

No. 57—After Clause 283, a new part inserted as Part XIII., relating to sewers and drains; this re-enactment being necessary because the Health Bill then before Parliament could not be completed in the session.

Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 58—Clause 286, definition of public buildings, etc., redrafted—agreed to.

No. 59—Clause 286, strike out all the rest of the clause after the word "feet":

Discussion ensued as to amending the Council's amendment relating to the minimum width of streets. Eventually the matter was postponed,

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11:35 o'clock, until the next Tuesday afternoon.

### Legislative Council,

Monday, 10th December, 1906.

	PAGE
Question: Railway Sunday Express to Goldfields	3610
Standing Orders Suspension, to expedite business	3610
Bills: Permanent Reserves Rededication, 3a.	3613
Loan, the First Schedule resumed in Committee, reported	3621
Coolgardie-Norseman Railway, 2a., Com., reported	3634
Land Tax Assessment Bill, Motion to Reinstate (lost)	3613

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 3 o'clock p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Annual Report of Board of Governors of the Perth High School.

#### QUESTION—RAILWAY SUNDAY EXPRESS TO GOLDFIELDS.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is the Government aware that repeated applications are still being made for a train to leave for the Eastern Goldfields on Sunday evenings? 2, Will the Government give the proposed alteration a trial for two months during the summer season? 3, Will the Government take steps to have the figures given by the Commissioner of Railways as to the cost of the proposed alteration verified, seeing that they are out of all proportion to the figures given in the return supplied to this House on the 13th November?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, No. 2, The Commissioner does not recommend such a trial, as there is nothing to warrant it. 3, Farther explanation is necessary before this question can be dealt with. If Mr. Brimage will call at the Railway Offices, every facility will be afforded him.

#### STANDING ORDERS. SUSPENSION.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved—

That in order to expedite business, the Standing Orders relating to public Bills and the consideration of Messages from the Legislative Assembly be suspended during the remainder of the session, so far as may be necessary to enable Bills to pass through all their stages in one sitting, and Messages to be taken into immediate consideration.

He said this was the usual motion passed at the close of each session in order that we might deal promptly with business and finish up the session. Towards the end of a session messages went backwards and forwards between both Houses frequently, and by passing the motion we would be enabled to deal with them at one sitting. Standing Orders had been suspended a week ago in another place.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: The statement might be perfectly correct; it was occasionally the practice to suspend Standing Orders; but the present business of the House was in such a state, with such important Bills before us and likely to come before us—amongst others the Land Tax Assessment Bill, which was in abeyance—that it would be unwise to do

so. He intended to stick to his previous opinion and vote against the reinstatement of the Land Tax Assessment Bill, but many members thought it might be as well to reinstate it. In addition to the Land Tax Assessment Bill there were other important Bills, including Railway Bills, to come down, and it would be unwise to suspend the Standing Orders when there were so many important measures to be dealt with. We could suspend the Standing Orders on the last day of the session, when unimportant Bills come forward; but due consideration should be given to all important measures.

HON. W. MALEY: If the Standing Orders were of service during the session, they should be of service at a juncture when important business was to be undertaken. It seemed the Government were determined at all hazards to force the ship of State on to the rocks, and to do so advantage would be taken even to suspend the Standing Orders for rushing important matters through the Chamber. Mr. Sholl was one of the consistent members of the House who was lending his strength to the country in this crisis.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: The position taken up by Mr. Sholl and Mr. Maley was somewhat unusual.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: We were trying to make this a live House.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: During his five years' experience in Parliament, we had during the last week in each session suspended Standing Orders. No Government would dare to take undue advantage of members by the suspension of Standing Orders. Due consideration and every opportunity would be allowed members during the last few days of the sitting to debate the various important measures that would come down. It was wise to prorogue during the present week, and that was the wish of most members.

HON. G. RANDELL: It was too early to suspend the whole of the Standing Orders, and he suggested that the Colonial Secretary should not press the motion, but move to suspend as each Bill came forward.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It might not be possible to get 16 members here,

and there must be that number to suspend Standing Orders.

HON. G. RANDELL: We could get that number. He desired to assist the Government, and this being Monday, he understood there was some idea of proroguing on Thursday or Friday. The Standing Orders could be suspended when necessary. It was seldom the Standing Orders were suspended so many days before the close of the session. There were important measures to consider, a number of Railway Bills to which some members were not very favourable, and an opportunity should be given for discussing these matters. Some messages might come from another place requiring careful consideration. There was a message to come forward in reference to the Municipal Corporations Bill, and other messages might necessitate careful consideration. Members might not wish to delay the business or unduly extend the session, but every member had a right to claim that time should be given for the consideration of any measure brought forward, and if the Standing Orders were suspended that might debar consideration being given. He did not think there was any ulterior motive, but he was not prepared to vote for the motion.

HON. S. J. HAYNES: Although it was usual, just before prorogation, to have a motion of this kind carried, yet having regard to the business before the House and the very important measures that were to come forward, this motion was premature. While he did not think the Government would descend to any ulterior motive, but wished to do what was right, yet we should not be doing our duty if we did not resist the motion at this stage. It would be better to sit a week or fortnight longer.

HON. W. T. LOTON: It was not desirable at this stage to enter into a long debate which meant waste of time. He was opposed to the motion as it stood. On the Notice Paper to-day were five or six Bills that had not passed the second-reading stage, also the Loan Bill involving an expenditure of two and a half millions.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: A Loan Bill had never before been discussed until the Standing Orders had been suspended.

HON. W. T. LOTON: Surely the business ought to be advanced a farther stage before the Standing Orders were

suspended. We had been in session now six months, and the most important business the Government wished to rush forward and finish within five or six days. It was unreasonable, and gave no chance for discussion.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Last session when an attempt was made to suspend the Standing Orders, protests came from several members, and now to a certain extent the Colonial Secretary and his colleague were deserving of sympathy in a matter of this kind. Nevertheless the protest made in the past and the protests now made were proper. He would not vote at present for suspending the Standing Orders. The protests made in the past were that all the important business of the session was saved up till the last week. We had been six months in session, and practically the work done was *nil*. The whole of the Government policy was sent to this House to be considered at a time when the Standing Orders were suspended, within the last three or four days of the session. Personally, he was getting tired of the session, and if he thought we could give due consideration to measures by suspending the Standing Orders, he would agree to it. But he was prepared to sit here another two or three weeks, and if necessary after the Christmas vacation, to give consideration to measures. The Loan Bill required careful consideration, and the Railway Bills required minute examination.

HON. J. W. WRIGHT: Three Railway Bills were passed last session in two and a half hours.

HON. M. L. MOSS expected that interjection. He recollected Dr. Hackett complaining bitterly of the lack of information and the undue speed with which the Bills were put through last session, and the then Ministers felt just as strongly about the business being rushed at the end of the session. Ministers then gave what information there was, but they did not approve of rushing. The present Colonial Secretary recognised that frequently he had to advocate matters which he did not altogether agree with; and he was one of those who complained bitterly about the rushing through of three Railway Bills last session without sufficient information. Then it was a question of an expenditure

of £100,000, but now two and a half millions of money was to be expended on works of which several, to his mind, were doubtfully payable. It would be a most serious dereliction of duty on our part if we declined to devote to these measures the necessary time for consideration. The Minister would do well to ask for suspension of the Standing Orders on each Bill separately.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (in reply): This protest came well from the hon. member (Mr. Moss), and it was a matter of surprise that Mr. Randell should object to the suspension of the Standing Orders at a later date than it had ever been asked for before. The Government hoped to prorogue on Thursday next. Last year Railway Bills were introduced and put through all stages in a space of two and a quarter hours before the prorogation. All necessary information on the present Railway Bills was furnished to members a week ago; and the request for suspension now was therefore perfectly reasonable. He hoped it would be agreed to, especially as under ordinary conditions the consideration of messages required three days. Hon. members might rest assured there was no intention to rush measures through the House; and, in any case, if the majority objected to the advancement of a measure by a stage, then, Standing Orders or no Standing Orders, the majority had power to impose delay. The opposition of older members was especially surprising, since these should be well aware that the most important measures had invariably been brought down after the Standing Orders had been suspended.

HON. G. RANDELL: So far as memory served, general suspension had never been granted more than two days before the prorogation.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Had the hon. member brought down Loan Bills or Appropriation Bills before suspension of the Standing Orders?

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. member must address the Chair, and not an individual member.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Randell had pointed out that the Standing Orders could be suspended from day to day; but in order that suspension might be obtained, at least 16 members

must be present. Six members were away now, and probably would not attend during the remainder of the session; three or four others were leaving to-day; therefore it was necessary to deal with the motion to-day.

On motion by the Hon. J. M. DREW, debate adjourned to the next sitting.

**BILL—PERMANENT RESERVES RE-  
DEDICATION.**

Read a third time, and *passed*.

**LAND TAX ASSESSMENT BILL, MOTION  
TO REINSTATE.**

Debate resumed from the 6th December, on the motion by the Colonial Secretary "That the resolution of this House passed on the 28th November, 'that the Committee on the Land Tax Assessment Bill have leave to sit again this day six months,' be rescinded, and that the House do resolve itself into Committee forthwith to farther consider the message No. 31 from the Legislative Assembly."

Hon. R. LAURIE (West): It will not be necessary for me to say very much on the motion, especially as it has been laid down by the President that discussion must be restricted absolutely to the point at issue. I think it right to allow reinstatement of a measure passed out in the manner this was disposed of. It has been generally understood that a majority of members of this House is in favour of land tax assessment. That statement has been repeatedly made by many members, and I think that in the interests of the Legislative Council of Western Australia it is but right that a taxation measure of this character, if it is to be finally disposed of, should be finally disposed of only after calm deliberation. This House has always prided itself on being a non-party Chamber, on being a House of revision—not a House in which a Bill may be sacrificed by a snap vote. The reinstatement of the measure will afford members an opportunity of calmly reconsidering the vote which disposed of the Bill, and this is only wise and right. We know there is a good deal of opposition to the measure—its life has appeared to hang in the balance ever since its introduction. Right

from the start it was understood that the measure represented a question of one vote only; but I wish to recall to the recollection of hon. members the fact that after the second reading of the Bill was carried the statement was made that while members would amend the Bill in the manner they desired, if a test of strength was to be taken at all it would be taken on the third reading. In my opinion the reinstatement of the Bill is the only proper course for a House of revision, which cannot initiate taxation legislation; a House some of whose members have even refused to approach a Minister of the Crown for the purpose of asking money grants for the provinces represented by them, seeing that we have always maintained the position that taxation legislation cannot be initiated here. I will ask hon. members specially to bear in mind that only two Legislative Councils in the whole of Australia have the right given to us here. Therefore I think it is fair not only to the House but to the country that only by a calm deliberative vote should this measure be passed out. I think the opportunity for reinstatement should be given. It will then be for members to show the country that on calm deliberation they have been prepared to pass this measure out, and that they are prepared to take the responsibility of so doing. I do not wish to say one word farther on the subject. I intend to vote for the reinstatement of the Bill. I have also said I was against all exemptions. I voted consistently. I voted when the members were nine and eleven on the last vote, and it appeared to me the Bill was going to be strangled simply because of the exemptions. I consider as far as I am personally concerned that in a matter of taxation it is perhaps better that we should allow the exemptions than interfere with taxation. I think it is right this House should deal with a matter of such a serious character as the question of taxation in a calm deliberate way, rather than pass it out on a snap vote.

Hon. W. T. LOTON (East): I regret I was not here the other evening when this question of reinstatement was dealt with, but sometimes business calls one away. I am opposed to this taxation

Bill. In my speech on the second reading I gave my opinion, and gave facts and figures relating to South Australia, which with a revenue three-quarters of a million less than ours and an indebtedness 50 per cent. more under loan manages to carry on her business with 50 per cent. more population. And I showed that Queensland with double our population, and practically double the indebtedness under loan, therefore having to pay nearly double the amount of interest on loan, and with a revenue only a quarter of a million more than ours, in 1905 (the latest figures I could get) had a balance to credit of about £17,000. From my point of view, if the present Government had any desire or inclination to economise in administering the affairs of this State, there would be no necessity for extra taxation. However, they say taxation is necessary, and this is the taxation policy of the Government. I am opposed not only to the tax, but to the policy of the tax. The policy is to place a tax on improved land, taxing it on its unimproved value. The phrase is a misnomer; you cannot get at it. Firstly it will have the effect, particularly in the towns, of reducing the value of property by I suppose 25 to probably 35 per cent., and in many instances in the towns, as also in the country, it will be a most iniquitous and unfair tax. You can take in towns, and in various parts of a town, two allotments of land having the same frontage and practically of the same value, the one highly improved, the next partially improved. The taxation value of these lands must be the same; and I suppose this socialistic idea of taxation is to make every person owning land put certain improvements on it, to put buildings on it in towns even if he cannot let them to tenants. It is with the idea practically of plundering the people—that is what it amounts to. I am opposed to the socialistic policy of taxing land on this system. Tax the improved land if you like, but if a tax on land is required, the fairest, simplest, and most economical way, and what would amount to the same thing in the end practically to the taxpayer, except that there would not be the iniquity and injustice done, would be to have an acreage tax on the land, first, second, or third-class, and reduce the tax for improvements.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The unimproved value of the land?

HON. W. T. LOTON: No; the acreage, the land as classified. On first-class land you can put it at 2d. an acre, if you like.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Upon the unimproved value?

HON. W. T. LOTON: I should tax the land.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: On its unimproved value?

HON. W. T. LOTON: No. The improvements should come in afterwards; an acreage tax on its improved value. You would classify it as first, second, and third-class land. The land being classified already, there would be no necessity to have land valuers. This would be a fair tax. The man who had most acres would pay the most. As to improvements, there would be a clause dealing with that question. I do not want to go into details. That would be the fairest tax for country land. When you come to cities and towns, tax the land on the annual value as you propose to do in the Municipal Bill. We have dealt with the Municipal Bill which has been returned to the other place, and I believe they have disagreed to the amendment to omit the provision for striking a rate on the unimproved values. If we agree to this land tax on the unimproved system, we shall be doing exactly what we have refused to do in the Municipal Corporations Bill. I am opposed every time as far as I am concerned to taxing improved land on its unimproved value. I am opposed to it every time on principle, and until convinced my opinion is wrong I would stand here and wreck every Government if it were possible by my own vote and send it to the people again.

MEMBER: And again.

HON. W. T. LOTON: And again; every time unless I was convinced it was wrong. I am fighting against the principle, which I consider unjust, unfair and iniquitous. The hon. member who has just spoken has talked about its being a snap vote when the division was taken some time ago. I think that is a very unfortunate statement to make. There was no snap vote about it. If I thought for a moment that the Government at that time were taken any unfair advantage of, I would be one of the first

to allow a vote to be taken again upon it. But what was the position? There were 24 members.

HON. R. LAURIE: One in the Chair.

HON. W. T. LOTON: You must have a Chairman. There was one pair out of the 24.

HON. R. LAURIE: You cannot count pairs; you do not reckon those.

HON. W. T. LOTON: There were 24 members represented. Four-fifths of the members of this House were present and voted; and I do not think any Government, or any party in the House, or any side of the House can say there was any snap vote, seeing that you had the representation of four-fifths of the House present on that occasion. That was ordinary public business notified in the usual way. Several members were absent who desired to be here. I do not know what the position would have been if all had been present, but I think it would probably have been the same. However, though some members were absent on that occasion, ample notice had been given of the intention to support this Bill. If the absent members are in favour of its reinstatement I suppose they will be here to-day to support the Government. But personally I am not prepared to vote for reinstatement; and if the Bill is reinstated I shall be prepared to vote against it on principle, even if I stand alone. The land tax proposal is inequitable and unjust.

HON. S. J. HAYNES (South-East): I was not present when the resolution was passed which the Colonial Secretary now seeks to rescind; but members know pretty well my views of the land tax proposals. I did not at any time, nor do I now, consider the tax necessary; but if it be necessary, I am against the proposal in its present form. It is a harsh and crude measure, and will work most inequitably and unjustly. However, I notice it is stated that the resolution now sought to be rescinded was passed by a snap vote. If I believed that, my belief would affect my vote. But the fact is, there were practically twenty-four members represented in the House when the resolution was passed. Had I been present on that occasion I should have voted with the majority. In the circumstances I cannot see that any snap vote was taken,

for I think twenty-two out of a total of thirty members is a fair attendance; and it must be borne in mind that during discussions on the Assessment Bill many members spoke most antagonistically to the measure, and yet thought fit to vote for the second reading, with the intention of making material alterations in Committee. Material alterations were made, which alterations will probably be rejected in another place; and if the Bill comes once again before the House, will the position of the Government be strengthened? I say no; rather will it be weakened. I think the Bill has been considered quite sufficiently; but I am met with the threat that unless it be reinstated and farther considered we shall have another session early in February. Such is the statement. Well, with all due respect to the present Government, I think they made a mistake in bringing in a land tax proposal at all. I think it is about the worst advertisement the State ever had; and still more damaging is it to accentuate what in my humble opinion was a mistake, by holding a special session in February to advertise that this great State is in such dire straits that we must impose a land tax to raise £60,000. I say that is one of the most damaging expedients we can adopt, particularly as the Government have now propounded a stupendous loan policy involving 2½ millions. They will call a special session for the sake of £60,000. That will be a nice advertisement in the English money market. I say it was a bad enough advertisement to propose a land tax at all, in view of the fact that we have published in our pamphlets to attract immigrants the statement that we have no land tax.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The absence of a land tax was not the inducement to immigrants.

HON. S. J. HAYNES: I should not oppose an equitable land tax; but I say that this tax at the present juncture is unnecessary. It seems to me illogical and inconsistent that, while we are hard up and while our large revenue cannot meet the expenditure of the present Government, we should borrow a large sum of money, instead of following the example of another Government with some of whose views I am not greatly in sympathy, but whose mark-time policy seems to me

much more businesslike than the present borrowing proposals. If we raise the 2½ millions for so-called reproductive works, our present troubles will be aggravated. Far better at the present juncture, instead of imposing extra taxation, effect economies in administration rather than wait till we are forced to practise economy, like certain other States. In the circumstances I shall certainly oppose the motion, because I think the present spirit of the House is against a land tax, or at all events is against the land tax proposed by the Government. If the Government think fit to hold another session in February to impose the tax, I sincerely hope the Bill will meet its fate on the second reading, a fate by which I should have liked to see the Bill overtaken this session.

HON. W. MALEY (South-East): As mover of the resolution it is now proposed to rescind, I should like to say a few words. I address a House consisting of the same number of members as was present when I moved my motion. The Government are appealing from what they have been good enough to call a weak and thin House to another thin House, in the hope of securing a large majority. There may be weak-kneed members of the Council, and I hope it will be shown to-day whether there are any; and if there are, I hope they will vote with the Government, for then the country will know once for all to whom it is indebted for vacillation, and to whom the Government look for support. I do not now refer to any individual, and I hope I shall not have to do; but I take strong exception to the remarks made regarding a snap vote, and to the manner in which my motion was put before the Chamber. Members know that before I made that motion the whole country had considered this question, which had been placed before the country by the Government. The matter had been well discussed in the Assembly, had been talked about in all the clubs and similar institutions throughout the State—[HON. J. A. THOMSON: Indeed?—] I have no doubt it was talked of in the organisations with which the member interjecting is connected; and the measure in all its bearings had been debated and was clearly understood.

Whether its effect was understood by the country is a matter which would be hard to determine, nor do I prophesy to-night what the effect would be. I wish to say there was no snap vote taken on that occasion: the motion was perfectly regular and in order. Mr. Moss, it is true, moved in Committee a certain amendment which was not exactly lost: neither was it passed, for the Chairman gave his casting vote in favour of farther discussion. That farther consideration was given to the measure in a full House, and I contend that the stand I took in moving my motion in a full House was a proper stand to take, as the voice of a full House is stronger than the voice of a House in Committee. I contend that those members who have reflected on the manner in which I have done my duty have no grounds for such a reflection. They have no grounds for referring to a snap division, but they seek an excuse for being on this side and on that side, like some political John Gilpin. This House was not in an uneven temper on that occasion; it is difficult to make this House in an uneven temper; members of this Chamber are not as excitable as some members of the public would like to make out, and I did not see any excitement displayed when the vote was taken; in fact, exactly the same members voted against the Government on both occasions, with the one exception, the Chairman of Committees. I shall not weary the House any farther. I shall vote as I did before, and I trust that members who voted with me before will vote with me again.

HON. J. M. DREW (Central): I certainly thought when I came into the House to-day that there would be some indication of repentance on the part of several of those gentlemen who secured the defeat of the Land Tax Assessment Bill a few days ago; but I am sorry to see that some of those gentlemen still persist in their opposition to the measure. It is said that no snap vote was taken, but I think there was an assurance given this House some days before that no action would be taken in the direction of annihilating the Bill without ample notice being afforded to the members of this Chamber. That was the understanding; at any rate, it is what a great number of the members of this Chamber

understood. What occurred on that eventful evening when the Bill was temporarily laid aside? Mr. Moss moved "That the adoption of the report take place this day six months." After some debate Mr. Moss generously withdrew. Then Mr. Maley took up the running. He discussed the matter for some time, and then expressed the wish to withdraw and was desirous of withdrawing. I think that is the position.

HON. R. LAURIE: Yes; that is the position.

HON. J. M. DREW: The question of withdrawal had to be submitted to the House, and there was one voice in opposition to the withdrawal.

HON. W. MALEY (in explanation): I may say that I asked for that withdrawal at the request of an hon. member of this Chamber, who told me that he had altered his mind about voting and that he would vote against me. That was the mainspring of my withdrawal.

HON. J. M. DREW: I am glad my remarks have been amply confirmed by Mr. Maley, that he did consent to the withdrawal. Previously we did not know the reason for it. Now we know that it was in consequence of some member who did not wish to give him support. Mr. Maley was desirous of withdrawing. However, simply because of the objection of one member of the Chamber, we went to a division, and those who had expressed themselves in opposition to the Bill were bound to vote against it. It was a hasty action, seeing that the Bill had passed all its stages to the final stage, to take any step in the direction of annihilating the measure. It seems to me also a grave act of discourtesy to another place. That place had refused to accept some of our amendments and had sent some of them back for reconsideration, and it was our duty to state whether we should insist on them or not; but no; after reaching a certain stage the Bill was blotted out temporarily, in a thin House; there were only 21 members present. Pairs have been alluded to, but how can pairs be referred to in this Chamber? Was it premeditated? I would be surprised to think it was. If it was, the House should have been notified, and a promise given two or three days previously that an attempt was to be made to wreck the

Bill, and the Government would then have been prepared. No such assurance was given, and at the last moment the Bill was blotted out. Now members come forward and say that certain pairs were arranged. I hope members will carefully reconsider this matter. We are informed that if the Bill is not reinstated a session will take place in February; and no doubt it will; the Government will again submit the Bill to the House, and the House will have to decide whether it accepts or rejects. If it rejects, the only course I see open to the Government is to resign.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: They dare not.

HON. J. M. DREW: Who is going to take their place? The members of the Legislative Council? There is a Loan Bill for 2½ millions before the House, and there is no strong opposition to that measure so far as I can see. No doubt it will pass with a very large majority, but it will increase the interest bill by £100,000 a year and the sinking fund bill by £25,000 a year. The whole of the members of this House, or at any rate two-thirds of them, think that the Loan Bill has been very wisely considered, and is in the best interests of this country.

HON. G. RANDALL: I do not.

HON. J. M. DREW: I have seen very little opposition to it. So far there have only been two or three members of the House strongly against it. No doubt members are desirous of seeing that this Bill becomes law, yet we are not desirous of taking any steps to provide revenue by means of taxation and restoring that confidence in the money market to which we will have to appeal.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: On a point of order, this is a second-reading speech. I spoke very briefly to the point.

THE PRESIDENT: I advised members that they must keep precisely to the subject of the motion; but I allowed two members who were trespassing to do so because they were not here the other evening. I must call on the speaker to confine himself strictly to the motion.

HON. J. M. DREW: I was merely endeavouring to justify the reinstatement of the Bill, and to convince members of the wisdom of reinstating it, and I certainly thought I had not gone to such



lengths for instance as Mr. Loton, who made a very strong second-reading speech in connection with the motion.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Hear, hear.

HON. W. T. LOTON: On a point of order, I submit that the whole of my remarks were in explanation of the way I was prepared to vote. It was not a second-reading speech at all.

HON. J. M. DREW: I have said all I desire to say, and I await the result with every confidence. If the House will not approve of the motion to-day, it will approve of the Bill in February next, because the voice of the country is in the direction of this Bill becoming law; and it will lead to a strong agitation against the Legislative Council, and a vigorous agitation towards the securing a reduction of the franchise for this Chamber, if the Bill is rejected. It will weaken the influence of the Council in the country, and consequently do it a great deal of harm. I am a firm believer in the Upper House, and would like to see its strength invigorated and not impaired.

HON. E. McLARTY (South-West): I shall keep my remarks strictly to the matter before the House. We have heard remarks about members being weak-kneed if they vote in a certain direction, but I take no notice of those remarks. I shall vote as I have always done in this House, according to my conscience and according to what I think is right and just. When this question came on a few days ago, notice was given by an hon. member that on the following Tuesday he would move that a direct vote be taken in connection with this Bill. After that member gave that notice, I spoke and expressed satisfaction at that course of action, because though I did not like it, since this Bill came before the House I have always desired that it should have fair treatment in every possible way, and that if it was to be rejected by the Council, it should be done above-board and in as full a House as possible, and that the country should abide by the decision of the Council majority. When the amendment was moved the other day, I will not say it was a snap vote, but it

was a great surprise to every member in the House. I hardly knew what to do at the moment.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: But you never do.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: That is very rude.

HON. E. McLARTY: I felt that I was bound in honour to my party to vote with them and support the amendment. But it was very apparent that the member who moved that amendment felt he had not done exactly the right thing, for a few minutes afterwards he asked leave to withdraw the amendment.

HON. W. MALEY: Is it not customary for a member to move a motion or amendment when he has an opportunity and can he not withdraw it if he thinks fit?

THE PRESIDENT: There is no point of order; it is an explanation.

HON. E. McLARTY: After the amendment was moved the member asked leave to withdraw it. It is a significant fact that out of 21 members present at that time 20 members signified their willingness for the amendment to be withdrawn, and only one member raised his voice against that course being taken. Even the member who moved the amendment was not strong upon it, and thought he was hardly right in the course of action he was taking. I am not committing myself to any action. I may take in a direct vote on the Bill when further considered, but I think it is my duty to vote for the motion, and I am going to do my duty in defiance of any member, for I will not bow my head and vote because some want me to vote one way and other members want me to vote another way. I respect every member's opinion, and I think members should vote as they think proper, and I shall not attack them for doing so. I expect members to give me the same consideration.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: But you change so often.

HON. E. McLARTY: On this occasion I am going to vote for the amendment, because I know that in the opinion of the country the measure has not been fairly treated.

THE PRESIDENT: There is no amendment before the House; there is a substantive motion.

HON. E. McLARTY: I intend to vote for the motion. If the measure is to be rejected it should be in another way. Without taking up the time of the House I may say I intend to vote for this motion.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: The next time you will vote the other way.

HON. J. W. WRIGHT (Metropolitan): I may be regarded as one of those naughty members who voted against the Bill, and I shall vote against it on every occasion as I intended to do, for I have not repented. My constituency does not want it, and one prominent man in my constituency this morning, a landholder of Perth, said to me, "You can bring any Government valuator you like on to my properties and value them, and if the land tax goes through, you can have those properties at 20 per cent. below the valuation."

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Is this a second-reading speech?

HON. J. W. WRIGHT: It think this tax is altogether uncalled for and quite unnecessary. If there were a little economy exercised over the expenditure of public moneys in the Works Department, no tax would be required. I do not know if I would be out of order if I referred to one or two ways in which public money could be saved.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the hon. member would.

HON. J. W. WRIGHT: I am sorry to hear that, because I could show in a few minutes where the amount of two or three land taxes could be saved in no time. I think Mr. Drew referred to the Lands Department. I do not know if I am out of order in referring to what he said, that there was £125,000 required for sinking fund and interest. It appears that there are two land taxes. As there is a waste of public money going on every day in the Works Department and in the Lands Department, I think we should stop it. Four years ago it took four men to attend to all the receipts of money in the Lands Department; now there are 27, and they are asking for more. We know that last year was a bad year, it was a poor year for work, yet they make out that the work increased sevenfold. It seems to me as we keep voting more money and are putting more taxes on the people,

this would be a good place to keep out of. I voted against the land tax proposal, and I shall vote against its reinstatement.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE (North-East): I only wish to say a few words regarding one of the statements made by Mr. Drew relative to the pair. I paired with Mr. Dempster, and I want to make it clear that the pair was arranged on the 18th November, and it was arranged with Mr. Dempster until the end of the session on the land tax proposals; therefore I paired with him in that particular division.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Even on a motion to defeat it.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: If I pair with a man I pair with him on everything.

THE PRESIDENT: Pairs are not recognised.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: You allowed Mr. Drew to make a statement about the pairs, and I wish to make a statement that I paired with Mr. Dempster to the end of the session. But out of respect, and owing to the influence of the Leader of the House, he having asked me to break that pair over this particular division, I have done so. I wrote to Mr. Dempster, and he has now arranged to pair with Captain Oats. I feel that it is fair to vote with the Government on this motion.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): I would like to say one word. I do not intend to make a second-reading speech, nor to debate the motion at length. I find 24 hours in the day take up too much time to have responsible men arguing on a point when the numbers are up against us, but I wish to explain how my absence came about when this unfortunate division was taken. It was absolutely necessary that I should go to the country for a couple of days, and I consulted a couple of my friends, gentlemen who, to my mind, have the soul of honour, as to whether it was likely or not that this measure would receive its death-blow that evening or before I returned. I was assured that no active steps of a murderous character would be taken that evening, and that there would be an opportunity, as I phrased it, to address myself to the question at a later

period. I went away in the full belief that this measure would be allowed, at all events, to reach another stage, and I came back to find it was not so. I am not making any charge against my friends. The hon. member who declined to allow the amendment to be withdrawn was Mr. Sommers, so I am informed, but I may be wrong. I have now explained my predicament. I so escaped the final decision in witnessing perhaps the last moment of my departing friend. I think this House would have acted in its own interests as well as in a courteous manner if it had exercised the power of the House at a later stage by saying directly and deliberately "Yes" or "No" to this land tax assessment proposal. However, the House thought differently. It does seem to me, and I have had some little experience of politics, not alone in Western Australia but in Australia itself, the decision this afternoon, and we must recognise it is against us, will be in every way an unfortunate one, one closely directed against the best purposes and uses of this House. I am satisfied it would have been a wise and judicious course from every point of view, if members had allowed a fair and straight-out vote to be taken, without availing themselves of this Standing Order on the main question whether the Land Tax Assessment Bill was to be debated in the future or not. The refusal to do so rests with its consequences on the members who vote against the motion. I repeat it is my firm belief, to the best of my judgment, and I hold it strongly, that a wiser and more generous and more liberal course would have been conceded in the best interests of the Legislative Council.

HON. W. T. LORON: Take a straight-out vote to-day.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: We cannot, because we are sheltered behind this Standing Order, which requires an absolute majority.

HON. F. CONNOR rose to speak.

THE PRESIDENT: The member has already spoken.

HON. F. CONNOR: On this question?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (in reply): If no other member wishes to

speak, I would like to say a few words in reply, indeed very few, for I am alive to the fact that anything I can say now will have no effect on the decision about to take place. I know that probably we shall not have the required number of members to carry the motion. As I said when moving the motion, I would like to ask members, and I am speaking as a member of the House and not as a member of the Government, to pause for one moment and consider if they can justify their action in this case. The result will probably be that at least half the House will affirm the motion and half the House will vote that the Bill should be reinstated and reconsidered. The minority, probably one-third, will say "no," and the minority rules the majority. The Government make no threat; it is no threat, as members said to have a session in February; nevertheless the Premier has announced in another place that it is part of the Government programme that there will be another session in February. I do not know on what date, we shall know in a few days when the House prorogues, but a session will take place in February. The decision which is about to be recorded will render that session necessary. The same thing could take place to-day as in February. Do members think they will be able to get any section of the community, their own electors, to justify their action? Will hon. members be able to justify themselves before their electors? I am not now speaking on behalf of the Government; but if the Bill is not carried next February, the most likely will be a dissolution.

SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Hon. members need not be at the pain of saying "hear, hear." I assure them a dissolution will cause no great regret on the part of present Ministers on this question. What, however, will take place after that? Will the Upper House, can the Upper House, still persist in the attitude of blocking a taxation measure?

HON. F. CONNOR: Ho, ho!

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member will not regard this as such a joke when the session is over. However, I am now merely pointing out that the present vote cannot alter the position.

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

Ayes	...	...	14
Noes	...	...	9
Majority for	...	...	5

AYES.  
 Hon. G. Bellingham  
 Hon. T. P. O. Brimage  
 Hon. E. M. Clarke  
 Hon. J. D. Connolly  
 Hon. J. M. Drew  
 Hon. J. T. Glowrey  
 Hon. J. W. Hackett  
 Hon. Z. Lane  
 Hon. R. Laurie  
 Hon. R. D. McKenzie  
 Hon. E. McLarty  
 Hon. C. A. Piesse  
 Hon. J. A. Thomson  
 Hon. J. W. Langsford  
 (Teller).

NOES.  
 Hon. F. Connor  
 Hon. S. J. Haynes  
 Hon. W. Kingsmill  
 Hon. W. T. Lotou  
 Hon. W. Maley  
 Hon. M. L. Moss  
 Hon. R. F. Sholl  
 Hon. C. Sommers  
 Hon. J. W. Wright  
 (Teller).

THE PRESIDENT: The result of the division is—Ayes 14, Noes 9. As, however, the Standing Orders require the concurrence of an absolute majority of the Council, I have to declare that the motion is lost.

Question thus negatived.

#### BILL—LOAN (£2,467,000).

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from the previous day.

First Schedule—

Item — Bunbury Harbour Works, £44,000:

HON. M. L. MOSS asked for the farther information promised by the Colonial Secretary at the last sitting.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member might specify what farther information he required. Reference to the sheets supplied some weeks ago in connection with the Loan Bill and the Loan Estimates gave all possible information. The total cost of the work was estimated at £73,000. A contract for the extension of the jetty and breakwater was let by the Rason Government, to which the hon. member (Mr. Moss) had belonged. An additional work required was the removal of siltage which had accumulated between the breakwater and the jetty since the construction of the former. The export trade of Bunbury, worth £11,000 eight years ago, was now worth £500,000 a year. Bunbury had by far the largest export trade of all the ports in Western Australia.

HON. M. L. MOSS: What was the amount of the contract let by the Rason Government?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Loan Estimates provided sufficient to carry on the work. The contract let for the extension of the breakwater by 800 feet represented £59,966; then there was a contract for the extension of the jetty by 300 feet, though that extension had been curtailed by 216 feet, representing £5,000; there was also dredging, which would probably cost £5,000; for minor contingencies and so on, £3,500 was provided; these making a total of £73,000. Under the original authorisation, £29,600 was still available; and thus the completion of the works required the £44,000 represented by this item.

HON. M. L. MOSS: What was the amount of the contract let by the Rason Government?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member had already been given all information.

HON. J. W. HACKETT was sure that the Minister wished to give all the information available, and he hoped his hon. friend (Mr. Moss) would not resent a reference to the cross-examining, badgering tone adopted.

HON. M. L. MOSS could not help it if the hon. member (Dr. Hackett) accused him of badgering the Minister.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: A professional tone.

HON. M. L. MOSS: That would not deter him from seeking information. If an intelligent explanation of the reasons why this £44,000 was required had been given, he must be very dense, since he was to-day in a tighter quandary on the question than when he originally sought to obtain information.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY would go over the figures again if the hon. member (Mr. Moss) persisted in not understanding. The contract let by the Rason Government was for an amount of £60,000.

HON. M. L. MOSS: This was the first time that information had been given.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member should withdraw the statement. It was a direct contradiction of his assurance that the information had previously been given.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Perhaps the hon. member (Mr. Moss) would explain.

**HON. M. L. MOSS:** If the hon. gentleman said the explanation had been given before, the statement must be accepted.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** protested against the hon. member's attitude. The contract was let for the breakwater by the Rason Government for £60,000, also extension of the jetty £5,000; the probable cost of necessary dredging would be £5,000, and certain work of supervision and contingencies, etc., was allowed for to the extent of £3,500, the total being £73,000. That was the contract undertaken by the then Government. We still had £29,000 available; therefore it was necessary to provide in this Loan Bill a sum of £44,000, thus making the total £73,000.

**HON. M. L. MOSS:** That information was good enough so far as it went. Did he understand that the late Government let a contract for £73,000 for a breakwater, and that there was no authorisation at all?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** certainly had never given the hon. member credit for being dense. If there was a contract amounting altogether to £73,000, and we only asked to be included in this loan £44,000, it must necessarily follow that the difference between £44,000 and £73,000 was in hand.

**HON. M. L. MOSS:** When that contract for £73,000 was let, was it let with only £29,000 of loan money available for carrying it out, or were there full loan moneys available for the purpose?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** There was not full loan money available, and it was necessary to put into the Loan Bill this £44,000 to make up the amount.

**HON. M. L. MOSS:** It was an exceedingly bad piece of policy to let a contract to the extent of £44,000 beyond the amount of the loan authorisation. He was surprised that the late Government of which he was a member were a party to it.

**HON. J. M. DREW:** No matter what Government perpetrated this, it was a most disgraceful proceeding. Nothing like it had come under his notice previously. He hoped it would never be repeated by any Government in the future.

**HON. W. T. LOTON:** If the position of facts were as stated by the Colonial Secretary, he also was surprised. He thought that not only Mr. Moss but every other member of the Committee until this information was given had been under the impression that this £44,000 was for some new work, some extra work, the extension of the harbour in some way. He was inclined to doubt whether the Colonial Secretary was posted up in the matter. He could scarcely realise that the Government some months ago let a contract for a total of £73,000 with only a provision for £29,000.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** It was done every day.

**HON. W. T. LOTON:** Then the sooner we got to the end of such government the better for the country. It was a most unbusinesslike, impracticable, and dangerous procedure to go on with.

**HON. M. L. MOSS:** It was unconstitutional.

**HON. W. T. LOTON:** It was unconstitutional, but apart from that it was most dangerous. If we were to let a contract for £60,000 with half the amount provided, we might go in for loan works costing £5,000,000 and have only half the amount.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The hon. member did not look at it in the right light.

**HON. W. T. LOTON** was glad the information had been brought out by the question of the hon. member, and he felt that even the Colonial Secretary himself could not justify the proceeding referred to.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The other evening the position was clearly explained by a member who possessed exceptional knowledge of work of this sort, namely Captain Laurie. This was not new work, like making a harbour. If shipping increased no Government would be considered a business combination if they did not carry out the necessary extension, seeing that the scheme was previously authorised, and when Parliament authorised the scheme they knew they would have to take it to a successful point so as to make the harbour quite safe. Were the Government with £29,000 in hand to sit down for twelve months and say the work was not to be done? He

did not blame the previous Government for doing it at all. He did not understand why Mr. Moss did not object to it at the time. He knew that Mr. Moss was only an honorary Minister, but thought he had heard him say in the House that he did work, though an honorary Minister.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Mr. Wilson was Minister for Works.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member had just as much say over works expenditure as he (the Colonial Secretary) had. Although affairs were discussed in Cabinet, he (the Colonial Secretary), as far as details were concerned, had no more voice in departmental matters than an outside member. Did not the hon. member see that the course taken was perfectly justified, as pointed out by Captain Laurie? Captain Laurie said that even now there was grave fear of a serious disaster there. A big port like that, from which 500,000 tons was being exported every year, was well worth considering, and seeing that the Government had £29,000 in hand and the port had to be made safe, they would not have been justified in sitting down and not extending the breakwater to make the port safe. This money had not been spent, but it would have to be spent to complete the work.

HON. C. SOMMERS: It was a good thing that this item had been ventilated, but now we had all the information necessary we might let the matter drop. Doubtless a Government having £29,000 or £30,000 in hand was justified in looking somewhat ahead in important matters like this and pledging itself to farther expenditure. He did not like the way of doing it, but something could be said for the Government that did it. All he was interested in was whether the work being carried out was in the best interests of the port, whether it would not probably cost more than we were likely to get back from it for a great length of time, because from what he could hear and see there was considerable silting, and the question arose whether we were on the right lines.

HON. E. McLARTY was surprised at members speaking of the breakwater at Bunbury as though it had been a complete failure and no protection to the harbour. It had stood a fair test for the

last eight years, during which the shipping had increased enormously, and there had been no disaster since that first portion of the sea wall was constructed. So far as the protection of shipping was concerned the wall was necessary. The only drawback appeared to be that there was a certain amount of silting; but seeing that the wall had been there something like eight years and there had been no expenditure up to the present to stop that silting, it could not be a serious matter. This extension would make the harbour very safe indeed. A certain amount of dredging would be required to keep the sand drift back. Members who knew more about it than he did said that the breakwater had served the purpose intended. It had a splendid effect on the harbour. He had seen more than 20 vessels lying in the harbour at Bunbury. He did not desire to see this enormous expenditure on Bunbury going on for ever, but this item was one of the most promising in the Loan Bill. He saw no other works in the schedule as likely to be reproductive as this. Eight years ago there was a trade of £11,000, and now the amount was half a million of money.

HON. E. M. CLARKE: That the work had been of great benefit to the South-West was almost beyond dispute. The question arose, why did they not make an inner harbour? The answer was, that Sir John Forrest in his wisdom knew perfectly well that if they attempted to make an inner harbour they would get no benefit from it until it was complete. He also knew that when they commenced putting the breakwater on that reef we should feel the immediate benefit of it. That was borne out by fact. Therefore, it resolved itself into this: whether we should start the inner harbour and wait till it was finished and till the timber industry had languished, or take the other course whereby we should get some immediate benefit. Mr. McLarty had remarked that there had never been an accident there since the breakwater was started, and he (Mr. Clarke), speaking of what he absolutely knew, could say that the timber business had gone up by leaps and bounds. Mr. McLarty had said he had seen 16 or 17 vessels there. The record number of vessels there at one time was 32. It might be argued that they were there to-

gether because they could not get quick despatch, and that they could not get quick despatch because they could not get harbour facilities. He did not quote figures much, but he would take the liberty of quoting a few now. In 1898 the value of the exports from that port was £12,000; in 1900, over £165,000; in 1902, over £218,000; and in 1903, £446,000. Last year, he was told, wharfage dues alone realised £20,000. The harbour would return good interest on capital. He appealed to the Committee, if there had been some slight irregularity, if the Government in their desire to do good to the "birthplace" had exceeded the bounds of prudence, not to let the whole community suffer. After hearing some members, one would think there was no silting-up except in the Bunbury harbour. Was there any harbour without some silting? Even in the natural harbour at Albany silting had to be combated.

HON. S. J. HAYNES: The hon. member was mistaken.

HON. E. M. CLARKE: A silt or a scour was bound to result from obstructing the natural seaway. Silting at Bunbury had continued for some eight years, and could now continue for several years without materially interfering with shipping. The exports from Bunbury justified the expenditure on silt removal.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: Perhaps one ought not to oppose a vote for the "birthplace," but he nevertheless objected to a contract being let for £73,000 when the authorisation had been for only £29,000. It was no excuse to say the preceding Government had done this; for two of the present Ministry, one representing Bunbury and another an adjoining constituency, were members of the last Government. No Government had a right to spend money without parliamentary authorisation; and could he obtain the support of even a strong minority, he would move as a protest to strike out the item. Doubtless in the early days the Bunbury harbour was constructed in the wrong place, and apparently money was not too well spent there. We were told a large number of ships entered the port, and that the export trade was enormous; but it was said the jetty was a sort of floating dock, on which some people were subject to seasickness. He believed the piles rested on basaltic rock.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Only in the old portion of the jetty.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: It seemed the new portions were much the same. The increase of exports was due to the Combine, and certainly the harbour should be made safe for shipping; but he protested against letting a contract for a larger sum than Parliament had sanctioned.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: As already explained, the Government were quite justified in letting the contract.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: The Minister's explanations were not, as a rule, convincing.

HON. J. M. DREW had asked at the last sitting what were the total imports and exports. That information was furnished; but he had asked also for the amount spent out of loan and revenue on improvements to date.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY had not understood the hon. member to ask for the total loan expenditure. It did not appear that much had been expended from revenue.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Thousands of pounds.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Then let the hon. member tell Mr. Drew the amount. For the rest, two years ago the new business inward was £180,248; last year, £362,339; total, £542,587. The figures for the outward business had already been furnished.

HON. J. M. DREW had clearly asked for certain information. It was desirable to know what this monster had devoured up to date.

HON. F. CONNOR: How much of the £224,500 had already been spent?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The printed returns distributed gave detailed information. He referred the hon. member to the last column.

Item—Fremantle Sea-Wall and Esplanade, £5,700:

HON. J. M. DREW had inquired as to this item, and found it was simply a carriage drive. Was this a reproductive work?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The sea-wall had been constructed along the foreshore and esplanade road to South street, where the Jandakot Railway began to turn slightly away from the imme-

diate foreshore. It was intended to spend £4,000 during the current year and £1,961 afterwards in carrying the esplanade to Douro Road and protecting it by a wall of stone from the inroads of the sea.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: This was an item which should come out of revenue. We were living in a fool's paradise. The Government were throwing sops all round the country and spending on works money that should come out of revenue. Members would see that he was trying to be consistent. He moved--

That the item be struck out.

MEMBER: This money was probably spent.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: All the more reason why it should come out of revenue.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Was this amount spent?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Some of it.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: Without parliamentary authority.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It was very regrettable that an item like this should appear on the loan schedule, and it was surprising to hear the Minister say that loan money had been anticipated for a work of this kind. Though his attitude on this would be a matter for considerable dissent among his constituents, he (Mr. Moss) could not allow it to stand in the way. He could not understand how loan moneys were entrenched upon to build an unproductive work of this kind. The money should come out of revenue, as the first money spent on the work did. It was a perfect scandal that an item of this kind appeared on the loan schedule, and he would not support it even at the risk of turning a large number of constituents against him.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The hon. member should take it and be thankful.

HON. M. L. MOSS: No. It was probably a sop thrown out to Fremantle to keep its members quiet. It would be a breach of duty on his part to vote for anything of this kind. We were asked to give authority to raise two and a half millions by way of loan money for public works purposes, but we were being continually told that many of the works had been constructed and that a

good deal of the money had been expended already. No one could say how much of the two and a half millions would be available for future works.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was all set out in the sheet supplied to members.

HON. M. L. MOSS: The country believed that the money would be available for new works. It would be nothing of the kind. How much would be available for new works?

HON. W. T. LOTON: The explanations with regard to these items revealed an extraordinary state of affairs in regard to finances. Had the money spent on this work been advanced out of loan moneys or out of revenue? Was it intended to recoup the revenue out of loan moneys when we raised loans?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: If members looked at the sheet in front of them they would get the information. The authorisations on this work at Fremantle were to date £11,164.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Did that come out of loan or revenue?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: All these figures related to loan money. Of the £11,164 there was £261 unexpended and available. We proposed to authorise £5,700, which with the £261 would make £5,961. The expenditure during the current financial year was to be £4,000; that would leave a balance of £1,961 to be expended after the financial year closed.

HON. M. L. MOSS: A large portion of the £11,000 already authorised and spent must have been used in building the railway to Jandakot. Even at the risk of voting against expenditure in his own province, he considered this money should come out of revenue and not loan.

Amendment put and negatived.

Item—Improvements to Harbours and Rivers, £43,000:

HON. F. CONNOR asked for information.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was proposed to spend £25,000 during the current year and £15,278 afterwards, while there was a balance of £2,722 to be recouped to loan suspense account. The work to be undertaken was Perth foreshore improvements between Barrack Street and Lord Street, improvements to Derby, Port Hedland, Balla Balla, and



Denham jetties, the survey of Nornalup Inlet, and other miscellaneous works on the North-West coast.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: It was understood that £51,000 was to be spent on the Perth foreshore between Barrack Street and Mill Street.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

HON. R. F. SHOLL believed that as a matter of fact it was so.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: When information was given, the hon. member should accept it. The Government were not authorised to raise or spend money more than £43,000 on all the improvements he mentioned, and only £25,000 was to be spent during the financial year.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: It was a new system for the Government to bring down a loan schedule and say that the money had already been expended, or half of it was to be expended. We ought to know whether the money set down for a particular work was to be expended on that work. It was all very well to lump a sum of £43,000 and then enumerate a number of works against it. The Government might carry on these works or not, or they might spend the whole of the money on one work. The amounts to be expended under the different heads ought to be set out in the schedule. He moved

That the item be postponed until detailed information is forthcoming as to how the £43,000 is to be expended.

THE CHAIRMAN: The member could only move that the consideration of the schedule be postponed.

HON. R. F. SHOLL would not take that responsibility. He entered a strong protest against the system of lumping amounts without giving the details.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the schedule was adjourned for ever he could not give the details of all the works. Take, for instance, the £500 set down for strengthening the Denham jetty. When tenders were called it might be found that the work cost £505, in which case an amount of £5 would have to be brought down in an Excess Bill. The £43,000 was to be spent over the whole of the harbours and rivers of the State.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: What he complained about was that a certain sum was to be borrowed for certain works, and

the Colonial Secretary enumerated those works, but did not give the approximate amount which was to be expended on each work. Under the Audit Act, the Government had a perfect right to spend the whole of the money borrowed on one work. Detailed information should be supplied to members.

HON. M. L. MOSS: A little while ago, he objected to the expenditure of a sum of money on the Fremantle sea-wall and esplanade, because it was not a reproductive work. He wished to enter his protest against the expenditure of loan money on the foreshores of Perth. The work was highly desirable, but no member could say it was reproductive.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It would be.

HON. M. L. MOSS: We had no right to construct a work of that kind out of loan money, and if we went on in this way, it would land the country in difficulties.

HON. F. CONNOR: How much of the £43,000 would be spent on reproductive works? He was not objecting to the works being carried out, but he wished information as to how much money would be spent in the North.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: If members consulted the figures that were placed before them, there would be no need to ask questions. On page 17 of the Loan Estimates the works on which this money was to be spent were enumerated, and they were: Perth foreshore improvements, Derby jetty, Port Hedland jetty, Balla Balla jetty, Denham jetty, Nornalup Inlet survey, and miscellaneous works throughout the State. Never was so much information given about a Loan Bill as had been furnished on this occasion, but all the information was doubted. The information was placed before members weeks before the Bill was brought down, but evidently members had not looked at the documents. The item of additions and improvements to jetties, tramways and rolling-stock in the North-West was to be spent in converting the tramway at Broome from a two feet to a three feet six inches gauge, and relaying the permanent way with heavier metals.

HON. E. LAURIE: It was generally understood that £50,000 was to be spent between the foot of William Street and

Mill Point. What members required were the items contained in the £43,000. The works were enumerated, but the amounts were not given against the works, and it was thought by some members that instead of the money being spent on the items enumerated, the whole sum would be spent on the Perth foreshores.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: It was not wise to pass a lump sum without knowing whether the different works enumerated would be carried out, for under the Audit Act the Government had the right to spend the whole of the money on one work.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Were the Government likely to do that when the works were enumerated in the Loan Schedule?

HON. R. F. SHOLL thought they very likely would. Fancy borrowing money for works already completed! No statement was furnished of the amount allotted to each work. These were not estimates, and gave no information whatever.

Item—Port Hedland harbour works, £5,000:

HON. R. F. SHOLL: The expense of water in the Port Hedland harbour was very small. Could the Minister state how the money was to be expended? The schedule gave no information.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was proposed to improve the harbour facilities by establishing beacons on shoals, by dredging, and by otherwise generally improving the harbour to meet the demands of Port Hedland's increasing trade.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: The Minister had given no information at all.

HON. R. LAURIE: If money was to be spent on dredging shoals, it was money well spent, since the result would be to decide whether vessels of larger tonnage could enter. He hoped the item would pass without farther comment.

HON. R. F. SHOLL was astonished to hear Captain Laurie, who was generally very sound, talk about dredging a harbour like Port Hedland, with heavy tides and a sand bank. It would fill up as fast as it was dredged.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was not proposed to dredge shoals, but to establish beacons on them.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: Dredging would be absolutely futile, for as fast as the outer banks were dredged the material removed would be replaced by silt. A training wall would be needed to control the current. Interference with the outer banks would ruin the port.

HON. R. LAURIE: While not questioning the hon. member's competency as an engineering authority, one would remind him that another engineering authority, Sir John Coode, had been wrong regarding Fremantle. All captains visiting Port Hedland, some almost weekly, some monthly, some every two months, agreed that a dredge would be of great benefit to the harbour; and applications had been made to Government after Government by Port Hedland for a dredge. Only within the last 10 days one steamer could not get into Port Hedland until another had got out, and that other could not get out for want of water. Much greater bars than that of Port Hedland had been dredged on the eastern coast of Australia, and kept clear. A permanent dredge would do a great deal towards improving the port by diverting the scour and permitting the entry of vessels of deeper draught.

HON. R. F. SHOLL dissented entirely from the hon. member's classing Port Hedland with Fremantle. At Port Hedland there was an open channel running straight from seaward into the harbour, a tide of seven or eight knots an hour, a sandbank outside, and a reef inside. To attempt to remove the bar meant that to-day's work would have to be repeated to-morrow. Captain Laurie might know more than himself about deep-sea navigation.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must confine himself to the item.

HON. R. F. SHOLL was confining himself to it. Captain Laurie, however, had very little knowledge of the conditions obtaining on the north-west coast.

Item—Sewerage for Perth and Fremantle, £278,000:

HON. M. L. MOSS: How much of the £278,000 was intended for works at Fremantle?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The total estimated cost of the entire work of sewerage for Perth and Fremantle, including suburbs, was £311,443. The

amount on the Loan Bill was £278,000; the amount available from prior authorisations was £33,443; and this gave a total of £311,443. Contracts had been let for sewerage of the main portion of Perth, and also for that of Subiaco and that of Fremantle. A contract for the supply of pipes had been let, and treatment works would be started early in March. Farther, it was proposed to put in at once mains to drain the gaol, the court house, the drill hall, and the police station. The amount in the item was intended to provide funds up to the 30th June next, for the following works: Claisebrook treatment works £21,000, expected date of completion of contract March 1907; concrete sewer pipe contract £22,000, expected date of completion October 1907; instalment of storm-water mains, a work which was now proceeding, £21,000—this contract would be completed in January 1907. The following works would be carried out during next year. Parry street storm-water mains, £30,000; the plans for which had been prepared, everything being in readiness to let a contract. Hyde Park drains, £6,000; Matilda Bay, Subiaco, drains, £28,000. The contract for the pipes was a three-years contract. Clays were now being tested, and as soon as satisfactory results had been obtained the work would be started. Farther, there were Perth mains, £20,000, which work was in hand; reticulation and mains, £20,000; Fremantle treatment works, £7,000. In connection with the last item, boring was now in progress; it was hoped that a start would be made in March next. Perth sewerage was estimated to cost £108,000, Fremantle £47,000, that of Subiaco £25,000, that of North Fremantle £12,000, and that of Claremont £9,000.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Did this £278,000 give enough money for the whole of this £311,000 worth of work?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

HON. M. L. MOSS did not begrudge a fraction of the money spent or to be spent in the future for this absolutely necessary work. It had already been postponed far too long, and every day there was any postponement the difficulties were multiplied considerably. He was glad it was intended to start this Fremantle treatment works at an early

date, in March next, but it was a matter of great regret to him that there was not a proposal to do more than construct these treatment works at Fremantle.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There was a lot more work than that. The treatment works were to be started immediately.

HON. M. L. MOSS: There were certain public offices, but that was an exceedingly small portion of the work. It was of great importance that the hotels, offices, and public and private buildings should be connected. It would be a very piebald piece of work if it was only intended to connect public buildings with the sewerage.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: During the financial year 1906-7 £20,000 would be spent at Fremantle in reticulation.

HON. M. L. MOSS wished to impress upon the Minister the importance of the work at Fremantle going on contemporaneously with the work in Perth.

HON. W. T. LORON: That was intended, surely.

HON. M. L. MOSS: What Fremantle people had to fear was that if we found Perth properly sewered and Fremantle carrying on in the way in which people were living in the densely populated parts of the town, Fremantle would become an extremely undesirable place to live in, and people would be flocking away from there. The town had already received a sufficient number of severe blows, and it was only what they were entitled to that the work should go on contemporaneously. That obviously was not what was taking place at present, because reference to page 17 of the Loan Estimates showed that considerable works were taking place in and around Perth, and nothing had been done in Fremantle up to date. As far back as 1896 the first vote was asked for to construct this drain at Fremantle, but they were as far off to-day as ten years ago.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: It was satisfactory to know that the work was now well in hand in Perth. He believed that the plans for carrying it out were in a very advanced state. He believed they were prepared by the late Government, and the work might now be fairly said to have been started. As to Fremantle, he was informed on the very best authority that the plans were not put in hand until

very recently, so if there was any delay the present Government could not be charged with it.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Was not Mr. Wilson Minister for Works in the late Government?

HON. J. T. GLOWREY was speaking of the present Government.

Development of Goldfields and Mineral Resources—Item, Kimberley District, £500:

HON. F. CONNOR wished to know for what reason a bore would be put down. It seemed to be under the wrong heading; he was not objecting.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: No; it was intended for the Kimberley Goldfields.

HON. F. CONNOR: To put a bore there?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Development of Agriculture—Item, Rabbit-proof fence, £126,000:

HON. E. M. CLARKE: Goodness knew what had been spent on the fence. It was increasing in dimensions. It was put down as a rabbit-proof fence, but there were two fences. Apparently the Government of the day shirked the question, or left it alone till the rabbits were upon us; and they proceeded to put the fence behind the rabbits. They then found a lot more rabbits on this side of the fence, and proceeded to put a fence behind a good many of those which had got through. They were continually spending money on the fence. It seemed there was no end to it. Was the item for maintenance, wages, or finishing the second fence?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The position was that £150,000 was the total authorisation out of loan money, and there had been some expended out of revenue. There was still a gap in the fence, and the rest of the expenditure would be useless if that gap were not closed up; so there was nothing for it but to spend £126,000 to finish the work.

Roads and Bridges—Main roads, and roads and bridges in agricultural districts, £15,400:

HON. J. W. WRIGHT asked for information.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Included in the amount of £15,400 in the Loan Bill was £6,040 for completion of the following works: Bridges—Marbellup, Carpaching, Popanving, Avon River, Mount Kokeby, Dudinyillup, Crossmans, Westbrook, Layman's Gully, Moore River. Roads—Busselton, Yallingup, Wanneroo, approach to Williams Railway Station, Payne's Gully, Roebourne.

HON. M. L. MOSS: They ought to be made out of revenue, every one of them.

Public Buildings—Item, Public Buildings, £175,900:

HON. M. L. MOSS would like a list of the buildings included in this amount.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The amount for this year, £84,703, included the following:—Perth Art Gallery, £5,000; Kalgoorlie infants' school additions, £505; Boulder infants' school additions, £450; Boulder West school additions, £425; Maylands school additions, £450; South Kalgoorlie school additions, £425; Perth (Thomas Street) school, £850; Cannington School additions, £250; Kalgoorlie abattoirs, £6,000; Old Men's Depot, Claremont, £4,000; Perth Government Printing Office, £5,000; Perth Government printing machinery, £5,790; Perth Government Electrician's offices, £600; and other works, the balance being principally for the Asylum.

HON. M. L. MOSS: There were two items which justified him in moving that this vote should be reduced; he referred to the Perth Art Gallery and the Kalgoorlie abattoirs. The Perth Art Gallery should be constructed, but this was not the time for the purpose. The money should not come out of loan, but out of revenue. It was a luxury in every sense of the word, and we had no right to vote £5,000 from loan money for work that could be well done without at the present time. As to the Kalgoorlie abattoirs, there was no reason why the Government should undertake this work. At Fremantle abattoirs had been constructed by private enterprise. Forrest, Emanuel and Company, Connor, Doherty and Durack, and S. W. Copley had spent thousands of pounds. This work should

be left to private enterprise at Kalgoorlie. He moved an amendment—

That the vote be reduced by £11,000.

HON. E. McLARTY: Private enterprise had met all requirements at Robb's Jetty, and the contemplated expenditure at Kalgoorlie seemed extravagant. He would support the amendment. As to the schedule generally, many of the items should not appear in a Loan Bill. To borrowing money for building art galleries and reclaiming foreshores he was strongly opposed. All such works might well stand over till revenue was available, for they were not reproductive. Where would the State be in the end if it were saddled with so heavy a tax for interest and sinking fund?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The amount for the Perth Art Gallery was needed to complete a work that should have been finished long ago. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales when here agreed to lay the foundation-stone of the Art Gallery on receiving a promise that the building should at once be put in hand. Unfortunately the revenue was not available. For constructing out of loan so substantial a building there was some justification, as the sinking fund would redeem the loan while the building was still as good as new. The abattoirs at Kalgoorlie were badly needed. It was idle to say they would be provided by private enterprise; for why had not private enterprise come forward already? The abattoirs would considerably lower the price of meat. The great bulk of the cattle would be slaughtered at Kalgoorlie. Only for one or two months in the year was the meat sent up in trucks from the coast, not for ten months, as stated by Mr. Moss.

HON. M. L. MOSS withdrew the statement: but that was a very small matter.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was most important; for if the meat could be slaughtered at Fremantle for 10 months annually and taken to Kalgoorlie, the amendment would have some justification. The site was near Kalgoorlie on the main railway line, and provision was made for handling 80,000 sheep, 8,000 bullocks, and 4,000 pigs per annum. In addition to the slaughter-houses and meat-dressing rooms, refrigerating chambers of 25,000 cubic feet

capacity, fencing, cattle and sale yards, tallow and fertiliser plant for utilising waste products, water tank and tower, trainways, and all the necessary fittings and machinery were provided for.

HON. W. T. LOTON: Would the charges made pay interest and sinking fund?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Certainly.

HON. G. RANDELL would like an assurance that the works would not be commenced till the loan was floated.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY could hardly give that assurance.

HON. G. RANDELL was quite in accord with Mr. Moss's amendment, which, however, touched only the fringe of the matter. The Art Gallery could well wait. Hundreds of thousands of pounds in this schedule ought to be omitted. The Government had surpassed their predecessors in proposing nonproductive expenditure from loan. An earnest effort should be made to make ends meet and put our finances on a sound basis. We could not continue borrowing for ever. True, our sinking fund had realised over £1,300,000; but now we were borrowing  $2\frac{1}{2}$  millions; so instead of reducing our indebtedness it was being increased, and our revenue heavily burdened with added interest.

HON. J. W. WRIGHT did not believe in the Art Gallery being constructed out of loan, but the Kalgoorlie abattoirs were in a different category.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	8
Noes	...	...	...	10

Majority against ... 2

AYES.				NOES.	
Hon. E. M. Clarke				Hon. G. Bellingham	
Hon. J. M. Drew				Hon. J. D. Connolly	
Hon. S. J. Haynes				Hon. F. Connor	
Hon. E. McLarty				Hon. J. T. Glowrey	
Hon. M. L. Moss				Hon. J. W. Langford	
Hon. R. F. Sholl				Hon. R. Laurie	
Hon. J. A. Thomson				Hon. B. D. McKenzie	
Hon. W. Mailey (Teller).				Hon. C. A. Picasse	
				Hon. J. W. Wright	
				Hon. T. F. O. Brimage	(Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

HON. M. L. MOSS would move a farther amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could not move again on the same item.

HON. J. M. DREW moved that the item be reduced by £5,000.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** That was out of order, the Committee having already decided that the figures "£175,000" should stand part of the schedule.

**HON. M. L. MOSS** would move for re-committal.

Schedule put and passed.

Schedules 2, 3—agreed to.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill proposed without amendment.

#### RECOMMITTAL.

**HON. M. L. MOSS** moved "That the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of amending Item 52, Public Buildings, £175,900."

**HON. R. F. SHOLL** seconded.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The good sense of the House should not permit the adoption of the motion. There had been full discussion of the schedule, and the Committee had decided that the item should stand part of the Bill.

**HON. M. L. MOSS** desired a vote on the question whether we were justified in expending £5,000 of loan money on an unproductive work like the Art Gallery.

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

Ayes	...	...	12
Noes	...	...	7

Majority for ... 5

**AYES.**  
**HON. E. M. CHARKE**  
**HON. F. CONNOR**  
**HON. J. M. DREW**  
**HON. S. J. HAYNES**  
**HON. W. KINGSMILL**  
**HON. W. MALEY**  
**HON. E. MCLARTY**  
**HON. M. L. MOSS**  
**HON. R. F. SHOLL**  
**HON. J. A. THOMSON**  
**HON. J. W. WRIGHT**  
**HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE**  
 (Teller).

**NOES.**  
**HON. J. O. CONNOLLY**  
**HON. J. T. GLOWREY**  
**HON. J. W. LANGSFORD**  
**HON. B. LAURIE**  
**HON. R. D. MCKENZIE**  
**HON. C. A. PIESSE**  
**HON. G. BELLINGHAM**  
 (Teller).

Question thus passed, the Bill recommitted.

*First Schedule*—Public Buildings, £175,900:

**HON. M. L. MOSS** moved an amendment—

That "£175,900" be struck out and "£170,900" inserted in lieu.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** trusted the item would not be struck out. When H.R.H. the Duke of York was here and laid the foundation-stone, a

promise was given him (which he was particular to get) that the work would be carried out; but unfortunately it had not been possible to fulfil that promise up to date. In view of that promise we were in honour bound to carry out the work, which was of an educational character and was badly needed. After passing the whole of the items the Committee should not follow Mr. Moss and call censure down on itself for the sake of £5,000.

**HON. H. BRIGGS** strongly supported the retention of the £5,000 in the schedule. As a member of the museum board, he could say that the institution was doing good work not only for Perth but for the whole country. At present an immense number of valuable articles were stored away and were being spoiled for want of room in which to display them. Considering that a promise had been given to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales that the building would be erected—and without that promise he would not have laid the foundation-stone—we were bound in honour to go on with it. While he did not approve of this work being paid for out of loan moneys, when the immense sums passed in this Loan Bill of two and a half millions of money were remembered, it was like straining at a gnat while swallowing a camel to question this small vote for an art gallery, to build which was a point of honour for the Government and also a point of economy when valuable paintings, pictures, and other works of art were being spoiled for want of room. To strike out the amount would be a step back at this period of the progress of the country when we had exhibitions and when technical schools were being established; and the objects to be displayed in the building in arts and crafts were intended chiefly for students in technical schools.

**HON. R. F. SHOLL:** This was not a question of £5,000, or of straining at a gnat while swallowing a camel, but of spending £5,000 and swallowing a principle. The amendment was a protest against expending loan moneys on a work which should come out of revenue. The President said many items had been passed of which he disapproved, though he neither spoke nor voted on the questions. A promise given by a previous Government was not binding on this

Parliament. We might strain at this gnat and get the £5,000 out of revenue, and then would not be swallowing the principle of borrowing money for this particular work. The mover of the amendment merely objected to the expenditure coming from loan money. An art gallery was a luxury, and though it might be instructive and even necessary, we must cut our cloth according to our measure. Unless this amount could be provided out of revenue, we should not go to the English market for funds for additions to an art gallery.

HON. H. BRIGGS had not spoken or voted on many of these large items because, as President, he desired to stand aloof from such things, seeing that afterwards they might be referred to his judgment. He spoke on this occasion because the president of the Museum Board, Dr. Hackett, who took an active interest in this matter, was regrettably absent. Dr. Hackett could have spoken more fully on the subject, having a greater knowledge of it, but in his absence it was his (Mr. Briggs's) duty to express his opinion, though remaining silent in regard to other items of the schedule.

At 6:30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.  
At 7:30, Chair resumed.

HON. S. J. HAYNES: Whilst in sympathy with the carrying out of a promise in regard to the building of the Art Gallery, he felt strongly with previous speakers that this amount should come out of revenue, and as a protest he would vote for the amendment.

HON. E. M. CLARKE: We should not borrow money for such purposes as this. If it came to the knowledge of the Duke of York that we had to borrow £5,000 to carry out a promise made when he laid the foundation-stone, the best thing would be to start a subscription and collect the amount. Such an item as this should never be discussed in this Chamber at all. The building should be constructed out of revenue and nothing said about it.

HON. C. SOMMERS: As schools were provided for out of loan money, surely this as an educational work was justified. A promise was made that £5,000 would be spent, and it was a long time ago since that promise was made. Under

the circumstances the promise should be kept. One member had suggested that we should pass round the hat; but it would be questionable that the money would be forthcoming if we did that. The Art Gallery was not for the city of Perth itself but for the whole State.

HON. J. A. THOMSON could not conscientiously vote for the item. Art galleries and museums were of a highly educational character, especially to a certain class of the community who had no other opportunity of studying art. It would be his duty, and be considered highly commendable on his part, if he were to have his children educated in high art; but if he could not afford to have them educated in high art out of his income he would be considered as going towards insanity if he borrowed money to have his children so educated. We must look at the matter from that point of view, and the Government should only spend loan money on really reproductive works. It was a very lame excuse to say that it was necessary to have the work completed or it would look improper on our part to allow a royal duke to lay a stone and then allow many years to elapse before we erected the structure. This was such a small item to a State with such a large revenue that if it were necessary to have the building erected we should construct it out of revenue.

HON. J. W. LANGSFORD: It was difficult to arouse any large amount of enthusiasm on an item of this kind, but he understood the opposition to the item was not so much to the item itself as to the establishment of a principle that these items should not find a place in the loan schedule. But why pick out an item like this for the demonstration of that principle? There were plenty of opportunities in the schedule upon which the principle might have been tested, but the very last item on the Loan Bill was to be sacrificed. The point was, were we justified in striking out this item?

HON. J. A. THOMSON: The interest of loan money.

HON. J. W. LANGSFORD: There were many other items on the schedule that could have been attacked to assert the principle.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Why did not the hon. member show it?

HON. J. W. LANGSFORD had not objected, but many members had objected previously, but hesitated to attack any item on the question.

HON. J. M. DREW supported the amendment for the reduction of the item. The item meant that we intended to go cap-in-hand to the British money lender for money to spend on an extension of the Art Gallery. He was only told to-day by a person that he was carefully compiling from the Loan Bill certain items to forward to the financial journals of the old country to show for what purpose we borrowed money. He opposed the item to affirm the principle that loan money should not be spent on such works.

HON. J. W. HACKETT had been seldom more pained at any remarks made in the Chamber than at the remarks of members on this item. When the Duke of York laid the foundation-stone, an inquiry was made as to whether the money was provided for the structure, because it was the persistent rule that royalty should not be asked to lay foundation stones until there was an assurance that the building would be carried forward to completion.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: What was the reply to that question; that the money was provided?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Yes; or otherwise the Duke of York would not have laid the stone. The foundation-stone remained a memorial, he could not call it of good faith on the part of the State, but of discredit to the State at large. The Legislative Council was asked to assert its undoubted great powers in order to set back the dial of the educational clock of Western Australia. He was especially grieved that Mr. Thomson had spoken in the way he did. Of all members he expected that member's warm support, and if he had been told that member would take that line of debate, he would have predicted that the remarks would never have fallen from his lips. The member talked about the expenditure. The object of the Art Gallery was in the first place to provide means of education and instruction for the poorest of the poor, a free gallery where people could study and be taught. If anything was legitimate it was the borrowing of money for the purpose of education.

We did that last year to a considerable extent in the Loan Bill introduced by Mr. Kingsmill. This was inserted for two reasons. First, it was a permanent building, one that should last as long as the State endured, and in the second place because it provided an absolutely necessary adjunct of education in Western Australia. He ventured to say this was the only House in which such expenditure would be seriously challenged. A gentleman elsewhere had spoken of an art gallery as a luxury; but the term was obsolete. There were no luxuries in the essentials of education; all were important in a greater or lesser degree. Imbued with a sense of this, he had so closely identified himself with the museum, the public library, and the art gallery as almost to incur censure, working for years conscious that it was absolutely impossible to give our children such an education as would allow of their stopping in the State and prevent their going to other countries for the rudiments of an art education. An adequate art gallery would generally give us that standing and position which other States had attained, and which it should be our ambition also to attain. Let any member compare the art of his early days with that now in every child's hands, and the immense advance that had been made would at once become apparent. Many teachers found the want of an art gallery an insuperable obstacle to the efficient carrying out of their work. If this opposition had been anticipated, he could have provided himself with hundreds of petitions, not only from the teachers but also from the taught. He could have surprised members with the evidence which might have been brought forward, of the desire to learn and happily also of the desire to teach in this State. It had been said that this item ought not to appear on the Loan Bill, and perhaps it ought not; but better there than not on the Estimates at all. If we were to comply with the simplest instincts of self-preservation in the battle of competition, then we must provide our children with an art education and an art gallery to enable that education to be carried forward to at least the degree obtaining in the Eastern States. He would have much preferred not to see the expenditure in the Loan



Bill, but there were no other means of obtaining it. Those who made money in this State fled from our shores, and unhappily those receiving the largest portion of our national income lived beyond our borders. It was not possible to provide the money from the ordinary revenue of the year. The Government no doubt had borne in mind that our loans were all terminable by reason of our excellent system of sinking fund—in the course of some 35 years all our loans would have been repaid. Any member who visited the museum could see for himself the disgraceful, the impossible straits to which the museum committee was reduced in hanging pictures. In the expenditure of the small funds available the committee was admirably assisted by people in England, who seemed to feel far more for the art future of this State than we ourselves felt. The museum committee was acquiring pictures of various masters of high repute, pictures which would prove invaluable to our children. Reflecting all the gallery was prepared to do, all it was required to do, what our people were losing by the want of it, and how readily it could be supplied in this way, then, although he would much prefer to see the expenditure come from some other source, all he could say and feel was that at last the Government had awakened to one of the elementary duties of the State. This was an educational vote. He was disposed to regard the present as the most serious discussion he had attended in the Legislative Council. Finding all that was likely to accrue from this placing of the Art Gallery in a loan schedule, he for himself, and he wished he could say for the majority of the Committee also, heartily accorded thanks to the Government, and assured them that the object justified the course they had taken.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: Some six years had elapsed since the foundation-stone of the Art Gallery was laid.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: More shame!

HON. R. F. SHOLL: It was a pity that Dr. Hackett's eloquent address had not been delivered at a time when our revenue was more expansive. We all agreed with what the hon. member had said as to the advisableness of an art gallery; and the present protest was not

against the establishment of an art gallery, but against the funds necessary for its establishment coming out of revenue. In view of the policy of the Government and the misgovernment of the country, the next three or four years would be serious times; and therefore we ought not to go to the Prince of Wales with a plea that we had been unable to build the Art Gallery out of revenue as promised six years ago, but were applying to the English money-lender for funds to construct a work that was not reproductive. Most institutions of the kind had been built out of public revenue and private subscription.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Some members had pointed out that this small item of £5,000 might easily be provided out of revenue. The total cost of the building, however, was estimated at £10,700. If the expenditure now proposed had been provided out of revenue, £5,000 for some other building would have necessarily appeared on the Loan Estimates. A building constructed as this one would not be for a year, for ten years, but for centuries. In that light, Dr. Hackett's argument as to sinking fund was an admirable one: in 35 years or so, we should have repaid the loan, while still possessing the building.

HON. G. RANDELL: But what about the annual expenses?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That was money indeed well spent?

HON. G. RANDELL: But how much would it amount to?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Our capital city ought certainly to possess an Art Gallery.

Amendment (to reduce by £5,000) put, and passed on the voices.

Bill reported with an amendment, the report adopted.

#### BILL—COOLGARDIE-NORSEMAN RAILWAY.

##### SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly) in moving the second reading said: Members will recognise in this measure an old friend, the work being one that has long been thought of. The question was before this House, if I remember aright, some years ago when a

resolution was passed affirming the necessity of building this line; therefore I dare say I am right in supposing the House is still of opinion that this railway should be built. If members will turn to the printed sheet which every member is in possession of in regard to all these railways — and I presume they have studied the maps — they will get a good deal of information from those particulars. They will see that the length of line from Coolgardie to Norseman is 107 miles, and the distance from Fremantle 363 miles. The gauge will of course be the ordinary gauge, the standard gauge of the State, namely 3 feet 6 inches. The line will be a light one, and therefore only 45lb. rails will be used. The sleepers will be half round, such as are used in the light railways. I may say here that the estimates set down are somewhat under the engineer's estimate, and I think the Government are justified, because they were enabled to construct the present agricultural lines for some £30,000 under the estimate of the engineer. Seeing that we have lines constructed, and we know the cost of them, I consider the Government are quite justified in taking that as a standard, and adding on the necessary cost in railage and the difference between wages in agricultural districts and those on the Eastern Goldfields. The estimate for construction is £81,000, and fastenings and rails £66,500, making a total of £147,500, the cost per mile being £1,379. That is a very cheap railway indeed. There are no engineering difficulties. Although this district is hampered to some extent for want of a railway, yet during 14 years under very trying circumstances which have existed it has put up, members will notice, a very creditable record in the way of gold production. Norseman has produced 327,560 ounces, of the value of £1,392,130. Then members will see set out the number of leases and the acreage held under gold-mining and mineral leases.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: What has it produced the last 12 months?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have not the figures, which appear in the Mines Report or the monthly Statistical Register. You will notice that the estimated tonnage of goods is 10,000 tons, 8,000 tons of local firewood and 2,000

tons of ordinary goods). That information gives members an idea why this railway ought to be constructed. In April of last year the Daglish Government commenced by asking the Engineer-in-Chief, the State Mining Engineer, and the District Superintendent at Kalgoorlie, Mr. Neil Douglas, to furnish a report. I have that report, which I promised to supply to Mr. Moss; and I want him to take care of it: it is the original, a typewritten copy. The report dealt with the cost of construction, and was submitted to the Government in June, and in due course laid on the table of the House in that month, therefore it will be contained in the Votes and Proceedings of last year, so that if members wish to look there it is available to any member who likes to take up that volume of Votes and Proceedings. I would like to draw the attention of members to this, that although it was estimated by these gentlemen that the line could not possibly be a payable one from the beginning when providing for all standard working expenses, charges, interest on cost of construction, and a one per cent. sinking fund, they simply went on the traffic as it was carried then. If you estimate the goods carried over any country road, and wait till you get sufficient traffic to justify a railway, I do not think you will ever build a railway. They made no allowance whatever for the extra traffic which will naturally follow when the line is built and the mines are opened up. Members will notice from the map that since then a very important mining centre has been discovered, which is likely to turn out very payable. I refer to Higginsville. The line would deviate somewhat from the original survey in order to take in Higginsville. I think that is likely to be a very prosperous little centre, and that it will add very considerably to the revenue of this railway. Of course Higginsville had not been taken into account in their report at all, because the lease was not pegged out at that time. It has only been discovered about 18 months. In that joint report, on page 2 it is shown that on 2,000 tons of material the cartage came to £10,000 more than the amount which would have been charged if the same material had been conveyed by rail at the then fixed rates. If a saving of £5 per ton could be thus effected by the railway

it would have its immediate effect in the development of the district, and the State generally would derive benefit therefrom. I would like to point out the great benefit these small leases would have if they could get their 2,000 tons of goods and materials carried at £5 per ton less. It would enable a mine which is not paying now to pay working expenses and probably pay dividends. In speaking of this I have already pointed out the great benefit that the revenue would derive from the timber traffic on that light line. I heard a gentleman well qualified to speak, who had been resident on the fields some time and is now resident in Adelaide, say he would very much like the Government to give him the right of building that line, and he would build it for timber alone. There is very fine timber situated practically all along that route from Coolgardie to Norseman. Private companies have built railways 100 miles in length for the sake of supplying the mines on the Golden Belt; and if it will pay a private company to put lines down it will pay the Government. I speak from having seen that part of the country, and I assert that there is plenty of timber there; and seeing, as I mentioned the other evening, that the mines consume a couple of thousand tons of fuel per day, members will realise what this timber traffic means.

HON. M. L. MOSS: This report says they are all well supplied by the present firewood companies.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: They may be well supplied, but the hon. member must know that the farther they have to go the more costly it must be, and the bush is gradually getting cut out. Mr. Kelso, the forest ranger, speaks as follows:—

At the rate at which timber is being consumed on the Golden Mile, it is only a question of time when the mines must extend their operations in regard to firewood. The construction of this line will mean that an almost unlimited supply will be provided for many years to come. The southern boundary of the Burbanks State Forest crosses the surveyed line at about the 14-mile in first-class timber; from this point to the 26-mile will be open to the cutters for the Boulder mines, and by cutting out to a three-mile lead on either side of the line and carting in to sidings about four miles apart, an area of 72 miles will be brought within the zone of operations, and

this country the forest ranger estimates can be cut out at 2,600 tons per mile, representing a total tonnage of 187,200 tons.

That is in the particular belt.

The freight on this at 1½d. equals £15,600 irrespective of rents for sidings, etc.

That is only taking that particular belt nearest to Coolgardie. Then he gives details of the timber the local mine would use and the mines at Coolgardie and Burbanks. He says:—

The mining timber along the whole route of the railway is of exceptionally good quality, mostly sound and free from gum veins or cupshakes, and quite equal to the class of mining timber being brought up to the fields from sidings westward of Southern Cross.

I would like to draw the attention of members to mining timber apart from firewood timber. The props and stays in the mines are very expensive indeed, as most of the mines use a good deal of jarrah and Oregon. In some cases the jarrah is not strong enough, and there is a good deal of Oregon, which is expensive. The carriage of Oregon would be a good thing for the railway. The Crown land ranger says that on this particular route there is an abundant supply of mining timber. The mining timber has been cut out around Kalgoorlie to a distance of anything like 60, 70, or 80 miles for many years; that is firewood. The Premier took the precaution a few weeks ago of going over this route himself, and he makes a comment on this report, saying he can hear out the statement that the timber is very sound. He bears out what I have just read from Mr. Kelso, the forest ranger. At the conclusion of the report of the board of inquiry it was emphasised that the line could not be expected to become a payable proposition but it was recognised that "few of the lines in the State were payable propositions when constructed, and that the development of the country by means of railway is a necessity to enable the State to advance and progress." I do not want members afterwards to quote from the report and say the board state that the line is not a payable one. If you take any line you will find that it will not pay working expenses, interest, and sinking fund at the time of its construction. As a case in point I may say the South Western Railway was opened through t

Perth on the 28th August 1893. The cost of construction, exclusive of rolling-stock, was given as £410,148, equal to £2,612 per mile. Since then many improvements have been effected. The traffic during the first year after completion, 1894-5, represented £21,684, or £138 per mile. The return showed a low rate of interest on the money. The traffic during 1903-4, the last year during which sectional earnings were kept separate, amounted to £243,188, equal to £1,039 5s. 4d. per mile. Thus the traffic was twelve times greater in 1903-4 than in the first year after completion. I cannot give any later figures, because the sectional earnings have not since been kept separate. I mention those figures to show that if we considered the probable traffic on a new line for the first few years, we should never build any line at all. A railway will make traffic for itself. It is the same with a tramline, for when it is first opened one can hardly say whether it will pay or not. The question whether the trams in Perth and Kalgoorlie would pay was an open question; nevertheless they made traffic for themselves. I have already given particulars as to the cost. For this line it is proposed to set aside £147,500, or £1,379 per mile, and to insist on its being built for that price, which is simply the price of the agricultural railways *plus* the freight on the material and the extra cost of labour. The main object of the railway is to assist the mining industry, the timber and other items of traffic I have mentioned being only as it were side issues. I believe the railway will open up a profitable and flourishing mining centre. I will quote extracts from the report of Mr. Montgomery, State Mining Engineer. Apart from his first report on the railway he has furnished a separate report on the mining possibilities of Norseman, in which he says:—

There are 87 gold-mining leases, representing 1,137 acres, in existence; and 14 more, representing 184 acres, have been applied for. All of these leases would be accommodated by this railway, which of course offers considerable prospects of development of gold production, as railway facilities will probably in many instances cover the difference between a payable and a nonpayable mining proposition. In the centre of Higginsville, which I mentioned before, there are 12 gold-mining leases. These are in addition to

those in the State Mining Engineer's report, and they represent 144 acres, while 10 leases representing 161 acres have been applied for. Besides the figures for Dundas on the paper distributed to members, I have returns for the following mining centres: Widge-mooltha, 4,082ozs., valued at £17,339; Londonderry, 13,977ozs., value £59,371; and Burbanks, 170,074 ounces, value £730,924. Mr. Montgomery writes:—

Within 18 months another find has been discovered, at Higginsville, situated a few miles east of the direct road to Norseman, and distant some 60 miles from Coolgardie. This new field has, I understand, already yielded 1,744 fine ozs. of gold, valued at £7,408.

This is a very creditable production indeed for a little field discovered and pegged out some 18 months ago. I wish members to realise that it is not an alluvial field where a few hundred men may gather up so many ounces in a few months. All this gold has been won from reefs; and though there is only one battery, which is privately owned, the performance of the field is very creditable. I do not wish members to think the whole of the gold came out of one mine; but only one mine is equipped. Mr. Montgomery says:—

This new district gives every promise of satisfactory development, and several shows have been systematically worked. The stone crushed at the Sons of Erin mine has given a return of from 15 to 20 dwts. per ton.

The returns from the State battery at Norseman, till 30th September 1906, show that 23,857 tons have been treated, and 24,819ozs. of gold won, valued at £92,534; whilst 16,334 tons of sands have been treated for £12,150. Mr. Montgomery says farther, on page 14:—

Apart from the published returns of the leading mines, it has been ascertained that that there has been a balance of roundly, 60,000ozs. of gold bullion won from a large number of smaller mines scattered over a belt of country some 32 miles in length, extending from Dundas on the south to the Peninsula on the north. Many of these are very promising prospecting propositions, only requiring active development to become important mines. The general average returns from the whole field is seen to be the very satisfactory one of an ounce of gold to the ton of quartz; but this has been due to the fact that under existing circumstances a fairly high return is necessary in most cases to pay working expenses; and only the best ore could therefore be milled.

I would draw members' special attention to his statement that notwithstanding the large output up to date, owners have had to confine themselves to ounce mines. Every mining member will recognise that an ounce mine is highly valuable. The mines at Kalgoorlie, with railway facilities and well equipped with machinery, pay handsome dividends on a yield of about half-an-ounce, and for some of them the yield is less than half-an-ounce, while very few of them yield more. The State Mining Engineer tells us that in the Norseman district owners have to confine themselves to ounce mines, on account of the high cost. His report continues:—

All over the field there are abandoned workings which have not proved payable, but which under more favourable circumstances would give a good profit. With better facilities for working, the average yield of the field would probably be only from 10 to 15 dwts. of gold per ton; but the tonnage crushed would increase very greatly.

The 10 to 15dwt. propositions cannot now be touched, but they would be opened up if there were proper working facilities. Mr. Montgomery continues:—

There can be no question that the construction of the railway to Norseman would enormously facilitate and stimulate the working of these lower grade mines, enabling many of them to become important producers. The Norseman field suffers very severely on account of its isolated position, as previously stated, in several important particulars. There are two days' expensive travelling by coach from Coolgardie, or five days' walking to be undertaken by men wishing to try there for employment; and consequently the supply of casual labour is very limited.

The mere fact of the absence of a railway considerably raises the cost of living; and men in search of work will not face a journey of two days by coach or four or five days on foot. The result is a scarcity of labour on the mines; and there is not so good an opportunity of getting first-class men as at the big mines in Kalgoorlie; and the Dundas mines have probably to accept the services of men who are not so skilful as the men on the bigger mines, though the Dundas mines pay higher wages. Mr. Montgomery points out also that the lack of travelling facilities deters investors from visiting the place, and that very good shows are thus passed over while places more convenient to get at are visited and

investors take them in hand. He then quotes an illustration of the difference in freights with the railway and without the railway:—

Coke costing £2 2s. 6d. in Fremantle costs £12 10s. in Norseman, as will be seen from the following cost of five tons of coke: Cost at Fremantle, £20 12s. 6d.; railage Fremantle to Coolgardie, £8 2s. 6d.; agency and charges, £3 15s.; cartage at £6 per ton, £30; making a total of £62 10s., as against £20 12s. 6d. Cement, which costs 12s. 6d. per barrel in Fremantle, costs £2 16s. in Norseman. Firebricks costing £8 17s. 6d. a thousand at Fremantle cost £34 19s. per thousand delivered on the mines.

He gives also the amount which the principal mine, the Princess Royal, had to pay for cartage during the previous 16 months. On stores, materials, etcetera, it was £1,173; on explosives, £238; local stores, £70; a total of £1,480; whilst cartage of machinery cost £753, making a total of £2,235 which would be saved to one mine by a railway. Until May 1902, the Norseman Gold Mines, Limited, one of the principal companies, made a slight profit in some months and a slight loss in others, and at last had to cease working. But if the cost of working was slightly reduced, that would make all the difference. That mine paid in wages until May, 1902, £160,525, for plant and machinery £39,000, and for stores apart from plant £50,934, a total expenditure, apart from Coolgardie or London, of £197,229. That mine was forced to close down on account of the high cost. A large capital being involved, work could not be continued. Mr. Montgomery's report continues:—

The tonnage crushed to the same date was 73,000 at a cost of £17,000, constituting a charge of 4s. 10d. a ton.

Members will see that if they multiply the tonnage by 4s. 10d., a very handsome profit will be shown. With railway communication the cost would have been 5d. per ton, and the mine would have made a substantial gain. If this be the case in larger concerns, the argument applies with equal force to small struggling shows, shows which have perforce been abandoned. The report continues:—

It should also be particularly noted that the cost of cartage on 1,320 tons was at the average rate of £13 per ton; but some of the goods came through Esperance instead of Coolgardie, and the railage to Coolgardie, £3 10s. per ton,

is not included in the figures just quoted. . . . The actual cost of freight is by no means the whole of the handicap the mines suffer from, as delay in obtaining requirements is almost equally serious. The carriers' teams are at all times (especially in wet weather) very much delayed on the road, often taking over three weeks on the journey from Coolgardie. The manager of the Princess Royal, upon one occasion, had a casting six weeks on the road between Coolgardie and Norseman, and would have saved £300 expended in struggling to carry on work without it, if it could have been promptly delivered. All foundry work which cannot be done locally is very slow in being obtained; and often heavy costs are incurred in consequence, which it is somewhat hard to assess. The grave importance and cost of delays in obtaining mining necessities and general merchandise are obvious to the practical mind, being far more serious than the whole cost of the goods themselves.

The State Mining Engineer, in concluding his personal report on this proposed railway, says:—

That the railway to Norseman would be of enormous benefit to the field goes almost without saying, and there can be little question that its construction would lead to a great expansion of mining there. The field is easily able to support ten times its present population.

I desire particularly to draw the attention of Mr. Moss to that. When speaking the other evening on the Loan Bill Mr. Moss talked of the absurdity of building a line to a place carrying only a population of 1,600; and I think by the way he confined himself merely to Norseman.

HON. M. L. MOSS: No; I took the information out of your own return on the table.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think the hon. member confined himself to Norseman, and did not include other districts served by this railway, such as Higginsville. These figures relate to the Dundas field, but the railway will serve districts in the Coolgardie Goldfield.

HON. M. L. MOSS: According to the Mines Report, the total population of Norseman is 450.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is the municipality of Norseman. Mr. Montgomery in his report says:—

The field is easily able to support ten times its present population, and there are enormous promising reefs waiting the attention of companies with capital to give them proper mining equipment and see them through the

initial development stages, out of which several important mines may be expected to eventuate. Under existing circumstances the cost of equipping a mine with machinery is so excessive that it can hardly be wondered at that investors direct their attention elsewhere.

I would like members to particularly note also that the State Mining Engineer gives it as his opinion that this field would carry at least ten times its present population. Instead of 1,600 it would be 16,000. The estimated revenue from the proposed line has been set down at £5,000, but the tariff will be framed to pay working expenses. With the development of the field it is quite certain that the estimate will be materially altered. As members are aware, there is a Bill before another place which provides that these lines shall be worked to pay working expenses. The Premier himself visited this district and took the trouble to go over the whole of the route, and spent some time there in order to satisfy himself; and as members are aware, he came back thoroughly convinced that the line should be built and included in the forefront of the programme of developmental railways. He says:—

In September I visited the Norseman district with the object of gaining all the information possible in a necessarily brief inspection. Whilst journeying to and from, some 400 camels were observed conveying material; also a number of teams, which gave evidence of the amount of traffic being done. I was greatly struck with the amount of valuable mining timber and firewood which would be procurable under such favourable circumstances were the railway built. As far as the properties inspected are concerned, one cannot but refer to the struggling existence of such a good mine as the Lady Miller leases, which in the opinion of prominent mining men—

And here the Premier is quoting Mr. William Henderson, who is favourably known to many members as a conscientious and capable mining engineer and spent some considerable time on this field, also Mr. Graham Price—

would, if at Kalgoorlie, profitably employ 200 to 300 men.

Instead of employing as it does from 10 to 15 men it would be employing something like 200 or 300.

To work this property satisfactorily a 10-head mill would be required, together with

all modern appliances. Some 400 tons of machinery would probably be necessary; and if the shareholders had to pay £7 10s. per ton for the cartage, it would mean £3,000, but with railway carriage at present rates the same machinery would be taken from Fremantle to Norseman for £350.

Members will readily see that as long as these high prices prevail, and rates like this have to be paid for cartage, it will never pay to equip these mines. It has been estimated by those mining gentlemen before referred to that this lease alone could keep 30 heads of stamps continually going. The Premier says also:—

The lode on this property varies from 10 to 40 feet in width and has yielded from developmental works from 7 to 11 dwts. over the plates, whilst the sands have not been treated.

I would like to point out to members who perhaps have not followed mining closely, that this would appear a very valuable mine; and no doubt any mine with a reef 40ft. in width that will yield from developmental work from 7 to 11 dwts. is valuable—developmental work is when they are prospecting for the reef, they take out a lot of ground—and all this material was crushed and yielded between 7 and 11 dwts. to the ton. They had to take it out in order to develop the mine; but after developing they follow the reef and take out nothing but gold-bearing ore, so that this yield coming from development is a very creditable production indeed. The Premier continues:—

The gold won from the Lady Miller leases is worth £4 per ounce. Some 1,607 ounces had been won at the time of my visit from 4,511 tons by amalgamating alone, whilst the tailings were estimated to be worth another 5 dwts. per ton. Another proposition, the Mararoa—

Here the Premier is again quoting Mr. William Henderson, but personally I may say that the Mararoa is a mine I know particularly well; it is a promising mine indeed and very satisfactory developments have taken place lately—

is similarly situated to the Lady Miller, and is handicapped by reason of the lack of facilities for economical transport of mining machinery, etc. The remarks made respecting the cost of equipment at the Lady Miller apply equally to the Mararoa.

Then the Premier goes on to say that since his visit some £3,000 has been spent on this property and a reef six feet wide

—a very respectable width—with a value of £3 per ton disclosed at the 230ft. level. I know from later information that the mine is developing in a very satisfactory way and will be worth a good deal more than it is to-day—a reef six feet wide worth £3 per ton. Then the Premier quotes a list of other leases, and goes on:—

The Princess Royal and the Princess Royal Central mines have been amalgamated, and Mr. Henderson the manager reports that they are now working on a large body of payable stone at 765ft. (vertical) level. This is evidence that the reefs live at a good depth. Already £116,000 has been paid in dividends on these properties—

That is, the Princess Royal; they are lately amalgamated—

HON. R. F. SHOLL: Yes; shares are now selling at 2s.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Premier continues—

—and it is anticipated that with farther development the amalgamated property will again reach the dividend list.

The Princess Royal has paid £116,000 in dividends, but is not paying dividends at the present time for this reason. The Princess Royal Central is a block claim on the Princess Royal, and the owners sunk a shaft on it—by the way, the local people did most of it themselves, being all Australian money—and cut the Princess Royal reef; but it dipped into the Princess Royal ground again, and in order to work the two properties cheaply they amalgamated. Now the Princess Royal is worked from the Central shaft, and they will soon be paying dividends as formerly. If they had not amalgamated, an expenditure of £30,000 or £40,000 would have been required to put down a new shaft on the Princess Royal. By amalgamating they saved that, and now they work the two properties as one, and I am sure members will see this a flourishing mine paying fine dividends within the next year. As I said before, the railway will not take exactly the route it was originally intended—on account of Higginsville it will deviate somewhat to the east. Speaking of Higginsville, the Premier says:—

Some good yields have already been obtained in this locality. Although only discovered in June, 1905, about 150 men are now employed there, and stores, hotels, and other conveniences are fast being provided. As an evidence that these railways induce prospect-

ing, it may be added here that since the timber railway was constructed to Mt. Monger

A privately-owned railway, a tramline practically, from Lakeside to Mt. Monger, built by a private syndicate for the purpose of bringing in firewood—

a few months since, some 150 men are engaged in mining pursuits, whereas they were unable to work their leases previously.

That will bear out what I say, that the construction of this railway will induce prospecting, will induce people to go there and look for mines and open them up, which, on account of the inconvenience, they have not felt inclined to do up to the present. The people of Norseman district have worked and struggled on for the last ten years without a railway. The fact that the field is not now paying dividends was quoted here the other evening as a reason why this railway should not be constructed. Members will see that the field must be a good and sound one for people to struggle on and put their money into it in the expensive circumstances under which they have been forced to carry on. The figures I have quoted show clearly that if they can get this railway it will cheapen the cost of mining; and according to the State Mining Engineer the field can easily increase its population from 1,600 to 16,000. I do not know that I can say any more, except to repeat that this railway will be built on the cheap system adopted on all the light agricultural lines. There was something said the other evening that this was only the first section of a line to Esperance. Esperance is 120 miles from Norseman, and there is nothing here to indicate that a line will be built to Esperance. It does not matter what the intentions of the Government are, but the Government have no intention of asking Parliament to sanction such a line. It could not be done without another Bill. The present railway is to be built with 45lb. rails and half-round sleepers; and that would not carry the heavy trains that would be required on a main line to a port; the line would have to be rebuilt. It is simply a tramway or light railway to carry mining material in order to try and cheapen the cost of mining and open up a valuable mining centre. Members will agree that we must do everything in our power to assist

in opening up a promising district to tide us over the depression from which we are suffering. We cannot encourage manufactures by bonuses or protective duties, or anything of that sort; therefore it is left for us to do what we can for our natural industries, mining, pastoral, and farming. I maintain it will be money well spent, and if the railway does not pay directly from the start it will in a very short time, not considering the indirect benefits that will accrue to the country. I move the second reading.

HON. M. L. MOSS (West): I hope members will not agree to the second reading of this Bill. I have already spoken at considerable length on the Loan Bill as to this particular railway line; and I desire to say again that I think it stands alone in the want of justification there is when one makes careful examination of material at the disposal of members of Parliament in the consideration of these lines. We are asked to give authority for the construction of a line, upon the information contained in the papers submitted to the House, of 107 miles in length at a cost of £147,500 for 1,600 people, and it has been pointed out that half of these 1,600 people are employed in carting mining timber at the present time. That means that if the railway is built the population will considerably decrease. Taking it for granted that there are 1,600 persons there now, and that they are likely to remain in that locality, I venture to say that in no instance has the country been asked to commit itself to an expenditure of £150,000 on the material the Minister has placed before us. An examination of the reports of the responsible officers of the Railway Department, the Mines Department, and the report also of the Engineer-in-Chief shows that they condemn the railway right away. There is a report here by Mr. Neil Douglas, the district traffic superintendent on the goldfields, and attached to that report is a useful statement showing the estimated revenue and expenditure on this line. He says that the goods at the present time carried via Coolgardie are 1,897 tons, and the revenue is £1,300.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: The hon. member is reading out extracts, and members



might infer that it was from a joint report. I understand each of these officers drew up a separate report.

**THE PRESIDENT:** That is not a point of order. The hon. member can refer to that matter when he speaks.

**HON. J. T. GLOWREY:** It is a misdirection.

**HON. M. L. MOSS:** That is not a point of order either. I will make it perfectly plain to show there are three reports here. I will read a small portion from each. Mr. Douglas goes on to say:—

Goods at present brought *via* Coolgardie, 1,897 tons, £1,322; goods at present brought *via* Esperance, 140 tons, £215; parcels at present brought *via* Coolgardie, 63 tons, £115; passengers, £1,431; mails, say £700; firewood for Princess Royal mine and mining timber for same, 7,912 tons, £597; mining timber for Kalgoorlie, £277; live stock, Coolgardie to Norseman, £267; Burbanks traffic, say £150.

Mr. Douglas estimates that the total revenue from the line will be £5,078, and he says the expenditure in connection with it will be—working expenses £10,047, interest on capital account at 4 per cent. and sinking fund at 1 per cent. £11,300, or a total of £21,387. The estimated loss on the working expenses will be £4,900, or a total loss of £16,300 a year. Surely in the face of that statement of estimated revenue and expenditure by Mr. Neil Douglas it is enough to condemn this project, when we are embarking on an undertaking which the responsible officers tell us will land the country in a loss at once of £16,000. Just one or two references to the report itself.

**HON. J. T. GLOWREY:** What does he know about mining resources?

**HON. M. L. MOSS:** I suppose Mr. Neil Douglas knows about as much as Mr. Glowrey. Mr. Douglas on page 2 of the report and page 26 of the file says:—

As for the timber resources on the proposed line, there is no doubt that a good belt of timber, suitable for firewood and mining purposes, exists between a distance of 13 miles from Coolgardie and practically into Norseman itself. It must be remembered, however, that sufficient firewood for the mines at Kalgoorlie, the only consumers of much importance in all the Eastern Goldfields district, can be provided from their present sources of supply for at least another eight or nine years.

This is very important:—

Firewood at the present time is delivered from Kurrawang and Kanowna at the mines at

Golden Gate at a rail rate of 1s. 8d. per ton, and from Broad Arrow at 2s. 7d. per ton. To bring it off the Norseman line it would be hauled at least 40 miles, and the rate would be 3s. 8d. per ton. This difference of 2s. and 1s. 1d. in the cost per ton, together with the fact that there is a plentiful supply at the present sources, must for some years, in my opinion, prevent the Norseman line from competing with the present holders of the contracts, more especially as some of the contracts are for lengthened periods. In addition the private companies are in a position, owing to the absence of precautions for the safety of the public, to haul the wood at less cost per mile than it can be done on a Government line.

On page 30 of the file, he says:—

In the statement of revenue at present presented, I have made every allowance in favour of the line, giving it the benefit in every case of doubt. For instance, a fair proportion of the chaff and oats credited to the line in the tonnage hauled from Coolgardie, is consumed on the road by the teams, and would not be hauled at all if the railway were constructed.

So that giving it every favourable consideration and putting the most favourable construction on every question that came before Mr. Douglas, he says that the line is going to be a loss from the commencement of £16,000 a year.

**HON. J. W. LANGSFORD:** Does he mention what the capital cost will be?

**HON. M. L. MOSS:** Yes; he says working expenses £10,000 a year, and the interest on capital account 4 per cent. and sinking fund £11,000. For a moment to refer members to the report of the Engineer-in-Chief, he says:—

The traffic statement shows that under existing conditions the estimated loss per annum in working expenses alone is £4,968 14s. 2d., as the earnings are estimated at £5,078 11s. 10d. and the expenses—including traffic, locomotive, permanent way, and stores and stationery charges—at £10,047 6s.

He repeats Mr. Douglas's figures, and goes on to show that for eight or nine years it is useless to expect revenue from the haulage of timber for the Golden Mile and Kalgoorlie:—

The present traffic would not warrant a daily train service, and in the traffic statement provision has been made for three trains a week from either end—i.e., Norseman and Coolgardie. This is the most economical arrangement that can be made. In conclusion, we have to report that the railway at the present time does not present itself as a payable proposition. Its construction would undoubtedly assist the mining industry, but it is a question whether the earnings would thereby be increased so as to make it payable. It

clearly would need to be a great improvement indeed, amounting to a doubling of the visible traffic, to make the line pay even working expenses let alone the sinking fund and interest on capital cost. Or it may be a question as to whether the construction of the line would so develop the mineral resources of the district, and so benefit the State as a whole, as to compensate for the loss on the line itself. It must be recognised that few of the lines in the State were payable propositions when constructed.

On page 23 of the file Mr. Montgomery, the State Mining Engineer, makes this statement:—

Under existing circumstances, the cost of equipping a mine with machinery is so excessive that it can hardly be wondered at that investors direct their attention elsewhere. But while I am personally of opinion that the district has a future which would soon justify the construction of a railway and make it a paying line, it cannot be denied that on the traffic at present in sight there is no chance of its paying even working expenses.

Farther down he says:—

A revival of investment in mining in this State seems therefore to me to be necessary before this railway will become a paying one, and its probability has to be risked in making the line. We here come upon purely speculative ground, and the extent to which risk should be run by the State in anticipation of better times in mining must be a matter for individual judgment of members of Parliament in coming to their final decision.

There can be little doubt that the whole of the figures the Colonial Secretary has given us in his speech are speculative. He is looking into the future and assuming a great deal as to the field improving. I cannot understand a report being more condemnatory than the report of Mr. Douglas. We are confronted with the difficulty at the jump of an estimated loss on working expenses alone of £5,000 and a total loss of £16,000.

HON. G. BELLINGHAM: On a capitalisation of £300,000.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I think it is on less than £300,000. The Minister has handed me this file in response to a request I made, and if that be so the Minister should have pointed out that it is on a different sum from that which the Government tell us it is going to cost.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I told you the Government had cut down the estimate.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Even with the estimate cut down, I cannot believe the Government are justified in expending £150,000 on this line. But my objection is of a different character. My main objection is that this is the thin edge of the wedge or the wedge driven half home to take the line to Esperance; and I cannot believe it is in the interests of the country, after having constructed a railway from Fremantle to the fields, having equipped and standardised that line in the way the best railways controlled by the Commissioner of Railways are equipped, to be saddled with a strong possibility of another line going to another seaport. I have already pointed out that there is only one alternative—we will have two railways competing with one another and neither paying. We shall have continual agitation and clamour to construct a line to Esperance; we shall have continual agitation to have a considerable sum of money spent at Esperance to construct a harbour there; and then we are confronted, as I mentioned in the House the other day, with a difficulty which was not apparent when we talked of the Norseman Railway some six or seven years ago. To-day the products of Eastern Australia come into the country without any impost in the way of customs duties, and Esperance will become an open and free port to the goldfields. We have expended close on 1½ millions of money to construct a harbour at Fremantle, and the vested interests of the State are centred around Perth and the producing districts on the Southern line, and in my opinion it will be fraught with a great injury indeed to them if we construct this Coolgardie-Norseman line. The line unquestionably from the information the Government have given us will be a loss from the jump. From the dictum of the State Mining Engineer, from the dictum of Mr. Thompson the Engineer-in-Chief, and the undoubted figures of Mr. Neil Douglas, the proposal is condemned in every respect. I do not desire to recapitulate the remarks I made when speaking on the Loan Bill or all the statistical information contained in the Mines Report in connection with this line. I do not know that any lengthy discussion on the measure will induce members to change their views, because every member has

made up his mind how he will vote on the Bill. I do not propose to move an amendment to the motion of the Colonial Secretary. I content myself, after giving briefly my reasons, with voting against the second reading of the Bill.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY (South): I rise with a considerable amount of pleasure to support the second reading of the Coolgardie-Norseman Railway Bill, and I hope members will recognise the long-standing necessity for the construction of this work. Most members of the House will remember that the work of constructing a railway from the Eastern Goldfields to Esperance was first proposed about 10 years ago. There were then rival routes—one party proposing to build a railway from Esperance, another party to start a line from Coolgardie. Long ago, and I emphasise "long ago," the question of building a railway from Esperance to Norseman has been abandoned. That mining centre, it has been recognised, must have communication somewhere with the seaboard; and what the people of Norseman now desire is to have communication with the Eastern Goldfields and with Perth. I repeat, the idea of building a railway from Esperance to Norseman has been finally abandoned long since. With regard to the Norseman Goldfield, I say fearlessly that to-day it is one of the best goldfields of Western Australia, outside Kalgoorlie. If hon. members will take the trouble to look up the returns of the amount of ore crushed, they will find that Norseman compares favourably even with Kalgoorlie. Over 290,000oz. of gold has been won there from less than 290,000 tons of ore. Mr. Montgomery bears out the statement that it will not pay to crush ore of lower grade than one ounce to the ton; and he says that values will probably decrease when railway communication is established, but he adds that a much larger tonnage will be put through.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Mr. Montgomery says 25,000ozs. for all the past year.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: Every word I state is taken from the report of the State Mining Engineer.

HON. M. L. MOSS: This also is taken from his report.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: I would not venture to quote anything else, because I know Mr. Moss would probably take exception if I did. My estimate of the value of the field is farther confirmed by Mr. Montgomery's remark that it is capable of maintaining ten times its present population. This House on a former occasion confirmed the construction of a line from Coolgardie to Norseman: that decision was come to on an abstract motion moved some three or four years ago. Since that date, I maintain the conditions and developments of the field have vastly improved. The length of the proposed line is 107 miles, and the estimated cost about £147,000. One aspect of the case Mr. Moss did not touch: he did not attempt to give members particulars of the Norseman goldfield, or of the immense auriferous ore existing there.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: He knows nothing about it.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: The hon. member was careful to refer only to the report of the Engineer-in-Chief and to that of the Traffic Manager. I am sure, however, that neither of those gentlemen, when inspecting the route and the field for the purpose of their reports, examined into the immense mineral resources of the district. Their visit had quite a different purpose. The Engineer-in-Chief presumably went there to inspect the proposed route for engineering difficulties; he certainly did not attempt to report on the mineral possibilities of the district; and I say, therefore, that in quoting the report of either the Engineer-in-Chief or the Traffic Manager, Mr. Moss is merely attempting to draw hon. members away from the real question at issue. I presume Mr. Moss admits that the three reports are drawn up distinctly; and I ask, what knowledge could Mr. Thompson and Mr. Douglas have of Mr. Montgomery's report, when they were drawing up their reports? They could have no knowledge of the ore resources of the district, or of the possibilities of traffic accruing once a railway was built to Norseman. This question must therefore be decided entirely on the value of Mr. Montgomery's report, and the reports of Messrs. Thompson and Douglas have no bearing whatsoever on the question. The Traffic

Manager, for example, would base his calculations entirely on the population of the district at the time he visited it. If I remember aright, Mr. Douglas makes it quite clear that the population of certain districts is very small. But before there was railway communication to Southern Cross, or to Coolgardie, or to Kalgoorlie, or other outback centres, what population had we in those centres? It is the fact of the establishment of railway communication that brings traffic, and there is no doubt whatsoever in my mind that the same result will be created at Norseman. Even if the field were quite equal to Kalgoorlie, Mr. Moss, on the ground of its geographical position, would apparently deny it the advantages of railway communication. The Norseman goldfield comprises 46 square miles, and at present upwards of 100 gold-mining leases have been taken up on the field: the effect of even the prospect of a railway has, during the last few weeks, brought about some important developments in mines to which I shall draw attention later.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Only one Norseman company pays dividends.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: Only 15 mines in the whole of Western Australia are paying dividends, so that Norseman's average is good. The district has produced over  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million pounds worth of gold, a record to be proud of under hitherto-existing conditions. Many things are to be considered in connection with the building of this line. First of all, the Government will not be called on to incur much expense in providing locomotive water on the line. That is already supplied by four or five large dams, at various points along the proposed route. First, there is one at the Horse Rocks, containing four million gallons of water; next there is one at Widgeemooltha, containing over three million gallons of water; the third is at Higginsville, also containing three million gallons of water; and then there are two very large dams at Norseman, each containing seven or eight million gallons of water. As to the prospects of this goldfield, I have before me a report of the Government Geologist, an exhaustive report on the whole of the goldfields, and it certainly is most complimentary to Norseman. I shall be pleased to show

the report to any member who cares to see it, and probably I shall read some extracts from it before I sit down. I do not think it possible to have better evidence of the permanency of this goldfield than the reports of the State Mining Engineer and the Government Geologist, which repay careful perusal. Mr. Montgomery, I am sure, would not without the most careful consideration make such important statements as one, for example, contained in his report that this field will carry a population of probably 15,000 people once it has railway communication. I desire now to read an extract from a letter addressed to me by a well-known mining engineer who has recently visited Norseman, and has acquired some large properties there:—

At Higginsville things are looking very well, and we hope shortly to have made such arrangements as to keep the battery going continuously. There is about 250 tons of public stone to crush this month, so it shows there is a little doing. On one of our leases a new reef has just been discovered by some tributors, and they have already had the following returns:—30 tons for 960zs.; 88 tons for 1260zs. The reef they are working looks very well indeed. We have also discovered sheelite on our leases. The lode containing this carries about 5 per cent. sheelite, which is worth £60 a ton, and would become valuable with railway facilities. The Lady Miller leases at Norseman, which we have just bought, are going to be equipped with a thoroughly up-to-date plant; contract for carting 150 tons machinery now being let. It will cost us fully £1,000 for cartage, whereas with a railway freight on Government rates it would have cost only £200, a saving of £800. The mine is only about 7dwts., but we are certain we can make it pay and employ a large number of men if we get facilities. On the Mararoa, I have just received a wire from Henderson saying that a crushing from development work at bottom level, 350 tons yielded 204ozs. over plates, sands being worth £1 3s. per ton, slimes £1 6s. This is very satisfactory, and looks as though it will turn out a good mine when properly equipped. I consider the prospects of these mines alone warrant the railway, not counting all the little shows that there must be and which have kept Norseman going so long. Now that I am established in that district, I would have no hesitation in introducing, and can introduce, a lot of capital once we are sure of the railway going through.

This letter is from a well-known and highly respected mining engineer. I do not know whether it is necessary for me to review the report read by the Minister in introducing the Bill, but many parts

of it afford strong evidence in favour of the construction of the railway. Mr. Moss, in quoting certain reports, referred to timber. I can assure hon. members that at the present time mining timber—not fuel—for props and other purposes is being conveyed to the Kalgoorlie mines from a long way to the west of Southern Cross, over a distance of 130, 140, and even 150 miles. Truck loads of that class of timber are being conveyed daily to the mines. Now I wish to point out that extensive supplies of this class of timber are obtainable on the route of the proposed railway, 30 or 40 miles out from Coolgardie. No doubt mining timber of this description will be drawn from that source and supplied to the Golden Mile so soon as this railway is built. The proposed line is somewhat singularly situated; singularly, that is, as compared with many other proposed railways; it traverses auriferous country right from the starting point to its destination. We know the Londonderry mine produced a large quantity of gold in its early stages, perhaps £750,000 worth. That, however, is not a matter of great importance, because the mine is situated close to Coolgardie. The only benefit which the Londonderry would derive from the line is cheaper supplies of firewood; and the firewood question, to my mind is becoming rather a serious one. The Londonderry draws its firewood supplies from a distance of about 10 or 12 miles. The other mines in the district would no doubt derive a benefit of cheaper mileage from the construction of the line. After leaving Coolgardie and reaching Widgemooltha, practically the whole of the country is auriferous. There is scarcely a mine that is not auriferous. At Widgemooltha in particular, some of the largest ore bodies I have ever seen on any goldfield are to be found. With all respect to Mr. Moss, I do claim to have some little knowledge of mining, as I have worked in mines and have lived on them for years; and I maintain these are some of the largest ore bodies yet found on the goldfields. It may be retorted that they are of low grade, but nevertheless there was recently obtained in that district some of the richest gold ever obtained on our fields. Shortly after we leave Widgemooltha we have a newly discovered goldfield

known as Higginsville. This field is small at the present, but every field must be small when it is opened up first. It was not known at the time this report was drawn up. After leaving that place until you get to Norseman, it is all more or less auriferous country, and very little prospecting has been done there until recently. In this report of Mr. Montgomery's, he refers particularly to the numerous reefs in that district. He says, speaking of two or three large well-known lodes which traverse the district, that even if anything happens to these there are many others which would take their place, and he refers to this particularly as a great advantage which may accrue from railway communication. In regard to some of the principal mines, I should like to read a few extracts from his report. What I desire is to impress upon members the permanency of this goldfield. I desire to refute, if possible, the statements and the imputations, I might say, that have been made by the hon. member who has opposed this measure. I have already stated that in my opinion it is one of the best auriferous countries in Western Australia outside of Kalgoorlie. I think I shall live to see that statement confirmed if those people have an opportunity of enjoying railway communication. There is no other field in Western Australia which can show the record to-day that this can. Mr. Montgomery says:—

The Break-o'-Day (11,533·36 fine ounces to end of 1904) and Lady Mary mines and leases (19,605·35 fine ounces) have also been considerable producers of gold, and during the last two years the Cumberland mine, including Mt. Benson leases (13,639·56 fine ounces) has also come to the front. Outside of these, however, there has been a balance of, roundly, 60,000 ounces of gold bullion from a large number of smaller mines scattered over a belt of country some 32 miles in length—

HON. R. F. SHOLL: What year was that?

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: Last year. In opposing this Bill Mr. Moss would make one believe that Norseman was a small little mining camp, whereas there is a well defined auriferous belt there of 46 square miles. I have a map showing the whole of the district carefully prepared by the Government Geologist. I am not making any statement I cannot

verify by facts and figures. The report continues:—

—extending from Dundas on the south to the Peninsula on the north. Many of these are very promising prospecting propositions, only requiring active development to become important mines. The general average return from the whole field is seen to be the very satisfactory one of an ounce of gold to the ton of quartz.

Kalgoorlie cannot boast of that; Kalgoorlie cannot report an ounce to the ton. There are mines to-day in Kalgoorlie showing under half an ounce to the ton and paying dividends. The report proceeds:—

But this has been due to the fact that under existing circumstances a fairly high return is necessary in most cases to pay working expenses, and only the best ore could, therefore, be milled. All over the field there are abandoned workings which have not proved payable, but which, under more favourable circumstances, would give a good profit. With better facilities for working, it is probable that the average yield of the field would fall to from 10 to 15dwts. of gold per ton, but the tonnage crushed would increase very greatly.

That is exactly what I said some little time ago. There is no doubt that the average yield of the field would fall, but the tonnage crushed would increase tenfold. The report continues:—

There can be no question that the construction of the railway would enormously facilitate and stimulate the working of these lower-grade mines, enabling many of them to become important producers.

This report is made by the State Mining Engineer, and I will leave members to draw their own conclusions. He refers to the Princess Royal, and also speaks of other mines. He says:—

All these mines could be worked on a much larger scale with benefit, but require machinery and development, for which capital is at present not available. There are also several other reefs in this part of the field that have been abandoned as not payable just now, but which have given yields that lead to the belief that they might turn out well if properly opened up.

He also speaks of the Cumberland mine, another large gold-producer, and says:—

The average yield from the mine so far has been satisfactory, the return being about 23dwts. per ton of quartz, and the mine seems to be in a fair way to hold its own. About 50 men are employed. The mine has its own battery and cyanide works, but no slimes-treatment plant.

He goes on and speaks of other mines in that district:—

The Norseman field suffers very severely on account of its isolated position in several important particulars.

I think Mr. Connolly referred to that, so I will not trouble members by reading it again. The report of Mr. Campbell, the assistant geologist, is one of a most exhaustive nature; in fact the whole of the book deals with nothing else than the Norseman Goldfield, and goes in for details. I will just read a few lines from it in different places. The Government Geologist in a prefatory note says:—

That portion of the Dundas Goldfield embraced by Mr. Campbell's work consists essentially of a series of metamorphic sedimentary rocks, estimated to reach a thickness, making due allowance for repetition by folding, of not more than 800 feet, which occupies a strip of country skirting the west side of Lake Dundas, and near the west side of Lake Kirk.

I mention that to show the enormous auriferous belt which is there. The report, I am sure, is too exhaustive and would not prove very interesting, but still so far as the goldfield itself is concerned there is not one reference to it which is not complimentary. The Government Geologist says:—

Norseman has proved a good mining field, the auriferous quartz reefs being scattered over a very large extent of country. The quartz reefs trend generally north and south, and underlie easterly at an angle of about 45 degrees; those trending generally east and west underlie south at angles varying from 60 to 70 degrees. With one or two notable exceptions, the quartz reefs are mostly short and consist chiefly of white quartz with a relatively small proportion of pyrites, galena, with (in certain localities) scheelite and bismuth. Many of the reefs evidently carry rich chutes of gold. Up to the end of 1904 the area embraced by Mr. Campbell's work has returned 266,004ozs. of gold, or at the rate of 1'019ozs. for every ton of ore treated.

That is very satisfactory. Mr. Campbell says:—

The area comprised in the accompanying geological map of Norseman is that portion of the Dundas Goldfield lying between the southern end of Lake Cowan and the northern end of Lake Dundas, about eleven miles in a north and south direction and six and a half east and west, with the town of Norseman as a centre; it covers about 46 square miles, excluding the lake plains.

I have no desire to go any farther into figures or data. I was anxious to quote

that particular paragraph which deals with the magnitude of the Norseman Goldfield. I trust that members in considering the Bill to-night will do so with fair and equitable minds. I would be one of the last members in the House to stand up and advocate this Bill, if I did not believe it was in the interests of the State that the line should be constructed. With regard to the bogey, as I may safely call it, raised by Mr. Moss, that is the Esperance Railway, I can only say that I, as one, am not prepared at the present time, and will not be prepared under existing conditions, to support a line from Norseman to Esperance. There is nothing to warrant that at present; but I say that we should be just to those people. Why should we penalise them owing to their geographical position? Those people have struggled on manfully for the last 12 or 13 years, and they have proved the existence of a good and payable goldfield. Why not let us grant them what they have sought for so long—railway communication with the seaboard?

HON. R. F. SHOLL (North): I must confess I do not know much about the merits or demerits of this line, but one would wonder, after hearing the arguments which have been brought forward by the hon. member who has just sat down, and who has advocated this railway, what has become of the gold. One would think that our export of gold ought to have been considerably larger than it has been, judging from all the statements that have been made in support of this very valuable and rich goldfield. The line might have been justified six years ago when the Princess Royal was in full swing. This mine now is producing very little gold. She is the mainstay, as far as I understand, of the Dundas field, and her fully paid-up shares to-day are quoted at 8s. 6d. The report of the Mines Department for 1905 showed that the gold yield for 1904 was 31,380 ounces, as compared with 25,961 for 1905, showing a decrease of 5,419 ounces. That does not show that this field is on the increase, or getting more prosperous. I must confess that I prefer to see a line built to a goldfield for its development in its early stages, and not when it has pretty well become exhausted and does

not produce the gold that it has done in its earlier stages. The cost of taking machinery there has been overcome, but it appears to me that the field does not carry down. The reefs become smaller and the percentage of gold in the quartz is less.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: Will you give an instance in which a reef has petered out?

HON. R. F. SHOLL: I can tell you where a reef has not paid—in the Princess Royal mine at the present time. I must confess I know nothing personally of this field; but if the field was not worthy of a railway in the days of its prosperity, and when the country was in a better position to pay for a railway, I do not think this is the time for expending a large sum on a railway which is a doubtful proposition and unlikely to pay. In a case before the Arbitration Court, I think about two years ago, the managers of mines in that district pleaded that they could not afford to pay a certain scale of wages on account of the poorness of the lode, and they gave that as a reason for a decision in their favour. I should like before we come to any decision to get that evidence. I think we should be careful before committing the country to a heavy expenditure on constructing a railway according to the dicta of gentlemen who try well to do their best for their constituents. At this juncture I do not feel justified in voting for the second reading.

HON. J. M. DREW (Central): Were we to judge of this Bill by itself, I think many of us would conclude it was a purely speculative proposal of the Government. But I think we should seek a deeper motive. In my opinion those at the back of the Government have urged them to bring in this proposal, and the intention is at a later date to extend the Norseman Railway to Esperance. There is no doubt about that; because so far, neither in this House nor in another place has there been any reason put before members to justify them in supporting the Bill. While the Labour Ministry were in power three impartial officers were appointed to investigate the proposal; the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Douglas of the Railway Department and Mr. Montgomery, State

**Mining Engineer.** The reports of these officers are before us, and every impartial person must admit that they strongly condemn the scheme. Mr. Douglas says that in his opinion there will be a loss of something like £16,000.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** He based his calculation on a cost of a quarter of a million.

**HON. J. M. DREW:** He based his calculation on a cost of something like £200,000, and we have no guarantee that the line will not cost £200,000. Probably it will cost that before completion. Mr. Montgomery states at the conclusion of his report:—

But while I am personally of opinion the district has a future which would justify the construction of a railway and make it a paying line, it cannot be denied, with the traffic at present in sight, there is no chance of its paying even working expenses.

Mr. Douglas goes even farther than that. He is in a position to form an accurate opinion whether the line from his point of view will pay. We are asked to pass with this Bill a sum of £81,000, and I think the ultimate cost of construction will be £150,000. I am firmly convinced this is intended to be the first section of a line to Esperance. That may not be the present intention of the Government, but I feel confident it is the intention of some who are supporting the Government.

**HON. J. T. GLOWREY:** Your Government supported the railway.

**HON. J. M. DREW:** I know my Government supported it; but I did not support it, and I certainly will not be bound by anything my Government did. It will be found, if this section be undertaken and completed, an agitation will be started on the fields for an extension to Esperance; and that demand we shall be unable to resist any more than we can sweep out the ocean with a broom. From every centre between Southern Cross and Lawlers will come a cry for the extension of the line; and there is no doubt it will be extended within a short period. In what position will this State then be placed? We shall have to compete directly against South Australia, which State will be placed in a far better position for competing against ourselves than it occupies to-day. South Australia can now land produce in Fre-

mantle at rates which shut out many of our local producers; but the agricultural products of Western Australia, or the great bulk of them, will have absolutely no chance if the railway be extended to Esperance, as I feel confident it will be within a few years if we sanction this project. In addition, the Perth and Fremantle merchants are surely entitled to some consideration. Are we to provide a railway and eventually to provide a port to compete with the port of Fremantle, on which something like £1,350,000 has been spent with the intention of making it the first port in Western Australia? This is the first step towards making another port to compete not only with Fremantle but with Western Australia as a whole. I am much surprised to observe that the seats of several agricultural members are vacant. I cannot understand why those members are absent to-night. If there be any occasion when they ought to be here, this is certainly the occasion, in order to oppose a railway project brought forward with insufficient information and insufficient justification. I am told, I have read, I have every reason to believe, that the port of Esperance will need an expenditure of not less than a million of money to render it suitable for shipping on a large scale. We must commit ourselves to that also. I do not know whether that is a fact; but Captain Laurie can correct me if I am wrong.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** If you are right. It will be impossible to open a harbour at Esperance.

**HON. J. M. DREW:** The quantity of surplus chaff received from South Australia this year, beyond I presume that received last year, was 200,000 tons. The increase is no doubt due to the abolition of the interstate duties. I think we have now sufficient competition established without creating more, especially when there is not sufficient information before the House to justify our supporting the Bill. If Norseman were a great gold-mining centre, then I think we should feel ourselves compelled, in spite of the threatening outlook, to support the project; but seeing the railway has no justification, as I think I can prove by figures, seeing the Dundas Goldfield has been going gradually backward during the past few years, there is no reason why we



should not resist this attempt to construct the first section of the Esperance Railway. In 1901 the Dundas Goldfield produced 29,843ozs.; in 1902, 28,579ozs.; in 1903, the record, 33,845ozs.; in 1904, 31,830ozs.; in 1905, 25,960ozs.; and till the end of August of this year 14,185ozs., a drop from 33,000ozs. in 1903 to say 18,000 in 1906. These figures show the railway is not justified; that the goldfield is going back if anything; and that we should wait for farther evidence of its progress before committing the country to an expenditure of £150,000, and all, I repeat, for the benefit of South Australia. We constructed the Coolgardie Water Scheme. Did we undertake it for the benefit of South Australia? We have gone to the expense of providing public buildings on the fields, providing police and other public officials. We shall have to do the same at Esperance if this railway is constructed and extended—all for the benefit of South Australia.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: We are not asking for an extension to Esperance.

HON. J. M. DREW: I know that. Seldom do any Government ask all they want in one breath. That is my experience. Governments move gradually, but move with certainty; and that will be the result of this scheme. I am pledged by the agricultural population to oppose this line. Self-preservation is the first law of nature. They recognise it is but right to do all they can to protect their interests. I have listened to the arguments of those who advocate this scheme, and the arguments seem to me to be nine points timber and one point gold. We have heard much of timber, and one would imagine there was an immense goldfields demand for timber, which demand could not be supplied unless this line were constructed. I admire the strenuous advocacy of the supporters of the Bill; I admire their efforts extending over many years, their great enthusiasm, and the industry with which they have carried on their campaign. For this they deserve every credit; but their energy will not interfere with or influence my judgment. I intend to oppose the second reading.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE (North-East): I have listened with great interest to the various speeches made this

evening on the Norseman Railway project. Some of the speakers fear lest the railway be continued from Norseman to Esperance. As a goldfields member I am first a West Australian; and any work proposed to the detriment of the capital of this State will have my strenuous opposition. I believe first in supporting Western Australia, and I think it my duty as a West Australian to do everything in my power to support the capital. This is not an Esperance Railway project, nor do its advocates anticipate its continuance to Esperance. Mr. Moss seems to take a delight in frightening agricultural members by stating that the line will at no distant date be continued to the seaport in the South. I regret as much as Mr. Drew that our old friend and goldfields advocate, Mr. Dempster, is not in his place to-night. He has always been a supporter of the Norseman Railway, and one of those who hold that the railway will be a payable concern. The Norseman Goldfield is to-day in such a state that unless it obtains cheap communication with Coolgardie, its yield will soon be farther reduced. The Norseman gold mines are now practically shut down because they cannot work the ore without cheaper means of transit. The Princess Royal returns have been quoted by Mr. Sholl. The lode of that mine has drifted to the Princess Royal Central, which with cheap means of transit will be a great mine. The most recent flotation, the Murroa, was sold to an Adelaide company for something like £5,000; and it is now quoted on the market at some £10,000 to £15,000, and there is every indication that it will be a great mine. Higginsville, another centre towards Coolgardie from Norseman, is a very promising field, and some leases in that locality have been taken over by the Red Hill Company. Already there are signs that a thriving town will crop up at Higginsville. The mining industry to-day compared with what it was in the early nineties is as different as chalk is from cheese. The scientific treatment of ore that has come about allows mine managers to treat low-grade ores with greater ease; but to treat low-grade ores more machinery is required, and the heavier stampers used must be frequently renewed; in fact machinery has constantly to be renewed, so that cheap

transit is the only way in which low-grade ores can be made to pay. The cost of treating ore at Kalgoorlie is 8s. 9d. per ton now, as against 23s. and 24s. per ton some years back, and it has all been brought about by cheap transit. If a line is taken to Norseman the mines in that locality will be able to treat their ore bodies at a much cheaper rate, and will consequently employ a greater number of men. I certainly think that the 1,600 persons there at present will be more than quadrupled, and no doubt other important centres will crop up. Mr. Howrey has stated that from Norseman to Coolgardie there is a continuous belt of auriferous country. I have travelled through the country and I can substantiate what he has said about it. I have not the slightest doubt but that the line will be a payable proposition after the first few months. Members know well that it takes some time for a district to open up, but I am quite sure the residents of the field and the speculators in South Australia will anticipate the railway and start to put capital into the district as soon as the Bill is passed by Parliament.

I regret the opposition shown by Mr. Foss. He seems to take a delight in opposing anything that is for the good of the goldfields. If he is one who has come from another country and has benefited by the prosperity of Western Australia, I certainly think it is not kind on his part to attack us in every way he possibly can. It seems to me that there need only be an item of any kind on the estimates for the goldfields for him to give it his strenuous and unkind opposition. I feel quite sure that members will agree with me that goldfields representatives are not like that. If they think it their duty as members of Parliament they do all they possibly can for the good of the country as a whole. As representative of a constituency in Western Australia I feel that I have a duty to support any industry and any work that is for the good of the country as a whole. I am hopeful that in the vision which will probably take place we will see many of the country members voting for the railway. They can take my assurance that I do not fear that it will interfere with their interests whatsoever. I would not advocate a railway

that would have for its purpose the damaging of the interests of the agricultural districts.

HON. F. CONNOR (North): I do not intend to give a silent vote for this Bill. I am going to take a stand, and express it in few words, quite different from what has been said here either by the supporters or the opponents of the Bill. I do not fear this bogey, Esperance, that both the supporters and opponents of the Bill are so frightened of. I say that if Esperance is the natural port of the goldfields it is not the duty of this House elected by the whole of the people of the State to try to stop the development of that particular port or any other port. It is cowardly—and I use the word with all due deference—the way this subject has been brought up by members both for and against the Bill. Either the railway is justified or it is not. In my opinion it is justified, not particularly to open up the Esperance district or port, but it should not be opposed because it may be the means of opening up that port. I wish members would say what they think, that it must eventually be the means of opening up Esperance as a port. It is not statesmanlike or even politic to have as the sole argument used by speakers that they are afraid of the bugbear of Esperance. If Esperance is a good port and it will suit the country that Esperance should be established as a port and that the goldfields should be connected with it by means of a railway, I do not see what we should be afraid of; because, after all, the natural law comes in. All the world over the fact has been established that where the natural port is, it eventually gets the trade of the district. I intend to vote for this Bill not with the fear that the railway will eventually go to Esperance. I do not fear that, and I do not think the country fears it, because if Esperance is the natural port from which the trade will come, nothing we can do here will prevent it. While I intend to vote for the Bill I raise my protest against the arguments used, because it seems to me cowardly to be afraid that this railway if it is built may be continued to Esperance. Goldfields members show a craven spirit. I do not say it in any disrespectful manner, but they are afraid to tackle the ques-

tion and to admit it. We know all about the goldfields Press. It has a great deal to do with the question. Mr. Kirwan has been fighting the question for a long time. The question is whether there will be a line built to Esperance, and I have no hesitation in saying that the railway, which the passing of this Bill will be the means of starting, must eventually connect Esperance with the goldfields. I am not afraid of that, but in view of this fact, I would not use the line of argument adopted by goldfields members. I protest against the manner in which the debate has been carried on by both sides. I shall vote for the Bill.

HON. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan-Suburban): I would like to say a few words before giving my vote in the division which I suppose will take place to-night. It will give me great pleasure in supporting the Bill. I think rather much has been made of the bogey of the continuation of this line beyond Norseman to Esperance; because after many years of vicissitudes, the final blow has been dealt to the prosperity of Esperance by the development of the Ravensthorpe fields. [THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Hear, hear.] Practically the centre of interest on the South-East coast—and I think I speak with an intimate knowledge of that part of the world—is now at Ravensthorpe and not at Esperance. Members who have been there lately must know that not only is the population of Esperance shifting to Ravensthorpe, but even the buildings are shifting too. The day when Esperance is to be considered a factor with regard to the South-East of this State is fast disappearing. I feel inclined to support the Bill, because I think the supporters of the measure, aided by some of those reports read, have just about justified—I do not say there is very much to spare—the building of this railway. I do so, too, because I think that at present at Norseman we have a class of miners I am anxious to encourage above all classes of miners. In many instances the shows at Norseman having been worked unsuccessfully by companies have passed into the hands of small working parties of miners, and so far as the prosperity of the State goes, so far as the desirability of settlers goes, the man who belongs to a

working syndicate of miners is worth a great deal more to the country than those miners who work on wages for companies. For these reasons, first, because I think the bogey of the continuation of the line to Esperance has been somewhat exaggerated, and second, because I think a case has been made out which will just about justify the construction of the railway, and third, because of the class of miner now inhabiting Norseman, it is my intention to support the Bill before the House.

HON. W. T. LOTON (East): Leaving out the question of what is called the bogey of running the line to Esperance supposing this line is constructed, so far as I am able to ascertain from the evidence placed before us to-night, I think the weight of it is entirely against the building of this railway at present. When we consider that the output of gold for this field during the past year has been just about half what it was nine or ten years ago, is it an indication that there is warranty for spending £150,000 on this railway? It seems to me we should wait and see if there is no better development, either in the mines now being worked or in some new mines.

HON. J. T. GLOWBEY: Thirteen years is long enough to wait.

HON. W. T. LOTON: The quantity of gold being produced is practically reduced by half. I think the people who have been living in Norseman and working those mines in the past are deserving of reasonable consideration; but I do not think the House is justified in agreeing to spend £150,000 because people have elected to settle on a certain goldfield which has not turned out profitable at present and is not likely to turn out profitable. With cheaper means of transit many of these mines that are low grade might be worked and might turn out fairly, but it is a matter of speculation, it is entirely an uncertainty; and at this particular stage and with the position of our finances, I am sure if the Government thought wisely on the matter they would stay their hands for the present. And if they wish to push the country ahead more quickly, there are better lines of railway and better portions of the State to develop on other goldfields than this one. There is the line from Magna

to Black Range. It is proposed to spend £5,000 during the next 12 months on the Magnet-Black Range Railway, whereas this line is to be carried on to completion. The Black Range line would open up a field that is entirely prosperous. I saw some gold specimens from that district this morning in a box about a foot square: they would make your mouth water, practically all gold. Without detaining the House farther, I have not been convinced at all that it is desirable at the present time to deal with the construction of this line of railway. I have been convinced, on the other hand, that it is undesirable, that we are not warranted in voting a sum of £150,000 with the evidence before us; that there will be a distinct loss to start with of at any rate from £10,000 to £15,000 a year. Why should we venture upon a distinct loss at the present time? We cannot afford it, and therefore this line should give way.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** (in reply): There is one matter I did not make quite clear, I am afraid, in introducing the Bill. I overlooked mentioning definitely and clearly that this report of the district traffic manager, Mr. Neil Douglas, was based on a capital cost of £226,000, and his figures of course are proportionate throughout. The Government only propose to spend £140,000—nearly £100,000 less; therefore it is quite a different matter to get a return from that expenditure. Mr. Drew remarked that the line could not be built for the money. He was scarcely correct in saying that, because we have built three agricultural railways during the present year with the same expenditure per mile, and in this case we have added the extra cost of freight and charges. The lines Mr. Drew took into consideration were the ordinary standard lines, which means at least £1,000 per mile more for construction than for the construction of this railway.

**HON. G. RANDELL**: Not £1,000 more per mile, £100.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY**: No; £1,000.

**HON. G. RANDELL**: What, more than the agricultural railways?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY**: Yes. The lines Mr. Neil Douglas had in his

mind averaged between £2,300 and £2,400 per mile, while this line is estimated to cost £1,300 per mile.

**HON. W. T. LOTON**: You will have to relay the sleepers along this line in three or four years.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY**: I disagree with the hon. member. The timber there is exceptionally good, far superior to jarrah in strength, and for sleepers it is exceptionally good. I would like to be able to hope that the hon. member may live as long as those sleepers will last.

**HON. W. T. LOTON**: What is the timber?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY**: Gimlet wood and salmon-gum. Mr. Kingsmill touched upon a very important point when he said that these people deserved a railway because local people had put their own money into the mines. That is a point I had rather forgotten to mention. There are too few mines owned in Australia, in Western Australia particularly. Without exception the principal mines at Norseman are owned locally; and the people there have put £11,000 into the Princess Royal Central during the last two years. I trust the House will see fit to carry the second reading.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	12
Noes	...	...	...	7

Majority for ... 5

AYES.		NOES.	
Hon. G. Bellingham		Hon. J. M. Drew	
Hon. T. F. O. Brimage		Hon. R. Laurie	
Hon. E. M. Clarke		Hon. M. L. Moss	
Hon. J. D. Connolly		Hon. G. Randell	
Hon. F. Connor		Hon. R. F. Shell	
Hon. J. T. Glowrey		Hon. J. W. Wright	
Hon. J. W. Hackett		Hon. W. T. Loton	
Hon. W. Kingsmill			(Teller.)
Hon. R. D. McKenzie			
Hon. C. A. Piesse			
Hon. C. Sommers			
Hon. J. W. Langford			
	(Teller.)		

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Deviation:

**HON. F. CONNOR**: Some closer limit of deviation should be defined than that provided by the railway Bills passed last session.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** This Bill would provide a closer limit, 10 miles as against 15 miles.

**HON. F. CONNOR:** Really no limit whatever should be allowed. The route should be surveyed, and no deviation from it permitted. In the case of the Wagin-Dumbleyung line, the route was entirely altered, being diverted a distance of eight or nine miles, after a deal of expense had actually been incurred in clearing a length of seven or eight miles. The reason for this deviation was unknown to him, but he believed it had been made against the express wish of the engineer in charge by the Engineer-in-Chief, who was really not responsible, since the survey had not been made by him and he was not in charge of the work. Such a deviation gave rise to great dissatisfaction.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 7—agreed to.

Schedule, Preamble—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment; the report adopted.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at sixteen minutes past 10 o'clock, until the next day.

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 11th December, 1906.*

	PAGE
Questions: Works Department Employees	3654
Sewerage Excavation, Damage	3654
Standing Orders Suspension, passed	3655
Bills: Loan, 3s.	3655
Coolgardie-Norseman Railway, 3s., division	3655
Hopetoun-Ravensthorpe Railway, 2s., Com., reported	3556
Douneybrook-Preston Valley (Upper Blackwood) Railway, Com., 3s.	3667
Greenhills-Quairading Railway, 2s., Com., 3s.	673
Health Act Amendment, 1s. (also see below)	3675
Roads and streets Closure, 1s. (also see below)	3696
Mines Regulation, 1s.	3696
Land Tax (to impose a tax), discharged	3675
Employment Brokers Act Amendment, 2s. resumed, negatived	3675
Jandakot-Armadale Railway, 2s., Com., 3s.	3677
Health Act Amendment, 2s., Com., 3s.	3695
Roads and Streets Closure, 2s.	3696
Mines Regulation, 2s. moved	3696
Contractors and Workmen's Lien, 2s. adjourned	3698

**THE PRESIDENT** took the Chair at 3 o'clock p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### QUESTION—WORKS DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES.

**HON. J. W. WRIGHT** asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, What is the number of permanent hands in the employment of the Works Department, and the total annual payment made to them? 2, What is the number of temporary hands in the employment of the Works Department, and the total annual payment made to them?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** replied: 1 (a) Number of permanent hands on 30th November 1906—202. (b) Total annual payments—£47,149. 2, (a) Number of temporary hands on 30th November 1906—34. (b) Total annual payments—£5,280.

#### QUESTION—SEWERAGE EXCAVATION, DAMAGE.

**HON. J. W. WRIGHT** asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is it a fact that the residence on Perth Town Lot L56 has been so badly damaged through the excavations carried on in connection with the Perth Sewerage, that it has been rendered dangerous and has had to be vacated? 2, Has the line of the sewer been altered in any way by the departmental engineer since the contract was