

New Clause.—Add the following new Clause.

17. The place in which an accident occasioning personal injury has occurred shall not be interfered with, except with a view of saving life or preventing further injury, until it has been examined by the inspector, or, in his absence, if demanded by any three miners engaged on the mine, by two competent persons to be appointed by a Warden or a Justice of the Peace.

WALTER A. GALE,

Clerk of the Assembly.

8-10-95.

ENGINE SPARKS FIRE PREVENTION BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly and was read a first time.

STOCK DISEASES BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly and was read a first time.

SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time. The necessity for this Bill is very great. It consolidates a number of old Acts some of which are of great age, but at the same time there are hardly any alterations or innovations on the present law. The Bill enables the Governor-in-Council, if a disease breaks out in a certain locality, to make such regulations as will meet the specific case. The advantage of this will be apparent to hon. members. Then, if any stock is imported, it will be isolated and dealt with without risk to the other stock in colony. As I have said, the Bill is absolutely necessary, and I now move that it be read a second time.

Question put and passed
Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 9.40 o'clock, p.m., adjourned until Thursday, 10th October, at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 9th October, 1895.

Suggested Compensation to Discoverers of Collie Coalfield—Cutting Young Jarrah Trees for Firewood—Well Sinking on Murchison Stock Route—Repairs to Sea Jetty at Fremantle—Encouragement of Co-operation Among Producers—Boring for Coal in Fasse District, &c.—Encouragement of Production, &c., of Vegetables—Water and Electric Works License Bill: second reading—Message from the Legislative Council: amendments in Public Health Act Further Amendment Bill—Appropriation Bill: second reading; in committee; third reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

SUGGESTED COMPENSATION TO DISCOVERERS OF COLLIE COALFIELD.

MR. ILLINGWORTH, by leave of the House, asked (without notice) whether it was the intention of the Government to take such steps as might be necessary for the purpose of giving a reward, as compensation for monies expended by the discoverers of the Collie coalfield.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied that the matter had been considered by the Government, but they had not felt able to make any recommendation during the present session. There was time enough yet to deal with the matter.

CUTTING YOUNG JARRAH TREES FOR FIREWOOD.

MR. RANDELL, by leave of the House, asked (without notice) whether any information had reached the Government to the effect that a wholesale destruction of young jarrah trees was going on, upon Crown lands near the railway. He was informed that trees only 6, 8, or 9 inches thick, which would be very serviceable as poles for mining and other purposes were being cut up merely for firewood.

MR. A. FORREST said the statement was quite true.

THE PREMIER asked where this was being done.

MR. A. FORREST said young trees were being cut for firewood along the Eastern Railway.

WELL SINKING ON THE MURCHISON STOCK ROUTE.

MR. HARPER, by leave of the House, asked (without notice) whether the Government were aware that it was reported that the mode of sinking wells on the Stock Route in the Murchison district was ill-judged and unsatisfactory. The report reaching him was that wells were being sunk only a few yards—in one case 150 yards—from existing wells on stations, and of course there could be little or no feed left in such localities for travelling stock, as the station sheep had to be watered there also. Another complaint was that the stages between wells were too long. A third complaint was that, instead of the wells being sunk where water could be obtained at a comparatively shallow depth, so as not to be too laborious for drovers who had to draw water for large numbers of travelling stock, the wells were sunk in places where the water was at so great a depth that the labor of drawing water for stock must be excessive, if not impracticable. If these complaints were true, the wells along this Stock Route would not reasonably serve the purpose for which they were intended.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he was inclined to think the hon. member could not have been correctly informed. He had seen one or two reports sent from the district, showing the progress of the work. The last report showed that a number of wells had been sunk at distances of 15 to 20 miles apart, and these wells were not near a station. The well-sinking had commenced at Mullewa, going northward to the Greenough River, then by the North Spring to Talling, and crossing over to Ballinyoo. The reports received were very satisfactory, and the statements of drovers were to the effect that the Government were now doing the right thing along this Stock Route, and finishing off the wells by equipping them with good buckets and troughs and everything that was necessary. He had not received any reports during the last month, but would make enquiry into the statement as to unsatisfactory work. He was satisfied, at present, that the hon. member was misinformed, because the Government had a practical man in charge of the party, Mr. Straker, a North-West squatter, who understood what was wanted, and was not likely to put wells in places where they would not be serviceable. As to the wells being deeper than was necessary, that was a question of going

down till the water was reached. He supposed 20 feet depth, or so, would be the average.

MR. LOTON said he had that day seen a drover who had just come over that road with stock, and his statement was that the work in connection with the wells was admirably done, so far as it had gone, but that in several instances the wells were sunk in the wrong places, the depth being 24 to 40 feet, while within a short distance water could have been obtained in abundance at 10 to 12 feet. If that was the case, the greater depth would make the drawing very difficult, and would compel the drovers to draw the water an extra 20 feet or more without necessity.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson) said he had had, indirectly, a good deal to do with the question of the Stock Route, the work having been placed in the charge of the Attorney-General and himself, who continued it up to a certain point and then handed it over to the Works Department. He had been instrumental in securing the services of Mr. Straker, who was a good, practical man to have in charge of the work. One point he had particularly impressed on Mr. Straker was the necessity of getting as far as possible from the ordinary Stock Route and the sheep station paddocks, so that the travelling stock might have a chance of getting some feed as well as water, away from the ordinary route of the stations. There would be no feed near a station well. He thought Mr. Straker would, as he had advised him, keep the line of Government wells as far as possible from the stations; therefore he could not understand how Mr. Straker could have been making such a mistake as had been reported. Perhaps Mr. Straker might be able, when called upon, to explain the matter clearly. He (the Commissioner) had already mentioned the report to the Director of Public Works, and asked him not to rest until satisfied that either the information was wrong, or that the work was being done properly. He (the Commissioner) had also been told by many persons who had travelled over this Stock Route that Mr. Straker was doing really good work, and making a splendidly finished job of the wells.

MR. RANDELL said he had recently taken the opportunity of speaking to a drover who had passed over that Stock Route, and the drover spoke of the admirable way in which the wells were sunk and equipped with appliances. From what this drover said, they ap-

peared to be thoroughly serviceable wells, and no complaint on any score was mentioned.

MR. A. FORREST said he agreed with what had fallen from the hon. member for the Swan (Mr. Loton). One of the most experienced drovers on the North-West coast informed him that the officer in charge had made the wells so deep that it was almost impracticable for drovers to water a large number of travelling stock; also that there were many places where water could be got at a depth of 10 to 20ft., whereas the Government wells were down 40ft. in some places. When there was only one man available for watering a mob, and he had to draw water 40ft., the work of watering would be almost impossible. The same drover had told him, only that morning, that if more care were taken in picking spots for wells, there would be no occasion to make them so deep. With this exception, the officer in charge was doing the work satisfactorily. It was well-known that in all the Murchison district water could be obtained by sinking 10 to 20ft., and he believed 20ft. depth was the limit in the district, at the stations. Wells 40ft. deep must be almost useless for watering travelling stock.

The subject dropped.

REPAIRS TO SEA JETTY AT FREMANTLE.

MR. SOLOMON, in accordance with notice, asked (1) whether it was the intention of the Government to carry out the repairs to the sea jetty at Fremantle, by day work or by tender; and (2) if not by tender, why not?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied: (1.) It is the intention of the Government to carry out the repairs to the sea jetty at Fremantle by day work. (2.) It would not be at all practicable or desirable to let the work by tender, for the following reasons:—The repairs are such that they could not be satisfactorily described for contract, as their nature and extent can only be ascertained as the work proceeds; and, if a description were attempted, it would leave the department open to all kinds of claims for extras. In addition to which, the work being on opened lines of railway, the maintenance department are responsible for the safety of the traffic, and for keeping the traffic open while the works are proceeding.

MR. SOLOMON desired to move the adjournment of the House, in order that he might speak upon the reply which had been given.

THE SPEAKER said the matter was not of such urgency as to justify the moving of the adjournment. He had permitted an irregular discussion on a previous matter, because it was one of urgency, and the session was about to close; but on the present matter he could not allow a discussion upon the reply given to a question. If a motion in regard to it was to be made, notice must be given.

MR. GEORGE said he wished to move the adjournment of the House, because the repair of the Fremantle jetty was a matter of great importance and urgency.

THE SPEAKER said he had already ruled that this could not be done, in reference to a matter which, in his opinion, was not one of urgency.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF CO-OPERATION AMONG PRODUCERS.

MR. HARPER, in accordance with notice, moved, "That in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that some preliminary steps should be taken by the Government, during the recess, for the purpose of encouraging co-operation among producers, with the object of fostering local, as well as export, trade in the products of the soil." He said: I move this in response to a very general feeling that has been expressed, in many different ways, by those connected with rural pursuits wishing to see some steps taken to provide for the future development of "any of the resources of the colony. I am afraid that, in the present booming times of gold mining, the Government are not inclined to look far ahead or take much heed as to the furtherance of those staple industries in the country which we hope will, in the future, have a very marked effect on the prospects of the colony. The other colonies are, more or less, going in very extensively in the direction of fostering co-operative endeavors among the producers; in fact, very great things have been accomplished by this means; yet in this colony, so far, little or nothing has been done in this direction, and I am afraid that, if time is not taken by the forelock and something done in this matter, we may find by and by, when some fall in the mining industry causes a general slackness in the colony, our permanent settlers and producers will not be so well prepared as they might have been, for developing other industries by means of co-operation. The Premier of South Australia, a few days ago, made a speech at the opening of an Agricultural Conference, in

which he pointed out what the Government of that colony were doing and were prepared to do, in the direction of fostering industries and aiding production. Therefore, considering that this colony has to come into competition with South Australia and other colonies in those products that may be exported, I think it is desirable that we should be guided in some measure by their action. Speaking at this Conference, the Premier of the adjoining colony said:—"We recognise that one of the chief duties of the Government is to foster and encourage the staple industries of the province, and we think one of the best ways of doing that is to help those who are interesting themselves in these industries, to help themselves." Later on he said:—"That brings me to a question on which there has been considerable debate of late. I refer to the State Advances Bill We believe that not only is cheap land desirable, but cheap money also, and we hope to do what we can towards giving both to the province. Only last night we passed through the Assembly, by a triumphant majority, the second reading of a Bill which has been properly described as one of the most important Bills of the session, and indeed of any Parliament in recent years, and designed for placing at the command of the producers cheap money to assist them and the community in developing our resources. I think action of that kind ought to encourage you. . . . Wool is on the rise, and if we turn our eyes to the west, we see important developments and increasing markets. . . . We are not going to tie ourselves down to any particular old lines. In the old days it was thought good enough to spend money to construct a railway, when nothing was said, or very little was thought, about encouraging production and assisting the export of the produce which might be carried to the sea board, and of securing for it a profitable market. We are changing all that now, and what we can do at this end, or at the other in the country, down at Port Adelaide, or in London, to find reasonable markets for the produce, we will do it. Only show that the thing is good in the interests of the colony, and we have no doubt that Parliament will ratify the expenditure. . . . Our wheat yield for last year, on account of the low average and the low prices, did not total much over £500,000. What did the

"neighboring colony of Victoria do? Why Victoria, with her butter export, her poultry and her rabbits, brought into the colony over a million of money. . . . We shall be only too glad to find that increased use is made of the Produce Export Depot at Port Adelaide, and the Wine and Fruit Depot in London. When we reflect that the prices which have been realised in England, as regards our fruit, wine, and apples, and this, that, and the other, there is good cause for congratulation as to what has been done. I think the Central Bureau has a right to be congratulated upon what has taken place. Let me say to Mr. Hardey and to all interested in the wine industry, that I am sure Parliament will be agreeable to place at your disposal funds at a reasonable rate for the purpose of enabling you to erect co-operative wineries. Last year a motion was carried in the Assembly allowing funds to enable the pastoralists to erect freezing works. Whatever we can do for the purpose of encouraging our staple industries is what the Ministry ought to do, and what we intend to do so long as we occupy our positions." All this, Sir, shows the policy of the South Australian Government, and shows what that Government considers necessary for the benefit of the country; and, as I have said before, if the people of this country are to be expected to compete with other colonies, they must be assisted. I would urge upon the Government the necessity of looking ahead somewhat and making provision to enable the people of Western Australia to produce what is necessary, at least for her own population. I hope the Government will do what they can in this matter. I may say the subject was brought to their notice many months past, by resolutions passed by the Agricultural Conference and endorsed by the Bureau of Agriculture. The complaint we make is not that the Government does not promise to do anything, but that, despite the promises, nothing is done. We have had no policy enunciated, and I do hope this will now be rectified. I beg to move the resolution.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson): I think I may say the Government are entirely in sympathy with the object the hon. member has in view in moving this resolution, but it would be more helpful if, in bringing this matter forward, the mover had indicated some more minute lines upon which he thought the Government

should proceed in reference to fostering the local products. It was easy to talk about encouraging and fostering the products, but there is nothing definite as to what is meant, or the direction our efforts should take. I believe one of the objects the hon. member had in view in bringing this matter forward, although he did not state it, was the establishment of wineries of considerable size, so that wine of surrounding vigneronns should be taken, properly treated, and rendered worthy of an article for export. I may say at once that the Government have had this under their attention for some time, and will be very glad to meet the wishes of the people in this respect, if some practical scheme can be arrived at. Perhaps we do not know sufficient about it, but it appears as if we are working a good deal in the dark; but possibly during the recess some effort will be made to encourage those who show a desire to help themselves. Whether the best way to do that is by granting these companies loans at low rates of interest, or whether the assistance should be in some other way, I am not able to say now. However, there is one thing cannot be too clearly stated, and that is that every effort the other colonies are engaged in making to foster their products is likely to act to the disadvantage of our own producers, and, consequently, assistance to those in this colony is required more than ever. We must assist our producers to produce better, more cheaply, and in greater quantity, if they are to compete with outsiders. The great thing we have to do is to produce an article that will be marketable, and for this we must have large establishments, skilled labor, and expert officers engaged in the operation. I can assure the hon. member that we are in hearty sympathy, and will give the Bureau of Agriculture and himself every assistance we can to evolve something practicable, to be of use to our own producers.

MR. SIMPSON: Sir, I rise with much pleasure to support the motion of the hon. member for Beverley. The Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands has said the resolution has been worded in an indefinite fashion, but there have been the rules of the House to be considered, with other features, which make it undesirable for the hon. member to give too exact an indication of his own ideas. The fact that he has not been so definite is a tribute of his confidence in the Government and shows that he is fully aware the Govern-

ment desire to assist the people on the land. I take it what we want more than anything else is some form of regulating the industries. We want some better system for our producers to work under, and I have no doubt the Government will aid the various industries of the settlers on the lands of the colony. By the establishment of concerns in the direction indicated by the Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands, we would establish a big interest of great value to the colony, and turn much of what has hitherto not been regarded as of such great value, into service and wealth to the country.

MR. HARPER: I would just like to say one word further. I have no doubt the Government have every desire to give assistance, and mean well, but nothing is being done towards adopting the policy of other colonies. If the Government would only give some clear indication of their intentions, people on the land would be quite prepared to go on developing the industries. It is the absence of anything definite from the Government that is so seriously hindering the settlement on the soil.

MR. A. FORREST: It appears to me that the whole of the other Australian colonies at the present time are encouraging their producers in the export trade, and it behoves us to render the same assistance to our producers here, so that, not only shall we have sufficient for our own consumption, but be able to export as well. Huge quantities of goods are being daily poured in here from the other colonies. In fact, West Australia is swamped with the goods of other parts, when we should be producing them ourselves. We will never have real prosperity in this country until we are of more importance as a producing country. At present the Government lends its assistance to the producers of other parts, and the local producers are all being ruined because of the competition. I trust the Government will be able to render some practical assistance to the producers here, so that they may meet the competition in their way.

Motion put and passed.

BORING FOR COAL AT THE VASSE.

MR. COOKWORTHY, in accordance with notice, moved "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the Government should enter into arrangements for boring for coal at the Vasse, and other parts of the colony, as soon as possible." The hon. mem-

ber said: The resolution standing in my name is, to ask the Government that it should take steps for boring for coal, not in one part of the colony only, but in all parts where there are any indications of the mineral existing. I have an opinion that good coal is to be found at the Vasse, and I will give hon. members my reason for forming this opinion. In the first place, on one occasion there was found near the beach the best of coal indications. Samples of bitumen were produced, and later on a man sinking a well came across a mineral-like substance which, without any doubt, was shale. We supported, in the district, a syndicate to bore for coal, and with an augur we sank three or four hundred feet. We could go no further with the appliances we then had, and just as we were about to get some assistance from Perth, the goldfields broke out, and occupied the attention of everybody. We then had occasion to apply to the Government for assistance, and they kindly came to our help. Unfortunately, this was of very little effect, because the boring appliances used by the Government were no better than our own. There is little doubt about the existence of coal in the district. Some of the cores brought up confirm this, but the augurs do not do the work sufficiently effectively to be as satisfactory as would be the case with proper appliances. Personally I feel confident there is good coal here, and, what is more, it is right on the beach. I do not think it necessary to emphasise the importance of a good find of coal at a depth of a few hundred feet, and quite close to a port. I am sure that in granting the request the resolution conveys, the Government will be doing their best towards developing the resources of the colony.

MR. MORAN: I would like to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether the motion is not out of order. Some time ago, when I attempted to move a similar motion, I was ruled out of order because the resolution referred to the expenditure of public money.

THE SPEAKER: The resolutions are not the same. I think the resolution the hon. member refers to was for the expenditure of a definite sum. At any rate there is no doubt about this resolution being in order.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I do hope the Government will give their kindly attention to the proposal of the hon. member. I think he has shown ample reasons why boring for coal in the Vasse should be carried on, and more particularly the suggestion that it is possible

a good coalfield will be discovered within view of a port. Such a thing would be invaluable, and to prove whether it is so or not will not cost much money. What money it does cost will be very well spent. I simply desire to express my own conviction, and the Government will do well to support the proposal now before the House.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I quite agree with the hon. members who argue that some such work as boring should take place to test whether there is coal at the Vasse. I regret that the work formerly done was not attended with success; but, unfortunately, the appliances then in use were not suitable, especially for the peculiar class of country about the Vasse. We have now, however, a machine of quite a different make, and it is already doing excellent work at Albany. As soon as it is available, I see no reason why it should not be sent to the Vasse. If the machine is not available as early as we hope it will be, the cost is not great—only £1,000—and we will get another one. This machine does the work well and cheaply, costing only 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per foot. This is such an important feature that, if it can be continued, there should be no reason why boring should not be carried on wherever good results are likely to follow.

MR. JAMES: I hope the Government will not come to a conclusion that all the coal of the colony is centred in one part. In fact, there is, I believe, good coal in my own constituency—at Jandakot—if indications go for anything. This is a matter upon which I believe the Attorney-General can give us some information. The idea that all the coal is at Collie River is not a true one, and I think that boring should be carried on at all parts wherever there is sufficient reason to suppose that coal exists.

MR. CONNOR: I cannot support the motion of the hon. member, because other work of a more important character is being neglected, while this boring is being carried on. We want the works to give water to the goldfields pressed on, because if we do not keep up the goldfields I am sure there will be no necessity for either the coal or the agricultural railways we propose to build. However, if boring is to be carried on, I certainly agree with the hon. member for East Perth, that it should be done wherever there is good reason for it. I believe it would be more valuable to bore for coal in my own district at East Kimberley. I believe

it is to be found there, and it would be of great importance if it was developed. At the same time I think the Government should turn its attention to the boring for water. [MR. LILLINGWORTH: That is being done.] Yes, but it has not been done up to this.

MR. SIMPSON: I have very much pleasure in supporting the motion of the hon. member, and I hope the Government will give it every attention, not only as to the prospects of coal at the Vasse, but in other parts of the colony as well. It seems a strange thing to me that this class of work is not done quickly. Instead of going on with the work, it takes two or three years before the documents are prepared, while a business man would have the machines out and at work. I think also that greater activity should be shown with regard to the boring for artesian water, because the discovery of one good supply of artesian water would do more good to this colony than anything else.

MR. SOLOMON: I have much pleasure in supporting the motion, because nothing could do this colony more good than the discovery and development of a coalfield so near the coast as this is supposed to be. I am surprised at the way in which some members object to every item of expenditure in the Southern districts, because the goldfields have been treated most generously. If a paltry £1,000 will lead to the development of a coal mine at the coast, it will be money well spent, and the proposal I have no doubt will be heartily supported by every hon. member of this House, with the exception of one or two of those representing the goldfields.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson): I may say, in reply to the hon. member for East Kimberley, that the Government are putting down bores on the goldfields in order to try and find an artesian supply of water.

MR. CONNOR: It is two years since I moved in the matter.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson): The Government fully recognise the importance of providing, as far as is possible, the goldfields with an ample and permanent supply of water, and will take care that not only the work of boring will be placed in efficient hands, but that the experimental bores shall be made as complete as the best plant can make them. The Government not being now stinted for funds will being fully impressed with the necessity

of finding artesian water, spare no effort to carry to a successful issue the work of boring on the goldfields with the success of which the welfare of the colony is so closely associated.

MR. COOKWORTHY: I am sorry that the hon. member for East Kimberley should have thought proper to oppose this motion, because if he had read it he would have seen that I do not ask that the Government shall limit the boring for coal to the Vasse, but the motion proposes to similarly test other parts of the colony, which of course may include boring at the goldfields. I thought it incumbent on the Government to put down these bores, wherever there is any likelihood of minerals being found; and, supplying an omission in my remarks when I introduced the motion, I may say that the indications found at the Vasse are exactly similar to those which have been found in the coal producing districts of New South Wales.

MR. GEORGE: I have very great pleasure in supporting this motion, for I think that boring for coal in West Australia is one of the most important kinds of work that can be done by the Government. The boring on the goldfields for artesian water is also very valuable work, but as a payable coalfield would employ thousands of men and circulate locally a great deal of money that is now sent out of the colony to buy coal, no effort should be spared to test places where there is a good prospect of a colliery being established. And while I am on this subject of boring I may say that the boring done by the sea worm into the karri piles of the Fremantle pier is becoming a serious danger to that structure.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We will soon cure that.

MR. GEORGE: The Premier says he will soon cure that; but so energetic are the steps being taken to do so that I am assured the hon. gentleman has not had time to read a report on the subject that was sent to him some weeks ago.

THE SPEAKER: The state of the Fremantle pier is not the question before the House.

MR. GEORGE: It has to do with coal, because at present the colony has to depend upon imported coal, which owing to the ravages made upon the piles of the pier cannot be safely carried over the pier.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I shall support the motion, and, as I have said before, I think the

Government should spend a large sum not only in boring for coal, but in seeking to discover artesian water on the goldfields.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Not a large sum?

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I believe I said at the time a large sum. I would say that the Government should spend £100,000 on boring in various parts of the colony.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): You are getting on.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I do not say that this money should be spent only in boring for coal, but also for water, and when the work is undertaken, the Government should get an expert from Queensland, where they have had a great deal of experience in tapping artesian water. In that colony, when it was resolved to put down bores, the Government sent to Canada and got advice and experienced skill from there, with the result that boring for artesian water has been a great success in Queensland; and, therefore, the Ministry should apply to that Government for the benefit of their special knowledge of the best machines, and how to work them to the best advantage. The Premier mentioned that the boring machine imported by the Government has been taken possession of by the hon. member for Plantagenet, and I do not know that any member has a right to take possession of plant that has been paid for with the taxpayers' money, for a particular purpose. I think that it is more important that the money for boring should be spent upon the goldfields.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The member for Plantagenet has nothing to do with it. The boring machine is only being used in his district for the benefit of his constituents.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Well, I hope that the Government will give the matter of artesian water their attention. We have money available for prosecuting experiments in this direction, for during the recess the Government were looking round to see what they could spend their surplus revenue upon, and I do not think they can find a better object for expenditure than in boring for water and coal in different parts of the colony, including the pastoral areas. It would have been well, I think, before the country was committed to the large cost of making an expensive line to the Collie for the sake of the coal to be found there, if search had been made for

coal nearer to the capital, and in a more accessible place, to which we should not have had to make a special railway in order to bring the fuel to market.

MR. MORAN: I am quite in accord with the remarks of the hon. member for East Kimberley. I cannot help thinking that if the motion under discussion had been brought forward by a goldfields member, the Government would have said that there was no necessity for the measure. I much regret that, up to the present time, the efforts which have been made to discover artesian water on the goldfields have resulted in nothing.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We are making another trial.

MR. MORAN: While I do not intend to oppose this motion, I cannot refrain from remarking upon the inability and mismanagement of the Government—who are so anxious to bore for coal, and to make costly railways wherever it is said that coal is to be found—in endeavoring to supply the goldfields, which have so much to do with the welfare of the colony, with a permanent and ample supply of water.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member is not speaking to the question before the House, which is that of boring for coal in various parts of the colony.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member for the Gascoyne alluded to the boring for water on the goldfields, and as the motion only relates to boring for coal, that is why I am making my protest against it. At the present time there is no urgent demand that we should find a coalfield, but there is an urgent demand that we should find water on the goldfields, and I think that every effort should be made to find it there.

Motion put and passed.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF PRODUCTION, &c., OF VEGETABLES.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the House went into committee for the consideration of the following resolution, which had been passed by the Legislative Council:—"That, 'in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the Government should enquire as to 'the best steps to take to encourage the production and preservation of vegetables.'"

IN COMMITTEE.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson): I think the House

should agree to the resolution, as the production and preservation of vegetables is worthy of encouragement in a colony like this, in which there is less cultivation than is desirable in the interests of the community.

MR. GEORGE: I hope that the House will agree to this resolution, and that steps will be taken as quickly as possible to give effect to it. In Mandurah, which is part of the constituency I represent, a Mr. Smart has, at considerable expense, erected a plant for the canning of fish and the evaporation of vegetables and fruit; and, if he can be given some encouragement, those industries may become important additions to the resources of the colony. Around Mandurah, there is a great deal of very good land suitable for the production of vegetables on a large scale, and if by means of a bonus similar to that which some years ago was granted in connection with the manufacture of jam, vegetables can be prepared in a portable form for consumption on the goldfields, there will be no necessity to import supplies of this kind of food from France, or any other part of the world. I therefore hope that the resolution will receive the general support of the House.

MR. LEFROY: As this resolution has been sent to us from the Legislative Council, and it aims at increasing the food supply of the colony, and as it only asks that the Government shall consider the best means of attaining this object, I think that hon. members may see their way to vote for it. The question is not, I should think, a very difficult one, and the enquiry may serve a useful purpose. At present there seems to be some scarcity of vegetables in West Australia for use in their natural state without preserving them, but if attention is given to the subject, as has been requested by the Legislative Council, the result might be that the cultivation of vegetables would be so stimulated that in the future there might be a plentiful supply, both in the fresh and preserved state. In any case, I do not think that the Legislative Council are asking too much in sending down this resolution, and I shall support its adoption.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I hope that if the Government accept the resolution of the Legislative Council on this grave matter of national concern, they will exercise the profoundest wisdom in the selection of the persons of whom they will enquire "as to the best steps to take to encourage the production

and preservation of vegetables." So far as I am concerned, I am inclined to think that certain leading citizens are best qualified to answer this momentous question, and that the Government in their search for light and learning should have recourse to Ah Ling, Kea Sang, Lee Wing, Wah Sam and Yeng Tuck. The questions which would be propounded to them are important, especially about dinner-time, and such a Commission could give the Government the best answer to the investigation which the Legislative Council desires us to make. I hope that the Government will be eager to seize the opportunity presented to them of becoming fully conversant with the subject during the recess, and will not fail to bring up an elaborate report upon the next meeting of Parliament, as to the result of their researches.

MR. RANDELL: There is no doubt that what this resolution aims at is, as the hon. member for the Murray has divulged, the payment of a bonus for the preserving of vegetables. As, however, the supply of vegetables in the green state is hardly sufficient, I do not think the time has arrived for preserving them; but if the enquiry asked for does not involve the expenditure of public money, and the Government bear in mind that they will have to justify next session any action they may take on this matter, I do not think there will be any objection to the motion.

MR. MORAN: I cannot see why those who are interested in the cultivation of vegetables cannot utilise the advantages of getting land gratis from the Crown. Excellent soil, good rainfall, a suitable climate, railway communication almost to their doors, and refrigerating cars and storage to pursue their industry, without asking for any further assistance from the Government. I do not see why there should be some undefined and undefinable scheme for preserving vegetables, which asks for the intervention of the Houses of Parliament and of the Government. I do not perceive what else can be done in a reasonable way to assist the production of vegetables or to cause people to go on the land, and the resolution seems to me to be unnecessary. There is no place in the world where there is so good a market for vegetables, and I am not prepared to go the length of creating a scheme of State socialism in this matter, and of promoting the growth of vegetables under Government patronage.

MR. WOOD: I think, in view of the back-

ward state of the production of the colony, that something should be done in the shape of granting bonuses to encourage the growth of fruit and vegetables, in order that these commodities may be obtained at a reasonable price. After the bonuses had given a good start to the industries to which I refer, the grants could cease, and the public would have the benefit of a cheap and adequate supply of fruit and vegetables, and it would be found that the money had been well spent. There is no doubt that if we do not do something in this direction, the vegetable market of this colony will have to be supplied from Adelaide, which would be a standing disgrace to West Australia.

MR. GEORGE: I should like to point out to the hon. member for Yilgarn, that Mandurah, where large quantities of vegetables could be grown on swamp lands, especially in the summer time when they are scarcest, has not a railway to its doors, as the hon. member from what he has said, seems to think, but is distant 16 miles from the South-Western Railway, so that it is impossible to cart the vegetables so long a distance, with the railway journey superadded, without greatly deteriorating their quality, to say nothing of the transit. But there is no doubt that Mandurah is the place to produce vegetables for the goldfields in a preserved state, if some inducement is given to capital and enterprise to embark in this industry.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I hope that next session the Government will try and give the Legislative Council a little more work than they have had this year, so that hon. members will have something better to do than drawing their attention to such matters as the very important motion they have sent down here. I dare say the motion was passed in a few minutes in the other Chamber, and it has occupied nearly half an hour of our time here. The motion is of no value, for it is well known how vegetables can best be procured; and as for the payment of bonuses for the production of vegetables, that is a thing with which the Government have, I submit, nothing to do. I consider that the resolution is worded ambiguously, and that instead of providing that the Government should be asked to inquire as to the best steps to be taken to encourage the production and preservation of vegetables, it should have provided for the payment of bonuses on the production of vege-

tables, which I am of opinion was its real object. Well, it is no doubt within the recollection of hon. members that a bonus was given for the production of jam, and that a condition was made that a certain quantity had to be produced before the bonus was paid. The firms to whom the bonus was offered fulfilled that condition and received the bonus, and after the first year the production of jam did not increase. The only thing that would encourage industries of that description, including the production of vegetables, would be a demand.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Surely there is a demand for jam in the colony.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: There may be a demand for jam, but I think the imported article is in more demand, being cheaper. However, I do not think that any industry can be fostered by bonuses, and I altogether deprecate the system of giving them. With regard to what the hon. member for West Perth has said, that vegetables would have to be imported from the Eastern colonies if some encouragement to local production is not given, I do not think that whatever amount of duty was put on potatoes, for instance, the local market would be able to compete with the markets of the Eastern colonies, because the soil in those colonies is much better. At any rate, in Perth and Fremantle and other centres of population, vegetables are cheaper than they were 50 years ago, and that has been brought about by Chinese gardeners turning the swampy lands into vegetable gardens and marketing their produce. If a motion were tabled providing that some inducement should be given to those who convert the swampy lands of the colony into vegetable gardens, I am sure that the hon. member for West Perth would be one of the first to indignantly protest against its being carried, while in regard to the resolution before the committee he is prepared to countenance the payment of portion of the money of the State to support a bonus system, which in my opinion is not a good line of policy to adopt.

Question put, and division called for.

MR. R. F. SHOLL claimed for the Noes the vote of the hon. member for the Murray (Mr. George), who had seated himself with the Ayes, on the ground that the hon. member had given his vote for the "Noes."

THE ACTING-CHAIRMAN said no hon. mem-

her could, after giving his voice on one side, vote in a division on the other side.

MR. GEORGE crossed the floor of the House and voted with the Noes, as directed.

The division was then taken, with the following result :—

Ayes	...	...	...	...	8
Noes	...	...	...	...	8
					—
A tie	...	...	...	...	0
Ayes.				Noes.	
Mr. Burt		Mr. George			
Mr. Cookworthy		Mr. Loton			
Sir John Forrest		Mr. Moran			
Mr. A. Forrest		Mr. Randell			
Mr. Lefroy		Mr. Simpson			
Mr. Richardson		Mr. R. F. Sholl			
Mr. Wood		Mr. H. W. Sholl			
Mr. James (Teller).		Mr. Leake (Teller).			

The voting being equal, the Acting-Chairman gave his casting vote with the Noes.

Motion, for the adoption of the resolution, thus negatived.

Ordered—That a Message be transmitted to the Legislative Council, acquainting that body that the Legislative Assembly had disagreed to the resolution.

MR. GEORGE: Sir, if I am in order, I would like to ask if there is anything I can do in order to have it recorded that I have had to vote against the resolution, when I wished to vote for it? I think it was unworthy of the hon. member for the Gascoyne to have tricked me, a young and inexperienced member as I am, in the manner he did.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I don't think the hon. member is justified in saying that what I did was unworthy, or that I tricked him. I really thought the Noes had a majority of one without the hon. member's vote. He is always so anxious, Sir, to call for divisions when it is quite unnecessary to do so, that I thought on this occasion I would claim his vote on the ground that I have stated.

MR. SIMPSON: Sir, I might point out that the hon. member for the Murray is not singular in his experience in this matter. I notice that the hon. member used the word "tricked" in regard to the hon. member for the Gascoyne, which, I am sure, he did not mean to use.

MR. GEORGE: Oh, yes, I did.

MR. SIMPSON: Well, what I rose for was to state that I was similarly treated by the Hon. the Premier last session.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Sir, I rise to say that I have never claimed any

hon. member's vote in the manner suggested by the hon. member for Geraldton.

THE SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. member for the Murray was in order in describing the action of the hon. member for the Gascoyne as an unworthy trick. What the hon. member for the Gascoyne did, in claiming the vote of the hon. member for the Murray for the Noes, was in accordance with the Parliamentary practice; and nothing that is in accordance with Parliamentary practice can be designated an unworthy trick.

MR. GEORGE: Sir, I withdraw those words, but at the same time I must say that I think it would have been perhaps more kind if the hon. member for the Gascoyne had conceded that I am an inexperienced member of this House. He knew very well how I was going to vote and what my feelings were with regard to the resolution. I think I am entitled to say, in regard to what the hon. member for the Gascoyne said about my calling for unnecessary divisions, that I am the best judge of that matter.

WATER AND ELECTRIC WORKS LICENSE BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Sir, I rise to move the second reading of this Bill "to encourage the construction of waterworks and electric works by private enterprise." I think I must apologise to the House for introducing this measure so late in the session. I regret it very much, and it will be for hon. members to say whether they will pass it or not for that reason; but the Government considered that it was necessary to deal with the question of supplying water to the Eastern goldfields, at once, because, there is no doubt that the water question on the goldfields is one that will have to be dealt with either by private enterprise or by public effort. It is known, of course, by all hon. members that the Government have expressed themselves as opposed to the construction of railways and other great works of that character by private individuals. We are all of opinion that it is better in the interests of the colony that railways should be owned and worked by the State; but I do not think we have committed ourselves so far as to say that we are opposed to encouraging private enterprise in most other directions, and especially do I think the obtaining and carrying of water to the waterless parts of

the colony by private enterprise is a matter that the Government should encourage in every way that is possible. For that reason we propose in this Bill that it shall be lawful for the Governor to issue a license for two purposes, viz.:—“(1.) Authorising any person or corporation to lay down water mains “on or under any land, whether vested in “the Crown or not, or on, or under, any public “road, for the purpose of conducting water to “be afterwards used and sold by the undertakers.” (2.) “Authorising the undertakers “to establish electric power generating stations, and to erect posts and lead overhead “or underground on any land, whether vested “in the Crown or not, or on any public road, “main and branch electric cables from the “said stations to any parts of the colony, and “to sell and distribute electric power for all “purposes.” In regard to the first, the waterworks question, there seems to be no doubt that the extensive goldfields to the eastward will have to be supplied with water from this part of the colony. It may be possible for them to go on as they are now for some time, but every day convinces me more strongly that ultimately water will have to be conveyed from the rivers near the coast to the Coolgardie and Yilgarn goldfields. I do not think that this proposal should frighten the people of this colony. It is to be regretted that there is not a large quantity of fresh water available in that auriferous district, but the fact remains that there is a great scarcity, and that that scarcity is not likely to be overcome, at any rate by boring. That being so, there seems to be no reason why we should not encourage persons who are willing to lay down water mains from the rivers near the coast to that arid though very auriferous district. Hon. members will notice that in this Bill it is proposed not to grant any monopoly to any company or person. If it had been proposed to give any particular combination of persons any monopoly or any pre-emptive rights, the Government could not have introduced a measure of this description so late in the session; but seeing that there is not any monopoly to be given either to persons supplying water or to persons supplying electric power, it seems to me that a good deal of the difficulty is removed from the passing of this Bill. There is no doubt that the whole of the Eastern goldfields at the present time suffer a very great deal from a want of water, and, as I

said before, it is very much to be regretted that such is the case; but I am altogether opposed to any scheme for taking other than fresh water there. A proposal has been made to me having for its object the conveyance of salt water on to the Coolgardie goldfield from Esperance Bay; but I do not think we should encourage such a scheme in any way. Fresh water going into the rich soil which abounds at Coolgardie, and in the district, will make it productive, and irrigation even, to some extent, may be practised; but salt water would do more harm than good, and would kill all the vegetation with which it would come into contact. I think I may say this, that the question of the water supply on these goldfields is one to which the Government have already given a great deal of thought, and is one which has compelled them to resolve to give it greater attention in the future; and unless private individuals are willing to undertake this work, there is not the slightest doubt that the Government will have to deal with the question themselves. Luckily there is an abundance of fresh water on the coast. We have rivers, such as the Moore and the Murray, which run all the year round and are capable of supplying all the water that is required on the goldfields in question. In regard to the proposal of the Bill to license persons to supply electric power to the goldfields, I am not in a position to speak with any authority, but it has been pointed out to me that electric power can be generated at one spot, and taken a long distance for use, as is done, for instance, at Niagara, where the celebrated falls of that name are used in the generating of electric power, which is conveyed on wires to the city of Buffalo, seventy miles distant. There is at the present time an offer before the Government to supply the Coolgardie goldfields with electric power from some central station. If that can be done—and I am assured by those who are moving in the matter that it can be—if it is possible to generate electricity somewhere near the coast and take it on wires to the Coolgardie goldfields, where it can be distributed by means of small dynamos, then, I think, the scheme will revolutionise the working of the machinery on that field.

MR. SIMPSON: They are doing it in New South Wales now.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Well, if it can be done, I see no reason why we should not give the people, who are able to do so, an

opportunity to carry it out. I have received cablegrams from reliable persons in London saying they are able to carry this project out, if the Government will obtain the necessary authority to give them a license to undertake the work, and with that object in view the Government have introduced this measure. The Government have been asked to include other classes of works in the Bill, as, for instance, the construction of tramways for the city, but the Government, knowing in the first place that the Standing Orders would prevent them from doing that, and also in view of the fact that we are opposed to private individuals managing railways and tramways, declined to accede to the request. At the same time I consider that the proposals to supply water and electric power to the goldfields are worthy of consideration, and the Government, after considering the matter, resolved to ask the House to empower them, by the Bill which is before hon. members, to issue licenses to the persons who wish to carry out these projects.

At 6:30 p.m. the Chairman left the chair.

At 7:30 p.m. the Chairman resumed the chair.

MR. WOOD, resuming the debate on the Bill, said: I have no intention of opposing it, but I think the matter is one that requires very great consideration, because the Bill creates a new departure by opening up something new to the people of this colony, if not new elsewhere. So far as the opening remarks of the Premier are concerned, I was not satisfied, from them, that this method of dealing with such projects will really benefit the colony. By giving to private companies such powers as this Bill proposes, we may be creating troubles such as those which have been experienced in connection with the Midland Railway Company, the Great Southern Railway Company, and other great corporations that have acquired interests in this colony. Therefore I, for one, am not agreeable to lending assistance to any Government to get into a hole, for the sake of showing a great amount of ingenuity in getting out of it. The Bill gives immense powers to persons who are called the undertakers—powers such as are given under the Railways Act of 1878. [THE PREMIER: That is about taking land.] I should like to know whether these undertakers will have power to send telegrams over any electric cable line which may be constructed, also whether the Government will have sole control over the location

of a company's pumping stations and other appliances. Altogether, this Bill requires very great consideration on the part of this House; and my only reason for not opposing it is that I have very great confidence in the Government, and feel pretty safe in supporting anything they bring forward for the benefit of the country, believing they will not undertake anything that is likely to be detrimental to the interests of the country. The confidence I have in the Government is the only ground on which I support this Bill, which I do not understand very much. Such a measure may be in operation in other colonies, but it is quite new in this colony, and we should be careful in granting concessions to private corporations. I think the construction of these works ought to be undertaken by the Government, in some way, and that such powers should not be given to private corporations.

MR. JAMES: There is hardly any member of the House who will fail to recognize the importance of this Bill, and the very extensive and exceptional powers we are giving to the Government under the Bill. For that reason I was somewhat astonished to find several members were anxious that the second reading should pass without comment. I think this is far too important a Bill to pass in this way. I recognise that, under the local conditions of this colony, it is necessary to carry out the ends aimed at by this Bill, and that extensive powers should be given to the Government. Therefore I think we shall have to give powers more or less extensive; but it is a question whether the powers in this Bill are not too extensive, and whether we should not, in the Bill itself, impose certain limits beyond which no Government should go or be allowed to step. The members of this Government must recognise the enormous power this Bill gives to the Government for the time being; and although we rejoice in having at present a Government who are likely to watch very carefully the exercise of the powers given by this Bill, yet the time may come when we may not have such a Government. [THE PREMIER: What are these great powers?] Under this Bill, power is given to enable persons to erect water works in connection with any or every town in the colony. I do not see any provision for applying this Bill specially to the goldfields. The proviso in Clause 3, that no street or thoroughfare in a municipality shall be entered upon without the consent of the municipality, is a limitation; but, with that

exception, the provisions of the Bill apply to every part of the colony. It is a very extensive power, to give the Government the sole right of saying what, in the past, here or elsewhere, has always been left for Parliament to say, in each case, by means of a private Bill. I do not think that a power so extensive as this exists elsewhere; but, at any rate, there cannot be a question that this general power is a most extensive one to give to a Government. Clause 7 gives to the Government the power of granting a license to the undertakers of particular works for a period of 21 years; and, further, that the Governor, if so desired by the undertakers, may grant a further continuance of the license for another term of 21 years, on such terms as Parliament may first approve of. I think the first term of 21 years is itself too long. [THE PREMIER: No monopoly is to be granted.] Well, if the undertakers desire to go beyond the first term of 21 years, I do not think we should provide a machinery which almost invites them to apply for an extension. It would be better to give to the Government the right of granting a power for a maximum time, and, if any extension be afterwards required, the undertakers should come to Parliament for sanction by means of a private Bill. There is a great difference between a private Bill of that kind, and a general Bill of this kind. It is said that no monopoly is to be given by this Bill. To a certain extent, that is true; but, for all practical purposes, the granting of a license for a large undertaking would be a monopoly in its effect, because if a large work, involving perhaps a million of money, be once established, it will be practically a monopoly in the hands of the company which carries it on, and which has induced the public to depend on it. It will be within the power of such a company to so conduct the supply of the electric power or the water as to prevent any competing company from gaining a footing against them, for when such a company is once established, it has absolute control of that which it supplies to the public, and we know how difficult it has been, even with a small monopoly like that of a Gas Company, for other competitors or even for the local Municipal Council to establish gas works in competition with those existing in the place. In Perth, for instance, there would be no legal impediment to the City Council in establishing gas or electric lighting works on their own

account; but the competition of the existing company, and the special inducements it might offer under pressure to its customers, do make the existing works a practical monopoly. Supposing a new company were formed for undertaking large works, under this Bill, the effect would be that any other company attempting to compete on the same lines would be handicapped by having to face an expenditure of perhaps a million of money, and by the power of the first company in being able to go round to its customers and say, "Unless you agree to take from us exclusively for five years, we shall cut off the supply." So that, for practical purposes, such a license would be a monopoly. But our great protection is that, by granting these rights to private corporations, we shall be giving to the goldfields that which they want—fresh water and electric power—though if it should turn out that fresh water is to be found on the fields, so much the better for the fields and for the colony. Therefore, while I recognise that this license will have to be given, we shall be doing wrong if we do not recognise the enormous powers we are giving to the Government in the Bill. The most important matter is that under Clause 3; and in view of the possibility of our having, at some time, a Government which might not be altogether honest, it would be a great safeguard against any improper exercise of the powers given by this Bill, if we were to add to this clause a proviso that the terms and conditions of every license so granted shall be published in the Government *Gazette*, and not come into force until a month after such publication. By doing that, we shall at all events necessitate that everything done under Clause 3 shall be in open daylight. We give extensive power by these essential terms and conditions, and the public who are affected by these licenses should have a right to know what are the terms and conditions under which any company so licensed is to exercise its powers; besides which, by requiring this publication in the *Gazette*, we shall be doing something to discourage shady transactions on the part of those persons who may be so inclined. I notice that a needlessly extensive power is given by Clause 15, which enables a licensed company to make by-laws for regulating the conduct and duties of their agents and servants, and imposing penalties on them for offences against such by-laws. If that power exists in connection with the Midland or the Great Southern Railway Company, I

can only say it ought not to have been granted. I do not see why any corporation to be licensed under this Bill should have the right to make special regulations, under which they can subject their agents and servants to penalties, and have power, under this Bill, to imprison such offenders if they do not pay the money penalties. The ordinary law of the land should be sufficient to give these companies all the remedy they are entitled to, in such cases. When the Goldfields Bill was lately before this House, objection was taken to the existence of the clause which gave power to make and enforce regulations. It was said, if we passed that section, it would be quickly copied. Strangely enough, that provision has been copied in Clause 59 of the Explosives Bill; and, strangely enough, it has been copied again in this Bill. Now the persons who may make by-laws, under this Bill, are private individuals; and all they have to do will be to obtain the approval of the Governor-in-Council, and then they can practically legislate; because that clause says that "All regulations and by-laws made under this Act shall be published in the *Government Gazette*, and shall be laid before Parliament within fourteen days after such publication if Parliament be then sitting, and if Parliament be not then sitting, within fourteen days after its next meeting"—that is the usual provision; but the clause goes on to say—"and when so published shall have the force of law, and shall continue in force unless repealed or altered as aforesaid or disallowed by both Houses of Parliament." Here, then, you are copying, in connection with this Bill relating to private companies, that which you have already copied in connection with the Explosives Bill, namely the exceptional and dangerous power which is given by the Goldfields Bill in reference to the making of by-laws. This clause provides that the by-laws so made are to be laid before Parliament within fourteen days; but it also says that, when published, the by-laws shall have the force of law unless and until repealed or altered or disallowed by both Houses of Parliament. The companies will thus be put in an exceptional position; and although the wording of this clause is not the same as the clause in the Goldfields Bill, the effect is the same. Suppose you had a Conservative Government in power, and they passed certain by-laws under this Bill; those by-laws could be upset or modified only by getting the consent of both Houses of Parliament

to undo what the Government had done. Therefore, unless that Conservative Government could be replaced by a Liberal one, there would be no means of upsetting these by-laws. This is not a condition that is inserted in any other legislation dealing with these points. Similar provisions in English Acts do not go on to say, as this clause does, that the by-laws made under a Statute shall have the force of law, unless and until repealed or modified or disallowed by both Houses of Parliament. We should not give to any individuals, nor to any Government, the power to legislate during a recess. I should like to see the alterations I have indicated made in the Bill, because I do not think we can deal with this subject too carefully, having regard to the great powers given by the Bill itself.

MR. GEORGE: The Premier, who is responsible for this Bill, changes his mind like that far-famed fabulous animal which changes its spots. For here is a Bill to encourage syndicates, whereas last session we had a different statement from the Premier, which I now wish the House to listen to while I quote from it, though the hon. gentleman now seems to have turned his back on what he then said. He then told us a long rigmarole, which I may call nonsense, because he has now turned his back on it.

THE PREMIER: Not at all.

MR. GEORGE: I think you have, because you said, last session, in speaking on the Address-in-Reply: "We would have to pay interest just the same, and we would have to make the thing pay, or else these people could not carry on their railway." Upon that I say if you knock out "railway" and put in "water works" or "electric power," the two cases will be identical. The Premier went on to say: "But how are these people going to make this railway pay, unless it comes out of those who use the railway, just the same as if it were made by the Government." These were the hon. gentleman's words, last session, against syndicates. His actions, this session, are to encourage syndicates. I am going to support this Bill because the Premier has at last seen what is the best thing for this colony—that instead of the Government running everything in the colony, they are going to let private enterprise carry out some of the undertakings; that instead of the Government carrying on that huge system of day-work which has been inaugurated in regard to some great public works, which system I con-

sider an incubus and a mistake, they are going to call in private enterprise to do what it should have been allowed to do before, and which no Government should attempt to carry out. In introducing this Bill, the Premier said that at this stage of the session he did not propose to take long over this Bill.

THE PREMIER: I beg your pardon. I did not say that.

MR. GEORGE: I took down your words.

THE PREMIER: You made a mistake in doing so.

MR. GEORGE: I was going to tell the Premier that, although he may be anxious to prorogue, and the House may be anxious to prorogue, and the hon. member for the Murray may also be anxious to do so, yet that is no argument for not sufficiently considering an important Bill like this, when brought in at the end of the session; the same as when an important Bill was brought in the other night ("Engine Sparks Fire Prevention Bill"), the Government put in a clause exempting the Government railways from the operation of that measure. So far as this Bill is concerned, I think the principle should be encouraged, but we should see that it does not confer too much power. Ministers are now giving up the idea that nobody but the Government can do these large works, and they are going to invite private enterprise to step in. There is a lot in the Bill which will require very careful consideration; and I trust the Government will not endeavor to rush this Bill through committee, but will allow fair discussion on its provisions. I must say that some of the Bills, in this session, have not had fair discussion. In Clause 4 of this Bill, it is practically proposed to give, to any persons whom the Government may license for the purpose, the same power and rights and privileges, for entering upon and taking private land, as are given to the Commissioner of Railways under the general Act of 1878. Well, I hope that those persons to whom these large powers are to be given will use them with more tact than is shown in using them in connection with Government works. I also think, Sir, that Clause 7 requires considerable attention on the part of the Attorney-General. At present it reads that any of these companies can obtain, at any time, an extension of their lease for a further period of 21 years. This would give them a lease of 42 years, and I do not think the provision is either right or necessary. **[THE PREMIER:**

But it must be with the approval of the Parliament.] Quite so. We know that is all right so far as it goes, but I do not think it is wise. There is another thing I should like to see brought in, and that is some provision whereby at the expiration of 21 years, or some other time, these properties should revert to the State. There is no reason why this should not be the case, because it is a practice frequently adopted in other countries and it is quite fair. Then again, I think that in addition to the power already given for the State to purchase any of these undertakings, there should be provision for verifying the cost of land, etc., at the present time. If this is done, it will prevent a great deal of dispute in the future. While we are discussing the question of encouraging private enterprise, I think we should incorporate the power to lay down tramways and railways. Exactly the same arguments which can be used with force in favor of the other branches of the Bill, can be used in support of extending the privilege to tramways. It would relieve our Railway Department and the Commissioner, and thus private enterprise, without monopoly, would give general satisfaction and meet the wants of the different districts far better than they are attended to at the present time. I think that if care was taken as to the way these private railways were carried out, it would be a great relief and prevent the necessity of the State borrowing large sums of money to meet the requirements of the colony.

MR. MORAN: I have no doubt, Sir, that this Bill has been designed more particularly with the view of meeting the wants of the goldfields than anything else. From what little one can hear privately in regard to the causes leading to the introduction of this measure, it is not in contemplation at the present time to carry the works on for the benefit of any other districts. This Bill aims at giving private companies the legal power to supply the goldfields with what they at the present time require. Firstly, there is the power to supply water, and secondly, the power to supply electric force to the fields. I believe it is fairly well understood that there is a powerful syndicate in London, comprising some of the leading mechanical engineers and scientific authorities, who are prepared to attempt and supply the necessary power to the fields from machinery somewhere on the coast. It is power to drive the plants and batteries we most require on the fields and prevent the

mines languishing. Whether the plans of this company can be carried into effect is quite another thing: at any rate, it is a question, not for this House, but for the people who are to find the money necessary to carry the scheme into effect. The scheme to supply the needs of the fields from stations three or four hundred miles away on the coast may prove successful. That is something we can only hold our own opinion about. We recollect that some time ago a gentleman wrote to the papers complaining of the fact that he could not get concessions to tap the Swan River at some point, and from that point supply Southern Cross and Coolgardie with fresh water. It was said this gentleman had ample money at his back, and this we may believe or disbelieve just as we please. If the methods proposed to be employed prove successful, it will be a great thing for this country, and considering the fact that ample care has been taken to prevent anything like a monopoly, I think there can be no harm in allowing this Bill to go through. Of course there are several matters of detail upon which we are not likely to be unanimous, and these can be discussed in committee. I am glad the opportunity is going to be given for private enterprise to carry out these works. The system is one I have always strongly advocated, and I supported the hon. member for Albany when he laid some similar scheme before the House in connection with the Murchison railway. I will most heartily support any legislation that has the slightest hope of meeting what we require on the goldfields; in fact, I have constantly agitated in this direction. Of course, as I said before, the proposal to raise this power 900 feet may be successful or it may not. I am inclined to think the latter, but no doubt the people concerned have properly figured it out. The only thing I feel it necessary we should guard against is that there should be no monopoly, and this is fully provided for in the Bill. There is another direction with which we should encourage private enterprise, and it would be a great boon to the people living on the fields. I refer to the class of people who are compelled to pay enormous sums of money in order to secure the carriage of their goods. It will be a great thing for the goldfields if they can be supplied with portable railways. I am strongly in favor of the principle of allowing private enterprise to carry out works of this character, and consequently this Bill has my most cordial

support. It will enable people who are capable of supplying water to the goldfields to do so, because the Government have signally failed in their endeavors in this respect. I have no doubt the Government have the best of intentions, but we know the way to a certain place is paved with good intentions. [MR. HARPER: Who knows?] I can tell the hon. member who will know some day. The way to the goldfields appears to be paved with the same material, but the people never get their water supply. However, I am pleased the Government are now giving private enterprise a chance of carrying out what they themselves have failed over. Let me tell the Government that the water question is going to be a more serious question on the goldfields this summer than it ever was before, and that is an unfortunate position which could have been avoided.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: The Government have done too much for the goldfields.

MS. MORAN: If that is so, then what they have done has not been in the proper direction. A great deal of the work will be useless. What the Government should do is to bring forward some comprehensive scheme for securing a supply of artesian water. I think they should offer a substantial, liberal, and even munificent reward for the solution of the water difficulty. I think every legitimate scheme, which has for its object the supply of power and water to the goldfields, should be heartily encouraged by the Government.

MR. SIMPSON: I intend to support the second reading of this Bill, because I think it is calculated to do a considerable amount of good in the back country. There is no question that the work proposed to be done can only be carried out with the aid of very considerable capital. It proposes to give power to private companies to furnish both power and water, and the question whether it will pay the companies who undertake the work or not, is one for the companies to work out themselves. I have no doubt they have gone into the matter very carefully. I quite agree with the hon. member for East Perth that the Bill is one we should most carefully consider when it is in committee, but the general principles should receive the support of every member of the House. If any scheme can be carried into practical working it will aid the goldfields of this colony more than anything else. It will assist in the economical working of the fields, and the

power need not be distributed as it is at present, where we see plants and mills going on small areas side by side, when one is using sufficient power for the lot. The method adopted at present is one of wilful waste; and, with the more profitable working of these fields, there is no question they will be very largely developed. I think the Bill is one the provisions of which can be best dealt with in committee, and there it should be carefully deliberated over. There is one thing I should like to see omitted, and that is the wretched word "undertakers." It reads most peculiarly in some parts. Hon. members will recognise this when they refer to Clause 3, which states a license may be issued "for the purpose of conducting water to be afterwards used and sold by the undertakers." Surely, we can obtain a better word than that.

MR. HARLER: I am not certain, Sir, that we will be doing a wise thing if we deal with such an important Bill as this upon such short notice and on almost the closing day of the session. It involves interests of the widest extent, and it is impossible to properly consider it. I do not say it would not be a good thing if undertakings of this kind could be established, but the notice is far too short. We may take it that the proposal is one to be carried out by the introduction of foreign capital, and that would have to be considered. We must consider that the interests of the whole colony have to be regarded in a case of this sort. It is all very well to say there is to be no monopoly, but once a privilege like this is obtained by one wealthy corporation, they practically enjoy a monopoly. It is possible, should the calculations of these people prove correct, that in a few years time they might be deriving as much revenue from their works as the revenue of the colony, and a corporation with this power would be a most dangerous body to be in existence in a colony like this. I do not think it is wise for us to pass a measure of this kind without being able to give more careful consideration to the whole subject. We should be able to go into the calculations and see for ourselves what the result of such a Bill will be. We hear just now a great deal about the results of the operations of company promoters, and one expression is often used, that it is the first robbers who do the best out of these schemes. It is certain that the people who propose to bring the undertaking forward are not the people who will carry it

out. It is not merely a scheme for getting up a company to float in London, leaving those instrumental in forming it to get out, and thus leave the others to carry it out. It is by far too large an undertaking to deal with at such a late stage of the session.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: While I intend to support the principle of this Bill, I agree with what has fallen from the hon. member for Beverley, and that is, that this is an important measure which might very easily have been brought forward earlier in the session, and not rushed through at the last moment. It is not the sort of measure to be carried out by the suspension of the Standing Orders, and by the setting aside of every form of the House. I think it is most inadvisable for us to depart from the requirements of the Standing Orders in regard to schemes of this character. We should not treat them in any way differently from the way we would treat a private Bill. This Bill is of such a very important character, enabling the promoters to go even on to suburban lands, that it should have been referred to a Select Committee. There is not time for that now. I regret there is so much rush about it. I find the Bill gives the promoters the same power as that held by the Commissioner of Railways, and that is to take one-twentieth of a person's land.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Yes, but they have to pay for it.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: The Commissioner of Railways has not to pay for it.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): That is true, but these people have. Read Clause 3.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I think Clause 4 gives them power to take this land. It is true Clause 3 may make compensation necessary. This is a provision we should be most careful over. At any rate, while I support the principle of this Bill, I wholly object to the manner in which the Standing Orders are being evaded. The Bill will give the Government too much power, and I do not think it advisable that public companies should be allowed to construct works of this character, without going through the usual form for introducing and carrying private Bills, or without the usual notice to the public. I have no doubt this Bill will be of great importance to the colony, if its provisions can be carried into effect. Too often we hear a lot about schemes of this sort, but when it comes to plunking down the money we hear no more about them. When the

Bill is in committee I hope the legal members of the House will study it well, so that no undue powers will be given to these companies.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Mr. Speaker, I hope I am not making a mistake when I say that I believe this Bill is very largely the outcome of a discussion which took place in this House last session, and in which several members pressed upon the Government the desirability of giving to persons certain rights for the purpose of obtaining water for the use of certain centres on the goldfields, and that it is this suggestion which is now being adopted. There is also the right to introduce electric power. References have been made to the dangerous powers placed in the hands of the Government, but I take it that before any scheme is assented to there will have been sufficient notice of it in the press to indicate what is proposed, and if the scheme were not approved of by the public, the Government would sanction it at their peril. The Government would not dare, in a matter of this kind, to perpetrate anything like a job, and it would be only such companies as commended themselves to the Government, to the public, and to Parliament, that would be likely to be given the powers intended to be given under this Bill. I think most of the discussion which has taken place could have taken place in committee, for the reason that the principle of the Bill can scarcely be objected to. It simply empowers the Government to afford a right, under restrictions, to certain individuals or companies, and I take it that it will be with a number of smaller companies we shall principally have to deal. I am not looking at the company with its millions, or to the visionary schemes for bringing the water some four or five hundred miles to one particular district. The Bill will encourage people to sink for water and supply a distinct want in all parts of the colony. I am not satisfied that we have artesian water. I hope we have, but there can be no doubt whatever we have an ample supply of water underground, if proper means are adopted to utilise it, and it will be because of these proper measures that a great many of the difficulties under which the goldfields labor will be conquered. A large industry has been established on our goldfields, and it is necessary there should be a large supply of water and power; and this being the case, if certain rights are given, there are people ready to come forward and make the supplies a success. In my judgment

the question is not one we should waste much time over, on the second reading. The points which have been referred to will require some consideration in committee, and the legal members of the House can indicate what alterations should be made. Having this in view, I think there should be no objection to the passing of the second reading.

MR. LEAKE: In common with other hon members who have spoken with regard to such an important measure as this being brought down so late in the session, I think there is not sufficient time for its discussion, more particularly when we come to look into the Bill, and find that it bristles with difficulties of detail. There really has not been time to make this Bill a workable one. I do not, however, intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill, although I reserve to myself the right of criticising the clauses when we go into committee. The Bill itself is a novel departure, and I certainly cannot understand the policy of the Premier in now advocating the giving of concessions to a class of persons whom, only so late as last session, he was pleased to describe as impecunious adventurers. I should like to know who the impecunious adventurers are, this time, and who are the representatives of the syndicate who are to carry out this work. I want to know what induced the Government to rush this Bill into committee. I hope the Premier will give the House some of the details. We should know, for instance, what applications he has received and what the various schemes put forward are, because something must have occurred to alter the opinion of the Premier. We must recollect that it was only last session that he held a very unfavorable idea of syndicates. Looking at *Hansard* and quoting from somewhere about the same place the hon. member for the Murray quoted from, I find the Premier said:—"I should have thought we had had enough experience of syndicates by this time. If not, we must be very hard to satisfy. All over the place, wherever we have had to do with syndicates, it has brought us into trouble. Only the other day, my friend the Attorney-General, when some complicated case was put before him, told me he never had any trouble except with these syndicates. Everything we have to do with them has resulted in trouble, worry and annoyance, and very often in disaster." That is the view the hon. gentleman held at that time about syndicates. I need hardly

say I do not quote these expressions with a view of confirming them or of endorsing them, but rather to show how necessary it is we should have further information and further time to consider this measure. I notice that the application of this measure is not restricted to the goldfields, although I fancy, so far as the practical effect of the Bill is concerned, it is only meant to apply in the direction of assisting in the development of the goldfields by providing a proper water supply and electrical power. I do not think we should make this Bill apply all over the country. There is no compulsion on people who bring forward any of these schemes to put down a deposit by way of proving their *bona fides* and their ability to perform what they undertake. I certainly think there should be a provision for the finding of proper guarantees.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): There is no need to put that in the Bill, surely.

MR. LEAKE: It is a most important measure.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): All that would be provided for in the conditions.

MR. LEAKE: Quite so, but there is no guarantee it will be done, and it should be included in the Bill. We have already on our Statute Book an Act known as the Tramways Act, and the principles of that measure are much the same as those contained in the Bill before the House. It enables people, under certain circumstances, to build tramways, but there must first of all be a provisional order, and in that they have to disclose the whole of their scheme to the public and the Government, and the scheme can then be fully criticised. The Commissioner of Railways has to take all sorts of precautions before he grants a license, and his decision has to be announced in the *Government Gazette*. It will be seen, by referring to the schedules of the Tramways Act, that a certain deposit has to be paid to prove the *bona fides* of the applicants. I have always understood that the Premier had the strongest objection against permitting the hawking about of these concessions in London, and in the face of this, I really cannot understand his readiness at present to grant these concessions without providing the ordinary safeguards. Apart from this, I think the scope of the Bill should be limited. So far as the principle of the Bill is concerned, I do not object to it. Clause 4 provides, how-

ever, that the powers of the people who undertake these works are to be the same as those held by the Commissioner of Railways, and *vice versa*. Do hon. members realise what power it is? It says, in the marginal note: "undertakers to have powers of Commissioner of Railways for entering upon and taking 'private lands.'" That I think is going too far for a private company. Of course compensation has to be paid, but still the power is far too great. I can quite understand why the Bill has been framed in this off-hand manner. It is because the Parliamentary draughtsman has not had time to think out all the details, and therefore to save time has embodied an enactment similar to that of the land-grant railways. To give these persons the same powers as those of the Commissioner of Railways is a very dangerous thing to do. The power is one which should be held under the strongest restrictions. Besides that, very great care should be taken to prevent water being taken from places where it is already required.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The proposals will be subject to the approval of the Government.

MR. LEAKE: That is quite true, but you know we are not always going to have the same Ministry. We will not always have those the country can so fully trust. For instance, some day we will be over there, and then you will be sorry all these things were not tied down by Act of Parliament. Not only do the undertakers (I think this is a horrible expression, and I would suggest the word "promoters") have the same powers as the Commissioner of Railways, but it is sought to adopt other provisions of the Railway Act. Finally, I think objection must be taken against the last clause, which gives the power to make regulations; and although I do not go so far as the hon. member for East Perth, yet I think the Attorney-General might, in committee, have it struck out, and the power to make by-laws restricted to such regulations as would come under the general laws. There are many matters to criticise in the Bill, and I will ask the Government to give the House as full information as it is possible for them to give of everything that has taken place, and the reason for this Bill being introduced. I should like to know if there is any correspondence with regard to these proposals, and we should know exactly what these people propose to do. I can assure the

Premier that, unless these details are given, there is very little chance of the Bill going through the House to-morrow or the next day. We are entering upon very dangerous ground when we commence to discuss a measure of this kind. It most undoubtedly ought to have been referred to a Select Committee. Of course there is no time now, but that does not affect what ought to have been done. It is very questionable whether the Bill can be carried through the other House at this stage, or before the prorogation. As I have said before, I do not, by any means, oppose the principle of the Bill. I have always advocated the encouragement of private enterprise, and more particularly when it would have to be on such a scale of magnitude as we know must be the case if these works are to be undertaken. To carry out such a scheme as that which has been hinted at will mean the employment of millions of money. At any rate, the sum would be too large for us to hope the Government would ever be able to provide, even if it would be wise to raise further loans, when private enterprise would meet the requirements of the public equally as well. At the same time, I think the public interests should be more thoroughly safeguarded. We should have every proof of *bona fides*, and there should be the most ample guarantee; and, what is more, we should insist upon the fullest details of any of the schemes suggested up to the present time being disclosed.

MR. CONNOR: I have on many occasions urged in this House the necessity of thoroughly testing the goldfields for artesian water, and should the diamond drills fail to find such water, there is no doubt that sooner or later water will have to be taken to the fields from the coast, in order to keep our mining interests going. I therefore shall not oppose the Bill, although it may be looked at from various points of view, and should be capable of improvement in committee. I suppose the Hon. the Attorney-General will take care to insert saving clauses to prevent a private company doing injustice to individuals, such, for example, as the ruining of a pastoralist by taking possession of the well from which he waters his stock.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Clause 11 provides for that.

MR. CONNOR: Well, I am glad to hear it. Of course, matters of that kind are for the legal members of the House to deal with, and to see that the public are properly protected. I

would again take this opportunity of urging upon the Government to spare no effort to prove conclusively whether artesian water can be found on the Coolgardie goldfield.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I desire to say a word or two on the general features of the Bill, before it goes into committee, where the details will be dealt with. All the members of the House must know that the question of the Coolgardie water supply is a subject of the most pressing concern to the Government, and it always has been so for many a long day. Last session the hon. member for Yilgarn was anxious that private enterprise should be encouraged to put down wells at Coolgardie, and erect condensers for supplying water under special regulations which he framed. The outcome was that the Government prepared more liberal regulations providing for a monopoly of large catchment areas around Coolgardie, to be given to those who were desirous of conserving water for the use of the town, and for mining purposes, but no one has taken advantage of these provisions. Neither in response to the invitation of the Government has a single tender been received for boring for water at Coolgardie, notwithstanding that advertisements asking for tenders were published all over Australia, including Queensland and New South Wales. No one would risk having to drive the diamond drill, which the hon. member for East Kimberley thinks it is so easy to set to work in a place like Coolgardie, where there might be no water at all, except for domestic purposes. Well, the Government are now considering another aspect of the question, although it is not my duty to invade the province of another Minister by telling the House at this stage what we have in view, but I can assure the hon. member that the matter is not being lost sight of. No Government could afford to neglect so important a matter as the water supply for the goldfields. We have now overtures to do away, by means of electricity, with a great deal of the need of water for mining purposes, and we think it our duty to submit the matter to the judgment of Parliament before we separate. There may be something in the schemes to which attention is being directed, and to give the right to carry them out would involve far fewer privileges than would be needed for the construction of a private tramway or railway, which would require two chains of land

along the route, which might injuriously interfere both with private property and with the intention of the Government to construct a line to the same destination. The only land that would be required by a Waterworks Company would be a few sites for pumping stations, while the permission given to electricians to put pipes underground or to carry a wire overhead would not seriously interfere with grazing or any other rights of landowners or of the public generally. Therefore, the Government ask the House to pass this simple Bill, which only gives them the power to grant licenses to people who say they are willing to spend their money on enterprises which the Government are not willing to undertake on their own account, and which have for their object the supplying of the goldfields with motive power, water, and light. The Government have no intention of granting licenses to lay these lines of pipes or wires to any place but the goldfields, nor do they intend to grant any monopoly, which in the event of one syndicate failing to complete the work would prevent us from granting other licenses to other syndicates. Hon. members will see that these licenses can in no way be likened to the giving of a private company power to make a tramway or a railway which the Government would not be willing to make themselves, and which would necessarily involve larger concessions than would be needed in such a simple matter as the laying of pipes or submarine electric wires, or for the erection of pipes to carry the electric wires overhead. If this Bill is passed, no other concessions are given, and what the Government say is, if there are people who are willing to take up these schemes, let them try. If they do not succeed, they will not hurt anybody. The hon. member for Albany says that there is no provision in this Bill for the lodgment of a deposit to guarantee the completion of the work; but there is no necessity for a deposit, such as would be required in the case of a railway, because the rights which are to be given are, as I have explained, of the simplest kind, and no monopoly is granted to anyone, while on the other hand no private property can be interfered with without compensation being paid to the owner, under arbitration, which generally results in the owner getting twice the value of his land, or perhaps a little more. In reply to another argument of the hon. member for Albany, that the licenses which are

contemplated by the Bill shall be submitted to the approval of Parliament, I have only to say that if the licenses are to be delayed until they can come before the House, the promoters of the water and electric works might as well stay their hands until they can get a private Bill to enable them to proceed. This Bill is intended to expedite the work of the syndicates, and if hon. members are of opinion that the licenses are not to be issued until they have received the approval of the Legislature, the Bill may as well be thrown out, for there would in that case be no occasion for it. In committee, however, I think we might insert a clause giving the Government power to fix the amount companies shall be entitled to charge their consumers, in order to prevent them blackmailing people, if water or electric works are established on the goldfields. This power has been exerted by the Government in connection with the tariffs of two private railway companies who have lines in this colony, and the tariffs have been amicably agreed upon between the Government and the officers of those companies, without any injury being done to the public. I should like the House to read the Bill a second time, and see whether it can be improved in committee.

MR. RANDELL: I am under the same impression as the hon. member for West Perth, that the Premier, in introducing this Bill, did not appear to be quite in favor of it, and I confess that it is a very far-reaching measure to be dealt with in the short time at our disposal this session. Although the Attorney-General tells us that the Bill does not go further than to give permission to syndicates to put pipes underground, or to erect posts to carry overhead wires, there are many other issues and interests involved in the Bill which suggest themselves to my mind. For example, the Bill gives very large powers to the Government in the granting of licenses, and I must say that the Government have not always made very good bargains in matters of this kind. They have generally been taken in by the gentlemen who have obtained privileges in regard to the two land-grant railways, the guano contracts, the timber reserves, and the Perth waterworks.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We had nothing to do with the waterworks.

MR. RANDELL: The Government have always been outwitted or overmatched in any contracts which they have made with private

companies. I do not think the Attorney-General has tried his hand yet in making agreements of this kind.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): You don't want to give him the chance.

MR. RANDELL: I say, that with regard to the agreements which have been made, the Government have, somehow or other, always come off second best; therefore it makes me doubtful whether we shall make a good bargain over water and electric works. The Attorney-General's suggestion that we should give the Government power to fix the charges for services by the syndicates is a very helpful one, and I think it will take away a great objection to the Bill. While there is no doubt that everything possible should be done to supply the goldfields with water, I do not think that the Government will be prepared to run water there from a river on the coast, and, therefore, if this work is to be done, it must be done by outside capital. But I hope that the terms upon which this colony will be employed will not prove to be prejudicial to the colony. Although the Bill appears to be fairly well safeguarded, it will be wise to adopt the suggestion of the hon. member for East Perth, that the terms of the proposed licenses shall be published in the *Government Gazette* for general information; for while I have much respect for the Hon. the Attorney-General, I am not one of those who think that all the brains of the colony are to be found among the members of the Ministry. While I do not intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill, I regret that it should have been brought up at so late a period of the session when it is almost impossible to give it due consideration. At the same time, the works contemplated by the Bill will require some hundreds of thousands of pounds to complete, and there is a possibility that if the subscribing syndicates succeed in accomplishing their object they will confer a benefit on the colony. But it is evident that fresh water for the goldfields can never be obtained from the upper reaches of the Swan, for if the supply in that river were largely drawn upon, the stream would become impregnated with salt water. The syndicates, it seems to me, must come either to the Avon or the Kingston Brook for a supply, but this is a matter that concerns those who are interested in the promotion of the Bill.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I should like to make one or two observations

before the motion for the second reading of the Bill is put. As I said when I moved the second reading, it is unfortunate that it had not been introduced at an earlier period of the session, but the Government only came to a decision in regard to it within the last ten days. The hon. member for Albany asks what are the forces at work which have induced us to bring forward this Bill. Well, I may tell him that a London syndicate, of whom Sir William Robinson, the late Governor of Western Australia, has several times written—and of whom I believe Sir William himself is one—is anxious to take advantage of such a measure in regard to electricity. We have one offer in writing, and Sir William Robinson informs us that the matter is in good hands, and pressing asks whether something cannot be done this session to grant the necessary powers. We have no offer in respect of waterworks, in writing, but several persons have spoken to me about them. I believe that this measure will do good, but I wish to say distinctly to the House, that unless the Bill is agreed to by a large majority, unless there is a general feeling that this is good legislation, I would much rather have nothing to do with the measure. If hon. members prefer to reject the Bill, the Government are in no way pledged to any one regarding it. The Government have only undertaken to introduce the Bill; they have done so, and their duty ends. So far as I am concerned, I have no object to serve. My answer to all who have approached me on the subject of obtaining concessions for supplying electricity or water to the goldfields, for some months past, has been—"You must get a private Bill for everything you require," and this has been the tenor of three or four letters we have written to persons who have addressed us upon the subject. At the same time, we do not like to be in the position of saying to these people, "We are not able or willing to carry out works of this kind ourselves, and we are not prepared to let you do so." The Government are not prepared to recommend to Parliament any practicable scheme for conveying a permanent water supply to Coolgardie—a work which might cost millions of money—and under these circumstances it seems only fair that a private syndicate who may be prepared to undertake the task should have the opportunity of doing so. Nevertheless, I may say that I have a considerable feeling against these syndicates, and I have on more

than one occasion expressed the feeling very plainly. I do not believe in allowing syndicates to do anything the Government can do; but the Government cannot do everything—we have not sufficient means to enable the Government to have a monopoly of every large public work, and in a matter of this kind, if we cannot proceed ourselves, I do not see why we should not leave it to other people to do. If the House insists upon the licenses being submitted to Parliament for approval, this Bill is not, in my opinion, necessary. We can just as easily allow the promoters of these schemes to bring in a private Bill themselves, and thus save the Government the worry and trouble of submitting the licenses to Parliament. I do not think I have anything further to say, except to repeat that, if there is not a general consensus of opinion in regard to this measure, I wish the House to distinctly understand that the Government are not eager to force this Bill upon them in any way.

MR. H. W. SHOLL: Sir, I think the Government have done all they can for the goldfields in regard to providing a water supply, and any complaints which are made against them in that respect are, in my opinion, wholly undeserved. I shall support them in their endeavor to pass this Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL.

The following message was delivered to and read by Mr. Speaker:—

MR. SPEAKER,

The Legislative Council acquaints the Legislative Assembly that it has agreed to a Bill intitled "An Act to further amend 'The "Public Health Act, 1886," and to extend the "powers of Local Boards of Health, and for "other purposes," subject to the amendments contained in the Schedule annexed; in which amendments the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

GEO. SHENTON,

President.

Legislative Council Chamber, Perth,
9th October, 1895.

Schedule of Amendments made by the Legis-

lative Council in "The Public Act Further Amendment Bill":—

Clause 6—Strike out the clause.

Clause 7—Strike out the clause.

Clause 8—Strike out the clause.

Clause 9—Strike out the clause.

Clause 10—Strike out the clause.

C. LEE-STEELE,

9/10/95

Clerk of Council.

Ordered—That the consideration in Committee of the foregoing Message be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

APPROPRIATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved "That this Bill be now read a second time."

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

The clauses passed through Committee without comment.

Schedule A:

Put and passed.

Schedule B:

MR. LEAKE suggested that the practice of putting all the items of the Estimates in the Appropriation Bill should be discontinued, as it appeared to him to be unnecessarily loading the Statute Book.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that to include the whole of the items of the Estimates in the Bill made them easy for purposes of reference.

MR. GEORGE, referring to item under the Educational Vote, "Assisted Schools, £1,350," asked whether it was necessary to have that item in the Bill at all, in view of the abolition of the Assisted Schools by the Bill recently passed.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Estimates were passed before the Assisted Schools Abolition Bill was passed, but the schools in question would only receive the grant-in-aid up to September 31 of this year, as provided by the Act.

Schedule put and passed.

Schedule C:

Put and passed.

Preamble and title:

Put and passed.

Bill reported, without amendment, and report adopted.

THIRD READING.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9:45 o'clock, p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 10th October, 1895.

Electoral Bill: third reading—Width of Tires Bill: second reading; committee—Goldfields Bill: committee; third reading—Mines Regulation Bill: Legislative Assembly's Amendments—Appropriation Bill: first reading—Stock Diseases Bill: committee; third reading—Engine Sparks Fire Prevention Bill: second reading; committee; third reading—Appropriation Bill: second reading; committee—Explosives Bill: second reading; committee—Width of Tires Bill: third reading—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

ELECTORAL BILL.

THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time and passed

WIDTH OF TIRES BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I have no doubt hon. members are aware that there is a body of gentlemen in this colony known as the Bureau of Agriculture. These gentlemen represent the pastoral and agricultural interests of the colony, and devote a large amount of their time for the public good. Amongst other things they have taken into consideration is, the wear and tear on our roads in consequence of the narrow tires used on vehicles which convey heavy loads. I am told, and I have no reason to doubt the truth of it, that half the damage to the roads, and consequently half the cost of repairs, is caused by nothing but these narrow tires. I am informed that if vehicles were bound to have

wheels with tires of a reasonable width proportionate to the loads they carry, our roads would not suffer nearly as much as they do, and the cost to the public funds would be at least half what it is now. Bearing this in mind, the Bureau prepared this Bill and asked me to introduce it. I must apologise for introducing it so late in the session, but I believe the reason of the delay is that the Bureau has been trying to induce the Government to take steps in the matter, but they have been so worried and wearied with other Bills, that they have found it impossible to take this subject into consideration. The Bureau, however, thinks it so important in the interests of the community, and in the interests of the public fund, as well as in the interests of preserving good our roads, that even at this late period of the session they have asked to have this Bill passed. I hope, therefore, hon. members will not see fit to throw it out, but will pass it on to the Assembly. The Bill provides that the width of tires on wheels shall be proportionate to diameter of the axle arm. It is presumed that no person in his senses will put more than a certain weight on a certain axle, and, therefore, it is thought to be quite sufficient to provide that, as the diameter of the axle increases so shall the width of the tire. I may say that this Bill applies only to waggons, drays, carts or lorries, and does not include vehicles intended solely for the carriage of passengers. I need not mention the proportionate width of tires as they are plainly set out in Clause 2. These widths have been considered by the Bureau, which is composed of of practical men, and it is considered that they are reasonably proportionate to the strength of the axle arms. It will be observed that after the 1st January, 1896, no person shall import any vehicle unless the tires upon it are of the prescribed width. Again, it is provided that after the 1st May, 1896, no person engaged in the building or making of vehicles, shall build or sell any vehicle unless the width of the tires is proportionate to the diameter of the axle as mentioned in Clause 2. Further it is provided that after 1st January, 1899, no person shall use any vehicle the tires of which are not of the prescribed width, and that if any person does so, he will be subject to a penalty not exceeding £5. Power is given to local authorities such as Municipal Councils and Roads Boards, as regards roads within their