

the honor conferred upon me. I shall have the greatest pleasure in going and doing the best I can for the honor, dignity, and welfare of Western Australia.

#### SCAB ACT, 1885, AMENDMENT BILL.

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

The Standing Orders were suspended.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): I now beg to move the second reading of this bill. I may state that owing to the outbreak of scab in the Victoria District, there was a meeting of pastoralists held in Perth, and certain suggestions were made to the Government with a view of eradicating it. Fortunately the hon. gentleman at the present time holding the position of Attorney General has taken a great interest in this question. He has obtained all the information he possibly could, and the result of his labors is before hon. members in this bill, which I now formally move be read a second time.

Question—put and passed.

#### IN COMMITTEE:

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3.—Interpretation:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton) moved, That progress be reported and leave given to sit again the following day.

Question—put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House, at 9-25 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, 24th February, at 3 o'clock, p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Monday, 23rd February, 1891.

Reward for Discovery of Yilgarn goldfield—Road between Front Flats and Walkaway Railway Station—National Australasian (Federal) Convention—Survey of Yilgarn Railway Route—Appropriation Bill, 1891—Scab Act Amendment Bill: third reading—South-Western Railway Bill: second reading; in committee; third reading—Adjournment.

#### REWARD FOR DISCOVERY OF YILGARN GOLDFIELD.

MR. TRAYLEN, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands, whether the conditions antecedent to the award of a bonus for the discovery of a Goldfield had been fulfilled in respect of Yilgarn; and, if so, what steps the Government proposed to take for distributing the award?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) replied that several claimants had claimed the reward, but no definite decision had yet been arrived at.

#### ROAD BETWEEN FRONT FLATS AND WALKAWAY RAILWAY STATION.

MR. TRAYLEN, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands whether, in apportioning the sum of £30,000 voted for Roads and Bridges from loan money, he would have regard to the necessity for better means of transit between the Front Flats and the Railway Station at Walkaway?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied that the Government would be very glad to take the matter into consideration.

#### NATIONAL AUSTRALASIAN (FEDERAL) CONVENTION.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest), in accordance with notice, moved,—

(1.) That this House concurs in the following Resolutions, adopted by the Australasian Federation Conference, on the 13th February, 1890:—

“(a.) That, in the opinion of this Conference, the best interests “and the present and future “prosperity of the Australian “Colonies will be promoted by “an early union under the “Crown; and, while fully recognising the valuable services

"of the Members of the Convention of 1883 in founding the Federal Council, it declares its opinion that the seven years which have since elapsed have developed the national life of Australia in population, in wealth, in the discovery of resources, and in self-governing capacity, to an extent which justifies the higher act, at all times contemplated, of the union of these Colonies under one Legislative and Executive Government, on principles just to the several Colonies.

"(b.) That to the union of the Australian Colonies contemplated by the foregoing resolution, the remoter Australasian Colonies shall be entitled to admission at such times and on such conditions as may be hereafter agreed upon.

"(c.) That the Members of the Conference should take such steps as may be necessary to induce the Legislatures of their respective Colonies to appoint, during the present year, Delegates to a National Australasian Convention, empowered to consider and report upon an adequate scheme for a Federal Constitution."

The hon. gentleman said: Members will have read the resolutions which appear on the Notice Paper, and which I believe are in the form adopted by all the other colonies; and I am very pleased that it is our intention to be represented at this Convention. Members know that it is somewhat inconvenient at the present time for members of the Government to get away, and I have no doubt it will be inconvenient to those other members who may be elected to proceed to attend this Conference at Sydney in this rather hurried way. But I think if we consider the importance of the occasion we must come to the conclusion that it would be a very great pity if Western Australia were not represented at this great national gathering. It will be the first occasion on which we shall have the opportunity of appearing before the statesmen of the other colonies as members representing

a self-governing community, the first occasion on which we shall be able to meet them on equal terms. I believe that our meeting will be productive of great good. For one thing it will enable those members who may be selected to attend this Convention an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the leading statesmen of the Eastern Colonies, which I think will in itself be of no little advantage in carrying on the business and cementing the relations of countries so closely situated as these colonies are. I remember the advantages gained by the meeting in London, at the Imperial and Colonial Conference, of representatives of these colonies and other British dependencies. I have often thought, since, that that Conference gave us an opportunity that not only we never had before but may never have again of meeting the most prominent statesmen, not only of Australia but of all parts of the British dominions, and of thus forming ties which probably would never have been formed but for this personal intercourse with the leading statesmen of those countries, which like ourselves are dependencies of the British Crown. I believe also that this great national gathering at Sydney will have a beneficial effect in the same way; and I hope it may have a still more important effect, namely, the union of these colonies in one federated dominion, and the fusion of all these colonies into one united Australian nation. Looking at the question from every point of view I think it is very necessary that we should strain every nerve to show ourselves equal to so great an occasion, and be prepared to do all in our power to hasten on a consummation so devoutly to be desired. I will say no more, sir, on this occasion—I do not think it is necessary—but will now formally move the resolution standing in my name.

MR. PARKER: I should be sorry, sir, to see such a resolution as this carried in this House of Assembly without some little further discussion. I think the importance of it demands a great deal more consideration than the few brief words we have heard from the Premier. That hon. gentleman, so far as I have gathered from his speech, apparently thinks that the main object to be derived from this National Convention is the

meeting in personal intercourse of the various statesmen of these colonies with the view of their becoming better acquainted with each other. Well, sir, if that is all the object we have in view, or the main object we have in view, I do not think we need trouble ourselves about being represented at all. But I think the object we have in view is a very different one. That object is perhaps the most ambitious one we could formulate at the present time, so far as these colonies are concerned, and that is the drafting of a Constitution which we hope may eventually become the Constitution of an Australian Dominion, under which we may, in fact, become a second Canada, and become a Power among the nations of the world. That, sir, is virtually what the object of this Convention is, and not merely an occasion for prominent statesmen to become better acquainted with each other. It was said at the last Conference held on this subject, in Melbourne, last year, that this movement in favor of Federation was a movement that came from the upper stratum of society and not from the lower. We know that in all great movements there is generally some master mind that initiates the idea, and that idea is taken hold of by others with more or less enthusiasm, and eventually it permeates the whole mass of the community. But I regret to say that, so far as this colony is concerned, there appears to be no feeling at all in favor of this Federation movement. No remarks that I have heard on the subject have created any enthusiasm whatever. I believe that, so far as the public of Western Australia are concerned, they are entirely indifferent on this question. I feel that before we can successfully enter into federation with the other great Australian colonies the people of Western Australia must become imbued with the advantages to be derived from federation. There are, to my mind, many difficulties, so far as this colony is concerned—and I trust the members who will represent us at this Convention will bear this in mind—there are many difficulties, so far as this colony is concerned, in the way of our joining in this federation, more difficulties than are in the way of those colonies who are closely connected with each other by railways, and who have daily means of communication with each other. We

are in this respect more in the position of New Zealand. It was pointed out at the Conference held last year by one of the representatives of that colony that, although it had been stated by one of the speakers that Nature had created no obstacles to the federation of the Australian colonies, Nature had, so far as New Zealand was concerned, created 1,200 obstacles, in the way of 1,200 miles of stormy sea. And that is our position. Our only communication with the other colonies is by the intervening stormy sea, and the distance from Albany to Adelaide is very much the same, some 1,150 miles. We might also say that, so far as our federating with the sister colonies is concerned, Nature has created another obstacle in the shape of 500 miles of sandy desert. Therefore, we must bear in mind that if there is to be Federation, if there is to be a Dominion Parliament and an Executive at the seat of Government—probably in New South Wales or Victoria—we must bear in mind that we shall be at a very great disadvantage. We shall be situated at such a distance from the seat of Government that I do not think we can expect that consideration for our wants and requirements which we would be entitled to. We must also bear in mind that if we have Federation it will mean a Dominion Parliament, with two Houses, in both of which the other colonies will be represented by a considerable number of members. I ask the members of this House whether they think we have a sufficient number of men of leisure and means in our midst who will be able and willing to spare four, five, or six months of their time every year in Melbourne or Sydney, to attend the sittings of this Dominion Parliament? I do not think that half a dozen such men could be found in the colony; whereas, if we are to be properly represented, like the other colonies, we would require, probably, 20 or 30 men to represent us, in the two Houses. These are disadvantages which our representatives at this Convention should not lose sight of,—our distance from the seat of the central Government, and the paucity of men of means, and leisure, and ability, who would be prepared to give up their time to attend the sessions of the Federal Parliament. I take it that unless we are adequately represented in

this Dominion Parliament we may as well be out of the Federal Union as in it. I only mention these matters because I think they ought not to be lost sight of; and I hope our delegates at the forthcoming Convention will not fail to urge them upon the attention of the Convention. If Western Australia is to be one of the Dominion states, it is absolutely necessary, to my mind, that we should be immediately connected by a railway with the neighboring colonies. We cannot at present afford to build such a line ourselves, but we have the land; and I should think the local Legislature would only be too ready and willing to subsidise such a line with a liberal subsidy so far as the land is concerned. But the construction of such a line as that, if it is to prove a success, must be a national undertaking. It must be taken in hand by a Federated Australia. At any rate, I cannot but think that until such a line is taken in hand, or we have an assurance that it will be taken in hand, it will almost be folly for us to surrender, as we would have to do, a great many of our present privileges to a Dominion Parliament and an Executive Government over a thousand miles away. Again, I hear this in mind—and I hope our delegates to the Convention will bear it in mind—when this subject was first mooted, about the end of 1889, it was in consequence of a report made by Major-General Edwards on the defences of the Australian colonies generally. A conference was called together, meanwhile, to consider the best system of defending our Australian coast against a foreign foe. Now, I will ask members what possible good—what possible aid to us, in case of necessity—would the defence forces of Victoria or New South Wales, or even South Australia, our nearest neighbor, be without railway communication? In the event of our shores being menaced, they could give us no aid that could possibly be of any timely help to us, at this distance. Not only that; they also would be menaced, and they would require their defence forces to protect their own shores. The only possible way in which they could afford this colony any aid would be through the establishment of railway communication between here and Adelaide. This, too, is a point which I think our delegates should

strongly urge upon the Federal Convention. Without such a line, the defence of Australia as a whole cannot possibly be consummated. I do not know yet who the members are who are likely to be chosen from this House and from the Legislative Council to represent us at this Convention; but, whoever they may be, I trust they will pardon the remarks I have made. If some other member had addressed the House on this subject, I would not have troubled the House with my remarks; but I felt that the importance of the subject demanded some further attention than the leader of the Government appeared inclined to give it. I thought we ought to look upon this great national gathering as something more than merely affording an opportunity for the leading statesmen of the various colonies to become personally acquainted with each other, which appears to be the dominant idea in the hon. gentleman's mind. I trust that other members will follow me, and give us their views on this subject, and that these important resolutions are not going to be adopted as a matter of form. I know that in the Parliaments of the other colonies the debates on this question occupied in some cases many days. It was not passed over by members tacitly endorsing the views of the mover or seconder of the resolutions. The question was dealt with from various and opposite points of view. Every phase of opinion found expression; and I think it is highly desirable that all shades of opinion should be expressed in this House, so that those who may attend the Convention on our behalf should have some idea of the views held by members generally on this question of federation. It must be borne in mind that, although we propose to send representatives to this Conference untrammelled, yet, I take it, they will be asked to assist in preparing a Federal Constitution which they think will meet the views of the people of their separate colonies. Therefore, to enable them to ascertain these views, it seems to me that it is the bounden duty of the representative men of the colony to give the delegates some idea of the views of the public which they represent. While I am entirely in accord with the view that we should do all in our power to bring about a

federation of these colonies, yet I must confess there seem to me many difficulties in the way, which will have to be overcome,—more so perhaps in our case than in that of any other colony of the group. I will point out to members this: it is said that complete Federation means a Customs Union and intercolonial free-trade. Members must know full well that one half our present revenue is derived from the Customs, and that it would be a very great blow to this colony if we had to surrender our Customs revenue to the Dominion Government. I do not know how, without some other direct mode of taxation, we would be able to raise sufficient funds to carry on the Government of the country. Not only that; it would be a great blow to the industries of the country, if we were to enter upon a policy of intercolonial free-trade. Victoria, and the other colonies to a lesser degree, have established manufactures and industries of various kinds, and they would be able to flood our markets with their products, so that there would be no hope of our establishing any local industries or manufactures of our own. For instance, I would ask members to think for a moment whether, if we had intercolonial free-trade, we would have had a tobacco manufactory in our midst? It would be cheaper to send the manufactured article from Adelaide or Melbourne, if that could be done free of Customs duty. The same with other industries. I shall not trouble members with any further remarks on the subject. I only hope that the few words I have spoken may lead to other members expressing their views. I admit I have not considered the subject deeply. I always had an idea that not only would Australian Federation be an immense advantage and a grand idea if carried out, but also that Imperial Federation—a federation of all the colonies with the mother country—would be a still grander idea, one of the grandest ideas that could be carried out; and I trust that the federation of Australia which we are now aiming at is merely a stepping-stone to that greater federation of the Empire, which I trust we may yet live to see.

MR. RICHARDSON: The hon. member for York has, no doubt, pointed out certain difficulties which must, in the

nature of things, stare in the face those who will represent this colony at the approaching Convention. No doubt Western Australia will stand in a peculiar position as regards this subject of federation, and her delegates must be prepared, on many questions, to stand aloof. Questions will arise connected with all the Australian colonies, in which Western Australia will find herself in a different position from any other colony. Her isolation forms one great barrier to her being closely united in any system of federation with the other colonies. However greatly we may desire to see ourselves united with those great colonies, we must not lose sight of the fact that their interests and our interests are in many respects not exactly identical; and our delegates must be prepared to find themselves in the unfortunate position of having to stand to their guns and endeavor to maintain their ground in the face of very powerful opposition. Whoever will represent the colony at this Convention will find themselves in a position of the greatest responsibility; and I trust they will be men who will have some grasp of the subject, and who will realise the position of the colony, and be able to stand up for the rights of the colony. I hope the House in choosing these delegates will rise superior to personal considerations, and will choose those whom they think best fitted for the position,—men who, while prepared to meet representatives of the other colonies on every possible point that will not entail loss or injury to our own colony, will at the same time be prepared, respectfully, but firmly, to maintain those rights which, in virtue of our own peculiar position, we may fairly be considered entitled to. There are many questions besides the tariff question which concern us more than the other colonies. For these and other reasons it behoves our representatives, while endeavoring in every possible way to cement the feeling in favor of this grand principle of federation and union of all the Australian colonies, and while putting no needless obstruction in the way, but showing every desire to advance that great movement by every means in their power,—while doing all this, it behoves them to be watchful, and to keep a keen eye (as it were) and a keen watch that in

doing so they are not sacrificing our weakness to the greater strength of the other colonies with their larger populations and their well-established manufactures. It is an old saying, that "charity begins at home;" and I hope that even in this great Federation question it will not be lost sight of. If it be found possible, by bold and decisive action, to attain the end which the hon. member for York has referred to—the connection of this colony with the Eastern colonies by rail, I hope our delegates will be prepared, on behalf of Western Australia, to offer most liberal concessions in the way of land towards that most desirable end. I hope they will not be led away, by any excessive idea as to the value of our territory, from offering on behalf of this country, with the sanction of this Parliament, most liberal concessions in the way of grants of land in order, if possible, to hasten the consummation of what we all devoutly wish—the establishment of direct communication between this colony and the Eastern colonies by the iron road. I hope the House, in selecting its representatives for this auspicious gathering, will endeavor to secure members who will worthily represent us, remembering that they will be put shoulder to shoulder with the very flower of Australian politicians. I trust that the men we send will not only acquit themselves creditably, but also give a practical demonstration to the statesmen of the other colonies that we have men amongst us worthy of the great trust recently reposed in us by the Imperial Parliament in giving us the privilege of managing our own affairs.

MR. HARPER: It is, I think, a high and noble aspiration for young communities like ours, and for all English-speaking communities, to aim at cementing the bond of union between them. Every year we live makes it more apparent that it is the destiny of our race to form a strong bond which will have a great influence upon the future peace of the world; and I think that we, on our part, in this colony, small community as we are, should do our utmost to help in cementing that bond. But, when we come to look at the practical aspect of the question, it seems from every point of view to present greater and greater difficulties. After carefully thinking

over the subject, it appears to me there are only two methods by which Australian Federation can be brought about,—either by a gradual process of surmounting these difficulties, or through the sudden effects of a scare or a panic. It is earnestly to be hoped that no scare will ever force us into a hasty union. We may hope, I trust, that by steady examination of the surrounding difficulties, and by mutual concessions, some process may be arrived at by which we may become united with our sister colonies under some system of federation. Still I think the more we look at it, from a practical point of view, the more will it become apparent that under existing circumstances it will be found impossible for us, a small and isolated community, to stand the financial strain which federation would make upon us. In that, I rather concur with the hon. member for York. Our community as yet is too small, too sparsely scattered over an immense territory, to enable us to meet, on equal terms, with our more populous neighbors; and I think the great object we should have in sending delegates to this National Convention is that they should assist in laying before the representatives of the other colonies the difficulties which surround us in connection with this matter, and to use what influence they can in preparing a Constitution which will leave the door open for us to enter the Union when our circumstances will enable us to do so. I earnestly hope that the time is not far distant when we may do so; but I really cannot see how, under present circumstances, we can hope to join the other colonies in a Customs union, which would affect us most materially, depending as we are for so large a portion of our revenue upon Customs receipts. This, I believe, is admitted by politicians in the other colonies. It would affect us more than it would any other colony, and we are in a less favorable position to stand it. I hope that the representatives of the other colonies will generously recognise our difficulties, and will do all they can, when framing a Federal Constitution, to give us an opportunity of joining them as soon as our circumstances will enable us to do so.

MR. CANNING: Sir, I think the Premier in moving these resolutions has

acted very judiciously, at the same time affording members an opportunity of indicating the course which in their opinion our delegates to the Federal Convention should follow. It was incumbent upon him to bring forward some motion which would bring before the House the views entertained by the Government in sending delegates to the Convention. I quite sympathise with his aspirations for Imperial federation, and for a general union of the Australasian colonies; but, at the same time, I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that at present neither one nor the other can be regarded within measurable distance of attainment. It may be said of either that it has not yet come within the range of practical politics. Much as we may desire to bring about a general federation of the whole of the different parts of the Empire, it is not yet above the visible horizon. On the contrary, from day to day, some fresh occurrence tends to shake our faith in the possibility of such a consummation being attained, for some time to come at all events. We find in the Dominion of Canada at the present time there are two great parties—one party undoubtedly very loyal to the British Crown, and the other party certainly inclined to some kind of union with the United States of America. The very fact of a party having such views and aspirations as I have indicated existing in Canada shows that the inhabitants of that part of the Empire are very far from being in a state of unanimity as to what is to be the future of the great Dominion. We know that the policy of the United States of America has had one great object in view for years past, and that is the absorption of all the States of that great continent. Whether they will succeed is a question upon which no man can venture an opinion. At the same time it is their policy; and there is a party in the Dominion of Canada that is favorable to the views of the United States. That indicates a great obstacle, and is a great discouragement to those who look forward to the union of all British colonies under the Crown. So much for the generalities of the question. As to Australian Federation, I am afraid that at the present moment, however desirable the object, there are insuperable objections in the

way of the accomplishment of it. To begin with, we have the differences in the tariffs of the various colonies. We have side by side New South Wales and Victoria — one almost a free-trade colony, and the other with a fiscal policy that falls very little short of the protective policy of the United States of America. There is a wide divergence, then, even between these two colonies, to say nothing of the other colonies with their conflicting tariffs. Some understanding would certainly have to be arrived at by which the tariffs of the various colonies could be assimilated; and at present that consummation seems very far off. As some members have indicated in their remarks this evening, our interests are not identical with those of the other colonies. I do not think anyone who gives the matter any serious consideration can come to any other conclusion. It is very difficult to see in what way our interests are identical with those of the other colonies. We occupy one-third of the whole territory; we are separated, at present, on the one hand by a vast expanse of ocean, and on the other hand by a vast desert. It is possible that in the course of time that desert will be bridged over by means of a railway; at the same time, many years must elapse before our interests can be brought into close relation with those of the other Australian colonies. No doubt intercourse will go on, and increase; but, at the same time, there is no tendency at the present time to bring us into closer commercial relations beyond the ordinary course of business. Our commercial relations tend more towards England than the other colonies. No doubt people will come over here from the other colonies, and employ their capital and energies here; but they will come here in the same way as they would go to India or any other part, to promote their own interests, and not for the purpose of bringing this colony into closer relation with the other colonies. So that I do not see at the present moment, that we are very near the realisation of the hopes of those who look forward to the near union of all the Australian colonies in the shape of federation. We have not yet even discovered the basis upon which it can be brought about. A common tariff would, no doubt, go a long way to

form a basis of union; but at the present time there seem to be almost insurmountable obstacles in the way of agreeing upon such a basis. Then, again, we have no common danger to compel us to unite for our common protection. All we can hope for, at the present time, is that there may be a mutual understanding between the colonies with regard to the questions already discussed at the Federal Councils which have been held from time to time. Beyond that, I do not think we could justifiably commit ourselves to any definite undertaking to join in any scheme of federation which would commit us to giving up the control of our own affairs in any shape whatever. My views are very much the same as those expressed by the hon. member for York and the hon. member for the De Grey. I do not think I need say any more. I have endeavored to indicate the views I hold, and I think time and circumstances will go far to confirm the correctness of those views. The solution of the question really remains to a considerable extent in the hands of the two great colonies of New South Wales and Victoria as regards forming a commercial basis upon which something like federation may be possible. But even if they arrive at an understanding upon that question, there are still many difficulties and many serious considerations to be settled before we can even then commit ourselves to what I believe is understood by Federation.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn):** I was very pleased that the hon. member for York should this evening have started a discussion upon this very important question, and still more pleased to listen to the cautious manner in which he asked us to approach the consideration of the question, which makes me regret all the more that the hon. member himself will not be able to be one of our representatives. I was present, but not as a delegate from the colony, at the Conference held last year in Melbourne; and it afforded me much pleasure, and I think I may say I derived a considerable amount of profit from the discussions that then took place on this question of federation. It stimulated me to read up the whole question, so that when the subject of federation came within the range of practical politics I might be able to speak with

some little knowledge of the subject. In my opinion, the question of the federation of the colonies is still something "in the air;" and I fancy that when any thinking man is asked to express an opinion on the subject he must do so with a considerable amount of diffidence and caution. Learned and versed as he may be in the history of federation as it has come about in any other parts of the world,—I refer particularly to the United States and to Canada—he will find that he still has something to learn about the entirely different conditions which surround the question in these Australian colonies. Federation, in my opinion, must be the development of time, and the development of circumstances. It is impossible for us at the present moment to speak with any degree of definiteness on the subject. My hon. colleague, the Premier, I observed, was very cautious in dealing with the question, feeling I suppose as I do that at the present moment there is really nothing very definite to be said about it, from a practical point of view. As I said just now, the whole thing as yet is "in the air;" and it was impossible for him or anyone else to express any definite opinion as to the position which this colony should take up in connection with it. Allusion has been made by the hon. member for York and other hon. members to the sacrifice which this colony would have to make in the event of the establishment of a Customs union between the various colonies; but, I take it, that whatever losses we sustained in surrendering our Customs revenue would be made up to us from some Federal fund; so that, if we lost on the one hand, we should gain on the other. No doubt our delegates will approach the consideration of the whole question with care and caution, though, I take it, that whatever they may do, and whatever this Convention may do, it cannot have any practical significance so far as any finality is concerned. It will still remain for the Legislatures of the various colonies to thresh any scheme out. So that in reality there will be no very grave responsibility cast upon our delegates; their duty will not be overwhelmingly important. I take it that their principal duty will be to keep their ears open, and say as little as they can.



MR. KEANE: I think that what has fallen from the Commissioner of Railways is about right; I think what our delegates will have to do is to say very little, and keep their ears open. In my humble opinion, the Federation of the Australian colonies is just about as far off at the present moment as the Transcontinental Railway between Fremantle and Eucla.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): That is not far off.

MR. KEANE: The hon. gentleman will never see it, nor I either. Holding these views, I do not think we need trouble ourselves much about what is likely to be done by this Convention. At the same time, I should be sorry if this colony were not represented. Having now been placed on a footing of equality with the other self-governing colonies, I think it is our duty to be present at this gathering like the rest; but as to any practical upshot of the meeting I do not think it will affect this colony in the slightest degree. I only hope that in selecting our representatives we shall select men who will worthily represent the colony, and who if called upon to speak will be able to do so; though I hope, myself, they will not be called even to do that.

MR. CLARKSON: I think this question of Federation is a very serious one for this colony. We should not, I think, like to be outside the pale of Federation; at the same time I can hardly see that we are in a position to join it at present. There are several very important considerations that will seriously affect this colony connected with this question of federation, not the least amongst them being the question of intercolonial free-trade. I can hardly think that we are in a position to agree to that. All I can say is, I hope those who go to this Convention to represent us will bear in mind the difficulties that surround this question, and, as the Commissioner of Railways has just said, say as little as they can to commit this colony to any scheme at present. I do not suppose that any very practical result will come out of the deliberations of the Convention; I take it that this is only a preliminary step towards carrying out this idea of federation. One thing is certain to my mind: that federation would be utterly

useless to this colony without a transcontinental railway to connect us with the other federated colonies—an undertaking which the hon. member for Geraldton seems to think a long way off. I am not with him there.

MR. THROSSELL: I think, sir, that if only for the sake of taking part in the discussion on the transcontinental line, which I think is within measurable distance, we ought to be properly and fully represented at this Convention; and I hope we shall send some of our best men as our delegates, for I regard it as most important that the colony should be efficiently represented on such an auspicious occasion.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): I should just like to add one or two words. First of all, I desire to thank the hon. member for York for his very interesting speech. I think we owe the hon. member some little debt for his having initiated this very interesting and important discussion. For my own part, I felt that I made a very poor attempt to place this matter before the House, but I purposely refrained from entering at any length into the subject, for I felt that, at the present time, not only is the subject surrounded with very grave difficulties, but that the whole question is in a state of indefiniteness. However, as a discussion has taken place, I am very glad of it, and perhaps I may be allowed to refer to one or two remarks that have been made in the course of the discussion. I may first of all remark that there is nothing to be very much afraid of in this Federal Convention. The difficulties which appear to frighten some hon. members are not insurmountable. Even such an intricate and difficult question as that of conflicting tariffs and other conflicting interests have been surmounted in other parts of the world where neighboring states have federated. We know that the United States of America, which have their local Parliaments, who send their representatives to the National Congress at Washington, have had the same difficulties to contend with. We know that among the numerous states of that great country they have dissimilar climates, dissimilar productions, dissimilar interests; yet they manage to enjoy a common tariff and a common law. To come nearer home, we

have only to look at New Zealand, which, after being separated into different provinces, is now united under a Federal Government, having gone back to it from a provincial form of Government. Then we have the example of Canada, which was at one time divided into separate provinces like we are, with their different forms of Government and their war of tariffs, like ourselves. Yet we find them federating under one law and one tariff. These difficulties, I say, have been overcome elsewhere, and I do not see why they cannot be overcome here. All the conditions that exist here existed in the United States of America, and in Canada. I think, myself, that one of the greatest drawbacks we shall find in connection with this federation question is that each colony will have to sink its individuality, as it were. This may be only a sentimental objection, but I think it will be found a strong one. We all know who is President of the United States, and who is Governor-General of Canada, but few, if any, of us know who is Governor of the State of Manitoba, or of Ontario, or Columbia, or Quebec. In Australia, at present, we all know who is the Governor of each separate colony, and not only who is Governor, but also who is Prime Minister of each colony. But when these colonies become federated, as in the case of Canada and the United States, they will lose what I may call their individuality; and it may be that, although the whole world may know who is the Governor-General, very few people will then know who is Governor of South Australia, or of Victoria, or of Western Australia, or of any individual state. No doubt in this way we shall suffer some loss of prestige, but it will be a sentimental loss; I do not think we shall suffer materially. However, this is a very difficult question, and I do not take much exception to the remarks of some hon. member recommending that our delegates should listen a great deal at this Convention, and not say much. I think that was good sound admonition, not only as regards this particular occasion, but for all occasions. Of course, as has been said, federation, so far as we are concerned, for purposes of defence, would be quite useless, unless we were connected by railway with the other colonies. Whatever else we do—

and no doubt we will do our utmost—we must encourage the construction of this railway by every means in our power. I know the hon. member for Geraldton is not very sanguine as to this line, though generally the hon. member is more sanguine than I am; but I should not be surprised, myself, to see the hon. member himself constructing this transcontinental line. I wish again to thank the hon. member for York for his excellent speech. I only hope that those who are selected by this House and by the other branch of the Legislature to go to Sydney will do their best to safeguard the interests of this colony. I have no doubt, whatever may be the result of the Convention—whether we are able to agree upon a scheme of Federation or not—it cannot fail in other respects to do a great deal of good, and be productive of much advantage in bringing these colonies into closer relation with each other.

**MR. RANDELL:** Whatever may be the difficulties at present surrounding the question of Federation—and these are many, no doubt, and a great many more will crop up from time to time—still there is no reason why we should not attain it by and bye. I certainly agree that it is absolutely necessary we should send delegates from this colony to meet the statesmen and delegates of the other colonies at this important Convention. I can only hope that the result of their deliberations may be satisfactory to all concerned. I think the hon. member for York has touched upon many of the difficulties that will confront our delegates; and I only hope they will accept the good advice given them to-night, and be careful not to talk too much, but to listen as much as they can.

The resolutions were then put and passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### APPOINTMENT OF DELEGATES TO THE CONVENTION.

**MR. PARKER:** May I ask, sir, whether you would be willing to go as one of the delegates of this colony to this Convention?

**THE SPEAKER:** I shall consider it a great honor, if elected, to go; and I shall consider it my duty to obey any resolution of this House.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. J. Forrest): I may say that the Government intend to propose His Honor the Speaker.

**MR. PARKER**: I do not see any necessity to resort to a ballot in the appointment of these delegates. I understand we are to send seven representatives. I presume that two members of the Government will go, and there is His Honor the Speaker; and, as this question of federation is not a party question, I should like to see at any rate one member on this side of the House go. I may say that we have arranged as to the gentleman we are willing to send, and no doubt the Government will arrange as to the gentlemen they will send; so that, instead of balloting for the names, they might be accepted by the House unanimously.

**MR. CANNING**: By acclamation.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS** (Hon. W. E. Marmion): I have no desire for a moment to interfere with the suggestion of the hon. member for York, but I should like to ask would it not be less invidious if the delegates were elected by ballot than in the way he proposes? So far as I am personally concerned, I shall be very glad to accept the hon. member's suggestion, but it strikes me that a ballot would be less invidious.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. J. Forrest): There seems to be a desire on this side of the House that the selection should be by ballot. The Government wish to be represented by two of their number and we wish, sir, that you also should be one of the delegates. There will be four more required. Two of these will have to be nominated by the Upper House. Amongst our own supporters, I do not like to nominate anyone in particular, and, for that reason, I would prefer a ballot. I think it would be better to leave it to the House to elect whom they like to represent the country. I believe that in the other colonies the delegates were all nominated, and went to the ballot afterwards; and I think that in South Australia even the Premier had a very narrow escape from being elected. At any rate, I do not think we can do better than to allow every member of the House to have a voice in this matter. I do not know that it is a party question in any way. We do not go to this Con-

vention as representing the Government, or as representing any particular political party. Each delegate will go there with perfect freedom to act upon his own responsibility.

**MR. PARKER**: I do not think there is any necessity to go to a ballot, at any rate so far as the Speaker of the House is concerned; and, personally, I should be glad to see the Government nominate the two members of the Ministry whom they desire to go. With regard to this question—if we are going to a ballot—I wish to impress upon members that it is not a party question in any way. Every shade of opinion ought to be represented in this Convention. In all the other colonies they took particular care that the leaders of the Opposition should be among the delegates, as well as members of the Government. All I ask is that one member sitting on this side of the House—although we have no Opposition here—should be chosen, and the member we desire to be chosen is Mr. Loton, who is not present this evening, but who has had a seat in this House for some years, and who I think will be well able to represent the colony as one of its representatives at this gathering. I shall have much pleasure in proposing the Hon. John Forrest, the Hon. W. E. Marmion, and His Honor the Speaker as three of our delegates; we can then go to a ballot, if necessary, for the other two.

**MR. RICHARDSON**: I think the House will appreciate the kindly way in which the hon. member for York has spoken on this subject. I think it would have been a source of gratification to us all if the hon. member himself had been able to go as one of our delegates; but I am sorry to learn that the hon. member cannot make it convenient to go. I am sure it is a matter for regret to us on all sides of the House that the hon. member is unable to act as one of our delegates on this important occasion.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. J. Forrest): The Government were very anxious that the hon. member for York should be one of the delegates, and I wrote to him on the subject; but he informed me it would not be convenient for him to leave. Otherwise we should have been very glad to have the hon. member on this delegation.

MR. SCOTT: May I be allowed to say that I trust no member will waste his vote in balloting for me, as though I should very much appreciate the honor, it would be most inconvenient for me to go away.

MR. PARKER: I hope I may be allowed to thank those hon. members who have been good enough to express their regret at my inability to act as one of the delegates to this Convention. I should only have been too glad to have given my services to the colony, in the interests of Federation; but, I find that in consequence of my long absence from the colony recently on another delegation, it is necessary in my own interests that I should stay at home at the present time. At the same time I thank hon. members for their good opinion. I now beg to move that Mr. Forrest, Mr. Marmion, and Sir J. G. Lee Steere be appointed three of the delegates to represent the colony at the Federal Convention.

Agreed to unanimously.

THE SPEAKER: I understand, then, it is proposed to ballot for the two remaining members. When the delegates to England, in connection with the Constitution Bill were balloted for, members handed in the names, and I simply announced who had the largest number of votes, without specifying what number of votes any particular member had received, and I would suggest that the same course be adopted in this instance.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): I have no objection.

A ballot having been taken,

THE SPEAKER announced that Mr. Loton and Mr. A. Forrest had received the largest number of votes; and they were consequently appointed.

#### SURVEY OF ROUTES FOR YILGARN RAILWAY.

MR. HARPER, in accordance with notice, moved: "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that before trial surveys to Yilgarn are commenced, a careful examination should be made of the country lying between Beverley and Southern Cross, and between Beverley and Parker's Range, as well as between other points of the Eastern Railway and the Yilgarn Goldfields, with the view of selecting the most suitable route for a Railway; such examination to ex-

tend to the character and quantity of land suitable for settlement, water supply, facilities for conserving the same, as well as the facilities for railway construction." The hon. member did not think he need say much to commend the resolution to the House. There was a general opinion that sufficient care had not been taken in the past in selecting the best routes for our railways; and he thought it was very desirable that we should not repeat those past mistakes. He suggested that these trial surveys should be made between various points of the Eastern Railway and the goldfields, and he mentioned Beverley because Beverley was a little nearer to Parker's Range and Southern Cross than either York or Northam. He had also been informed by a very good authority that the character of the country between Beverley and the goldfields was superior to that farther north, and also that the water supply was better. A survey would settle these and other points, and he hoped there would be no opposition to the motion. What they all wished, he hoped, was that the best route should be adopted, and that was the only object he had in view.

MR. DEHAMEL was glad the hon. member for Beverley had brought this motion forward, and he hoped the Government would adopt it. In fact, he thought it was the duty of the Government to do so. He also had been informed on good authority—the best authority almost—that there was a good route and a good water supply to be had; and he thought, before the Government attempted to commit the House or the country to any scheme of railway to the goldfields they ought to have this route surveyed. Unless they did so, and came prepared with a report on the subject, they would find they would not be able to carry this line of railway as easily as they thought.

MR. KEANE did not think anyone could find fault with the resolution. He was only sorry it did not include a survey of the route from Northam and York.

MR. HARPER: So it does. It says "as well as between other points of the Eastern Railway," which will include Northam and York.

MR. KEANE: I should like to hear from the Premier, when the Government

are likely to be prepared to undertake the survey of this line?

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): It will be put in hand at once.

MR. CLARKSON believed that every member of that House, and, he was sure, people outside, had had quite enough of constructing lines of railway before proper surveys had been made to discover the best route. Our present Eastern Railway would convince anyone on that point. He took it that an exhaustive survey would be made of this Yilgarn line, not only from Beverley, but also from other points, before the route was finally decided upon. He thought he could point out a better route than from Beverley to Yilgarn, but he did not know that this was the proper time to discuss that subject. He thought they might fairly expect the Government to have surveys made of various routes. In his opinion the most northern route that could be adopted would be the best.

MR. THROSSELL said he had pleasure in supporting the motion, though he felt sure that in bringing it forward the hon. member had done so in the interests of his constituents, and not because he believed the Beverley route was the best that could be found for a line of railway to Yilgarn. As the hon. member did not confine himself to Beverley, there could be no objection to his motion. What was wanted was a railway that would best serve the interests of the colony at large, and not of any particular district; but, the more this question of route was threshed out, the more fully convinced was he that the House would come to the conclusion that there was only one starting point for this line, and that that starting point was Northam.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said no one, of course, would find fault with this motion; it was only proper that there should be a thorough investigation of the best route. He was sorry the Government had not taken the same course with regard to the Busselton line, instead of adopting the survey of a private individual. He hoped that in the case of every future railway there would be a thorough examination of the country so as to discover the best available route.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest) said he could quite understand the necessity for exhaustive surveys through dif-

ficult country; in that case, of course, it was very necessary to explore the various routes so as to obtain the easiest and the very best, because they all knew that the cost of construction was a great deal, and that with a careful survey a great saving might be effected. But as regards this line to Yilgarn, it was dead level all the way, and he could not see that any exhaustive survey was necessary, from every point, so as to satisfy the aspirations of every town in the Avon Valley. His idea was that the line should go as straight as possible from the capital to the gold-fields, without any unnecessary deviations. It was all level country; whether they started from Northam, Newcastle, York, or Beverley an equally easy line could be found, once they left the settled districts. Therefore, why should they spend a lot of money in exhaustive surveys from each of these little centres of population? He thought the shorter the route the better; and the quicker would they get from the capital to Yilgarn the better. He did not think this resolution really meant anything, and he did not think the House ought to approve of it. It would be just as right for the hon. members for Northam, Newcastle, and York to put forward a similar resolution; and he was sure that every member who would vote for this would also vote for the other resolutions. So that there was really nothing in it, but simply this: that the Government before they decided upon the route of this railway should find out which was the best. He did not know why there need be a resolution to that effect, nor certainly why Beverley should be particularly specified as the starting point, any more than anywhere else. He did not see the slightest use of this resolution; it would have no effect whatever; and if it was to remain on the records of the House, his hon. friends, the members for York, and Northam, and Newcastle, might just as well bring forward a similar resolution. We could not afford to adopt any but the shortest route for this line, simply in order to benefit this town or that.

MR. RICHARDSON thought the Premier had overlooked the fact that there were two points to be considered in connection with this line—the starting point and the terminal point; and what they

had to bear in view was the relative advantages of the various routes, taking both ends of the line into consideration. What might be the longest route to Southern Cross might be the shortest route to Parker's Range, or *vice versa*. There was also another point to be considered: the future development of these fields might alter the aspect of affairs altogether as to the ultimate destination of this line. He thought all that the hon. member for Beverley wanted was that the Government should not act too hastily in deciding upon the route for this railway, but be guided in the matter by the result of careful surveys.

MR. HASSELL thought they ought to have surveys made from all points, so as to make sure of the best route; and, taking that view of the matter, he should support the resolution.

Motion—put and passed.

#### APPROPRIATION BILL, 1891.

Read a first time.

#### SCAB ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): I beg to move the second reading of a bill to authorise the construction of a railway from Bayswater to Bunbury. I do not know that I need say anything further upon this subject than has already been said. The subject has been pretty well exhausted by this time, and, as we have a large majority in favor of the line, and as the session is drawing to a close and time is precious, and the Upper House is waiting for this bill to conclude their labors, it seems to me it would be no use to prolong the discussion. I may say it is my intention to ask the House to suspend the Standing Orders, so as to get this bill passed through all its stages this evening, so that it may be sent to the other House at once. The reason why we have brought the bill forward at this session is that we have the surveys of this line already made; the whole of the surveys, sections, and estimates have been laid on the table of the House, and all the information that is usual and

necessary in placing projects of this kind before the Legislature. I believe, myself, that this line will be productive of great good to the colony; it will altogether transform the face of the country between here and Bunbury. Instead of travelling, as we do now, along a road with only here and there a homestead, we shall see the whole country under cultivation. When speaking on this subject in connection with the Loan Bill, I said that the magnificent timber along the route of this railway would alone be a sufficient warrant for the construction of the line—the most splendid jarrah timber in Australia. In addition to that we have a magnificent climate, a plentiful rainfall, and a soil capable of producing almost everything one requires in the way of necessaries and comforts of life; and I thoroughly believe this is one of the works that we are bound to construct, in the interests of the country. In formulating any scheme of public works it would have been impossible for any Ministry to have brought forward a scheme without including this railway in it. That is my opinion; and I believe I shall never regret the course I have taken in advocating this line of railway. I can only add, in the interests of those I have the honor to represent and of those between here and Bunbury, that it gives me the greatest pleasure to be the medium of introducing this bill to the notice of hon. members. I now move its second reading.

MR. CANNING: As I have the honor to represent a constituency through which a portion of this line passes, I wish to ask on behalf of these people whether it is intended that the line should pass from Bayswater by the village known as Cannington?

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): It is.

MR. CANNING: Or whether it shall go round the back?

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): It is going by the mill.

MR. PARKER: I really cannot allow this bill to be read a second time without some further debate. The Premier says there is no occasion to make any more speeches on the subject, because it has been fully discussed already. I would like to ask members what information is there before the House to justify us in passing a bill for the construction of this

line? The rule in any other deliberative Assembly is, that before it is ever asked to authorise the construction of an important work like this, every information, the fullest detail, is given, as to the probable amount of traffic, the character of the country, the number of the population, and the probability of the work being a reproductive work. We have heard nothing as to the probable traffic on this line,—not a word. From what I can make out, the only traffic which the Premier has in his mind is the timber along the line. He says there is a great quantity of timber, and that in his opinion that alone justifies the construction of this railway. But I would ask members to consider this question,—how will the construction of this line between here and Bunbury benefit the timber trade? We know that all the timber from Jarrahdale will go to Rockingham, and that the timber about Bunbury will be shipped at that port, and will never be sent down by this railway for shipment at Fremantle. We also know that the quantity of jarrah required for local consumption is comparatively small, and that there is any amount of timber to supply our local requirements on the Eastern Railway. Timber will not be sent along this line simply because we have built this railway,—so long as there are ports of shipment available for shipping it. If the Government want a railway to develop the timber trade let them run it into the interior of the country from Bunbury the Blackwood way. Let them continue the Boyanup line, which was built expressly for opening up the timber trade of the district. I ask members whether they really can justify the construction of this line on the information which the Premier or the Government have placed before them. Not a word has been said about the probable traffic; all we hear about is that there is plenty of timber, and that this alone is sufficient to warrant the country in spending between £300,000 and £400,000 in the construction of this railway. True, when this matter was brought forward some years ago, I submitted a memorandum showing the probable traffic from the Canning District,—though I was not responsible for the figures myself; and much of that was to be timber traffic. But that item is no longer available, for there is a private

line that will take all that timber traffic from the Canning. I ask members to pause before they commit the country to this work, upon the information now before them. Do not let us rush through this bill without some consideration. Let us show that we have some sense of our responsibilities. I ask the hon. member for the Vasse to bear in mind that this is a bill to authorise the construction of a line from Bayswater to Bunbury—not to Busselton. This bill does not carry the line any farther than Bunbury, and, if the hon. member allows this bill to go through this House as it stands, he may whistle for his railway to the Vasse. There will be an end to the Busselton line. He will never see it. If the hon. member wishes to do justice to his constituents, he will vote for no bill that does not include the extension of this line to the Vasse. If the hon. member votes for the present bill, I shall be sorry for him when he has to meet his constituents a few years hence. Let members consider what this line means. The total amount of the Loan Bill which the House has passed is £1,336,000. Out of that sum there is about £150,000 voted for the commencement of Sir John Coode's harbor works at Fremantle. According to Sir John Coode's own calculation these harbor works will cost about £500,000; consequently, at least another £350,000 or £400,000 will be required to complete them, which commits us to a loan, not of £1,336,000, but £1,736,000. Had I known, when this first item on the Schedule (the Bayswater-Busselton Railway) was under discussion the other day, that the scheme of harbor works which the Government proposed to adopt was Sir John Coode's scheme, involving an expenditure of £500,000, I should certainly have divided the House on this first item. But we were not told then that the Government intended to carry out that scheme.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marnion): I gave the hon. member credit for being able to see further than that.

MR. PARKER: I do not think many members knew that they were pledging themselves, when they were passing that Loan Bill, to a loan of £1,736,000. I do not think many of us were aware that

we were committing ourselves to a loan, not of a million and a third but of a million and three-quarters. We did not know that the Government had decided to carry out Sir John Cooode's scheme.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): Didn't I tell you so?

MR. PARKER: Not on the second reading of the bill; and I think the hon. gentleman was very much wanting in candour in not doing so, and telling us that this £150,000 was only for the commencement of harbor works. When we voted for this Bunbury line on the Schedule of the Loan Bill, we did not know that the Government intended to commit the country to an expenditure of £500,000 on harbor works at Fremantle.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): You ought to have known it.

MR. PARKER: He says we ought to have known it. Why did he not have the candour to tell us? I am certain of this: that had we known it, this item of the Busselton railway would not have passed as easily as it did. I know I can say for myself that I should have opposed it, and would have divided the House on it.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): You would not have had much support.

MR. PARKER: I am not sure about that. This question of the contemplated expenditure of half a million on these harbor works ought, I think, to make us seriously reconsider the question of building this railway. What does a loan of £1,736,000 mean? It means, for one thing, £67,000 a year in the way of interest alone. If members have scrutinised the Schedule of the Loan Bill, they will have noticed that there is hardly a work included in it that will bring in any direct revenue. Take the three railways. None of them, for years to come at any rate, will ever pay the interest on the capital expended on them, much less will they pay working expenses—certainly this Bunbury line won't. So that we have to meet, not alone the interest on the capital but also the working expenses of these railways. The same applies to harbor works. I do not see how these harbor works are going to produce any additional revenue. There is no want of shipping that I am aware of at the present time, and the mere existence of an improved harbor

will not bring more vessels here; so that we cannot expect much increase of revenue from that source. If the trade of the colony demanded more shipping than we have at present, there would be no lack of shipping, even with our present accommodation. So that these harbor works, which are to cost us half a million of money, will bring in no additional direct revenue—nothing worth speaking of—unless the Government intend to increase the harbor dues, light dues, port dues, and charges of that kind.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): So they will.

MR. PARKER: Then you will drive ships away, instead of bringing them here. No doubt improved harbor accommodation will reduce freights, but they will bring in no direct revenue; so that we shall not only have to pay the interest on the money spent in constructing them, but also the working expenses. Here then, we have a contemplated expenditure of £1,736,000 without any probability of any direct return. I think we shall find ourselves in a very unfortunate and embarrassing position when that money is spent, unless our goldfields turn out as well as expected. No doubt, while the money is being expended, everything will go on smoothly; but, when it is all spent, and labor is leaving the colony there being no more work, and we find it necessary to resort to increased taxation, we shall find ourselves in a very unfortunate position indeed unless our goldfields realise the expectations that have been formed of them. I think the Government have undertaken too much altogether, in the present position of the colony. After all, we are only a small community—under 50,000 people; and we are not in a position to undertake every public work which we may consider necessary. If the Government had confined themselves to a million I should not have objected, but I should have preferred them to have put harbor works in the front altogether. Supposing we do not progress in the satisfactory manner we all hope, and our goldfields—which, after all, like all other goldfields, are only speculation—do not turn out as successful as we expect, what will be our position then, with all this money gone? We shall certainly not be in a position to borrow more money. I want to see these



harbor works not only commenced but carried out to completion; and, if not first on the list, they certainly should have appeared second on the list. If the House declines to pass this Bunbury railway bill we shall have £350,000 more for these harbor works, which would about finish them. I am aware that we have passed the Loan Bill; but I take it that, if the House does not sanction this work, the Government will not borrow all that money, and they would be able to go in for a further loan of £350,000, for the completion of these harbor works, without further increasing the indebtedness to which the colony is already committed. I think we are going too far when we pledge the colony at one step to a loan of a million and three-quarters. We are discounting the future for the next ten years at least. It is all very well to compare our indebtedness per head with that of the other colonies. That comparison was made on the assumption that we were only going to borrow £1,336,000, and not £1,736,000. This larger amount will bring up our indebtedness per head of the population to about a level with the indebtedness of South Australia. We know that taxation in South Australia is very much larger than ours is at the present time, including a property tax, and, I believe, an income tax. Here the Government have made no provision to meet these increased charges, consequent upon this contemplated large increase of indebtedness. They say that will come in the future; but I think it would be wiser if they had told us now how they propose to meet these charges. We know it is very "taking" this public works policy. It will tend to increase the value of property, for the time being; and the owners of property are jubilant; they feel they will benefit by this public works policy—I dare say I will myself. But what we have to look at is the ultimate result. Let us not spend this money simply for the sake of spending it, and simply for the sake of getting some of it into our own pockets. Let us rather consider how this money can be spent to the best advantage and the permanent benefit of the country. If the Government were prepared to show that this Bunbury line is going to be in any sense a reproductive work, or that it

will lead to settlement like the Eastern Districts, I should not oppose it.

MR. RICHARDSON: Read your own speeches.

MR. PARKER: I do not want mere opinions, my own opinions nor anybody else's; I want facts and figures. I have already said that some years ago I placed some figures before the House showing the probable traffic from the Canning District; but they were not my own figures; and, as I have said, a large item of that traffic (the timber) will now go on a private line.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): Among the items mentioned were shingles. The hon. member now finds himself a shingle short.

THE SPEAKER: Order.

MR. PARKER: That is an impertinence. Does the hon. gentleman intend it as an impertinence?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): A joke. I withdraw it.

MR. PARKER: We know the country through which this line will go cannot compete with the Eastern Districts in the growth of cereals. No doubt it is good land for vines and other fruits, root crops, and dairy produce; but these will not support a railway. They have a roller flour mill, I believe, at Bunbury, yet nearly every bushel—I won't say that,—but the major portion of the wheat that is sent to that mill actually comes down from Dongara.

MR. A. FORREST: You know nothing about it.

MR. PARKER: I am sorry members opposite should treat me with rudeness.

MR. A. FORREST: I only meant that the hon. member was talking about a subject he did not understand.

MR. PARKER: I say they cannot, apparently, produce sufficient corn to keep their own mill going. They actually have to ship it down from Dongara. Then again look at the evidence of the witnesses examined before the Agricultural Commission, all residents of the district. Take Mr. Maguire, an excellent farmer I believe, who, I see, has lived in the district for the last 37 years. Asked what was the lowest price he could afford to sell wheat at, his answer was "nothing less than 6s. a bushel,"—"he could put

his land to better use. With improved machinery and a cash market he might be content with 5s." Now if this experienced farmer could not produce wheat, and make it pay, for less than 5s. or 6s. a bushel, that accounts for wheat being brought to the district from Dongara. The country, evidently, is not suited for agricultural settlement. If it is not suited to produce cereals, in competition with other districts, it seems to me that the chances of there being any paying traffic for this line are very remote indeed. The progress of settlement must necessarily be very slow in a country that does not lend itself to agricultural settlement. Another great obstacle in the way of settlement in these Southern Districts is the cost of clearing. Surely it is time for us to pause and consider what we are doing, and not build a railway that may turn out to be a "white elephant" for years to come. I do not altogether oppose the line, but I say there is no necessity for proceeding with it at once, or until we are satisfied of its paying. There will be no dearth of public works in the colony presently; and I know of no pressure being brought to bear by the unemployed to find them work to do, as there was when this line was mooted some years ago. What I ask is that the Government should not proceed with this bill further this session, and that between now and the winter session, in July or August, they should provide themselves with all necessary information as to the probability of the line paying, and submit it to the House—information that will satisfy us, as reasonable men, that the work is one that the country would be justified in undertaking. Estimating the interest and the loss on working expenses, I put it down that this line will cost us annually about £25,000. I ask members whether, in these circumstances, it is not a matter deserving of the gravest consideration at their hands,—whether they think it right, or just to their constituents, that they should commit the country to this large capital expenditure, and then this further annual expenditure, without the fullest inquiry and investigation—which is all I ask for. If it could be shown that this line would merely pay its working expenses, I should be very glad indeed to give my adhesion to it.

All I ask is that we should wait until we have this information. I do not ask members to reject the line, but simply that there should be an investigation. What I would impress upon them is this: that each separate work on this Schedule, as it is brought forward, ought to be considered on its own merits; and that we should not say, "I will vote for this work if you will vote for that." We do not want that sort of political log-rolling. Let each particular work be dealt with on its own merits; and, unless members are conscientiously satisfied that this or that is a work that ought to be undertaken in the best interests of the colony, no consideration in the world ought to induce them to vote for it. All I ask to-night is that, when the motion for the second reading of this bill is put, members should vote against it. I do not want to move the rejection of the bill, by moving that it be read this day six months. All I want is that there should be a reasonable inquiry before we commit the country to this large expenditure. I ask Northern members whether they think they can justify their action to their constituencies, if they commit the country to an expenditure involving additional taxation, without any information whatever to support their action. In fact so little information has been given to us, even as to the probable cost of this line, that the question of compensation has been entirely omitted.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): There will be none.

MR. PARKER: How is that? We know the line runs through the town of Pinjarrah.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): There's a deviation.

MR. PARKER: There is no deviation shown here. As the line is now laid down, it goes through Pinjarrah. There may be a deviation, but possibly the deviation may come to more than the compensation would. I believe the survey of the line which has been adopted by the Government was made by private individuals for Mr. Dobson. I do not think the Pinjarrah people will like it, if they find that this line is going to shirk their town. We have always thought there would be no compensation in the case of other lines when they were first projected; instead of which we have had

to pay hundreds of thousands of pounds by way of compensation; and the probability is that it will be the same with this line. It may be said that we have already had a select committee, some years ago, on this work; but, when we had that committee, the question of the policy of constructing the line was not considered, but simply the question of the expediency of adopting the particular scheme then submitted to the committee. The report of the committee wound up by saying: "In the present circumstances of Western Australia, while depression is somewhat acute, and while the laboring population is rapidly leaving our shores, the interests of the country seem imperatively to demand that some such useful and reproductive public work should be commenced as would have the effect of acting as a brace, of preventing anything like disastrous collapse, and of tiding over a period which must pass until the sources and causes of progress, already looming hopefully in the near distance, shall have had time to tell, and to renew that career of prosperity which for the time being has been suspended." It will be seen that the only reasons given by the committee for recommending the construction of the line were simply the depressed state of the colony and the cessation of all public works. There was never any inquiry or investigation into the probability of the line proving reproductive. The question of the policy of its construction was not considered at all. We went straight for building the line because of the depressed state of the labor market, and to prevent people leaving the colony. All I ask now is that the Government should, between this and next session, institute a thorough inquiry, so as to satisfy the House that we would be justified in incurring this large expenditure in the construction of this railway. If it is likely to be a reproductive work, nothing can bring that out more forcibly than a thorough investigation; and, unless it is a work that can bear investigation, it ought never to be commenced.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS** (Hon. W. E. Marmion): I would just like to say a few words, and to congratulate the hon. member opposite upon the speech he has just made,—a speech which displayed an amount of attention

to the subject which I certainly did not think he would have given at this stage. I think it is a great pity the hon. member did not give some attention to this subject at an earlier stage, when the Loan Bill was under consideration. He has stated to-night that his principal objection to the second reading of this Bunbury Railway Bill is the fact that my hon. friend the Premier, when addressing the House on some former occasion, did not explain to them that, instead of £150,000 being required for harbor works at Fremantle, a sum of £500,000 would be required. Why did not the hon. member, who is so fond of inquiries, make some inquiry then? Why did he not challenge that item of £150,000, and ask whether it was expected that would be sufficient to complete these works? Why did he allow it to pass without ascertaining what the intention of the Government was, if he did not know it? The hon. member knew as well as I did that £150,000 would not suffice to complete these harbor works at Fremantle. The hon. gentleman understood the position well enough. He knew well enough what the intentions of the Government were, and it is sheer nonsense to pretend now that he didn't. It is simply another attempt on his part to throw dust into the eyes of the members of this House. Let those who credit his statement do so. I have no wish to enter into any long discussion at this stage; no good could come out of it; but I am perfectly sure in my own mind that he understood thoroughly what was intended to be done with regard to harbor works; and I do not think any member who supported the Government the other day, as regards this railway, will desert them to-night, in consequence of anything that has fallen from the hon. member for York.

**MR. SCOTT:** I think the hon. member for York has put his case in a very able way, and I only wish I could support him. When the hon. member talks about the traffic of the Eastern Districts as compared with the traffic of the Southern Districts, we have to look at what has made that traffic. Is it not the railway to the Eastern Districts that has done so much to stimulate agriculture in those districts? Can anything tend more to paralyse agricultural pursuits in

one district than finding another district provided with improved facilities of transport, and so placed at such an advantage that the farmers of the less fortunate district have no chance of competing with their more favored colonists. Before that railway was made to the Eastern Districts the greater portion of the traffic consisted of sandalwood, and not agricultural produce; and it is the railway and nothing else that has led to increased production of cereals. I can quite understand why farmers in the Southern Districts should not be able to grow wheat to sell under 5s. a bushel, when we bear in mind the difficulty of getting their produce to a market. These people now simply grow for their own consumption, whereas if they had a railway they would grow ten times as much, and we all know that the cost of producing 100,000 bushels is much less, *pro rata*, than the cost of producing 100 bushels. Will not a railway to these districts tend to increase agricultural settlement as it has done in other parts of the colony? Apart from this, I consider that this House has virtually pledged itself years ago to give a railway to these Southern Districts.

MR. PARKER: Pardon me; not this House.

MR. SCOTT: Well, I feel myself pledged to give these Southern settlers a railway at the earliest possible date. As to any log-rolling, I deny that it is resorted to at all here. This policy of public works put forward by the Government is not a policy of log-rolling, but a policy put forward in the best interests of every part of the colony. It has been agreed for years past that these Southern Districts deserved our utmost consideration. I am not prepared to say that if the Government had only proposed to go on with the first section of this line at present, I would not have been better pleased. They are going a step further than my judgment goes at present; but, as I have already agreed to the principle of constructing the line, I feel myself justified in voting for the whole of it. The hon. member for York asked what our position would be if Yilgarn did not turn out as satisfactorily as we expect it will? In my opinion there is not the slightest doubt that Yilgarn will turn out successfully. Nor have I much doubt as to this Bun-

bury line being successful, perhaps not at first, but before very long. I believe that in ten years from now you will have a large population settled along this line, especially if the hon. member for York finds himself on the other side of the House, and carries out his colonisation scheme. He will find the Eastern Districts so full, that he will have to settle some of his colonists in these Southern Districts; and this line of railway will be just what is wanted to develop those districts.

MR. RICHARDSON: It has been said that the hon. member for York ought to have raised the points he has done this evening when the Loan Bill was under discussion. I think the hon. member did so, and that they were fully and sufficiently answered at the time. But the hon. member has stuck to his points like a true Briton, and it is evident he does not intend to turn tail upon them at all. His chief point is the disparity in the present traffic of the Southern Districts as compared with the immense traffic of the Eastern Districts when a railway was granted to those districts. I do not think there is anything in it. The Blue Book returns of the acreage under crop when those districts first got their railway do not support the statement. If with the very best country, with a better climate, and better opportunities for irrigation, a railway constructed for the development of these Southern Districts is going to ruin us, all I can say is, it is a most extraordinary thing. The hon. member sees no chance of any traffic along this line. I would remind the hon. member of the resolution I brought forward the other day with reference to irrigation colonies and the fruit-growing industry. I may tell him that these Southern Districts afford every facility, both as regards climate and soil, and also means of irrigation, for the successful establishment of such colonies. All that is wanted is capital, and enterprise, and determination. One such enterprise alone, such as that at Mildura, would provide a very large amount of traffic for this railway. It would mean the establishment of 5,000 people on the soil—about equal to the whole population of the Eastern Districts. The hon. member asks us to pause, and to make

further investigation into the necessity of this railway. One would think this is some entirely new scheme. This project has been before the country for many years, and we have had lots of investigation and lots of information about it. Most of us know the country well, and know its capabilities, and if we were to go on investigating for the next ten years we would be none the wiser. Investigation will never convince those who have made up their minds to oppose this line through thick and thin. "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still." As to that dreadful bugbear of taxation, our present taxation is nothing like what people suppose, so far as the working classes are concerned. It does not trouble them at all. What concerns the working man is to be able to earn good wages and obtain plenty of employment, and not how much he is individually taxed through the Customs. The question of £2 per head per annum to a man in constant work, with good wages, is a question of very small consideration indeed. There is also another side to the question. If we can reduce the cost of living to him, if we can save him and his family £10 a year in that way, by bringing the necessities and comforts of life within his reach at lower rates than at present, it will benefit him a great deal more than any hardship we may put upon him by a slight increase of taxation. The hon. member for York has also pleaded that each of these public works should be dealt with on its own merits. Let us do so, in the light of increased taxation. I find that the amount of taxation which this particular work will entail is only 5s. 3d. per head of the population. I do not think that is going to ruin us,—not quite sixpence a month. As to the hon. member's estimate of the charge there is likely to be in the way of interest and loss upon working expenses, he has adduced no facts in support of his theory; but he prophesies that we are going to lose £25,000 a year—[Mr. PARKER: Including interest]—on this line. I shall be very much surprised if we do anything of the kind, judging from the result of the working of the Great Southern Railway, 240 miles in length, passing through most sparsely populated country, thoroughly undevel-

oped country, and great stretches of most poor and barren country, such as you will not see along this Bunbury line. Yet we know that the working expenses of that line are not greatly in excess of the returns, already. I venture to say that when this Bunbury railway is fairly started there will be no loss on the working expenses of the line, for the simple reason that the working of it, in the first place, will not be half as great per mileage compared with the Eastern Railway. Give it three or four years' grace, and I believe it will not only pay its working expenses, but also a portion of the interest on the capital expenditure.

MR. DE HAMEL: Since I came down to attend this session I have been converted to this railway, thanks to the good offices of my hon. friend the member for the Murray, who gave me an opportunity of inspecting the country through which this line will pass. I think any reasonable one who saw this country would be converted as I was. As to its not being a corn-growing country, I agree that the greater portion of it is not; but it is land that can be irrigated, capable of producing any amount of fruit, and land 10 acres of which is equal to 100 acres of land such as I am accustomed to down South—land, too, where colonisation could be successfully carried out, where men with families could make a good living and have comfortable homesteads on a comparatively small quantity of land. As to cereal growing, I saw some splendid wheat-growing land at the McLarty's, at Pinjarrah, and they said if they had a railway, they themselves would put in another thousand acres under crop. On one point I am quite in accord with the hon. member for York—that the Government have not given us sufficient information hitherto with regard to the probable traffic on this line, and the probability of its paying. In that respect we are to a certain extent taking a leap in the dark; and, if I had not seen the country myself, I would not have been prepared to take the responsibility of voting for this line. I admit the absolute necessity of the immediate inauguration of some public work, and this appears to be the only work which the Government can proceed with at the present time. With regard to any of the other works on the Schedule of the Loan

Bill, I shall require very much more information than has been afforded to us on this, before I shall be able to support the Government.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I think we must all congratulate the hon. member for York on his very able speech, although everyone may not be able to agree with him. We know that the hon. member was only doing what he considered his duty in cautioning the House not to rush into this large expenditure without further information. I think with him that we ought to have a great deal more information as to the probable revenue likely to be derived from this line, the amount of traffic, the number of people along the line, and the quantity of land alienated, and the character of the country. All this ought to have been placed before us, before asking us to commit ourselves to this work; and I think we ought to insist upon this information. I think, however, that some of us may be inclined to vote for this line now that the most objectionable part of it has been left out—the portion between Bunbury and the Vasse. We find this is no longer our old friend the Bayswater-Busselton Railway, but the South-western Railway. Still I do not see why the Government should be in such a hurry to rush this particular railway through, this session. I think if ever there was hasty legislation this is hasty legislation with a vengeance. The Government have not even their own surveys, but have fallen back upon a private survey. As has been said, it appears to me that in building this line, with the information we now have, we are taking a leap in the dark. I have no faith in it myself. I do not believe it will pay “for a generation,” as has been remarked by an hon. member of this House, who is now one of its strongest supporters. I do not believe it will pay the interest on the capital expended on it, not only “for a generation” but for two or three generations, even if it pays its working expenses. I only hope I may be wrong, and that what the Government expect of the line may come true, and that it may prove of some benefit to the country. If it should turn out so, I shall be the very first to acknowledge that I was mistaken, and that the Government were right. I have no feeling in the

matter—not the slightest; but I am strongly opposed to it, simply because I do not believe it is in the interests of the country that the work should be undertaken. I think if arguments go for anything, and we come to read the *Hansard* report of this debate, it will be acknowledged that the arguments of the hon. member for York against the construction of this line were much stronger and more deserving of attention than anything that was urged in its favor.

MR. CLARKSON: I do not intend to occupy the time of the House at this late hour. I candidly confess that when first I entered this House I was strongly opposed to this Southern line. Since then I have gained from private sources a great deal of information with regard to the country which this line is intended to serve. When I visited some of the Blackwood country, 25 years ago, I thought very badly of it indeed; I saw very little good land, and I thought from what I had then seen that it would be a waste of money to build this railway. Since then, and since I first entered this House, I have conversed with gentlemen who reside in the district, men who I know are thoroughly practical men, and whose opinion I am willing to take in preference to my own, and they tell me that there is plenty of good land. The greatest objection I had to the line as originally proposed was that it should be carried beyond Bunbury, on to Busselton; but I am pleased to see in the bill now before the House that the latter portion of the line has been dropped, and that it is now only proposed to take the line as far as Bunbury. I would have been quite prepared to have supported a line as far as Pinjarrah, but I did not see much necessity to extend it to Bunbury, seeing that we have steamers calling there regularly. But I am told that these steamers are of little or no use to the settlers inland, who will be benefited by this railway. At any rate, when we get this line to Bunbury we shall have an end to any further subsidies to these steamers. The hon. member for York, I admit, has given some strong reasons against the construction of the line at present, one particularly being that these districts have not sent hardly any produce to this market. But that may be for the

want of facilities of transport, a want which this railway will supply. Railway communication operates wonderfully in developing a country. We have seen that already. We were told that the line to Guildford would not pay for greasing the wheels; we know differently now. I only hope that this Southern line will also falsify the somewhat gloomy prophecies we have heard about it, for I have made up my mind to support the line.

MR. COOKWORTHY: It is not my intention to detain the House long at this very late hour. This question has been thoroughly beaten out on previous occasions. All the arguments for and against it have been exhausted long ago. Still the hon. member for York is not satisfied. The hon. member reminds me of that oracular person, the village school-master, of whom Goldsmith said—

"In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,  
For, ev'n though vanquished, he could argue still."

Every argument which the hon. member has used has been refuted, and it is not my intention to traverse them again. As to the difficulty of providing the interest on the capital expenditure, the same argument was used when our very first loan was raised, and also when every successive loan was raised; but we have not found any difficulty, so far, in providing the interest, although we have borrowed and spent over a million of money, the greatest portion of it on works that were not reproductive works, in a direct sense. Has the Eastern Railway paid the interest on the capital expenditure? Has the loan money spent in the Kimberley District yielded any return anything like sufficient to pay the interest upon it? Has any other public work in any part of the colony paid interest and working expenses? Yet, will anybody say that the country has not benefited by its railways and other improved facilities for developing its resources? What the veins and arteries are to the human body, railways and roads are to a country; stop the former and you cause death; without the latter you cause stagnation. As to the character of the country which this line will open up, although not essentially a wheat-growing country, it is capable of growing cereals to any extent; and it has a climate, and a rainfall, and a soil that

will abundantly produce fruit of every description; and it is well known that an acre of fruit is far more remunerative than an acre of cereals. There is also a large population already settled in these districts, and, counting population alone, I say they deserve this line of railway. As to the Eastern Districts and their railway, I travelled to-day on that railway, and, for 50 miles of it, for one acre of good land that I saw there is a hundred in the Southern Districts. Yet the hon. member for York would oppose this line. The hon. member has tried to divide the supporters of the Government. He says if I support this bill I may whistle for the extension to Busselton. I do not believe in that. I am prepared to trust in the honor of this Government. The hon. gentleman at the head of this Government is a man well known in this colony, and I do not think he is a man who would make a statement or give a promise simply in order to secure what little support I or any other member might give him. I consider the Premier a man who is far above that sort of thing. He has promised that this line shall go to Busselton, and I am prepared to rely upon that promise, whatever the hon. member for York may say. Even if we did not get our line, this Bunbury line will do a great deal of good. It will even do more good to Perth and Fremantle than to the districts it passes through. The hon. member for the Gascoyne says that one of his strongest objections to this line has been removed,—the extension to Busselton. The hon. member for the Gascoyne is of course a great authority on a work of this kind. We often hear reference made to the "backbone of the country." What is that backbone? Is it a sturdy class of cultivators of the soil, such as we have in these Southern Districts, or is it a lot of Malays, Chinamen, and blacks, which form the largest portion of the population of the district which the hon. member represents? These Malays, Chinamen, and blacks may be the "backbone" of a few individuals, but they are a poor backbone for the country. That is not the kind of "backbone" that will make any country great, prosperous, and free. I represent 2,000 European men and women of the Anglo-Saxon race, and not Chinamen, Malays, and blacks; and

I ask are not these people of our own race worthy of some consideration at our hands? Or are we to confine our sympathies to the hon. member for the Gascoyne and his alien races? The hon. member need not trouble himself about this extension to Busselton. I feel certain that the time is not far distant when the hon. gentleman now at the head of the Government will fulfil his promise, and not only carry this line as far as Busselton, but also extend it to the tinfields as well.

MR. RANDELL: I should like to say a few words to vindicate my position with regard to this line. I have carefully thought over the matter, and I think the Government have done right in bringing forward this bill at the earliest possible opportunity; and I would leave it with them as to whether the surveys are correct, and also their estimates of the cost, and also the character of the country. I can only hope—and I am quite certain that the hon. member for York entertains the same hope—that the line may answer all the expectations which the Government entertain with regard to it, and that it may tend to the development and prosperity of the country. I think it would be wrong to oppose this bill, after the work itself had passed the House with such a large majority; it would only amount to what I may call obstruction, in view of the decided majority we know to be in favor of the bill. At the same time, I think the hon. member for York has made out a very strong case for postponing the bill. But, in view of the public feeling that exists in favor of the commencement of public works, and of the majority at the back of the Government, I think we should leave all responsibility with the Government as to the wise and careful expenditure of this money, and as to the best method of constructing this line. Various theories have been thrown out, and no doubt the Government will consider them; for instance, whether the contracts for the line should be let in small sections, or whether one contractor should do the whole of the work. I am glad myself that one public work is to be undertaken by the Government first, before proceeding with the rest. I only hope that they will spread the expenditure of this loan money over a number of years, and not press on

all these works simultaneously. I hope the Government have taken any opposition to this work from this side of the House in the spirit in which it has been offered. I hope they will always give credit to members on this side of the House for expressing their honest and candid opinions,—opinions which they may find valuable to them at times. What opposition there is, is simply honest opposition. As to this particular work, I am not at all convinced that it will be a paying line, nor that it will to any large extent develop the country. But I believe it will prove of great advantage to the inhabitants of Perth; it will bring fruit and dairy produce to their doors at rates which they cannot be had now. But I do not think that the benefits of the line will extend much further. At the same time, I should be sorry to oppose the passing of the bill, now that it has gone so far.

MR. A. FORREST: I thought there would hardly have been any discussion on the second reading of this bill, after we had discussed the question for some hours the other day, and this work had been before the country for years. The hon. member for York himself introduced it in this House more than once, and at that time the hon. member could not say too much in favor of the country. Why? Because he then represented that part of the colony. But, now that he represents another part of the country, he does not believe in it. I do not think his constituents are so selfish as he is in this matter. We all know what the railway has done for the Eastern Districts. Look at Northam,—the whole district cleared, and a thriving population settled on the land. We may expect quite as much from this line to the Southern Districts. We know the land is much superior, and that a very small quantity of it will support a large family in comfort. The hon. member for York says that nearly all the corn comes down to the Bunbury mill from Dongara. I say he is wrong. A few thousand bags of wheat, I believe, are brought from Dongara to Bunbury, and for this reason; the carriage of wheat all that distance by sea is cheaper than to cart it a much shorter distance. That shows the want of this railway. Wheat can actually be delivered at Bunbury from Champion Bay at a price which defies competition



from the Wellington farmers,—not because they cannot grow wheat, but because they have no facilities for bringing it into town. I congratulate the Government on bringing this bill forward at once. The country has made up its mind to have it, and this House has made up its mind too. The only members who are really opposed to it are the hon. members for York and the Gascoyne. They say they want more information. Surely we do not want more information when we have our eyes open, and know the whole of this country, and all the people in it. As to what the hon. member for the Vasse said about the hon. member for the Gascoyne representing only Chinamen, Malays, and blacks—[Mr. COOKWORTHY: I said mostly.]—I must deny that; I think he represents a very good body of people. The Gascoyne is the outlet of a very important pastoral district, and I think the hon. member ought to withdraw his remark.

MR. PATERSON: One word before the debate closes. I should be sorry that the hon. member for the Gascoyne should take up any land in the district where this railway is to go, for it is notorious that he will never do anything to improve any land which he possesses. The hon. member has land about Perth now, and he has never spent a penny in improving it. That is not the sort of man we want in the Southern Districts, when we get this railway. Then, again, there is the hon. member for York. No doubt the hon. member has the interests of the colony at heart, but we have never heard of his doing anything towards the settlement of the land. He never goes five miles out of Perth to find out the capabilities of the country through which this line will run. If the hon. member had the real interests of the country at heart, he would have done like the hon. member for Albany—gone and seen the land for himself. Had he done that, perhaps he would have been converted like that hon. member was. But the hon. member for York prefers to depend upon what he hears; he prefers to listen to colored reports. He has spoken of the cost of producing wheat in the Wellington District. Surely he ought to know that the reason why the farmers there cannot afford to sell wheat at a lower price is because they cannot get it

into market. Give them a railway, and they can do it right enough. We have 8,000 people in these Southern Districts, and surely they must produce something. I believe your merchants and storekeepers and tradespeople will tell you they are better customers, and pay better, than those of any other part of the colony. The hon. member for the Gascoyne says he wants more information. Why does he not go and get his information for himself? Lying, lolling on that bench will not get him his information.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): I will not keep the House more than one or two minutes; but I could not allow the debate to close without saying a few words in reply to the hon. member for York with reference to the line to Busselton. The reason why the Government have not included the extension to Busselton in this bill is because they have not the surveys completed farther than Bunbury. That is the only reason. I was very sorry indeed that we were not in a position to include the whole line in this bill, but it was impossible to do so until the surveys were completed. I think the hon. member displayed a very bad feeling when he attributed any intention on the part of the Government to leave out the Vasse. He seemed to take a delight—and so did the hon. member for the Gascoyne—in twitting the hon. member for the Vasse that if he agreed to this bill he would have to whistle for a railway to Busselton. All I can say is, so far as the Government are concerned, they will act fairly and honorably towards Busselton. As soon as the surveys are ready we will submit them for the approbation of the House. It can never be said that we went back from our pledges, or that the hon. member will have to whistle for his railway if he agrees to this bill. The hon. member for York also said that I misled him with regard to Sir John Coode's scheme, when the Loan Bill was read a second time, because I did not say anything about it on that occasion. But the whole thing was explained when we were in committee, dealing with the item of harbor works. Why did not the hon. member oppose the bill at the report stage, or on its third reading, instead of coming here now with a cock-and-bull

story about his not having known the intentions of the Government? Time will not admit, at this late hour, that I should traverse the whole of the hon. member's statements, but I think that instead of congratulating him we ought to complain, for he has only wasted the time of the House to-night, and tried to obstruct the Government when he knows that we are all anxious to finish the work of the session. For an hour and a half we have been compelled to listen to a lot of twaddle and nonsense, which we had over and over before—simply wasting the time of the House and delaying the business of the country. As for the hon. member for the Gascoyne, I did not expect his support; I look upon him simply as an obstructionist, a born obstructionist. The hon. member simply represents himself in this House; I am sure he does not represent anybody else. As for our taking a leap in the dark, I do not think we are doing so at all. We know perfectly well what we are about. We know all about this country, and we know all about its capabilities. I look upon the hon. member for the Gascoyne as a perfect failure, whenever he has attempted to pose as a politician. I regret to see any member obstructing the business of the House simply for the sake of obstruction, talking against time, and indulging in a lot of twaddle, when he knows that the feeling of the House is against him. I do not understand such tactics. The hon. member is nothing unless he is a financier; he is always posing as a financier, when really he knows as much about finance as any man you meet in the street. I will not waste the time of the House in referring to his rambling criticisms. We have wasted a whole evening already, all through the tactics of the hon. member for York, backed up by the twaddle of the hon. member for the Gascoyne. I will say nothing more. Time is of great importance just now, as members are aware, and it is no use discussing the same thing over and over again, when we know the House has made up its mind in favor of this railway.

Motion—put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Question put—That the House do now resolve itself into a committee of the whole to consider the bill.

Agreed to.

In committee, the clauses and Schedule of the bill were agreed to, *sub silentio*, and the bill was reported to the House.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest) moved the suspension of the Standing Orders, so that the bill might be then read a third time.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: This is another trick of the Premier's; another attempt to rush the business of the House. I suppose he wants to get away on his holiday trip to Sydney, to air his eloquence before the Convention, as he has here to-night. It is to be hoped that when he gets among the statesmen of the other colonies he will keep his temper a little better than he did to-night. I must protest against the Standing Orders being suspended in this way, to allow the Premier and his colleagues to go holiday-making.

MR. RICHARDSON: I take it, this is simply a question of form. In view of the unanimity of feeling on the subject of this bill, what objection can there be to our passing it through its remaining stages this evening, so that it may be sent to the other House? What possible difference can it make if we were to postpone the third reading for a week? It seems to me it is only unreasonable obstruction.

MR. PARKER: I see that the rule as to the suspension of the Standing Orders is that, "in cases of urgent necessity, any 'Standing Order or Orders of the House' may be suspended on motion duly made 'and seconded without notice, provided 'that such motion has the concurrence of 'an absolute majority of the whole of the 'members of the Legislative Assembly.'" I do not see that this is a case of "urgent necessity." The Upper House, I understand, is not sitting this evening, and there can be no absolute necessity for reading this bill a third time until to-morrow at any rate. I do not mean to say that any member is likely to change his opinion between this and to-morrow; still, as this is not a case of "urgent necessity," I think the Government ought not to press this motion. It can be read a third time to-morrow, when the other House is sitting, and transmitted to them.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): It is very unusual to oppose a bill on its third reading, especially when there is

such a unanimity of feeling as there is with regard to this bill. Our object is simply to save time.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS** (Hon. W. E. Marmion): Will the hon. member pledge himself he will not oppose the third reading to-morrow?

**MR. PARKER**: I am not going to pledge myself in any way; but if the Government press the third reading to-night, I shall certainly go with the hon. member for Gascoyne and divide the House.

**MR. R. F. SHOLL**: I do not see that it would be much use in dividing, for I think the hon. gentleman who keeps his temper so well has already secured a very large working majority, who will follow him anywhere. I think we had better get through with the bill, and let him go to Sydney to mix with the politicians of the other colonies, who, I hope, will teach him better manners.

Question—put and passed.

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

The House adjourned at 12 o'clock, midnight.

## Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 24th February, 1891.

Joint Standing Orders relating to Private Bills—Scab Bill: committee—South-Western Railway Bill: first reading; Suspension of Standing Orders; second reading; committee: third reading—Adjournment.

**THE PRESIDENT** (Sir T. C. Campbell, Bart.) took the chair at 3 o'clock.

PRAYERS.

### JOINT STANDING ORDERS RELATING TO PRIVATE BILLS.

**THE HON. J. W. HACKETT**: I have to move, sir, "That this House do adopt the Joint Standing Rules and Orders of the Houses of Parliament relating to

Private Bills, as adopted by the Standing Orders Committees of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly." It only needs a word or two from me to explain that these Standing Orders have been adopted by the two committees appointed by the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. They have been gone over very carefully by these two bodies, which were composed of the President, the Hon. Mr. Leake, and myself, as representing this House, and the Attorney General, Mr. Parker, and Mr. Speaker, as representing the Assembly. We have adopted the South Australian model as far as was possible, taking our circumstances into consideration. I may mention that it is necessary such Standing Orders should be passed in order to facilitate the introduction of private bills, one or two of which would have been laid before us this session if there had been any means of bringing them before the House."

**THE HON. G. W. LEAKE** seconded.

Question—put and passed.

### SCAB ACT, 1885, AMENDMENT BILL.

#### IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 3 passed.

Clause 4.—Scab Districts: Appointment of Inspectors:

**THE HON. T. BURGESS** asked the Hon. the Colonial Secretary if he could give any information as to when the Government intended to declare the scab districts under the Act, and particularly as regarded the Victoria District, where scab now existed. It might probably be found necessary to sub-divide the present district. At the present time it extended from the sea-coast to the South Australian boundary, and sheep depasturing 200 miles from Geraldton would come within the scab district as it was at present, whereas the scab might only exist within a very limited area.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Shenton) said that in a matter of this kind the Government would have to be guided by circumstances. They would obtain the best information they could, and if it were necessary to sub-divide the districts, they would do so. He could assure the hon. member that every possible precaution would be taken.