

Act to empower the Diocesan Trustees of the Church of England in Western Australia to sell, mortgage, or lease Perth Allotments H 7 and H 1, and to apply the proceeds or rents and profits thereof, subject to and in accordance with certain trusts."

The petition having been received and read, a Bill in accordance with the prayer of the petition was introduced by the ATTORNEY GENERAL.

Bill read a first time.

On the motion of the ATTORNEY GENERAL, the Bill was referred to a select committee, comprising the following members:—Messrs. Loton, Randell, Traylen, Wood, and the Attorney General as mover.

LANDS RESUMPTION BILL.

Introduced by the COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson), and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9·8 o'clock, p.m., until next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 16th October, 1896.

Width of Tires Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Jury Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Public Health Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Australasian Federation Enabling Bill: Legislative Council's suggestions—Lands Resumption Bill: second reading; in committee—Railways Amendment Act Amendment Bill: second reading; in committee; third reading—Industrial Statistics Bill: discharged—Kalgoorlie-Kanowna Railway Bill: in committee; third reading—York-Greenhills Railway Bill: second reading; in committee; third reading—Kalgoorlie-Menzies Railway Bill: second reading; in committee; third reading—Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill: second reading; in committee—Sale of Liquors Bill: order discharged—Criminal Evidence Bill: Legislative Council's amendments—Crown Lands Timber Bill: order discharged—Church of England School Lands (private) Bill: select committee's report—The Speaker's Ruling *re* suspension of Standing Order 63 (private Bills)—Motion: Reservation of Jarrah and Karri Forests—Loan Estimates: consideration in committee—Want of a quorum: adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4·30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

WIDTH OF TIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

JURY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

AUSTRALASIAN FEDERATION ENABLING BILL.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S SUGGESTIONS.

The Legislative Council having suggested two amendments in this Bill, these were now considered.

IN COMMITTEE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved that the House agree to the suggestion made by the Council for amending Clause 25 by striking out the words between "at," in the second line, and "to," in the third line, and inserting the following words, "such rate as the Governor may determine," in lieu thereof.

Put and passed.

THE PREMIER also moved that the House agree to the second suggestion made by the Council for amending Clause 28, by inserting in the third line, between the words "electors" and "of," the words "for the Legislative Assembly," so as to read "electors for the Legislative Assembly of," &c.

Put and passed.

THE CHAIRMAN said these alterations in the Bill came before this House in the form of suggestions made by the Legislative Council for amendments to be made by this House, if agreed to.

THE PREMIER further moved that Clauses 25 and 28 be amended, in accordance with the suggestions made by the Legislative Council, and in pursuance of the resolutions passed by this committee.

Put and passed.

Resolutions reported to the House.

Report adopted.

Ordered, that the Bill be reprinted with the amendments, and that a message be sent to the Legislative Council accordingly.

LANDS RESUMPTION BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson), in moving the second reading, said: This Bill, which is a very short one, is rendered necessary by the fact that under the Railways Act there is no limit placed on the time within which owners of land which may have been resumed by the Government can send in claims for compensation. The Government have power, under the existing Act, to resume lands for public purposes, but the Act does not require the owner to send in his claim for compensation within any stated time, and it is inconvenient to have claims kept in suspense for an indefinite time before being presented. It has been incon-

venient in such cases for the Government not to know what were the claimants' ideas of the value placed on land which had been resumed, and we cannot ascertain that without going to arbitration, unless some time is fixed, as is proposed in this Bill, within which claims must be sent in. This Bill provides a limit of time, and supplies machinery for appointing arbitrators, and for the payment of compensation for land resumed.

MR. A. FORREST: This Bill, although a very short one, contains an important provision in Clause 8, which says compensation is to be paid with 6 per cent. interest from day of taking land owned by any person. Does that mean that this rate of interest is to be paid on the value of the land, or on the rental received from the property?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS: On the value.

MR. A. FORREST: If it is vacant land, without buildings, I think the interest might very well be left out. What owners of land which has been resumed by the Government now grumble about is that a Government department resumes the land and takes the rent receivable, without paying the compensation money immediately, and without allowing the rent to go to the former owner in the mean time. I should like to see this clause amended, by providing that interest on the purchase price shall not be payable in the case of unimproved land.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): This provision in the Bill is in the interest of the person whose land has been resumed.

MR. A. FORREST: I am speaking in the interest of the country, and I shall move an amendment in committee, so that the interest may be paid for improved property, and not for unimproved property.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Commissioner of Crown Lands to serve copy of order of resumption on occupier and owner:

MR. R. F. SHOLL said this was the usual thing. Here was an important Bill brought down at the end of the session. A protest ought to be made,

and he therefore moved that progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clause 3—Limit of time for sending in claim for compensation :

MR. RANDELL said more time ought to have been allowed for members to read this Bill before going into committee on it, as the Bill had come down only that afternoon.

MR. LOTON said he had not had time to read it.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS said he had no objection to report progress, and ask leave to sit again on Monday next.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

RAILWAYS AMENDMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt), in moving the second reading, said : This is a Bill which has come down from the Legislative Council. Under the provisions of the Railways Amendment Act, 1879, certain compensation money—that is, money which the Government may pay into the Supreme Court for property resumed, such property being the subject of a marriage settlement, and without anyone being the absolute owner for the time, and there being only a limited interest in that property—this money has to be paid into the Supreme Court, and application has afterwards to be made by the tenants-for-life for the money to be invested; but the only mode of investment for money lodged in court in such cases is for the purchase of land or debentures. I do not know why, in the original Act, the investment of such moneys in freehold property was omitted, and I cannot see any reason why it should have been. In very many settlements the trust prohibits the investment of money except in freehold property. Moneys that are in the Supreme Court, having been paid in as compensation received for land taken by the Government, could not be invested, as I have said, in freehold properties. This Bill therefore proposes to amend that section of the Act, so as to allow investment of such moneys to be

made on mortgage of freehold property in the colony and in the purchase of municipal debentures. I beg to move the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—Short title, &c.:

MR. RANDELL said he had not heard distinctly what moneys these were that could be invested in freehold property, as provided in the Bill.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL said these were moneys which were the subject of a marriage settlement. For instance, if a wife had an interest in certain land during her life under a marriage settlement, and the land was resumed by the Government and compensation paid for it, the compensation money would be paid into the Supreme Court in such a case; and as the marriage settlement had been drawn in such a way as to apply to the land on the assumption that the investment would always remain in that land, there was no provision in the original Act by which such money could be re-invested in freehold property. The object of this Bill was to enable such money to be re-invested in freehold property or in municipal debentures.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Report adopted.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and *passed*.

INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS BILL.

ORDER DISCHARGED.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said hon. members did not appear to understand this Bill, and therefore he would not persevere with it until there was a little more light on the subject. He moved that the Bill be discharged from the Notice Paper.

Question put and passed, and the order discharged.

KALGOORLIE-KANOWNA RAILWAY BILL.

The House went into committee to consider the Bill.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Authority to construct :

MR. RANDELL expressed the hope that the Government would consider the propriety of constructing the line out of revenue, instead of out of the loan funds. He was strongly in favour of that being done.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said there was no money available at present out of revenue.

Put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and report adopted.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

YORK-GREENHILLS RAILWAY BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) : I have pleasure in asking the House to approve of the second reading of this Bill, which is for the purpose of constructing a railway from York to Greenhills. As hon. members are no doubt aware, this is the first time that the colony has proposed to make an agricultural railway out of revenue, and I can only hope and believe that it will prove successful. The line will pass through good country. It is altogether an agricultural district, and its praises have been sung by hon. members of this House for many years. Hon. members who were in this House at the time the railway to Yilgarn was constructed, and who were opposed to the construction of the line *via* Northam, will find, if they will only look up the speeches they then made, that if they hold the same opinions still, the Government are fully justified in deciding to construct the railway from York to this favoured spot. If anyone will look at the map of the district, they will find that a very large area is already held under lease from the Crown or in freehold. As a rule, the land is held in small blocks, the people of the district residing upon their own land, from which they produce a large quantity of cereals. It was said the other day that in giving evidence before the Agricultural Commission, which was

held some years ago, Mr. Penny, one of the oldest settlers in the neighbourhood of Greenhills, told the Commission that he did not know where he could get more than 100 acres of a farm, meaning land fit for cultivation. I had the pleasure of meeting the gentleman yesterday and asked him if he had noticed the remark that had been made, and he said that he had, but that at the time he gave evidence before the Commission he was not aware of the value of what was known as morrell and salmon-gum country, and of that which grew all the different eucalypts common to that part of the colony. In fact, he said he had taken a great deal of trouble in selecting his own land to avoid the places which grew those trees, and was finding now, to his great regret, that the places which he desired to exclude contain the very best land. The hon. member for West Kimberley, in replying to the statement of the hon. member for Perth, who produced the extract from the evidence of the Commission to which I am referring, gave exactly the same opinion in regard to what has been said by that settler, and explained the reason for the different view held by Mr. Penny now and that held by him some years ago. I suppose no one will be found in this House to oppose the railway itself. I do not think that anyone who takes any interest in the agriculture of the colony, and who desires to see it encouraged in every way that it is possible to do so, will be able to oppose the railway on the ground that it is not required. A railway to Greenhills is the first instalment of the building of railways out of revenue. Of course we cannot go so fast, in building railways out of revenue, as we can out of a Loan Bill. At the same time I think this small line will be found to be a good beginning, and that as time goes on this railway will be extended. I have no hesitation whatever in recommending to hon. members the construction of this line of railway from York to Greenhills. The only point on which there may be a difference of opinion—the only point on which there is likely to be a difference of opinion among hon. members in this Assembly—is in regard to the route the railway shall follow. I have no hesitation in urging hon. members to adopt the route which is suggested by the Government, that is to build the railway

from York to Greenhills. A permanent survey of the line has been made, which leaves the main line some four miles, I think, from York, and ascends the valley of the Mackie. I have no hesitation in recommending the House to build this railway from York, for very many reasons, and amongst them I think it should go in the direction of the natural port of that district, the port of Fremantle. I may say at once that I am not in favour at the present time of what is described by so many persons in the Eastern district, and especially, I think, by the people of York, as what may be called the "loop line." It may come to pass by-and-by that this railway which we are proposing to construct may be continued further in the direction of Cubbine and Youndegin, and may eventually join the main line to Southern Cross. But although, no doubt, as time goes on that will be the direction that the line will probably take, I am not asking hon. members to support the route from York to Greenhills with that object. Hon. members can see for themselves that this object will come about later on, when the branch line has been extended a distance from the main line and traffic is increasing. Of course there will be a desire, and it may be said that it will pay, to at once extend the line so that it will join the main line to Southern Cross; but my idea is that all our efforts at present, in regard to providing for the great traffic of the Eastern goldfields, should be in the direction of the duplication of the present line, rather than in making a "loop line." I cannot see myself that a loop line is either justified or necessary at the present time. As time goes on, as the land becomes developed, and this railway we are proposing to make is extended, of course it may be a small matter to complete the loop line; but I say in my opinion it is neither justified nor necessary at the present time. The object the Government have in view, in recommending hon. members to build this line at the present time from York to Greenhills, is to give facilities to agricultural producers in that part of the country: we have no other object in view. It has been asked—and I believe my friend the hon. member for Beverley proposes to move in that direction—that this line should be built, not from York but from Beverley to Green-

hills. I have no doubt that the arguments he will use will be in the direction of connecting the Southern part of the colony between Albany and Beverley with the main line to Yilgarn or Southern Cross; but, as I have said already, in my opinion it will be better to duplicate that railway, if a single line will not carry the traffic, and the "loop line" is neither necessary nor justified. I have made inquiries from the people living at Greenhills—it was not necessary to make any inquiries, for I know very well the geography of the country, and I know it will not suit the people living there to go down to Beverley in order to get to York and Fremantle, because they would be going away from home—going away from the direction in which they wish to go. The route from Beverley to Greenhills is 13 or 14 miles; so that to get to York the people of Greenhills would have to travel about 33 miles, or twice as far as they would have to go from Greenhills direct to York, or 18 miles against 33 if my figures are right. Unless a "loop line" was constructed from Greenhills to the main line from Northam to Southern Cross, I do not think there would be anyone in this House to advocate that the line we are now proposing should be made from Beverley to Greenhills. I take it that the hon. member for Beverley would admit this, and that anything he has to say will be in regard to the extension of the line from Beverley to the main line. Now the hon. member proposes that this matter should be referred to a select committee. Well, I do not know that it is desirable, on the part of the Government, to oppose the appointment of a select committee on all occasions. In fact, for my part, I have no objection to this matter being investigated as much as anyone would like to investigate it. At the same time, I can see no reason whatever for a select committee in regard to such a simple matter as this. No one who has any interest in the matter, or who has taken a little trouble—and I hope everyone in this House has done so, for hon. members can master this question in a very few minutes—can judge for himself as to which route is the best in the interests of the district, and also in the interests of the whole colony. I take it that the position the Government should take up

in regard to these matters is, that they should form an opinion in regard to the best route that the railway should follow, and urge it upon hon. members. I do not think that the Government should relieve themselves of responsibility which should attach to them, by relegating the question of the route to a select committee. It is only questions upon which the Government are in doubt, where they find a difficulty in coming to a conclusion, that should be relegated to a select committee. I think the proper course for the Government is to try and lead the House in the direction that they think the policy of the country should go, and not to shirk responsibility by referring different matters to a select committee. That is not government. Of course it is very much easier for the Government to leave such matters to a committee and let everyone decide, to let everyone have a say, and so try and get out of their responsibility. But although that might work for a little while, I do not think it would work in the long run. I think it is the duty of the Government, when they form an opinion, to urge it with all the force they can command upon the attention of hon. members. For that reason I am opposed to a select committee on this very simple although important question. I think there can be no doubt whatever, in the interests of the people of the Greenhills district themselves and in the interests of the people of the whole colony, that this railway should be built in the direction of the natural outlet of that part of the country. And no one, I think, will be found to deny that the natural outlet of that part of the country is not in the direction of Albany or in the direction of Southern Cross, but it is in the direction of the port of Fremantle, the natural outlet of that part of the colony. I have much pleasure in moving the second reading of the Bill, and shall resist, as far as I can, the reference of this question to a select committee, being convinced in my own mind that there is nothing to justify a departure from what must be apparent is the best route. I am sure all those who will try to take an unbiassed view of the question, as to the route of this short railway at the present time, will agree that it should be built in the direction of the port of Fremantle,

the natural outlet of that part of the country.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

MR. HARPER: I have to move that this Bill be referred to a select committee. I have listened with attention to the reasons given by the Premier for adopting the York route, and for objecting to a select committee. It has been the custom of the Government in the past, where there has been any difference of opinion as to the route of a railway, to send it to a select committee; but on this occasion it does not appear to suit the Government to do so. The great argument the Premier has used right through his statement is that if the line was made from Beverley, the Greenhills people would have to go some little distance further if they were travelling to York or Perth; but he has carefully avoided alluding to the large numbers of people who are now going a long way round in reaching the Eastern goldfields from Albany. The Premier has intimated that probably, in the future, this line will be continued until it joins the Yilgarn railway, and I suppose it would be quite fair to say that the number of people who would be likely to use the line from Greenhills to York would be one in a thousand of those who go a long way round, 40 or 50 miles out of their way, to get to the Eastern goldfields. That point the Premier has carefully avoided in alluding to this matter. Of course I have no objection to giving railway facilities to agricultural districts, where it can be done with benefit to the State; but the district to which this short line will run is already well supplied with railway communication. The Greenhills farmers have only 15 miles to carry their produce to a railway station at the present time, so that they are within a profitable limit of a line. It seems to me that it is a piece of unwarranted extravagance on the part of the country to build this line to serve a few people. We know that it is impossible that the line will pay. That is a point I have no doubt the Premier does not wish to have brought out. The amount of the traffic that will go over that line, or the increase of traffic that it will bring to the main line, will not stand looking at for a second. The profitability of this line will not bear investi-

gation. We have much larger areas and more important districts which no attempt has been made to bring within reach of a railway; and it seems to me that we are going out of our way to give unnecessary assistance to a small district, while very much larger districts are undeveloped. I allude particularly to the projected line, the line that has been asked for from Pinjarrah into the rich agricultural district of the Williams, a line that we are assured would go through a very valuable forest. The people living in the Camballing, Marradong, and Williams districts are unable to make a profitable use of their lands, in consequence of their long distance from a railway. We are told that there is very rich agricultural land there, and that the line would traverse the greatest jarrah forest in the colony; and yet while those districts are left without a railway, it is proposed to make a line from York to Greenhills for the benefit of a small community who are already fairly supplied with railway communication. I think if this House will only agree to refer this question to a select committee, and see what returns will be given of the number of people living in that district, and how much they grow, it will be made clear that the line will not pay. It may be very nice to grant that small community a railway, but it will be a burden on the State for all time. If the line should be constructed, and it is ever continued to join the Southern Cross railway, it will not serve the enormous numbers of people who are travelling between Albany and the Eastern gold-fields: it will only be used by the few dozen people who are residing in the locality. Their produce would mainly go to the fields, and there would only be an occasional visitor down the line between Greenhills and York, so that the railway would be a white elephant to the State. Considering the evidence we have in the neighbouring colonies of the great danger of constructing these short agricultural lines, I think this colony should pause before starting on the same downward career. I have much pleasure in moving that this Bill be referred to a select committee.

MR. MONGER: I am sorry I am unable to support the motion of the member for Beverley. He has not made

a single strong point in favour of this line starting from Beverley. I take it that, in the first place, this line is being built for the purpose of assisting the settlers of Greenhills, and those settlers are unanimous in their desire that the line should start from a point near York. In fact, at a very large public meeting held at Greenhills some few days ago, a resolution was passed unanimously in favour of the York route as opposed to the Beverley route. The hon. member for Beverley talks about the settlers residing between Beverley and Greenhills, but I think there are more settlers residing between Greenhills and York than between Greenhills and Beverley. If the line is taken from York, it will be of advantage to a larger number of people than if taken from Beverley. If it were not that I should unnecessarily take up the time of the House, I would say the Bill might be referred to a select committee; but we are on the eve of the prorogation of Parliament, and hon. members have not the time to give to meetings of a select committee. I am certain the Government have given every consideration to the question of the route of this railway. I notice the member for Beverley is rather fond of these select committees, and there is no doubt that the trips into the country provided by select committees are very enjoyable, if we have the time to give to them. This is a very small item, I think, to refer to a select committee. I hope the House will show its sympathy with the Government, and give them practical support in their endeavours to further the great agricultural industry. I am, I think, safe in saying that if this line is given to the people of Greenhills, many hundreds of acres of land now looked upon as comparatively useless will in a short time be brought under cultivation. I think it is the desire of every member of this House as far as possible to assist those farmers who have done so much for the colony, and who have not been so prosperous as they would have been if they could have got their produce to market at reasonable cost. I am quite in sympathy with the people round Marradong, the Williams, and the other places to which the member for Beverley made reference. The member for Beverley said the claims of those

people for a railway are stronger than those of the people who will benefit by this proposed line; but I hope that next year, if I am a member of this House, I shall be able to support the building of a line to those places, provided the finances are in a sufficiently flourishing condition to allow it to be built out of revenue. I hope we will next year be able to build both the line to Marradong and the line from Northam to Quelquelling. I feel certain that the experience of the Government, in constructing this line to Greenhills, will encourage them in the building of other agricultural railways. These lines, I think, can be made to pay, and I do not think the Government are taking the first step in a downward career in proposing these agricultural lines, as was suggested by the member for Beverley. I believe the construction of this railway to Greenhills will be one of the finest things done by this Ministry. I do not think there is any necessity to agree with the desire of the member for Beverley for a select committee; and I hope he will show consideration for the Government he has hitherto so liberally supported, by withdrawing his motion and allowing this Bill to go through without further debate.

Motion (for referring the Bill to a select committee) put, and division taken, as follows:—

Ayes	5
Noes	13
Majority against				8

AYES.
Mr. Illingworth
Mr. R. F. Sholl
Mr. Simpson
Mr. Throssell
Mr. Harper (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Burt
Sir John Forrest
Mr. Higham
Mr. Lafroy
Mr. Loton
Mr. Monger
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Randell
Mr. Richardson
Mr. Solomon
Mr. Traylen
Mr. Wood
Mr. A. Forrest (Teller).

Motion negatived.

The House went into committee to consider the Bill.

IN COMMITTEE.

Bill passed through committee without debate, and reported without amendment.

Report adopted.

THIRD READING.

THE PREMIER moved that the Bill be read a third time.

MR. RANDELL said the country would view with displeasure the construction of this line, if any large amount of compensation had to be paid for the resumption of land. With regard to agricultural railways, there should be no need for the payment of compensation.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) said he was not aware that any compensation would have to be paid in connection with the construction of this line.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

KALGOORLIE-MENZIES RAILWAY BILL

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I have pleasure in asking the House to assent to the second reading of this Bill. As is well known, there has been a good deal of difference of opinion, and a good deal of controversy in regard to the route a railway should take to connect the town and district of Menzies with the railway system of the colony; but there is no difference of opinion in regard to the necessity of connecting the town and district of Menzies with that railway system. All the Government have had to consider, therefore, in dealing with this matter has been the question of route, and not the question of the necessity of the railway. I may say that this matter has given me, personally, a considerable amount of trouble and anxiety, and I have no doubt that all hon. members who have tried to understand the question, and have given the matter attention have found considerable difficulty in arriving at a conclusion as to what route was best. There have been three distinct routes recommended and placed before the public of the colony. The first route I will refer to is that from Kalgoorlie to Menzies, the route recommended by the Government. The length of the railway by this route would be 82 miles, and it is estimated to cost, in construction, £210,000. The railway going by this route from Kalgoorlie will pass the auriferous centres known as Smithfield, Paddington, and Broad Arrow. These centres are all together, and they

are all auriferous. The distance between Smithfield and Bardoc is about 15 miles. I would like to point out to those hon. members who are not acquainted with the country that the route from Coolgardie to Menzies joins the line proposed by the Government from Kalgoorlie at Broad Arrow, a point 46 miles from Coolgardie and 25 from Kalgoorlie. There is a difference, therefore, of 21 miles between the two routes to Broad Arrow, but from that point the routes are the same. The second route is that from Coolgardie to Menzies, 103 miles in length, and the cost of construction is estimated at £270,000. That route, after leaving Coolgardie, goes through the auriferous country known as Mount Burges, and afterwards to the 21-Mile, the 25-Mile (Kunanalling), and on to Black Flag, and joins the Kalgoorlie route at Broad Arrow. This Coolgardie route would serve a number of people and a considerable area of country to the Westward of the 25-Mile, including the Kintore Group and the Wealth of Nations district, some twenty miles from the 25-Mile. It would also serve places further to the North to some extent, and I do not know whether Siberia would not be as well served from the 25-Mile as from any part of the line the Government now propose to construct from Kalgoorlie to Menzies. The third route is from Southern Cross to Menzies, a distance of 165 miles by the route lately examined by a surveyor. This route would be shortened a little if it went straight from the place known as Speakman's to Menzies, or deviating further to the South you may take in what is known as Siberia Soak or Wangine. By that means you might either go in to the 90-Mile or pass to the Westward of it and go on to Menzies. That route would be shorter a good deal than the route from Southern Cross, leaving the 90-Mile, or Goongarrie, as it is sometimes called, to the Eastward a little. By taking the route I have suggested, I think that something like 15 miles might be saved, and we might safely say that we could get from Southern Cross to Menzies in 150 miles, and build the railway by this route for perhaps £400,000 instead of £441,000. Members can, by looking at the map, which can be relied upon, see the places I have mentioned in their relative situations,

and they can also see the relative importance of the different routes. However, no one, by referring simply to the map, can form an opinion of the relative value of the country through which the routes pass. It is only those who have had an opportunity of visiting the country, or those who have obtained information from others, that can form an opinion on the subject of the best route, taking into consideration at the same time the number and importance of the centres that would be served by each. The Government have had to consider all these proposals, and I can assure the House there has been some difficulty in arriving at a conclusion between the relative advantages of the routes from Coolgardie and from Kalgoorlie. I may say too—and I think it is a matter we ought to give consideration to, and at all events I am prepared to give it consideration—that each of these routes has influential support both from the goldfields, and also from Perth and Fremantle. I may say that a large deputation, one of the most influential in regard to its *personnel* that has ever waited upon me, urged upon me the advantages of adopting the route from Southern Cross to Menzies. I may say that I promised to look into the matter and send a surveyor to examine the country and report, and that report is now in the hands of hon. members. I may say that from the first I personally did not favour the route from Southern Cross, and for the reason that it traverses a large extent of unsettled country. The advocates of that route will, no doubt, tell us—and probably they have better information on the subject than I have, and information that in the future will probably prove to have been correct—that this route will serve important belts of auriferous country. At the present time, however, there is no settlement between Southern Cross and Speakman's Find, a distance of about 105 miles. I have been informed by those who have traversed this country that it is promising in some places, and they believe that by-and-bye there will be some finds of gold made there. Well, that may be so, and I am willing to believe that it will be so, but at the present time, the whole of that country is unoccupied and that is one of the principal reasons why I cannot favour the construction of a line

from Southern Cross to Menzies. As hon. members are aware, the Government have received deputations from the advocates of all these different routes. The Coolgardie people are anxious that the line should start from Coolgardie; and the Kalgoorlie people are anxious for it to start from Kalgoorlie; although I must say for the Kalgoorlie people that I do not recollect that they have urged their claims very strongly upon the Government. I have no doubt the people of Kalgoorlie feel very strongly about it, and in fact, the principle newspaper in Kalgoorlie has written strongly about it, but they have not been so active in regard to the matter as have been the representatives of Coolgardie and of Southern Cross. It has been said by the newspaper at Kalgoorlie that the people there rested their claims upon what was reasonable and upon the common sense of the Legislature, and considered those claims were so strong that they must have due consideration and weight when carefully examined. On some occasions, and particularly on one occasion at Coolgardie, I have been pressed pretty closely by the people in regard to this matter, and I think we will all allow that it is much easier to say pleasant than unpleasant things. At that time, I think I suggested that it might be desirable to refer the question of the route to a select committee. That was my intention at that time, for I thought it a difficult question and a question that might be viewed from many different aspects; but shortly afterwards I gave the matter a good deal of consideration, and with the other members of the Government I considered it more closely and more particularly in regard to the developments taking place along the three routes. After this careful consideration, we came to the conclusion that, if we had a strong opinion, it would be much better for us to express it and to ask the Legislature to be guided by the conviction at which we had arrived. As I said just now in regard to the Greenhills railway, it is a very easy way of shirking responsibility to refer a question of this sort to a select committee. I can assure this House that when I sit on the opposite benches, which I hope to do some day — [MR. ILLINGWORTH: Never]—I shall myself guard most jealously the right of this House to be

advised by the Government, instead of the responsibility being thrown upon the House by reference to select committees. It is the duty of the Government to advise the House on every important question. There are questions which may fairly be referred to select committees, and I may instance, as one of them, the question of building bridges over the railway in Perth, a question involving many interests, and which is now in charge of a select committee. I thought that this question of the crossings in Perth was one that the House might be asked to appoint a select committee to deal with; but I do not think this House is anxious or willing to allow the Government to throw their responsibilities upon select committees, and as we get older in Responsible Government, I think hon. members will be less willing to do that than they are now. I think it is our duty, if we have an opinion—and this is a matter on which we have an opinion—to tell the House what we think about it. I may say that, after the opening of the Kalgoorlie railway, when I had had an opportunity of meeting the people of Kalgoorlie, on our return to Perth we discussed the matter, and we were assisted in arriving at a conclusion by the information which the Minister of Mines, who had also been making a tour round the district, was able to place before us in regard to the developments which had taken place since my last visit to the mines in that district. The Government came to the conclusion that the best route to adopt, in the interest of the colony, was the route from Kalgoorlie to Menzies; and, having arrived at that opinion, I think we should not hesitate to recommend Parliament to adopt that route. The principal reasons why the Government decided to recommend to the Legislature the construction of this railway from Kalgoorlie are these. We consider the position of Kalgoorlie and the output of gold from that locality, also its position as a gold-bearing centre, entitled to have direct communication with the northern parts of those goldfields. If the line were built from Coolgardie, it could scarcely be said that Kalgoorlie would have a very easy means of communication with the northern parts of the fields, because the people desiring to

go from Kalgoorlie northward to Menzies would have to travel about 70 miles instead of 25 miles across. There being this great difference in the distance, I think that people who wish to make that journey would rather drive across than go 70 miles in order to get over a distance of 25 miles in a direct line. The Government came to the conclusion that Kalgoorlie, as a mining centre, and having regard to its present condition of development and the great prospects in store for it, as well as the influence it has had on the colony as a gold-producing centre, is entitled to have direct communication with the northern parts of the fields, if that can possibly be provided. We have also to consider that the length of railway to construct to Menzies, if started from Kalgoorlie, will be 21 miles less; and although the finances are in a flourishing condition, still we ought to consider the extra cost which would be involved in making the line 21 miles longer than is necessary for connecting Menzies and the intervening mining districts, as well as giving facilities to Niagara and away to the northward. This would be a saving to the colony in the cost of construction of some £60,000. Of course I am aware, as are all hon. members who are interested in the question, that in continuing a railway from Kalgoorlie northward, we are leaving out the 25-Mile and the country to the westward, so that these places will not have the advantages of railway communication at the present time. I do not include Mount Burges in these exceptions, situated as it is within 10 or 12 miles from the centre, because I do not think 10 or 12 miles can be considered outside the area of railway influence; nor can I consider the Black Flag, which is seven or eight miles from Broad Arrow, as being outside the influence of railway communication, having a station within eight miles, or that it will suffer any great disadvantage in not being directly connected with the line. It is impossible to build a railway to every centre on the goldfields, and all we can do is to try and serve as many important centres as possible. I may say to hon. members that when I first visited these localities, in November last, and viewed the whole situation of these goldfields, I was of opinion—and I think I expressed it to a deputation

that waited on me a short time afterwards—that a railway would be best constructed from Coolgardie or the 25-Mile, and then to detour, by way of Black Flag, to Broad Arrow and on to Menzies. That was the conclusion I came to at that time, but in the interval which has elapsed things have changed a good deal. Kalgoorlie, especially, has greatly progressed from being a small place with a few mines, until now it is a very important centre. Therefore, looking at the matter with all the later information we have now, when the question of the route has to be decided, I have no hesitation in saying that the position and claims of Kalgoorlie, as the chief gold-producing centre at the present time, is entitled to a great deal of weight and consideration. I think it could be said we were doing injustice to that important place, which has had such a large influence on the Coolgardie goldfields, and such a large influence on the colony, if we were to cut it off, as we would be doing, from having reasonably direct communication by railway with Broad Arrow and Bardoc, and on to Menzies, connecting the northern parts of the Coolgardie and the Murchison goldfields. I never favoured the Southern Cross route to Menzies, because of its extreme length, for it is double the distance as compared with the route from Kalgoorlie to Menzies; and, after all, the difference of 82 miles as against 165 miles of railway construction is a matter we are bound to consider, in deciding this question.

MR. SIMPSON: How will it compare in distance from Fremantle?

THE PREMIER: I have not calculated that, but the hon. member may deal with it. A railway from Menzies to Southern Cross would be twice as long to construct, in order to bring it into our railway system, and there is no population to speak of *en route*, while there is certainly the extra cost of construction, being a difference between £210,000 and £441,000 to be taken into account. My own opinion is—and I say it without any hesitation whatever—that to build a railway under existing circumstances from Southern Cross to Menzies, and to leave the country between Kalgoorlie or Coolgardie and Menzies without increased facilities of transit, would be absolutely absurd. I am speaking of things as they

are now; but if, at some future time, we have all that country between Southern Cross and Menzies covered with mines, as I hope will be the case, then the position will be different. Looking at the matter as it is now, it appears to me that it would be absolutely absurd for any Government or any Parliament to build a railway 160 miles through unoccupied country, when a railway through 82 miles of country occupied with mines will serve the same terminus, and also serve a large population between the two points. I have no doubt, and in fact I hope from the bottom of my heart, that as time goes on, and as Menzies becomes a great city, and as the northern goldfields increase, we shall have to increase our railways in the direction of Mount Margaret and Mount Malcolm, and other places. When we are able to afford it, and there is population to be served, those people will want closer communication with the metropolis and with the port of Fremantle; and as those places get filled up with intervening mines and a settled population, we may reasonably make a direct route by extending railway communication. But in the present circumstances, when people already settled in that country want to get from one mining centre to another, they wish to go in as straight a direction as possible, and not go roundabout; therefore, as to the present, we must provide for the population that is there; and, as to the future, when the time comes for such extension, and when it is justified by the mining developments in altered circumstances, we shall all be glad to consider the question of another route for giving direct communication with the metropolis and the port. The whole matter is a question of development. Here we have a settled country from Kalgoorlie to Menzies, also far away to the northward and the eastward of those places; and there being this large population settled there, what we have to do now is to try and serve the already existing population. That being so, we are bound to build the line through a country that is settled, and not go round about to build it, for political reasons, through a country that is unoccupied.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We have one political railway already.

MR. A. FORREST: Is that the Cue-Nannine line?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It is the line to Greenhills, just passed.

THE PREMIER: I have not arrived at my opinion hastily, and I have told it to you. I may say that if there is a soft corner within me, in regard to any place, I would much rather favour a line which would serve the older settled districts, than try to take it in some other direction through country that is not settled. My idea is that the city of Perth should continue to be the metropolis, and that Fremantle should be the central port of the colony; therefore I want to do everything I can to foster connection in such a way that all parts of the colony shall, as far as practicable, make Fremantle their port, and be connected with Perth as the capital. But, at the same time, I am not going to advocate any such foolish idea as that everything must come to these central places. I say that, if everything were equal, I should much rather advocate a railway that would bring people quickly to the established centres of population, than that they should have to go roundabout. Only fancy for a moment the people of Kalgoorlie and the people of Coolgardie, the two chief mining centres on our Eastern goldfields, wishing to do business with Menzies—and they all have business to do—and being obliged to come down 120 miles to Southern Cross in order that they might go back 150 miles to Menzies! This is an absurdity, and can be justified only by those persons who have not seen those centres of mining development lying between Kalgoorlie and Menzies, and who do not know anything of the locality or the geography of that country. I say again, unhesitatingly, that a railway from Southern Cross to Menzies is not justified at the present time. I say, further, there is not a single man, if he can get out of his mind other ideas, and will look at the question in an unbiased manner, who can say such a railway is justified at present. The facts are all absolutely against it. If it were not so, I should be only too glad to assist those persons who are urging this matter on our attention. It appears to me that seeing the population that is settled on the auriferous belt between Kalgoorlie and the northern areas, it is impossible for the Government to advocate or support a railway which would leave out all those people, in order

to build it from Southern Cross to Menzies through a country that is unoccupied at the present time. I say also that the population between Coolgardie or Kalgoorlie and Menzies does justify the construction of a railway from Kalgoorlie to Menzies. The existing interests, the work of development that is going on, and the population living there,—all these justify the construction of a railway from Coolgardie or from Kalgoorlie through the mining centres *en route* to Menzies. I would like to say to everyone who takes an interest in this matter, and especially to hon. members, that in dealing with it we ought to keep out of our minds, if possible, any question with regard to Esperance Bay becoming a port for our Eastern goldfields. The question as to whether Esperance Bay is to be a port of this colony, and such a port as will injure Fremantle, is a question we may leave out of consideration at present; for I feel quite sure that, when the time comes for discussing that question, the Parliament of the country then sitting here will be quite competent and equal to deal with it; therefore I see no reason whatever why we should consider that question at present. Those who know what is going on in the colony will know very well—and I have no hesitation in saying so—that public opinion must change to a very large extent in this colony before the two Houses of Legislature will ever consent to see the metropolis and the principal port of the colony supplanted by any other city or port in the colony. We know that very well, and anyone who holds a different opinion must think that the people in this colony and the representatives of the people will change very quickly during the next few years. I have no fear whatever on that subject, for I believe that, when the time arrives, the Legislature will be quite competent to deal with the interests which are then involved. I do not see how that question arises now, as a practical one for us to consider, in dealing with the extension of the railway from Kalgoorlie to Menzies. It is our duty at present, seeing that we are pressed on all sides with claims for urgent and necessary works, to promote and foster the established interests of the colony. To deal with our present necessities is the first consideration. I do

not think we can go wandering about, or speculating in an abstract way, as to whether we should do this or that, with a view to something that might be useful by-and-by; for I think we have too much to do already with things that are forcing themselves upon our immediate attention. Therefore I say a railway from Southern Cross to Menzies is not forcing itself upon us as a practical question, at present, and there are no interests already in existence that have a right to demand it. I have every faith in the wisdom and intelligence of future Parliaments to deal with any question that may arise, which will in any way influence or affect the interests of those places which are then permanent; and it is no use for us to speculate now in that direction. The Parliament of the future will do what it thinks best in the interests of the people for whom it will then have to legislate; and if a Parliament, at a future period, thinks that Fremantle as the central port, or Perth as the seat of Government, should be transferred to Esperance or to Eucla, the Parliament of that day will have full power to do it, and anything we can do now will not alter that. I believe the city of Perth and the port of Fremantle will always command, in the future, as they have done in the past, quite sufficient men of ability and intelligence to exercise a proper influence, and a very large influence, in the Parliament at any future period, upon what is going on or is likely to happen in this country. What we have to consider now, in dealing with this measure for deciding the route of this railway, as being a question which agitates some people's minds, is that we should have a proper regard for the interests of the whole colony and the interests of the Coolgardie goldfields. I ask the House to agree to the second reading of this Bill; and I believe that, in the circumstances, we should be coming to a right decision in agreeing to the Bill; and, although I am willing to admit the advantages of the Coolgardie route, still when I consider that we shall save 21 miles in cost of construction, amounting to £60,000, and that we shall do no injury to Coolgardie, as the line will not be more than three miles longer for the people of Coolgardie to travel over in going to the northern fields

than by the other route, I have no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that the railway should be continued from Kalgoorlie, as that seems to please everybody who is interested in the two chief mining centres of Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. All we have to do is to form a just conclusion as to what is best in the interests of the whole of the colony, and also to consider the interest of the people who are living in the districts which this railway will serve. In reviewing this matter, as I have had to do during the whole of the year, and knowing all the facts concerning it, I have not the slightest doubt that the decision which the Government have arrived at is the best, not only in the interests of the Coolgardie goldfields, but also in the interests of everyone in the colony.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of this Bill. From my knowledge of the country that lies between Coolgardie and the district of Menzies, I can confidently say that the construction of a railway in that direction will be justified in present circumstances. I have not had the pleasure of going over the country that has been decided on as the best route; but it seems to me that, in any case, the railway will have to be constructed from one of those two centres, and as the people in those districts have decided that it does not matter very much which centre the railway is to start from, I am quite willing to go with them to that extent. I am satisfied it is only a question of a very little while as to when the railway will have to be constructed *via* Mount Burges and the 25-Mile. The Government will have to construct a line for their own purposes as far as Mount Burges in connection with the water supply, and I presume they have considered all these points. The improvement made in those large centres demands that the Government should connect them by railway, and I hope this railway will continue to go forward, following up the large centres of the goldfields until the line coming up from the Murchison side will meet this main line which connects the Eastern fields with Perth and Fremantle. I have great pleasure and satisfaction in supporting the second reading.

At 6-25 p.m., the SPEAKER left the chair.

At 7-30 p.m., the SPEAKER resumed the chair.

MR. RANDELL: I do not think the Premier, in moving the second reading of the Bill, addressed himself to all the phases of the question; and, judging from what he said in reply to the interjection of a member, he left some of them to be dealt with by this side of the House.

THE PREMIER: I could not remember the distance from Fremantle. That is common ground.

MR. RANDELL: The Premier has not shown reasons for taking a railway to Menzies at all. I think members of this House and the people of the colony should be informed exactly as to the value of the output of gold at Menzies, and what are its prospects for the future.

MR. MORAN: You know more about it than you did of Southern Cross, when that line was made.

MR. RANDELL: Still, it is desirable we should have information of the extent and value of the Menzies goldfield, and whether we want to take a railway by that route to the Murchison, or in that direction. I do not dispute that Menzies should have a railway, but we have not received from the Premier the information: he has not stated the case so fully as to enable us to decide the question. Then with regard to the route, I think the Premier has ignored the Southern Cross route, which it is admitted would shorten the railway to Menzies by many miles. He has also forgotten to tell us the nature of the business between Coolgardie and Menzies, and Kalgoorlie and Menzies, which is the principal business place for that goldfield. We can only guess, from what we have read from time to time in the newspapers.

THE PREMIER: Coolgardie is now.

MR. RANDELL: Where does Menzies draw its chief supplies from?

THE PREMIER: From Fremantle.

MR. RANDELL: That, I think, is a very material element in the case.

THE PREMIER: Not only Menzies, but a good many other places round there also.

MR. RANDELL: That admits a serious phase of this question. There ought to have been full information as to the position of the producing portion of the colony towards Menzies, so that we should be able to consider whether it is desirable that the line should be constructed from Southern Cross in preference to the route suggested by the Bill. There is one very important feature that, as the Premier has said, there may be some auriferous country between Southern Cross and Menzies, and we cannot get away from this fact, that by making the line from Kalgoorlie, timber, machinery, and stores for the Menzies mines will have to be carried from 60 to 80 miles further than they would be by the route from Southern Cross, and not only for the Menzies mines, but also for the outlying goldfields which have not been mentioned to-night by the Premier. My mind has been open on this question; but since the case in favour of the Southern Cross route has been forcibly put before the country by those who are in favour of it, and the matter has been taken up by the Municipal Council and by the Chamber of Commerce and others in the centres of Perth and Fremantle, I certainly feel that a very strong case has been made out, in the interests of the portion of the colony extending from Albany to Geraldton, on behalf of the shorter route. I need not refer to what has been said so often in this House, but I think when the time does arrive—and I think it will be a considerable distance ahead—when the mines cease to be profitably worked, what will there be to fall back upon in the goldfields districts? The goldfields districts of Western Australia are not like the Ballarat district of Victoria, surrounded by rich agricultural producing country. The land about our auriferous areas may be good, yet the rainfall is so uncertain and so small that the idea of cultivating it could not be seriously entertained. The question arises that the responsibility must be cast upon the Government, and I am very glad they have taken the responsibility of recommending a route. I think it is their duty to do so, and in regard to what the Premier has said on this point, I agree with him that it is a duty that belongs to the Government, with the knowledge of all the facts that they have, and after a

careful consideration of all the surrounding circumstances, to say which route is the best. I am quite willing to admit that they have the best interests of the country at heart as much as any individual member of the House; and when they recommend any particular route, I am quite willing to concede that they do not do it for party purposes, or in order to secure larger acceptance of their policy or larger support in any particular centre, but that they do it solely with a desire to promote the best interests of the country. I admit that, although the hon. member for Nannine may dispute it; but, at the same time, I do not think that in placing their proposal before the House, the Government are dealing as fully with all the possible routes for this railway as we could wish, in order to show us clearly whether it should start from Southern Cross or Kalgoorlie. I admit that there are several centres—Southern Cross, Coolgardie, and Kalgoorlie—which have a right to be considered. The mines upon which a considerable amount of capital has been expended are now in working order, and there are various centres between both Coolgardie or Kalgoorlie and Menzies which have a right to be considered. I am free to admit that, if the line were made from Southern Cross to Menzies, we should ultimately have to make a railway to Bardoc, Broad Arrow, and the other goldfields in that district which have been named. A great deal depends upon the volume of trade between Menzies and Coolgardie, and between Menzies and Kalgoorlie, respectively. We cannot get away from the fact that the object Coolgardie has in view, in advocating the starting of the Menzies line from Coolgardie, is to make that city the metropolis of that part of the colony, and to have communication with Esperance Bay. When that time arrives, and the mines have developed enormously, as it is expected they will do, we shall find that by building a line from Kalgoorlie, a severe blow has been struck at the producing interests of the colony, with the exception of the trade for the supply of timber, which the goldfields will always have to obtain from the ranges in the Southern portion of Western Australia. A responsibility is cast upon Parliament to take these facts into consideration. It behoves us to look further

ahead than to-day or to-morrow or next year, or even a few years ahead; we should, in dealing with this line, look at the results it will have in the distant future, and see that the interests of other portions of the colony are not sacrificed on the altar of the goldfields. I had intended to move for a select committee to consider the question of the route of this railway; but after what has taken place in connection with the Greenhills line this evening, and in view of the fact that we have before us nearly all that we are likely to obtain from a select committee, I am not inclined to take that step at the present moment. But I would like to have further information on the points to which I have drawn the attention of the Premier. At the present moment I think that the older settled districts of the colony have a great claim to be considered, inasmuch as they have done a great deal for the development of the mines. Those districts are taking upon themselves enormous liabilities for the development of those mines, and we must consider the distant future when the mines will cease to pay, or perhaps to become so far unproductive that it will not pay capitalists and others to work them. Looking at the question involved in this Bill in all its bearings, and at the large population who had for years been struggling against adverse circumstances, and who have steadfastly plodded on, doing their best to develop the country and to discharge their duty, I think it requires serious consideration before we take a course which will, to a very large extent, jeopardise those interests to which I have referred. I am not prepared at the present moment to support any other line than that from Southern Cross, but of the rival routes from Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, I think that the case is very much in favour of starting the line from Kalgoorlie. So far as I can gather, Kalgoorlie appears to be very much the larger centre of gold production than Coolgardie at the present moment. I have no doubt that accounts for the very strenuous efforts which are being made by Coolgardie to secure the starting of the line from that town, and passing through the 25-Mile and other places on that route, with an eye to the ultimate making of a line from Esperance, and thus causing Coolgardie to become a great

entrepôt for merchandise, and the great centre of the Eastern goldfields. I do not blame the people of Coolgardie for looking forward; but of the two places I think the line should start from Kalgoorlie, because at the present time the mines of Coolgardie are not so productive as those of Kalgoorlie. It was suggested, in a pamphlet I received from Coolgardie, that the line should start from there because of the south-easterly position of Coolgardie; but the author of the map by which he sought to prove this had garbled the reproduction of the map of the Crown Lands Department in order to place Coolgardie considerably more to the south-east than its true position. I think the man who did that injured very considerably the case for Coolgardie, and if he wanted to advocate the Coolgardie route I think he made a great mistake, and one that would be likely to be resented by those who discovered the trick that he proposed to play upon them. I am not singular in that opinion. It was said in Coolgardie itself that the map was not correct. As I have said, it is an important question whether all the material for the development of the mines and for the sustenance of the population of the Menzies district shall have to be carried fifty miles further *via* Kalgoorlie than *via* Southern Cross.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Seventy miles further.

MR. MORAN: Sixty-five miles.

MR. RANDELL: The only question is as to whether it would be better to construct this line from Southern Cross to Menzies, or whether it would be better to wait and see whether it would be in the interests of the country to connect the surrounding districts by rail with Kalgoorlie. I think it is pretty certain that Southern Cross will ultimately have to be connected with Menzies direct. It must, however, be admitted that the goldfields centres which have been mentioned by the Premier have a claim to be considered.

MR. A. FORREST: As one who takes a great interest in this Bill, and one who has large interests in these particular districts, I approach this question with a great deal of satisfaction. In the first place, I give my support to the railway starting from the town of Kalgoorlie *via* Broad Arrow to Menzies. In advocating that line, I am doing so not only in the

interests of the people of that part of the colony through which it will run, but of the colony at large. I do not think that at the present time the Government could, under any circumstances whatever, build the railway from Southern Cross to Menzies, because there are no people living between the two places, or if there are any people there they are a very small community. Between Kalgoorlie and Menzies the line will pay from the very start. The first section to Broad Arrow will be reproductive before it is opened. Thence to Bardoc there is another section that will pay also. Then we get to Goongarrie, where batteries are about to be started by the representatives of a large amount of English capital, large sums of which have been spent in the development of the mines. In the course of a week a twenty-head battery will be started, and there are others on the way to commence operations. That section of the line will pay from the start. Now let us go on to Menzies, and we find that it is one of the most important centres on the goldfields, being the outlet of Niagara, Mount Margaret, Lake Darlôt, and other districts of the East Murchison goldfields. When we get the railway to Menzies, it will serve all these districts to the north and north-east, which I have not the slightest doubt will in time become our most important gold-producing centres. When those districts get their batteries erected and get into full work, it will be time enough for the Government and for this House to say there should be a direct line from Southern Cross to Menzies. The construction of a railway from Southern Cross to Menzies should not be proposed at the present time, because we are not in a position to undertake it, but we will be in that position when the gold-producing districts to the north and north-east of Menzies are in a condition of development. When that time comes, the necessity will arise for a more direct line to the sea-board from Menzies. We may rest assured that the people to the north and north-east of Menzies will not, when that time comes, be prepared to travel 70 miles round to reach the sea-board, or be prepared to pay more freight on their timber, their machinery, and their stores than they would do if they had a line direct to Southern Cross. When the

proposal was first made for a railway to Menzies, no one had the slightest idea of starting it from Southern Cross, but I have told the Premier myself many times that the time will come when he will have to build a line by that route, and I believe he will have to build it before many years are over. I do not think that any Government or any body of men representing the opinions of others could, in their sane moments, ask this House to build a railway from Southern Cross to Menzies at the present time. As to what people on the goldfields may say about members of this House and their views, we are broad shouldered enough, I think, to bear any abuse that may be placed upon us, and we are able to have opinions of our own and to protect their interests and our own at the same time. The whole point is that these people desire that their towns shall become a great centre, and that a railway shall be built to the Southern coast, thus leaving the older districts to bear the public burdens. What has this House done for the goldfields? It has voted two and a half millions of money to provide water, and it has given railways to all the important centres and water supplies and everything else possible for man to do. Surely, people who come here with the intention of throwing in their lot with us should be loyal and become at once West Australians. They should cease to be South Australians or Victorians, seeing that they have come here to make money and to settle. No one lives on a goldfield for the pleasure of it, and there is no man on the goldfields at the present time who would not, after making his fortune, get away. As far as I am concerned, I have the greatest regard for the people on the goldfields, and I have always in this House tried to help them as far as possible, because I consider the interests of the goldfields and of these districts to be identical. It has, I think, been said by the newspapers of Coolgardie that the people in the coastal districts have no interest on the goldfields, but I contend that the people in the coastal districts have large interests in the goldfields. The people in the coastal districts were the first to start the goldfields, and they built the railway to Southern Cross, and many of the mines on the fields belong to them. If I

thought, for one moment, that it would be better in the interests of the country that the railway should go from Coolgardie, I would vote for it, but, on the facts of the case, I cannot give my vote for that route. We save the construction of twenty-one miles of railway by starting from Kalgoorlie as against starting from Coolgardie, and, at the same time, we make the distance between Menzies and Coolgardie only three miles longer than if the line were built direct. I do not think the people of Coolgardie have any right to complain of that extra three miles, when by taking this route we serve Kalgoorlie as well as Coolgardie. The people of Coolgardie say they want a railway to Esperance Bay because it saves distance, but when the same argument tells against their own interest they do not put it forward. It is agreed on all hands that it is desirable to build a railway to Menzies, and the only question in dispute is in regard to the route. As far as I know, and I know these fields well, having travelled over them, there is no reason whatever why the railway should not go from the point selected by the Government. The hon. member for Perth says he will require more information. I may tell the hon. member that if he goes to Coolgardie he will see a very large population, some thousands of people, and that if he goes to Kalgoorlie, he will see also a considerable population, and again at Broad Arrow, all engaged in mining, not officials but people doing manual work, and working six days a week. If you go further on, you will find another large population at Bardoc, and also at Goongarrie and again at Menzies. If this railway were built for the passenger traffic alone it would pay, but we have also to consider that it will carry a large amount of machinery and stores, besides being useful in the conveyance of mails. The question of the Southern Cross route, I am sorry to say, is not at present, to my mind, within the range of practical politics, but when the right time comes, I shall be happy to advocate its construction. It might be supposed if we adopted the Southern Cross route, that we did so because we were afraid of the trade being taken to Esperance. I do not think we are afraid of that, and I am sure I am not afraid of it. I am

prepared to stand here when the time arrives, and give my vote against the construction of a railway to that port, and I do not think that there is any need to mention Esperance Bay in the present discussion. I shall most heartily support the second reading of this Bill, and I hope the Government will lose no time after the contractor has finished the line to Kalgoorlie, in calling for tenders for the railway to Menzies.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I suppose the Government are satisfied that this railway to Menzies is both desirable and necessary, and that they are convinced of the permanency of the Menzies field, otherwise they would not bring this measure before the House. In considering this matter we should not take into account the interests of Southern Cross, Coolgardie or Kalgoorlie, but the interests of Menzies, and the fields beyond Niagara, Lawlers, and others to the North. I quite agree that a railway should be built to Menzies, but I am not so satisfied that the best route has been proposed. We have heard a great cry from Coolgardie about this matter, but we can understand that the people there are not agitating in the interests of the Menzies district, but in the interests of Coolgardie. They believe that if the railway goes from the point they desire it will make Coolgardie a more important centre and will enhance the value of their town properties. They are acting not in the interest of the country but from selfish motives, and their agitation should not influence us to any considerable extent when considering this Bill. There are many arguments to be used in favour of the Southern Cross route, and the only argument against it is the cost of construction. If the line were taken from Southern Cross, it would practically mean the duplication of the line to the goldfields, for it would relieve the goldfields line of the traffic to Menzies, Lawlers, and several other districts. In view of the great works to be undertaken, I question whether there will not be another block on the railways. This single line to the goldfields will have to carry the water pipes for the water supply scheme, the rails, sleepers, and fastenings for the building of this line, and also the ordinary traffic; and if we started this

line from Southern Cross, it would relieve the Coolgardie end of the present line from pressure. Another argument in favour of the Southern Cross route is that, so far as the Menzies people are concerned, it would be seventy miles shorter, and that would mean the payment of lower freights. It seems to me to be nonsense for hon. members to talk about duplicating the line to Menzies, for when this line is built from Kalgoorlie to Menzies, there will be little chance of Menzies being connected with Southern Cross direct. We should look ahead a little, and consider whether it would not be advisable to build the line from Southern Cross to Menzies straight away. The time is not far distant when all the fuel for the fields will have to go over the line, coal being taken from the Collie fields or from over-sea from Newcastle, and it will be a hardship upon the people of Menzies and the surrounding districts if they have to pay seventy miles unnecessary freight upon it. It will be a serious matter, the payment of this extra freight on machinery, timber, and stores, and I think it is an argument in favour of the Southern Cross route that it would save the freight on seventy miles. Leaving the Southern Cross aspect of the question, I think there is a good deal to be said in favour of the Coolgardie route as against the Kalgoorlie route. Personally, I have not much sympathy with Coolgardie, because I deprecate the bounce and bluster which have characterised the conduct of the people there. If it were a question that could be decided by the tossing of a penny, I think I would say that bounce and bluster would not go down with me. We should not, however, consider our private feelings in deciding this question. The railway from Kalgoorlie to Menzies will be eighty-two miles long, and that from Coolgardie will be one hundred and three miles, but the adoption of the Coolgardie route would enable the railway to serve Kunaling, Black Flag, Mount Burges, and Broad Arrow. [MR. MORAN: Broad Arrow is common to both.] In addition to Broad Arrow, the Coolgardie line would take in several centres which the Kalgoorlie line would not serve. The Coolgardie route certainly touches more mining centres than the Kalgoorlie route. The line from Southern Cross to Menzies,

the Premier tells us, could be reduced to one hundred and fifty miles, and if it were reduced to that extent, there would be seventy miles more mileage by the route proposed by the Government. Another point we ought to consider, as bearing on the Coolgardie route as against the Kalgoorlie route, is that if we adopted the Coolgardie route we should build the railway to Mount Burges, and thus enable the pipes for the water supply scheme to be conveyed cheaply to that point. There are so many arguments in favour of each of the routes, that I think the matter should have been referred to a select committee. I know the Government and hon. members would not favour a reference to a select committee at this late period of the session, but if ever there was a question that should be referred to a select committee, this is one. We have only the most meagre information from the Government, and a select committee would be able to deal thoroughly with the whole matter. I think this matter ought to be referred to a select committee, particularly in view of the promise made by the Premier on the subject. The Premier seems to have changed his mind on the point, but I think the matter should go to a select committee, and if a select committee is moved for, I shall support the motion. My mind is quite open, and I wish to vote for the route that is best for the country. I am satisfied that if this line starts from Coolgardie or Kalgoorlie there will be a serious block on the line. I do not believe that a single line will carry the immense traffic that is certain to be available in a short time. With regard to the question of the goldfields getting railway communication to the South coast, I do not think the country will return men to power who will sanction the building of such a railway for the benefit of the other colonies, when it would have the effect of wasting millions of pounds that will have been expended by that time on the building of railways to the goldfields. I do not believe the country will return to Parliament members in favour of diverting the trade from this colony to another colony. I repeat that I would like to have had this matter referred to a select committee, so that all the arguments in favour of each of the routes and all the facts bear-

ing on each of the routes could have been placed before the House. We do not want Ministers simply to say they have decided upon a certain work or on a particular route to be taken by a railway; but what we want is the information upon which they have come to a decision.

MR. MORAN: I think it is about time I should give the House a little information about the different routes. I think the Premier was perhaps a little lax in not giving the House some information about the probable amount of traffic to be done on the proposed railway; but it is generally supposed that men in the habit of reading the newspapers, and certainly members of the Assembly, know something about the large centres on the goldfields. I am led to this view more particularly by the remarks of the member for Perth, who usually takes most reasonable views of the questions submitted to Parliament. The hon. gentleman is not noted for being enthusiastic on any party question, but he generally gives the House the benefit of his opinion on both sides of a question. He says that he lacks the information he ought to have to enable him to come to a decision on the route question. As to the member for the Gascoyne, he knows as much about the goldfields as I can tell him, and I know also that he is not speaking earnestly and seriously when he says that, if it were in his power, he would construct the line from Southern Cross. I cannot understand that anyone who has made such a handsome fortune as the hon. member has done—[MR. R. F. SHOLL: Where is it?]—and who owes so much to the different centres on the goldfields, should for one moment consider that it would be right or moral for this Parliament to go back from its promise to give railway communication to Broad Arrow, Black Flag, Bardoc, 25-Mile, Goongarrie, and all the places in the neighbourhood of Menzies. I wish to direct the attention of the House to the remarks of the hon. member for Perth. I do not think his arguments will bear examination. The strongest argument he put forward in favour of the Southern Cross route was that the extra 70 miles of haulage would be against the interests of the producing districts. He said it would not be fair for the producers that they should for all time have to pay freight on an extra 70 miles in

order to get their stuff to Menzies. Now, sir, the hon. member knows as well as I do that the man who produces a ton of chaff or a ton of potatoes in this colony will not pay one penny of the extra cost of delivery at Menzies.

MR. RANDALL: I said the people of Menzies would have to pay the extra cost.

MR. MORAN: Very well; I will consider it from the point of view of the people of Menzies having to pay. We know very well that the public opinion of Menzies, the opinion of those supposed to represent the district, is a unanimous one in favour of the Kalgoorlie route. I make this assertion notwithstanding the very small petition hurriedly got up in the last week or two in favour of the Southern Cross route. Speaking for the miners, the men who have to do the work on the fields, I say they are unanimously in favour of being connected with those other centres to the South. They desire to be able to pass readily from one mining centre to another, and can it be supposed that a man working at Menzies would like, if he desired to go to Coolgardie, to go by rail to Southern Cross, 165 miles, and then another 140 miles before reaching his destination. It is the very life of the mining industry for the different centres to be linked together. The working miners are the men who will have to pay for every penny's worth of material taken over these railways, and we should endeavour to bring them as near as possible to the various centres where work is available. The hon. gentleman has said that he does not yet know why a railway should be built to Menzies, and the Premier has not taken the trouble to inform him how the necessity arises. That necessity, of course, arises from the large developments at and around Menzies and in the intervening districts; but supposing there is a doubt about the matter, I would ask whether it is better, in the interests of the colony, to spend half-a-million of money upon a railway through a district, the value of which is problematical, or to spend half that amount in building a line to serve mining centres, the importance and value of which have been proved? I understand that some hon. members, and more particularly the members for Fremantle, are inclined, in the interests of their constituencies, to

support the Southern Cross route; but I would ask them if they are prepared to shut out from railway communication mining centres which are just as important as Kalgoorlie. Broad Arrow is quite as important as Coolgardie, because it is the centre of several mining districts, and it is just as important as Kalgoorlie was, and has as good signs of permanency as that field had when the extension of the railway to it was decided upon. At the present moment Bardoc and Broad Arrow are more entitled to railway communication than was Southern Cross when the railway was built to there from Northam, it not being supposed at that time that there was another bit of gold-bearing country to be found. Broad Arrow and Bardoc are absolutely in as good a position, so far as developments are concerned, as was Coolgardie when the line was extended from Southern Cross. I would like to ask the members for Fremantle, who, I gather, intend to support a motion in favour of building a line from Southern Cross, whether they are induced to take that course, not to save the people of Menzies 70 miles of haulage, but from fear of railway communication being given to the South coast. The Fremantle merchant knows very well that he will not have to pay the extra freight, not a penny of it, and that no producer in this part of the colony will pay that extra freight, but that the people of Menzies will pay it. The people of Menzies would prefer to pay the freight on this extra haulage, rather than not be connected with the great mining and commercial centres of Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. I ask the members for Fremantle to remember that, if they take the course of moving in favour of the Southern Cross route, the goldfields people will understand the meaning of it. The people on the goldfields will know that the action of the members for Fremantle arises from the fear that Esperance Bay will be connected with the goldfields and will monopolise the trade. That fear, I think, is groundless; but supposing the day arrives when there is a majority in the Legislature who consider the time has arrived to build a railway to Esperance Bay, what will happen? They will build that line from Esperance to Coolgardie, a distance of one hundred and seventy miles.

THE PREMIER: Two hundred and twenty miles.

MR. MORAN: I do not think it is two hundred and twenty miles, but we will say two hundred miles.

MR. A. FORREST: It is two hundred and twenty miles.

MR. MORAN: I will give the hon. member for West Kimberley another twenty miles, and call it two hundred and forty miles from Esperance Bay to Coolgardie. The distance from Kalgoorlie to Menzies is eighty miles, so that we could get a line from Esperance Bay to Menzies in about three hundred and twenty miles. Is it to be for one moment supposed that because you have a line from Southern Cross to Menzies, the majority of the members of the House at that time will not decide to carry on the line from Coolgardie or Kalgoorlie to Menzies all the same? I would say to this House, and especially to the members for Perth and Fremantle, the towns which are reaping the benefits of the prosperity springing from the goldfields, that if they persist in their intention with regard to moving for the Southern Cross route, they will do an injustice to the goldfields, and revive those feelings of bitterness which we hoped, and earnestly hoped, were dying out altogether. I have spoken now with the object of laying these matters before the members for the capital city and the principal port; and I say if they pursue a policy of self interest in this matter, not only will the people of Coolgardie join in that cry, but all those people who have held aloof up to the present, and possibly others in the surrounding country will join in it, and the ill feeling between the two main mining centres will be accentuated very much. The people of Menzies have expressed an unanimous desire to be connected by railway from Kalgoorlie. We know that the Council there have passed resolutions in favour of that route; we know that delegates from Menzies who came down here and attended a convention were in favour of it. And what is there left to support the contention of the members for Fremantle? The people of Menzies are willing to pay the extra freight which will be involved by the little extra distance from Fremantle in having to go by way of Kalgoorlie, instead of a shorter route through a wilderness from

Southern Cross. And I say that, by taking the line along the route proposed in the Bill, at least 10,000 people will be served along the route, whereas if the line were to start from Southern Cross, what number of population would be served right up to Speakman's? It would pass through a wilderness of sand, and there is not a white man within 50 miles of it. I have been over that country, and I say that no one who knows what kind of country it is can expect any mining developments to take place there, for it is a sand-plain from start to finish, extending the whole way from Speakman's up to Siberia, and for over 100 miles of it at least you may expect never to see a white man. Then besides the cost of the extra length of railway if taken by that route, there will be the water scheme to consider, and the laying of a second pipe, which in itself will be an important matter. In fact, the more you look into it, the more ridiculous is the proposal to take a railway by that route; and the only reason alleged for it is that a few people consider that Esperance Bay may at some future time become a port for the goldfields, and in that way injure Fremantle; but I say the same people who, as representatives in Parliament, would have the power to make Esperance a port and to build a railway from Esperance to Coolgardie, would also be able to put absolutely penal rates on any freights that might be sent over the railway line from Fremantle to those goldfields. Those hon. members who are now so apprehensive about the future should not forget that, when I proposed the other evening a motion in favour of building a railway from Esperance to Norseman, I did not get a single supporter in this House. Did that look as if Esperance Bay was likely to be made the port for the Eastern goldfields? When Fremantle wanted an additional member to represent that district in this House, under the Bill we lately passed, I sacrificed my own interests in Coolgardie, and said I would not ask for another representative to be conceded to the Yilgarn electorate, but that I would vote for an additional member being given to Fremantle. I ask those gentlemen now to calmly and considerately take a fair view of this question of a railway route to Menzies, and not be

afraid of any consequence in the remote future. They may find that I, or other representatives of the goldfields, may be their best friend in their day of need. I hope it will be on record in "Hansard" that the people of this colony are not of two opinions as to where this railway should start from.

MR. SOLOMON: The member for Yilgarn seems to have anticipated what the members for Fremantle are going to do. As far as my own intention is concerned, I do not intend to move that this railway should start from Southern Cross; but I intend only to refer to a promise given by the Premier to a deputation, which promise led them to expect that, when this matter came forward for settlement, the Government would propose that the question of route should be referred to a select committee of this House. I have here a newspaper report of what took place on the occasion of that deputation, and I suppose the report is a correct one. It says the Premier stated the Government ought not to take upon itself to say which way a railway should go, and that when this matter came before the Legislature, he was thinking of proposing it should be referred to a select committee. When the deputation heard that expression of opinion from the Premier, they were perfectly satisfied to leave the whole question to this House, believing that the House would refer the question of route to a select committee. I am sorry the question of route has now, to a certain extent, been taken out of the hands of this House by the action which the Government are taking in not proposing to refer it to the consideration of a select committee; because if the report which I have read is correct—and I do not think the Premier will say it is not correct—the people who formed that deputation, which the Premier said was the most, or one of the most, representative that had waited on him for some time past—[MR. SIMPSON: He always says that]—I say that deputation fully looked on that as a promise that the question should be referred to a select committee of this House. So far as Fremantle members are concerned, they have only the good of the colony at heart; and it matters little to them which route the railway takes, so long as it will serve the best

interests of the colony. If it is for the general good of the community to start the railway from Kalgoorlie or Coolgardie, it matters little to the members for Fremantle which place it starts from. But, at the same time, the members for Fremantle have interests to look to, and they do think that, instead of the railway going so many miles further to reach Menzies, and having to carry goods from the port a greater distance than would otherwise be necessary, a branch line should be made from Southern Cross along a more direct route to Menzies. Still, they would have been perfectly satisfied to rest on the verdict of a select committee, if the question of route were referred to it.

MR. GEORGE: I am not prepared to support an amendment for referring the question of route to a select committee, for I have very little confidence in the verdict of a select committee in such a case. It can hardly be considered fair to ask a number of unprofessional gentlemen to decide as to the best route for a railway, and to decide it from the same point of view as that from which the Government have considered this matter, when we find that aspersions are thrown about that people are really considering private interests in the matter, more than the true interests of the country. I do not see how the appointment of a select committee would further that matter at all. If there is one thing more sure than another, it is that, fight against the Esperance Railway as much as you like, it is only a question of time when that railway will have to be made; and the justice of the case will compel the Legislature to give it. The people who will require it, at a future time, will have the matter in their own hands, for they will be strong enough to have that railway built, and I believe it will be built in a few years. I shall now support the starting of this railway from Kalgoorlie to Menzies, because it is the best route geographically; and, from the arguments brought forward by hon. members, I am confirmed in that opinion.

Question put and passed, without dissent.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

The Bill passed through committee without remark and without amendment.

Bill reported, and report adopted.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: This is a Bill received from the Legislative Council, and its object is merely to amend, in two directions, the Mines Act which was passed last year. In the first place, the Bill provides for survey plans of surface and underground workings of mines to be made and transmitted to the Mines Department, in the first instance, within six months after the passing of this Bill, and quarterly afterwards. The Minister of Mines has represented that there is a great necessity for compelling the owners of mines who are developing their properties to have surveys made of the workings, and to require them to keep an authentic record of the development of mines; for, as time goes on, it will be necessary and convenient for people who may be mining in the same localities to know exactly the extent and dimensions of shafts and drives that have been made in adjacent mines; otherwise very considerable trouble and inconvenience may be occasioned, as has been found in the other colonies. Without these records, in course of time, when a new mine is being developed, the working party may come suddenly on a drive made from an old mine, of which they had no knowledge, and there may be damage done from a flow of accumulated water, or in other ways. The surveys which are required by the Bill will be recorded in the Mines offices on the different gold-fields. The second object of the Bill is for the appointment of inspectors of boilers, who, under the direction of mining inspectors, are to test, inspect, and report upon all boilers and other vessels in which pressure is used in connection with any mine, and to keep records of same. These are two apparently small matters, but important in their way; and they are the only points in the Bill, as all controversial points have been avoided, for the purpose of saving the time of the House at this late period of the session. Therefore, I think these two

points may well be agreed to by this House. I beg to move the second reading.

Question put and passed.
Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE:

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Mining manager to furnish certain survey plans to Minister:

MR. SIMPSON said it would be expedient to omit the word "six" in the first line, and insert the word "twelve" in lieu thereof. He would be glad if the Attorney General would consent to this, as the goldfields were so widely scattered, and many of them difficult of access at present. The Bill, in its present form, would impose a large expenditure of capital on the part of mine-owners; for, by the requirements of Clause 2, either each mine manager must be a competent surveyor, or it would be necessary to secure the services of a competent surveyor in each district. The Bill involved a big expense to the owners of mines in the initiatory stage, although, of course, when a mine had got up to the company-holding stage, and the British public were applied to for capital to work it, the question of expense for these services would not be so serious. He admitted the necessity and expediency of having these surveys made, but it would be wise to make the alteration he had proposed. Seeing that the Government had decided not to introduce a Goldfields Bill until the mining industry was more fully represented in this House, he would move, as an amendment—[SEVERAL MEMBERS: Strike it out!]
—he moved that Clause 2 be struck out.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said it had been pointed out to him, times out of number, that there was a great necessity for these surveys to be made, and records to be kept, for showing the underground workings of the mines; and as to the great expense which had been alleged, his opinion was that these surveys would practically cost nothing, for there was scarcely a mine manager, or even a digger, who could not map out a plan of the workings of a mine, showing the shafts and drives in it. These could easily be obtained, where the workings were so small as they generally were at present.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said the Bill required survey plans to be made.

THE PREMIER said that if a commencement were not made now to have plans of surface and underground workings made and records kept, the time would come when the omission to do this would be very much regretted, as the consequences would be inconvenient and perhaps serious. It was desirable that plans of the workings should be made and recorded, in order that persons mining in the future, in those localities, would know exactly where to expect the workings to be, and where they should expect to join on to them in working adjacent ground, or in working some other part of the same ground. Thousands of pounds might thus be saved by means of these records. The provisions of the Bill would not be carried out vexatiously, and all that was required was that a mine manager should show what was being done in the mines. Every mining company published plans for the information of its shareholders, and it should not be difficult to keep records of the workings. Such records were made everywhere else on goldfields; and they would prove of inestimable value here in the future, while the cost would be almost nothing.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said this Bill could scarcely have been considered by the Government. They could not possibly have considered what was involved in the request for plans of all workings to be made and records kept of every mine in the country; for, if this were done, about 400 clerks would be required in the department to receive, arrange, and record the plans, and all the space now possessed in the Public Works Department would be required to provide accommodation for keeping these plans stored for reference. The Bill not only required plans to be deposited once, but fresh plans were to be furnished every quarter from every mine in the country; so that all the staff which the Government had in the civil service would not be sufficient to examine all these plans and record them.

THE PREMIER: Make it yearly, if you like.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said this was a provision which had come into operation in the other colonies only at a recent date in reference to well-developed mines, and

it applied only to goldfields where the workings were down 2,000 to 3,000ft. The owners of mines in Bendigo and Ballarat were not required to furnish plans and surveys in the early stages of the development of those mines; and it was not until shafts had got down 2,000ft. or more that such a provision became necessary.

THE PREMIER said the same regulation was now in force in Victoria.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said that in the Ballarat district, where there were alluvial workings, mining was conducted underground on an extensive scale, horses and teams being kept down for weeks together; and in such cases it became necessary that there should be complete drawings of the workings, so that other persons working adjacent mines might know where a big shaft or a long drive was situated, and especially where the mining came near the surface, as in following an old overlaid gutter containing alluvial gold. The case was different in mines like those of this colony, which where down in hard country, and where there was nothing above to suffer damage, except perhaps a hessian shanty; so that there was really no necessity to supply to the Mines Department a sketch of every working in every mine in this colony. To require this to be done in the present stage of mining in this colony was utterly and completely absurd; and, if attempted, it could not be carried out, and would be utterly useless if carried out. Let the department suggest that every mine down 400ft. or 500ft. should supply these plans once a year. That would be sufficient for all purposes; but to expect every mine that was down a few feet, and having a number of prospecting shafts in one claim, should supply plans of all workings was utterly absurd. Therefore he said again that the Government could not have considered the Bill. Seeing then that this was a moribund Parliament, that it was very difficult to get a quorum of members together for business, and that only two or three mining members were in it at present, while it was expected that in the next Parliament there would be a larger number of mining representatives, the best course to take in reference to this Bill was to drop it. He moved that the Chairman do leave the chair.

Question put and passed.

The Chairman left the chair, and reported that progress had been made with the Bill.

Report adopted.

SALE OF LIQUORS BILL.

ORDER DISCHARGED.

The Order of the Day for the consideration of the Bill in committee having been read,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that the order be discharged.

Question put and passed, and the order discharged.

CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

The Legislative Council having made two amendments in the Bill (Clauses 1 and 2), these were now considered.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. JAMES, the introducer of the Bill, said he would accept the amendments made by the Legislative Council; as, although the provisions of the measure had been curtailed, it was still a step in the right direction. He moved that the amendments made by the Legislative Council be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported to the House, and the report adopted.

CROWN LANDS TIMBER BILL.

ORDER DISCHARGED.

The Order of the Day for resuming the debate on the motion for the second reading having been read,

MR. ILLINGWORTH said: I have carefully considered this Bill, and have consulted with a number of members about it. I have also talked over the Bill with the Commissioner of Crown Lands, and I am perfectly satisfied that it is impossible for the Bill to pass this session. I think it would be unwise for it to pass; and, if the Government will allow me, I will move that the Bill be discharged from the Notice Paper.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I think it is only fair that the Minister in charge of the Bill should be allowed the opportunity of reply, and to withdraw the Bill. I hope

the Government will be loyal to their colleague, and resist the discharge of the Bill.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I think there is a great deal more in the Bill than it gets credit for, and that when Parliament meets again the Bill will be considered again perhaps in its present shape. My colleague, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, has found that it was a mistake to place the Bill before the House at the present period of the session. The House is not prepared to deal with a subject that is so very important and so troublesome, at this advanced period of the session. Therefore I think the only course for the Government to pursue is to acquiesce in the motion of the member for Nannine, that the Bill be discharged, and we can bring it on again in the next Parliament.

MR. LEFROY: I may say, before agreeing to this motion, that I hope when the Government bring up a Bill of this kind again, they will bring up a measure in a shape different from that of the one before the House. I think that, as the Bill is framed at present, it would do a great deal of hardship in the country, for we should not be able to cut a single round rail or sapling of any kind. People north of Perth, where the trees are chiefly small, would have to do without timber at all, and have to use iron standards for fencing, instead of making use of the timber of the country. I think this Bill is a very crude one, and that the man who drew it did not understand the circumstances of the country. When a Bill is brought in again for the management of forests, it will require more consideration than this one appears to have received. I hope that, before submitting a measure of this kind to the House again, the Government will give those who are interested in the timber trade an opportunity of expressing their views on this subject outside the House.

Motion put and passed.

Order discharged.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL LANDS (PRIVATE) BILL.

MR. TRAYLEN brought up the report of the select committee which had considered the Bill.

Report received, and ordered to be printed.

Ordered, that the consideration of the select committee's report be made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

THE SPEAKER'S RULING RE SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 63 (PRIVATE BILLS).

The following notice of motion appeared on the Notice Paper in the name of the Attorney General:—"That in order to expedite business, and under the powers conferred by Standing Order No. 63, the Standing Orders relating to the introduction and passing of private Bills be suspended for the remainder of the session, with respect to a private Bill intituled 'An Act to empower Leslie Athol Norman or his assigns to enter upon Crown and certain private lands, and erect poles thereon, and to carry overhead electrical conductors across any such lands, and to confer on the said Leslie Athol Norman and his assigns certain powers and privileges,' and also as regards a private Bill intituled 'An Act to empower the Diocesan Trustees of the Church of England in Western Australia to sell, mortgage, or lease Perth Allotments H 7 and H 1, and to apply the proceeds or rents and profits thereof, subject to and in accordance with certain trusts.'"

THE SPEAKER, referring to the foregoing notice of motion, said: The House will recollect that last night, when the hon. member gave notice of this motion, I told him I thought the motion was out of order. The hon. member asked me to permit the motion to appear on the Notice Paper, and I have allowed it to appear. I have now had an opportunity of looking more closely into the matter, and I am decidedly of opinion that the motion is entirely out of order. I am very sorry that there has been what I regard as an attempt to set aside the Standing Orders in regard to private Bills. These Standing Orders have been drawn with great care, with a view to protecting the interests of the public against those gentlemen who promote private Bills for their own interest. Therefore it is very necessary that every precaution shall be taken to see that the interests of the public do not suffer from the passing of a private Bill, and that there shall be a

certain amount of time between the stages of the consideration of private Bills. A private Bill stands in a position entirely different from that of a public Bill. I should like to read to the House what May, in his "Parliamentary Practice," says upon this question:—

In passing private Bills, Parliament still exercises its legislative functions; but its proceedings partake also of a judicial character. The persons whose private interests are to be promoted appear as suitors for the Bill; while those who apprehend injury are admitted as adverse parties in the suit. Many of the formalities of a court of justice are maintained; various conditions are required to be observed, and their observance to be strictly proved; and if the party do not sustain the Bill in its progress by following every regulation and form prescribed, it is not forwarded by the House in which it is pending. If they abandon it, and no other parties undertake its support, the Bill is lost, however sensible the House may be of its value. The analogy which all these circumstances bear to the proceedings of a court of justice is further supported by the payment of fees, which is required of every party promoting or opposing a private Bill, or petitioning for or opposing any particular provision.

So the House will see that a private Bill stands in an entirely different position, as compared with a public Bill, when it is submitted to this House. In the consideration of a private Bill, the House acts not only in a legislative, but also in a judicial capacity. As a court, it enquires into and adjudicates upon the interests of private parties; as a legislature, it is watchful over the interests of the public; and, therefore, the Standing Orders restrain persons from proceeding with private Bills, except under forms which do not apply to a public Bill. May goes on to say:—

In pointing out this peculiarity in private Bills, it must, however, be understood that, while they are examined and contested before committees and officers of the House, like private suits, and are subject to notices, forms, and intervals, unusual in other Bills; yet in every separate stage, when they come before either House, they are treated precisely as if they were public Bills. They are read as many times, and similar questions are put, except when any proceeding is specially directed by the Standing Orders; and the same rules of debate and procedure are maintained throughout.

It will be seen that, in their judicial stages, private Bills are treated very

differently from public Bills; and very properly so, in order that persons whose rights or property may be affected by these Bills may have an opportunity of opposing them. Now, in our Standing Orders, the mode of procedure in regard to private Bills is very clearly set forth, and the notice of motion I am now referring to is against the authority of these Orders. I would like to point out some of the provisions of our Standing Orders in regard to private Bills. In Section 4, it is provided that when a private Bill is to be introduced, "The notices shall, within three months of the presentation of the petition, be published once a week, for three consecutive weeks, in the *Government Gazette*, and in one or more newspapers published in or nearest to the district affected by the Bill. The publication of all notices shall be completed not less than 21 days immediately preceding the application for the Bill." With reference to this Bill, 21 days have not elapsed since the publication of the notices, and therefore there has not been time for persons who wish to oppose this Bill to do so. In this case, then, there is a variation between the Standing Orders which apply to private Bills and those which are applicable to public Bills. Section 17 says that seven days before a private Bill is read a first time, copies of the estimates of expenditure of the undertaking shall be delivered to the clerk. This has not been done in this case. Section 29 says that an estimate of the expense of the undertaking under each Bill, shall be made and signed by the person making the same. This has not been done. Section 30 says that a sum of not less than two per cent. on the estimated expenditure shall, seven days at least prior to the first reading of the Bill, be deposited in the Treasury. That has not been done. Section 44 prohibits the introduction of a private Bill, unless a petition asking for leave to introduce it has first been presented. Section 46 requires that a petition for a private Bill shall be accompanied with proof that the notices have been duly given. Section 48 provides that, after the first reading of a private Bill, the Bill shall be referred to a select committee; and, according to Section 52, from seven to fourteen days shall ordinarily elapse between the bringing up of

the report of the select committee upon such a Bill and the second reading of the Bill; while, in the terms of Section 53, three clear days must intervene between the report and its consideration by the House. I have considered this motion, and, if I were to allow it to be put, which I cannot do, we should really be nullifying all the provisions of the Standing Orders relating to private Bills, and which have been framed in the public interest. Therefore I conclude that, under all the circumstances of the case, the motion is out of order, and I cannot permit it to be put.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Will you allow me to say a word or two on this matter?

THE SPEAKER: You will be out of order, if you do.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I would like to say that there is no undertaking in this Bill.

THE SPEAKER: Pardon me; there certainly is an undertaking.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I think not, sir. The Standing Orders refer to works desired to be done under private Bills. This is simply a case of wanting power to erect poles.

MR. JAMES: If the hon. member is out of order, what right has he to address the House?

THE SPEAKER: In my interpretation, this is certainly an undertaking, within the meaning of the Standing Orders; for the Bill gives the promoters power to enter upon private lands, and to erect poles and carry electrical conductors across such lands. None of the rules of the House have been complied with; no deposit has been paid. During the present session, a company wishing to construct waterworks and carry pipes over private lands had to lodge a deposit in respect of them of two per cent. of the estimated cost, amounting to £16,000. I think that, in an undertaking like this, where power is sought to erect poles and wires, not only on Crown lands but also on private lands, that is an undertaking within the meaning of the Standing Orders. But, in any case, the Standing Order as to requisite notices has not been complied with, and this is necessary with all private Bills.

Notice of motion ruled out of order.

MOTION—RESERVATION OF FOREST LANDS.

MR. HARPER, in accordance with notice, moved "That, in the opinion of this House, the best interests of the country would be conserved by reserving from sale all forest lands which produce jarrah and karri of a marketable character." He said: In rising to move this motion, I wish to point out the danger which it appears to me is involved in the power given under the land regulations, for the alienation of valuable forest lands for agricultural purposes. Under the various provisions of the Land Act, such lands can be alienated for a very small sum; and I think members will recognise that in the forests of the colony Western Australia has a very valuable asset. In view of the prospects of the colony, it is very desirable that we should no longer delay in preventing the curtailment of the area of our forests. I do not know that I could express the value of the forests of the colony in any better words than those which are to be found in a paragraph of the valuable report which has been laid on the table of the House, written by Mr. J. Ednie-Browne, the Conservator of Forests for Western Australia. He says:—"The forests are nature's gift, and should be looked upon and dealt with accordingly"—as an inestimable inheritance of great commercial and climatic value. Besides, much of the land upon which the best jarrah grows is, as a rule, of little or no value for agricultural purposes; and I maintain, without any logical fear of contradiction, that the timber now upon it is the very best kind of crop that will ever be seen upon it. To destroy it, therefore, for the sake of a few more blades of grass, is suicidal and reprehensible in the extreme." I consider that, apart from the teak forests of Asia, we have in this country the principal hardwood forests of the world; and there is no doubt that we ought to give our earnest attention to maintain the value of these forests to the uttermost. I feel that it is in the best interests of the State that we should interpose to prevent the alienation of the forest lands, and at an early date deal with those areas which have been denuded of timber, with a view to getting them reafforested as soon as possible, and to

protect the young trees. I feel confident that, if this is done, a valuable supply of timber will be provided for the future for domestic and other purposes. I have much pleasure in moving the resolution standing in my name.

MR. THROSSELL: I cordially support the motion, and I think there is much need for it when I read, in the homestead leases regulations, that the Crown grant of forest lands may be obtained for 3s. 9d. per acre, and thirty years allowed for the payment of that sum. When such terms as these are offered, there is great danger of the whole of the forest lands in the South-Western Division, including those in the Eastern districts, being alienated from the Crown and monopolised by speculators; for even if they have to pay 10s. per acre for these areas under the conditional purchase regulations of the Lands Act, the timber is worth far more than that amount. When it is remembered that the forests of the colony represent a national asset of the value of £124,000,000, I think it will be admitted that the Government are making a very great mistake—which I want to emphasise—in ringbarking large areas of land in the Southern part of the colony, the cost of which is defrayed by the incoming selector. Ours is the only colony possessing valuable forests of jarrah, a timber which is only beginning to be a marketable commodity in the marts of the world, and which is worth more than the Crown gets for the land on which it grows. I think that the motion is one that will commend itself to the support of the Government and of the House.

MR. A. FORREST: I think the time has arrived when no land on which jarrah or karri grows should be sold, unless it has been reported upon by an officer of the Crown as not being worth reserving as a forest area. It is a well known fact that land is taken up under the Lands Act, and when every stick of timber is cut off it the ground is thrown up, after the payment of only 6d. per acre per annum. The time has arrived when this practice should be stopped, and the forests, which in the South portion of the colony alone are worth £124,000,000, should be taken care of. The choice sites fit for cultivation, where we want to settle producers, do not grow jarrah, so that legitimate settlement will not interfere with the

forest conservation that is recommended by Mr. Ednie-Browne in his excellent report. No such report has ever been presented to this House, and it shows clearly not only the value of our forests, but also what we should do to take care of them. I do not know that even our goldfields are a more valuable national asset than the timber resources of Western Australia. I hope that the Government will take note of this motion, and not sell forest lands for a nominal sum, as is being done. A gentleman told me this morning that he had got hold of a thousand acres of Crown lands, from which 50,000 loads of jarrah could be cut.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I do not suppose there is much to be afraid of, if lands are occupied for timber cutting and a profit is made by selling the timber. I do not know that the colony is losing by that, to any large extent. I am glad the hon. member has brought forward this motion, for I am quite in accord with it. Of course the hon. member is too experienced a man to expect that it can be carried out in every particular. Land that is occupied sometimes has good timber on it, but I think I know what the hon. member means. It is that we should conserve and reserve the jarrah country as far as practicable, to be dealt with under laws specially made for timber country. I hope the land we have been ringbarking on the Lower Blackwood is not jarrah country. I believe it is red-gum and blackbutt country; but if it is jarrah country, it should not have been ringbarked. I hardly think it can be jarrah country, because as a rule jarrah country is no good for agriculture, while blackbutt country is very good for cultivation. It would do no harm to ringbark red-gum or blackbutt country, because those timbers are of no market value. I am quite in accord with what has fallen from the member for Northam, in regard to the application of the Homesteads Act. I do not think it would be at all advisable to apply that Act to any of the jarrah country; in fact, it would be a suicidal policy altogether to allow our jarrah forests to be destroyed in order to create homesteads. Though I am quite in accord with the motion, I think it would be impossible to carry it out to the greatest nicety; but at the same time, we are, I

think, now realising that in our jarrah forests we have a magnificent asset. Hitherto the timber business has been carried on under great difficulties, there being no great market for the timber, and there being great difficulties with regard to shipment. I think we may all congratulate ourselves that we have such a splendid asset in our jarrah and karri forests, and I think we should do all we can to make the most of that asset, in the interests of the community.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I have very much pleasure in supporting this motion. I only rise to express my pleasure on seeing that hon. members who voted for the Agricultural Bank Act, one of the principal clauses of which was to provide for the ringbarking of certain timbers at the public cost, now admit that they made a mistake.

THE PREMIER: It is not jarrah that is being ringbarked.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson): With reference to this motion, I am happy to be able to inform hon. members that I am careful in regard to any applications I receive for land, not to approve of any applications for land carrying good jarrah. I have obtained a special report in such cases on the character of the timber, before granting conditional purchase leases. I am now sending an officer to make a survey of all the available jarrah country, in order that it may be located on the plans, and in order that we may obtain a sufficiently accurate traverse of it. When this plan is completed, we will be able to see whether land applied for under the conditional purchase conditions should be granted or refused. We hope in course of time to get sufficiently accurate diagrams of the jarrah country, so that there will be then no danger of granting valuable jarrah country under the conditional purchase clauses of the Land Act. As to the ringbarking contract, the officer in charge of that work had it specially impressed upon him that no valuable jarrah country was to be ringbarked. I have personally inspected the country that has been ringbarked, and I found a block of about one hundred and fifty to two hundred acres on which the trees had been destroyed. Thereupon I made strict inquiries, and found that it had been done

in mistake, the man who had the contract for the ringbarking having made a mistake as to the place where he had to work. As a rule, jarrah does not grow on good land, and the land selected for the ringbarking experiment is supposed to be the best of the Lower Blackwood. No large jarrah trees grow there, and where the jarrah grows the land is not so good. The department have been thoroughly alive to the necessity of preserving the jarrah forest in every possible way. Mr. Newton Moore, who accompanied the Conservator of Forests on his tour, has made special reports on land applied for in the jarrah districts, and where valuable timber was known to be upon the land the application has been refused. I hope in the future the department will have sufficient information, so that there will be no danger of the destruction of good jarrah by persons creating homesteads.

MR. LEFROY: The resolution seems to me to be of a somewhat sweeping character, for it asks the Government to reserve from sale all jarrah country where the timber is of a marketable quality. The resolution refers to all forest lands. I suppose the Government do not intend to deal with that resolution to the full extent of its meaning, for if they did they might have to refuse to sell land on which there was any jarrah at all.

Motion put and passed.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1896-7.

The House went into committee to consider the Loan Estimates for the financial year.

IN COMMITTEE.

Vote—*Departmental*, £122,660 18s. 8d.:

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that, in asking the committee to approve of the Loan Estimates, he did not think it necessary to say very much. The Loan Estimates were really an abstract of what the Government proposed to expend out of the funds made legally available by votes of the House on the various Loan Acts. Under the Audit Act, it was necessary the Government should give the House an abstract of how they proposed to spend the moneys, or rather that portion of the moneys they desired to appropriate for the year. The practice of placing Loan Estimates before the Assembly was a very

useful one, for it gave the Parliament the power to control the expenditure of the Government out of the loan funds. It gave the House the right to say what work should be proceeded with and what should not be proceeded with, amongst works previously authorised. It gave Parliament power as to the actions of the Government in regard to public works, which it would not have if it were not the practice to supply Loan Estimates. They could all remember a time when Loan Estimates were not supplied at all; but the House had insisted that it should have those Loan Estimates, and the result was that the Government were able to place before hon. members a full statement of what had been spent during the past year, and what was proposed to be spent during the current year. At the end of the Estimates, hon. members would find a statement showing the progress of the work during the past year, and the progress intended to be made during the present year. In the previous year the House had authorised the expenditure of £863,000, and of this amount only £650,000 had been expended. The Government had not expended the full amount, because of the large contributions from current revenue, about a quarter of a million from that source having been expended on three items—rolling stock, additions to existing railways, and development of the goldfields, including water supply. That, of course, was not loan expenditure; and, as a consequence, he found the Government had not expended by £213,000 as much as they were authorised by the Loan Estimates to expend. Hon. members had not had an opportunity of looking carefully through these Estimates, but when they did so they would notice the Government had adopted an improved method of compiling them. These Estimates were not compiled on exactly the same basis as the Estimates of the Consolidated Revenue. The effect of the Consolidation Loan Bill, which authorised the Treasurer to carry all loan moneys he received to a general loan fund, was apparent in the Estimates before the committee. He was able to place those Estimates in a simple and distinct form before the committee, instead of having to deal with them in respect of the separate Loan Acts. The Government

proposed to expend during the year a sum of money of great magnitude, no less than £2,701,303; and he did not think the Government would be able to spend it all, for it seemed an immense amount; but the House had placed the money at their disposal, and it was the duty of the Government to carry out the works as quickly as possible. It would be observed that £122,600 came under the heading of departmental expenditure, and that sum provided for the payment of the officers engaged to carry out the work. The sum of £1,765,581 had to be expended on railways and tramways, and included in this amount were £500,000 for additions and improvements to open railways, and £600,000 for rolling stock; so that £1,100,000 of the total amount was to be spent on rolling stock, and other works in connection with existing railways. Upon harbour and river improvements £281,071 would be spent during the year, and of this £150,000 would go to Fremantle harbour works, and £80,000 to the purchase of dredges and barges. On public buildings there was the small balance of £2,632, and this the Government proposed to expend. The sum of £60,000 would be spent during the year on beginning the sewerage schemes for Perth and Fremantle. The Government proposed to spend the sum of £290,000 during the present year upon the Coolgardie water supply scheme; £150,000 on the development of the goldfields, and £15,000 on roads and bridges.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Is that £290,000 for the big water supply scheme?

THE PREMIER: The £290,000 was for the scheme for which a Bill had been passed during the session. Pumping engines and sheds would take £30,000, main pipes £150,000, laying and jointing of the pipes £50,000, the reservoirs £40,000, and the distributing mains £10,000. There was a small balance of £357 for public works at Geraldton, and that sum would, no doubt, be spent. The Government proposed during the year to spend £10,000 upon the development of agriculture. There was any amount of timber in the country that was only fit for ring-barking. The sum of £4,000 would be spent on immigration, chiefly on introducing single women. He had referred to all the items included in the Loan Estimates. Hon. members would notice a statement

at the end of the Estimates, information as to the progress of the works during the twelve months ended June 30th, and also the anticipated progress during the present year, and he hoped hon. members would consider the Estimates fairly complete. He hoped there would be improvement every year in regard to the compilation of these Estimates, because he desired the Loan Estimates to be given as much in detail as the ordinary Estimates. The Government were doing a little in that direction, but there was still a good deal of room for amplification. They had adopted a basis that would not require alteration for years, and it was a sound basis, because it gave an opportunity of amplifying the Loan Estimates as far as it was possible to do so. The loan expenditure of the colony was creating an immense establishment, but the works could not be carried on without a very large staff and a very large expenditure. He believed in the necessity of the works upon the Loan Bill, and he thought they were of a character that must commend them to every member of the House. He begged to move the adoption of the first item on the Estimates.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the Estimates before the committee gave a good deal of information to hon. members, and the only fault he had to find was in regard to the time given to hon. members to consider them. The Estimates had been placed on the table only that night. He noticed, however, that in nearly every case there was an increase of salary to the officers. It seemed to him that the officers in the Public Works Department, which was controlled by their eminent Engineer-in-Chief, of whom they all ought to be proud, received increases from salary out of all proportion to the increases given in other branches of the service. The Engineer-in-Chief was very fond of spending money, and never stopped at expense. Moreover, the Engineer-in-Chief pretty well ruled the Ministry, and he (Mr. Sholl) quite understood it. Mr. O'Connor was a very eminent engineer and a very able man, but though he was an excellent engineer, he ought to have been a lawyer; and if Mr. O'Connor had been a lawyer, he would have been able to convince the judges that anything was right. He (Mr. Sholl) wished to call the attention

of the Ministry to a statement by the Minister of Mines, in the Legislative Council, to the effect that of the £200,000 placed on the Loan Bill for the development of the goldfields and mineral resources, £180,000 had been already spent. [THE PREMIER: No, no.] He (Mr. Sholl) had that statement on the authority of members of the Legislative Council. If it were true that that money had been spent, the Government had not been fair to members of the Assembly, for the information ought to have been supplied to them. The Government had no right to allocate any sum without the approval of Parliament; and if, as had been stated by the Minister of Mines, £180,000 out of £200,000 had been spent, the Government were trying to hoodwink the members of the House in order to get their measures through. Glancing through the Loan Estimates, it seemed to him the Government had endeavoured to give every information to the committee. The House had arrived at the position that the expenditure of two or three or even ten millions was not a matter of consequence. He thought, however, that time should be given to hon. members to study the Estimates; therefore he moved that progress be reported.

THE PREMIER said the member for the Gascoyne seemed to be the leader. The other members on the Opposition side of the House did not want progress to be reported, or, at any rate, the leader of the Opposition, the member for Nannine, did not want progress to be reported.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he did not want to report progress, but was anxious to go on with the business.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the member for Nannine was not his leader, nor would he ever recognise him as leader.

Motion to report progress put, and division taken as follows:—

Ayes ...	4
Noes ...	9

Majority against ...	5
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AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Loton	Mr. Burt
Mr. Randell	Sir John Forrest
Mr. R. F. Sholl	Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. George (Teller).	Mr. Lefroy
	Mr. Monger
	Mr. Piesse
	Mr. Simpson
	Mr. Wood
	Mr. Illingworth (Teller).

Motion negatived.

MR. LOTON, referring to item 502, "Development of goldfields and mineral resources," said the unexpended balance of loan funds on the 30th June last was £194,715 19s. 2d., and the next column showed the estimated outstanding liabilities, on 30th June last, to be £180,028 19s. 6d. An hon. member had drawn attention to a remark made by the Minister in another place about this sum having been allocated.

THE PREMIER: No; it is not due yet. We do not owe it to anyone, as it has not been expended.

MR. LOTON said it could not be a liability unless the expenditure had been incurred, and if, as the figures in this item showed, the estimated outstanding liability on the 30th June was £180,028 19s. 6d., and as it was proposed to spend £150,000 on this item during this year, therefore, although there was an estimated liability on the 30th of June of £180,028 19s. 6d., yet the Government proposed to pay only £150,000 of the total liability in the current year.

THE PREMIER said the explanation was that, about the end of last year, after he had visited the goldfields, he submitted to the Cabinet a number of works which he considered necessary, principally for water supply on the goldfields. The first estimate he submitted amounted to £100,000, but the total cost of those works when completed would amount to £160,000. Since then, however, there had been other works added to the list, and the total amount of the works which the Government had now authorised the department to carry out amounted to £180,028 19s. 6d. Many of these works, however, were scarcely commenced at present. For instance, in making a large tank for storing water on the goldfields, the department would commence by boring here and there to test the strata, and the actual excavation and construction would not commence until some time afterwards; so that if sufficient money was not available for the work, the Government could at once say: "Stop this work." The total which the hon. member had referred to was therefore only an estimated liability in the event of the works being completed; but as many works had not yet been begun, and others had only been commenced,

the money was not yet owing, because it was not actually spent. The amount stated in the estimate was the total amount of works authorised by the Government to be undertaken by the department, and in some cases the works were not yet undertaken, while in other cases the works were in hand but not completed. Therefore, although the Government had authorised the department to expend a total of £180,028 19s. 6d. on certain works, the estimate was that only £150,000 would be spent within the financial year, some of the works not being completed within the year; and therefore all the money would not have been spent at the close of the financial year. The money required for these works would come out of loan item No. 502, "Development of goldfields and mineral resources, £194,715 19s. 2d."

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it did appear that the Government had allocated the money and spent some of it, before they brought in the Loan Estimates for the House to sanction.

THE PREMIER said the money for this item had been allocated last year, and some money out of current revenue was also spent last year on works for the development of goldfields and mineral resources. It would be seen, on reference to the particulars given in these Estimates, that the Government spent £76,000 last year more than they were authorised to spend on works for the development of goldfields and mineral resources, and they did this notwithstanding the provision which had been made out of last year's Loan Estimates. The reason for doing it was that it was indispensable to supply water to the people on the goldfields, who were opening up the country. As he had stated, this money had not yet been spent, and could not be regarded as a liability until it was spent. If the House did not authorise these works to be undertaken and completed, the Government could stop the works at any time; and very little money had been spent up to the present.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) said that pages 36 and 37 of the Public Works Report, then on the table, would show all the works which were to be undertaken.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said members were not allowed time to look at that.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said the statement in the Works Report was so voluminous and so far-reaching, that it ought to furnish to members all the particulars they asked for. The Government were pledged to these works, and that was the only reason why this amount was mentioned as a liability in June last, for many of these works had then been commenced as being urgently necessary. As to the statement of the member for the Gascoyne, in regard to the departmental expenses being proportionally large, they were $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the amount to be expended last year, and taking the proposed expenditure of this year the departmental proportion would be found exactly the same, namely $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the proposed expenditure; consequently there was no disproportionate increase, although the staff was actually larger now, because the amount to be expended was much larger in the present year. He had explained, in his annual statement to the House, that the reorganisation of the department was being undertaken, and that in the engineering section an engineer had been placed in charge of the various branches, and he was to be responsible for the branch in each case, under the direction of the Engineer-in-Chief. These engineers had to be paid in proportion to their position and responsibility, and they received from £700 a year downwards, the highest amount being received by the Inspecting Engineer, Mr. Dillon Bell. He believed that, after a few years' experience, it would be proved that this reorganisation was a change in the right direction; and, in the case of the engineering branch, one distinct benefit would be that it would relieve the Engineer-in-Chief to a large extent from minor responsibilities, and the engineers in charge of branches would probably in many instances refer to the Minister for direct instruction, without the necessity of going to the Engineer-in-Chief; consequently the Minister would be more in touch with the work that was going on. The Estimates now before the House gave information much more in detail than the previous Loan Estimates had supplied; and the officers of the department had given a good deal of attention to the preparation of this information. In accordance with the

Loans Consolidation Bill, which had passed through this House, the Loan Estimates had been placed in such a form for this year that they would be easy to understand, and the simplified form would also be of advantage to the department, as far as the carrying out of the various works was concerned. He would be pleased to reply to any questions which members might ask.

MR. GEORGE drew attention to the state of the House, and said he must oppose any further progress that evening with so small an attendance of members. After the manner in which the estimates of expenditure from revenue which he had characterised as profligate and extravagant were forced through the House the other evening, he thought they would be wanting in a sense of their proper duty if they permitted these Loan Estimates to be passed in a few minutes after the details had been placed before them. He asked whether hon. members were doing their duty to their constituents by simply swallowing these Loan Estimates *holus* *bolus*, at one huge gulp.

MR. SIMPSON said he wished they would choke the hon. member.

WANT OF A QUORUM: ADJOURNMENT.

THE CHAIRMAN having reported that there was not a quorum present,

THE SPEAKER, after the usual interval, finding a quorum was not present at 10-17, p.m. declared the House adjourned until the next sitting day (Monday).
