now holds the same position. When this question of the rival claims of York and Northam as the starting point of this railway was under discussion, a select committee was appointed, evidence was taken, and the Government were supposed to have acted in the best interests of Western Australia. I say now, without fear of contradiction, they did not act in the best interests of Western Australia. I say that a political “job” was committed, and I further say that when they perpetrated that “job” they purchased the support and interest of the member for Northam for all the time he may hold a seat in this House during their Administration. I am sorry to think that in the Loan Bill which the Premier proposes to introduce this evening there are other items of a somewhat similar nature in the way of political “jobs”; and I only hope that members will treat those items, not in the way in which they treated this Yilgarn railway “job,” but treat them in the way they deserve to be treated—throw them out of the Bill. I say, sir, that the action of the Ministry in connection with the question I am now trying

to bring under the notice of members is a standing disgrace to the Forrest Ministry. Time will show—it has already shown—that the figures which they received from the Engineer-in-Chief as to the amount of compensation to be paid for lands in Northam were totally incorrect and misleading. I will satisfy the House in a very few minutes that those figures were not only altogether wrong and misleading, but that they were concocted for the occasion. The hon. the Premier laughs. He may laugh, but the hon. gentleman will not be able to go behind what I say, that these figures were concocted for the occasion, so as to enable the Government to gain the one object they then had in view. I hope, however, as I have already said, that when members come to deal with the Loan Bill which the Premier is about to introduce this evening, they will not allow the hon. gentleman's natural eloquence or persuasive oratory to tempt them to agree to the sops to the districts down South which are included in this Bill. So far as I am concerned, and speaking as the representative of a district which has a grievance against the present Ministry for the unjust way they treated that district, I can only say that if my casting vote could result in these items being thrown out of the Bill, I hope to have the opportunity of recording it. In bringing forward the motion which I am now asking the House to agree to, I have first to call the attention of members to a question asked in another place, which was this: "What amount has been allowed by the Engineer-in-Chief, in his estimates on the alternate routes to Southern Cross, for compensation for townsite properties to be taken by the railway in either case?" The reply of the Colonial Secretary on that occasion was as follows: "The sum of £1,528 has been allowed by the Engineer-in-Chief for compensation in Northam. No compensation is required for York." That was the answer. No compensation is required for York, and the Engineer-in-Chief has allowed £1,528 for compensation in Northam. This statement and those figures were based upon the estimate of the Engineer-in-Chief, and, in conjunction with other statements made in this House by the hon. member for Northam, were one of the main reasons

which induced the House to agree to the railway going the route it did. These figures were criticised in very severe terms by the then member for York, the present Colonial Secretary, when the evidence of the Engineer-in-Chief before the select committee was brought up for discussion. The hon. gentleman ridiculed the Engineer-in-Chief's estimate of £1,528 as compensation for Northam lands, based as they were upon the innocent assumption that town lands in Northam could be resumed by the Government for £30 an acre, and said that in his opinion the compensation would be at least four times the amount included in the estimate of the Engineer-in-Chief. I do not wish to weary members by reading the remarks made by the Colonial Secretary (who was then the member for York), on that occasion; but I wish to bring under their notice the statements made by the hon. member for Northam in reply to those remarks. The hon. member said: "As to the question of compensation for Northam town lands, I believe the amount that will actually be paid will be nearer the sum named by the Engineer-in-Chief—that is £1,528—than that mentioned by the hon. member for York"—namely, four times that amount. The hon. member for Northam went on to say: "We cannot answer for the absentee owners, but the resident owners have signed a paper leaving the matter of compensation entirely in the hands of the Government." I say, sir, though that paper may have been signed, the Government thought very little of it. I also say, with all due respect to the hon. member, that he, himself, as one of the "resident owners" who was largely interested in this question of the resumption of Northam lands, did not carry out the pledge he gave in this House on that occasion, when the rival routes were being discussed, and when he led this House to believe that the owners of land in Northam required no compensation, so far as resident owners were concerned, the hon. member, himself, being one of the largest resident owners. I will ask the hon. member to get up in his place to-night, and tell us whether he, himself, did not receive in compensation, for the lands in which he is interested, a sum almost equal to the amount estimated by

the Engineer-in-Chief as compensation for the whole of the land that would have to be resumed and paid for in Northam? The hon. member, of course, will have the opportunity of denying or accepting the statement I have made—that he, himself, after telling this House that the estimate of the Engineer-in-Chief, £1,528, was nearer correct than the estimate of the hon. member for York, namely, four times that amount—that he (the hon. member for Northam), himself, actually received in compensation an amount almost equal to the sum he stated in this House would be as much as would be required to pay compensation for all the lands resumed for this railway in the town which he represents. I have not seen the figures representing the amounts actually paid by the Government, but I challenge the hon. member to deny that he, himself, did not receive a sum equal to the whole amount which the Engineer-in-Chief estimated as the sum that would have to be paid for land in Northam, and which the hon. member, himself, led this House to believe was a fairly accurate estimate. This House will, in a few days, be called upon to consider other railway schemes, and, no doubt, similar statements will be made to induce members to support those schemes as were made to induce them to support the Northam in preference to the York route for this Yilgarn line. No doubt, too, those statements will be supported by the Government. But I hope that the lesson we have learnt from the hon. member for Northam will be the means of inducing members to be very wary in again accepting the figures of the Government. When I say “of the Government,” I mean of the gentleman who prepares the Estimates which the Government from time to time bring forward in this House. With all due respect for the attempt at denial which the Engineer-in-Chief made to the statement and the figures I recently made use of, I say those figures were very nearly correct; and if the Engineer-in-Chief and the Minister of Railways compare the figures which were submitted to this House about three years ago, they will find that the figures I made use of on a recent occasion were much nearer the mark than those which the Engineer-in-Chief submitted in a recent issue of a certain paper. I do not

think it is necessary for me to detain the House any longer. I have told the hon. member for Northam that what he stated in this House was almost as near to being untrue as you can get; I do not think I can use more forcible language. I can only repeat that in my opinion the action of the Government in connection with the starting point of this railway was a political “job,” and it was the first attempt under Responsible Government in this colony by means of which the support of a member of this House has been purchased by the Ministry—a member who is now unable to take any action in this House contrary to the wishes of the Premier and his colleagues. Sir, I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

MR. THROSSELL: I desire to thank the hon. member, in the first place, for not having taken advantage of my absence to bring this motion before the House the other day. I recognise his kindness, and I recognise that he is quite within his privileges when he brings forward a motion of this kind. But when the hon. member brought it forward I thought it was in order to obtain information that would be of interest to the House and the country generally, and not in order to make it a vehicle for a personal attack upon myself. With regard to his statement that I have sold my services to the Government, I desire to throw his statement back upon him with the deepest feeling of indignation. If I wished to do so, and to attribute motives to any members of this House, I might retort by saying that although the hon. member sits on the opposite side of the House he is a stronger supporter of the Government, *sub rosa*, than I am myself. I think it is altogether out of place for the hon. member for York to attribute motives to any member of this House. In quoting what he did from *Hansard*, he quoted what was quite right as to what was said on that occasion. I have read it, and I can remember the debate that took place. The hon. member for York (Mr. Parker), very wisely, I think, challenged the figures of the Engineer-in-Chief, and told him he must be very innocent if he thought the people of Northam were going to accept £30 an acre for town land. It is also quite true that I stated that we would sign a paper and present it to the Government—[MR. MONGER: You never did.]—in which

the matter of compensation was to be left entirely in the hands of the Government; and I can inform the House that some of the residents of Northam did present such a paper, in which the question of compensation was left entirely in the hands of the Government. But we all know, from experience, here and elsewhere, that the ways of Government are mysterious; and that paper, instead of being made use of, was returned by the Government, who said it was not worth the paper it was written on. What would the hon. member for York have done under the circumstances? Were the people of Northam to run after the Government and press upon them a document which they said was not worth the paper it was written on, but which was presented to them in all good faith? I do not know exactly at the present moment what the compensation paid by the Government has been. There is an hon. member opposite who can speak from his own knowledge on the subject, he having been the Government valuator, and I think he will tell you that the value paid for the land in Northam was a fair and just valuation, considering the enhanced value which the land had acquired by reason of this railway. I think the debate which the hon. member quoted from took place in 1892, but this compensation question was not finally settled until 1894, and the value of land had increased. Had this railway run through York, instead of Northam, what a tremendous change would have come over the value of York land. It would have quadrupled in value. Why should Northam lands not increase in value in the same proportion? I strongly resent the insinuations cast upon me by the hon. member in connection with this matter—insinuations which are unworthy of him, and which I hurl back upon him, when he accuses me of selling myself to the Government. I have never yet sold my independence to the Government, or to anybody else, and I think it ill becomes the hon. member for York to attribute these motives to a member of this House. So long as the Government act in the future as they have done in the past, so long will they have my support, and the support, I think, of every member of this House. But to tell a member that for the sake of a paltry few hundred pounds he has sold his independence is an insult which I resent with the strongest feeling of

indignation. I tell the hon. member this: I am just as independent as he is, and I trust he will act the part of an honourable man and make an apology. During the past four years that I have had the honour of representing my district I challenge the hon. member, or anyone else, to show—although I have been an open and a warm and honest supporter of the Forrest Government—that I have ever done anything to justify the remark that I have sold my independence? I scorn the imputation. Coming back, sir, to the question of compensation, why has it exceeded the estimate? The reason why it has exceeded the estimate is not far to seek. We are reaping, I am thankful to say, the advantage of our own enterprise, and the advantages we expected to accrue from this railway passing through our township; and members will be glad to know that this compensation money in many cases has been of the greatest possible benefit to many good and worthy old settlers. [Mr. MONAGHAN: What about yourself?] Speaking roughly, as to the total amount of compensation paid, I believe it will run to £6,000 or £7,000. The hon. member says I have, myself, received more than the Engineer-in-Chief's estimate for the whole of the Northam lands. True it is, but that compensation was in a great measure in respect of land in which others as well as myself were interested. I regret having to make this personal allusion, but it has been forced upon me. I made no claim against the Government myself. When the matter was left in the hands of my solicitor I told him so, and that whatever other people might do it behoved me to stand to my word. But when it became apparent that the Government were determined to pay compensation, and that everybody who had land that had been resumed was receiving compensation, was I to stand by and refuse what was offered? I hope I am not a fool or a Don Quixote enough for that; nor do I think that the hon. member for York is. I believe that in my case I got about £1,500, but I may say, in explanation, that the greater portion of that money was not mine, but belonged to one who is near and dear to me, and who had the title to that land. In another case, an old widow lady obtained £800, which was a very handsome reward. But no claim was made, so far as I was

concerned. The Government sent up their own valuers, and in the majority of cases the amount offered by these valuers was accepted without demur. In some cases the land had changed owners, and it was only natural that the new owners should place as high a value on this land as they reasonably could. But, so far as I know, there were no arbitration cases. Every case was settled amicably, so far as I know. While I heartily support the motion before the House, in so far as the object of it may be to gain information which may be of public interest, I may say once more I regret that an hon. member, who is generally very happy and courteous in his remarks, should on this occasion have so far forgotten himself as to make a personal attack upon myself. I am afraid the "Wealth of Nations" has had some effect upon the hon. member. I regret at any rate he should have thought fit, when bringing forward a motion of this kind, to make it a cloak for casting a scandalous reflection upon myself as a member of this House; and I hope, as I said before, he will in his better moments act the part of an honourable man and say he is sorry for it.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: There is no doubt that when the question of the route of this Yilgarn railway came before the House two or three years ago, one of the reasons which influenced members in favour of Northam was this question of compensation. I think the amount which it was then stated would be required for compensation in Northam was about £1,500, and it is news for us to hear now that the Government have actually paid something like £7,000. When this question of route was under discussion in the House the hon. member for Northam then distinctly stated that the owners of land in Northam—I think I am correct—were willing to make a present of the land required for this railway to the Government, and that the owners of land had signed a paper to that effect. Yet we are now told that the Government have already paid between £6,000 and £7,000 to these people. I cannot help thinking that the hon. member for York has very good reason to bring this matter before the House, and that the district he represents has reason to feel that it has a grievance against the Government

for the manner they have acted in this matter. I think, with the hon. member, that there has been a little political jobbery connected with it, because the Government need not have paid this heavy compensation. I have heard it stated that this precious piece of paper that was got up at Northam at the time contained the signatures of people who held no land at all. Of course these people were quite willing to give up what they did not possess. It is all very well for the hon. member to say now that he was not going to stand by and refuse compensation when his neighbours were getting it. But the hon. member was the one who offered the inducement to this House to take the line through Northam, by saying that the people of Northam would require no compensation. Now it appears they have received some thousands of pounds in compensation, the hon. member himself receiving no less than £1,500. It is no use, I suppose, pursuing the matter further, though there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that the route of this line has gone through the wrong place. [THE PREMIER: You always thought that.] It goes through such poor country that the Government have to run their trains during the night so that people may not see the nakedness of the land. The traffic is always delayed, too, for the want of water on the route, although we were told there would be ample water and that there would be very little expense in obtaining it as compared with the York route. We now know that this and other statements made at the time were misleading. As the Premier has a long task before him this evening I will not detain the House any longer.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The Government will be very glad to produce the returns asked for.

MR. MONGER: I was glad to hear the hon. member for Northam, in his usual virtuous indignation style, saying that he resented the statements I made, and talking about hurling them back. With all due respect to the hon. member, I can only repeat that everything I said appeared to me to be perfectly true and correct, and, from his remarks in reply, I have no reason to change that opinion; nor have I the slightest idea of tendering any apology, or withdrawing anything I

said. I have only to recall to his attention the statements made by him in this House, as reported in *Hansard*, and ask him to be his own judge. If, when he has studied these statements, and reflected upon them, he thinks he is entitled to an apology, I should be the first one to make that apology. But I say that everything I stated was perfectly true. I challenge him to deny it; and, at the present moment, nothing is further from my mind than to tender the slightest apology to him for anything I said about him.

Motion put and passed.

#### WHARFAGE AND POSTAL RECEIPTS INCLUDED IN RAILWAY REVENUE.

\*MR. SIMPSON, in accordance with notice, moved for a return, showing for year ending 30th June, 1894,—

1. The amount received as wharfage included in the revenue of the Railway Department.

2. The amounts received for wharfage at Geraldton, Fremantle, Bunbury, and Albany respectively.

3. The amount of revenue derived from the Post and Telegraph Department by the Railway Department for conveyance of mails.

The hon. member said this return would be supplementary to the return already laid on the table by the Commissioner of Railways the other day, showing the receipts in connection with the various railway lines; and, as the receipts from wharfage and from the postal department formed a portion of the railway revenue, he thought it would be useful for members, and for the country, to know to what extent the receipts from these sources helped to swell the railway revenue.

Motion put and passed.

#### LOAN BILL (£1,500,000).

##### SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest), in moving the second reading of a Bill to authorise the raising of a sum of £1,500,000 by loan, for the construction of certain public works, and other purposes, said: Mr. Speaker—Sir, it is just about three years and a half ago that I had the duty cast upon me of introducing the first Loan Bill of £1,336,000, after we received our

present Constitution. I have again, sir—although in the interval I have had to submit another Loan Bill to this House of £540,000—I have again, sir, to-night, in the second Parliament of our new Constitution, to propose to this House that we should embark upon another Loan Bill for the prosecution of the public works of the country. I may say, sir, that I rise with pleasure to undertake this duty, but, at the same time, with a deep sense of responsibility for the action which I propose that this House and the colony should take. It must be well known to everyone in this House and to everyone in the colony that we cannot build our railways, and carry on other public works of magnitude, from current revenue. That, I think, anyone who takes an intelligent interest in what is going on in the colony must admit. The revenue of the colony is increasing largely, no doubt; but in an enormous territory such as we have the control of, the expenditure grows quite as quickly as the revenue. In fact, if the revenue were very much larger than it is at the present time, there would not be the slightest difficulty in expending it upon works of pressing importance. It is, also, I think, apparent to everyone that this immense territory cannot progress unless we have means of internal communication, unless we have railways and other public works necessary to develop it.

#### *The Loan of 1891.*

As I said just now, sir, it is three years and a half ago since I had the duty cast upon me of introducing the first Loan Bill under our present Constitution. At that time many persons in the colony, and many persons in this House, thought that the Government were going too fast, that they were embarking upon too great obligations at that time. I think I may safely say that there was a strong opinion amongst many of the best men in the colony at that time that the loan we then proposed was rather too great a loan. A good many thought it was altogether too great, but a good many more considered that the responsibility was rather too great for the colony to undertake. I would now ask those members of this House, and those persons throughout the colony who held that opinion on that

occasion, whether they think so now. Although since that time I have had to obtain from this House its approval to a further loan of £540,000, I wonder whether there is anyone in the colony at the present time, whether there is any member in this House who opposed the Loan Bill of 1891, who now thinks he was right and that the Government were wrong. I doubt it. They must all now recognise that the loan of 1891 was a measure that was justified. It has justified itself since. It has been the means of doing a large amount of good to the colony; in fact, it has infused new life into it. And, I do not believe that when this debate is ended—and no doubt there will be a long debate upon this Bill—I do not believe that when this debate is ended, it will be found that any member will have stated that the Government were wrong in introducing that first Loan Bill. When I introduced that Bill, on the 5th February, 1891, I said, "Can anyone in this House bring himself to believe that when we have expended this £1,336,000 we are now asking the House to approve of, on the objects in the schedule of the Bill, that we shall wish we had never borrowed it?" That money, and, as I have already said, £540,000 in addition, has been practically spent—it has not been all spent, but it has all been allocated; and I ask the House to say whether it now thinks there is anyone who wishes we had never borrowed it. On the same occasion I challenged anyone to show that the colony had been retarded or injured by its borrowing policy, and I do the same now. It is not the borrowing of money that ruins people, or that ruins a country, it is the injudicious way in which the money is often spent. This colony will never be ruined by borrowing, but it may be plunged into difficulties by injudicious expenditure. I venture to say that the money we have borrowed during the last three and a half years has been wisely and judiciously expended.

*Can we afford the Loan.*

Sir, in considering this new loan there are two questions we have to consider—first of all, are the works proposed to be entered upon necessary and urgent works; and, secondly, can the colony afford it?

In other words, will it pay? I have no hesitation in saying, for myself and for the Government, that all other considerations except these two must be set aside. If the works are not necessary and urgent, and if we cannot afford this loan, it does not matter how pleasant and advantageous the works may be, we shall have to do the same as private individuals have to do in similar circumstances—we shall have to do without them. The Government take their stand upon that foundation. We take our stand upon these two propositions: that the works we propose in this Loan Bill are necessary and urgent, and we also say that the colony can afford to undertake them, and that it will pay the colony to construct them. In order, sir, to arrive at a decision upon this matter—for it all comes back to this question of finance, whether it will pay the colony to embark upon this expenditure, and to take this additional obligation upon its shoulders—in order to arrive at a decision upon this all-important question, I would like to compare our position to-day with the position we occupied at the beginning of 1891, when the present Government came into office, upon the introduction of Responsible Government. The revenue of the colony at that time was £414,313. At the present time the revenue of the colony amounts to £681,245. During these three and a half years, therefore, our revenue has increased by the sum of £266,932. The colony's expenditure at that time was £401,787, whilst at the present time it is £656,356; so that we have increased our expenditure by £254,619. In other words, although our revenue has increased, our expenditure has also increased. But that will always be the case, I hope. It is not our duty to hoard up the revenue of the colony; it is our duty to expend it for the public benefit. We had this money to expend, or we certainly would not have expended it. Our credit balance at the beginning of 1891 was £45,600. On the 30th June last we had a credit balance of £88,020, showing that we have been living quite within our means. Notwithstanding all our obligations, and the increased interest on loans, we have managed the affairs of the country in such a way that we have a credit balance of £42,420 more than we had three and a half years ago, when



we undertook the Government of the country. The population at the beginning of 1891, when we took office, was 46,290 souls, all told; at present it is 75,919, showing an increase during that period of 64 per cent. At the time we took office the public debt of the colony was £1,284,079, or an indebtedness of £28 per head of the population. During that period of three and a half years our liabilities in respect of interest and sinking fund have increased from £71,774 to £128,384, and our present indebtedness is £3,128,808, or £41 per head of the population. I may mention, in passing, that we have at the present time about half-a-million of money in hand out of the two last Loans—the Loan of 1891 and the Loan of 1893. But all that money has been pledged for works in hand; so that, although the money has not been spent, it has been allocated or ear-marked, and it cannot be expended in any other way than in the way it has been already arranged, and for which it was borrowed.

#### *Our present Indebtedness.*

I have already said that the indebtedness of the colony at the present time is about £41 per head of the population. That, I admit, is a considerable amount for any colony to owe. But, if we compare our indebtedness per head of the population with the indebtedness of the other colonies, although it may still appear considerable, I think we need not be altogether alarmed. The present indebtedness of Victoria per head of the population is about the same as our own—£41; in New South Wales it is £44; in Queensland, £74; in South Australia, £65; in Tasmania, £46; and in New Zealand, £62. In case £41 per head may appear very large to some members, I may point out that in 1891—which is the latest date I can get accurate statistics on the subject at present—the proportion of our public debt to the number of bread-winners in the colony was, at that date, much lower than the proportion in any other Australasian colony. At that time the proportion of the public indebtedness to the number of bread-winners was:—In Queensland, £166 per head; in New Zealand, £156; in Tasmania, £115; in New South Wales, £105;

in Victoria, £87; whilst, in Western Australia, it was only £66 per head. I have looked into this matter, and, notwithstanding the increase of our public debt since 1891, I do not think that, with the large influx of grown men to our gold-fields, the position of the colony in this respect has been disturbed. I believe that our present indebtedness per head of the number of bread-winners is by far the smallest in these colonies. I think, sir, that is a matter which should encourage us. It is a matter that has given me very much pleasure, when looking into it; and I have no doubt that members will be glad to know that, while our indebtedness per head of the population is less than the indebtedness of any of the other colonies except Victoria, which is about the same, our indebtedness per head compared with the number of bread-winners is only £66 per head as compared with £87 in Victoria, which is the lowest of all the other Australasian colonies.

#### *Imports and Exports.*

The value of the imports of this colony for 1890, when we came into office, was £874,447; whereas the imports for 1893 amounted to £1,494,438, and, for the first half of 1894, the imports of the colony reached the comparatively enormous sum of £1,010,126. Members will notice that the value of the imports during the last six months is about two-thirds of the value of the imports for the whole of the previous year. This is a matter that would have been altogether satisfactory if the exports of the colony had also increased in the same proportion. But I regret to say that our exports have not grown as we would all desire to see them grow. This, sir, is a most serious question, and I shall have a good deal to say about it before I sit down. I wish to draw the attention of members most seriously to the fact that the export trade of the colony is not in the satisfactory condition I would desire, and which members would desire. A great deal of this is no doubt accounted for by the low prices ruling for some of the staple products of the country—wool, pearlshell, timber, and almost everything we produce for export. Still, although this accounts to some extent for the unsatisfactory export returns of the colony, the fact is

staring us in the face that our exports have not increased, but, as a matter of fact, have decreased during this period I may say of prosperity. For 1890 our exports were valued at £671,813, and out of that amount £86,664 was for gold, leaving our exports for that year (exclusive of gold) at £585,149. Three years afterwards, in 1893, the total value of our exports had certainly increased to £918,147, but, of that amount, no less than £421,385 represented the value of our gold export; so that the value of the exports which the colony has been accustomed to rely upon, only amounted for 1893 to £496,762, as compared with £585,149 in 1890. For the first half of this present year, our exports amounted to £440,135 only; and, out of that, we exported gold to the value of £288,210; so that, although we have imported to the value of £1,010,126 during the first half of the year, the value of the exports which we have been accustomed to in the past only reached £151,925 during the same period. As I have already said, the low price of wool—and, in estimating the value of our exports of this article our Customs authorities have recently placed a much lower value upon it than they used to put upon it in years past—the low price of wool and other staple articles of export has, no doubt, had a great deal to do with the decreased value of our exports; still, the fact remains, and it affords serious cause for reflection, that the ordinary exports of the colony are not increasing as we would wish. I will only at this moment say that I hope members will give their most careful attention to this matter, and that they will look into it, and not be so ready to oppose the Government in its desire to foster the occupation of the land, to encourage its cultivation, and to increase the production of the country. That is the point I want to come to. I should like members to carefully consider this matter—the hon. member for the Gascoyne particularly—and not to be opposing the Government in its anxious desire to promote production, and to develop the industries of the country by all the means in its power.

#### *Our Gold Export.*

One pleasing feature in connection with the exports of the country is that which

I have already indicated, the increasing value of our gold export. The total export of gold from the colony has now reached the magnificent sum of £1,230,394; and, what is more satisfactory still, is that we are only just beginning. So far we have only been scratching about, here and there, on the surface of the auriferous belt of this country. I say advisedly we have only been scratching the surface, so far, and done very little in the way of systematically prosecuting the industry. On the whole of the Murchison Goldfields we have not more batteries than I can count on my hand; and on our Yilgarn Goldfields I do not think we have as many as that. Therefore I say we have hardly begun yet to develop the auriferous resources of this great country, and this magnificent sum of £1,230,394, which represents the value of our gold exports up to the present, is what has been obtained by what I call scratching about here and there. When I introduced the Loan Bill of 1891 the export of gold for the previous year was only £86,663, whereas for the year ending the 30th June just passed, the value of our gold exports reached £560,162. Prior to 1886 there was no gold worth mentioning exported from this colony; the value of our first export for that year was £1,207.

#### *The Demand for a Loan Bill.*

With regard, sir, to this Bill that I have now the honour and the pleasure of introducing, I may say that, as in 1891 the people of the colony demanded that a Loan Bill should be introduced, so do the people of the colony now demand that another Loan Bill should be introduced. The country has been appealed to on this question, and I say there is not a single member in this House who owes his seat to his having opposed this Loan Bill in its entirety. Certainly one or two did oppose some of the smaller items in it; but not one single member returned to this House went before his constituents and said he was opposed to the borrowing policy of the Government as disclosed by me in my Speech at Bunbury on the 23rd May last.

#### *Our Public Credit.*

Our credit, sir, at the present time, I am glad to say is better than ever it was since we have been a colony. We are in better repute at the present moment in

London, the great financial centre of the world, than any other Australian colony. I do not say it in the way of boasting, but as a fact; and, as a fact, I think I am perfectly justified in stating it. We are the only one of these colonies at the present moment that has not a deficit. Although we have been lavish in our expenditure—lavish in our expenditure on useful public works, I mean; although we have not hoarded up our money, but spent it freely on useful and reproductive works, still to-day we have the satisfaction of knowing that we have a credit balance of nearly double the amount we had when we took upon ourselves the management of our own affairs, three and a half years ago. As members are aware, during those three years and a half we have increased our public debt by £1,844,729; and, although we had to provide the interest on £3,128,808, and to carry on the Government of the colony with its ever-increasing demands, still, we have not come to this House with any scheme for extra taxation. I am aware that the Tariff Act, which was introduced under considerable pressure last session, is likely to result in an increase of revenue—I am looking into that matter now, and in a few days I hope to be able to give the House some further information on the subject—still I say that, without imposing any extra taxation upon the country, as we promised in 1891, we have been able to meet our increasing liabilities and to carry on the work of Government, and not only to maintain our credit, but to improve it, and after three years and a half have nearly double the surplus balance we had when we entered into office. I will go further than that. I firmly believe that when we have borrowed this £1,500,000, and expended it on the works named in the schedule of this Bill, the colony will be in a far better position than it is at present to pay, not only its way, but also the interest upon its public debt. My firm belief is that the colony will be even in a better position than it is now to meet its liabilities, when the works included in this Loan Bill are carried out, and this money is expended.

*Extension of our Railway Policy.*

Sir, as indicating the movement and progress of the colony since the present Government came into office, we have

only to look at our railway receipts. I remember that when, in 1891, I told the House that a sum of £45,813 had been received from our railways in 1890, some hon. members could scarcely believe it. But the fact remained that our railway receipts in 1890 were £45,813, whereas, for the year ended the 30th June last, our railway receipts amounted to £133,544. The actual earnings were more than that, being £141,257; while the expenditure on our railways for the same period was only £103,972, leaving a profit of £37,285 upon the year's transactions—a sum equal to the interest, at 4 per cent., upon nearly a million of money. I ask the House, what is the bulk of this loan required for? About three-fourths of the whole is for railway construction. About three-fourths of the whole public debt of this country, up to the present time, has been expended on railways, and only one-fourth upon other undertakings; and I do not think that the Loan Bill before us this evening will alter that proportion, when we have expended this million and a half. Surely we cannot engage in better work than in extending our railway system, through this immense territory, and give the people in it facilities of transit, and a cheap and rapid means of communication. I do not see how we could spend our loan money upon more useful works. As was stated in His Excellency's Speech at the opening of Parliament, the policy of this Government is to promote the progress and development of the mineral resources of the colony by constructing railways, and other useful and necessary works, and, at the same time, to encourage the occupation and opening up of our agricultural lands. I think that is, putting it in a few words, the policy we desire to pursue—the development of our mineral resources, and the opening up of our lands. The two must go together; and I believe if we carry on these objects, hand-in-hand—if we do all we can to encourage the occupation and cultivation of the soil, and to settle people on the land, and endeavour to increase the production of the land, and at the same time do all in our power to encourage the development of our mineral wealth—I believe if we do these things simultaneously, we shall be on the right road. Some time ago, I remember warning this

House—I think it was in introducing that Bill which was so much discussed at the time, the Homesteads Act—that if we went on with one and not with the other, disaster would happen in the end; and I am as firmly convinced of that to-day as I was then.

*A Glance at the Future.*

Now there is one thing I am sure members would like me to state as correctly as I am able to, and that is, what in my opinion will be the position of the colony, at the end of say another three years and a half, when we have expended all this million and a half of money that I ask the House to approve of to-night. I believe the position will be something like this: The public debt of the colony at that time will be about four millions and a half; and the population of the colony, if we increase at the same rate as we have increased during the last three and a half years—and I think I am not taking an extravagant estimate if I estimate the increase of population at the same ratio during the next three and a half years as during the past three and a half years—if we do this, the population of the colony by the time this money is expended may be put down at about 125,000. Our indebtedness then will be about £36 per head, as against £28 per head when this Government assumed office, and our public debt was only £1,284,079, and as against £41, our present indebtedness per head of the population. That is the conclusion I have arrived at in regard to the position the colony will occupy financially at the end of the next three and a half years, provided we do not borrow more money than this £1,500,000. I think, sir, if my estimate is correct—and it is upon these estimates that I am basing all my arguments, and taking up the position I do to-night—if my estimate of the position of the colony is correct, and that our indebtedness per head of the population will not be more than £36 when this loan is expended, I think that I have shown that we are not acting unreasonably, but acting prudently and cautiously, in advising the borrowing of this money.

*The Murchison Goldfields Railway.*

I think, sir, it is desirable that I should to-night deal, very shortly, with the more

important items included in the schedule of this Bill. On the occasion of moving the second reading of the Loan Bill of 1891, I did not follow this course; I left the items on the schedule to be discussed as they came on in committee. But I think that on this occasion a few words of explanation may be desirable, and will not be altogether unacceptable to members. The first item on this Bill is the railway to the Murchison Goldfields, for which a sum of £409,000 is provided. I am prepared to admit, with regard to this item, that the case to be made out in its favour may not be quite so strong as in the case of the proposed Coolgardie railway. But I take my stand upon this: I have visited the locality, I have seen the country, and I have come to the conclusion that the work is justified. I do not know whether I could have come to that conclusion if I had not visited the locality; but, having visited it, I have no hesitation in recommending that this work should be undertaken. During the time we have been in office, say since the beginning of 1891, 68,937 ounces of gold, valued at £261,960, have been produced from these goldfields, and exported from the colony. I think this is a good start, and I am sure hon. members will regard it as a very good start, in considering the desirability of undertaking this great public work. And you must remember that this amount has been obtained almost without any machinery being set up on the field. It has been obtained by scratching about, and by shallow sinkings, and by various means—systematic in many cases, I must admit, but still sinking at no great depth. Still, this immense sum of over a quarter of a million in gold has been obtained and exported from these goldfields. The auriferous area, to my knowledge, is very extensive. The stone generally is rich in most cases, and very rich in some cases. Besides that, we must not forget—although if it were only for this reason I would not advocate the railway—we must not forget that the line passes through, and is adjacent to a fairly good pastoral country, and that it will be a new centre for all the pastoral country lying away to the northward, even to the far Kimberley. This will make Cue, or some place on the Murchison goldfields, a centre to which stock may be taken, in order that it may

be transported to the central markets. It will also encourage the extension of settlement to a very much larger extent than at present. I really believe—and I have given this matter as much consideration as I have had time to—that this is one of the great works this country should undertake at the present time. I believe it will prove reproductive, and will open up this vast auriferous area called the Murchison goldfields, and will not only open up a rich auriferous country, but will also stimulate pastoral enterprise to the northward and the north-east.

*The Coolgardie Railway.*

The next item, No. 2, is the railway to the Coolgardie goldfields, viz., the extension from Southern Cross to Coolgardie, £228,000. I think every one will admit that this is a work absolutely necessary. If you were to take a ballot of this House, I do not think you would find any single individual who would say he is opposed to this railway. Since the beginning of 1891 we have exported 155,753 ounces of gold from the Yilgarn and Coolgardie goldfields, valued at £591,861, and this is only the beginning. It is becoming so common to hear of rich discoveries almost every day, that we are growing quite used to them, and pay little heed to the frequent reports. Nearly all the reasons which apply to the Murchison goldfields railway apply to this line, except those connected with pastoral settlement, and something may be done even in that direction by the conservation of water. This railway will also bring the Dundas Hills into close connection with Coolgardie, and no doubt it will be as easy to get to Dundas Hills by that railway as by way of Esperance Bay. I need not labour this question, because I believe the colony as a whole, and the members of this House as a body, have come to the conclusion that this work is absolutely necessary.

*Railway from Donnybrook towards Bridgetown.*

The next item is a railway towards Bridgetown, for which £80,000 is proposed in the schedule. I must say this work, in my opinion, is not less important than the others. This district has tin, if it has not gold; and since

the beginning of 1891 the value of tin exported from Greenbushes has been £42,085. Hon. members will recollect there has been a great fall in the price, but notwithstanding that, the total value of tin exported has been £42,085 from only a few hundred acres. I wish there were some other mineral spots of a few hundred acres which would produce as much. I ask hon. members not to despise this export from a few hundred acres, which have been worked only with very primitive appliances—far more primitive appliances than on the goldfields. That tinfield is only in its infancy, and I have no hesitation in saying there will be many thousands of pounds worth of tin exported from that district so soon as we provide railway communication, and people are encouraged to go into it and see what is there. I believe there will be a large increase in the yield when we have better means of communication, but even during the last six months, notwithstanding the low price, £6,808 worth has been exported from this place. But the main reason I have for urging this railway is that it will open up a portion of the colony most fitted to support a large population. I may tell hon. members that during the last three and a half years, since we took office, we have imported into the colony £600,000 worth of food that we could easily grow here. It will, no doubt, be said by some hon. members who may speak against this measure, that there is plenty of land along the railways already constructed; but, I say the most of it, or the best of it, is in the hands of private individuals, or in the hands of land companies. Where, I would ask, are the places along the railways where the liberal land laws of this country have that free scope to the large extent that I hope to see them have? This Bridgetown railway will not run through lands occupied or sold to persons who do not make use of them, but through lands belonging to the Crown, where these laws will have free scope. No doubt some hon. members may think that production and cultivation are getting on very well in this country; in fact, I have heard an hon. member quoting from statistics in this House to show that we have as large an amount of land under cultivation as

many other countries have. I do not dispute that, but I say our nearest neighbour, South Australia, and the one that supplies us with a great many things we require at present, has, per head of population, an average of  $8\frac{1}{2}$  acres under cultivation; while we, in this country, have only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres per head under cultivation. There the land may be better, and the climate is not better than ours, but they have more than three times as much land per head under cultivation as we have. My object, and the object of the Government, in including this item in the Loan Bill, is to try and do justice to every part of the colony. We do not desire to look after one part or another, but we cast our eyes all over this immense territory, and try to do justice to every part of it, and to those who are trying to develop it. And I am of opinion that this is the very best part of the colony at the present time that is not yet opened up, and that requires to be opened up in order to increase our production. I should like hon. members to look into this measure, and judge of it by past experience. Of all the works, the most opposed in 1892 was the South-Western Railway. The Government had more trouble in carrying that railway, not only in this House, but also in another place, than any other work with which we have been associated. I would ask hon. members to look at the results of that railway, and see what has been done in the way of traffic on it, and then say whether they think the Government were wrong in building that railway. The hon. member for the Gascoyne (Mr. R. F. Sholl), in regard to the proposal for building that railway, when that item of the Loan Bill was before the House in 1891, asked hon. members, "Were they going to build a railway to bring down a few tons of fruit." And he went on to say, "I do not believe it will pay the interest on the capital expended on it, not only for one generation, but for two or three generations, even if it pays its working expenses." That is what the hon. member said, at that time, and I want to pin him to those words. He said also—and these words are very important—"If I should turn out to be wrong, I shall be the very first to acknowledge that I was mistaken, and that the Government were right." Well, I

know the hon. member prides himself on his straightforwardness, on his ideas of right, and on his integrity; therefore I now ask him to acknowledge that the Government, and the hon. members who assisted them in carrying that item of the Loan Bill, were right and that he was wrong. I ask him to do so because it has been proved that the line is paying already more than its working expenses. For the twelve months ended 30th of June, 1894, the revenue earned by that railway was £16,290, and the expenditure was £12,191, leaving a credit balance of £4,099; and that is not in one, two, or three generations, but in the very first year. There is not a railway in this colony of which this statement could be made, in reference to the first, or even the second year's returns. I do not believe there is a railway in this colony that has been able to show the result that I have now great pleasure in quoting to the House. I only ask hon. members to be guided by the experience of the working of this one railway from Perth to Bunbury, the returns including also the traffic on the Donnybrook section, and in these returns there are scarcely any cross-charges, but these are the actual receipts, viz., £16,290 for twelve months, as against an expenditure of £12,191. I should like hon. members to look into this matter, and see if the Government were wrong in proposing in 1891 to build this railway from Perth to Bunbury, which some one said was wanted for bringing up a few tons of fruit and a few fowls. Surely, hon. members who opposed that railway, on grounds that are proved to be wrong, should now look more carefully into this proposal which we now make for extending that railway to other parts of the South-Western district, before they condemn us for doing so. It has been said by some persons, and also by members of this House, that because I happen to represent an adjoining district, therefore this Bridgetown Railway is a sop by me to the people of the Nelson district. I do not know why I should be anxious to construct a work if it will not pay, and will only end in disaster, and thus be a discredit to myself. I can assure hon. members that I am not prepared to advocate any work that will turn out a failure, and bring disaster to the colony, and discredit to myself. I have no

hesitation in saying that this work will be a work that will be reproductive. I do not say it will be reproductive in a year or two; but I believe it is a work we should enter upon, because it will be the means of increasing our production—the very thing we want at present. We are making large discoveries of gold in the colony, and a sure and certain market for all we produce is being created; but what is the use of it to the colony if everything we require has to be imported from other countries? We want to turn the land to account, and make it productive; and the only way to do this is by giving facilities of transit in those parts of the country that are capable of development. I believe that the land in the South-Western corner of the colony is capable of large improvement, and that it will pay to develop and cultivate, if only good and certain means of transit are provided.

*Railway to the Collie Coalfield.*

The next item in the Schedule, No. 4, £60,000, is a line of railway to the Collie Coalfield. I have been amazed at the reception that has been given to this scheme by some hon. members. One would suppose, to hear some persons talk, that the discovery of coal was a matter of no importance to this colony, whereas it is the one great thing we require—equal to a goldfield. Perhaps more advantageous than the discovery of a goldfield is the discovery of a coalfield. But some hon. members seem to think that because I have a constituency down there I am trying to do some sort of “job.” I do not know that I am so dependent on any particular district of the colony; but even if I were, I do not think any constituency would ask me to do such a thing, and if it did, I think I would rather let the constituency go to Jericho. But when I see a coalfield that is worth hundreds of millions sterling to the colony, shall I not take some steps to make this great mineral deposit available and useful? Certainly I shall. There is nothing more I need say on this proposal, at present. I do not believe this House will throw out this railway proposal. I do not believe it will do it, in the face of the country. If hon. members do throw it out, the responsibility will rest on them. We

have at the Collie a coalfield that is said, by experts, to be worth hundreds of millions; and all we ask is authority to borrow £60,000 for making a railway to this valuable mineral deposit. I know very well the House will pass this item, because hon. members cannot help passing it with the information before them which the Government have had, and which I will place fully on the table to-morrow. It would be political suicide for anyone in this House to oppose this railway, when we have such a valuable deposit alongside of us, and we must therefore do our best to utilise this great treasure that is almost at our very doors.

*Railway Rolling Stock.*

With regard to item No. 5, rolling stock, £174,000, this is a large item, but I can tell hon. members it will be very much larger before we have finished with railway requirements. There is no end to the demands for rolling stock. I have no doubt my friend the Commissioner of Railways will tell you this amount in the schedule is too small. The demand for rolling stock being so large, I do not think is a matter to be regretted, for it shows there is work to be done, and that we are working our lines to some purpose. This amount on the schedule will do for a short time—may last, perhaps, a year or so, but we shall have to come again to the House for more. I am not prepared to ask for a larger amount just now.

*Improvements to Opened Railways.*

Item No. 6, £44,000, is for additional improvements to opened railways, and this is another item that will never end. Stations, sidings, and other facilities are continually being wanted, and so long as we go on building railways out of loan, and these items are chargeable to capital account, we shall, of course, have these requirements to meet. The amount we ask for now will do for a time, but, you may depend upon it, this amount will not suffice for a very long time.

*Fremantle Harbour Works.*

Item No. 7, £200,000, is an important one—the harbour works at Fremantle. I am glad to inform the House that this work is going on satisfactorily. The north mole has been extended 2,438ft., and is now in 27ft. depth of water, or

more, and the south mole has been begun. I look forward to the completion of this work not only with much pleasure, but great anxiety, for I feel that we can never take our proper place with the other colonies until we have sufficient accommodation for ocean-going steamers at Fremantle. Until that time arrives we shall remain isolated. We are round the corner, away from the highways of ocean traffic, and people will not come to us as they go to other places, because we are altogether out of the highways. For myself, I will never rest until we have the mail steamers coming into Fremantle, as they do at the chief ports of other colonies; and I make the statement without any ill-feeling to the port of Albany, which I desire to see progress as well. I hope and trust sincerely that the time is not far distant when all we wish for Fremantle as a harbour will be accomplished.

*Development of Goldfields and Mineral Resources.*

In item No. 8 it is proposed to set aside £70,000 for the development of the goldfields and mineral resources of the colony. We intend to expend this money in providing roads, water supply, and public buildings. The large sum of £101,774 has been expended since 1891 in developing the goldfields, by providing them with public works and other necessities. The large amount which has been spent, and the further large amount we propose to spend on railways and facilities for the goldfields, should be sufficient in themselves to prevent anyone from saying that the Government and the Parliament of this country have been unmindful of the best interests of the goldfields.

*Development of Agriculture.*

Item No. 9 is a sum of £40,000 for the development of agriculture, and included in this item you will notice it is proposed to purchase land. The object of placing land in the list is that it may be judicious for the Government to acquire from private owners some good agricultural land along railways; and, if it is found possible to do this in the interest of the country, and without loss. I think it might be desirable for the Government to do so. Therefore, we propose to make

provision, so that if a suitable opportunity occurs we may take advantage of it. This item provides also for clearing and draining land. I think something may be done in that direction, perhaps, under another bill which I hope to introduce in a short time, in which the clearing of land will be dealt with. But the small amount put in this Loan Bill for these purposes will not, I think, be objected to by hon. members in reference to the clearing and draining of some land by the Government. There are some localities where a large amount of good land may be brought under cultivation and made useful by spending a moderate sum of money on making main drains; and if the Government can do that, I cannot see how they can spend money in a better way. For that reason it is desirable that the Government should have power, through the Legislature, to clear and drain lands, which may thereby be made productive instead of remaining useless.

*Market and Cold Storage.*

The same item includes a sum for providing a public market and cold storage in connection with the railway system in Perth, of which project you all have had some knowledge. I believe there is some opposition to this proposal. It has been said the Government are interfering with private enterprise; but it is strange that private individuals are so willing to do a great deal now that they did not say anything about until the Government made a proposal. If I thought they would do what is felt to be necessary in this direction, I should be glad to give it a trial, but in connection with our railway system, I do not see how private enterprise can provide cold storage. In this colony, where we have a semi-tropical climate, I think it is a disgrace that we have not been able to provide means by which perishable food products can be preserved to suit the market without becoming unfit for use in a few hours. Surely our resources are sufficient not only to provide cold storage at a railway centre, but also to provide for packing and carriage along the railways from one end of the system to the other, without loss or damage. This item—the development of agriculture—has for its object the increasing of the productions of the



soil; and if hon. members did not know before, they must have been amazed when I mentioned to-night that, during the last three and a half years, £600,000 worth of food, that could have been well produced in this colony, has been imported into it from other places.

#### *Agricultural Bank.*

Hon. members will notice that there is no mention in this schedule of an Agricultural Bank, but the Government have not lost sight of that project, and hon. members will have it placed before them in a few days.

#### *Harbour Works at Geraldton.*

Item No. 10 is for harbour works at Geraldton, £10,000. We propose to extend the new jetty into deeper water, as it is not in sufficient depth at present, and we hope this further expenditure will extend the jetty to a depth sufficient for the coasting traffic.

#### *Improvements to Harbours and Rivers.*

Item No. 11, £40,000, is for improvements to "Harbours and Rivers," principally in the Northern parts of the colony, and a portion of the money is to provide for dredging.

#### *Lighthouses.*

Item No. 12, £25,000, is for "Lighthouses" along the coast. This is a necessary matter which we cannot allow to remain longer in its present position. There are several lighthouses very much needed for the safe navigation of our extensive coast-line; particularly at Eclipse Island, near Albany, at Cape Naturaliste, at Fraser Island, near Point Cloates, at the North-West Cape, and at other places further Northward. The Gascayne is being already provided for. Lighthouses at all these places are absolutely necessary in the interest of safe navigation, and we hope, with this amount of £25,000 to do something, at any rate, for promoting safe navigation of our coast.

#### *Telegraphs.*

Item No. 13 is for "Telegraph Extension," £20,000. Some of the works in connection with this item are enumerated, but there will be many more. During the time we have been in office

we have added about 1,400 miles to the telegraph system of the colony, and we intend to go on constructing telegraphs, because I do not believe there is any expenditure so reasonable, so useful, and which gives so much satisfaction.

#### *Roads and Bridges.*

Item No. 14 is for "Roads and Bridges," £50,000. This item includes the stock route to the North, and we hope to place this route in a better condition than it has been in. It is not satisfactory, but we hope, under new arrangements, to make it entirely satisfactory. There will be a small amount available for roads and bridges throughout the colony. I am aware that this is a popular item. It benefits so many that it seems right that this item should have consideration in a Loan Bill.

#### *Schools.*

Item No. 15 is for "Public Schools," £20,000. As population increases and is being distributed throughout the colony, a great many schools are being called for; and as we commenced in the Loan of 1893 to provide schools out of loan, so we propose to continue that course in this Bill.

#### *Miscellaneous.*

No. 16, the last item in the schedule, is "Miscellaneous," £30,000, for any general requirements that may occur; and the item also includes the charges and expenses for floating the loan, and to cover any deficiency in case the bonds do not realise par.

#### *In Conclusion.*

I have now gone through all the items in the schedule of the Bill, and explained them to the extent that I think is necessary on this occasion. Of course they will all be dealt with separately, one by one, and we shall be able to have a full discussion upon every item, from the standpoint that any hon. member may desire. I have only to add, in conclusion, that I hope and believe this Bill will pass, and I hope it will pass unanimously. I know that this House represents some of the very best men in this country; and I feel sure they will be equal to the great responsibilities that

are cast upon them. I hope we all have faith in our country, that we believe it is a place which can be very much improved. We know that it has been much improved during the last three and a half years; in fact, so much so that if we had been away and returned now, we would scarcely know it again; and if the Government have been so successful in the past, under circumstances which have been adverse to some extent, what reason is there why we should not be successful in the future? I can see none. I believe there is not a single work in the Bill that is not absolutely necessary; and the only question we have to consider is—Will they pay? If there is anyone who considers they will not pay, at least it cannot be said they are not absolutely necessary. The only question is, then—Will they pay? And I have already given you my opinion that they will. I hope the Bill will be carried in its entirety unanimously. On the second reading of the Bill of 1891 there was no division, and I hope and believe that on the second reading of this Bill we will not go to a division. I would ask hon. members to consider what has been the history of every measure we have introduced into this House, every measure of a progressive character—the Government, and those who have supported them, wishing to go ahead, whilst others have wished to pull them back. I suppose that is the usual thing in politics all over the world. But I think that the party I represent in this House can take this much credit, that we have been successful, and those who have opposed us must admit that if their views had prevailed this colony would not have been in the improved position it is in to-day. We were told that we were reckless, and that we wished to go ahead too fast. But what has been the result? I think everyone will admit that during the last three and a half years the Government, and those who supported them, have been in the right. There is no doubt about it. I do not wish to boast, but it is a fact. I say the Government have led this country to victory, and if you give us a chance we will lead you on to victory again. Many persons said—those who were opposed to us certainly said—in 1891, that the Loan Bill we brought in was too big, and that we would ruin the country. But were they right? No.

They had to join with us two and a half years afterwards in passing another Loan Bill for £540,000. Then we were told, time after time, that our Estimates were too big, and that we would not realise the estimated amount of our revenue. But we have generally received the estimated revenue and often more. Then we were told that we would have to ask for more taxation, and that we would ruin the country. But the Government have never had to introduce fresh taxation. At the same time I do not wish to deny to those who have been in opposition to the Government my thanks for the support they have given us on many occasions. They have given us support, and they have criticised us, and though perhaps at the time we did not like it, I do not know that it did us any harm, and I readily acknowledge the good support we have received from many members of the Opposition. This Loan Bill, the second reading of which I have to move, is a general scheme, and the Government take their stand upon it. The schedule is in accordance with what we say are the requirements of the country, and in accordance also with the views of the people of the country. I throw down that challenge for any one to take up who likes. I say this Loan Bill is in accordance with our requirements, and in accordance with the views of the country. I ask that the Bill may be taken as a whole, and not mutilated. If you commence to touch it, and mutilate it, all I can say to hon. members is that, in my opinion, they will spoil it. A great change has come over the country during the past few years. This House is changed, and hon. members opposite have changed, not only in the *personnel*, but also in their views. But there is one body in this House that has not changed, and that is the Government of this country. It has not changed, nor have its good, loyal, and experienced supporters changed. We have desired to push ahead this country, and have been successful, so that now, from having been a poor, isolated, and unknown place, it has become the centre of attraction, and is perhaps as well known as any other part of Australia. I can only say, in conclusion, that for my own part I have unbounded confidence in the future of this country. I believe we are on the right road;

that we must go on moving with the times. We cannot stop. We have commenced to construct our public works, and have been successful; and is it to be said that, after going so far, we are to stop and not go on? I see no reason why we should not go on. I think I have shown that the colony is in a far better position than when we undertook the management of our affairs. We are in a far better position to borrow this money than we were in when we borrowed the £1,336,000 in 1891, and our Revenue is rapidly increasing. I have confidence in the colony myself, and I have confidence in the good sense of the community, and in the good sense and patriotism of members of this House. Many of them have "won their spurs" in the service of this colony, and I believe they will be equal to the responsibility that is cast upon them. I am sure we shall do our best to promote the interests of the old colony of Western Australia, which we all love so well, and whose interests we will strive to protect either in adversity or in prosperity.

Mr. RANDELL: I rise only to move the adjournment of the debate. The thanks of the House are due to the hon. the Premier for the earnest, persuasive, and energetic way in which he has moved the second reading of this Bill. I hope the result of the deliberations of this House will be such as will promote the best interests of the colony at large. I move that the debate be adjourned until this day week (Monday, August 27).

Question put and passed, and the debate adjourned accordingly.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at forty-three minutes past 9 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 21st August, 1894.

Employers' Liability Bill: committee's report—Fencing Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 2.30 p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL.

On the Order of the Day for the consideration of the committee's report,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said it would be recollected that in committee the hon. member for Nanaimo moved an amendment to strike out the words "in case of death" in Clause 6 (now Clause 10), but, upon an assurance from him that he would look into the matter, the hon. member consented to withdraw his amendment, the object of which was not to limit the time for commencing an action under the Bill to a period of six weeks should the Court be of opinion that there was reasonable excuse. The clause as printed only made this proviso in case of the death of the person who met with an accident, but the amendment proposed that the same condition should apply to all accidents. He was now prepared to accept that principle so long as an employer was not prejudiced by the delay. He, therefore, had to move that the words "in case of death" in the proviso be struck out, and the following words be added at the end of the clause, "and that the employer has not been prejudiced thereby."

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said he was prepared to accept this amendment.

Question put and passed.

#### FENCING BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1.—Repeal of Acts:  
Put and passed.

Clause 2.—Interpretation of terms:

Mr. LEAKE said that, at the request of the hon. member for East Perth (who was absent), he had to move that the definition of the word "Fence," as given in the Bill, be struck out. That definition was as follows: "'Fence' shall mean 'any substantial fence reasonably deemed