

dence would be taken with regard to the land or improvements; the court would be appealed to on the question of damages. It would be ridiculous for an owner to appeal to a court constituted under the Public Works Act against values made under this measure, because this measure would prevail. The Premier said he desired this clause to prevent speculation, but the clause required alteration. Its effect would be as members of the Opposition had pointed out, and the Premier must have known his own intention when he had the clause inserted. It would cost far more than it would save. If the Premier wished to prevent land jobbing the Opposition would help to amend the Public Works Act. If the provisions mentioned by the Premier were to be found in the Public Works Act, the law should have been altered long ago. He would vote against the clause and he hoped that if it was passed the Premier would after further consideration have it recommitted and altered.

Mr. WISDOM: The Premier stated that the valuation laid down by the Valuer General need not be taken by the court but could be altered. The clause was practically a direction to the court that the valuations must be accepted as true and correct on the date they were made. He could not understand how any valuation could be modified or altered by the court. He accepted the Premier's assurance that he desired to be fair, but he was not fair. The State would be given a distinct advantage over the owner and there was no provision to compensate the owner for the advantage. As the Bill allowed the State the privilege of a fresh valuation, would the Premier allow the owner the same privilege? Unless he did so he had no right to claim that he was holding the balance fairly between the State and the land owner.

Mr. Turvey: He gets that right within twelve months.

Mr. WISDOM: But the Valuer General had the right at any time.

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

Ayes	18
Noes	7

Majority for 11

AYES.

Mr. Dwyer	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Foley	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Gill	Mr.
Mr. Lander	Mr.
Mr. Lewis	Mr.
Mr. McDonald	Mr.
Mr. Mullany	Mr. A. Wilson
Mr. Munroe	Mr. Heintzmann
Mr. O'Loughlin	(Teller)
Mr. Price	

NOES.

Mr. Harper	Mr. A. B. Plesse
Mr. Lefroy	Mr.
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Layman
Mr. Mounier	(Teller)

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 42, 43—agreed to.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 1.10 a.m. (Friday).

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 14th October, 1913.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: Annual report of Gaols Department for 1912.

QUESTION—SEWERAGE FILTER BEDS.

Hon. C. SOMMERS (without notice) asked the Colonial Secretary: Has his attention been drawn to the report of the City health officer on the condition of the filter beds in connection with the sewerage system and if so, what action do the Government contemplate taking?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: My attention has not been called to the report, but I will give the matter consideration.

MOTION—MAIN ROADS, CONTROL.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE (South-East) moved—

That in the opinion of this House the greater main roads of the State leading from Perth to Fremantle, Perth to Albany, Perth to Busselton via Bunbury, Perth to Geraldton, and a circular road leading from Perth to Perth, via Toodyay, Northam, and York should be under the direct control of the Public Works Department, and that legislation providing for same is desirable.

He said: Hon. members will observe by the Notice Paper that my motion deals with what I term the greater main roads of the State, the Perth to Fremantle, Perth to Albany, Perth to Busselton via Bunbury, Perth to Geraldton, and a circular road leading from Perth to Perth via Toodyay, Northam and York. As my motion explains, it is my desire to have special legislation brought in to deal with these main roads. There is no better indication of a successful and prosperous community than is afforded by good roads. Most of us who have travelled in other parts of the world will agree that wherever we have found good roads, we have found prosperous people. As far as Western Australia is concerned, we are very much younger as a State than most other countries, but going to the sister State of South Australia we find a better class of road than we are able to boast of in this State. My object is to draw attention to these roads, and I trust that something better will be done for them

in future than has been done in the past. Formerly these roads were the highways of commerce between the various ports and the settlers, and to-day they play a somewhat similar part to a less degree. Most of these roads have been established for fifty years or more. Many of them were put down in the early days, and in my boyhood I was acquainted with them. Most of them have real good foundations. All these roads run in directions which are such that if we were about to lay out similar roads to-morrow, I do not suppose we would alter their routes. They are so favourably situated, and I hold that this State must keep them in existence. As I have already said it is fifty years and over since they were established and a lot of work has been done on these roads. They run parallel to and at convenient distances from our existing railways. Take, for instance, the road from Perth to Albany. We find it running at an average distance of 18 to 20 miles from the railway track throughout the full length of the road. It crosses the railway at Mount Barker, but for a considerable distance it runs parallel to the line and to-day there are what I may term our secondary main roads running from the centres and rising towns on the Great Southern across to this main road and extending for 20 or 30 miles west of it. This goes to show that if anything is done to put these roads in a proper state of repair, they will be greatly used by motor and other traffic between the centres on the Great Southern and Perth. Take the town where I live, Wagin, and the same argument would apply with equal force to Katanning or Narrogin. Wagin is about 140 miles from Perth by this road and to reach it by railway it is necessary to travel 200 miles. In these busy days many people cannot afford to waste time idling in railway carriages and losing four or five hours on the journey to the City, when, with the conveniences they possess in the way of motors, they would be able to save those hours and put them to profitable use. What I have said with regard to this road applies equally to the others. In the case of everyone of them, with the single exception of the road from Perth

to Fremantle, it is possible to travel more quickly by road than by railway. These roads are so well situated and save so many miles of travelling compared with the railways, that the people will continue to use them so long as they are available. They are in existence to-day, and we should do our best to keep them in existence. Our local governing bodies who have to provide the new main roads leading in nearly every instance across the old main roads find the strain of the upkeep of the older ones more than they can afford.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: What about the new roads, for instance, Esperance to Norseman?

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: That is a goldfields way of looking at these things. So far as I can judge, in the minds of some hon. members there is only one place in the State, and that is the goldfields.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Will the hon. member include the Esperance-Norseman road?

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: I am speaking only with regard to these roads of which I have personal knowledge.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: To places already served by railways.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: We must not look at it from that point of view alone. I am dealing with the old main roads of this State which connect with the ports.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: But there are railways which are more necessary.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: That may be, but will we allow good roads to become useless? Will we be too miserable to launch out and spend a few pounds? Roads like these have done good service to the State, and will continue to do good service. To get back to the question to which I was about to refer, the aggregate mileage of these roads is roughly 750 to 800. This, as the Yankees would say, is a tall order. There is no doubt that the upkeep at present is principally borne by the people. The poor pittance given by the Government does not afford much assistance in the direction of maintenance, and the struggling settler is carrying the bulk of the burden of the improvements done on these roads. That should not be so. We

should take steps to provide for the special upkeep of these main roads.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: That would be outside the Perth boundary.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: There should be special conditions. The Perth-Fremantle road would require separate treatment from what I suggest is necessary for the country roads. As regards the Perth-Fremantle road, it would be necessary only to proportion the rates received. Naturally a greater amount of rates would be received per mile of road between Perth and Fremantle than between, say, Geraldton and Greenough, or any two of the localities I have mentioned. I have gone carefully into the matter and I have had long years of experience in road-making, and I estimate that these roads, inclusive of bridges and culverts, represent an expenditure of half a million pounds. Those who have travelled and who know what it costs to construct roads and keep them in order will, I think, arrive at the same conclusion, that these roads, although their present state is not too satisfactory, and in many instances is not safe, represent an expenditure in the past of half a million of money. To put those roads in good order I estimate it would take at least £100,000.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: They all lead to Perth.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: Why should they not?

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Why should we not have concentration?

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: I do not want to take from those people who have been responsible for the development of the goldfields any credit which is due to them, but I do want to look further than Kalgoorlie and Esperance Bay. Of course in a question of this kind, ways and means play an important part, perhaps we might say a most important part. I would suggest, if hon. members see eye to eye with me, that the Government should reserve by Act of Parliament a strip of country five miles wide on either side of these greater main roads, and dedicate the rates collected under the provisions of our Roads Board Act to the special upkeep of these roads, less

one-fourth of the amount so collected, which could be returned to the local governing bodies through whose district they ran, to help them to keep the branch roads in order.

Hon. J. F. Cullen : You will take in a lot of the townships then.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE : The scheme I suggest would go a long way towards paying interest and sinking fund and provide for the maintenance of the roads. The proposal would not add to the burden of the taxpayer one bit more than is imposed on them to-day. At the present time the local bodies in their efforts to attend to the roads leading to their own centres very often neglect the main roads. I might mention particularly the Albany-road, which is going to become a feeder road to the spur railways, and it is only right that it should be kept in order by the Government, and that the local bodies interested should not have to suffer loss of income by having to maintain that road. Therefore, if the Government return to the local bodies the one-fourth to which I have referred, those bodies could keep their branch roads in order. I have not much more to say in regard to the motion. I am not wedded to any particular scheme, but I believe that the idea which I have suggested is a practicable one. The suggestion might be modified or enlarged. The income which would be derived from 6,400 acres, the area represented as embraced by each mile of road, would at three farthings per acre, which is about the present tax, return £20 per mile. Of course my suggestion would not apply to a road like that between Perth and Fremantle. That would require special treatment. We have heard hon. members refer to the condition of that road in connection with the debate on the Traffic Bill, and we heard Mr. Connor's motion on the subject of its disgraceful condition. But, after all, bad as it is, it is only a mere fly in the ointment as compared with the other main roads in the State. We cannot afford to let tourists pass us by when one remembers that a country like New Zealand spends so much out of its annual revenue to encourage tourists to go there, and as

they find that it pays them to do so, it is only reasonable that we should expect our Government to do something of a similar nature. I have not gone too closely into what the actual interest and sinking fund, in connection with the expenditure of the £100,000, would amount to, but I take it that the income of £20 per mile, to which I have referred, would go a long way towards providing that interest and sinking fund.

Hon. J. F. Cullen : Your proposal could not apply to the Perth-Fremantle road.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE : No, I have said that it would require special treatment. I travelled over it myself the other day and I do not wonder that hon. members spoke of it in the manner that they did. It is a poor little thing after all that so many people who live so close together cannot do something to make that road more creditable than it is. It seems to me, however, that it is nobody's road, but it is really about time that something was done to put it in order. It seems that where there are a great number of people living, there we find the worst roads. I submit my motion to hon. members for what it is worth and if it will do no more good, it will certainly draw attention to the necessity for spending more money on the main roads. They all run in good directions, and if we had to construct them again to-morrow I doubt whether we could put them down as they were originally constructed. They have been our main roads since the colony was first established, and were of the greatest service until the railways took a great deal of the traffic off them. They are still, however, of great service and demand our attention. I invite hon. members to discuss my motion in the hope that some good may result from it.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East) : I second the motion, but I would like to make it very clear that my support only goes as far as the actual wording of the motion. I cannot see my way to make the enormous concessions which the hon. member has mentioned. These roads pass through quite a number of townships, and if we conceded five miles on

either side of the main roads we should be handing over, for instance, the whole city of Perth. I tried to get my colleague to make himself clear on that point. His remarks about the five miles on either side were not limited in his speech.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: I intended to do so.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I assume that it was his intention to exclude the towns altogether and to only concede a strip of country five miles on either side of these roads in a country district. However, that is a detail, and I assume he put this in to give more light and debating room to the question. The real question, however, is that the problem of the great trunk roads of the State will have to be faced. I do not think that it is by any means faced in a practical way in the Traffic Bill before the House. As I pointed out when debating that Bill, the little subsidy that has been attached to the main roads under that measure appears to have been put in as a bait purely and simply. It would not necessarily add £1 to the Government assistance to local governing bodies, because their assistance is in the form of a movable feast or rather a contingent feast. If the Treasurer is comfortably off he will furnish more, whereas if he is in straits he will provide less, I mean so far as that assistance takes the shape of grants, and most of the assistance from the Treasury to the local governing bodies is in the form of grants, obtainable by deputation and representation of influential men in each district, and so on, practically a form of political patronage, which is very dangerous, but yet no Government has seen its way to do anything better. My point is that the problem of the great trunk roads has not been practically faced in the Traffic Bill. My colleague's motion is really a demand that this problem should be faced. Of course, I cannot speak as feelingly as the owner of a motor car. I do not know the nature of the roads so thoroughly as any one who has driven over them in an up-to-date motor car, but, leaving that out of the question, the main trunk roads are essential to the development of the country. As Mr. Piesse has pointed out,

nearly all the main trunk roads that are included in his motion are feeder roads to the railways and are important from that point of view. However, good roads are essential, and I hope with my colleague that the discussion on this motion will lead the Government and Parliament to face the problem of our great trunk roads, which are certainly now in a very bad condition. Even though just now I may claim to be a Perth resident, I am not greatly concerned about the immediate surroundings of Perth and Fremantle. Admitting that the road between Perth and Fremantle is one of the worst in the State—

Hon. W. Kingsmill: In the world.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I think that a big city with its very prosperous port of Fremantle might possibly have done more for that road than it has done, and, therefore, I am not much concerned about that particular road. I think it is a little bit of a problem that these two wealthy municipalities need not fear to tackle themselves without calling largely upon the people generally of the State, but the country roads by which Perth and Fremantle are very largely served and developed demand very serious consideration, and I hope that the Government will try to excel previous administrations on this great problem.

Hon. F. CONNOR (North): I intend to support the motion, and before I sit down I shall move a small amendment, which I have no doubt Mr. Piesse will accept. It was my privilege within the last week or two to draw the attention of the House to the state of the road between Perth and Fremantle, and the remarks I then made apply more or less to the roads referred to by the mover of the motion. I was rather astonished to hear the interjection by a goldfields member, that were it not for the goldfields Perth would be a cattle farm. In reply to that interjection, I say it is well that Perth has the goldfields, because if it were not for that we would have had no Mr. Ardagh to grace and adorn this Chamber.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: You would have had no Perth either.

Hon. F. CONNOR: There was a Perth before the hon. member was born, and there will be a Perth after he is dead and forgotten—and regretted.

The PRESIDENT: Perhaps the hon. member will confine his remarks to the motion.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Following on the remarks of Mr. Cullen wherein he said that he does not care much what happens to the roads about the metropolis—

Hon. J. F. Cullen: No; I said I am not anxious about them.

Hon. F. CONNOR: That is practically the same thing. I would like to say I have always been a firm supporter of giving all the help possible to the farming industry, so far as the finances of the State would permit. I was also a good friend of the mining industry in the early days when I was the only direct representative of the miners in the Parliament of the State, and I say it is wrong that members who have sat in this House for many years and supported the requirements of every industry to the best of their ability should have to sit in the House now and listen to remarks, which I think are *infra dig*, in reference to the roads about Perth and Fremantle. Because after all Perth and Fremantle were the places first established, and they have assisted towards the development of the State. Next in importance come the roads or the want of roads in the far north of the State. Those of us who represent that portion of the State—Sir Edward Wittenoom, my colleague, Mr. Pennefather, who unfortunately is not capable of taking his seat in the House, and myself—do not come along and worry the House about what our constituency cannot get because the goldfields has got something, or what the agricultural industry has got which the goldfields have not got. The motion before the House is one that ought to be considered from a national point of view. I agree entirely with Mr. Piesse, and I will vote for the motion. I will go further and consider the road referred to by Mr. Kirwan—I said road—between Kalgoorlie and Esperance. The people down there deserve roads, too, and if the hon. member will move an amendment that that

road be included I will support him. I said “road.” I wish again to draw the attention of the House to the state of the road between Perth and Fremantle. Hon. members know that this road is in a positively disgraceful state.

Hon. J. Cornell: You want a good road to Karrakatta.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I am not in a hurry to get there; neither is the hon. member, because he has too good a billet. The amendment which I shall move refers to the circular drive from Perth via Welshpool, Kalamunda, Guildford, and back to Perth. That is one of the most important works that can be carried out, because while we have tourists coming to the State and an automobile traffic in existence, and while we have the mechanical facilities for showing people the beauties and richness of the country, we yet have no roads. That is one of the most beautiful drives in any part of Australia. In all new countries at the present time it is the object of the rulers, both the Governments and the municipal authorities, to have their wares shown to the best advantage, and to have their beauty spots made available to visitors. I hold that Western Australia is still a new country, and I say it is a standing disgrace that for the sake of making a road over a couple of miles of sand patch, one of the most beautiful drives in Australia is not available to automobile traffic. Application has been made from time to time for that road to be put in proper order, and I saw by the paper that the roads board is to form a deputation to the Minister for Works on the subject, and that the request will be supported by the Automobile Club. If this work is not carried out it will be a disgrace to the Administration. I move an amendment—

That after the word “York” the following words be added:—“Perth via Welshpool, Kalamunda, Guildford, and Perth (circular drive).”

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban): I wish to second and strongly support the amendment. I suppose this might be considered in some respects a sort of academic discussion, but

there are few more practical men in this House than the mover of this motion. Therefore, if he thinks it worth while to take up the time of members in bringing this matter before the House and the country generally, anyone else is fully justified in spending a little time in dealing with the question. I would certainly never lose any opportunity of representing to the Government of the day and Parliament the necessity of good roads to open up this country. As to the different schemes proposed, I am, comparatively speaking, indifferent. I wish to see an experiment made, because I hold that at the present time with regard to the actual mechanical construction of roads we have a great deal to learn in this State. Certainly I have no local feeling on the matter. I travelled over that Esperance road many years ago, and I think it took me about a day to do 15 miles. At any rate, I was a strong supporter of the Esperance road at that time. But let these different projects take their turn. The gold-fields always seem to want to come first. There are other more important roads requiring attention and to them the mover of the motion has called attention. I do not wish to waste too much time in referring to the mover's definite proposal for setting aside a five-miles strip of country in order to supply revenue for the maintenance of the trunk roads, but I see the very great difficulties there are in the way of that proposition.

Hon. C. A. Piesse : I am not wedded to it.

Hon. A. SANDERSON : It may be worth consideration, but we have first of all to consider the actual construction of the roads, then the question of finance, and after that the question of management. It is certainly rather astonishing to see a proposal that these roads should be under the direct control of the Works Department as an experiment. I would like to see an experiment made and my own idea is to have a central roads board looking over the roads of the country to assist the Minister.

Hon. C. A. Piesse : Call it what you like.

Hon. W. Kingsmill : Don't worry about calling it anything; the people will do that.

Hon. A. SANDERSON : I want to strongly support the amendment. I do not attempt to disguise the fact that I am personally interested in the matter. I live in the district referred to, and I have fought for it for the last 17 years. I say now that if it were properly opened up it would be a revelation to the people of Perth and suburbs, both as regards productive capacity and natural beauty.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan : I thought the hon. member said he had no local feeling in the matter.

Hon. A. SANDERSON : Certainly not, but I am prepared to put this road before any impartial committee or board and let the Esperance people put theirs forward, and I do not care what test is taken, whether population, natural beauty, production, or any test Mr. Kirwan likes to make, chain for chain, that road will come a long way before the Esperance road. I certainly have no feeling of hostility to the road of which the hon. member is speaking, because I have such painful recollections of it; but here is a road at the very door of the city which has been crying out for improvement for over 17 years. The Government have given a certain amount of money on the understanding that the Roads Boards will give a certain amount, and then the Government would come again if the work is well done and complete that road. The money spent has been practically thrown away, because no owner of a hired motor car would go over that road unless he was paid extra for it, and no settler will go over it unless he likes to put himself—I will not say in danger—but to the greatest inconvenience and trouble. Pedestrians could not get along that road at the present moment because it is swamp for the couple of miles I have referred to. Only to-day I took some people from the mail boat up to the hills, one of them being from Victoria and the other from New Zealand, and in returning to Perth

we had to go back on our tracks, and everyone will admit what a disappointment that is from the tourists' point of view. People have to make a detour of about 20 miles back on their tracks, whereas they could otherwise reach Perth in seven or eight miles. I address my remarks to the leader of the House, as we recognise what authority he carries, and sincerely trust that the result of this debate will be to make him bring before his colleagues the importance of this road matter. With reference to the Perth-Fremantle-road, I am not aware whether the mover was speaking of the south side of the river or the north side, but I would recommend him to go on the south side of the river, as it is shorter—to get to the Causeway at any rate—and better than the Perth-Fremantle road. On the subject of the Albany road I do not know whether the hon. member was referring to the old Albany road.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: There is only the one Albany road.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I have come by two myself. The hon. member should try the Popanyinning road. The hon. member told us his estimate was that half a million should be spent on these roads, but I would say, at a rough estimate, that it would take a million to put these roads in good order.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: A million!

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Perth to Geraldton is a pretty big contract in itself. Let the Government redeem their promises and put an end to this tomfoolery of a road having a bit missing in the middle. If the Government have time to consider the matter, and I sincerely trust the leader of the House will bring it before his colleagues, I trust that in one part of the country, and that not the least important part, they will put this matter right.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: I accept the amendment.

The PRESIDENT: Then that is the main question before the House.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South): I am sure that every hon. member of this House would like to see all these roads in good order, all of them as level and as hard as

billiard tables, and those of us who can afford the luxury of motor cars would certainly enjoy tremendously all the trips which would be entailed by making these roads, including circular drives around the city, and the occasional tourist who comes along would enjoy them still more. That is an ideal excellent in its way, but personally I have an ideal which I think can be compared favourably with that of the hon. members who have brought this question forward. The Hon. Mr. Sanderson has suggested that this work can be done for £1,000,000. In the present state of the finances I can think of many schemes which, to my mind, would be more advantageous to the State, and for which we could get more value for the expenditure of £1,000,000 than we could by the improvement of roads, every one of which is between places that are already connected by railways. To my mind, if we have any money to spend, there are parts of this State where it could be spent to better advantage. The hon. Mr. Connor, who has spoken, represents a vast portion of this State, the great North, for which we would all delight to see more done than is done at present. I am quite sure the hon. member would find in the North many requirements for which that million might be spent to more advantage. I think that if we are going to spend this money on roads there are a great many roads not in any one part of this State, but in many parts of the State where there are no railway facilities at present, and where there are pioneers and settlers, men on the land, battling hard, who need bridges and roads to bring their produce along to the nearest railway. Surely they are more worthy of consideration than the improvement of roads to places that are already connected by railways.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: I asked for an expenditure of £100,000.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I was referring more particularly to the hon. Mr. Sanderson's estimate, and with all due respect to the hon. Mr. Piesse, I think he will agree when he looks into the vast length of these roads, and knows the condition in which some of them are, that his estimate is very much under the mark,

and possibly it would be found that Mr. Sanderson's estimate is nearer to the mark than that of Mr. Piesse. However, there are hon. members of this House who every now and again get up and refer to the condition of the finances. They refer to the deficit and to the burden of loan money, and now what is this proposal that is brought forward? It is a proposal which one hon. member states will cost £100,000, and another hon. member states will cost a million. Surely if we have that amount of money to spend we can spend it to better advantage than that. There is another aspect of the question. I do not know whether these hon. members are aware of the extent to which commercial motors are being used to-day throughout the world, in competition with railways. In Kalgoorlie within the last few weeks motors have started in competition with the tramways, and have materially reduced the receipts of the tramways. The motors are doing very well, and there are people on the gold-fields who do not know how the matter is going to end. It is certainly a very serious thing for the tramways. These motors are loaded with people, and carry them at the same rate as the tramways. They make, I understand, £4 or £5 a day. The serious question of the competition of motor traffic with railways has to be taken into account in connection with this proposal. If we are going to spend £100,000 or £1,000,000, whichever it be that is recommended, I think we ought to pause to consider whether it will have any effect on the receipts of our railways. There have been some references to a road which my hon. friend, Mr. Ardagh, very pertinently mentioned, the Norseman-Esperance road, which was at once the subject of many jeers in this Chamber. Some hon. members seem to think any reference to the southern portion of this State is only worthy of jeers.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: We were not jeering.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: There were jeers, and there are always jeers when this question is brought forward, but those of us who believe in that country do not mind the jeers, and the time will come

when it will be seen that we have been in the right all along, and not those who have so long blocked that portion of the State, and the progress of the State generally. As regards this motion, I do not suppose it matters very much whether it be carried. I have a great deal of confidence in the present Government, and I am sure they will always treat as it deserves whatever comes with the force and strength of popular will behind it. This is merely an academic discussion, and whether it be carried or not will have no result whatever.

On motion by Hon. W. Patrick debate adjourned.

TRAFFIC BILL.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th October.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew, in reply): It is pleasing to learn from the hon. Mr. Kingsmill that this Bill lacks at least one of the predominating characteristics of the villain of the play, inasmuch as it makes its second appearance before a previously unappreciative audience without a vestige of disguise.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: That is the only difference.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think that fact may be accepted as *prima facie* evidence of its worth. Virtue never practises the arts of deception. It scorns duplicity and asks the world, with all confidence, to take it for the thing it is. Mephistophelean change of attire and aspect are foreign to its nature, and that is the reason why hon. members see before them to-day this Bill adorned with all the graces of that unaffected simplicity which marked and dignified its previous entry to this honourable House. Mr. Kingsmill in the course of his discussion soared into space, and in his lofty aerial flights still saw far above him, towering eminently, Alpine heights and Himalayan steepes to which the Minister for Works aspired to climb. He had a vision, which was a somewhat paradoxical vision, of a member of the lower House occupying a

place a little higher than the angels. I was expecting him all the time to liken the Minister for Works to Lucifer and to quote from *Paradise Lost* where Satan alights on the world's outermost orb and then wanders on and finds a place called the "Limbo of Vanity" and afterwards takes flight to the Gate of Heaven, from which he casts envious eyes on earth and particularly on some famous city. Milton pictures the scene in beautiful and expressive language which should serve all purposes from Mr. Kingsmill's point of view—

Satan from hence now on the lower stair,
That scaled by steps of gold to Heaven's
gate
Looks down with wonder at the sudden
view
Of all this world at once. The spirit malign
With envy seized discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen or some renowned metropolis.

First seen or some renowned metropolis. But possibly the hon. member realised the incongruity of calling to his aid one of the sublimest passages of Milton to bolster up his case for the continued collection of license fees on carts and drays plying between Perth and the suburbs. Mr. Kingsmill expressed indignation because it had been asserted that this House rejected the Bill last session. He said the House did not reject the Bill, that it made amendments which did not affect the principle of the measure. Correctly speaking the House did not kill the Bill; but, to use a somewhat vulgar phrase, there are more ways of killing a dog than choking it with liver.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: I never called the Bill a dog, at all events.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is such a method as breaking its back-bone, and that was the method adopted in the instance under review. The Bill was attacked ferociously from the start, and we got only to Clause 5. Mr. Piesse kicked it, Mr. Cullen cuffed it, and Mr. Sommers did the back-breaking part of the business. The interpretation of agricultural machinery was altered by Mr. Piesse. The power to appoint more than one traffic inspector was refused through

an amendment by Mr. Piesse, and the sub-clause giving the Minister power to appoint licensing officers in the metropolitan area was struck out at the instance of Mr. Sommers. This was a very vital principle of the Bill. It made provision for a fair and equitable distribution of revenue. It was interfered with, and seeing that the Government recognised it as a vital principle of the Bill the measure was withdrawn. Mr. Kingsmill appears to be under the impression that there is animus lurking in some Minister's breast against the Perth municipality. I would like to disabuse his mind of that impression; it is not so.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: I am glad to hear it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: But the Government desire to end all the heart-burnings of the past and to introduce a reasonable system which should be generally acceptable. I have figures which I shall give and which will prove the justification for intervention on the part of the Government. I will quote Victoria Park as an instance, for it is a fair sample of the whole. Victoria Park with 5 miles of main road—being Perth-Albany 3 miles, Guildford-York 1½ miles, and Cannington-Fremantle half a mile—collected £62 5s.; while Perth collected, for motors £712, for carts and carriages £555, for drays £226 10s., for cabs £49 17s. 6d., drivers £101 19s., trams £6 2s., or a total of £1,651 8s. 6d. Mr. Kingsmill said that the vehicles licensed in the suburban municipalities used the Perth roads. But the small amount of licensing fees received by the suburban municipalities is abundant proof that there are very few vehicles in those municipalities. And if there are very few vehicles the roads are not used to a very great extent by those vehicles in those municipalities. Victoria Park has 5 miles of main road to maintain while it gets only 3¾ per cent. of the licensing fees which Perth gets. Perth collects £712 on motor cars. Those motor-cars are used to only a small extent in Perth. Very few people keep motor-cars in order to take them to their offices. The cars are used for trips to the country.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Why, there are 60 motor-cars on the public streets.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: During the course of those trips to the country the roads under the supervision of the suburban municipalities are cut up. Although those motor-cars do so much injury to suburban roads they are all stabled in Perth. They pay their license fees here, and the damage they do is principally to the roads in the country districts. Mr. Kingsmill stated that the City council had never paid anything towards the maintenance of the causeway. I have here a letter from Mr. Harry Brown, who has been connected with the Perth City Council and also with the Perth roads board. This is what Mr. Brown writes to the Under Secretary of Public Works under date September 29 —

Dear Sir,—In reply to your inquiries I beg to inform you that I have been connected with the Perth roads board for the past 20 years. During the earlier portion of that time the causeway was under the jurisdiction of my board, who were assisted by the Government in its maintenance. Some time afterwards it was under the joint control of my board and the Perth city council, and the Government, with the local bodies, contributed to its maintenance.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: It does not appear in the Perth books.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I referred to the close-fisted policy adopted by the Perth city council. Mr. Kingsmill stated that it was a most unhappy allusion. He said that the City council expended on the Mount's Bay-road more than it received in respect to that road. The amount quoted by Mr. Kingsmill for 6 years averages £247 8s. per annum.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: And watering, £250, or a total of £500.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The total sum received in rates by the city council, according to Mr. Kingsmill, is £190. But he forgets that on that £190 it receives a subsidy from the Government of 7s. 6d. in the pound. Then what about a proportion of the licensing fees?

Surely the Mount's Bay-road is entitled to the expenditure of some proportion of those licensing fees.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Add to the expenditure £250 per annum for water.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Swan Brewery Company alone pay £25 10s. in licensing fees, besides their general rates. This would mean rates £190, subsidies £71 5s., fees from the Swan Brewery £25 10s., total £286 15s., or £39 7s. more than they spent on the road, according to Mr. Kingsmill.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: They spend also £250 a year for watering that road. The hon. member has forgotten that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I distinctly remember that, but surely you would not take that into consideration when discussing the question of the maintenance of a road?

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Most undoubtedly.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am very doubtful as to the correctness of the figures submitted by the hon. gentleman. That is to say, £190; for we are told by the Swan Brewery Company that they alone pay £184 10s. per annum in rates. That is by one firm.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: The figures were supplied to me by the town clerk.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is very difficult to know how the £190 is made up, and I would be glad if the hon. member would supply me privately with the details. The statement that the sewerage operations were responsible for the condition of the road will not bear examination. The sewerage extends from Spring-street only a few chains, whereas the length of the road in the council's district is quoted at 215 chains. The sewerage did some damage to this road, undoubtedly, but that damage was repaired by the department.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: The city council say it is not so.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will read a report on the subject from Mr. F. W. Lawson, engineer for the metropolitan area, as follows:—

To say that the bad condition of Mount's Bay-road is due to the sew-

erage work is wrong. We opened a trench 2 feet 3 inches wide from Mill-street to Jacob's Ladder, and this will necessitate road repairs on a strip of 4 feet wide only. This work has been done, but the city engineer asked that a little more blue metal be placed on the road, and his requirements being reasonable, are being carried out. I am in a position to say that the road was in a shocking condition before the sewerage work was put in hand, as I have been along there and I know the condition it was in; but its bad state cannot in any way be put down to our operations.

But it must not be forgotten that the Mount's Bay-road is a trunk road, and is a road used by all living between Perth and Fremantle.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: No, some use King's Park-road.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman implied that the only rates which should be spent on that road are the rates collected from property abutting on the thoroughfare.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: I never said a word of the kind.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Well, that is the conclusion I drew from the hon. gentleman's remarks, namely, that they expend more on the road than they receive in rates from the property.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: The hon. gentleman's draftsmanship is at fault in drawing that conclusion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is the only conclusion to be arrived at when the hon. gentleman quotes £190 as being received, and puts forward a statement showing that £247 has been spent on the road. I contend even more should be spent on that road than is collected in rates from persons owning property in that locality. It is the road that serves Perth and Fremantle. If the principle were acted on that only the amount of rates raised in a locality should be spent in that locality, all the money raised in rates in Hay-street should be spent in Hay-street. That would not be advisable. Is it not more reasonable that the money should be spent in attracting business

to Hay-street, in making the roads to enable the people outside to come to do business in the City? That is the attitude we take up. There was a definite undertaking given in 1906 to maintain this road. Here is a letter from W. E. Bold, town clerk of the city of Perth, to the Under Secretary for Works, dated the 31st October, 1905. It is as follows:—

With reference to your letter of the 18th instant I have the honour by direction to request you to be good enough to convey to the Hon. Minister the thanks of the council for having decided to proceed with the reconstruction of the portion of Mount's Bay-road, between Point Lewis to a few chains beyond the Swan brewery, as shown on litho. submitted to you. The council is prepared to undertake the maintenance and watering of this section as soon as completed by your department, as well as the other portion of the road within the city boundary. It is of course understood that the previous arrangement made with your department under which the Government undertook to maintain and water Mount's Bay-road, south of Point Lewis, upon receipt of the amount of rates and subsidy collected by the council on all properties south of Point Lewis, will thereby be cancelled.

Then there is a letter from Mr. Stronach dated the 26th October, 1906, which says—

Adverting to your letter of the 11th instant relative to the taking over of the Perth-Fremantle-road within the city boundary by your council, I have the honour to advise you that the arrangement proposed by you is agreeable to this department, and that in consideration of your council taking over the full control of the road forthwith the Government will withdraw any claim that they may have had for rates under any previous agreement.

Then a letter of the 12th November, 1906, from W. E. Bold, town clerk of the city of Perth, to the Under Secretary for Works, as follows:—

With reference to your letter of the 26th ultimo, I beg to state that the

council has decided to undertake the maintenance of Mount's Bay-road on the conditions set forth therein.

And not only to maintain but to water it. Mr. Kingsmill states the city council placed £1,639 on last year's estimates for tarring and metalling the road. I am glad to hear it, and the Government will be gladder still when we hear that the money has been expended.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: They are waiting for the Government to build the tram line before starting—the tram line they have promised.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will give the history of the Perth-Fremantle-road in a concise form—

This road was originally constructed by the Government from Government funds, and was maintained at the cost of the Government, who granted various amounts for the purpose. Notwithstanding these facts, in the year 1895-6, the Government had to undertake the reconstruction of the road, and it voted £8,000 for the purpose, and during the following year £21,000 for the purpose. The road was subsequently entrusted to the local authorities again and periodical votes were given to them to maintain the road, but in 1904-5, less than ten years afterwards, the Government had again to reconstruct the road at a cost of £26,000. On the completion of the work the Government created it a Government road under the provisions of the Public Works Act, and maintained the road in proper order themselves. Subsequently the road was handed back to the local authorities and a bonus paid to them for maintaining the road until Parliament decided that the onus of maintaining the road should rest with the local authorities, through whose district it passed, and gave them three years' notice that they intended to discontinue the amounts on a sliding scale so as to give these authorities time to provide against the time when they would have to maintain it themselves. Since the discontinuance of the Government grant apparently very little money has been expended on the main road, consequently it is now found to

be in such a condition that it will practically want reconstructing again, and the estimated cost is as shown in the estimate. As regards the portion of the road between Spring-street and the boundary of the Perth municipality, in 1905 when the Government were reconstructing the road they completed the portion between Spring-street and Point Lewis on the 3rd August, 1906, but before completing the balance of the road from Point Lewis to the boundary just beyond the brewery, some undertaking was requested from the city council that they would maintain this road in order when once it had been reconstructed, and this undertaking was given on the 31st October, 1905. The portion of the road referred to was then completed and handed over to the city council. Notwithstanding this the city council are trying to back down from their undertaking, and the present condition of the road is evidence of the way that authority has carried out its compact. In 1906 the portion of this road within the city municipality was in such a condition as to need some attention, and it was arranged to carry out the necessary works on the road and charge the cost of same to the city council by deducting from them all the rates collected from properties fronting this road, since June, 1905. The council then wrote that if the Government would forego its claim to the rates the council was prepared to take over the maintenance of the road. To this the Government agreed, and wrote them on the 26th October, which was duly acknowledged by the council on the 11th November, 1906.

I have already read that letter—

The nature of the traffic on that road makes it imperative that there should be continuous attention paid by the controlling authority, and if once it is neglected for a short time considerable damage will be done to the road. Various amounts granted to the various local authorities since 1899 for maintenance, etcetera, of this road amount to £5,199 1s. 4d.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: All this because you stated the council was close-fisted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Kingsmill has asked, have the Government ever approached the city council to devise some scheme for the allocation of the fees. It seems to me it is the duty of the council to approach the Government, as the Government are the superior body.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: The council find no fault with things as they are.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If there is to be any approaching, it should be from the city council.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: But they want no change.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Why the complaint then?

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Because the Minister is interfering.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is a complaint that the Government have not approached the city council. If there is any ground for complaint the council are to blame.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: The hon. member again draws a wrong conclusion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: As to the control and supervision of the traffic in the city, the Government have given more assistance than has been recognised. We have six police constables supervising and controlling the traffic.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: That is purely for the protection of the public.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: For the protection of the public, and carrying out duties which are imposed on the city council, and should be carried out at the cost of the taxpayers of the city. The total annual cost in connection with this supervision is £1,254 14s. That does not look as if the Government had any animus towards the city council when they have agreed to continue this further subsidy.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: What about the resumptions—the useless resumptions?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am coming to that now. The hon. member stressed the great loss of taxation by quoting the Federal and State land resumptions. I think there is very little room indeed for sympathy with

Perth when the position comes to be analysed. The resumptions entailed a very severe strain on the Government of the State, and its financial resources were very much affected in consequence. It involved a very considerable loan expenditure, and I fail to see how the city council can ultimately suffer. That land was resumed for some purposes in the interests of Western Australia in general and the city in particular, and the loss of rates through resumptions will not be great because the owners of the land resumed will build elsewhere. They are mostly business people, and it will only mean the change of locality of the business. Mr. Kingsmill also stated that the Swan brewery would be exorbitantly taxed under the Bill. The principle observed in the Bill is to charge licensing fees on a basis of £1 a ton. Motor wagons are charged up to £5 and £1 a ton afterwards. If a farmer owning a light buggy has to pay £1 for that vehicle, surely it is reasonable that £1 a ton should be charged for heavier vehicles. The Swan brewery lorry weighs five tons 11¾ cwt., and the ordinary load for the lorry is four and a half tons, making a total weight of ten tons. This, travelling over the road cuts it up, and it is preposterous to say the company would not be able to run these lorries except at a loss. They will have a big saving in drivers, and it must be recollected also that the Government subsidise pound for pound what the company pays, and that money is spent in further improving the roads, and good roads will mean saving in wear and tear of the vehicles. On one occasion, so the company advised the Government, the Mounts Bay-road was in such a terribly bad condition that the company had to repair it themselves. Everyone knows that these tractors do a considerable amount of injury to the roads. I myself have seen them between Perth and Fremantle tearing up the roads terribly, and it is a fair basis to impose the fees on the principle of weight. There should be no objection to that. The hon. member, Mr. Cullen, tried to kill the Bill with an amusing story. He gave a funny dialogue in which a guileless roads board member ap-

peared to be the unhappy victim of misrepresentation. This member of a roads board was led to believe that the country districts would get all the licensing fees collected in Perth.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Not all. The Minister will spend most of it in expenses.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That was the impression that the roads board member had who interviewed the hon. member. It would be interesting indeed to know the particular roads board which is honoured with the membership of this artless, and I may add, also avaricious gentleman. I suppose this roads board member attended the conference of country roads boards in Perth, and if he did he ought to know this Bill was discussed clause by clause by that conference.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Probably that is where this conversation occurred.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: This roads board member is under the impression that a definite promise was made that the country districts were permitted to grab all the fees. Because the measure does not give all the power desired it is a thing accursed, and this unfortunate roads board member is an unhappy victim of someone whose name has not been mentioned. We are told also that the country Press is making fun of the Government because there is no mention in the Bill about the monetary assistance to local authorities. I presume that the Press was in a humorous mood after hearing the hon. Mr. Cullen's funny story, but if the Press was serious, I will give them a little enlightenment. There is a proper place for everything, and the proper place to make provision for an expenditure of this description is on the Estimates. We should not make every Bill a Supply Bill.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: It was not mentioned in the Bill but only in the circulars from the department.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman also said—

It is incorrect for the Minister to say that the local authorities are in favour of the Bill. They are not in favour of that portion that affects them.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Hear, hear!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: How does the hon. member know that?

Hon. J. F. Cullen: I have had a good opportunity to ascertain.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I prefer to judge these people by their actions at the conference. That is the only means of judging their feelings in respect to this measure. Clause 23 was submitted to the local authorities at the conference and was passed without opposition.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: With acclamation, I should think.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: By way of an interjection the hon. Mr. Cullen stated that the roads boards were getting less in the way of grants now than they were two or three years ago.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: No, some years ago.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is not so. I think the hon. member said they were not getting half as much.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: As some years ago.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is totally at variance with fact. In 1911 they received £30,000 and last year they received £43,000. That is an increase of £13,000.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: What did they get six years ago?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I did not refer to six years ago; I was referring to two or three years ago, and the hon. gentleman, if I remember rightly, interjected that they were not getting half as much now as they were two or three years ago.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Nothing of the sort.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. Mr. Cullen also remarked—

In what shape do the roads boards get grants now? Purely in the form of political patronage.

and the hon. member has repeated that assertion to-day. I was under the impression at first that he did not mean what he said.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: I did not say that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I thought it was a careless slip of the tongue. Does the hon. member say that he did not make that remark? This is a correct note of the hon. gentleman's re-

marks. He said the grants were made purely in the form of political patronage.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: The grants, not the subsidy.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is a well defined basis—

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Mr. President, I rise to a point of order. The Minister must know that there is a clear distinction between subsidies and grants. Grants are lump sums given in response to requests influentially presented by deputation and so on, and wholly depend upon the discretion of the Minister. Subsidies are entirely different and my references were to grants. I do not think the Colonial Secretary wilfully misrepresents me, but the bulk of his speech is a parody of argument and not an answer.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have not misrepresented the hon. gentleman. I have read exactly what he said. His words were—

In what shape do the roads boards get grants now? Purely in the form of political patronage.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: That is grants.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That would give the impression that it is purely in the form of political patronage—

Hon. W. Kingsmill: That is true, is it not?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is a carefully thought out scheme of classification. Prior to 1911 subsidies were granted to roads boards on the general basis of the varying circumstances of each individual board. In 1911 the Hon. Mr. Daglish, Minister for Works of the day, made a promise when the House was passing the general vote for grants to roads boards that he would have some classification adopted for roads board grants, *vide Hansard*, the 18th January, 1911. In pursuance of this, a classification was prepared by dividing the roads boards into six different classes—a, b, c, d, e, f, according to the geographical position and the general purposes for which the lands were held. These classes were graded according to the amounts of rates which could be col-

lected—21 grades—and the general basis of the classification made so much in the pound of rates collected, ranging from 7s. up to 16s. in the pound. At the conference of local governing bodies, called together by the goldfields, held in the Technical school on 17th August, 1911, they requested that a classification should be introduced. An officer of the department was sent with a classification which had already been adopted, with the result that the conference approved of the classification by resolution. Full details of this classification, grading, and other particulars, were published in the Public Works Report for the year 1910-11, and laid on the Table of both Houses; also full particulars of the actual amount of each grant and basis appear in the Public Works Report every year. It does not matter at all what the hon. member meant to say, but it does matter a great deal what his reported remarks convey to the people of this State.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: It matters what the Minister can twist my remarks into.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I want to show that there is some form of making grants other than on the basis of political patronage.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member's remarks will soon be forgotten.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. Mr. Cornell objects to tram drivers' licenses, but I would point out that existing legislation makes provision in this respect. The city council imposes a fee of 1s. on each man and 1s. on each driver and I think that during the year the sum of £6 2s. was collected by this means. The hon. member also objects to a tax on bicycles. In France there is a tax of 2s. 6d. on bicycles. All that will be imposed under this measure is a tax of 1s.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: We are not in France.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. Mr. Piesse raised objection to the licensing of drivers. If the Bill means what the hon. member said it does, there is some ground for his objection, but I contend that the Bill says that the drivers of motors shall be licensed.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: See Clause 26.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman quoted Clause 26. That gives power to make regulations. The regulations in respect to the licensing of drivers would be based on Clause 37. If that is not sufficiently clear I hope the hon. gentleman will move an amendment to place it beyond doubt.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Mines Regulation.

2, District Fire Brigades Act Amendment.

Received from the Legislative Assembly.

Sitting suspended from 6.12 to 7.30 p.m.

BILL—WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th October.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (in reply): The bulk of the criticism of this measure has had no direct bearing on the Bill. It has dealt principally with the administration of the Goldfields Water Supply. Mr. Cullen and Mr. Colebatch alleged that the settlers in the dry areas had been subjected to cruel treatment by the Government, and they were pictured as victims of grinding oppression. There is no warrant at all for these caustic animadversions. The conditions imposed on the settlers are no more burdensome than they express their willingness to accept. The position is that a desperate condition of affairs existed in October 1911, and the water difficulty had at that time reached a very acute stage—disaster was threatening. The Government sought to remove this desperate situation, and decided to throw out 100 miles of extensions, which had previously been hung up, but before taking any action the Government consulted the whole of the settlers who would be affected by the proposed extensions.

These settlers were given clearly to understand that water rates would be imposed. There was no deception on the part of the Government, or, so far as we can discover, on the part of any of the officers of the Government, and now the principal engineers of the department advise that in these dry areas within a certain distance of the 30-inch main, the reticulation of Mundaring water is the cheapest form of supply that can be devised.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: What about the farmers?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: According to the scheme of the Chief Engineer of the Goldfields Water Supply Administration, the actual cost of water from these extensions is 8s. a thousand gallons. Notwithstanding this the Government are supplying it at 6s. a thousand gallons. I may also point out that the scale of rates is calculated to return only sufficient revenue to pay actual local expenses incurred on branch mains, plus the cost of pumping water. It must not be forgotten also that farmers are not loaded with any expense incidental to the 30-inch main, or in connection with the construction of the Mundaring reservoir. These matters might well have been taken into consideration, at any rate to a limited extent, but they were very generously on the part of the Government, left altogether out of the calculation.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: What nonsense; they have paid all the time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There has been no acknowledgment of this generosity either by Mr. Cullen or Mr. Colebatch.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: If this is generosity, what would hard treatment be?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The action of the other settlers who have not been served by the water supply, is the best proof that these rates are not generally regarded as oppressive. The department has received a specially urgent and an almost unanimous petition from an adjacent district, North Baandee, to lay down extensions. The 5d. an acre provided for would not be sufficient to make this extension pay, consequently, before

the Government could undertake the work and make provision, if necessary, for a higher rate, it was essential that there should be a petition, and these people have petitioned knowing full well that their action in that respect gives the Government power to charge them a rate of even more than 5d. per acre. There is now in hand a scheme, due to a request from a majority petition, a scheme for the reticulation of a large and important district north of the railway between Baandee and Merredin. This proposition comprises 117 miles of pipes at an estimated cost of £35,000, that is for reticulation, and there are 134 holdings embracing 135,000 acres which will be served by the supply. Over 70 per cent. of the land owners in that district have petitioned for the extension of the water supply to their district, and the fact that they have so petitioned, as I said before, gives the Government power to increase the rate beyond 5d. per acre annually.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Do they know the cost?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They should have a very fair idea of the cost. I am not, however, in a position to say whether these figures have been presented to them, but at any rate they know what the cost will be to them, and that it may be in excess of 5d. per acre.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Evidently they do not think much of what some hon. members in this House say in warning them.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Before the Government submitted the scheme to the settlers, the department endeavoured to secure cheaper supplies from other sources. The two principal officers got to work and they spent much time in investigating the question, and their report shows that for this particular district the reticulation of Mundaring water and the supply of it at the present rates is the cheapest and the best of all possible methods of obtaining water. That is the pith of the report of the two engineers.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Are these engineers connected with the scheme?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They are connected with the Water Supply Department. Mr. Colebatch remarked that the individuals along the main conduit had not consented to be rated. It is not likely that they would.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: You told the House that everybody who would be rated had consented.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am coming to that. I stated everyone to whom the extensions applied.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: To whom that Bill applied.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is not likely that these people would consent or agree to anything in the nature of an increased contribution. That is totally against human nature. But the settlers along this 30 inch main are less entitled to sympathy than the settlers who are further back. They are in the first place in more prosperous circumstances, they get a more plentiful supply of water, and they get a better pressure at a lower price.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Are they using the water?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The price of the water is only 2s. 6d., as against 6s. to the other settlers.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Are they using it?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I cannot say.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Of course they are not. They had their own supplies before the pipe line was laid.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is no justification so far as I can see for continuing to supply these people on the basis of the totally inadequate return contributed in the past.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: They have never been supplied.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is their own fault.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: They do not want it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: With regard to the alleged understanding with the Government on which the Legislative Council passed the Goldfields Water Supply Amendment Act in 1911, Mr. Colebatch admits that I definitely

stated that within twelve months' time from then, the Government would apply the Bill to all existing lines. There is no dispute about that, because it is clearly shown in *Hansard*, but his quotation of my previous remarks carries no force whatever. Those observations were made by me before I had the opportunity of consulting the Minister for Works. I knew there was a Bill coming down in connection with water supplies in the following year, and I thought there probably would be some clauses in that Bill dealing with the subject about which Mr. Wilding had spoken. I sent to the Legislative Assembly for the Minister for Works, and he came here and told me that this Bill would apply to all existing lines within twelve months.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: And he told you that these people would be rated at only twopence.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: And I told the House, so that there was no deception on my part. I told the House while the Bill was in Committee and while Clause 6 was under consideration, so that if it had been deceived it was then relieved from the deception by me and the Bill could have been thrown out. After Clause 6 was considered Mr. Cullen moved a new clause limiting the operations of the measure, and he used these words:—"After twelve months the Government will have the power to levy all over the supplies, 5d an acre," so that apparently Mr. Cullen was in no way deceived. Consequently I thought it might be expected that the House was fully aware that within twelve months the Government proposed to rate all lands served by the existing lines. With reference to the alleged understanding as to the amount of rate to be charged in respect of land served by the 30 inch main, all the assurances given in this direction I am informed have been reasonably observed. The lands on the existing main west of Northam, including the Beverley and Toodyay extensions, are rated at twopence.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: They are not on the 30 inch main at all.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am going upon information which has

been supplied to me, and I am stating that these people are rated at twopence an acre.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Quite so, but they are not on the 30 inch main at all.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They must be in proximity to it, otherwise the Minister's data is not reliable.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: The promise was that only those on the 30 inch main would be rated.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Nobody has been connected up with the scheme except on a petition sent in by a majority of the property owners.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: The Minister is talking about the pipe line laid down in 1902.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That may be so. I know nothing about the locality at all. I cannot be expected to know every part of Western Australia, and I must rely on the matter submitted to me by the departmental officials. I get piles of matter and I have to take the pith of it and pass it on to members.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: To unappreciative members.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Apparently, to very unappreciative members. In the areas adjacent to the 30 inch main east of Northam the Minister found that the circumstances of the settlers, and the benefits which were being conferred by this scheme, were such that it would be markedly invidious and unfair to charge those people lower rates for a better service than the persons less favourably situated on land more remote from the railway. But it must not be forgotten that there has been no increase in the price per thousand gallons.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: No increase on what?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: On the price per thousand gallons, and in addition to that they can obtain full value for the increased contribution they are making.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: But these people do not use it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is their own fault if they do not use it. It is the same in connection with every water supply. A supply is established in a

town and the whole of the people are rated whose land is situated within a certain distance of the main. I dare say the same principle has been applied in this instance.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: No. The Minister knows that the pipe was laid for the goldfields and not for these people.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I know that was so in the first instance.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: And these people consented as a matter of grace to let it go through their properties.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Reference has been made to the cost of sewerage and house connections, but that has really very little to do with the Bill. The amalgamation of the Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Departments has facilitated the economical carrying out of work. Over 2,000 houses have been connected during the last financial year, which is pretty good evidence of the satisfactory organisation of the department.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: What is the loss per annum on the Goldfields Water Supply; £89,000?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Nothing like that. It was very high during some previous Administrations but has gone down substantially during the last two or three years.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: What are the profits on the Kalgoorlie-Perth railway? Fifty times the loss on the water supply.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: As proof that the administration of the sewerage section of this department is giving satisfaction, I may say that the department is regularly in receipt of applications from householders to make connections.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Under compulsion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not under compulsion. There is no necessity for compulsion at all. They need not apply to the Government. They can make the connections themselves. But there have been repeated applications, and from people who do not wish to take advantage of the deferred terms which the Government offer. Now, why are these applications made? There can be

only one reason: because the parties making the application consider that the work can be more economically done by the Government. A comparison with other Australian capitals shows that the cost of the work is not proportionately greater when the extra cost of labour is taken into consideration. Again, the standard of work is very much higher than it is elsewhere, and there is better work turned out in Perth than in any other portion of Australia. Reference has been made to the cost of connecting individual houses, but that is no criterion. The cost of connecting houses varies in each case. In some instances considerable structural alterations are asked for by the owners, a better service is insisted upon, and high-class material is wanted, and of course the charge is greater.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Is it true that they cannot get detailed accounts?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am not aware of it. Mr. Moss referred to a man having a septic tank being obliged to connect. In any comprehensive scheme of sewerage we cannot allow any exemptions. What control would we have over private septic tanks? If a sewerage system is necessary in the interests of the people, it should be a scheme to take in the whole of the properties and no man should be allowed to run a septic tank in accordance with his own particular ideas. It is also stated that the average cost of cottage connections is £60. From information supplied by the department I find that the average cost is £30. But there may be instances where the cost is £60 or even £100, if the owner of the house desires many structural alterations to be effected, and high-class work to be put in. Mr. Colebatch has announced his intention of moving that Clause 4 be struck out. He wants to wipe this particular Act off the statute-book because he considers that the Act of 1911 has not been satisfactorily administered. The only effect of that will be to bring about chaos and confusion in connection with the administration of this department, and, furthermore, heavy financial loss to the State. I do not think the hon. member is serious, and I do not think the

Legislative Council will go so far as to support him in his motion.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—FREMANTLE IMPROVEMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 9th October.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER (Metropolitan-Suburban): I do not propose to keep hon. members very long in connection with this Bill. I would like to say at the outset that I cordially support the main idea contained in the Bill, namely, the improvement of Fremantle and the relief of pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the main street. For a considerable time, there is no doubt, traffic has been increasing to such an extent that it is absolutely necessary that some relief should be given. I can remember some 15 or 20 years ago suggesting to the council that in order to relieve the traffic in High-street, they should run a street through into Henry-street. If that had been effected considerable relief would have been afforded, but the council did not see their way to adopt the suggestion, apparently because they could not see a sufficient return for the outlay. Now the first thing that strikes me about the Bill is that it has adopted the principle of municipal dealing in land and proposes to stamp the municipality of Fremantle, at any rate, as landlords. I do not like the introduction of that idea, but if the main purpose of the Bill, namely, the resumption of 12 feet of High-street, cannot be effected without doing that, then of course there can be no way out of it. I should have thought, however, that it would have been possible, without resuming all this land, to have resumed six feet on either side. I think that could have been done without the necessity of entering upon this big scheme, because six feet off either side would have enabled the widening of the street to be effected without seriously encroaching on the buildings on both sides of the street. Another point is in connec-

tion with the referendum. I doubt if it is clear that it is a referendum of the whole of the Bill to the ratepayers, and it is not a question merely of borrowing money for the resumption of that strip of land, but a question of borrowing money for the expenditure of anything from £70,000 to £100,000 to enable the municipality to become landowners and run all the attendant risks of land-owning in Fremantle. I think the ordinary ratepayer when this Bill is put before him at the referendum will be inclined to think that all he is asked to vote upon is the question of the resumption of land for widening High-street. In my opinion more than that should be disclosed to the ratepayer, and I hope it will be possible to so put the ballot paper before him that a résumé of the chief provisions of the Bill will be presented to him, so that he may understand at a glance what he is voting for. He should understand that he is not only voting for the expenditure of a large sum of money, but also for the expenditure of an unlimited amount of money. That is a very serious matter to consider. Certainly the council can not borrow any money unless the consent of the Governor-in-Council has first been obtained, but it is not the Governor-in-Council, or the Government, who are concerned in the borrowing of the money, but the people of Fremantle, and I think the people of Fremantle should be distinctly told that this is one of the provisions attaching to this Bill. I hope it will be possible to put some description of the Bill before them when the referendum is taking place. Another important point was called attention to by Mr. Colebatch, and that is the introduction of the principle of one man one vote in connection with the referendum. We find that in Subclause 5 of Clause 4 each ratepayer on the special roll shall be entitled to one vote only and the special roll is a roll of owners or occupiers. I agree with Mr. Colebatch in asking what the object is in departing from the provisions of the Municipalities Act, which provides that on a referendum of the ratepayers for the purpose of borrowing money, the owners' roll used for the election of mayor shall be used. Hon.

members will know that under Section 84 the roll of owners is made up in a special manner, and the owners are entitled to a certain number of votes in proportion to the annual value of their property, up to as many as four. This Bill departs altogether from that principle and gives one man one vote on this question. I say I would like to know the reason for departing from the Municipalities Act in this respect. I find, on looking up various Statutes of a similar nature, the Bunbury Electric Lighting Act of 1911, the Geraldton Gas Supply Act, and the Fremantle Electric Tramways Act, all adopt the principle laid down in the Municipalities Act.

The Colonial Secretary: What about the Perth Gas Company's Act?

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: I am just coming to that. The only measure I can find departing from that principle is the Act of 1910-11 which provided for the taking over as a going concern of the Perth Gas Company's business, and that a referendum was to be called for by 30 ratepayers on the question of whether the money should be borrowed for that purpose or not. On that occasion, I admit, there was a proviso that persons whose names appeared on the special rolls should be entitled to one vote only, but in speaking on the question of the introduction of this Bill I see from *Hansard* of 1910, page 1698, the then Colonial Secretary himself said—

The machinery for having the poll is somewhat different to that prescribed in the Act. Under the Municipal Corporations Act only property owners can vote in objecting to a loan, but a departure is made in this instance in the direction of providing a special roll which will include all occupiers and owners of property within the city area. There is no doubt good reason for adopting the principle in connection with ordinary municipal loans that only owners shall vote, because it is provided that a rate sufficient to earn interest and sinking fund shall be levied, and a direct charge is made on property. Therefore it is a very proper provision in the Act that only owners should vote

in giving the municipality power to borrow.

In this Bill, which adopts various sections from the Municipal Act in connection with the borrowing of money, a special rate will be struck and will be a direct charge on property. Section 450 of the Municipal Act provides—

Whenever any money has been borrowed by any municipality, and so long as any such money remains unpaid, the council, from time to time, shall strike such special rate, not exceeding one shilling and sixpence in the pound, upon the annual value of all rateable land, as the council deem necessary, having regard to the profits, if any, of the undertaking, to enable it to pay the interest on the money borrowed, and also such percentage of the principal sum as is named in the debentures issued to raise such money for the purposes of a sinking fund.

Section 464 provides that the debentures are recoverable against the municipal revenue. It states—

The receiver or receivers appointed shall be entitled—(a) To receive and recover any part of the revenue (whether such part forms portion of the annual ordinary revenue of such municipality or of any special rate levied in respect of any loan as aforesaid) of the municipality that is outstanding at the time of his or their appointment. . . . Or the receiver is entitled to take the whole of the ordinary revenue accruing from this special rate to meet these debentures. Further, if we turn to the form of the debentures at the end of the Act we see the debentures are said there to be chargeable upon the municipal revenue of the municipality and are not otherwise secured. There, as the Colonial Secretary said, the money under those circumstances is chargeable against the revenue of the municipality. If we turn again to the Perth Municipal Gas and Electric Lighting Act we find that there the principal and interest of the debentures were chargeable upon the undertaking, that is the Perth Gas Company's business which the municipality was taking over, and the municipal revenue too. I would like hon. members

to understand that the security for the debenture in that case was a going concern that was being taken over, and again under Section 13 of that Act the special rate there could only be struck in respect of a deficiency over and above the profits from the undertaking which is required to make up the amount of interest and sinking fund. I venture to suggest that there is a considerable difference between that Act and the Bill which we are now considering and the other Acts mentioned, and these different considerations probably weighed with the House when it decided to give only one vote on that occasion and departed from the usual practice of allowing the owner to vote and have his cumulative vote. Undoubtedly the owner is the person interested when a special rate is struck, and if the whole of the municipal revenue is pledged it is the owner who will suffer, as the rate is a charge upon his property, not upon the occupier, and therefore I think there is very good reason for the Colonial Secretary saying what he did, that it is provided that a rate sufficient to meet interest and sinking fund should be levied. I would like to know why we are departing from the ordinary provision under the Municipalities Act whereby a referendum is taken on the vote of the owners. Beyond drawing attention to the points I have, I do not know that I have very much more to say about the Bill. I cordially support the principle contained in it for the betterment of the town of Fremantle, but I will certainly join with other hon. members in opposing such a provision as that taking away the right of the owner to have a say on this referendum.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East): There is just one point of principle which I would like to urge upon the Minister. It is well understood that a great number of members of the Legislature here are in favour of altering the basis of voting under the municipal law. They believe in one man one vote. Of course those who look more deeply into the matter know that those advocates of one man one vote have been misled in this from a superficial consideration of the basis of the franchise in the Electoral Act. They

do not recognise the essential difference between the faculty of an electoral voter and that of a municipal voter, but, even admitting that a great number of members of the Legislature have taken that superficial view, I want to impress upon the Minister that it is not constitutional to try to give effect to that view of theirs by a side wind. If they desire to alter the basis of the municipal franchise the proper way is by an amendment of the municipal law. But to try and bring it into a small measure of this sort, a kind of incidental Bill, to try to slip in a precedent or what will be quoted afterwards as a precedent, is not right.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: They tried it in the Traffic Bill; it is becoming a habit.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: The very fact that the Colonial Secretary quoted just now what looked like a precedent showed what use would be made of this if by any carelessness of this House it were allowed to slip through. The hon. Mr. Gawler has laid the matter clearly before the House, that there was quite a different set of circumstances in connection with the Perth Gas Company Bill, but the fact that the Minister jumps at that as a precedent for this much more serious provision in this Fremantle Improvement Bill shows the danger of slipshod legislation. I hope the Minister will say to his colleagues, "If we want to give effect to our view that the municipal franchise should be one man one vote, let us bring in an amendment of the municipal law." That would be straightforward, but it might easily happen that in this unconstitutional way a very serious precedent might slip through, and might afterwards be quoted as a precedent. I hope the Minister will willingly consent in Committee to such amendments as Mr. Colebatch and Mr. Gawler forecast. I do not think it is probable that there will be a demand for a poll at all in this instance. I think the people of Fremantle will recognise at once that these two streets should be widened, and although many of them would prefer a resumption of only enough land to widen the streets they will not be so critical as to prevent the business proposition that is embodied in

this Bill. But if there should be a ballot how much simpler it would be, instead of preparing a special roll with a view of getting through this little change which would be called a precedent afterwards, how much better it would be to provide that the ballot would be taken on the mayoral list, the list that would be used for an extraordinary election for the mayoralty of a municipality, how much less it would cost, and then if Ministers wish they could bring in a Bill in an open, manly way to embody their pet view of the municipal franchise.

On motion by Hon. R. J. Lynn, debate adjourned.

BILL—COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 17th September.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): I do not propose to speak on the second reading of the Bill. I understand it is the intention of the hon. Mr. Kingsmill to introduce very comprehensive amendments of the existing banking law when the Bill is in Committee, so I do not propose to oppose the second reading of the measure.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan): In order that I may have some opportunity of making a reply to the speeches that have been delivered on the Bill, I beg to move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion passed.

House adjourned at 8.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 14th October, 1913.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—LUDLOW PINE PLANTATION.

Hon. FRANK WILSON asked the Minister for Lands: 1, How long has the present overseer (Mr. G. Ashton) been employed on the Ludlow pine plantation? 2, How many men has he engaged during that time? 3, How many men have been dismissed, and for what reason? 4, Is it a fact that the overseer, or his wife, is proprietor of a store, and that the employees are expected to deal there? 5, If so, will he take steps to put a stop to such a practice?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Two years. 2, 59. 3, 44: 18 on account of incompetency, who were kept on for less than one week; 15 because of slackness and incompetency; 7 because of drunkenness; 2 neglecting duty; 1 ill-treating horses; 1 thieving in camp. 4, The overseer's wife, it is known, keeps a store on her own land at Ludlow station. About a year ago instructions were issued to the ganger that if the men employed on the plantation were served from the store his services would be dispensed with, and similarly the men were also notified that if they had any dealings with the store they would be dismissed. I am assured that no infractions of this instruction have been committed. 5, If