

Question passed.

The House accordingly adjourned at five minutes to 1 a.m., until Saturday forenoon.

Legislative Council,

Saturday, 23rd December, 1905.

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Bills for Agricultural Spur Railways (3), debated jointly, namely—	
1, Katanning-Kojonup, all stages	920
2, Goomalling-Dowerin, all stages	933
3, Wagin Dumbleyung, all stages	934
Bill: Appropriation, in Conn., 3a.	935
Metropolitan Waterworks Act Amendment (extension of water supply), all stages ...	935
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Assent to Bills	937
Prorogation to end of May	938

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 11 o'clock forenoon.

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Papers relating to the suspension and reinstatement of the Commissioner of Police.

BILL—KATANNING-KOJONUP RAILWAY.

AGRICULTURAL SPUR LINE.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

SECOND READING—JOINT DEBATE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill), in moving the second reading, said: Members will notice what has taken place in another part of the Legislature, and the procedure followed there can with a good deal of advantage be followed here; that these three Bills in so far as the second-reading debate goes may be considered as one. By that I mean any arguments for and against the three railways may be submitted in the one debate, and the Bills dealt with afterwards in a more or less formal manner. This is a method of

procedure that will recommend itself to the Chamber because a good deal of time is saved thereby, and each Bill can nevertheless receive the treatment to which it is entitled. These Railway Bills have been brought forward in pursuance of what has been, since the Government has had existence, one of the main planks of their platform, that of constructing what are known as spur lines of railway, running from the main lines into country which is either settled or which the Government are desirous of settling, or which is in both stages. With regard to the information which no doubt members wish to be supplied with, and which I shall be able to give them, I shall deal with the following heads of information, namely, the starting point and terminus of the line, the total area of land served by the line, the area of land alienated along the route of the line, the area of land available for settlement along the route of the line, and in most cases classified into second and third class; then again I shall be able to give members information about the rainfall, the lie of the country, that is the nature of the country through which the lines pass, including the engineering difficulties which are met with or which are conspicuous by their absence, the timber growing on such country, and the deviations. I should like to know if there are any other items of information on which members require me to speak.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: The probable freight.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman must know that it is practically impossible to arrive at that.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: The probable cost of working the line.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: We can get that.

HON. R. F. SKOLL: The report of the surveyors.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: The result of the working of other lines.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That can be got of similar lines, not spur lines built on a trunk-line basis. We do not propose in the first place that these lines shall be built as spur lines have been hitherto built on the trunk-line basis. It is not proposed that these lines shall cost £4,000 a mile equipped, but it is estimated that the cost of the 80

miles of line which these proposed railways embrace, allowing 10 per cent. extra for sidings, shall be £136,000. So that members will see the estimate of the lines will be well under £2,000 a mile, and I am informed by the Minister for Works that the estimate is rather on the liberal side than otherwise. That includes a certain amount for rolling-stock. As I started out to say, this spur line policy and the encouragement of agriculture, either that which exists at present or that which is to come by building these spur lines, has been a prominent policy of the Government ever since its existence. It is due to the fact that the Government wish to put into operation as quickly as possible this important part of their policy—important indeed not alone for the agriculture community, but for the whole community—that the Government take the earliest opportunity of bringing this policy down in order that a policy which undoubtedly, at the last election, was cordially endorsed by the bulk of the electors of Western Australia may receive consideration at the hands of Parliament.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: This is the earliest moment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I admit with sorrow it is late in the session, but I ask the hon. member to display some fair play and reasonableness, and I ask if the Government could have brought these lines down before this time.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Of course they could.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Then I do not think the hon. member is reasonable, or is displaying much fair play in this connection. Parliament has been in session now for approximately a month. Ministers have been working as hard as ever they could work, there is no doubt whatever about that; that is universally acknowledged; and the departments have been going at high pressure in order to keep up with their ordinary work added to the work which is put on them by the session of Parliament; therefore I do not see how the Bills could have been brought down sooner. I regret as much as members that it has not been possible to bring the Bills down before this, but it has not been possible, and I ask members to study what it means to the State to delay the passage

of the Bills before taking any action in any direction. It puts back progress in these districts affected by the railways for 12 months at least. Actually a good deal more by the moral effect which the rejection of the railways by the Legislative Council of Western Australia would have.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I understand all that.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am certain the hon. member does understand, and I am certain the Legislative Council will do whatever it does with its eyes open, and with a due recognition of the consequences of that action. I am simply putting on record my opinion of the situation as it strikes me, and I hope as it strikes a majority of the members of the House. I have just said that the policy of building spur lines in various parts of our agricultural settlement has met with hearty endorsement at the hands of the Legislature of Western Australia. It has met with the extremely hearty endorsement of members in another place. These railways were opposed in another place by a certain section of the House, but they have passed triumphantly by majorities varying from 15 to 16 in each instance; the two main divisions being 28 to 13 and 26 to 10.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: There are no parties in this House.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would again point out to members that if there were anything novel in this proposition—if the subject had not been discussed for practically the last year or 18 months—there would be some reason for the position which, I understand, some members are about to take up: that the project is being rushed through Parliament, without due consideration and sufficient information. But members who read the newspapers—and I presume that all read them in order to keep themselves in touch with public events—must know that the details of each line have been threshed out again and again, not only locally but by deputations to the Minister, reports of which have been available for the information of members as well as of the general public. Of course I know that Mr. Sholl, who will persist in interjecting, is a stickler for form. That is, he is a stickler for form, not always, but when the aforesaid stickling suits his purpose. If he thinks there is some

little informality that may be dug up, he will set to work to dig it up. There are two great objects to be served by these spur lines. In the first place, we have to consider the convenience and the prosperity of those persons who are already settled on the land; and this is a subject of which I would ask members to think deeply and well. I would ask members to put themselves for one moment in the place of those settlers who now occupy land in the vicinity of these proposed lines, and to think of their feelings should such a thing happen as that all these railway projects should be thrown out. The settlers have had the guarantee of the Government that at the earliest possible opportunity—and that is now—these railway projects should be brought before Parliament for consideration; and those settlers' disappointment, and I may also say their resentment, will I think be keen and justified, if those railways, which have for 18 months or more formed part of their daily hope be not proceeded with. Then again, we have to think of the settlement which must ensue along the routes and beyond the termini of these lines. This is of national importance. Intimately connected with agriculture in this State is the subject of immigration—the successful settlement of people from the old country on the land. And before we can legitimately and freely encourage immigrants to come here, we must be ready with lands for them to settle on. Members will no doubt say that there is a large area of land taken up and not made use of along our existing lines of railway. That is so; but if members will recollect, an extremely large proportion of that land has been taken up within the last two years. There has not yet been time to fulfil the conditions on which that land was taken up, though the holders have done their best. If we wish to encourage our agricultural industry and to maintain that progress which has been so evident during the last few years, we must seek fresh lands. We must extend our railways into areas lying a little farther back. With the object of providing a place to which immigrants can be taken when they arrive in Western Australia—a place where they can select farms—the Minister for Lands has reserved within a reason-

able distance of the terminus of this line a considerable portion of Crown land marked in red on the map, a little to the south of the terminus.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: How much?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: About 130,000 to 180,000 acres, I think. I forget the exact area. Members will see that this very project which we are now discussing lies at the root of our immigration policy. If we are to continue to carry out that policy, we must of necessity be prepared to meet immigrants when they arrive, to have officers ready to take them to places where they can select land; and this will be impossible if these spur lines are not constructed. Therefore I ask members, are they prepared to set back our immigration policy for 12 months by throwing out these lines?

MEMBER: That will not in the least affect the policy. Twelve months will be needed to get the immigrants here.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Evidently the hon. member does not read the papers, or he would notice that for the last month or two we have been obtaining from England a most desirable class of immigrants. Within the last six months we have received over 100 immigrants with capital, prepared to go on the land—some of them with £700. And it would be to our everlasting shame if those people, induced by our agents in England to come out, were not supplied with land on arrival. To deal briefly in the method I have indicated with the railway, I will give members some information under the heads to which I have referred. The length of the line which we are now considering is to be 28 miles. It is to start from Katanning, and to terminate 28 miles westward, at Kojonup. The total area of land to be served by the line is 386,000 acres. The land available for settlement along the route of the line is 40,000 acres of first-class land, 32,000 acres of second-class land, and 9,000 acres of third-class land. The average rainfall along the route of the line is 21 inches, and the country is well watered by permanent pools on several creeks which the route of the line traverses. The land along the route is lightly timbered with jarrah, blackboy, and red and white gum, the clearing being moderately easy. The lie of the country is undulating, easy

grades being obtainable. The limit of deviation is five miles. The country between Katanning and Kojonup is settled by a large number of practical farmers, principally from South Australia. It is well adapted to agriculture, stock-raising, and mixed farming. The population is fairly large, and there will be a heavy loading of farm produce. A great number of selections has been taken up in anticipation along the Balgarrup River. This railway may be expected to open up that fine block of country lying between Kojonup and the Bridgetown Railway.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: What is the distance from Kojonup to Bridgetown?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: About 65 miles. There are along the route of the line 142 settlers, about 100 of whom have families, holding 130,981 acres as freehold first-class land, and 65,524 acres as second-class and third-class. There are 8,792 acres cleared, of which 2,358 acres are under wheat and 200 acres under barley this season, while 705 acres are under oats. Depasturing on this area are 1,130 horses, 514 cattle, 10,495 sheep, and 266 pigs. There are 121 acres cultivated as orchard, and 7,030 are ringbarked. I do not think members can deny that this is a fair prospect. We have the settled country; we have the country yet to be settled. I am sure that several members have seen the district, and travelled through it; and if not, I who have seen it advise them to do so at the earliest opportunity. It contains an extremely fine area of land waiting to be taken up on the advent of this railway; for, besides the settled land, there is yet to be settled land which will well and truly repay settlement. Now let us pass on to the details of the Wagin-Dumbleyung line.

THE PRESIDENT: That Bill is not before us. This is a Bill for the construction of a railway from Wagin to Kojonup. By permission of the House, the Minister may refer to the other lines.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It may be well to permit the discussion of all the lines.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think it far better to give the details of these lines in the second-reading speech on the first Bill, and then each Bill can be separately put through.

THE PRESIDENT: I will take the sense of the House. Has the House any

objection to the Minister's dealing with the two other lines?

MEMBERS: No.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The line to which I now wish to refer starts from a town called Wagin, on the Great Southern line, with which town most members are acquainted by name, and runs approximately eastward to a point north of Dumbleyung Lake. The length of the line is to be 30 miles. The total area to be served by the line is 435,000 acres. The area of land alienated is 104,500 acres, of which 65,000 acres is first-class land, 45,000 acres second-class, and 41,000 acres third-class; but there is also an area of 167,500 acres not classified. The rainfall along the route of the line is 15 inches. The timber is white and salmon gum, with jam, easily cleared. The lie of the country is undulating, and presents no engineering difficulties. Easy grades are obtainable. The limit of deviation is 10 miles. There are along the route of the line 100 settlers, and the line will serve a population of 300. Over 600 acres are under crop, and over 300 are cleared and ready for burning in March. Settlement is proceeding very rapidly. The soil is excellent, the average yield in bushels per acre of wheat being about 15. This land too is to a large extent settled by men from South Australia, who are every day receiving accessions to their ranks because of the good accounts which they are sending to that State, and also because of the prospect held out to them of this line being built.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: What is the area of land not selected and open for selection?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The area comprises 65,000 acres of first-class land, 45,000 acres of second-class land, 41,000 acres of third-class, and 167,500 acres not classified. The area selected is 104,500 acres. Now I shall give the like details of the Goomalling-Dowerin railway, of which the length will be 15 miles. The total area of land served will be 240,000 acres, of which 64,000 is alienated. The area available for settlement is 176,000 acres not yet classified; but I am led to believe on the best of authority that this area, though not yet classified, comprises at all events the normal proportion of good land. The

rainfall is 14 inches per annum. The lay of the country is undulating, and presents no engineering difficulty, easy grades being obtainable. The timber is York and salmon gum, gimlet wood and jam, very easily cleared. The length of line is 15 miles, limit of deviation five miles. The country between the Goomalling and Dowerin Agricultural Areas is being very rapidly settled. The soil is splendid. Over 8,000 bushels of wheat were carted to Goomalling last year. In places as many as 40 bushels per acre have been obtained. The line should in the near future be extended in a north-easterly direction to Cowcowing, to tap the splendid wheat-growing country in that district; and ultimately the line will probably join the Eastern Railway near Kellerberrin. The average yield per acre last year was about 18 bushels. There are in the district about 300 settlers and their families. Those are briefly, on account of the all too short time now at my command, the details of the three lines for which Bills are now before the House. Again I should like to ask members to consider thoroughly and deeply before they take any step which must, as it must in my opinion, retard the agricultural progress of Western Australia to such an extent as will a refusal to build these spur lines retard not only our agricultural progress, but necessitate the stoppage, for some time at least, of that scheme of immigration just getting into swing. I would ask members to ponder the effect on the outside world of the temporary or partial stoppage of that scheme of immigration now being brought prominently before the eyes of the British public; to think what it means to the credit of the State, and to let that weigh with them when considering these railway projects. Even if members delay for only 12 months the building of these lines, members will assume a heavy responsibility. The building of these railways has been part of the policy of a Government which believes in this State, not because Ministers sit in their offices and read reports, but because they consider it part of their duty to travel through this country and to make themselves acquainted with the resources of what must in my opinion be, even from an agricultural point of view, the best State in the Commonwealth. I would ask members

to treat these projects kindly and generously, and not to rob the settlers along the route of these lines—and the intending settlers who have their eyes on the manner in which the Government is pursuing its railway policy—of the opportunity of becoming prosperous and contented citizens in our midst. I have much pleasure in moving the second reading of the Bill.

HON. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): I ask for a few moments the kind forbearance of the House; and I feel sure that forbearance will be granted. This is one of the proudest days of my life, when I stand here and see that map hanging in the Chamber, disclosing the great settlement that has taken place, not only in the Great Southern but in the Eastern Districts. I have grown grey in traversing that country. Twenty-five years ago I went into it practically a stranger, and realised that in those lands adjoining the Great Southern Railway—the railway was not then in existence—we had an opportunity of making districts equal to the Eastern District. And to-day, after 25 years, the map shows a settlement of which the country should be proud; and to-day we are asked to consider the reasonable demands of the settlers in those districts, which are languishing for want of the railways we are asked to grant to-day. In connection with these projects there is not the slightest need for telling an untruth; and truthfulness is to be laid to the credit of our Lands Department. Therefore any figures that I quote, being supplied by that department, will, I trust, be taken as reliable. It has been urged that people are not doing enough work on the lands they possess along existing lines. I have a table here which will show how impossible it is for them to do anything more than they have done in the limited time for which they have held those lands. We find that out of 5,989,000 acres, 309,804 were taken up in 1900; in 1901, 351,999 acres were taken up; in 1902, 350,630; in 1903, 1,045,171; in 1904, 1,362,941; and in 10 months of 1905, 1,132,398; making a total of 4,543,000 acres taken up since the year 1900. When we remember that the Lands Department has again and again complained of being starved in its survey vote, and that only during last

year could it undertake these surveys. members will understand the position. Moreover, the conditions on which people were induced to take up that land were very liberal. We said to them that if they took up the land they should have two years from the date of survey to fence one-tenth of it, five years more in which to fence the whole of it, and five years more in which to effect the other improvements. We cannot say that the people have not carried out the conditions; nor could they have done more. We as a Parliament have, by not making surveys, prevented them from doing more. I speak as one of these people; and I say without hesitation that 95 per cent. of them are fulfilling and more than fulfilling every condition which they undertook to fulfil. We as a Parliament have encouraged the poorer class of people to go on those lands; they were tempted by those conditions; and we cannot now turn round and say that they should have done more. Our duty is to carry out our promises. I am not here to plead for the waster or the speculator; but as a representative of the settlers I tell you these are doing their duty to the State, and are becoming a prosperous community. Given time, they will make the State very prosperous. Members have said they have not had time to become acquainted with these matters; but if members will not look into the papers that are placed before them, that is not the fault of the Government.

SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM: There is no opposition to the Bill yet.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: There is opposition to the movement. The fact remains that every member has had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the desires of the people, so that excuses cannot be made. Good reasons have been advanced by the deputations which have waited on the Government for the construction of these lines. The Colonial Secretary has given us such a full and detailed account of the circumstances surrounding each railway, and knowing all that country as I do, having spent my youth there, all I say is that the demands of the people are reasonable. We have in these localities intelligent people, full of ambition, who believe in the State and who are making comfortable homes for themselves. These people are not doing that on fee simple

lands but on lands upon which the State has to collect at least 10s. an acre. In helping the people we help the State.

HON. G. RANDELL: How many of the 4,500,000 acres are there within 15 miles of the railway line?

HON. C. A. PIESSE: I trust the reasonable requests of the people living within the vicinity of these lines will be granted by members.

SIR E. WITTENOOM (North): After listening to the speeches of the Colonial Secretary and Mr. Piesse, I think the members of this House present themselves as objects of sympathy to the whole of the people of Western Australia. We find ourselves placed in the unfortunate position of having to consider three most important Bills for the expenditure of £120,000, and we are asked to consider them in something like half an hour. The Leader of the House has been good enough to say that he has in his hands a large amount of information that is available for members if they like to look at it. What is the use of that? We have half-an-hour to consider three Bills. There is an immense amount of information contained in the papers, but it will take hours to look through those papers, yet we are asked to pass these Bills without obtaining this information. Members of the House are in an unfortunate position, for if they do not pass these Bills they will be blamed for blocking the progress of the country. The Government will say they are trying to do all they can for the State, but the Legislative Council are blocking its progress. We members are entitled to the sympathy of all the thinking people of Western Australia in these circumstances. I am prepared to admit all that has been said in favour of the railways, and I am prepared to listen to the pathetic appeal which has fallen from Mr. Piesse, also the impassioned remarks from the Leader of the House as to the desirability of developing the country. Yet whilst we are all prepared to develop the land and the settlement of the land—no one can blame me during my public career for stopping the progress of Western Australia—we have a duty to conserve the interests of the State. We know from experience in other places, the initiation of spur lines and similar lines of railway has been attended by a great

deal of failure. Whilst I am not prepared to say the circumstances would not be different in this case, and probably lead to success, at the same time I think we are entitled to have sufficient time to consider the Bills before we pass them. It is naturally a popular policy for the Government to bring forward, a policy to assist the people on the land. A great deal of fault will be found with members of the Legislative Council if in our wisdom we do not see fit to pass these Bills after half an hour's consideration. Whilst we admit all the arguments, we should see that these lines have a probability of paying, for the reason that they have to be built from money borrowed from people in England, and one of the conditions attendant on the borrowing of money is that it be spent on reproductive works. That is a position that I am sorry to say is not as carefully considered as it should be.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It is not a condition of borrowing.

SIR E. WITTENOOM: It is a condition.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It is very desirable.

SIR E. WITTENOOM: When the issue is sent out it is said that the money is to be spent on reproductive works, and in the schedule are the works on which the money is to be spent; therefore I say if you spend the money on any but reproductive works you are causing a breach of the agreement. While not in any way opposing the railways, we have a duty to perform in seeing that they have a probability of paying. I contend that the Colonial Secretary and Mr. Piesse have given us no figures to show whether these lines have a probability of paying or not. We have no estimate as to the amount of freight or goods to be carried, and nothing as to the cost of working.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: We have the experience of other railways.

SIR E. WITTENOOM: We have the experience of railways in Victoria.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Much better, on the spot.

SIR E. WITTENOOM: If the hon. member had been here just now instead of being away from his duties he would have heard that I was not opposed to the railways, but that I want to see there is a probability of their paying.

I admit there is a desirability for them and that they would be most useful in the development of the land, which is held with satisfaction by farmers in the vicinity. At the same time it is the duty of Parliament to see that these lines are made to pay. We hear a great deal in many directions of the indirect advantages attending Government affairs. But there are many things which do not pay. We have been told to look at the indirect advantages. But there are too many indirect advantages in connection with departments in Western Australia, and it is time that when we borrowed money we saw the works would pay. I could instance two or three ways in which money is spent from which we get no profit. There are the Police, Education, and Justice departments—these do not pay. It is to keep the Government in a straight line that I ask members to pause before voting for the works. It is a moot point amongst experts whether spur lines pay or whether they ever will pay. Governments as a rule in most countries—I do not know whether it is any different here—will not descend to cheap lines. Cheap lines will not last and they do not pay, and as to pioneer lines experts are entirely opposed to them.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The 80 miles of railway are to cost £136,000, and £24,000 is for rolling-stock.

SIR E. WITTENOOM: It is a matter requiring very careful consideration, and we should have time to consider the disposal of this £136,000, for we do not know if the lines will pay. I consider good roads are better than spur railways, and good roads are less expensive. The upkeep of a railway is the cost. I should like to hear a little more as to whether the lines will pay, and also as to their desirability. We all would like to see railways wherever there is settlement. There is no better way of conveying freight and goods and produce to market. At the same time we must conserve the interests of the country and not go in for a large expenditure with the prospect of losing money. With a little more information on the points which I have touched upon, I shall be prepared to support the second reading.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER (East): I congratulate the Government on having

brought forward these three Bills, and I think they have been before the country so long that everyone is convinced of the importance of the lines. The land along the line from Katanning to Kojonup is blessed with a plentiful rainfall; it is good country and I know the line will pay well. I regret the time is so brief that members cannot talk about the lines, but I am sure it will be advantageous to build this line as well as the line from Wagin to Dumbleyung, where we know there is great settlement. It is unreasonable not to consider those persons already settled on the soil. We all know that agriculture cannot possibly be made to pay unless people have railway transit; therefore railways should be carried to every locality where there is sufficient land to justify the construction of a railway. After all, the cost of the construction of a railway is very little more than the cost of a macadamised road. And it is more costly to keep a macadamised road in repair than it is a railway. Therefore I shall always be in favour of railways to localities where sufficient produce can be grown. I think it is only fair to the Government to give them credit for having prepared all the information they can, and I think the department deserve credit for the report, which shows an immense area of land still open for selection. That ought to open the eyes of members to the importance of getting the land selected and occupied as soon as possible, and assist those already on the soil. How can a man make anything out of growing corn when he is situated 20 or 30 miles from a railway? He cannot do it. If we wish to encourage people to select land, we must give them railway transit, and I hope members will see the necessity of doing so. If members will not give the lines their support they will not give general satisfaction to the country.

HON. W. MALEY (South-East): It is not my intention to detain the House at any length, but I may say, like Sir E. Wittenoom, we are objects of sympathy. As a representative of the South-East Province I claim to be an object of sympathy. We are not given permission to make remarks that are necessary on such a great proposition and on which such momentous issues to the State hang. I trust that while Sir E. Wittenoom and

others give us their sympathy they will assist us in our earnest endeavours to get these projects passed into law, and thus give the settlers the advantage of railway carriage. If not, I am afraid we may be objects of derision. These measures have passed members of the Assembly who are fresh from the ranks of the people with a mandate to do their duty to the settlers of the country; and if we reject the Bills we shall place ourselves in such a position that we cannot be in many respects or in any great degree but objects of derision. These are strong words to use, but I use them advisedly. As members have asked for information I will endeavour to supply them with some in regard to the construction and maintenance of the proposed railways. The estimate given by Mr. T. Smith is that light railways can be constructed for £650 per mile, while the estimate given by the engineers for the Government is £1,100 a mile, of which I have the details in my possession. The cost of maintenance is set down at £1,200 per annum on a 30-mile line, and the total cost, including interest on 30 miles, is £4,000 per annum. That is a small matter for the country to make up. I am satisfied the direct profit will give that return and the indirect profit will be incalculable. There is the indirect profit of the sale of town and country lands. I commend the Government for going out of their way to reserve land, not along the railway line, for in some instances the land along the proposed route is settled, but the Government are making reservations beyond the termini of the railways. The question is whether these spur lines compare with spur lines in a country like Victoria. I say they do not. If we were to take a trunk line from Victoria and place it in the State of Western Australia, it would simply be as a spur line. You can make no comparison of the value of the spur line to the country. In Western Australia the space is practically limitless. The carriage from Kojonup is 260 miles, and goods can be carted in from beyond Kojonup and conveyed 30 miles to the Great Southern line. Look at the advantage to the Great Southern line of the additional traffic over 235 miles in addition to the 30 miles of spur line. We have to pay in this State 5s. more

per 100 tons per mile than people have to pay in New South Wales. We have here a very payable proposition, and unless settlement is pushed out into the country, unless the waste lands of the country are settled, we have enemies that will do us a great injury. We have it reported in this morning's newspaper that the rabbits are getting over the fence and coming into the settled districts. We have put up two fences already, and they will not keep the rabbits back. Are we to leave the country without railways and hand over this State as the Eucla country has been handed over, to the rabbits? That has been due to the dilatoriness of previous Governments and the dilatoriness of members who are not long-sighted enough to see that something must be done to deal with the pest. I take it that Sir Edward Wittenoom, in questioning the advantage of railways over roads, unfortunately does not know how the roads are kept. It takes up the whole of a settler's time in carting stuff to market, and time is money to settlers. I think Sir Edward Wittenoom is engaged in pastoral pursuits or agricultural pursuits, and no one engaged in agricultural pursuits can deny that the settler who has no conveniences to reach a market is at a great disadvantage and cannot compete with other settlers, even at the same distance from a market. I hope members who are not inclined to vote with us will not vote against us, but rather retire from the Chamber, unless they are convinced they should oppose the measures. As far as I am concerned, I leave to the fairness of the House the question of these railways.

HON. W. T. LOTON (East): It usually falls to the lot of members in this place on the last day of the session, or the last day but one, to receive important measures; but I do not know that it has ever been attempted to place measures before us of such importance at so late a period. We have four Bills—three railway Bills and another—and we have barely time to read them through. The Minister who has introduced them, I am bound to say, has given us the only information at his disposal, and the question now before us is whether we shall adopt the policy of the Government, that is to say adopt the policy of constructing certain spur lines of railway, on

the spur of the moment, in a short space of time, within an hour or so, or whether we shall defer their consideration—failing fair consideration of the projects—for the short period of four or five months. It seems to me it would be desirable in the interests of the country to defer the consideration of these matters for four or five months. I cannot see that the people already settled in these particular districts or who intend to settle will have any real cause of complaint. Although we have a spur line at the present time, this is practically a farther departure with regard to the construction of railways for another 70 or 80 miles. This Bill before us proposes to deal with the Katanning-Kojonup line, which of the three projects is the most desirable to be dealt with first, for in that district there is a very good climate and very good land; but it is a question whether we should not continue the South-Western Railway from somewhere this side of Bridgetown in the direction of Albany. Has this ever been considered by the Government?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

HON. W. T. LOTON: I do not know whether this House has had an opportunity of considering it. At any rate, the public have not. It seems that a very large portion of land will be opened up by the continuation of the South-Western line, I do not say from Bridgetown, but from the nearest point from that in the direction of Kojonup. The extension of that line would not need more than about 60 miles of railway. Nearly the whole of the land that this spur line will open up would be opened up by the construction of a line from the South-Western Railway to Kojonup.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It would cost more to open the country up that way.

HON. W. T. LOTON: Such a line would open up the country and enable the producers in the settled country to get to the markets of Fremantle and Perth by a less distance of about 50 miles. I am not arguing in favour of this particular line, because I do not know that it has been considered, but we shall have to consider whether or not we shall extend the South-Western Railway in the direction of Albany. If that be done there will be no necessity to have a

spur line between the Great Southern and South-Western lines. Whatever advantage the State is to get from the extension of railways or the building of these spur lines, members must give full consideration to the details before voting for the expenditure of this money. There is another point in connection with the construction of these spur lines. The Commissioner of Railways is entirely opposed to spur railways, for he says they cost more to work and manage than loop lines do and they do not serve people so well. If the cost of management is more when the lines are opened up it will be a serious blot on the construction. Is no attention to be paid to the advice and opinions of the managers of our railways? Are they deserving of no confidence? Does the Minister for Works propose to take charge of the new railways and are we to have a dual control? If so, it will need an extra staff. We know what the trouble is with the privately owned railway—the Midland Railway—and if we are to have another system, as it were, there will be farther trouble. Regarding the whole of these lines, my view is that I have not enough detailed information to enable me to give a sound vote. My view is that the whole three Bills should be deferred for farther consideration. These spur lines are to cost practically about £136,000. I notice that the Minister said the spending of this £136,000, money already borrowed, was a mere bagatelle.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not remember using that expression.

HON. W. T. LOTON: He is so reported. I refer to the Minister for Works. One-sixth of a million is a mere bagatelle! And if it should happen that the whole undertaking was a failure, the Minister says it does not much matter. Is that how a Minister of the Crown looks at the spending of £136,000 of borrowed money?

HON. C. A. PIESSE: The undertaking cannot be a failure.

HON. W. T. LOTON: All railways are not successful. I am quite in accord with every member of the House in favour of opening up and developing the country. We must do it by railways. But it does not follow that members of this House, who are here to express their

views, should come to a conclusion on matters of this kind within an hour from the time when the proposals are placed before us. What damage will be done by waiting for five months? No damage whatever.

HON. M. L. MOSS: We have now been waiting for 18 months.

HON. W. T. LOTON: We have been waiting 18 years for many things, and shall have to wait 18 months for these. What provision is made on the Estimates before us for the construction of these lines? Only £5,000.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Detailed surveys have to be made.

HON. W. T. LOTON: So the Government are labouring this question. They are providing on the Loan Estimates a magnificent sum of £5,000 to spend between this and next year, on three spur lines. If that is the whole of the work they propose to do—

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: We have that done. Let us make the detailed surveys, and the thing is settled.

HON. W. T. LOTON: The Minister has given us some information regarding the rainfall east of Wagin—15 inches. Will he tell the House over how many years the observations extend, and whether that average is for Wagin or for 45 miles east of Wagin—the extent of country this railway is to serve? We do not get an average rainfall of 15 inches even in the valley of the Avon. But that country east of Wagin has been occupied by kangaroos and emus.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The rainfall record has been kept for eight years.

HON. W. T. LOTON: Perhaps the Minister does not know that we get barely an average of 15 inches through the valley of the Avon, on the river.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The rainfall record has been kept by Messrs Warren Bros., at a point some 35 to 40 miles east of the Canning, for the last 8 or 10 years; and the average is 15 inches.

HON. W. T. LOTON: I have no intention of talking out this Bill; but I believe that farther time should be given for considering these railway projects. I venture to say that the country will benefit if we do not pass these Bills to-day.

HON. S. J. HAYNES (South-East): In view of the time fixed for the prorogation, I think that unless my remarks are very short I shall be antagonistic to the Bills before the House. I trust that the House will support them. I admit that the time at the disposal of members for considering the Bills is ridiculously short; nevertheless these projects have been for many months before the country. Valuable information has been given us to-day by the Colonial Secretary, and by my colleagues Messrs. Piessé and Maley; and there is a valuable object-lesson in the map on the wall. When anything like reasonable propositions for agricultural lines can be put before me, whether for lines in the South-East Province or elsewhere, I will support them; because agricultural lines will tend to make profitable that which is at present unprofitable, and will tend to satisfy the cry for population to be settled on the soil. I am quite in accord with Mr. Loton's remarks with respect to the proposed line *via* Bridgetown to Albany. That has been mooted before, and it was supported from Sir John Forrest's time onward. I admit that such a line is warranted. But in that district, and in many other districts in this State, are plenty of objects on which expenditure is warranted. The difficulty is to find the money. Having regard to the clock, I will not occupy more time. From my personal observation I am satisfied that the line from Katanning to Kojonup is well warranted, and should pay. Of the routes of the other lines I have not had an opportunity for personal inspection; but from my experience in the Eastern States my preference is for loop lines rather than spur lines. At the same time I recognise that these spur lines will open up valuable land, and will tend to settle people on the soil. And with respect to the losses incurred by spur lines in the Eastern States, I have no doubt that the Government have considered the circumstances of the proposed lines, and that the results will not be disastrous. One of the lines, at least, can be turned ultimately into a trunk or a loop line. At the same time my preference, I candidly admit, is for loop lines, which I think would better serve the country, and would open up a larger area for selection. However, spur lines are part of the policy

of the Government; and though there is great reason in the arguments of members, I trust that the Bills will be supported with a view to settling people on the soil. To induce population of a farming type is one of the planks of the Government policy. Then there must be lines provided for that population, and lands in proximity to a railway. The amount on the Estimates is very small, being a provision for a survey. We shall have the details in five months; whereas, by postponing the project for five months, we shall postpone the agricultural lines for 12 months.

MEMBER: The money is not yet borrowed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: We have it in hand.

HON. S. J. HAYNES: I trust that the Government will succeed, by careful administration, in handling the money when the time comes for its expenditure.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): As every moment that goes by furnishes an additional argument against passing these Bills or any of them in the present session, I will not add to the weight of opposition by making an unfair use of the time. I shall be as brief as is consistent with an explanation of the position I take up with respect to the three Bills. I do not believe that anybody in this State can charge me with being antagonistic to the scheme. I remember the day when the Goldfields Water Scheme, with which it is one of my proudest boasts to have been associated, was championed by only three or four persons in this State; and nothing but the undaunted and unremitting efforts of those three or four could have made it successful. A little farther back, during the first months of Sir John Forrest's term of office, he brought before the Chamber a policy of the most far-reaching obligations, which staggered members of this House and members of another place, but was nevertheless to a great extent the foundation of the prosperity of Western Australia. But what I do complain of is that we are about to decide off-hand a scheme which, when regarded in all its bearings, in its future as well as in its present effects, is infinitely the most important constructive scheme brought before this House since the days when the Goldfields Water

Scheme was adopted, though I admit that Federation was a larger question.

HON. M. L. MOSS: And more unfortunate.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The hon. member has changed his opinion on that point. But when a measure of this kind, which is transcendently more important than any other construction measure which has for years been placed before us, is brought up, not in the closing days but in the closing hours of the session, it behoves members to consider very seriously whether by a rush vote they should give effect to a scheme which at a later date may be fraught with disaster.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It has been before the country for 18 months.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: What has been before the country?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The discussion of these three lines.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: No. I take entire exception to that statement. What has been before the country is the choice of five lines on the west side and five lines on the east side of the Great Southern Railway: the question of the junction of the Eastern Railway with Goomalling, and the extension of that spur line, but in a direction, we understood, towards Cue; the extension of the Eastern Railway, extensions of the Government Northern Railway and of the South-Western Railway—probably in all 20 projects. But no particular discussion or examination of any of these has taken place; and that statement I defy Ministers to contradict, not by interjections, but by quoting facts.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I have heard it said that you never read the *West Australian*.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Sometimes I read it; but so large a number of other persons read it that I can always pick up, by conversation, a good knowledge of its contents. If only for my own protection, and for the sake of future administration, I would point out that when we consider all that is involved in these Bills, it is not fair or just to the position of this House as a House of examination and review, to ask it to accept a principle of an absolutely novel character in the few minutes left at members' disposal. I have heard many members rise in this House and protest against their being asked to adopt resolutions

or to take certain action which negative the principle that this House is bound, without consideration of districts, to consider the interests of the State as a whole. To bring up these three measures, with a number of covert threats behind them that we shall be throwing the country back for a twelve-month, that we shall be interfering with agricultural progress, that another place has adopted the Bills by large majorities, that if we reject them we shall be retarding the progress of the State in every direction—I say that is not justifiable on the part of the Government or of any other body of men; and I cannot conceive anything in this half-digested policy to warrant this House forgetting the position it should occupy in the Constitution, as the last court of review, which should give to this and other measures its full and impartial attention with a view to ascertaining what is warranted by the interest of the country. From every point of view this constitutes a new departure, which should have taken not minutes of deliberation in this House but days and possibly weeks. The scheme should have been put before the country, so that it could be canvassed thoroughly in the Press, on the platform, and in private circles. Instead of that, these Bills were not heard of till three days ago. No one in this House, except Ministers, could have known what were the Government intentions regarding spur lines or any other lines. Such are a few of the features that characterise this novel mode of action. By adopting these Bills we commit ourselves to one side of a highly debated question—whether a loop-line system or a spur-line system, or some combination of the two, is the most advantageous.

HON. M. L. MOSS: These will ultimately be utilised as loop lines.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I cannot understand how this can be used as a junction line. I have very little hope indeed of the lines being continued. We have had experience of promises of extension in that very neighbourhood, which promises have not yet been performed. Of course, these lines will have to be given a fair test. If they fail to carry out their purposes, then these are the last of the lines of this class that we shall probably see in this State. Not

only have we that big question to decide; we have also to decide the primary question of whether the light line of what I may call the Hedges or the Teesdale Smith type is the most advantageous, or the line of the Engineer-in-Chief, or the line advocated by the Commissioner of Railways, Mr. George. All those matters should be fully discussed here; and I take leave to ask this House whether there has fallen from the Colonial Secretary one single sentence which throws any light upon these matters, or holds out any indication whatever of the Government view on these questions, and how that view has been arrived at. Then we have the question of cost. How is it possible to suppose that this House can deal with such a question as the cost of this line on the details given by the Colonial Secretary? He has entirely avoided that aspect of the case. He has told us that he is relying upon the estimate of the Engineer-in-Chief; an estimate that has been examined and condemned in some of the most reliable professional quarters in this State. And the Minister has not told us what has to be done with the railways after construction. I understand that if the lines are constructed, they will not be handed over to the Commissioner of Railways; and I earnestly hope that the statement will prove true, that some other person will be put in authority over these lines. Otherwise, we shall see an approximation to the standard of the Government railways, instead of the light developmental lines essential to this State. A few days ago the Premier received a deputation at which I was present; and I can vouch for the attitude and demeanour of the Premier, as well as for his words, when he said: "The policy of the Government is that these light lines should pay, not indirectly only, but directly. That is a condition precedent to those lines." The Premier seems to have been overruled by some powerful voices in his Cabinet; for assuredly the Bills that have come before us cannot be said in any manner to bear out that understanding of Mr. Rason's. But I complain that, notwithstanding this direction of the Premier, given solemnly and soberly to a deputation, and the words duly reported, the Colonial Secretary should have made no attempt

whatever to show whether these lines will be profitable. After all, the whole project hinges on that question. Whatever the views of the Government may be, the question comes back to this: will these lines be found profitable? If they are successes, we may see spur lines extended in all directions. But what we do want is a system, a general policy, applicable not to three points on the Great Southern Railway, but to this whole State of a million square miles. We want a policy which will embrace every district capable of agricultural settlement. If these lines be failures, I can congratulate my friends who represent the South-East Province on their having the only three spur lines that will be constructed. If these are failures, I am quite certain that no others will be constructed in the future; because the Consolidated Revenue Fund is becoming reduced, and the demands upon it are becoming heavier every year. We shall find it unequal to the demand of paying interest and sinking fund and the best share of the working expenses.

HON. C. A. PRESSE: We can pay for everyone of them, as the land is undoubtedly valuable.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Paying from the proceeds of the sale of land—undoubtedly that is another feature, and one that has received much consideration, on which there has also been much correspondence in the Press. I hope that feature will be taken up by the Government, but the Colonial Secretary has made no reference to any expedient of the kind.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have stated the area of land available.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The point is, are you going to earmark the money received from the sales of these lands to pay for the construction of these railways? If you do, you provide us with a way out of the main difficulty as to where the money is to come from to build the railways and afterwards to finance them. I say the land will be settled, I do not say without railways, because the day may come when even railways will be antiquated institutions, something else taking their place; but I say the problem of the State is to bring all the settlers within reach of the market to

such an extent that everyone outside 15 miles of the existing lines will obtain some means of carriage. That is the principle that underlies this whole question, and we could have spent days discussing that point alone, but it is thrust aside and hardly touched on at all by the Colonial Secretary. Now that all the gold-fields seem to have reached their farthest maximum, and there seems to be a small decline, the nearest boom and the one I am waiting for is the settlement of agriculture. But the question is whether we shall do more to retard the prosperity of the people and the business of railway communication by providing three lines that are doomed to failure from the start, for if they are failures they ruin almost entirely the hopes of opening up millions of acres. The bringing up of this question in these closing minutes of the session is not warranted or justified by any conceivable benefit. If something can be done to secure a portion of the land revenue created by the extension of the spur line, then we are in a different position altogether. But the major question is the proceeds from the extension of the railway system of the State. What profit does the Government expect from these spur lines? Do they expect any profit at all? Are they prepared to face a deficit year by year, the revenue not being sufficient to cover the working expenses, leaving all other charges against the consolidated revenue? The minister has not uttered a syllable as to whether he expects to get any profit or return. But the returns will not be sufficient to pay working expenses. There is the responsibility that rests on this House to take such steps as to insure the ample discussion of these measures, and to impress on the Government the absolute necessity of bringing down these measures at a much earlier period of the session so as to enable proper discussion to take place. For my part, I shall vote in the interests of economy and agriculture, in the interests of this House, against these propositions. Not with a view of destroying them, but with a view of postponing them for four months and a-half, by which time the House will again be in session. I hope the House will take that view of the matter.

HON G. RANDELL (Metropolitan) :
I move that the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	8
Noes	14

Majority against ... 6

AYES.	NOES.
Hon. H. Briggs	Hon. T. F. O. Brimago
Hon. J. W. Hackett	Hon. J. D. Connolly
Hon. W. T. Loton	Hon. V. Hammersley
Hon. E. McLarty	Hon. S. J. Haynes
Hon. G. Randell	Hon. W. Kingsmill
Hon. J. A. Thomson	Hon. Z. Lane
Hon. Sir E. Wittenoom	Hon. J. W. Langsford
Hon. R. F. Sholl (Teller).	Hon. W. Muley
	Hon. R. D. McKenzie
	Hon. M. L. Moss
	Hon. W. Oats
	Hon. C. A. Piesse
	Hon. C. Sommers
	Hon. C. E. Dempster (Teller.)

Motion thus negatived.

Question (second reading) put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE, ETC.

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

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, That the Bill be read a third time.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY moved an amendment, "That the third reading be postponed until after the consideration of the other two Railway Bills."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY did not object.

Motion passed (the third reading passed later).

At 1.15 p.m., the PRESIDENT left the Chair.

At 1.45, Chair resumed.

BILL—GOOMALLING-DOWERIN RAILWAY.

AGRICULTURAL SPUR LINE.

Received from the Legislative Assembly and read a first time.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill) : In moving the second reading of this Bill, I will do so purely formally, as I explained to members on the second reading of the Kojonup Bill. I have already given members the information which I have at my command with regard to the class of country this railway is about to pass through, the number of settlers located

thereon, the amount of land available for selection, the amount of land already settled, and the rainfall. [Interjection by HON. G. RANDELL.] The Government are not aware of any difference of opinion as to the route, except that some people think it should turn southward instead of north; but given the northerly direction, I do not think there is any difference of opinion as to the route. Members will find the line delineated on the plan.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE, ETC.

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

Read a third time, and *passed*.

BILL—WAGIN-DUMBLEYUNG RAILWAY.

AGRICULTURAL SPUR LINE.

Received from the Legislative Assembly and read a first time.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill), in moving the second reading, said: I take it members will not expect me to do other than formally move the second reading of this Bill. I have already given them the information at my command in regard to the country the railway is about to pass through, starting point and terminus, the length of the line, the number of settlers served, the amount of land available for selection, and the class of country the railway will serve. They having had these considerations placed before them, I do not think they will require any farther information; and I therefore move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE, ETC.

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

Read a third time, and *passed*.

BILL—KATANNING-KOJONUP RAILWAY.

THIRD READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill) moved that the Bill (discussed earlier in the sitting) be now read a third time.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East) said he wanted to make a little explanation on account of his having moved the adjournment of the third reading. He would preface his remarks by entering his strong protest, for he might say he was speaking now rather on behalf of the members of the North-East Province and South Province, the Eastern Goldfields members, to save time. The adjournment of the third reading was moved because the second reading had slipped through rather quickly. Those members had not voted against the adjournment with a view to knocking out the Bill by a back-handed blow. They strongly protested against the Government bringing down at the last hour and almost at the last minute of the session three such important Bills containing new principles of railway construction. Those members who protested were in no way prejudiced; and as the second-reading debate proceeded they concluded that, so as not to block settlement, they would support one or perhaps two of those lines, leaving the other one or two lines to be brought in at the beginning of next session. They thought that the Goomalling extension should be proceeded with, because there was already a spur line to Goomalling, and the additional cost of working would not be great. They thought it would be only fair to give the new settlers of whom they had heard an opportunity of settling on the land; and therefore those members would support one line in the Great Southern District. They had not made up their minds which one to support; hence their moving to postpone the third reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY assured the hon. member that no one regretted more than Ministers the need for bringing in these Bills at the tail-end of a session; and the hon. member would realise that this was almost worse for Ministers than for private members.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: Members were not speaking against the Colonial Secretary personally.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY was only explaining the attitude of the Government, who regretted the need for bringing down at the end of the session matters of such importance; but they had to choose between two evils: whether it was better to bring down the Bills

with what he considered sufficient information, although placed somewhat hurriedly before the House, or to hang up the Bills and delay for 12 months the progress of Western Australia. The Government preferred to hurry through the Bills rather than not have the Bills at all; and Ministers shared the regret of the hon. member at their having to appear to treat this House with less consideration than the House deserved. He would endeavour not to offend again in that manner, and assured members that this procedure was far rougher on him than on the House, because he was thereby obliged to acquire much information in an exceedingly short time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time, and *passed*.

APPROPRIATION BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Discussion resumed from the previous day.

SCHEDULE C.—Loan Estimates and Loan Suspense Account:

Vote—*Railways, etc.*, £316,750:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There could now be no objection to passing the item "Agricultural and other Railways, £5,000," nor to reinstating the item "Fremantle Dock and Slip, £5,000," struck out in error owing to an incorrect message received to the effect that the item had been struck out in another place. He presumed that members would have no objection to the reinstatement on recomittal.

Amendment (Mr. Loton's) by leave withdrawn.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: In protesting yesterday against spending loan money on works that were not reproductive and on public buildings, he had stated that the sum in question, £70,000, was much larger than had ever in this country been spent out of loan on public buildings. The Leader of the House stated at the time that £330,000 had been spent out of loan by a previous Administration on public buildings. A return laid on the table of the Assembly by the Treasurer set forth the total amount spent out of loan on public buildings since the foundation of the colony as less than £63,000. The

Colonial Secretary would say there were buildings other than public buildings; but railway buildings were part and parcel of the railways, hence the present Government would in one year spend out of loan on public buildings a greater sum than had been thus spent since the founding of the colony.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The subject started by the hon. member was altogether foreign to the vote under discussion. The return which the hon. member alluded to had been shown to the Treasurer, who said that he (the Colonial Secretary) was perfectly correct in stating that the sum expended out of loan on public buildings, exclusive of railway buildings, was £332,000; and that to get at the true expenditure from loan on public buildings one had to analyse several votes, such as departmental, mining, Department of Agriculture, etc. Thus analysed, the true expenditure from loan to date was, as stated, over £330,000.

Schedule as amended agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

RECOMMITTAL, ETC.

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, Bill recommitted for amendment.

Schedule C (Harbour and River Improvements £84,528) now amended by reinserting the item "Fremantle dock and slip £5,000," erroneously struck out.

Bill reported without amendment (as printed), and the report adopted.

Read a third time, and *passed*.

BILL—METROPOLITAN WATERWORKS ACT AMENDMENT.

EXTENSION OF WATER SUPPLY.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

SECOND READING, ETC.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill) in moving the second reading said: After they hear the explanation I have to make, I scarcely think members will think this Bill is debatable. It is to substantially increase the capital available at the disposal of the Metropolitan Waterworks Board, which now consists of the Minister for Works. The capital now available is £420,000. It is proposed to increase the borrowing powers of the board to

£820,000, for two reasons. In the first place, even minor works are hung up, as shown by the little Bill passed this session to ratify the agreement between the former board and the Mount Lawley Estate, and the board is penalised for the want of ready money. In the second place, with the limited capital at its disposal it is impossible to carry out the larger works for which Perth and its suburbs are crying out; and it was thought advisable by the Government to bring down this Bill to increase the capital, and thus relieve the board of its financial worries so much present with it in the last few years. It is not, as it were, creating a charge on the State of Western Australia, but the charge will be on the localities deriving the benefits from the operations of the board, that is the ratepayers of the district where the water is reticulated will have to bear the charges to be imposed, if any are imposed under this Bill. I do not think it is necessary for me to enter into more than a very short *résumé* of the history of the board.

HON. M. L. MOSS: There is no time now.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Just tell us what you propose to do with this money.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Bill gives power to raise money, but does not raise it. When the money is raised we propose firstly to more thoroughly reticulate the suburbs, and secondly to initiate a scheme in the valley of the Canning River, whereby a largely increased water supply can be assured by the raising of the present Canning weir; and it is the intention of the Government to start with that work as soon as possible. The matter has been gone into fully by the Engineer-in-Chief, who reports that it is practicable. It is not the old Victoria weir; it is a new reservoir. It is interesting to follow the scheme as it has been worked out, taking into consideration the increased supply which will be needed for Perth and the results which the supply of this water in larger quantities will have on the price the public will have to pay. According to a very elaborate and carefully worked out table supplied by the Engineer for Water Supply, in four years from hence, with an increase of population of 3,000 a year for Perth and suburbs, which of

course will be an ever-increasing increase, it is calculated that in 1910 the price of water can be reduced to 11d. per thousand gallons, and in 1912 to 10d. per thousand gallons, until we get to 1921, when it is confidently asserted the price of water will be reduced to 7½d. I do not think that the Engineer recognised in his computations the probable arrival at the vanishing point. Members know I have to be brief, and this is briefly the object of the Bill; not exactly the object of the Bill, but the object of expending the money to be raised if this Bill be passed.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

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

Read a third time, and *passed*.

COMPLIMENTARY REMARKS.

HON. C. SOMMERS (South): Ten members of this House will have to meet their electors soon, and probably some may not be returned. As one of them I desire to express to the House and members my appreciation of the work we have done, and I trust that you, Mr. President, being one of the retiring members, will return to continue the good work you have done. If you are returned, every member will welcome you. I conclude by wishing you a long life and a merry Christmas.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE: As a young member we looked to the President and the Chairman for information, and I tender them by humble thanks for the many kindnesses they have shown to me. I join in wishing you, Mr. President, and members a merry Christmas.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill): May I be allowed, in the concluding minutes of this session for which every member has longed during the last week or more, to thank you, Mr. President, and the officers of the House for the invariable courtesy shown to members; and may I personally be permitted to thank hon. members who have given me such kind, if at times judicious, support. There is one thing I do not think anybody has alluded to, that is the uniformly good attendance we get here. One thing gave me a great deal of

pleasure the week before last, on looking round the Chamber, to find that no less than 29 members were present. With one member away on leave of absence, that makes up the full number of 30. We can always reckon on having an attendance of well over 20, and I think it is a feature we may well be proud of, that in spite of that attendance we find that the *cacothetes loquendi* has not overcome members to such an extent that the progress of business has been hampered in this Chamber. It is a pleasure on all occasions to pilot the business of the Government through this House, and I have again to thank members for their kindness and courtesy towards myself. I thank you, Mr. President, and Mr. Briggs, and I desire to tender to members of the House all the compliments of the season and very many happy returns of the same.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER (East): This may be the last occasion I shall be amongst members. [MEMBERS: No.] I only say I shall be sorry, but if I do not come back I want to express my thanks to members for their kindly feelings towards me. I have to thank the President for his kindness and courtesy towards myself, and I hope he will hold his present position for many long years. I hope the House will always be able to work with that good feeling that has existed in the past. I wish members a happy Christmas and a successful New Year.

HON. J. W. LANGSFORD (Metropolitan-Suburban): I may be permitted to say a few words following on those of Mr. Sommers. The hon. member has spoken with some hesitancy as to whether he will renew that friendship that has existed so long in this House. As far as I am concerned, I do not speak with that hesitancy, for I am convinced the electors will appreciate the good work I have done for them, and that we shall meet again in the course of next session. I have to thank the President for the kindness and courtesy with which he has treated members like myself.

THE PRESIDENT: I thank members for the kindly references they have been pleased to make as to my occupancy of this Chair. It has been said that ten members go out this session by effluxion of time. I am one of these, and whether

I come back to this Chamber or not has to be decided hereafter. Still I recognise the honour which has been conferred on me in electing me President, and I also recognise the uniform courtesy and kindness which I have received at all times at the hands of members. I wish members a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. I trust those members who go for election will come back again.

THE PRESIDENT left the Chair until a few minutes before 3 o'clock.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR entered the Chamber at 3 o'clock, and commanded the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly, who accordingly arrived with their Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER presented the Appropriation Bill, to which His Excellency assented.

HIS EXCELLENCY also gave assent to the following Bills, in addition to four Bills assented to previously:—

"An Act to confirm an Agreement between the Metropolitan Water Works Board and the Proprietors of the Mount Lawley Estate and to amend the Water Works Act, 1889, and for other purposes."

"An Act to further amend the Law relating to Public Elementary Education."

"An Act to amend the Electric Lighting Act, 1892."

"An Act to further amend the Agricultural Bank Act, 1894."

"An Act to enable the purpose of portion of Permanent Reserve No. AΛ 3421, and portion of Permanent Reserve No. AΛ 7403 to be changed."

"An Act to amend the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1904."

"An Act to amend the Jury Act, 1898."

"An Act to amend the Life Assurance Companies Act, 1889."

"An Act for the Prohibition of Secret Commissions and Rebates."

"An Act to provide for the Compilation of Acts of Parliament, with their Amendments."

"An Act for the Closing of certain Roads and Streets, and for other purposes."

"An Act to Amend the Bills of Sale Act, 1899."

"An Act for the Regulation of Fisheries."

"An Act to impose Duties in respect of the takings of Totalisators."

"An Act to further amend the Stamp Act, 1882."

"An Act to further amend the Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act, 1880."

"An Act to further amend the Land Act, 1898."

"An Act to further amend the Fire Brigades Act, 1898."

"An Act to amend an Act to regulate the Establishment of Banking Companies in the Colony of Western Australia, and to enable the proprietors of such Companies to sue and be sued in the name of any one of their Public Officers."

"An Act to further amend the Metropolitan Waterworks Act, 1896."

"An Act to authorise the Construction of a Railway from Wagin to Dumbleyung."

"An Act to authorise the Construction of a Railway from Goomalling to Dowerin."

"An Act to authorise the Construction of a Railway from Katanning to Kojonup."

"An Act to supply a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and from Moneys to the Credit of the General Loan Fund and from the Loan Suspense Account to the Services of the Year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and six, and to appropriate the supplies granted in third Session of Parliament."

Bill reserved for His Majesty's assent, namely:—

"An Act to make provision for the better protection and care of the Aboriginal inhabitants of Western Australia."

PROROGATION.

HIS EXCELLENCY, in closing the session of Parliament, was pleased to speak as follows:—

"MR. PRESIDENT AND HONOURABLE
"GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE
"COUNCIL,—

"MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
"LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

"I have pleasure in releasing you from
"your Parliamentary labours.

"MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
"LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

"I thank you for the liberal provision
"which you have made for the public-
"service.

"My Ministers hope that by careful
"administration with regard to the affairs
"of the Metropolitan, Interior, and
"Northern portions of the State, and
"with the assistance of the extra funds
"which will be placed at their disposal
"by reason of the legislation you have
"passed this session, to more closely
"approximate the Revenue and Expendi-
"ture.

"MR. PRESIDENT AND HONOURABLE
"GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE
"COUNCIL,—

"MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
"LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

"I am pleased to know that you have
"made provision for the protection of,
"and better administration of the laws
"relating to, the original inhabitants of
"this vast portion of the Australian
"Continent, and I sincerely trust that
"the measure which has been passed
"during the present session will prove
"satisfactory alike to the aborigines and
"those with whom they are mostly
"brought into contact.

"Since calling you together on the
"twenty-third day of November, I have
"noticed with great interest the present
"condition of the mining industry, and I
"feel sure that with the application of
"the most modern methods of treatment
"of our auriferous deposits, the liberal-
"ising of the mining laws, and a due
"appreciation of the State battery system,
"many prospectors will be able to work
"their claims with profit to themselves
"and the State, whilst many others will
"be induced to come hither seeking for
"the treasures which the Almighty has
"so bountifully placed at our disposal.

"It is gratifying also to observe that a
"steady stream of desirable settlers con-
"tinues to flow towards our shores,
"attracted by the liberal provisions exist-
"ing for land settlement, and the valu-
"able assistance rendered to *bona fide*
"settlers through the medium of the
"Agricultural Bank.

"The legislation which you have passed
"during this short but trying session
"will, I am assured, be found to be of
"much advantage to the State.

"I now prorogue this Parliament to
"Thursday, the 31st May next."

The session then closed.