

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 8th September, 1898.

Petition (British Investors): Dual Titles on Goldfields—Question: Immigration Restrictions. Evasion—Question: Pilbarra Goldfield. Expenditure from Loans—Question: Telegrams (old). Preservation for Evidence—Question: Cattle Ticks at Coolgardie—Paper presented—Return: State Schools. Attendance and Cost—Return: Fremantle Harbour Works. Particulars—Return: Ashburton Goldfield. Officers' Salaries, etc.—Busselton-Boyanup and Newcastle Railways. Revenue and Expenditure—Reappropriation of Loan Moneys Bill, in Committee; Third Schedule further considered: Divisions (2); reported—Adjournment.

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

### PRAYERS.

PETITION (BRITISH INVESTORS):  
DUAL TITLES ON GOLDFIELDS.

MR. ILLINGWORTH presented a petition (including 852 duplicate copies, with separate sets of signatures) from British holders of gold-mining leases in this colony, praying for the abolition of the dual title, reefing and alluvial, to the same area of ground.

Petition received, read, and ordered to be printed.

Ordered that it be considered on the 14th September.

QUESTION: IMMIGRATION RESTRICTIONS. EVASION.

MR. VOSPER asked the Premier,—1, Whether he was aware that certain prohibited immigrants had recently arrived in this colony contrary to 61 Vict., No. 13? 2, If so, what the Government intended to do in the matter with a view to the deportation of the said immigrants, and to the punishment of the persons responsible for their illegal introduction and landing in the colony?

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied:—1, There have only been two cases brought under the notice of the Government. In one, that of a Chinese immigrant from Singapore, instructions were issued that he should be taken back to Singapore; in the other, that

of two Malays, imported for service, the Law Officer advised that they should be allowed to land, and they were landed at Cossack. 2, The Government intend to carry out the law.

QUESTION: PILBARRA GOLDFIELD,  
EXPENDITURE FROM LOANS.

MR. KINGSMILL asked the Director of Public Works,—1, What amount of money from the General Loan Fund was expended on the Pilbarra Goldfield (Vote: General Development of Goldfields) during the year ending June 30th, 1892. 2, Upon what objects?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied:—1, £2,447 6s. 7d. 2, Principally in connection with the construction and deepening of wells. A return showing particulars will be laid upon the table.

QUESTION: TELEGRAMS (OLD), PRESERVATION FOR EVIDENCE.

MR. WILSON asked the Premier,—1, Whether it was true that steps were being taken in the Telegraph Department to destroy all telegrams over two years old. 2, If so, whether the Premier would give instructions for the preservation of those on hand, as they were valuable documentary evidence in case of legal or other proceedings.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied:—1, All telegrams have been destroyed up to June, 1896. The remainder are still on record, but, unless otherwise ordered, will be destroyed after they are two years old. 2, In Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania, and Queensland they are only kept for one year, in South Australia for five years, and in Western Australia two years. The want of room renders it difficult to keep them longer.

QUESTION: CATTLE TICKS AT COOLGARDIE.

MR. A. FORREST, without notice, asked the Premier, whether any action would be taken by the Government, in reference to a statement made in the House on the previous evening, by the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans), to the effect that he possessed a number of cattle ticks found in Coolgardie by an inspector.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied that he did not know what steps could be taken, but he would inquire into the matter.

#### PAPER PRESENTED.

By the COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Expenditure of loan moneys on Pilbarra goldfield, return.

Ordered to lie on the table.

#### RETURN: STATE SCHOOLS, ATTENDANCE AND COST.

Ordered, on the motion of Mr. CONOLLY, for Mr. Monger, that there be laid upon the table a return showing,—1, the average attendance of pupils at the James-street Infants' School for the quarter ending 30th June last; 2, the number of teachers employed in that school; 3, the salary of each teacher; 4, the proportion of the salaries actually paid to teachers in that school per annum to the number of children in average attendance, basing the calculation on present average, and on the salaries actually paid to teachers at the present time; 5, the cost per child per annum in the infants' department of schools within the metropolitan area, calculated on the present average attendance, and on the actual salaries paid to teachers; 6, the cost per child per annum for all children attending State schools in Perth (exclusive of the James-street Infants' School), calculated on present average attendance and on the actual salaries paid to teachers; 6. the cost per child per annum for all children attending State schools in Perth (exclusive of the James-street Infants' School), calculated on present average and actual salaries paid to teachers; 7, the cost per child per annum for all children attending State schools in Western Australia.

#### RETURN: FREMANTLE HARBOUR WORKS. PARTICULARS.

Ordered, on the motion of Mr. GEORGE, that there be laid upon the table a return showing,—1. The quantity of sand actually removed from day to day in connection with the Fremantle harbour works, from July 1st to August 27th, 1898. 2. The depth below low-water mark to which the piles were driven (a) as to the

old railway bridge; (b) as to the new railway bridge. 3, The present depth of the river-bed below low-water mark at (a) twenty feet below the new railway bridge; (b) under and between both railway bridges; (c) twenty feet above the old railway bridge.

#### RETURN: ASHBURTON GOLDFIELD. OFFICERS' SALARIES, ETC.

Ordered, on the motion of Mr. QUINLAN, for Mr. Hooley, that there be laid upon the table a return showing—1, The amounts paid in salaries to the warden and mining registrar of the Ashburton goldfield respectively. 2, The amounts paid for the last financial year to those officers for travelling allowance respectively. 3, The number of days occupied in travelling from the Ashburton to Bangemall. 4, The distance between the two places as the crow flies. 5, The value of gold exported during the past financial year from the Ashburton and Bangemall respectively.

#### BUSSELTON-BOYANUP AND NEWCASTLE RAILWAYS. REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

Mr. GEORGE, referring to a notice of motion he had given, for a return showing revenue and expenditure on the Busselton-Boyanup railway and the Newcastle railway, said some action had been taken by the department, in the general scheme of reorganization, to meet the altered conditions of the service. Therefore, if the Commissioner of Railways would give an assurance that this would be carried into effect shortly, or at once, he would be satisfied, and would not proceed with the motion.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piessé): The return asked for was one he would be willing to prepare, but he understood that the object was to ascertain the revenue and expenditure in connection with the Bunbury and Boyanup service and the Newcastle service. With regard to the Boyanup-Busselton and Donnybrook service, the change in the running of trains on that line which had been contemplated for some time had resulted in the rearrangement of the time table, which would come into force on the 12th instant. Every effort was being made to reduce the train mileage in con-

nection with the running of trains, and he hoped that with this assurance the hon. member would not proceed with the motion.

**MR. GEORGE:** The statement made was quite satisfactory to him, and he would not proceed with the motion.

Motion withdrawn from the Notice Paper.

## REAPPROPRIATION OF LOAN MONEYS BILL.

### IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration of Third Schedule resumed.

Item, Survey of Railway from Coolgardie to Norseman, £5,000:

[Amendment moved by Mr. Leake, at the previous sitting, that the item be struck out.]

**MR. LEAKE:** Before discussing the subject further, he would like to ask the Commissioner of Railways if there was any proposal to survey the line from Coolgardie to Bonny Vale?

**THE PREMIER:** That was done a year or two ago, because the route to Broad Arrow ran past Bonny Vale.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** The arguments with regard to the survey from Leonora to Menzies might be used with equal effect against the survey now proposed, and others could be brought to bear. The railway would have to be built not by this Parliament, but by the next. Some members might have an idea of what the next Parliament would think regarding the rival claims of Coolgardie and Esperance as to the starting point for the Norseman line. Coolgardie had a rival not only in Esperance, with regard to the starting point, but also in Kalgoorlie. This House would not be justified in voting money for this survey from loan funds. The Premier had said the majority of people who would have to pay for the line were in favour of the route now proposed.

**THE PREMIER:** It would be in their interest. He did not say they had expressed an opinion.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** Taking that view there were more disinterested people in Western Australia than he had supposed; but there had been rival deputations, one favouring the Coolgardie

route, the other the Esperance route; and those deputations visited most of the populous centres in the colony. Everywhere the Esperance deputies were received with open arms. The meeting in Perth, which might be supposed to be against having Esperance as the starting point, was presided over by the Premier's brother, the mayor of the city, who was supported by the member for Perth; and in spite of the diplomatic arguments of the member for Coolgardie, the majority at the meeting were in favour of the Esperance route. The claims of Esperance were like the articles mentioned at the end of a sale list, "too numerous to mention." One claim was that Norseman would be drawing its agricultural supplies from the south-east coast district; and, from what the Premier had seen at Esperance, did he not consider it capable to a large extent, if not altogether, of supplying the wants of Norseman with agricultural produce? The Premier indicated that he did not think so; but possibly he had not seen enough of that district. As Carthage was to Rome its natural enemy, so the Premier seemed to regard Esperance as the natural enemy, whereas it should be the natural friend, of this part of Western Australia. He only wished the Premier would emulate the example of Cato, who, while hating Carthage as the natural enemy of Rome, had handed down to posterity a reputation for justice; but it was to be feared that the reputation of the right hon. the Premier would, in the light of later years, always be somewhat tarnished by the way in which he had treated the people of Esperance.

**MR. MORGANS:** As to whether the Premier had treated Esperance fairly that was a matter of opinion. The Government proposed to give railway communication to Norseman, and the Committee were asked to consider the desirability of giving Norseman a railway. The member for Pilbarra had drawn into the discussion the great question as to the rights of Esperance to have railway communication with Norseman; but this had nothing to do with the question before the Committee, which was whether a survey should be made from Coolgardie to Norseman.

MR. VOSPER: With what object?

MR. MORGANS: To make a railway. So far as Esperance was concerned, he had the greatest possible sympathy with it, and would be glad to see everything and anything done for the best interests of Esperance; and if any question were brought forward in reference to Esperance and its well-being, it would have his support. If the Government, in their wisdom, had chosen to suggest the construction of a railway from Esperance to Norseman, although he did not consider that would be so much to the advantage of Norseman as a railway from Coolgardie to Norseman, still he would have given it his support. The Government had a political policy in this question, and it was no good attempting to hide it from the House or the country. The Government were not prepared to open up a competing port with the goldfields in Esperance as against Fremantle. He was not called upon to say whether that was a good or a bad policy.

THE PREMIER: We said it was not necessary.

MR. MORGANS: Without discussing that point at all, he said the Government had declared that this was their policy. The people of Esperance and Norseman should remember that theirs were not the only interests to be considered. What was done in the House was supposed to be in the best interests of the country as a whole. He had seen remarks made by the Mayor of Esperance, whom he (Mr. Morgans) knew to be a very able and competent man, as to the action of the Government, and he thought the remarks had been made without proper consideration.

MR. VOSPER: What would the hon. member have said in such a case?

MR. MORGANS said he did not think he would have called the Premier of the country a "disreputable political trickster," which was what the mayor of Esperance did.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The language was not Parliamentary.

MR. MORGANS: It was not justifiable on the part of any public man to speak of another public man in that way. As a goldfields member, he asserted that Norseman deserved a railway, and it was in the best interests of that goldfield to have a railway built. Supposing the people

of Esperance could not get a railway from Esperance to Norseman, the next best thing was to have a railway from Coolgardie to Norseman. Once a railway was made from Coolgardie to Norseman, it would be a step to the construction of a railway to Esperance, and a long step. The railway would then have been made 100 miles out of 220 miles in the direction of Esperance, and any reasonable person must see that there was more prospect of getting railway communication from a line which was constructed, than waiting to get a railway started from Esperance.

MR. GREGORY: The people would be all starved out of the place before then.

MR. MORGANS: Why would the people be starved out of the place? Esperance had to depend for the whole of its life upon Norseman, and between Esperance and Norseman there was a piece of desert 120 miles in length, which made it practically impossible to make use of the valuable facilities of Esperance as a port, in consequence of the difficulties of transit over that desert. That might be a misfortune for the people of Esperance. He only wished there was a hard road between Esperance and Norseman, so that Esperance could get a fair share of the traffic. The Premier and the Government were not responsible for the existence of this piece of sandy desert between Esperance and Norseman. The result of the existence of this desert was that all the heavy machinery now used in the mines of Norseman was sent from Fremantle to Coolgardie, and taken down that way, simply because people could not afford to pay the cost involved in sending the heavy machinery over the sandy desert. It was cheaper to pay the railway rates from Fremantle to Coolgardie, and send the machinery down from Coolgardie to Norseman. At the present moment there was a large battery, with a full equipment of machinery, going to the Norseman Gold Mine; and, after considering the whole of the facts with regard to the freight and cost of delivery, it had been decided to send this machinery *via* Coolgardie, and a large portion of it was now on the way. This showed that Esperance was suffering, not from the incapacity of the Government, but from the

unfortunate fact that nature had put a sandy belt between Esperance and Norseman.

MR. MORAN: Sand made a good bed for a railway.

MR. GEORGE: There might be worse ballast than sand.

MR. MORGANS said he was not prepared to discuss that question. He knew that a railway might be built over a sandy desert, but could hon. members persuade the Government to do that? The only thing that could be done, in view of the declared policy of the Government, was to build a railway from Coolgardie to Norseman.

A MEMBER: Was it good policy?

MR. MORGANS: That was a side issue.

MR. LEAKE: The Government had abandoned the railway.

MR. MORGANS: Oh, no; the Government had not. They had only deferred it, and there was a great difference between abandoning a railway and deferring it.

MR. LEAKE: The Government had better defer the survey, then.

MR. MORGANS: A railway must be built to Norseman, because it was of the utmost importance there should be communication. He was not advocating this railway from selfish motives, although the member for Albany smiled at that statement as though incredulous. He (Mr. Morgans) was not pleading for Coolgardie, but was pleading entirely on behalf of Norseman people and their interests. Some feeling had arisen as to whether this railway should start from Kalgoorlie or Coolgardie, but he did not believe these local feelings and jealousies should be allowed to exist. What was more, he did not believe the local feelings and jealousies existed, except in the pens of some newspaper editors. When he discussed these questions with, say, the member for North-East Coolgardie and other friends in Kalgoorlie, he noticed they were quite agreed that railways should be built from the most desirable point, so far as cost of construction and the convenience of people were concerned.

MR. VOSPER: Some people thought the Boulder ought to be the starting-point.

MR. MORGANS: That might be so, but the majority of people freely admitted that the railway should be built

from Coolgardie. If Coolgardie were made the starting-point, it would serve a great number of interests, tapping the Burbanks and Londonderry districts and the country some miles further south, which at the present time was prosperous from a gold-mining point of view. A railway from Coolgardie would also serve the important and growing district of Redhill.

MR. VOSPER: At 30 miles distance?

THE PREMIER: The survey went within fifteen miles of Redhill.

MR. MORGANS: The survey went, so far as he knew, within eleven or twelve miles of Redhill, and he had been over the country. The member for North-East Coolgardie used to be the strongest supporter of this route from Coolgardie.

MR. VOSPER: A railway from Esperance to Coolgardie always had his support.

MR. MORGANS: Then the member for North-East Coolgardie advocated, in part, really what he (Mr. Morgans) was advocating.

MR. VOSPER: The hon. member was advocating, in part, what he (Mr. Vosper) advocated as a whole.

MR. MORGANS: And if the question were put to the vote, the member for North-East Coolgardie would no doubt lend it his support, for the reason that, years ago, he was convinced of the necessity for this railway. The member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) ought to allow the mantle of fairness to fall across his shoulders. The hon. member knew the district and the importance of a railway to Norseman, and his broad-minded attitude on all questions should preclude him from opposing in any way a measure which had for its object the construction of such a railway.

MR. MORAN: Oh!

MR. MORGANS: The member for East Coolgardie did not appear to appreciate the flattering remarks which were being applied to him; but, with the broad-minded views he held on all questions of the kind, he would not let his mind be biased by a question of route. Kalgoorlie had already a railway from Menzies, and the member for East Coolgardie could not raise any objection to the present proposal, except on the ground of securing the best starting point for the

railway proposed now. The hon. member might be relied on to give his support to the making of the surveys in order to satisfy his own mind, and the minds of other members, as to which was the best starting point—a matter that could be settled only by making the survey asked for. Hon. members seemed to be straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel; for while it was proposed to spend the small sum of £5,000 in making a survey for a railway to an important mining district, he did not wish to be ungenerous, and he regretted having to call attention to the £15,000 allotted to the district of the member for Pilbarra.

MR. KINGSMILL: Not £15,000.

MR. MORGANS: Well, £5,000.

THE PREMIER: It was £13,000.

MR. MORGANS: No more than £5,000 was now asked in connection with the survey of a railway from Coolgardie. In view of the great importance of the question, it was to be hoped hon. members would not impart any feeling of localism into the discussion, and would not attempt to stop a valuable work simply to be in opposition to the Government. The best thing that could be done under the present circumstances was to build the railway which was now required to the Norseman goldfield. The development of that goldfield was of great importance to the gold-mining industry of the colony, and it was, therefore, to be hoped hon. members would not press this question to a division, but would be generous and place facilities in the hands of the Government for carrying out a survey which would result in valuable information, worthy of the best consideration of Parliament.

MR. QUINLAN: Considering the indebtedness of the country, and the probability that the construction of the proposed line would not take place for a year or two, the expenditure on the survey might well be deferred; and he intended to vote against the proposed expenditure. Lines had already been surveyed of the construction of which there was not the least likelihood. Seeing that it had been deemed advisable to defer the construction of an agricultural railway, he could not see that the Government would be wise in proceeding with this railway from Coolgardie to Norseman. From the arguments of the plausible member for Cool-

gardie (Mr. Morgans), nothing could be learned to convince hon. members that it would be wise to construct this railway. When this subject was discussed a day or two ago, members seemed in favour of the line from Coolgardie to Norseman. It was even admitted by the member who represented Esperance and Norseman, that to construct a railway from Esperance would be to go over the desert. There was no desire to have more white elephants than there were already in the colony. The line from Esperance to Norseman might be wanted once in six months, so far as could be judged from the output of gold at the latter place. The suggestion that we should open the markets of the colony to the other places was to his mind a fallacy. He was surprised, to say the least of it, that hon. members should pretend to have the interests of this colony at heart, and advocate that which they knew would be detrimental to those interests. It might be wise to construct such a line in the future—possibly when there was federation of Australia—but to dream of opening the port of Esperance to Adelaide, which would result from the construction of a line from Esperance to the Norseman, would be fatal to the best interests of the country and the districts which he and other members represented.

MR. MORGANS: That was a good reason for making a line from Coolgardie, instead of from Esperance.

MR. QUINLAN: If there should be a line from anywhere to Esperance, it should be from Coolgardie, and he had already expressed that opinion. Supposing the Coolgardie field had never been discovered, what would have been the result of the construction of the railway to Southern Cross? Had it not been for the discovery of the Coolgardie fields, that line would have been a drag on the country.

THE PREMIER: There was plenty of gold at Southern Cross.

MR. QUINLAN: It was of no use the Premier saying that. Would the output of gold at Southern Cross have been enough to pay the interest on the railway to that place, assuming that the Coolgardie field had never been discovered? As to the construction of railways by private enterprise, the exper-

ience of the colony had been a bitter one. He was not in favour of railways of any kind being constructed by what was termed "private enterprise." It would require strong reasons to induce him to alter that opinion. The expressions which had fallen from the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) were much to be regretted, for he used a threat that the day would come when the goldfields would do this and that, and would revolutionise the place.

MR. VOSPER: They were doing it already, and would do it some more, too.

MR. QUINLAN: The hon. member should be grateful to the other parts of the colony, which had borne the burden and heat of the day so long.

MR. VOSPER: When did they do it?

MR. QUINLAN: The inhabitants of the older districts would have to pay the penalty, if anything caused the goldfields population to return to Victoria and New South Wales.

MR. VOSPER: As a matter of business, the old inhabitants had been paid very well.

MR. QUINLAN: The Forrest Government and the descendants of the early settlers could feel that they had been generous to the goldfields, that they had spent money in all directions to assist the new-comers, and were entitled to a little gratitude.

MR. GEORGE: It was not the Government, but Parliament, which spent money.

MR. QUINLAN: The few people who would be losers by the non-construction of the railway from Esperance, some of whom were his own friends, were certainly entitled to sympathy as persons who had made a bad bargain; but they felt aggrieved only because they had purchased land at Esperance with the expectation of making a profit when the line was constructed; but the people in the South-Western District were entitled to prior consideration. As to the meeting held in Perth a few weeks ago, which had resolved that the railway should start from Esperance, he could venture the opinion that it was a packed meeting. Having had a large experience of public meetings in Perth, and knowing the mover of the proposition that the line

should start from Esperance, he would say that the same person had done no good either to himself or to the country, since he knew him, but had been agitating and making people uneasy and unsettled, and discomforting many whom he might otherwise have helped. That person did not belong to Perth, but was a total stranger here, and did not represent this portion of the colony. He (Mr. Quinlan) presided at a meeting about a week ago, and the same person was present, but did not dare to repeat his tactics.

MR. VOSPER: Perhaps the hon. member did not allow amendments at his meeting.

MR. QUINLAN: That was not so. The reason given by the member for Pilbarra for the Esperance railway was totally unfounded and erroneous. As there were other and better channels for the expenditure of this sum of £5,000, which might grow into £10,000 before the survey was completed, he would support the amendment.

MR. HIGHAM: If it were proposed to at once construct this railway, and if this could be done, the developments at Norseman would compel him to record his vote in favour of the survey; but as in present circumstances it would be impossible to construct the railway for two or three years, he would join with those who desired to cut out the item, on the same principle which had led him to vote for the excision of the previous survey. The next few years would witness many new developments in that locality; and, if all the railways desired in that district were to be surveyed before there was a possibility of constructing them, the result would be a similar state of affairs to that in the Pilbarra district, where there were three separate routes for a railway surveyed without the remotest possibility of a line being built. With regard to the public meeting in Perth, something might be said on both sides, for the Perth people showed themselves so indifferent to the question that they allowed a snatch vote to be taken.

MR. MORGANS: The meeting was packed.

MR. HIGHAM: Then it was very thinly packed. There were more empty chairs than people in attendance. It was significant that the delegates from Esper-

ance spoke at Perth, but fought shy of the meeting at Fremantle.

MR. CONOLLY : The hon. member meant the Norseman delegates.

MR. VOSPER : The Esperance men did not come further than Kalgoorlie.

MR. HIGHAM apologised. He meant the Norseman delegates. The survey should be postponed till there was some possibility of constructing the line.

MR. ILLINGWORTH supported the amendment for the same reason as he had given when speaking on the previous item, that there was no reasonable prospect of constructing the line ; and it would be wrong to lead the people at Norseman to suppose that a railway was intended to be built, when there was no prospect of so doing. The Premier had mentioned that a survey was made from Coolgardie towards Menzies at some considerable cost. The only use of that survey, so far, had been in regard to the Bonny Vale railway.

THE PREMIER : The survey had been availed of in the line from Broad Arrow to Menzies. It was only the part from Broad Arrow to Coolgardie which had not been constructed. The hon. member did not know the country.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he knew the country, and had travelled over it.

THE PREMIER : Then the hon. member did not know the facts.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : What he had said was that a survey was made towards Menzies from Coolgardie. That was correct.

THE PREMIER said he understood the hon. member to say, "to Menzies."

MR. ILLINGWORTH : No. It was a question of route. The same question presented itself now. That survey had been of no value to the country, and the cost of it was a loss, except in so far as it was useful for the railway to Bonny Vale.

THE PREMIER : Trial surveys had been made in dozens of cases.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : And an immense amount of money thus wasted.

THE PREMIER : No ; money had been saved.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : Where there was a prospect of constructing a railway, flying surveys might be justifiable ; but in this case it was not a flying survey, but a definite survey which was proposed,

a survey which would fix for a future Parliament the route for the railway, and which involved an expenditure of £5,000 long before it was needed. The present Parliament should be content to mind its own business, and leave other Parliaments and future generations to work out their own destiny. Were we now to fix upon a certain route, some future Parliament might decide upon another route ; and, supposing this to be the best route for the railway, no survey was required for a year or two.

THE PREMIER : According to the hon. member, there was no prospect of doing anything whatever.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : Why should we go to the expense ? It would be different were this vote out of revenue, or out of an ordinary loan ; but we were called upon to absolutely reappropriate money which had already been voted, and was needed for other purposes. This was not an orderly way of conducting the business of Parliament, and for that reason he would oppose it.

MR. GREGORY : While agreeing that Norseman should have railway communication, the proper course of that railway was from Esperance ; but the railway was to be built for the people of Norseman, and not for those of Coolgardie and Esperance Bay, and it was because the Norseman district had proved itself worthy of railway communication that the Government intended to build a railway between Coolgardie and Norseman. When the actual proposal for the railway came before the House, he intended to vote that Esperance should be the starting point ; but, in the interests of the Norseman people, he would vote now for the survey, which should be made so that the Government would be able to tell the House what the line would cost.

MR. VOSPER : If the survey were made right through to Esperance, the hon. member's argument might hold good.

MR. GREGORY : The Norseman people wanted a railway. If they could not get it from Esperance, he was in favour of a line from Coolgardie to Norseman. The people of Norseman should have their railway, and therefore he would support the proposal of the Government.

MR. HOLMES : All members were convinced, even if some were not prepared

to admit it, that the present state of the finances did not justify the spending of money on surveys for railways, which he believed the Government had no intention of carrying out. Granting surveys would simply be fulfilling a promise made when money was more plentiful than at the present time. No money was now available for the purpose, except by misappropriation of the finances, which would be neither reasonable nor just, and would be opposed to good finance.

**THE PREMIER:** The hon. member was a fine financier!

**MR. LEAKE:** That was a nice way for the Premier to speak of one of his supporters.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Common abuse.

**MR. GEORGE:** Without going into the question of whether the railway should start from Esperance or Coolgardie, he might be allowed to show why it was advisable to have a survey. The country and members had been crying out for retrenchment and economy, but while there were occasions when economy was required, there were also occasions when it was advisable to spend money. We had on our engineering staff, as far as survey skill was concerned, the pick of the colonies, and the staff comprised engineers of whom any Government could be proud. Some of the men were lent by the Government of Victoria two, three, or four, years ago to make a survey in regard to the deviation of the Eastern Railway; and, whatever the cost of that survey, it was amply repaid by the fact that they discovered and laid bare errors made in previous surveys by officers who, however well intentioned, had not the skill of those who were brought over. He did not know what the intentions of the Government were in connection with this matter, but possibly they were anticipating cutting out this survey staff as soon as they had finished their railways, but did not wish to retrench the department entirely until these surveys had been made.

**THE PREMIER:** Hear, hear.

**MR. GEORGE:** Just as people might wish to cut down expenses in their business, but might desire to strain a point if they had good workmen, so it might be with the Government. He had had a great deal to do with railway construction, not only here, but in different parts

of the world, and that was the idea which occurred to him.

**THE PREMIER:** Whatever the result of the division might be, the time spent in discussing this question of railway surveys, although considerable, had not been wasted, because we had been able to place before the House and the country the views of members relative to the prospects of the Mount Margaret goldfield, and the country between Menzies and Leonora, and the country further northward. We had also been able to place before the country the position of the goldfields at Dundas, of which the town of Norseman was the principal centre. Moreover, it had afforded him an opportunity of explaining the views the Government entertained, and why they desired to make surveys to build these railways. He believed that when the matter was really carefully considered, people would come to the conclusion that the Government were advocating this, not for some political reason, but because they had solid, good grounds for the action taken. Just now the member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) made some reference to these proposals, and, he thought, said they were not just. The hon. member certainly told us they were altogether opposed to good finance, and because he (the Premier) jokingly remarked—for he did not wish to say anything offensive—that he (Mr. Holmes) was no doubt a great financier, the member for Central Murchison charged him with being abusive.

**MR. HOLMES** said he could manage his business better than the Premier did the country.

**THE PREMIER:** Perhaps so. He believed the hon. member was a good man of business, and he deserved the greatest credit for his energy. But because he (the Premier) made a joking remark, he was accused of being abusive.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** When it was made, he thought the Premier really meant it.

**THE PREMIER:** If anything offensive or abusive had been said, he ought to apologise to the member for East Fremantle. He was sure the member for Central Murchison would acquit him of saying anything intentionally offensive.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : When the words were spoken, he did not think the Premier was joking.

THE PREMIER : If a member of the Opposition deserved a hit, he did not mind giving him one ; but he was not in the habit of being offensive to his own supporters. Members who advocated economy should always encourage the making of surveys before being asked to vote money for certain works. As a rule, in this colony, members had been asked to vote large sums of money to make surveys to Menzies, Murchison, Cue, and, in fact, everywhere almost, on estimates based on what we might call horseback inspection. They had very seldom had full information before them in order to know what the work would cost ; and the reason was not far to seek. Supposing we were in such a hurry that we had to get a Loan Bill passed in order to borrow money as soon as possible, a survey was taken offhand, and the whole thing carried out as quickly as it could be, the House not being in a position until a long period had elapsed to know the actual cost of the work. In a great work of construction, a large amount of money might be wasted through an error with regard to a certain bank, or bridge, or culvert over a marsh, in consequence of survey not having been carefully performed. If there was no intention whatever to build this railway, he should certainly be one of those to vote against the survey, because we did not want to spend 5s., to say nothing of £5,000, when there was no intention of carrying out the work. The member for Central Murchison had told us a good many times during the last two or three weeks that there was no reasonable prospect of constructing the line. He (the Premier) would like to ask him what we were going to do during the next few years. Were we not going to build any more new railways ? Were there no other great public works to be carried out ?

MR. ILLINGWORTH : Let the Government pay their Treasury bonds.

MR. LEAKE : Let them pay their debts.

THE PREMIER : If the hon. member (Mr. Leake) should be so unfortunate as to get a seat upon the Treasury benches, we should get, in the first Governor's Speech, a policy in regard to opening up

and developing this immense territory. Unless things were very much worse than he (the Premier) thought they would be, he (Mr. Leake) would have to go back to the comfortable chair he now occupied, or else have to be equal to the necessities of the country. We could afford railways better now than ever we could.

MR. GEORGE : The Premier must have deceived us before then.

THE PREMIER : No one had been deceived by him. Let people look at our assets now, as compared with what they were a little while ago. This railway must be built, whether next year or not, unless we were going to suppose that Norseman was never to be more than at present, and that it would languish and disappear altogether. Did anyone say that Norseman, with that auriferous country extending nearly all the way between it and Coolgardie, would remain as at present ? Would it not develop and increase ? His opinion was that it would develop and increase very largely ; and therefore a railway must be built. A railway to Norseman would assist all the people of the colony ; and the constituents of the members of Fremantle would probably benefit to a greater extent, or at any rate to an equal extent, with the citizens of Perth ; whilst the people of Avon Valley would benefit more than any other agriculturists in this colony, because they would have a market. In the interests of Norseman the railway should be built from Coolgardie, because it would connect it with the existing goldfields and all other parts of the colony. Of course two lines would be advantageous, but we could not get them at present, and therefore people at Norseman ought to rejoice at any prospect of being connected with Coolgardie and the rest of the colony. It would be in the interests of the pastoralists and the agriculturists of the colony, because it would give them a better market to the extent of the population on the goldfields. He was quite sure that whether we looked at this question in the interests of Norseman, or in the interests of the eastern goldfields, or in the interests of pastoralists and agriculturists, or of Perth and Fremantle, or of Western Australia generally, the best way to serve Norseman was to connect it with the existing railway system of the colony.

For these reasons he hoped members would support the making of the survey.

MR. WALLACE said he intended to vote for the amendment. When speaking generally on the Reappropriation Bill, he stated this was one of the items he did not agree to. If the Premier would only listen to the advice of some hon. members, he would see that the desire was to "go slow," as we were circumstanced at present. Many other ways of spending this £5,000 would give a quicker return. Esperance being a portion of Western Australia, it was unfair to cut that port off from the other portion of the colony. Before we could be in a position to build a line from Coolgardie to Norseman, federation would again be before us, and then hon. members might see the necessity of having a railway to Esperance, because Esperance would be of value to us and to Australia as a whole. He did not think the colony was insolvent or bad. We were in a "corner", no doubt, and the colony required careful handling to get through the difficulty; therefore this £5,000, small as it might appear, might be converted to a better use and be more beneficial than expending it on this survey.

HON. H. W. VENN: The question was whether we should or should not commence the railway at Esperance, or whether the line should or should not be continued from Coolgardie. The Committee should not be misled in regard to the issue. He had heard one if not more hon. members say they intended to vote for a survey of this line, as it would leave them entirely free to reverse that vote when the question came up again for the construction of the line. Those hon. members were deliberately wasting public money. Those who were opposed to the Coolgardie-Norseman line should declare themselves now. It was not in the mind of the Premier to construct a line from Esperance to Norseman, and it was not the desire of the House to do so. He intended to vote for a line from Coolgardie to Norseman, and if that was the test question now, he would vote for the survey. The Premier had said the colony was not able to afford this and that; therefore one would have thought the colony was hardly able to afford this survey. Last night the Premier said we

could not afford abattoirs and chilling works, there being no money; but now the Premier said the country was never in a better position to construct a railway than now. If that was so, £5,000 was nothing to a great country like this. It was well to settle the question of the construction of this line now, so that it should not crop up again. This was not a trial survey, but an absolute survey that was to be made between Norseman and Coolgardie; and if we authorised the Government to make the survey, let us stick to our guns and authorise the Government to construct the railway.

MR. MORAN: There was a good deal in what the member for Wellington said, for it was just as well for the Committee to see what it was committing itself to. We should first thoroughly satisfy ourselves that this line would pay, and we wanted to know what it would cost. The Premier said it would cost £200,000, but he (Mr. Moran) thought it was more likely to cost £400,000. There was the rolling-stock to be considered, also the running of the trains and the fitting up. He was sure the line from Coolgardie to Norseman could not be constructed under £300,000.

THE PREMIER: It could be done for less.

MR. MORAN: How much did it cost per mile in Western Australia to construct railway lines as an average?

MR. LEAKE: About £4,000.

MR. MORAN said that was his opinion.

THE PREMIER: Oh, no.

MR. MORAN: Let us say £3,000.

THE PREMIER: We should not reckon all the work that had been done between Fremantle and Perth, and average that with the other lines.

MR. MORAN: There would be a deep cutting in this railway between Coolgardie and Norseman, and there was a nasty piece of country from the Slate Rocks to Widgeemooltha and on to "Mount Morgan." It was a most difficult piece of country—mountainous country, so far as the goldfields country was concerned. There were gullies which would have to be bridged over, and big cuttings would have to be made. As to the mineral wealth of the country *en route*, he would be silent. Where once the ring of hammers was heard, and

where there were formerly many prospectors, a dead rabbit was found the other day.

THE PREMIER: A good many men were there now.

MR. MORAN: There was this permanent difficulty that the line was to be constructed into an absolutely waterless country. The Government wished to construct the railway to Norseman, which in itself was waterless, and water might have to be carted from Northam to Norseman. If the Coolgardie water scheme were now constructed, there might be no objection to the Norseman line being built; but the Premier had no intention of constructing the Coolgardie water scheme before this railway line.

THE PREMIER said he did not say that.

MR. MORAN said he was saying it for the Premier.

THE PREMIER: The tanks were full at Widgeemooltha and other places.

MR. MORAN: Full of emptiness.

THE PREMIER: The tank at Widgeemooltha had been running over for some time.

MR. MORAN: The evaporation per annum was 7 feet, and how much water would be left in a 10 feet tank, if there were 7 feet of evaporation? He had been informed by a high authority in the Railway Department, that the department was entirely opposed to the construction of the line from Coolgardie to Norseman.

MR. MORGANS: The same argument applied to the Menzies line.

MR. MORAN: But the Menzies line was built. No doubt the same argument applied; but, in the case of Menzies, it was only necessary to go a little further to get a big freshwater supply. On the road from Esperance there was no freshwater. Was the Coolgardie water scheme going to be carried out?

THE PREMIER: Yes.

MR. MORAN: And when finished?

THE PREMIER: In three years.

MR. MORAN: Well, in the name of goodness, why was the permanent survey required now? It was, no doubt, to fulfil the promise made by the Premier. But what was a Premier's promise, in these changed times, compared to the import-

ance of the issues involved? If the Premier did give his promise, why should every member be bound thereby, seeing that, as the Premier well knew, members were allowed a little latitude, and must be allowed latitude, if they had to be honest? As for the Coolgardie water scheme, he had not yet, even in his dreams, seen it carried out; and that was the reason he was supporting the proposal for a line to Mount Leonora, seeing that it was just as well to have two strings to one's bow. The proposed survey would simply raise false hopes. There would be a shortage in the revenue next year, and, so far as he could see, the financial condition of the colony would not improve for a year or two more. It would be unwise to endeavour to pay off the indebtedness next year, and the proper policy was to provide out of loan funds for the deficit of £200,000. The works which had caused the deficit were properly chargeable to loan; and, instead of undertaking unnecessary works, there ought to be a transfer from the revenue account to the loan account. Bunbury harbour and other works, from which our children's children were going to benefit, ought not to be paid for out of revenue, but to be chargeable to loan. Hon. members would be acting properly by not taking the faintest notice of the claims which had been put forth by Kalgoorlie, claims put forth in no reasonable or rational manner. As a member for the district, he treated these claims with the contempt they deserved. The language of a section most active on the question, in reference to this House, and more particularly in reference to the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans), who was respected and esteemed by hon. members because he had the audacity to represent the interests of his constituents, was worthy of the contempt of every man in the House. When the Menzies line was built, Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie sank their differences, or said they would sink their differences, and loyally abide by the Government's decision. If ever any railway had to be built in future, he, for one, would loyally abide by whatever decision was come to by the officers of the Government. He would discountenance any agitation which had for its object the

stirring up of strife between the two towns.

MR. GEORGE: Who did it?

MR. MORAN: It was known by whom this unworthy strife was stirred up; and he took the opportunity of saying, on behalf of his constituents, that he was entirely ashamed of the foul language which had been used in speaking of the member for Coolgardie, who, after all, was a respectable gentleman who had brought a large amount of capital into the colony, and perhaps had not had the luck he deserved. At any rate, the hon. member did not deserve obloquy, when advancing the interests of his constituents. The claim for the construction of this line at the present time was preposterous. The country could not afford the line, and these goldfields, which were only four years old, had a good railway service already. It was a moot question whether we had not gone too far in expenditure in this colony, and the pressing claims for a line from Esperance to the goldfields were mere bombast. What was wanted was the present Government not to tinker with the tariff. There was a railway 400 miles into the desert; whereas the Queensland goldfields had not one railway yet, and the goldfields in New South Wales were in the same position. He would not advocate the wild scheme for this railway, in the present position of this colony; and in connection with its construction were many grave considerations. Two years ago he said the solution of the difficulty would be found in allowing the people of Esperance and Norseman to build a narrow gauge contour line by private enterprise, and that was his opinion still. If these people could find the money—and the member for the district said capital was ready—they ought to be allowed to build such a line; and a contour line or tram from Esperance to Norseman would serve the goldfields well for many a long year. The traffic of a goldfield was greatest in its early stages, because when all the machinery had gone up, the traffic fell off, there being little or no back traffic; and a tram would be all that was necessary to carry the ore down. If machinery was going up, ore was not coming down, and if ore was going down, machinery was not going up. Cool-

gardie and Kalgoorlie had no claims whatever to be considered in the matter. Norseman must be considered on its own merits. To prevent the construction of a narrow-gauge line, under the circumstances he had indicated, would be riding the hobby against private enterprise too far. Such a tramway could not compete with the railway system, and it was not desired that it should, because we could not afford £100,000 for an ordinary line of railway at the present; but, if a company was prepared to put the money down, and deposit a guarantee of £10,000 in a bank, that company ought to be allowed to build an ore tramway, and he for one could see no shadow of argument against such an undertaking. There was no ground for fear, from the political aspect of the case; because such a tramway could never compete with the present railways, which really formed the high way to Europe. An ore tramway would give all that was required, and inspire the Esperance people with hope. A level sand-bed was about the best in the world on which to build a railway line, which, to give a service of 12 miles an hour, could be constructed cheaply and reasonably. He was a great believer in private enterprise, under proper restrictions, because he believed it had civilised the world. The Government always had it in their power to buy any private railway company out, if the Government desired to construct an ordinary railway line. There was no argument against the construction of a tramway, but every argument in favor of such a work. The proposal of the Government ought not to be entertained, because we had no water supply, and this would be running a railway into a desert with no hope of adequate traffic.

At 6.30 p.m. the CHAIRMAN left the chair.

At 7.30 the CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piessé): Most of the members who had listened to the different arguments for and against this proposed survey, had already made up their minds as to how they would vote; therefore it would not be necessary for him to detain the Committee long. Most of the argu-

ments adduced pointed to the fact that, on the score of economy, it was necessary to obtain information on the question of this railway, so as to enable the Government eventually to prepare a correct estimate of the work. It was especially necessary, in a work of this character, that a survey should be made, and for that reason the Government decided to place in this schedule a sufficient sum for the purpose. Of course some reliable information had been obtained for the purposes of this line between Coolgardie and Norseman; but, as the character of the country was somewhat different from that over which the goldfields lines in general ran, being somewhat hilly in parts, hon. members would doubtless perceive there was a great necessity for a survey, to enable the department to prepare a correct estimate. Money so spent would be well spent. There was at present a staff of surveyors who had been recently engaged upon surveys throughout the colony, who were ready to undertake this work; and, having such an experienced staff, it would be much more economical to do the work now, than to dispense with the staff and be compelled eventually to appoint surveyors to carry out the work who might not have the same experience. He was glad to see this point had been noted by the member for the Murray (Mr. George). Some hon. members touched on the question of the route the railway would take, and doubts had been expressed as to the distance the line would run from Redhill. From observations which had been taken, he believed the distance from that place would be about 15 miles, but it was a matter for future decision. All along the line, even to within 20 miles of Norseman, the country was of an auriferous character; and this fact alone should be sufficiently encouraging to induce the Committee to undertake the work. Several places along the route were coming into prominence. Some 20 miles from Norseman there was the Peninsula, which was likely to be a rising place in the future; and there were other places which had been known to be auriferous, and which, with the advantages of an improved water supply, would be thoroughly prospected in the future.

MR. VOSPER: All such places lay between Esperance and Norseman.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: They lay between Coolgardie and Norseman, and consequently they would all be served by the line. Experience showed that the prospects of a good water supply was more favorable along this route than on any other line hitherto constructed on the goldfields. A quantity of water amounting to 10,000,000 gallons had already been impounded in three reservoirs, and would be used for the future railway. The caption area which served these tanks was very satisfactory, and the tanks filled with great rapidity. Apart from the existing water supply, there were suitable areas all along the route where water could be conserved much more easily than in any part of the goldfields beyond Boorabbin. The nature of the country lent itself to the conservation of water, and enough could be secured at a very small expense for all railway requirements. The country, too, being south of the principal parts of the goldfields, was favorably situated as regarded the rainfall; therefore water would be more easy to obtain than in the dryer regions towards Kalgoorlie and Menzies. All these considerations showed that there need be no anxiety as to water supply in respect to this future railway, as even the normal rainfall would give a sufficient supply, as had been proved by the tanks already constructed, which held well and were full at the present time. There should be therefore no two opinions with regard to this question. Even admitting that the survey would be made only for obtaining an estimate of the cost of the railway, still it was undeniable that the only practicable means of providing Norseman with railway communication was by adopting the course now proposed by the Government, by connecting it with Coolgardie, thus bringing the Norseman people in direct communication with all the railway systems of the country. He and other speakers had clearly pointed out on a previous occasion, that to construct a railway from Esperance to Norseman would involve a separate railway system, with the necessary locomotive and other workshops, and an entirely new set of rolling stock, to work that line; whereas, by continu-

ing the line from Coolgardie as now proposed, we could make use of the rolling stock already provided for the railway system generally. With regard to the cost of the line, that would be better known on completion of the survey. The experience gained in the past, in placing estimates of railways before the House, showed that the information to be acquired by a proper survey was absolutely necessary, and that the money now asked for would be well spent if applied to such a purpose. Whether the line would be built in the near future depended entirely upon the condition of the colony and the will of Parliament. There was no doubt we must do something early to connect the town of Norseman with the railway system of the colony, and it could not be done in a better way than that proposed by the Government. He thought members, even if not inclined to commit themselves to the railway itself, would assist the Government by agreeing to this vote.

MR. CONOLLY: The member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) was the only one who had brought forward a proposition, in this debate, for the construction of a line from Esperance to Norseman by private enterprise; and it was only fair that he (Mr. Conolly), as member for the district, should say a few words in support of that proposal. Considering the present financial position of the colony, and taking into consideration the fact that the Government had been compelled to withdraw their proposition as made in the Governor's Speech, to construct a line immediately from Coolgardie to Norseman, it would be the means of meeting the difficulty at a far earlier date, and far more satisfactorily and economically to the whole country, if the Government would now relax in some degree their attitude relative to the policy of building the railway by private enterprise. He hoped that before the session closed he (Mr. Conolly) would have an opportunity of bringing forward a measure having this object in view, and that when it came forward it would receive the favourable consideration of the Premier and the Government. Regarding the few words uttered by the Premier, he would like to say that surely the Norseman people themselves were the

best judges as to which line would be the most advantageous to them. The Premier had repeatedly said the line from Coolgardie to Norseman would serve the Norseman people better than one from Esperance to Norseman; but he (Mr. Conolly) could scarcely conceive there could be any real doubt as to which of the two lines the Norseman people would prefer, and which would be of most benefit to them.

THE PREMIER had said he had a strong opinion about it.

MR. CONOLLY: It was not a fair thing, either to the people of Norseman or to the House, for the Premier to confuse the views of those people with his own opinion.

THE PREMIER: As to their opinion, he had never said a word.

MR. CONOLLY: What the Premier said was that the line from Coolgardie to Norseman would serve them best.

THE PREMIER: Yes; in his opinion.

MR. CONOLLY: Surely the people of Norseman should be allowed to know what would serve them best. It was they who had to develop the field and live there, and who would be benefited or otherwise by a line.

MR. VOSPER: Which did they prefer?

MR. CONOLLY: Undoubtedly they preferred a line from Esperance to Norseman; and if the Premier were there himself and engaged in the development of that field, he would share their opinion.

THE PREMIER: There was a very different opinion when he was at Norseman.

MR. CONOLLY: There was not. A large majority of the people of Norseman would undoubtedly prefer the line from Esperance; and surely any member looking at the situation must fully recognise the greater advantages of being connected with the seaport of Esperance than with another goldfield.

THE PREMIER: All the capitalists and mine owners wanted it the way proposed.

MR. CONOLLY: The right hon. gentleman was absolutely mistaken. There might be a few people who had always advocated the line from Coolgardie, but they did so principally because they thought they might be able to get that

sooner than a line from Esperance, and not because they preferred it.

MR. VOSPER: That was the reason.

MR. CONOLLY: The Premier must know that people held this opinion.

THE PREMIER: The line proposed would, in his opinion, be more to the interest of the people at Norseman.

MR. CONOLLY: With all due deference, the opinion of the Premier was not of equal weight to that of the people who lived there, and who must know better than the right hon. gentleman what they required.

THE PREMIER: The opinion he had expressed could not be altered.

MR. CONOLLY: The opinion of the Premier had always been against connecting Norseman with its natural port. With reference to the cost, the Commissioner of Railways had endeavoured to prove that the line from Coolgardie would not cost more than one from Esperance; but it did not require an expert to realise the economy there must be in constructing a line from Esperance, as compared with the cost of constructing one from Coolgardie.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Nothing was said by him about the comparative cost of the line. He only said this survey would supply information.

MR. CONOLLY: It was only fair to the country, the people, and the finances of the colony that the Government should make themselves acquainted with the particulars surrounding such a question as this. The member for Coolgardie was eloquent in speaking of the desert between Esperance and Norseman. It might be a surprise to him to know that this year, in that district, there were 300 acres put under cultivation. The minds of Ministers were absolutely closed, and they would not entertain anything that might be favourable to the people of Esperance.

THE PREMIER: The land referred to was only a patch.

MR. CONOLLY: There were, as he had said, 300 acres under cultivation, which this year would produce a ton to the acre.

MR. VOSPER: The Duke of Orleans Bay was unrivalled, in that matter.

THE PREMIER said he had been there.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: It was a matter of opinion.

MR. CONOLLY: If anyone were to stand up in the House and produce before the Government the most conclusive evidence, the Government would still remain unchanged in regard to this question. He would like to refer to a few expressions from the member for Toodyay (Mr. Quinlan). That hon. member said he knew the class of people at Esperance, who were, he averred, land speculators, land sharks, and so forth. That was very interesting, especially from the member for Toodyay himself. He would like to know from the hon. member how he personally had benefited or otherwise from the influx of population into this colony. He would like to know what amount of unearned increment the old settlers of Western Australia had obtained from the large influx of population. He (Mr. Conolly), as one who came to the colony, congratulated them on it. He had no reason to say they should not have made it, but he would like to point out to gentlemen like the member for Toodyay that it was out of place to refer in a deprecating manner to those people down at Esperance who owned any land. What the hon. member had said was not spoken at all as a compliment, or to the credit of the people there, but it was levied at them as a kind of reproach that they owned land at Esperance. People at Esperance were not these land speculators, nor did they bear the characteristics of the land speculator, which were in many cases to be found here in Perth. They had built houses, and had brought their wives and families to live at Esperance. A few minutes ago he heard a member say there were only 150 people in Esperance; so, what could anyone expect when hon. members spoke of the place in such a way as that? Only a short time ago there were 150 children going to the Esperance school. These people had bought the land, the Government having received the money, and the people had built homes, opened up businesses, and brought their families finally to become citizens and colonists of Western Australia. These were the people of whom the hon. member said in a reproachful manner, they were a lot of land speculators. He wanted to know what right any hon. member had to express

himself in such a manner about Esperance. It was not right, fair, nor was it justified. The Government might plead that the line from Coolgardie to Norseman would benefit Norseman, but the Government would never be able to construct the line without leaving an indelible tarnish on their records as administrators of this colony. The people of Esperance had gone there, and the Government had encouraged them to build their town; the Government had given every encouragement to the people that any Government could give. The Government had assisted the people of Esperance, and had expended Government money in the town; and, apart from the Government money which had been expended, there was the encouragement which the Government had given to other people when they saw the Government constructing buildings. It was a promise not given in words, but actions. The Government had pledged themselves by their actions that they would maintain this town; and now the Government suddenly, after all this work had been done, swept the people of Esperance out of their homes. Although the Minister for Works might smile over this, the action the Government had taken towards Esperance would never conduce to the credit of the Government. It would be an action that would stand unparalleled in the political history of Australia. It would close one of the best of the harbours in Western Australia; it would divert trade from its natural channel, and bring it to Fremantle, while nature had placed a natural harbour within 100 miles of the goldfields.

THE PREMIER: With what object were we doing this?

MR. CONOLLY: It would be summed up in one word: Centralisation. That was the object. The policy of centralisation; which he might say, in some degree, had been followed by some Governments, but not in the same degree as the Government were proposing to carry it out in regard to Esperance. He did not think any Government in Australia would attempt to divert traffic in the way in which the Government were attempting to divert it in this case; and although the Government might carry this work out, it would never do them credit, now, or in the future. Although the proposition which

the Government had brought forward had placed him (Mr. Conolly) in a difficult position, he was going to vote for the survey. He could not refuse to do so. The Government had done an unnecessary and cruel injury to Esperance and the district by bringing in such a proposition as this without carrying it out. If the Government had seen fit to bring the proposition forward, the Government should have carried it out at once. An injury had been done to the town and district of Norseman. The Government had raised indignation against them throughout the length and breadth of the goldfields; and now the Government said all we could do was to make a survey of this line. If the Government were going to construct this line they should have brought forward a proposition at once; if they could not construct it, they should never have raised the indignation and outcry throughout the goldfields. It had been most cruel to the people of Esperance. Although the Premier spoke in sympathetic tones sometimes of the people of Esperance, at other times he spoke in a most deprecatory tone of them. Esperance people were colonists of Western Australia; they belonged to Western Australia, and contributed to the revenue, and assisted, in proportion to the population, in carrying the indebtedness of Western Australia. The Government of this colony had no right to ignore and literally ruin a portion of the population. The present position had been brought about by the Government's own action. If the Government had not intended to make the town of Esperance, if they had intended that people should not live and prosper there, they should never have taken the money from the people for the purchase of the land; they should never have surveyed a town there, nor expended public money there. The people of Esperance thanked the Premier for the works that had been carried out; but what had been the result? It had been a taunt to the people of Esperance. It had lured the people to build homes and consider the town a benefit to them; and, now that the Government had done all this, they deliberately swept the town off the face of the earth.

THE PREMIER: This House had heard a good deal about Esperance lately.

MR. CONOLLY: And it would hear more in the future. "Esperance" would never be a welcome word to the Premier. He understood that the Premier had no reason to like Esperance, as associated with it were many matters which would not reflect credit on the head of the Government.

MR. EWING: Although supporting this item, he did not bind himself to support the railway when it came up for construction. He had not made up his mind in regard to the construction of the railway, but it was highly desirable that the survey should be made, so that, when we came to consider the matter, we should have the facts fully and properly before us.

MR. LEAKE: One would have expected, during the course of the debate, to have heard some utterance from the Government benches, which would have amounted to an assurance that this contemplated little work was absolutely necessary. We had not heard from either of the Ministers who had spoken that it was intended to construct this proposed railway, or how much it would cost. He might just as well repeat what he had said on the other items, that this was a paltry subterfuge, a miserable excuse, which the Government had to make with regard to their announced railway policy in the Governor's Speech. Works amounting to something like half a million of money had been abandoned; and yet the Government now told hon. members they wanted the paltry sum of £9,000 for the survey of two railway lines, which the Government had not the face to tell us they meant to force on Parliament in the near future. The Government knew perfectly well that, so far as the Coolgardie-Norseman railway was concerned, there were many points of difference amongst hon. members; and whilst something might be said in favour of the Menzies to Leonora railway as one of the goldfields trunk lines, still no argument had been brought forward to show that this line was either necessary or required, or that it was seriously advocated. It could not be constructed or commenced within the next three or four years; and yet we were asked to reappropriate money out of a Loan Act for what the Government told us, and the Government thought

members of the House foolish enough to believe, were works of urgent necessity. There was no principle whatever, political or otherwise, which could justify the Government in asking for a reappropriation of loan moneys, unless the works to which the money was intended to be applied were works of urgency or importance. Taking the Norseman railway, there was no doubt it was a vexed question, for it had not yet been decided by a distinct vote of the House whether the railway should start from Esperance or Coolgardie. That had not been fairly debated. The only reference to the railway line from Esperance to Coolgardie had been promptly smothered by the Ministry; and neither the member for the district nor any other member had had a fair opportunity of discussing the question as a great political concern. He sympathised with the member for Dundas in the difficult position in which he found himself. The member for Pilbarra made an excellent point when debating this question, for he pointed out that the route of the railway from Coolgardie to Norseman was not settled, nor was it likely to be settled for some time. And he (Mr. Leake) was with the member for Pilbarra when he suggested that a survey of a railway direct from Coolgardie to Norseman would probably be along a particular route, which in the course of a few months might turn out to be an absolutely useless one. It was one which might have to be departed from altogether, and consequently the expenditure now contemplated would be absolutely useless, if not in the course of the next two or three months, at any rate in the next two or three years, before the line could be constructed. The Committee had been told by the Government that one of the great advantages of a railway from Coolgardie to Norseman was that the water which had been stored in the tanks at Widgemooltha, and one or two other places, could be utilized. That argument, childish as it might appear, was quite on a par with and characteristic of the arguments generally advanced by members of the Ministry, when advocating any particularly pet scheme; and it was an argument which could be commended for what it is worth to the consideration of hon. members.

**THE PREMIER :** Considering that the argument was never used.

**MR. LEAKE :** Oh, constantly used.

**THE PREMIER :** No.

**MR. LEAKE :** When Ministers were in a difficulty, they never knew what they said or what they thought. What they thought they did not say, and what they said they did not mean, and it was always difficult to fathom the minds of hon. gentlemen on the Government benches. The only ability these gentlemen displayed was in dodging difficulties and getting themselves out of holes, in which they unfortunately found themselves placed by their own errors.

**MR. A. FORREST :** When a man was in a hole, it was clever to get out of it.

**MR. LEAKE :** The member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) had advanced a particularly sound argument, when he said that in no circumstances would this railway be justified until after the completion of the Coolgardie water scheme. That was an argument with which he (Mr. Leake) agreed entirely. One of the greatest difficulties which had to be contended with during last summer was the want of water for engines along the eastern railways.

**MR. MORAN :** It might be the same next summer.

**MR. LEAKE :** Last summer water had to be hauled from Northam nearly the whole way along the line ; and inasmuch as the tanks at Widgemooltha and other places would only hold a few days' supply for the engines, it followed that, in the event of another dry season, the department would be forced to drag water all the way from Northam, not only to Coolgardie, but to Norseman. Yet in the face of all this, the Government proposed not to wait until this Coolgardie water scheme should be completed, but actually to reappropriate money from that very scheme, which was the essence of the whole affair, and apply it to this unnecessary railway. Harmless and apparently inoffensive as the vote might appear, involving the sum of £5,000 only, yet when the actual railway was brought up for consideration, hon. members would be told they had voted for the survey, and thereby impliedly pledged themselves to vote for the construction of the line.

**HON. H. W. VENN :** That was bound to be.

**MR. LEAKE :** It was astonishing to find the member for Wellington pledging himself to vote for this item, although he was opposed to the railway.

**HON. H. W. VENN** said he was not opposed to the railway, but he considered the survey might be postponed.

**MR. LEAKE :** That was the astonishing part. The hon. member thought the survey might be put off, and yet he was going to vote for it at once, telling the Committee candidly that those who voted for the survey pledged themselves to vote for the railway afterwards.

**THE PREMIER :** If the position of the colony did not justify it, a member need not vote for the railway.

**MR. LEAKE :** That was just the sort of argument the Premier made use of. The Premier would point to *Hansard* with the finger of scorn, or the smile of satisfaction, and tell hon. members they could not go back on the vote they had given in 1898 for the survey of the line ; pointing out that when the survey was before them was the time to have objected to the construction of the railway. That was a miserable attempt to trick hon. members into a pledge, from which possibly they would find a difficulty in withdrawing at some future date. It was a monstrous proposition to put before an assembly of reasonable men. But, after all, the Committee need not be astonished, for the Government were in such extreme straits that they were lost to all sense of political candour—he was going to say decency, but perhaps the Government would not like that word, and he would not use it. The Government were lost to all sense of true politics when they were found coming down with a miserable schedule such as this. It was humiliating—he would not say it was contemptible, because somebody might object to that word also, though it was difficult to find a word which properly suited the position in which hon. members and the Government were placed. He did not suppose anything he could say would influence votes upon this question ; but he had hoped that, when favoured by speeches from the Premier and from his right-hand man, the Commissioner of Railways, hon. members

would hear something about the necessity for these lines, something about their probable cost, about the routes, and about the time in which it was proposed to construct the works. That wretched paragraph in the lengthy speech of His Excellency, the Government had been compelled to throw to the winds—that paragraph which was the one flourish in June last, when the Government said their public works policy was going to be two goldfields railways, for which money was to be reappropriated. The Bonny Vale line could scarcely be treated seriously, and he was sure the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) did not expect him to make any reference to it. But two railways were flourished in the faces of hon. members, and yet, within a few weeks, these railways were absolutely abandoned. The Government dare not go on with them, and it could only be supposed they were nothing less than frightened. In place of railway proposals, the Committee were now asked to vote £4,000 for the survey of one line, and £5,000 for the survey of another. The Government had made promises during the course of this session of other works and other improvements, amongst which might be mentioned, casually, improvements to the Legislative Assembly Chamber and the surrounding premises, at a cost of something like £10,000. It would have been far better to spend £10,000 on the improvement of the Government offices around the Chamber, and in the improvement of the Chamber itself, than to practically waste money on the two proposed railway surveys. If half what the Premier said was true about there being auriferous country the whole of the way between Coolgardie and Norseman, mining centres would no doubt spring up; but what was a mining centre one day was not a mining centre the next. Population shifted from quarter to quarter, and a survey made to-day might not be worth anything to-morrow. It was foolish to ask the Committee to pledge themselves to the expenditure of this money, when they did not know how or when the railways were to be built.

Amendment—that the item be struck out—put, and a division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	15
Noes	...	...	...	16

Majority against ... 1

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Higham	Hon. S. Burt
Mr. Holmes	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Hooley	Sir John Forrest
Mr. Illingworth	Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Kingsmill	Mr. George
Mr. Leake	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Hall
Mr. Moran	Mr. Hubble
Mr. Oats	Mr. Lefroy
Mr. Quinlan	Mr. Locke
Sir J. G. Lee Steere	Mr. Morgans
Mr. Vosper	Mr. Pennefather
Mr. Wallace	Mr. Piessé
Mr. Wilson	Mr. Throssell
Mr. Kenny	Hon. H. W. Venn
(Teller)	Mr. Conolly
	(Teller)

Amendment thus negatived, and the item passed.

Workshops (railway) at Midland Junction, £30,000:

MR. HIGHAM moved that the item be struck out. He did so, not in the hope of preventing the removal of the railway workshops from Fremantle, for he realised that the site was not suitable, being too small and also too valuable to be occupied by these buildings; but when the Government proposed to spend £30,000 on workshops at Midland Junction to take the place of those at Fremantle, and when he knew there were a thousand other objects to which the sum might be devoted with greater advantage, it was time to protest against such a temporary expedient. In view of the present state of affairs in the workshops at Fremantle, it was not wise to remove them at once. The workmen, far from impeding each other, as they did a few months ago, had been compelled to mutually agree to work five days a week. There was no congestion in the shops at present; there was no great quantity of rolling stock to be put together; and the work in hand was mostly in the nature of repairs. This work of removal might therefore stand over for some time; and, when it was undertaken, a sufficient sum should be put on the Estimates, and not a paltry amount such as this. Last week, in reply to a question of the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Solomon), it was stated that £28,000 had already been expended on the quagmire at

Midland Junction; and what did we see for it? Comparatively nothing. £5,000 had been spent on the preparation of the sites, and the preparation consisted merely of levelling the soil. An expenditure of nearly £60,000 must be incurred before the heavy machinery required for the workshops could be erected. The nature of the ground was not suitable for heavy machinery, and proper foundations would be very costly.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** That was absurd.

**MR. HIGHAM:** It had been fairly well proved, and would be found so in the end. The result of the expenditure of this sum of £30,000 would merely be to isolate a small section of the works from those at present in Fremantle. It would not provide a workshop for even one department, and would lead to disorganisation, to ineffective work, and to considerable expense for supervision. The results would not be satisfactory. If the Government desired to remove these workshops, as they did—

**HON. H. W. VENN:** The House had decided upon it.

**MR. GEORGE:** Not this Parliament.

**MR. HIGHAM:** It was during the session of 1896. If the Government desired to make this change, they should go about it in a serious way, and expend a sum which would lead to the more economical working of these workshops. The recent proposal would thoroughly disorganise the body of men now employed, and would lead to a greatly increased expense. A considerable expenditure must even now be incurred in Fremantle in building new running sheds, and it would be utterly absurd to proceed with the alterations in the slipshod manner now proposed.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse):** The hon. member could hardly be serious in his amendment, though there might be a good deal of sense in some of his remarks. His contention appeared to be that, though it was necessary to remove the workshops from Fremantle, we ought not to do it just now, but to wait till we could devote sufficient money to undertake the work at one time, instead of disorganising the department by having

some of the workshops at Midland Junction and the others at Fremantle. The reason why the vote was asked for was that it was necessary to provide £10,000 to recoup the vote from which this amount had been obtained, for the amount already expended, thus leaving an amount of about £20,000 to be expended this year. With that £20,000 it was proposed to erect a portion of the wood-working branch of the locomotive works, and during next year it was hoped that another portion of these works would be proceeded with. He had consulted with the Locomotive Engineer on this matter, and found that the wood-working branch could be economically conducted at Midland Junction; and as the fittings and foundations in connection with that branch would not be so heavy as those required for the machinery, erection, and other repairing shops, this small work could be commenced out of the money it was proposed to ask the Committee to vote. The Government had given great consideration to the question of the workshops generally, and no one regretted more than he and other members of the Cabinet that these works had not been pushed on more quickly. Everyone knew that all possible information should be gained with regard to the workshops to be erected; and, although many designs had been prepared from time to time, still when the Engineer-in-Chief went to England it was decided that, before commencing the work, he should be asked to obtain expert opinion with regard to the design. More delay had thus been caused; otherwise a portion of the work would have been put in hand much sooner. The wood-working part of the establishment would be first taken in hand. Anyone who would take the trouble to visit Fremantle now would find the branch in a congested state, not conducive either to good workmanship or to economy.

**MR. HIGHAM:** That congestion no longer existed.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** It still existed. Only a few days ago the head of the locomotive branch stated that if the Government could not find the money to erect these wood-working shops at Midland Junction, about £4,000 or £5,000 must be found

for further improvements in the Fremantle establishment, which was being carried on under great difficulties. On a prior occasion, when this question was before the House, it had been pointed out that to continue these works at Fremantle only meant loss to the country; and during the past two years from £6,000 to £7,000 had been expended in the erection of buildings at Fremantle, which sum might have been saved if the new works could have been proceeded with. Not only had the work to be done in workshops entirely unsuited for the purpose, but it was done at great loss and with great inconvenience. Some steps must at once be taken to put this work in hand, and he hoped the hon. member would not press his amendment, for he must agree to the necessity for immediate action in connection with the removal of the workshops from Fremantle. In the interests of Fremantle, the hon. member should not lose sight of the fact that this removal would be gradual; and, though the wood-working shops could be erected at once, considerable time must elapse before the other works could be removed. It was proposed to prepare the foundations, and have everything in readiness to permit of the removal of the machinery from Fremantle with as little stoppage of work as possible. Every possible effort would be made to prevent delay. Of all the items upon this schedule, this one should be allowed to remain intact, and he appealed to hon. members to assist him in maintaining it in the Bill.

MR. GEORGE: The mover of the amendment would not, he hoped, take the advice of the Commissioner of Railways. In the debate in connection with these workshops a few years ago, one argument was that, in consequence of having the workshops at Fremantle, the machinery was gradually being rusted and rendered of no use through the sea air; but although some four years had elapsed, no complaints were heard now of the machinery being unable to carry on the work owing to the effect of the sea air. We were also told that the workshops at Fremantle were not able to cope with the work of the colony, and that the increased rolling-stock could not be dealt with there; that unless these work-

shops were built at once, there would be a terrible breakdown; and that there was no possibility of making profits, whilst there would be a probability of making a great loss. Another thing said was that the men were working in water. We were not told that they had to learn swimming or to have diving dresses, but we were led to understand their health was suffering greatly from the effects of damp in the workshops. Seeing that we should perhaps be treated on the present occasion to a similar sort of twaddling arguments in support of this proposal brought up on behalf of certain interests, which perhaps it would not be well to examine into too closely, he wanted to point out that there was no absolute necessity at the present time, for £30,000 to be wasted at Midland Junction for the purpose of removing these workshops. £10,000 had been wasted.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Wasted—that was it.

MR. GEORGE: Well perhaps there had not been £10,000 wasted. Suppose we said £8,000.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Nothing at all. A lot of material had been put there.

MR. GEORGE: A large staff was kept there, and what were they doing? Planning æsthetic colours to paint a jarrah house. There was a tremendous staff in that building close to the electric light works, the whole result of their labours being one galvanised shed, open at one side, except perhaps they might have got a cross-section of every stone and every little bit of clay above the surface. What did they do until the chief of that staff was transferred to the harbour works, because the chief of the department could not have the cheek to keep him there at the Midland works any longer doing nothing? The Commissioner wished to show it was absolutely necessary for the welfare of the Railway Department that the workshops should be shifted. The Minister wished us to understand, by inference, that the present shops were unable to cope with the work. As a matter of fact we had far more rolling-stock now than four years ago. We had some lying there not put together, for

the simple reason that we had not the work to give it.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: That was not true.

MR. GEORGE: The hon. gentleman said they had so much to do they had to reduce the time of the men to five days a week. Either he must be talking without book, or else there was some other reason why the time had been reduced. If the Government had so much work in that department, why were those men robbed of a day's work, and why had their families to live on five days' wage instead of six?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: That was a regular clincher!

MR. GEORGE: Yes, and the hon. gentleman would have to get a new set of teeth to bite through it. The hon. gentleman could not tell him they could not cope with the work.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: The Government did not say they could not cope with the work.

MR. GEORGE: £10,000 had been spent at the Midland Junction, and members would like to know what had been done with that before they voted another £20,000. Ten thousand pounds had been spent to make one shed, and probably a few plans. A number of gentlemen had had to put in time without working, and that was the worst thing any man could do. This year it was proposed to erect a portion of the wood-working machinery, but the hon. gentleman had not told us what it was for. There could be no necessity to build trucks when there were so many lying idle as at the present time. A few years ago evidence was produced showing that it was proposed to order the most modern machinery, both in regard to working wood and iron. It was also suggested, and he (Mr. George) believed fairly well proved, that one of the Commissioners who sat on that matter was actually an agent for the very people from whom it was proposed to order this machinery, which was said to be necessary to do the work cheaply and quickly. Had that machinery been ordered? Was it here now? He believed that a little of it was in the colony, if it had not rusted to pieces. He did not think the balance had been ordered. The Commissioner of Railways told them the

Locomotive Superintendent (Mr. Campbell) felt it would make no difference whatever in the working of his department to have one portion down at Fremantle, and the other a few miles away; but he (Mr. George) thought the statement was a mistake, because in his opinion Mr. Campbell was too good a man, and understood his business too well, to commit himself to such an assertion as that. The hon. gentleman must know that it would make a considerable difference. As to the Midland Junction being the most central spot, it was nothing of the kind. If we wanted the most central spot we could not do better than come to Perth, and then God help the people of Perth if those infernal machines were brought here. In Western Perth the engines were driving nearly everyone mad. He would like members to consider this matter. We had been fighting over the question whether £4,000 or £5,000 should be spent upon the survey of railways that would be made—although some people said they would not—which survey might save perhaps £10,000 or £20,000, or even £50,000 on a contract, but here was a question of £20,000 relative to these workshops. No doubt if the Locomotive Superintendent were called to the bar of the House and asked whether he had men and means at Fremantle to do the work wanted in Western Australia he would say he had. The thing was an absurdity. As far as Fremantle was concerned in wishing to keep everything down there, it did not matter to him; for though he had property there, he also had property in Perth and near Midland Junction, but that did not influence him. The people of Midland Junction had been unfairly treated, for they had been led to believe that the works were to be erected at Midland Junction right away.

HON. H. W. VENN: That was never stated.

MR. GEORGE: The people were led to believe that. We were told some time ago it was so absolutely necessary to have the workshops at Midland Junction at once, that it was a matter of urgency.

HON. H. W. VENN: It would take a few years to remove the shops.

MR. GEORGE: While we had been waiting during these few years to have the workshops removed, the money that

the works were to be removed with had been removed also. He believed he had a greater faith in this country than even the Premier had. The country was good enough, if we did not spoil it. Since he had been in the colony, about 8 years, he had done as much as had the hon. member who interrupted him. He had provided more employment than the hon. member did, or would do in 50 years. Although it was stated, two or three years ago, that the removal of these workshops was a matter of urgency, the Government had been dilly-dallying with the works during this time; the money had now been wasted, and we were asked to take other money out of loans which had been appropriated. This was not justifiable. That the workshops were not needed was shown by the fact that men were put on to work at short time. The machinery at the works was good enough for all that was needed. It turned out as good work as could be turned out in the colony. If there was any special urgency for the removal of these workshops because of the large amount of work to be done, then put the men on for six days a week instead of five. He hoped hon. members would support the amendment.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS** (Hon. F. H. Piesse): As to the workshops at Fremantle being so full of work that it was necessary to make this removal to the Midland Junction, what he had intended to convey was that the place at Fremantle was overcrowded, and it was altogether unsuitable for the work carried on now. There was a necessity for the removal of these workshops to Midland Junction, and that necessity was admitted some time ago. The House agreed and admitted the necessity then, and there must be a greater necessity now. Hon. members must also admit that at the present time there was an opportunity for removing the workshops which previously could not have been taken advantage of. During the past two years the necessity for constructing the rolling-stock that came here was so great that we could not then remove the workshops to Midland Junction; and, although some delay was no doubt attributed to the designs, the principal cause of the delay was that we were not able to move away as quickly as we ought to have removed. The late

Commissioner (Hon. H. W. Venn) would bear out what he now said. It was understood, when this matter was decided some two years ago, that it would take time to remove the workshops from Fremantle to Midland Junction. We could only make this removal gradually, and that was what was proposed to be done now. As to the reckless expenditure and waste and extravagance attributed to the Government, no one knew better than the member for the Murray that many of the assertions as to the number of men working, and other statements, could not be borne out by fact. The Government were acting with the one desire to economise as far as possible, and the only way to do that was to remove the workshops from Fremantle to Midland Junction.

**MR. RASON:** The question of the removal to Midland Junction had been settled years ago; and the members for Fremantle, he understood, had recognised the necessity of the removal and had become reconciled to that fact. But, with a persistency worthy of a better cause, they seemed now prepared to fight to the last for everything that was not for Fremantle. It might be public zeal, and he was prepared to admit that it was; but in this instance it was mistaken zeal. The member for the Murray (Mr. George) had made use of an argument which was unworthy of his ability, and he ought to have known better, in saying there could be no such thing as splitting up workshops and separating the different branches. The hon. member did know better than that; for having had experience of English railways, the hon. member must know that the workshops in England were split up in all directions, and yet the railways were managed well and economically, as commercial concerns, and that while giving satisfaction to the public, they paid dividends. The hon. member could not give one instance of an English railway company having its workshops at a port, whereas many instances could be given of railway companies owning docks and warehouses; also dredges and everything in connection with docks, and yet their workshops were not at the port.

**MR. GEORGE:** Those railways did not get their material at the ports. They got it in the "black" country.

Mr. RASON: English railway companies had their workshops in the most convenient places, where the work could be most economically carried on. The most convenient place for the Government shops in this colony was demonstrated to be at the Midland Junction, and that had been settled long ago.

Mr. GEORGE: No.

Mr. RASON: If it had not been settled to the mind of the hon. member, then the hon. member was more difficult to satisfy than other members.

Mr. GEORGE said he did not represent Guildford.

Mr. RASON: Neither did he (Mr. Rason). It had been demonstrated that there would be an immense saving to the Government, if the railway workshops were located at Midland Junction. The hon. member had spoken of the injustice to some of the Government workmen at Fremantle.

Mr. GEORGE: It affected all the men throughout the workshops there.

Mr. RASON: Was there any hardship on these men, when it had been understood for years that the shops were to be removed to Midland Junction? On the other hand, the hon. member admitted that a great injustice had been done to the inhabitants of Midland Junction, because the workshops had not been more speedily gone on with; and yet the hon. member wished to perpetuate a hardship which he acknowledged. Any member who knew anything about railway working must know that the port of Fremantle was no place for the workshops of Government railways. The railway system was extending year by year, and the Government necessarily had an immense rolling stock. It was not fair for members to talk about the ridiculous amount of rolling stock kept by the Government. The Government were bound to have a large stock on hand, as it was not known when an emergency might arise, and when all the surplus stock the Government hand in hand would be required. Rolling stock which was kept at the port must depreciate by the salt atmosphere. The hon. member knew that full well, and he (Mr. Rason) was surprised that the hon. member should attempt to ridicule such a well known fact. It was surprising the hon. member was not prepared to

deny the statement now, seeing he had previously ridiculed the idea. It had been proved, and admitted even by members for Fremantle, that it was necessary the workshops should be removed to Midland Junction. The people of Fremantle had recognised this fact, and the people of the rest of the colony had looked forward to the removal. It was recognized that the removal of the workshops to Midland Junction would be a means of saving to the colony, and the people consequently looked to the Government to carry out a reform which was undoubtedly in the interests of the whole community.

Mr. DOHERTY: As one of the members for Fremantle, he could not agree with his colleagues on this vote. It had been decided, on national grounds, that the workshops ought to be removed from Fremantle to the Midland Junction; and it was the duty of Parliament to establish works that would give large employment, and provide such workshops as would in the future enable us to construct our own engines, carriages, and trucks. During the last two years, a million of money had been sent out of the colony for rolling stock; and the object of establishing workshops at Midland Junction was to have that money spent here amongst our own working people. It was not the small amount proposed to be expended now that should be regarded; thought ought to be given to the future and to the necessity of providing employment. If there was one thing the Government had neglected it was building up manufacturing industries in this colony. Anyone travelling from Perth to Fremantle could see the higglety-pigglety state of the railway workshops at the latter place. It was by no means like the railway workshops that could be seen in the old country; say, for instance, the Midland Railway workshops at Crewe. At Fremantle there was a collection of small sheds which would really take seven men instead of one to look after. If the workshops were shifted to Midland Junction, repairs must of necessity come to be made at Rocky Bay, and, as Rocky Bay was in his district, he regarded that as the most suitable place. But if the object was to establish works in which our own engines and carriages could be built, Midland

Junction was the place. Everyone with knowledge of the subject told him that serious loss was involved in bringing engines and other vehicles down from Midland Junction to Fremantle and back again; and surely this was a time when economy ought to be exercised. Competition between Fremantle and the Midland Junction ought not to be allowed to crop up in connection with the question of the railway shops, because, as he had said, hon. members were there to work for the good of the country as a whole. In his opinion the proposal before the Committee would not necessitate one man leaving Fremantle; at any rate, if a man had to leave, he would have to be replaced. The railway system was growing day by day, and he understood that twelve months from now there would be 1,400 miles of railways in the colony. Surely this extension of mileage would mean the necessity for more labour; and to have satisfactory results, there must be proper machinery and systematic work. There was no reason why a large factory could not be established here on the same lines as the railway workshops at Crewe. There was plenty of iron in this country, and why should we not smelt it here instead of sending our money out of the country for supplies.

MR. GEORGE: It would cost a million of money to put the Crewe works down in the colony now.

MR. DOHERTY: Such large works as those at Crewe were not required in this colony; but works on the same system were required. The people of North Fremantle admitted the present sheds were a disgrace, and that proper workshops should be erected at Midland Junction with repairing sheds at Rocky Bay. All evidence went to show the work would be better done at the Midland Junction; and for these reasons he would not vote for the amendment.

MR. GEORGE expressed his regret at having raised the ire of no fewer than three of the most distinguished members of the Assembly, in the persons of the Commissioner of Railways, the member for South Murchison (Mr. Rason), and the member for North Fremantle (Mr. Doherty). The last-mentioned member talked about building our own engines and making our own iron and steel; but

it was a pity the hon. member did not know what he was talking about. To put works in this colony for the manufacture of steel necessary to make our own engines would require more money than twice the amount of the deficit of Western Australia at the present time. Reference had been made to the workshops at Crewe, but Western Australia did not require such an establishment as that in the English Midlands. The Victorian Government built what they called national workshops for the building of engines, carriages, and rolling-stock; and when a Commission was appointed to enquire as to where the money had gone, it was found that material to the value of £100,000 was there rotting and wasting.

MR. DOHERTY: Western Australia did not follow Victoria.

MR. GEORGE: Then why did the hon. member instance England? The hon. member had asked him questions, and then growled because he replied. As to parting the workshops, what he said was correct. The Commissioner of Railways had said it was intended to move the wood-working shop to Midland Junction, and he (Mr. George) maintained that the best machinery in any workshop was the master's eye. The Commissioner and the Premier knew that the fact of their being present in their departments was worth fifty times as much as any control they could exercise by scribbling memoranda. In the chief engineer at Fremantle (Mr. Campbell), we had a man who thoroughly understood his work, and he had reorganised his branch in a way that few men in the colonies could have equalled. Mr. Campbell's opinion on this subject would be worth taking.

MR. DOHERTY: The hon. member had said that before.

MR. GEORGE: And he would say it again. The Commissioner of Railways said workshops were unsuitable and overcrowded. To say they were unsuitable was to erect too high a standard of suitability; and his (Mr. George's) contention was not that the Fremantle workshops should not be improved, but that at the present crisis in the finances we had no right to incur an expenditure of £20,000 at Midland Junction. His sympathies were with the poor deluded

people at Midland Junction, who had bought land and built houses there in the expectation that the railway workshops would soon be erected and a big population attracted to the place. At the same time, there was not a man in the colony who had not in some way been deluded either by the actions of the Government, or through his own over-sanguine expectations in regard to the future of the colony. He (Mr. George) had purchased a site at East Perth on which to erect his own works, but felt it imprudent in the present state of trade to run the risk of a removal. The Minister, as was only natural, desired to see his department equipped with the best shops and machinery; and so would he (Mr. George) if the country could afford it. There could not be a more conclusive reason for delay in this matter than the fact that the men in the Government workshops at Fremantle were at present working on short time. One hon. member had asked him whether he would deny that machinery would spoil if exposed to salt air. Certainly, he would not deny that; but he required strong evidence before believing that machinery at Fremantle was being spoilt through exposure and neglect. If that were so, the person in charge of those workshops should be cleared out at once; but he had too much confidence in the practical skill and administrative ability of Mr. Cambell to believe that any machinery in his charge was so neglected. In all well-ordered workshops there was a weekly cleaning-up of machinery with oiled rags; and no competent mechanic would allow his machinery to be tarnished or spoilt by exposure to salt air. It was said an engine might have to be sent forty miles for repairs to Fremantle. Certainly an engine which broke down would have to be sent to the nearest shop for repairs; but if the works were at Midland Junction, an engine breaking down at Fremantle would have to be sent to the Junction for repairs, and must afterwards return to Fremantle to resume work. An engine breaking down at Southern Cross would probably have to be sent to Northam. Where could such repairs be better effected than at the shops where the bulk of the men were congregated? He did not argue that the

workshops must not be removed, but that it was not prudent at the present time to incur the expenditure of the erection of a new shop. He had no personal interest in the question. He had not, and never had, any property at Midland Junction; and though he had some at Fremantle, that did not influence him. As well might it be said that because he had property in Victoria he wanted the work done in that colony. He hoped the Committee would stop this extravagance, at least for a time. Even on the Minister's own showing, it was impossible to shift the works for several years; and, if so, the alleged urgency did not exist. It was wrong to say that the department could not cope with the work in the present buildings, when they had robbed the men of a day's work per week. In these circumstances it was useless to maintain there was too much work to do, and not enough machinery to do it with.

MR. HOLMES: This afternoon he had been told he could not be accepted as an authority on finance. Probably he would be informed to-night that he was not an authority on workshops. He must state, however, that in his opinion we were not justified at present in spending £30,000 on workshops at Midland Junction. Some four years ago Parliament was informed that the shops at Fremantle were not up to date, and that works at Midland Junction should be commenced immediately. Land had been purchased at Midland Junction in the summer time for £2,000, and he had been told that when the winter came in the land was found to be under water.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: It was worth £25,000 at the present time.

MR. HOLMES: And a sum of £5,000 extra had been spent to raise it above high water mark. During the past four years an enormous quantity of rolling stock had been imported, and the despised workshops at Fremantle had been well able to cope with all the construction required.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: A great part of it had been done in the open air.

MR. HOLMES: During the next few years there was no likelihood of the same quantity of rolling stock being imported, and it appeared that the men had actually

got ahead of the work, as they were now working five days a week instead of six.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** That was better than having every fifth man turned out.

**MR. HOLMES:** All hon. members professed to agree on the necessity of curtailing expenditure, yet to-day we had passed an item for the survey of a railway; a couple of days ago a similar item had been passed, the two amounting to £15,000. Here was another item of £30,000. Where would this expenditure stop? The colony had got ahead of its supplies and rolling-stock. There was none on order or likely to arrive except carriages and locomotives, and there were more engines and carriages already here than there was traffic for. The only need for this undertaking was to keep the member for the Swan (Mr. Ewing) quiet. This object appeared to have been attained, which perhaps was a desirable achievement, though £30,000 was a high price to pay for it. Some four years ago we had the argument about salt air affecting machinery at Fremantle; and one would almost imagine the Government were going to erect machinery to stand there and rust. Any man of common sense knew that if this machinery was kept in use, it would be kept in repair, and would not rust. The Government stores had been built on the beach at North Fremantle, and parts of machinery had to be kept there. If there was anything that would rust, it would be parts of machinery, and not machinery that was in constant use. If the workshops at Fremantle had been sufficient to cope with all the work there had been before the construction department for the last four or five years, they would be sufficient to cope with any likely to be taken in hand within the next four or five years; and without discussing the question of which was the best site, there was, he asserted, nothing to justify us, at the present time, in spending £30,000 at Midland Junction. He should certainly vote with the hon. member for Fremantle, in striking out this item.

**MR. EWING:** There was this difference between the aspect of the question now, and the aspect of the question when it was considered by the House on previous occasions, that on the first occasion

a motion was proposed and lost; and on the second occasion one was submitted by the Government, and carried. At that time the land had not been bought, nor had some £20,000 been expended.

**MR. HIGHAM:** The land was bought before there was any discussion.

**MR. EWING:** There was no evidence that it was bought then, but the Government took the proper precaution to get land under offer before the resolution was passed, so that when it was passed they would not be in a position of having to buy land at almost any price asked for it. Money had been spent on that land, and some £20,000 expended generally upon the works up to the present. If these works were not continued and carried out, the money spent up to the present would be absolutely useless. He understood that comparatively comprehensive workshops could be erected at a cost of £50,000, over and above what had already been spent; so that if this £30,000 were voted, we would require only another £20,000 to answer all purposes for the immediate future, and the works would be on a plan that would allow of proper and regular development.

**A MEMBER:** The Commissioner said it would be £180,000.

**MR. EWING:** The Commissioner did not propose to spend £180,000 now, but was going to spend a portion in order to meet the requirements of the present; and the workshops would be built in such a way that they could be extended, if the industry of the colony developed in the future. The gist of the question, as previously argued, was whether the workshops should be removed from Fremantle or not; and gentlemen who represented Fremantle on those occasions admitted, with the Government, and with almost every member of the House, that it was absolutely necessary that arrangements should be made in relation to the workshops. It became only a question of site. One member representing that portion of the country had been able to shake himself free from the prejudices which had surrounded members for Fremantle in the past. He noticed that members who spoke in a previous debate advocated the removal of those shops to Rocky Bay, another site urged being Richmond—in fact anywhere, so long as

the money was poured down the throats of the people of Fremantle. That was the experience of the past, and of to-day, and he believed it would be the experience of the future, unless the personality of those members was changed. Every member should do his duty to his constituency and look after local wants, but if members sacrificed the interests of the community to those of individual electorates they were doing a wrong to the country. It was established long before he (Mr. Ewing) was member for the Swan that Midland Junction was the most suitable place for the workshops. Members on both sides of the House admitted on that occasion that the gentleman who reported upon the work was competent to do so. The member for Albany, in discussing the matter, said that his reason for moving the motion for the removal of the workshops was that it had been found that the removal was necessary, and that Midland Junction was the best place for them. The member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) pointed out that if they were at Midland Junction it would effect a saving to the country of £15,000 per annum, that being the interest on £300,000. Seeing that a comparatively limited amount of money would supply what the country required, and be the means of saving a large sum annually, it was the bounden duty of members to support this item, in that it would be for the benefit of the community. The member who moved this amendment did not appear to him (Mr. Ewing) to show any special reason why the shops should be left at Fremantle. It had been admitted in the past that the great difficulty in connection with the Government railways had been due to the want of proper facilities for attending to the rolling stock and works generally. If the Fremantle works were inadequate as far back as 1895, as the House unanimously agreed, how much more must they be out of date now? Money had been spent on the Fremantle Harbour Works, and the present Reappropriation Bill contained items relating to Fremantle. If the members representing Fremantle were genuine in their desire to save the country expense at the present time, they would have said they would leave those items to the future.

Such, however, was not the case. Those members would take the whole of the £170,000, but immediately it came to a small item of £30,000 for something which the country required, they said we could not afford it. If this was not the proper time to spend money on workshops at Midland Junction, it was not the proper time to spend money on the harbour at Fremantle. He (Mr. Ewing) would support the Government in this or any other matter in which he thought they were right.

MR. GEORGE: The standard of right was voting money for Midland Junction.

MR. EWING: If that was the standard of right of the member for the Murray, then he pitied him. There was no doubt this work was necessary. It had been agreed, long before he (Mr. Ewing) came into the Assembly, that new workshops were required at Fremantle, because the old workshops were not fit to cope with the condition of things four or five years ago.

MR. HOLMES: It was said so then, but the workshops had been doing the work all the same.

MR. EWING: Members for Fremantle admitted that those workshops were not sufficient for the work some time ago; therefore, how much more insufficient were they at the present time? Members who represented Fremantle wanted the works kept in their electorate, and to be put at Richmond, at Rocky Bay, or somewhere else, so long as they were in the Fremantle electorate. The question which we had to decide was whether the workshops were necessary or not. Whether it suited Fremantle or not, the money ought to be voted, if it was in the interests of the community.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The question as to whether the workshops should be removed from Fremantle to Midland Junction was one that the country decided several years ago; and it was generally acquiesced in by the whole community, and the people of Fremantle. He confessed to being disappointed that the removal had not taken place as soon as we had anticipated, after obtaining the verdict of Parliament. There was a great deal of ill-feeling engendered by the action of the Government, when the motion was brought be-

fore the House some years ago, and many of his (the Premier's) friends at Fremantle were opposed to the action of the Government, and one member of Parliament went over to the Opposition benches in consequence, and for some reason had never returned. If he (the Premier) had thought the removal of these workshops would take so long, he would not have moved in regard to them when he did. There was no reason why one should incur the displeasure of supporters, but the Government intended to take action at that time in the interests of the country, and it was on the advice of the Government engineers that the action was taken. If we had not done as much as was anticipated, he did not regret it much, after all, because it had given a good deal of time to those who might have been injured by the removal of the workshops to prepare for the removal. It had been said that many persons in the employ of the Government would be injured by the removal of these workshops. Those people had received good notice that they would have to remove to Midland Junction. No one since the motion was brought forward thought that we could defer for any length of time the removal of the shops, and no one could make himself believe that the situation of the shops at present was a suitable one, for the reasons that the site was too valuable, and it was too confined—there was not enough room. At the Midland Junction the Government had a very large area of land, purchased for a small price some years ago—he believed some 260 acres. It was level and altogether suitable. We had obtained an excellent water supply, and the site was at the junction of the Midland railway and the Eastern railway. It was close to the steep grades; in fact he was informed by those who knew—because he had no great knowledge except what people generally gained—that the site was altogether suitable for workshops and rolling stock. In the interests of Fremantle the Government wished to remove the shops gradually, and did not wish to do it all at once.

MR. A. FORREST: The Government had not the money.

THE PREMIER: The Government might find the money, if we were very

anxious to make the removal at once. But it was in the interests of all concerned that these shops should be removed gradually. No one could be injured because everybody knew that the removal was to take place in the end, but that it would be done gradually. We should remember that any money expended in Fremantle in enlarging the shops to give greater accommodation would be money wasted, and it would be better to spend the money on the permanent site.

MR. GEORGE: What about the short time of the men? They were working five days instead of six, because there was not sufficient work to do.

THE PREMIER: If there was not the work to be done, then the men should be got rid of. It was not the duty of the State to keep a lot of persons employed if there was no work for them.

MR. GEORGE: The argument of the Commissioner of Railways was that there was a large amount of work to be done at these shops, and there was no room to do it in.

THE PREMIER: Then there were more men there than there was work to do.

MR. GEORGE: Nothing of the kind.

THE PREMIER said he did not know what the hon. member did mean. The hon. member had spoken half a dozen times, and he had not made hon. member understand what he meant yet. What he (the Premier) wanted to impress on the Committee was that in the interests of Fremantle this removal should be done gradually. He also wanted to impress upon the Committee that there would be no hardship to those employed, as good notice had been given, and he further wished to impress on hon. members that any money spent in Fremantle, allowing that we must remove the shops, was not conducive to economy. It would be better to expend all the money at the permanent abode for the workshops. Seeing that Parliament had decided to remove the workshops to Midland Junction, we had better go on with the work gradually.

MR. A. FORREST said he intended to oppose this vote on the grounds that in November, 1894, this matter was discussed in the House, and it was then de-

cided that the workshops should be removed from Fremantle to some point further away from Fremantle. In the early part of 1895 a resolution was passed in the House that the workshops should be removed to Midland Junction. During 1895, 1896, 1897, and 1898, an immense amount of work had to be done at Fremantle by the Railway Department, in building trucks and carriages, and carrying out other important works, during the boom time, which we had in those years. We now found that there was not so much work to do, because it had been stated that the men were only working five days out of the six at the workshops at Fremantle. We should also be aware from the remarks of the Commissioner of Railways, that the amount of rolling stock to be made up at Fremantle was not very great at present, and we were also fully aware that a large amount of rolling stock was in the colony, nearly sufficient to meet the demands of the trade, so that the question of spending the £30,000 did not seem to arise.

THE PREMIER: We owed £10,000.

MR. A. FORREST: The country would not mind voting the £10,000 if the Government wanted it. When we were curtailing in every direction the Committee were asked to reappropriate a sum of £30,000. We knew that £30,000 was not sufficient to complete the work; it would not be done for six times as much, and if we commenced these works to the extent of the amount we were asked to vote, it would pledge us to complete the works. In the present state of the finances of the colony, and considering that money was being reappropriated, he considered the trade of the country did not warrant the expenditure of further money from reappropriations to build up large workshops in another portion of the colony. When the colony got over the small difficulty it was in at the present time, no doubt it would be unanimously decided to build workshops which would be a credit to the country, and do the work of the country, but no argument had been used by the Government to show that more work was required to be done than could be carried out at present. There was no reason why we should reappropriate this money, except it was to give work to the people of the country,

and if the Government said that, he believed he would vote for the item. The Government did not say the money was required to give work to the people, because they dare not say it. What he (Mr. A. Forrest) was saying would be of little moment, because the Government were determined to spend this money; but if we were all private individuals sitting here on a board, we would feel that, with the present plant there was at Fremantle, we should not be justified in spending this money, but that the work should stand over a little longer.

THE PREMIER: The works were all out in the open at Fremantle.

MR. A. FORREST: That was an important question, but we had gone through the boom times and we had built carriages and engines during that time, and now, when there was a slackness, the Government said we must spend money in removing the workshops. If it had been said in 1897 that it was necessary for the country, which was then growing at a very fast pace, to have the workshops shifted, even the members for Fremantle would have agreed to it; but at present he saw no reason whatever why the House should reappropriate £30,000 in the way proposed, when a removal was not absolutely required in the public interests.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: The remarks of the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) were really surprising. It was to be regretted that members who opposed this item had not had an opportunity of seeing the workshops at Fremantle. He had visited them some 60 or 70 times, and was there only last Sunday, and he could assure the Committee that the state of the place was enough to convince anyone that no delay should take place in the removal of the workshops. The great bulk of the work was done in the open, or under canvas, at great expense to the country; and, if that state of things were allowed to continue, it would be simply impossible to hold the Government responsible for carrying on the department economically. In 1894 there was only about one-fourth of the stock at present owned by the department; for, instead of 25 or 30 engines in 1894, there were now 260 engines in the colony, and within a few months from the present time the mile-

age of the railways should be increased to 1,400 miles. There was really no course open but to remove the workshops; and if such a step were necessary four years ago, it was doubly necessary now. The railways were a big concern, the earnings last month reaching nearly £100,000; and yet members were found to oppose a vote of a paltry £30,000 for an absolutely necessary removal of the workshops, while votes of thousands of pounds were passed for other works which were perhaps not so urgent. The expenditure on the railways was reproductive in the highest degree; and, in order that the stock should be well-cared for, it was necessary there should be a removal of the establishment. There had been some references to the shortening of the work days in the department; but rather than knock off every fifth man of the class earning £3 a week, it was deemed a better arrangement that all should be kept on and earn 50s. a week. In any case, this was only a temporary arrangement. The stock should be kept in good repair, and during the next four months stock would still be coming in. It had not been found necessary to repair a lot of the stock which had come in new, but only that day a return had been submitted to him showing there were about 30 engines and 130 waggons under repair at the shops. There was no doubt the necessity for repairs would increase as time went on. The railways were extending in the dry districts, and owing to the dust caused by the nature of the ballast, there was more deterioration in connection with the rolling-stock here than, possibly, there was elsewhere. All this meant that a proper place was necessary in which these repairs should be made. There was a valuable stock, worth one and a half millions of money, lying about the country, and some means must be found of housing that stock, in order to thoroughly protect it. In this work a beginning must be made, and it was hard to understand how hon. members could fail to recognise the absolute necessity for removing the workshops. The foresight shown by those responsible for arranging for the site at Midland Junction was most commendable, and deserved the credit and the thanks of the people of the country. The site chosen was an

ideal site for the purpose, and it was simply absurd to say it was under water. He was confident that not only would £30,000 be required, but ten times that amount of money would be necessary before ten years were over; and the country ought to be congratulated on the need for these workshops. He, like every Minister since the institution of responsible Government, had taken a great interest in this subject. Our railway system should be a perfect one, and the only means of attaining that end was by voting the small amount now necessary for the commencement of the works.

MR. GEORGE: Although it had been stated that he had spoken half a dozen times, this was only the third time he had addressed himself to the subject. What he had dealt with in the absence of the Premier from the Chamber was the statement of the Commissioner of Railways that the railway workshops should be removed, because the work was pressing and could not be done at Fremantle.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: That was one of the arguments, and it was an argument of which the country ought to be proud.

MR. GEORGE: If there was any weight in the argument, why had the working time of the men been reduced to five days a week? He (Mr. George) was not the man to ask the Minister to discharge men, and, in any case, if he did make the request, it would not be acceded to. His own opinion was, if a good body of workmen had been got together, they ought to be kept. He would not object to the removal of the workshops to the Midland Junction for one moment, if the country had the money to spend.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: There was the money.

MR. GEORGE: Then the money had not been honestly got, anyhow.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: That was another thing. The Government must get money honestly, if they could; but, if they could not get it honestly, they must get it somehow.

MR. GEORGE: That reminded hon. members of the old story that a man must get money honestly if he could, but, at any rate, he must get money. That was a nice sort of argument to come from one of the Ministry. Was that the hon. gen-

tleman's system of ethics, or system of honesty? If it were, then the sooner the Premier and the Commissioner of Railways found themselves in the Fremantle gaol, the better for the country. This argument advanced by the Commissioner of Railways was too puerile altogether. No doubt it was necessary the stock should be housed, and he was glad to see that carriage-sheds were being provided in Perth; but he objected to this expenditure at a time when the Premier found it necessary to come to the House and speak for three hours, with a face as black as midnight, and his heart in his boots, on the finances. He did not know the exact language in which to couch his opinion of the proposal of the Government, but, at any rate, it was a proposal that was not a right one. It might be diplomatic, but it was not honest. He himself was sanguine about the country.

**THE PREMIER:** Then the hon. member should not abuse the country.

**MR. GEORGE:** The country had never been abused by him, and, in any case, the country was one too good for him, and too good for the Premier.

**THE PREMIER:** Not at all; not for the hon. member.

**MR. GEORGE** said he was satisfied with the country, and would be satisfied with it so long as the Government guided their course prudently; but he could not support such an argument as that which had just been put forward by the Commissioner of Railways, and which was a degradation to politics.

**THE PREMIER:** The hon. member was running that to death.

**MR. GEORGE:** It was necessary sometimes to drive a nail into thick skulls; and, while that was not necessary in this House, he might occasionally, by accident, hit a member of Parliament.

**MR. QUINLAN** supported the item. He had been a member of the commission appointed some four or five years ago to enquire into the advisability of removing the workshops from Fremantle; and the majority of the commission were decidedly in favour of the removal at that time. If that removal was then necessary, it must be apparent that the present necessity was much greater. The Commissioner of Railways had given a sufficient reason for the change in pointing to the number of

locomotives now in stock. Though none of the members of the commission could speak from practical experience, like the member for the Murray, nevertheless the Committee would doubtless give them credit for coming to a just conclusion, having heard the evidence of experts qualified to give an opinion. Among the reasons which had influenced the commission were the want of accommodation at Fremantle, the fact that the whole of the land occupied by the workshops was urgently required for wharfage accommodation in connection with the harbour works, while the net-work of lines there would impede traffic and prevent access to the wharves. The Government made a good purchase of the land they required at Midland Junction, and the land reclaimed at Fremantle would be a very valuable asset to the State. Another argument was the bad effect of sea air and salt water on machinery, especially in regard to machinery exposed in the open. It was pointed out that the amount which must be written off for deterioration in the value of stock so exposed would pay the interest on the outlay at Midland Junction. A great disadvantage of the Fremantle workshops was that there was not room for the men to work. The member for the Murray could speak with authority on that point. In the new establishment there would be room for the erection of modern appliances. This question was pretty stale, but he felt bound to speak upon it as a member of the original commission which heard evidence on the subject, though the side he took was against his own interests, for, unfortunately, he had no land at Midland Junction. He had come to the conclusion that the Fremantle workshops must go; and the Government had given due notice of their removal. When the change was first proposed it was argued that the workmen and officers had invested their all in building homes for themselves at Fremantle, and it would be unjust to cause them to move. But four or five years had since elapsed. There had been a boom in house property; the men had a glorious opportunity of selling out and purchasing afresh at Midland Junction. There were strong reasons for the removal before, and now those reasons were doubly strong.

MR. WALLACE: In view of the statement of the Commissioner of Railways in regard to the necessity for protecting certain stock or stores now lying exposed at Fremantle, he would support the proposed expenditure of £30,000; but he would not pledge himself to support any further votes for the extension of the scheme as decided some years ago. He voted for the item only to give to the railway stores and stock at Fremantle the protection which the Minister maintained was necessary.

MR. GEORGE: Surely the Commissioner of Railways would not sit still and see his words misinterpreted as they had been by the member for Yalgoo (Mr. Wallace). What the Minister said was that he wanted to house the stock. The railway stores were not the stock. The stores were being shifted at the present time to the north beach.

MR. MORAN said he had a grievance in this connection. Four years ago he was requested to talk for two hours against the proposed removal of the works to Midland Junction. As soon as he and his friends were beaten, he bought some land at that place, which had been lying idle ever since. If the Government did not hurry up the works, they would ruin all people similarly situated. The Premier was in favour of removing these workshops slowly.

THE PREMIER: Gradually.

MR. MORAN: That was a good word, and probably meant anything from a year to 100 years.

THE PREMIER: Step by step.

MR. MORAN: Seeing that only £15,000 had been expended in four years, and that £300,000 would be required to complete the work, that consummation would be reached in about 1,500 years from date. From the remarks of the Commissioner of Railways, he was led to the conclusion that there was no necessity for the new workshops. There was a large area of land lying idle at Fremantle.

THE PREMIER: No.

MR. MORAN said he understood the only objection to the Fremantle workshops was that they were dirty, because they were not properly cleaned up.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: The shops were cleanly kept. What he

had said was that they were in a crowded state.

MR. MORAN: There was any amount of room to extend them. All the heavy work of the department had been done. There was no longer a boom in truck-building, nor would there be another. Kalgoorlie would not import another million pounds worth of machinery in 12 months. The heavy traffic was over, nor would it come again; and to spend £300,000 on unnecessary workshops to be erected in the middle of a lake, where they must be built on punts, or on piles, was in the present position of the colony too much. The Premier knew the works were not required. The Commissioner of Railways had proved it, and had said he did not want the money. There was no site yet available. The site could doubtless be seen on a fine day, when the water was not stirred up. There was about 10 feet of water on top of it. By the time that the hole had been filled up, and the £300,000 expended, even then the place would be no good, except for harbour works connected by canal with the sea. We ought to stop before spending this money, in the present position of the colony. We had any amount of men at Fremantle who, in fact, had not the work to do. More work had been done in the last two years than the department would be called upon to do in the next six.

THE PREMIER: Oh, no.

MR. MORAN: The department would never have the same amount of work to do in a hurry in relation to the rolling-stock as they had before, and the difficulties had been got over. The Premier did not believe in this scheme.

THE PREMIER: Yes, he did.

MR. MORAN: The matter might stand over for the next two or three years; the finances of the colony at the present time not being in a flourishing state.

Amendment—that the item be struck out—put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	5
Noes	...	...	...	21
				—
Majority against	...			16

*Ayes.*

Mr. George  
Mr. Holmes  
Mr. Locke  
Mr. Moran  
Mr. Higham  
(Teller)

*Noes.*

Hon. S. Burt  
Mr. Conolly  
Mr. Doherty  
Mr. Ewing  
Sir John Forrest  
Mr. Gregory  
Mr. Hall  
Mr. Hooley  
Mr. Lefroy  
Mr. Mitchell  
Mr. Morgans  
Mr. Pennefather  
Mr. Piesse  
Mr. Quinlan  
Mr. Rason  
Sir J. G. Lee Steere  
Mr. Throssell  
Hon. H. W. Venn  
Mr. Wallace  
Mr. Wood  
Mr. Hubble

(Teller)

Amendment thus negatived, and the item passed.

Harbour Works, £210,000—Item, Fremantle harbour works, including cable to Rottneest, £128,000:

Mr. WALLACE asked for explanation as to the cost of the cable.

THE PREMIER: About £4,000.

Mr. WALLACE: It had been stated the cost would be more than £10,000.

THE PREMIER: No.

Item passed.

Item, Bunbury breakwater, completion of, £30,000:

Mr. LEAKE: Would the Director of Public Works tell the House how much had been spent on this breakwater?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: £68,000 up to the end of June.

Mr. LEAKE: And this £30,000 was to complete?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: This £30,000 would complete the work. It was expected the work in hand would last about four months, and the Committee might rest assured there would be no expenditure over the £100,000 first voted, that being the estimated cost.

Mr. LEAKE moved that the item be struck out. It seemed to him the proposed expenditure was not necessary.

THE PREMIER: Up to August, £13,000 of this amount had been spent.

Mr. LEAKE: It was not surprising to hear that the Government were going in for unauthorised expenditure.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: It was authorised. The Government took a vote on the Estimates last year to carry on the work; and the probable cost was £100,000.

Mr. LEAKE: Parliament had not authorised the expenditure of £100,000.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: The Government had to carry on many works in the same way.

Mr. LEAKE: The Government had pledged the country to this work without the authority of Parliament, and now Ministers came to Parliament and said, "You must vote the money."

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: This was an authorised vote.

Mr. LEAKE: This was authorised as a revenue work. This was another hopeless flounder on behalf of the Government. We were told that this work was to be constructed out of revenue; then the Government expended money without the authority of Parliament, and now wished to re-appropriate loan money, and commit the country to a fresh loan. The Bunbury breakwater was a work that could be stopped—the sea stopped it the other day by knocking one end off the breakwater. The Premier had announced that it was his duty to restore the credit of the colony.

THE PREMIER: The credit of the colony was as good as ever.

Mr. LEAKE: The Premier said in the Budget Speech that he had to restore the credit of the country.

THE PREMIER: The credit was all right.

Mr. LEAKE: There was no reason why the £30,000 should not stand over. The few stones that had been thrown into the water at Bunbury would not be any the worse for remaining there a little longer. There was no pressing necessity for the expenditure of the money. The £30,000 might be applied to pressing or urgent works. Further down on the schedule there was another £10,000 for Bunbury jetty.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: A very necessary work.

Mr. LEAKE: Directly and indirectly, half a million of money would be expended on the wonderful harbour at Bunbury.

THE PREMIER: It was unworthy of the hon. member to misrepresent like that.

Mr. LEAKE: There were the line to Bunbury, then the line from Bunbury to Bridgetown, the line from Bunbury to the Vasse, the workshops and jetty, and the harbour works. Fully half a million of money was being spent in Bunbury.

THE PREMIER: The railways referred to were good ones.

Mr. LEAKE: Yes, wonderful railways. The Bunbury breakwater had never been recommended or approved by the Engineer in Chief—it was simply a fad of the Premier's, and there was no reason why the work should not be held in suspense for a little time. He (Mr. Leake) was down at Bunbury the other day and saw what had been done. No doubt a great deal of money had been expended. Tremendously heavy seas came in after a north-west gale, and the seas were sufficiently strong to distribute the stone deposited there for the mole. Whether a good harbour would be made at Bunbury was very doubtful. The Engineer-in-Chief had never fathered the scheme—he (Mr. Leake) would not say the Engineer-in-Chief had actually condemned it, but the work was not to be placed in the same category as the harbour works at Fremantle. The Bunbury harbour scheme was a wretched scheme altogether. He believed what the member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson) had said was right, that it would pay the country to carry the timber and goods from Bunbury to Fremantle free of cost rather than go to the expense of the improvements at Bunbury.

Mr. GEORGE: The line would have to be duplicated.

Mr. LEAKE: That would be better than expending money at Bunbury; but Bunbury was represented by the Premier. There was no reason why there should not be a cessation of expenditure at Bunbury, when we knew the finances of the country were in a very ticklish position.

Mr. GEORGE: Since the Committee had decided, by an overwhelming majority, to spend this money, whether the money were honestly come by or not, it was no use wasting time in discussing the other items. No discussion would influence the division, so far as the Bunbury breakwater was concerned. Bunbury harbour would be one of the great factors in the development of the timber

trade of the South-Western District, and not only in the Murray and in Wellington portions, but further south. Even with free carriage over the railways, timber could not be brought from those districts to Fremantle, unless extra lines were laid. During the last 18 months it had been necessary to run special train after special train, in order to get timber to Fremantle, and there had been great difficulty in keeping the line clear. When the Bunbury harbor works were finished, ships would be able to lie there in safety, and the timber trade would be enormously developed. His contention would be borne out by any hon. member who had anything to do with the timber trade.

Mr. MORAN: It was a huge mistake to endeavour to build works out of revenue. He supported the item because he was a firm believer in opening up the seaports of the colony, as the natural way to develop our resources. Bunbury would probably be the second seaport of West Australia and the centre of the largest rural population for generations to come. But, inasmuch as the Bunbury harbour works were for future generations, it was wrong to allow their cost to be paid out of revenue. Why should the present generation be called upon to pay the whole cost of a work which would be a permanent national asset, to be handed from generation to generation? In any country, where there was proper statesmanship, such works would be charged to loan fund; and it was quite sufficient to ask the present generation to pay the interest. It would be a mistake to endeavour to pay off, out of revenue, a deficit of £200,000, which had been created by works properly chargeable to loan account. If the country were properly financed there was no deficit at all. The revenue and expenditure of the country, as a going concern, balanced, and more than balanced. Not only the £30,000, which was going to finish the breakwater, but the £70,000 should at the earliest possible moment be transferred to loan account; and, as he had already intimated, he would later on in the session oppose the proposal of the Government to pay the deficit of £200,000 out of revenue. Some little allowance might be made for the "long bow" in the statement that the recent

gale had distributed the stones of the Bunbury breakwater; but, in any case, there was all the more reason why this £30,000 should be expended, because such a storm might occur again, and an unfinished breakwater was worse than none, for it was constantly liable to destruction, and thus a heavy debt might be handed down to posterity, without any corresponding asset. It was not to be supposed that one hundred thousand pounds would suffice for the work. He hoped there would be no further proposals in the House to construct harbour works, railways, or even large public buildings, out of revenue. This course was unfair to the people, for all such expenditure was properly chargeable against future generations, the work done in respect thereof representing a permanent national asset. He would move at the proper time that the whole of the expenditure in respect of this item be transferred to the temporary loan fund, thus relieving the revenue.

MR. A. FORREST: The amendment of the member for Albany had been moved with a full knowledge that the Government had received from the people in the Bunbury district large sums of money for timber lands, on the assumption that a good harbour would be provided; otherwise those people would never have taken up that land, for the timber would have to be brought to Fremantle for shipment to London, and, in that case, the freight alone would kill the trade. If this item were thrown out, as well as the £10,000 required later on to put this breakwater in good condition, the big timber mills now being erected, and the railways now in course of construction in that district for miles and miles from the main trunk line, with the main object of supplying timber for the London market, would be rendered useless. If the timber from the Bridgetown district had to be brought to Fremantle by rail, it would be shipped at a loss, for Bunbury was the only practicable outlet for such timber. He hoped the House would insist upon the completion of the harbour works by a practically unanimous vote. No more important work could be imagined. He would rather see a portion of the Fremantle harbour works stopped than see the port of Bunbury left insecure.

Several of the largest companies floated in London were building railways nine or ten miles from trunk lines at their own expense, erecting large mills, and employing a large amount of labour to ship timber at Bunbury. He hoped that later on £10,000 would be expended to put the jetty into such order that ships could come alongside and load, so that the facilities afforded might be equal to those at the port of Fremantle.

Amendment negatived, and the item passed.

Item, Carnarvon jetty, £15,500:

MR. LEAKE: Was this work already started?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: Yes; last year £6,000 or £7,000 was spent. The work was nearing completion, the total sum spent being about £13,000.

MR. LEAKE: The work was authorised to be constructed out of revenue. This was another result of the devious ways of finance. The credit of the colony was pledged to these works, and the only way to pay for them was by reappropriating out of loans.

THE PREMIER: The best way.

Item passed.

Item, Bunbury jetty, £10,000:

MR. LEAKE: Was the Bunbury jetty a new item?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: It was an entirely new item and very necessary. There would be a large amount of shipping next year, and something must be done to put the jetty in order.

MR. LEAKE: The Bunbury breakwater would have cost £100,000; and then to make that breakwater useful we had to spend an extra £10,000 on the jetty. These were works which might fairly well wait. The country was not pledged to these works, and the same argument did not obtain with regard to the expenditure of the £10,000 as to the previous works to which the credit of the country was pledged. We must pay in cases where the credit of the country was pledged because the Government would otherwise be sued, and the country would have to pay the expense. But this item of £10,000 might very well stand over. He moved that the item be struck out.

Amendment negatived, and the item passed.

Item, Ashburton jetty, £7,500:

MR. LEAKE: Was this a new work?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: In consequence of the disastrous cyclone which visited that part of the country the jetty was destroyed, and the Government decided to erect another, at an estimated cost of £7,500. It was proposed to use some of the material remaining from the old structure, to effect a little saving.

MR. GEORGE: Was that the jetty which had been built without supervision?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: The department never built works without supervision.

MR. GEORGE: Perhaps the Minister would state how it was that spikes were put in instead of bolts, nails instead of spikes, and how various little matters of that sort took place.

MR. A. FORREST: What had become of the inspector who passed these works?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: He was dismissed.

MR. A. FORREST: Who were the contractors? It was well known to the residents that the inspection must have been of a peculiar order; and the contractors must be to blame to a certain extent.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: The contractors were Smith and Timms.

MR. GEORGE: How long did the jetty take to build, and how long was the inspector there?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS said he did not know.

MR. GEORGE: The inspection of the work was said to have been of a most superficial nature. The Ashburton jetty was a disgrace to the Works Department. It was a notorious fact that in consequence of the superficial manner in which the jetty was put together, and in consequence of the fact that it had no supervision, although he believed the country paid for supervision, when a cyclone came the whole structure was destroyed.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: This was like a great many more of the stories which the hon. member got hold of. There was no doubt that the supervision, in the early stages of the work, was not what it should have been. The Government sent another

officer of the department, who could be depended upon, to take up the supervision, and transferred the former supervisor to another district, and subsequently he was dismissed. As to the faulty work, some neglect was proved against the supervisor, and certain portions of the contract were not carried out as satisfactorily as they should have been. After sending up the second officer, the work was continued, but before the jetty was completed a cyclone destroyed what had been done. The structure was not sufficiently strong to withstand the storm.

MR. GEORGE said no stories had been brought to him about this work. The department let a contract to build a jetty; the Government sent a supervisor, who did not supervise the work; then the Government sent another supervisor and discharged the first supervisor. The jetty was not quite completed when a cyclone came and blew away the structure. The work of constructing a jetty was carried out in stages, one stage being completed before another was commenced. Supervisor No. 2 must have seen the finished work, and if this officer had been any good at all, he would have seen that spikes were used instead of bolts, and nails were used instead of spikes; therefore supervisor No. 2 was no good. Then supervisor No. 3, in the shape of a cyclone, came along and swept the work away. If the Director of Works had a public washing-day and said his linen was clean, he (Mr. George) contended the linen was dirty.

Item passed.

Item, charges and expenses of raising Loans, £100,000:

MR. LEAKE asked how this item got into the schedule. Had there always been an item in the annual Appropriation Bill for charges and expenses of raising loans, and was it always charged to loans, or was it paid out of revenue?

THE PREMIER: Since 1894, there had always been an item in the annual Reappropriation Bill for charges and expenses of raising loans; but no doubt there was plenty of room for difference of opinion in regard to the item. In some colonies the item was shown on the loan schedule; but it was a better plan

to have a vote for the full amount of each item.

MR. LEAKE: And every loan implied another loan?

THE PREMIER: Not always. Since we began to borrow at 3 per cent., it had generally been at a discount. Formerly, with  $3\frac{1}{2}$  and 4 per. cent loans, there was a good deal to the credit of this item, at one time as much as £50,000; but it had all vanished.

Item passed.

Schedule as a whole put and passed.

Preamble:

THE PREMIER moved, as amendments, that in line 3 the word "raise" be struck out, and "expend" inserted in lieu thereof; also, in line 3, that the words "to be expended" be struck out.

Put and passed, and the preamble, as amended, agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11.25 p.m. until the next day.

### Legislative Assembly.

*Friday, 9th September, 1898.*

Question: Bunbury Harbour, Steamer Nemesis and Stress of Weather—Question: Fremantle Harbour, and Lights for South Quay—Question: Coolgardie Water Scheme and Tenders for Pipes—Message: Assent to Bills—Gold Mines Bill, second reading, debate resumed and adjourned—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7.30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

#### QUESTION: BUNBURY HARBOUR, STEAMER NEMESIS, AND STRESS OF WEATHER.

MR. OATS asked the Premier: 1, Whether it was a fact that the steamer Nemesis had to leave the Bunbury harbour through stress of weather on Friday night, 2nd instant, and seek shelter in Geographe Bay. 2, What provision the Government proposed to make for safe anchorage in Bunbury harbour to prevent vessels from being wrecked.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied: 1, The Nemesis was lying at the jetty astern of the barque Amicitia, and as it was blowing very hard, the captain thought it possible that the barque might break from her moorings and come down on his vessel, so, as he had to go to the Vasse to discharge cargo, he hauled off and went to that port, but the weather was so bad that he could not get near the Busselton jetty. He, therefore, came straight back to Bunbury, and came alongside the jetty at once without any trouble. 2, It is believed that the present breakwater will give the protection, which will result in the desire of the hon. member being fulfilled.

#### QUESTION: FREMANTLE HARBOUR, AND LIGHTS FOR SOUTH QUAY.

MR. HIGHAM, by leave and without notice, asked the Director of Public Works whether, in view of the frequent arrivals and departures after sunset of mail and intercolonial steamers at South Quay, Fremantle, he will immediately instal several lights, for the safety and convenience of the public?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied: I cannot answer that question without notice. It really means in what time are we expected to instal the lights?

MR. HIGHAM: Not in an indefinite time.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: I should like the hon. member to give notice of the question. I will look into it, and see what can be done.

#### QUESTION: COOLGARDIE WATER SCHEME, TENDERS FOR PIPES.

MR. LEAKE, by leave and without notice, asked whether the Premier had anything to communicate to the House with regard to the tenders for pipes for the