

## Legislative Assembly,

Monday, 4th December, 1899.

Question: Sunday Labour in Mines Bill—Question: Federal Enabling Bill—Fremantle Harbour Works Railway Bill, first reading—Papers presented—Companies Act Amendment Bill, third reading—Seats for Shop Assistants Bill, third reading—Peppermint Grove, etc., Water Supply Bill (Private), second reading, in Committee, recommittal, reported—Loan Bill, £750,000, in Committee, second schedule (railways), Divisions (2), items passed: third schedule, progress—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

## PRAYERS.

## QUESTION—SUNDAY LABOUR IN MINES BILL.

MR. GREGORY, without notice, asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Government, at an early date, to deal with the Sunday Labour in Mines Bill, as it is the general impression that the Bill is going to be shelved? I was induced to withdraw an amendment to the Mines Regulation Bill, on the understanding that this Bill would be passed this session.

THE PREMIER: I shall be glad to arrange with the leader of the Opposition in regard to the passage of this Bill.

## QUESTION—FEDERAL ENABLING BILL.

MR. LEAKE, without notice, asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Government, now, to introduce the Federal Enabling Bill?

THE PREMIER: I must ask the hon. member to give notice of the question.

MR. LEAKE: Then I will give notice for to-morrow.

## FREMANTLE HARBOUR WORKS RAILWAY BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, by leave, and read a first time.

## PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: 1, Report of Committee of Public Library, 1899. 2, Plans of Fremantle Harbour Works Railway, Rocky Bay to Rous Head.

Ordered to lie on the table.

## COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

## SEATS FOR SHOP ASSISTANTS BILL.

Read a third time, on motion by MR. MOORHEAD, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

## PEPPERMINT GROVE, ETC., WATER SUPPLY BILL (PRIVATE).

## SECOND READING.

MR. DOHERTY (North Fremantle), in moving the second reading, said: I desire to inform the House of the reasons which have necessitated the introduction of this measure. In 1896, negotiations were entered into between Mr. James Grave and the Peppermint Grove Roads Board, for the former to supply water to the districts covered by this Bill; and subsequently an agreement was entered into by James Grave of the one part, and the Roads Board of the other part, to carry out the object of the negotiations. It was found, however, that the agreement was *ultra vires*, because the local Roads Board had no power to allow Mr. Grave to lay pipes and water mains in their district; and the property owners there having spent something like £24,000 under the agreement, Mr. William Dalgety Moore, who has acquired control of the waterworks, now asks Parliament to give the board power to carry out the agreement entered into in 1896. It would be very hard if, after spending all this money, private individuals should be at the mercy of the board, without any compensation; and Mr. Moore does not feel inclined to continue the work, unless he be secured by legal powers. I have in my hand a petition from 200 or 300 residents of the district, praying that the Bill be passed, in order that they may have the benefit of a water supply; and the measure will be of great benefit to the poorer residents of the district, who own small houses, and for a small sum have a good weekly service. I wish hon. members to distinctly understand that the Bill seeks for no monopoly, because it does not prevent any other company, individual, or corporation asking for the same rights as are now sought by Mr. Moore. I have no doubt that in a few years it will be necessary to supply Fremantle with water from the Darling Range *via* Perth, and that of course will do away with the scheme this gentleman wishes to have power to carry

out. That phase of the question, however, need not be considered at the present moment, because such a scheme is not yet within reasonable range of realisation, though, as I say, it must come in time. The Government have already arranged to supply the goldfields with water; and surely within the next few years they will see their way to supply Fremantle also, and embrace the district dealt with in the Bill. In the meantime, Mr. Moore wishes to have the right to lay pipes and mains for the supply of the district, and the price for water is set down in the Bill at two shillings per thousand gallons, or the same charge which is made by the Metropolitan Waterworks Board in Perth. Clauses 5 to 10 guard the interests of the local authority, who may, under Clause 12, require Mr. Moore to lay down mains and supply water if they so desire; and by Clause 14 Mr. Moore is bound to supply the local authority with water at a rate not exceeding half of the rate charged to private consumers, while Clause 15 provides that he shall maintain plugs and all necessary appliances in order to contend with fires. The Bill only asks for what is just, and, under the circumstances, I confidently ask the House to pass the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 9, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 10—Power to local authority to alter situation of pipes, etc.:

MR. QUINLAN asked for further assurance that the Bill did not give a monopoly, because his idea was that it gave an established right, and there was danger in hurrying through a Bill of the kind. He had been warned by people concerned that the Bill would give a monopoly to a certain extent, if not wholly; and it would be well to report progress, to afford opportunity for further consideration.

MR. DOHERTY: The highest legal opinion had been obtained that no monopoly was given by the Bill.

MR. ROBSON: From a report of the proceedings of the Parliamentary visit the other day to the Metropolitan waterworks reservoir, it appeared that the Metropolitan Board had in view a big

scheme of water conservation, to supply not only Perth but Fremantle and the districts contemplated in this Bill; and, while the powers which Mr. Moore sought in the Bill might not be called a monopoly, there was no doubt that in a few years there would be created a vested right, which would have to be bought out. Residents of the district were opposed to the Bill, because it created what they regarded as a vested interest in the supply of bad water, in the face of the probability that in a few years the Government would be supplying good water. He moved that progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

MR. VOSPER: Most of the pipes contemplated in the Bill had been already laid under the authority of the local board; which authority, however, the board had no legal right to exercise. The *personnel* of the board had been changed to some extent, and some of the members were seeking to upset the agreement entered into in 1896, careless, perhaps, of the vested rights of the person who had laid the pipes. The aim of the Bill, so far as he understood, was not so much to create a vested interest as to preserve a property already in existence from being interfered with. It would be a very hard case indeed that Mr. W. D. Moore, after he or his predecessor had spent some £24,000 in laying pipes and doing other work, should, through some act of the Roads Board, be deprived of his property. He (Mr. Vosper) would not support anything like a monopoly, or anything likely to oppress the people in the district affected; but he did not wish to see destroyed any rights created by the deliberate act of the people's representatives. Clause 29 entirely prohibited any possibility of monopoly, for it said:—

Nothing in this Act contained shall confer upon or vest in the proprietor any exclusive right to supply water within the limits of this Act, nor in any way prejudice or affect the right of any local authority in any district affected by this Act to obtain a supply of water from elsewhere, or entitle the proprietor to claim any compensation, should similar rights and privileges be conferred upon any other person; and as regards all such matters, the rights of the local authorities shall be in all respects the same as if this Act had not been passed; and the local authorities may themselves lay, or grant to any other person the right to lay mains and

pipes above, below, or alongside those of the proprietor.

Not only was that clause an absolute guarantee that no monopoly could be created, but it would confer upon the local authority a power which they did not possess at present. The local authority now could not authorise any person to lay pipes and mains. He hoped the House would consent to pass the Bill as it stood, because it would afford a measure of justice to enterprising persons who had done their best for the people, and at the same time fully guarantee the rights of the public.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It was necessary to make an addition to Clause 29. He wished it to be recorded in *Hansard* that the House was clearly under the impression that this measure would not make the Government or any private individual or company liable for any existing rights this company might claim under the Bill. He did not think the promoters of the Bill desired to have any rights; but the property might pass from hand to hand, and if the Government proceeded to lay on water and undertook to supply Cottesloe, and so practically ruined the owners of the property, who might at that time have paid £50,000, the owners might be disposed under this Bill to come to the Government and say, "You have destroyed our property, which was created by Act of Parliament, and you must pay all costs."

MR. MOORHEAD: What was the legal effect of a record in *Hansard*?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: No legal effect.

MR. MOORHEAD: Then what was the reason for making the record?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: At a future time, before any action could be taken in such a case as he suggested, Parliament would require to be consulted, and reference would be made to *Hansard* to see the intention of Parliament at the time the Act was passed. The hon. member was sufficiently acquainted with Parliamentary practice and history to know that a record of this kind would be of exceedingly great value in future discussions.

MR. MOORHEAD: Such record had no binding effect.

THE PREMIER: To this matter he had not given close attention, and he had

not intended to speak, but a little consideration would perhaps be desirable. Doubtless hon. members knew the facts better than he did; but, as he understood, some time ago the proprietor of these works at Osborne entered into an agreement with the Roads Board of that district, and obtained permission from the board to lay pipes about the district. He commenced the undertaking and had laid a considerable number of pipes, but now it was found that the Roads Board, acting in good faith at the time, had exceeded their authority. It was said they had not the power to make the agreement which they entered into, and it was now asked that Parliament should give the authority. It was generally thought he (the Premier) was adverse to private enterprise, but certainly he was not adverse to private enterprise where there was no monopoly. As he understood, all that was sought by this Bill was to enable the proprietor of these waterworks, which cost a lot of money, to have the right to lay pipes along the roads and to supply water to the inhabitants of the district under the control of this Roads Board, but he was not to have any exclusive right, so that to-morrow, or at any time in future, other corporate bodies or persons, the Government, or anyone else, might have the same right to lay pipes about the district. It was difficult for him (the Premier) to understand what objection there was, but he believed there was objection in the districts it was sought to assist with this supply of water. He thought the objection came from those who thought the granting of this right might prevent a better supply of water from being obtained at an early date from the Government or other agency; but, after all, it seemed somewhat unfair that a private individual willing to risk his money in obtaining water, laying it on to houses, and giving conveniences to people, should not be allowed to do it, although no monopoly was created.

MR. ROBSON: Did the Premier apply that argument to the railways as well?

THE PREMIER: The railways were not being spoken of by him, what he was referring to being a water supply. The hon. member's mind was so big that he could not bring it to bear on a small matter, but he wanted to deal with

the whole of the railway system of the colony. It seemed to him somewhat unfair to say that a person should not supply these people with water, when we remembered that there was no obligation upon the people to take the water. Unless the people chose to take it, the proprietor's occupation would be gone. If we made Clause 29 thoroughly safe—perhaps a little safer than at present—we would, he thought, run no risk in passing the Bill, and he was certainly surprised that there had been any opposition to it. As he had said, the only ground that he could see for opposition was that if the Bill were passed it might prevent a better supply from being obtained at an early date; but of course there might be other reasons of which he did not know—that was, that the proprietor could not supply the water, and might keep other persons from giving a larger supply; but even in that case he did not think any great injury would be done.

**MR. DOHERTY:** The proprietor was bound to supply.

**THE PREMIER:** That was a statement he was very glad to hear. He hoped the provisions were stringent and precise, so that the proprietor would be bound to supply the water, because that was an important matter. He really thought that, if we made Clause 29 safe, we would be running no very great risk.

**MR. HIGHAM:** It was to be hoped hon. members would do nothing to prevent the passage of this Bill promptly. We had reached a stage of the session when a day's delay possibly would mean the sacrifice of any private Bill. The measure had been well considered, and, judging by the remarks of those who preceded him and had spoken against it, there was very little to be said in opposition to the Bill. The provisions fully covered all risks. The only opposition shown had come from a section of the community who were in a position to afford their own water supply. On the other hand, there was a great outcry from a large portion of the people in the district referred to, and if an active canvass had been made the outcry would have been considerably greater from those not able to afford wells from 70 to 100 feet deep, nor windmills, nor other expenditure which would run to a sum of something like

from £80 to £150 or £200. This Bill conferred no exceptional privileges upon the grantee. He was compelled to maintain within certain districts a supply of water, and should he fail he would be liable to certain penalties. Clause 29, in his opinion, fully protected not only any other water scheme that the Roads Board might wish to institute, but also the Government. He was willing to admit that the existence of this water supply scheme might delay another water supply, which not only this district, but the Fremantle Municipality, desired to see introduced at the earliest possible date, and that was a continuation of the Darling Range water supply through this district to Fremantle. But although people might have every desire for that scheme, and there might be every necessity for it, the construction of those works was very far off at present, and he did not see why we should deprive an immense number of suburban residents now living on those blocks, of the water supply it was proposed to give under this Bill. A much larger number of people would live in that district if there were a good potable water supply, such as might be obtained from Claremont. In passing this Bill we should be giving nothing away beyond the right to supply the district with water. He hoped the House would join in the endeavour to put the Bill through as early as possible.

**MR. SOLOMON:** From the Premier's remarks, it appeared that the Bill might delay the extension of the Perth water supply to this district, and to other places nearer Fremantle, which before long would doubtless require a new supply from somewhere. The Fremantle water was brackish, and sometimes undrinkable, and it might become necessary to ask the Metropolitan Board to bring a supply from the Canning River. He would not oppose the Bill, but this point required consideration.

**MR. WALLACE** said one man had told him some months ago that the Bill was being introduced contrary to the wishes of a large majority of the residents of Cottesloe and neighbourhood, and that the water proposed to be supplied was bad. Nevertheless, in the House the Bill had met with no opposition until the member for Geraldton (Mr. Robson) spoke this evening; and prob-

ably that hon. member only knew of the district from his visits to Osborne, where probably he did not drink water. He (Mr. Wallace) knew that the water was good, and that but for this supply the residents must have suffered great hardship. The quality of the water would compare favourably with that supplied in Perth, of which fully half was obtained from bores.

MR. WILSON: There was no harm in the Bill, as it conferred no monopoly, nor were residents compelled to accept the supply. Clause 29 did not make it clear that the Government would be protected in the event of their carrying water from Perth through this district, when they would require power to rate property. If that were done, the private proprietor could no longer carry on, and might claim compensation from the Government.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11 to 28, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 29—Not to affect right to obtain supply of water elsewhere, or create vested interests in proprietor:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: To make this clause perfectly clear, it required amendments providing that the Government or the Metropolitan Waterworks Board should be free to lay mains along the road. In the clause there was a reference to private individuals supplying water; but, in the event of the Government so doing, there might be a demand for compensation. He moved that in line 4, after "of," the words "the Government, the Metropolitan Waterworks Board" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL further moved that in line 4, after "authority," the words "or any body corporate or other person" be inserted.

MR. WILSON: This seemed rather mixed. A corporate body or the Metropolitan Board would not want to obtain a supply elsewhere.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: They might.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The words proposed had better be inserted in line 5, otherwise further alterations in the clause would be required.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The first part of the clause referred to the

exclusive rights of the proprietor; and the reason for inserting the words "the Government" was because the proprietors would say, "we want compensation if the Government are not going to take the water."

Amendment put and passed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL further moved that in line 10, after "any," the words "body corporate or" be inserted.

MR. MOORHEAD: If the words were inserted, they might cause confusion. The object of the clause was to enable the people of Cottesloe to obtain water from other persons besides Mr. W. D. Moore. If the alteration were made later in the clause, it would meet the case.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The amendment should be made in line 5, after the word "from." It would be better to report progress at this stage, so that the member in charge of the Bill or the Attorney General could bring down a new clause.

MR. DOHERTY: The amendments were not necessary at all. If the Government or any person wished to supply the people of Cottesloe with water, all they had to do was to get an enactment passed through Parliament.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: If the clause were inserted at all, it was imperative the Government and the Metropolitan Waterworks Board should be mentioned in it. While a private individual was protected under the clause for any damage which might accrue by operating in the district, the Government or the Metropolitan Waterworks Board were not protected; and if the Government or the Waterworks Board began to supply water in the district, the owner of the present waterworks might demand compensation, on the ground that the clause only exempted certain persons, and the Government were not exempted.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL suggested, to avoid any ambiguity, that the words "the Government, the Metropolitan Waterworks Board, or any body corporate or" be inserted after "upon" in line 7.

MR. JAMES: Under this clause no rights were reserved to the Metropolitan Waterworks Board or the Government; but the word "person" included a corporation, according to the Interpretation Act which was passed last session.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL asked leave to withdraw his amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that in line 4 after "authority" the words "or person" be inserted.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It would be better to report progress at this stage, and the Attorney General could then put the clause in order.

MR. DOHERTY: Why not go on with the Bill now, even if it were necessary to recommit the clause to-morrow?

MR. RASON: It would be a fair thing to report progress at this stage.

MR. JAMES: What did hon. members want?

MR. RASON: A monopoly would be created under this clause, or not at all; and would Mr. James say that the clause as drafted did not grant a monopoly? He (Mr. Rason) understood that the largest main laid was a 2in. main, and supposing the Government or some private body wished hereafter to supply this district with water, undoubtedly the person who had laid this main would want compensation. Could compensation be claimed?

MR. JAMES: There would be no legal claim for compensation. This was simply a permissive Bill, and wherever a permissive right was granted, it might be that certain moral claims for compensation arose, and it was in order to avoid such claims that Clause 29 was inserted; but it did not matter what clause might be inserted, a person who had spent money under such circumstances could not be prevented from claiming compensation. At the same time, hundreds of small householders could not get water until this Bill was passed.

MR. DOHERTY suggested that this and the remaining clauses of the Bill might be passed, and the Bill be immediately recommitted, with a view to making the amendments desired.

Clause as amended put and passed.

Clause 30—agreed to.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

#### RECOMMITTAL.

On the motion of MR. DOHERTY, Bill recommitted for amendment.

Clauses 1 to 28, inclusive, further agreed to.

Clause 29—Not to affect right to obtain supply of water elsewhere, or create vested interests in proprietor:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that in line 4, after "authority" the words "the Government, the Metropolitan Waterworks Board" be struck out.

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

New Clause:

MR. JAMES moved that the following be added, to stand as Clause 30:

Nothing in this Act contained shall in any manner prejudice or affect the right of the Government, or any board authorised by the Government, to establish and carry on waterworks, or to distribute and supply water within the limits of the Act, nor entitle the proprietor to any compensation whatever by reason of any such matters.

Clause put and passed.

Bill reported with further amendments, and the report adopted.

#### LOAN BILL, £750,000.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration resumed from 29th November.

Schedule—Part II., Railways:

THE PREMIER moved that the first four items be postponed until the end of "railways," namely: Additions and Improvements to Opened Lines (construction), £65,000; Boulder Railway Extension and Duplication (construction), £20,000; Coolgardie to Bonnie Vale (construction), £10,000; Coolgardie to Norseman (first instalment) (construction), £60,000. He was not prepared to go on with the first two, owing to the absence of the Commissioner of Railways. There was no other object.

MR. LEAKE: Let the Premier postpone those two.

THE PREMIER: As to the Coolgardie to Norseman line, he was not quite ready with the statistics, which would require a considerable amount of elaboration in order to fully place before hon. members this important matter, probably one of the most difficult he had to deal with. He was, however, prepared to go on with the other items.

MR. LEAKE: Why not go on with the Bonnie Vale line?

THE PREMIER: The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) was not

present, owing to the late arrival of a train. He was quite prepared to go on with the Menzies to Malcolm railway, and all the other items down to "rolling-stock."

MR. MORAN: Let "rolling-stock" be dealt with.

THE PREMIER: What objection hon. members had to his motion he could not see. Surely they were not going to deny him the right to arrange the public business.

Motion put and passed, and the first four items postponed.

Item, Menzies to Malcolm (first instalment, construction), £60,000:

THE PREMIER: This was an item which he had much pleasure in asking the Committee to approve. Hon. members would notice that the item was "Menzies to Malcolm," but the only reason this was inserted was that the Government had been advised by the engineer that Malcolm was the best point for the divergence of the routes. If hon. members desired it, he had no objection and perhaps it would be better to insert "Leonora" instead of "Malcolm," because he had been informed that an erroneous impression had gained ground in the district that the Government had some ulterior object in view, which of course was not the case. He was prepared to move that the item be "Menzies to Leonora," instead of "Menzies to Malcolm." Certainly Leonora was 10 or 12 miles further, but that was not a matter which need be taken into consideration at the present time. The object of this railway had already been placed before hon. members on several occasions, especially when he introduced the Loan Bill, and also when he spoke the other evening with regard to the matter. It was admitted on all hands, he thought, that the goldfield called the Mount Margaret goldfield was one of the most promising we had, and was already one of the largest producers of gold. Practically it was a new field. Only for the last two years had it been recognised as a separate goldfield, and during that time something like half a million of gold had been obtained there, and this year gold worth about £300,000 would be obtained. The average output of gold during the last few months had been something like 8,000 ounces, the output

this year would be about 80,000 ounces. There had been many obstacles in the way of the progress of the district owing to its great distance from the coast, also owing to the difficulties of transport, and he need hardly say owing to the many other attractions in parts of the colony nearer to hand. Some very promising mines existed there, and a good many rising centres. There was the Mount Leonora township. Many mines surrounded that place, the most important being, of course, the Sons of Gwalia, which was supposed to be one of the best in the colony. A public battery had been erected, and had been doing good work. There was also the Mount Malcolm centre, the town being the largest in the district, and there were many mines and several batteries at work. Going eastward a little further there were several batteries at work, and especially might be named the Malcolm Proprietary mine near Murrin Murrin, which was a going concern, employing when he was there a hundred and odd men in a community consisting of 200 or 300. Then there was the Mount Morgan centre, which had a considerable community. He supposed there were several hundred people in the township. This was a good mine in a good district. Going further we came to what was called the British Flag group, where the town of Laverton was springing up; and further on was the Erlestoun district, which was also promising. Westward from Leonora we got to the Diorite King group of mines, and from there the road ran away to Lawlers. On the way to Leonora, 30 miles from Menzies, we passed Niagara, a nice little township where, as hon. members knew, there was a large reservoir which, when full, would contain some 40,000,000 gallons of water, and at the present time there was about 9,000,000 or 10,000,000 gallons in it. A very important factor in building this railway was in relation to water, because not only would Niagara supply water for the railway, but it would be a grand source of supply for some time to all the country this way from Leonora to Goongarrie and to Kalgoorlie. It was a very considerable reservoir, and would be a good stand-by for the Railway Department, besides which he thought it might be of some use to the people at Menzies, as we would

be able to carry water cheaply even by railway, as that country was nearly all down-hill. The Mount Margaret district was different in many respects from the districts south of Goongarrie, including Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie, and all the way to Southern Cross and to Norseman, in that it was not timbered with eucalyptus in the same way as all those districts were timbered, and as a consequence the mines had great difficulty in obtaining good timber for mining purposes. The country north of Menzies, and even at Menzies itself, was wooded with small acacia timber which was so prevalent in Central Australia. The ordinary name was mulga. It was not at all a good timber. Great difficulty was experienced in such mines as the Sons of Gwalia, the Malcolm Proprietary, Mount Morgan, and he might say all the mines in that district, in obtaining suitable timber for dealing with the wide lodes and reefs in those localities. The consequence would be that the timber for the mines would have to be brought from the South, either from timber country between Goongarrie and Southern Cross or, as would be cheaper and certainly better, from the coast. The jarrah timber would be used in the Mount Margaret district in preference to timber obtainable about Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie, as it would be more easily got, and on the whole would be cheaper: certainly it would be much better timber. The length of the railway would be, from Menzies to Niagara 32 miles, about 30 miles more to Mt. Malcolm, and about 10 more to Leonora, or a total length from Menzies to Leonora of some 72 miles. It was generally acknowledged that of all the railways now proposed to be built in the colony, this was, *par excellence*, the one which should be constructed, for it would open up a district producing more gold than any other which had not the advantage of a railway—a district which, in fact, was producing more gold than many goldfields which had railway communication. The railway should therefore be built without delay. As it was a line which anyone would build as a private speculation, there could be no reason why it should not be built as a Government work, especially as it would be part of the great trunk line from Fremantle through the Eastern goldfields.

This would not be a railway to a place uninhabited, or to a place not proved to be of value. This district was inhabited by a large number of people, and had rich mines and much capital sunk in mining. He wished he could transport hon. members in a moment to the Sons of Gwalia, the Malcolm Proprietary, or the Mt. Morgan mines, which he had seen; for all who saw those mines must admit that the district which was producing such large quantities of gold, and in which there were such populous communities at work, was deserving of a railway to promote its development. Some few months ago he had visited the Sons of Gwalia mine, and had been hospitably entertained by the manager; and at each corner of the table, as an ornament in honour of the visit, which had taken place at the time the gold was smelted, there were 500 ounces of gold; in fact some 2,000 ounces were displayed: yet that was only one mine, and there were many other mines in the district, such as Merton's Find, which were working batteries, the three principal mines being, of course, the Sons of Gwalia, the Malcolm Proprietary, and the Mt. Morgan. There was also the North Star, a very good mine, right in the town of Mt. Malcolm, and he might say one hundred other mines within easy distance of those already mentioned. People might hold diverse opinions about the principle on which goldfields railways should be built, but the rule he had always laid down for himself was that the Government should build railways through country where there were people and mines, and that principle had been followed consistently. Some years ago a large number of people in Perth and Fremantle started an agitation for having the railway to Menzies built from Southern Cross. That proposal, though largely and influentially supported, he had strongly opposed; for such a line must have run through a district where there were no people; whereas by building a line from Kalgoorlie to Menzies through settled and populous districts which were producing gold, like Paddington, Broad Arrow, Bardoc, and Goongarrie, success was certain. The same principle must in all cases be adopted. The Government could not afford to run railways through uninhabited country in order to reach



a rich district, when that district could be reached through other districts already settled, and which would benefit by improved transit. This remark would apply to the proposal of the member for Geraldton (Mr. Robson) that a railway should be built from Mt. Magnet to Menzies and thence to Leonora, because, said that hon. member, it was a shorter distance to Geraldton, rather than run the line from Menzies to Leonora; for in the one case 250 miles of railway must be laid, and in the other only about 70 miles. To that doctrine he (the Premier) could not subscribe, however much he might desire to help the hon. member and his district. If he (the Premier) were so foolish as to give his adherence to any such project, he could not very long command a majority in the House. To construct the Menzies to Leonora line some considerable time would be required, for a survey of the route had not even been made, nor were the necessary rails for the whole distance to be covered at present in the colony; but he would like to urge the building of the line as far as Niagara as soon as possible, for that would bridge over 32 miles of the distance now proposed to be authorised, and would also give the department access to the large quantity of water at the Niagara reservoir. It was impossible to believe that any great exception could be taken to the construction of this line. The House had by a large majority declared in favour of the Bill—[MR. MORAN: Ah! ]—and now nearly everyone who had supported the second reading was in favour of this railway to Leonora. It was a work urgently required; it was a work which would pay, and one which, if desirable, would be constructed on reasonable terms by private enterprise. He could say much more in regard to the item, but having spoken so often on the subject during the session he had really nothing new to tell. If the railway met with opposition he would be prepared to bring forward further arguments in its support, and to deal with objections from whatever source they might come. The line could not but be of great benefit to those goldfields it would tap; it would stimulate new enterprise, and where there was now one mine there would be a dozen at work; it would bridge over 60 miles of heavy road,

and would enable machinery to be carried at a reasonable cost: for that district was in a worse position than any other of the Coolgardie goldfields in that it had no great quantity of eucalyptus timber, nor timber for building and similar purposes. Any large-sized timber required had therefore to be carted from places south of Menzies, or even brought all the way from Perth. The railway would thus enable people on those fields to provide themselves with all their requirements at a cheaper rate than in existing circumstances; and he strongly commended its construction to the approval of hon. members, for after visiting the district he could safely say there was no place in Western Australia which he knew of more worthy of a railway than this, nor did he know of any other place to which a railway was so thoroughly justified, and where it would be so certain to pay.

At 6:30 the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

THE PREMIER moved that the word "Malcolm" be struck out, and "Leonora" inserted in lieu thereof.

Amendment put and passed.

Question: That the item as amended be agreed to:

MR. ROBSON: It was to be regretted that the Government had seen fit to pick out the fifth item in the second schedule as the first to be dealt with, as some members who were opposed to the Leonora railway, and sat on the Government side, were unavoidably absent. In his opposition to this line he would have the co-operation of several members who represented electorates surrounding the Geraldton electorate and who sat on the Government side. Perhaps the member for Greenough (Hon. R. W. Pennefather) would support him so as to further the interests of that district. It had been stated that the line which he (Mr. Robson) advocated was the longer and would be the more costly to the country. He admitted it looked so on paper, and that the line as proposed by the Government was shorter. The Premier, in advocating the line to Leonora, had stated there would be a vast amount of traffic from the various districts through which the line ran, and that the district

had a great future before it; but every word the Premier had stated had brought more forcibly before hon. members that the tacking on of this line to the Coolgardie line would mean, not only the relaying of that line with heavier rails, but with all the possible traffic to which the Premier looked forward in the near future, the duplication of the Coolgardie line; and from that point of view the Government would have practically to build another set of lines from Fremantle to Coolgardie to carry the traffic after the Leonora line was constructed. A large pumping scheme to water the railways and to supply the people on the Eastern goldfields with water was being carried out; therefore it must be clear that the cheaper line in the end would be the line from Geraldton to Mount Magnet and on to Mount Leonora. The first cost of this line would be the least, in the end, to the country. The people of the districts through which the line would run would be able to obtain their supplies much cheaper, and in addition there would be the benefit of distributing the trade of the colony over the various portions of the country to which it was due. The Government, by constructing the line which he (Mr. Robson) advocated, would confer a benefit on the whole of the Murchison district and the country to the north. The people of Leonora and Menzies would be able to obtain their meat cheaper by tapping the resources of the great northern country for stock, because at the present time stock was brought down to Fremantle and taken back again and driven overland to its destination. If the line from Geraldton were constructed, the stock would go overland to Cue and then be taken a few miles overland to its destination. To build this railway in the proper manner he had suggested would largely and legitimately increase the prosperity of the colony. The other night he opposed most strongly the Coolgardie-Norseman railway, and advocated a line from Esperance to Norseman; and he now reminded the Premier that to build what the right hon. gentleman called a great trunk line from Fremantle would be to pursue, perhaps unconsciously, a policy to which the Government were strongly opposed, because by throwing

out this feeder to the north and south, it would be found before many years were over that a great trunk line had been completed, not from Fremantle, but from Esperance. When the line had gone to Leonora and down to Norseman, the population of the goldfields generally would be brought within 125 miles of the port of Esperance, which it was the policy of the present Government to keep closed. The day might come, however, when the present Government would not have the power to keep the port of Esperance closed, or when there would be another Government on which public opinion had a more immediate effect. In advocating the extension of the north and south lines from Coolgardie, the Premier was giving the Esperance people and the goldfields people the greatest lever they could possibly have in any efforts of theirs to make the most valuable portion of this colony a province of South Australia.

**THE PREMIER:** That was what the hon. member wanted.

**MR. ROBSON:** At any rate, that was what the Premier did not want. Had the Premier a few years ago granted the Esperance people the right to build a private narrow gauge line to Norseman, and no further, the present trouble would never have arisen, because the legitimate claim to have Esperance as the port to serve that portion of the colony would have been satisfied. The weight of public opinion on the goldfields would before long force this or some other Government to open that port to Norseman; and it was not in the interests of Fremantle and the older settled portions of the colony to veto both these lines, and let the traffic and trade of the colony be done at the ports on the western portion of Australia, rather than the southern. Perhaps the weakest point in the programme he (Mr. Robson) had put forward was connected with timber, a large amount of which would be required by the mines in the Mt. Margaret district, and the shortest railge, in this respect, was by the line the Government proposed. At the same time, the Government were carrying timber at a dead loss, and, as the more timber there was carried at mineral rates the greater the loss would be, it would be much better to allow private enterprise in shipping carriage

and let timber go round, even if the mine owners had to pay a little more. It would probably be a good many years before the Mt. Margaret people would call on the Collie coalfield for their supply, the railge alone on that route being prohibitive. But there was a well-proved coal deposit on the Irwin, which would probably do for Geraldton what the Collie coalfield was likely to do for Bunbury, if the Government would help in opening up that former field by completing railway communication, and thus give to the Mt. Margaret people a very much cheaper fuel than they would ever get from the Collie either by ship and rail, or by rail solely. He knew he was in a hopeless minority on this point, but he would be glad if members on the Government side who represented northern districts would express their views.

MR. RASON: As one of the members on the Government side to whom the member for Geraldton (Mr. Robson) had presumably referred, he intended to support the item. Bearing in mind his duty to the country, and certainly his duty to his constituents, this was the proper course; because although the interests of Geraldton might be to a certain extent the interests of the portion of Murchison which he was supposed to represent, yet Lawlers, an all-important part of his constituency, had a better chance of being served by the proposed Government line in the immediate future than by any suggested railway from Mt. Magnet. He could not consider one portion of his constituents before another, and it was his duty, even taking what might be regarded as a narrow view, to vote for the railway as proposed. He recorded his vote in the hope that the railway would not end at Lawlers, but would ultimately be joined with the Murchison railway, and in the near future would complete the circle. Some members on the Opposition side professed to know a great deal about the district he represented; but he thought he knew a little of its requirements, and although he might get into even more disrepute than he enjoyed at the present time, he would say there was nothing to justify a railway from Mt. Magnet to Lawlers, while, on the contrary, there was a great deal to justify a railway from Menzies to Leonora.

Item put, and passed on the voices.

Item, Northam towards Goomalling £20,000:

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS: The line affected the district he represented, and this was perhaps the first time it had been proposed to construct an agricultural and pioneer line in this colony, and to utilise second-hand rails taken up from the Eastern railway. The sum of £20,000 had been set down for this work, but, if he understood aright, that sum included a charge for the second-hand rails, to be recouped to the Railway Department. It would also be noticed there were no stations on the line, and the railway was to all intents and purposes an agricultural one. Since the railway was surveyed in 1897, 41,000 acres of conditional purchase land had been selected, representing £20,500, and in addition to that he was in a position to state positively that 27,000 acres had been taken up under grazing farms; that was second and third class land at 6s. 3d. and 3s. 9d. per acre. He was also in a position to state, from a report made to him by one of the officers who had recently been to the locality, that a very large proportion of the land of the new selectors was now under cultivation, and of the country that would be tapped by this railway, about 25,000 acres were under crop. These settlers in good faith had taken up large areas of land. There were about 250,000 acres of land still available as third-class grazing land, and 27,000 acres or so within the immediate neighbourhood of the proposed terminus. He did not want hon. members to accept his statements, but, on the other hand, he wished them to be careful how they condemned this railway, bearing in mind a certain agricultural railway that should be nameless, for he did not want to refer to it in detail. Had the same steps been taken with regard to every other agricultural railway as had been taken in relation to this, there would be no occasion to blame the Government for any mistakes made in the past. He felt sure hon. members would give their hearty support to this railway, and if they did not, he would feel himself to be in a very awkward position. The line had been surveyed in good faith, and it had been his wish to attract population from the other colonies, with the pleasing result that, as he had said, 41,000 acres had

been taken up under conditional purchase, which meant £20,500. We were now asked to spend about £20,000 upon this line. The selectors had never claimed anything but a purely agricultural line. They had always asked simply that the locomotives should be run out to where there was the stuff to carry in. The building of this railway would lead to an immediate impetus to land settlement in that district, and the class of selectors would be of the very best, consisting of men who would grow cereals successfully and make happy and comfortable homes. With regard to the loan scheme as a whole, it represented only £30,000 a year, or £2,500 a month; and we should bear in mind that we had a revenue bordering on a quarter of a million a month, and that the gold output for the year approached £6,000,000. If it were the object of the Government and of hon. members to induce settlement, surely it should be our aim to do so by cheapening the cost of production, whether of soil products or of gold. He did not see how hon. members could object to it. We talked about the cost of living. He was told that the cost of cartage at the present moment from Menzies, from which it was proposed to build one of the lines, was 1d. per lb. avoidupois, a large charge in itself. The cost of cartage to Northam was from 25s. to 30s. per ton; railage to Kalgoorlie 23s.; railage to Perth 8s. 6d. When wheat sold at between 5s. and 6s. a bushel, and chaff at from £5 to £7 per ton, people could make a living; but now we were faced with low prices, wheat selling at from 3s. to 3s. 6d. per bushel, and chaff at from £3 to £4 per ton, and this year the rate would probably be as low. In advocating the proposed line he did not ask for any favour, but in good faith, following up the action of the Railway Department in the survey of this line, he felt in duty bound to do his best. As he had said, since 1897, £20,500 worth of agricultural land had been taken up, irrespective of 27,000 acres of grazing land. The approval of this line would be immediately followed by applications for another £20,000 worth of land, and as the railway went to these well-known forests, settlement would go on almost indefinitely. Land condemned by the old settlers on account of the cost of clearing, representing about £4 per acre, had now

been conclusively proved to have something peculiar in it which made it enormously rich, and instead of costing £4 it could be cleared at from 15s. to 20s. per acre. There was a desire to get hold of this rich land. He appealed to hon. members to deal with this railway on its merits, and to remember that the prospect of it had been an inducement to people to settle upon the land. There was nothing of the Greenhills jumble or any other about this line. He had taken the trouble to have prepared for hon. members the plans produced, and they would see that the ground had been surveyed by responsible officers, and that the officers who had gone over the line would prove fully what he said. He realised his responsibility, and felt that if this line were thrown out to-night he would be regarded as a party who deceived and bamboozled a lot of men who had arrived from the Eastern colonies and had settled here in good faith. He trusted he would have the support of hon. members on both sides of the House, not as an act of favour, but as an act of justice. He would remind them of our revenue, of our gold output, and of the expressed desire of hon. members to induce settlement, not by screwing down wages, but by reducing the cost of production and attracting population. To reduce the cost of living there was no better means than he could see than by carrying out the railway policy of the Government, whether in relation to agricultural railways or mineral railways. He was sure they would see with his eyes in the matter, and would unanimously vote for the railway proposed. Those who knew this country would tell them there was no richer land in the colony; and when they looked at the map produced they would find there was nothing bogus about it, no humbug, but that there were 200,000 acres of land already sold on the conditions of compulsory improvement. No large estates in relation to which we might be taunted that we had no power to make them productive, but 200,000 acres of land now being worked for the benefit of the colony, and this system would be extended almost indefinitely when the railway was constructed. He was not making use of words to throw dust into the eyes of hon. members, or to deceive them because this line would be in his own district. He

felt deeply and earnestly his responsibility as Commissioner of Crown Lands in inducing people to come to the colony, and he trusted this line would have the heartiest support of members.

MR. A. FORREST: The railway policy of the Government would be supported by him, and especially the line from Northam to Goomalling. Some years ago he had the honour of being a district surveyor in this part of the colony between Northam and Goomalling and Toodyay, and he knew that the land was of a very fertile nature. He looked forward to the day when this country between Goomalling and Northam would all be taken up. The Government asked the Committee for a sum of money to build a light line of railway to enable the people at Goomalling and Northam to compete with other persons engaged in the same trade at a price at which they could grow the stuff. The Commissioner of Crown Lands had stated distinctly that he had promised these farmers—and most of the farmers around Goomalling and towards Northam were of the new class who had come here to throw in their lot with us—that they would have a railway there, and he (Mr. Forrest) knew the settlers understood that the House would, as far as they practically could, make themselves a party to it. He considered it only an act of justice that these people should have railway communication, more especially after the speech of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, who told us that when produce was at a higher price than at present they could compete and make a living, but with the present low price of produce they were unable to compete. The railway would be built with the old rails from the Coolgardie line; it would proceed through level country free from engineering difficulties, where there were few creeks and hills; over its whole length there would be a certain steady traffic all the year round, there being a considerable population permanently settled on the soil. The leader of the Opposition (Mr. Leake) should join with the Government to pass this railway for the benefit of settlers who had done so much in recent years to make this a producing colony. That hon. member should study the statistics exhibited in the precincts of the House, of produce grown in recent years in this colony.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What about the object lesson of the Greenhills railway?

MR. MONGER said he would speak of that.

MR. A. FORREST: That railway had been unsuccessful because not carried far enough; otherwise it would now be paying. Surely no hon. members could warmly oppose an agricultural railway. In building a goldfields line none knew what might happen to any field: in Victoria and New South Wales there were big mining towns utterly deserted. But the country between Northam and Goomalling contained a permanent population; for even if present settlers left, the land could be used for pastoral purposes. Hon. members on both sides should do what they could for people who had been led to take up this land by the representation of the Commissioner of Railways that the line would be constructed as soon as possible; and it would be an act of justice to give these people opportunities of carrying their produce equal to those enjoyed by settlers in other districts. To his own practical knowledge this was a fertile district, capable of great improvement and of increased production, and the item should be agreed to.

MR. LEAKE opposed the item, not with the hope of success, but because this was not a proper time to bring it forward. Though he had said enough on the second reading, he would once more remind hon. members that it had at first been proposed that the Marradong and the Goomalling railways should be built out of revenue; yet now the latter line was placed in the loan schedule of the Government at a time when the colony was not in a position to embark on speculative works. The other evening the Premier had said he only proposed to construct out of loan such works as would pay. Agricultural lines had not yet paid in the colony, for the only paying railway was the goldfields line.

MR. DOHERTY: What about the Perth-Fremantle line?

MR. A. FORREST: The goldfields line appeared to pay only because the accounts were not properly made up.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Then the department did hoodwink the public?

MR. LEAKE said he wished the hon. member (Mr. A. Forrest) would not make such unseemly interjections. It was

scandalous that a Government supporter should make such remarks about the railways. Agricultural railways had not hitherto paid.

**THE PREMIER:** Which were agricultural railways?

**MR. LEAKE:** Take the Greenhills line.

**THE PREMIER:** Fourteen miles long!

**MR. LEAKE:** And Goomalling, he believed, was twelve miles.

**THE PREMIER:** Twenty.

**MR. LEAKE:** The line to Northam and the Newcastle spur line were agricultural railways which did not pay, and now the country was to be saddled with another such line which would not pay. He had been through this Goomalling district, and would not deny its suitability for agriculture, but the real question was whether in the present state of the colony's finances such a line was justified. Of course, though there were Government supporters honestly opposed to this railway, its construction would nevertheless be approved. Hon. members were asked as an act of justice to the local settlers to build the railway. On the other hand, he asked as an act of justice to the rest of the country that the money should not thus be wasted. Though he did not know the view the House would take, he could guess; and if he spoke for twenty-four hours it was not probable that he could influence the vote of any member, and he therefore spoke more by way of protest than otherwise, for such a new departure as this was only to be expected from the present Administration, who one day stated they would only construct such lines out of revenue, and then came down at a moment when the country's finances were not too strong to ask Parliament to construct one out of loan.

**MR. ROBSON** opposed the railway, not only for the same reasons as the last speaker, but on the additional ground that there was much good agricultural land locked up on existing lines of railway. Better develop than build new lines which would increase the losses of the railways. From the published returns, table 2, page 30, it appeared that last year the loss on the South-Western railway was £14,251, yet there was surely much good land not taken up along that line. There was still good land available

in the Bunbury district and about Pinjarrah. On the Great Southern railway the loss was £23,253 for the same period, and there was plenty of land available for settlement on that line. Pass to the Northern railway, including the Northampton line, and one found the loss was £14,821.

**THE PREMIER:** Fourteen thousand?

**MR. ROBSON:** Yes; including the Cue line.

**THE PREMIER:** Oh? Dilate on that!

**MR. ROBSON:** There was still good land in those districts, which would be settled if proper encouragement were given. Moreover there was land enough along the Midland railway to settle sufficient people to produce all the country wanted for years to come and a good deal more, without building either the Greenhills, the Goomalling, or any other railway. Better increase settlement on these lines, and make them pay, before building new agricultural railways.

**MR. MONGER:** Against this line he had no desire to protest strongly, but the Minister of Lands, in introducing the item, would have done well had he remembered certain well known facts to which some slight reference had been made in his speech, namely the same Minister's remarks in reference to the Greenhills railway, which line had not come up to expectations. For this want of success there were many reasons. Recently the Commissioner of Railways had visited the Greenhills district, and found the residents confronted with difficulties in respect of the time-table and the tariff then imposed. Up to that time the Greenhills railway had shown a considerable loss; but since, the railway had practically held its own and was now on the eve of paying. That was the first agricultural line in the colony, and now a second was proposed, in somewhat different circumstances. The Greenhills line went through land where no claims for compensation could be made; but, judging from the plan submitted, showing such large settled areas coloured green, claims would be likely to arise. On a former occasion the Commissioner of Crown Lands gave a pledge that no claim would be made by the people of Northam for compensation for land required to extend the railway from Northam to Southern Cross. He once

asked for a return showing the amount of the claims made in connection with that line, and remembered at least that the amount was considerable. If he found, later, that any compensation was to be claimed for land through which this line was to run, when the Bill authorising the construction of the line came before the House he would oppose it, because, once having had the pledge of the people of Northam, he could not accept their pledge for the future. The Commissioner of Crown Lands had spoken of the splendid quality of the land through which the line would run; but there was plenty of splendid land along the first agricultural line which was built in this colony; there was as good land through which the York-Greenhills line passed as any through which the line from Northam to Goomalling would be constructed; and if the first agricultural railway were carried further, it would prove more lucrative to the people than the line from Northam to Goomalling. Before agreeing to the construction of the Northam-Goomalling line, he wanted to know what compensation the people of the country had to pay for the resumption of land along the route of this railway line.

MR. GEORGE, in opposing the construction of the line from Northam to Goomalling, said he objected to start a railway on false pretences. The amount placed on the Loan Bill for the construction was £20,000, when the actual money required would be £52,000. It was absurd for members to be asked to pass an amount of £20,000 when we knew the balance of the money required for the construction of the line would have to come from some other fund in the hands of the Treasurer, and members would be asked to pass the amount in an Excess Bill or in some other form next session. Large amounts of money should not be used for such purposes without the approval of Parliament. He could not too strongly condemn the construction of any line which had been passed on deceit. The member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) had said that old rails would be used in the construction of this railway: that did not make any difference: the money for these rails would have to be provided and would have to be transferred from some other work. The rails

and the fastenings were to cost £11,000, but that £11,000 would have to be raised, and next session the House would have to pass a Loan Bill for a million and a half of money. While congratulating the Commissioner of Crown Lands on the business-like way in which he set to work to settle people on the land, one asked whether it was desirable to settle people on new lands before other agricultural districts had been thoroughly developed where there was good country. People had been settled on land in this colony which was equal to anything to be found along the Northam-Goomalling line. People had been settled on good land for 20, 30 and even 50 years; and at the present time these people had to carry their stuff to market, not 20 or 30 miles, but 100 miles from Bannister, Wandering, and Marradong.

THE PREMIER: That was not 100 miles.

MR. GEORGE: Pretty nearly. The people from Marradong carted their produce down the Albany road to Perth to sell it.

THE PREMIER: They did not take the shortest road: it was not 50 miles to Pinjarrah.

MR. GEORGE: The farmers at Marradong did not cart their produce to Pinjarrah, but to Perth. The Commissioner of Crown Lands had said that if the line was not passed, he would be a party to deceit and to bamboozling the people in the district. We had already been a party to deceiving and bamboozling the people on the Williams and at Wandering. The people in that part of the country had been kept on the land by promises of a railway or they would have cleared out. The Government would not build the railway to Marradong, nor would they allow private enterprise to construct it.

THE PREMIER: The Upper House threw out that line. It was passed in the Assembly.

MR. GEORGE: It was thrown out in the Upper House, but if the right hon. gentleman wished the line to be constructed, no Upper House would have dared to throw it out. People had been settled on land which during the winter time was under water, and at the present time was under water to the depth of four to six inches. There were other districts in the colony where people had

been deceived and bamboozled. The member for West Kimberley had spoken of the permanent settlement on the land: one could tell the hon. member that people had been settled on the soil for 30 years in the hope of getting a railway, and they did not get it. The farmers in the Marradong and Bannister districts could send to market more produce than could be got rid of, if a railway were constructed to that district. For some reason or other justice was to be given to one district and denied to another.

THE PREMIER: How many people were there at Marradong?

MR. GEORGE: It did not matter how many people there were there: a promise had been made to construct this railway. The member for Albany (Mr. Leake) had pointed out that when the Goomalling railway was proposed on a former occasion it was coupled with the Marradong line: both were to be built. Why had the Marradong line been withdrawn after spending £4,000 on the survey, while the Goomalling line was again proposed, though very little had been spent in surveying that line? The people in the Marradong district were losing heart by not having the promise of a line carried out. Not only would the Marradong line open up good agricultural land, but some of the finest timber country in the colony.

THE PREMIER: Had the hon. member ever been to Marradong?

MR. GEORGE: Before he knew the right hon. gentleman and before he entered this House he had visited that district many times: he knew the country there, and in his judgment it was the best timber land to be found in the colony. If the Premier wished to make this colony self-supporting, the only way was to open up that country, and to provide the farmers in that district, as far as possible, with a market at their own doors. Northam was on the high road to the best market in the colony, Coolgardie, and further lines were to be constructed so that the farmers could send their produce on to Coolgardie. Were the farmers on the Williams or the Murray likely to send their stuff to Coolgardie when they had to cart it such a long distance to a railway line? The member for Geraldton had said that £14,000 was lost on the South-Western railway last year: that was not on account

of the line being an agricultural railway, but in consequence of the Government encouraging the coal and timber traffic, and in doing that the Government were helping the farmers on the Murray and at Marradong, because a better market would be created for the people who were producers. The Marradong and Murray districts had not been fairly treated, and had not received that consideration the people were led to expect they would receive. Perhaps it was because the member for the Murray did not sit on the Government side of the House that the line was not to be built. If the Premier would tell him (Mr. George) that was the reason why the Marradong railway was not built, he (Mr. George) would send in his resignation at once; but so long as he was in the House he would speak in an indignant manner when he thought people had not been treated fairly.

MR. MORAN: An air of foregone conclusion was visible in regard to these items, and the expression of placid content and happiness on the Premier's face showed his hope and belief that every proposal was going through successfully. The Premier had had one great success this evening, in connection with the Leonora railway, against which it would be hard indeed to find objection, the intrinsic worth of the goldfields it was proposed to serve being of a very high standard. He (Mr. Moran) on the second reading of the Bill opposed the whole policy of new loan authorisation, and he now repeated his regret that such legislation should have been proposed by the Government. The only redeeming feature was that hon. members knew perfectly well the Government would not raise the money, and that not more than one of the proposed railway lines would be built or commenced before Parliament met next session. If there was one of the proposed railway lines against which he had less objection than another, it was the Goomalling line. This railway would not, perhaps, pay from the beginning; but all through his six sessions in the House he had never opposed any proposal which was for the benefit of the agricultural and older parts of the colony; and of all the railway lines proposed this line alone could be constructed without the importation of new material. The objection he brought against the Leonora



line, and with tenfold force against the Norseman or any other new goldfield line, did not stand against the Goomalling proposal, he having opposed the former because the traffic on the goldfields railways was now so much impeded that no new work could be put upon them. The Committee were told that old rails, which were being taken up from the Yilgarn railway, would be used for the Goomalling line, and he was delighted to hear it, because the carting of rails for the construction of the line would be back traffic. Northam was the centre of a permanent water supply, and the confusion that must arise in the goldfields traffic during dry seasons would not be experienced in connection with the Goomalling line; and he would not oppose the item, although he would have been glad had the Committee found it possible to throw out every new line proposed. A feeble resistance was offered to the Leonora line, feeble possibly in the face of the majority of two to one in the division the other night on the whole Loan Bill, and because it was felt by hon. members that to oppose the items would be a waste of time, not in keeping with the dignity of the Chamber. He had often stated that he was a believer in the betterment principle, as applied to railway construction; and it was criminal on the part of the Assembly, session after session to allow some of the best lands on our present railway routes to continue locked up in the hands of a foreign corporation, who were making no use of the territory. In this we were laying a rod in pickle for ourselves; and what was to be said of Parliament, or of members of Parliament, who travelled day after day along the railway lines and saw some of the finest lands which had been locked up for the last 50 years without paying a penny of revenue or employing a spade, pick, or plough?

MR. CONNOR: Why not propose an absentee tax?

MR. MORAN: Not only had he proposed an absentee tax, but he had warmly advocated the principle of a land tax levied on lands fronting railway lines, and assessed on valuation. Railway lines were built to the goldfields, but did the Minister of Mines approve of applying to agricultural land the same principle he applied to mining properties? Did the

Minister not see it was unfair to build railways to agricultural districts, and allow the best portions of our lands to lie idle, when he, at the same time, brought forward laws to compel all mine owners to work their mines, even going so far as to specify the amount of labour? Next session an effort ought to be made to complete the land policy, and introduce legislation compelling land owners along railway lines to work their land or part with it; and one startling lesson in this connection had been referred to by the member for York (Mr. Monger). The people of Northam once gave a promise that they would not ask for any compensation for land resumed for railway purposes, if the Yilgarn line went from Northam and not from York, and on that occasion two sets of people were pulling the strings, and no doubt the most astute won. Northam got the railway line, and then the people sat hard down on their land, and refused to shift until compensated in golden sovereigns; but had there been a betterment system in operation, they could not have asked for any compensation, and possibly might have had to pay a little for the improved value of their land. He was told by the Commissioner of Crown Lands that the land between Northam and Goomalling was owned by small settlers, and as each man would probably improve his holding, this line might prove a success. At any rate, in sanctioning this line hon. members had the pleasure of knowing that the line was being built to a part of the colony which would be in a flourishing condition, as long as people in any part of the world wanted food. There was no reason why Western Australia in the next five or ten years should not be an exporting colony, considering our wheat average was higher than that of the Eastern colonies; and if the Legislature saw that people either utilised their land or gave it up, hon. members might rest assured that in passing this item they were sanctioning the construction of a line not for temporary prosperity, but for a great future. He hoped the work would be undertaken carefully, and that no reappropriation would take place; because he was rather afraid that what the member for the Murray (Mr. George) had said was somewhat true, and that Ministerial pressure would be brought to complete

this line as quickly as possible. If that were done, it would be necessary to re-appropriate £32,000 out of some other vote. Where reappropriation would end he did not know, and he did not suppose anybody except the Premier knew the exact state of the finances.

MR. GEORGE: The Government did not know.

MR. MORAN: Allowing that the Government knew the business of the country, he must say that he himself did not know the exact position of the finances. Where there was a reasonable prospect of a good agricultural light line being built cheaply, he would never oppose such a proposal.

MR. QUINLAN: This line was fully justified, particularly having regard to the benefits it would confer in the way of settlement. It was evident a large amount of land in this district had been taken up, principally on the assurance of the Government that this line would be constructed. The route was surveyed two or three years ago, and in the interval deputations, petitions, and all manner of requests had been made by the whole of the new settlers for railway communication. A petition presented about two years ago pointed out that farming did not pay over a distance of 15 miles from a railway, and that a number of settlers had been encouraged to make their homes in this district, by the institution of the Agricultural Bank. Most of those people were a desirable class of small settlers, combined with the older settlers, who had held land at a great distance from railway communication, for the last 40 or 50 years. The Commissioner of Crown Lands had told the Committee that the new selectors alone represented 41,000 acres, valued at £25,000; and he (Mr. Quinlan) was assured by a good many of the people that if this railway were not constructed they would have to abandon their holdings. It was evident that, indirectly at any rate, this railway would pay.

MR. MORAN: Very indirectly, it was to be feared.

MR. QUINLAN: Of the district to be served he had more knowledge than either the member for Albany or the member for the Murray. The hon. member (Mr. George) was scarcely correct in his statements or fair in

his arguments in opposing this railway merely because a line to Marradong had been surveyed through his district. That was a bad spirit. If he (Mr. Quinlan) thought fit to follow that example, he might say that because another member had voted against a railway advocated by him, he would vote against any railway in which that member was concerned.

MR. GEORGE: That was not the point.

MR. QUINLAN: It was. On some subjects the member for the Murray was not the authority he claimed to be, and the hon. member should bow to others who had a more intimate acquaintance with the colony and its requirements in relation to agricultural interests. So far as concerned the other surveyed line referred to, it was more or less designed for timber traffic; and while he would be happy to help that desirable industry, yet seeing the bad times the timber people were having, he did not think there was any urgent necessity for the construction of another line for the conveyance of timber. One of the largest mills of the colony was now closed down, and he was sorry such was the case, because it had given employment to a vast number of men. However, he hoped the industry would take a turn, and that those who had invested their money would reap the benefit they deserved. There had been an interjection in reference to the Greenhills railway. Even the hon. member for York (Mr. Monger), who, in all he uttered in the House, displayed a spirit of broad-minded justice, said that, so far as that railway was concerned, it did not go to the point which might have made it a great success, and he had told his own people they had no right to have the line constructed where it was. Therefore, he hoped no comparison would be drawn between the Greenhills line and that under discussion. In regard to the Goomalling line, he thought the Government would be wise in utilising the old rails, and even the petitioners asked that no expense should be incurred for railway stations, all they wished being to have some communication.

MR. MORAN: Would the hon. member guarantee they would not agitate for the expenditure of more than £20,000?

MR. QUINLAN: Yes; the people had offered the land free, and they required

only the old rails and no stations. He would willingly resign his seat if they did not carry out the promise they had made. The chairman of the Railway League had even signed a document and sent it to the Government, and it said they did not desire any compensation for land.

MR. MORAN: Did that include suburban lands outside Northam?

MR. QUINLAN: When speaking on the second reading he referred to lands outside Northam. A few acres might be required at about a pound an acre, but he was going to make a suggestion (which was not his own, but that of a friend), that when the Bill came before the House a clause should be inserted in respect of compensation. He hoped that at all times he would be reasonable in any statement he had to make in the House, and especially did he desire to be so on this occasion, and if the friends who returned him as a representative were not satisfied with his view, they would have a right to get someone else to do the work better. As to the reference by the member for Albany (Mr. Leake), who pointed out that it was distinctly promised that the railway should be built out of revenue, he (Mr. Quinlan) had already referred to the reason why, he presumed, the Government had to construct it out of loan money, namely that the revenue was reduced by the action of people who were generally opposed to the interests of the agriculturists, there being a reduction of the tariff relating to sundry products of agricultural industry.

MR. GREGORY: The dividend duty would make up for that.

MR. QUINLAN: That would not satisfy him. With regard to the repairs of the railway, the cost would have to be met from time to time out of revenue. The work to be undertaken was, to his mind, of a permanent character, and posterity should contribute its proportion to the cost. Since the introduction of responsible government Parliament had done fairly well. There were some who took a pessimistic view, but generally the majority had been wise enough to see a little further ahead, and were able to construct many works for which those who came after them would be thankful. The member for Albany (Mr. Leake) referred to the district he (Mr. Quinlan) represented as not being

very important, but that was a question of opinion. He might reciprocate so far as the hon. member was concerned. As to the argument of his friend, the member for Geraldton (Mr. Robson), that there were lines already constructed upon which settlement should be encouraged by the Government, surely it would be admitted that the Government were doing all they could in that direction. Some of the land in the hon. member's district was excellent, but a good deal of it was not likely to be taken up. Unfortunately, a railway took in an enormous area of land in a particular district with which he (Mr. Quinlan) was concerned. However, it was for the railway company who had the concession made them to make the railway pay, and to settle people there. It was not a question for the Government, although he recognised it would be good for the Government and the country if the land were taken up. The member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran)—and it would be well if other hon. members would take the same view and perhaps be a little more kindly disposed than at present—stated he considered this the best of the lines to which he was opposed. He (Mr. Quinlan) supported the line now proposed because he thought it would be one of the best paying lines. The Commissioner of Crown Lands had referred to the cost of transit, the amount of land sold, and the promise of this line to many people already there. Many were living 15 or 20 miles from a railway, and some perhaps a still greater distance. One selector lived 35 miles from any line of railway, and had reared a big family there under great trials and hardships. Let any hon. member accompany him (Mr. Quinlan) to the district, and he would show that member whether the selectors were new or old. The member would very soon recognise that many of them did not belong to Western Australia.

MR. MORAN: They would now.

MR. QUINLAN: That was to say they were not born in Western Australia. There was no question they were *bona fide* settlers, and by coming here they had shown they were not satisfied with the place in which they used to dwell. He was satisfied hon. members were disposed to support this line. He hoped he would never give occasion for it to be

said of him that he advocated a railway he did not believe in.

MR. MORAN: It was desirable to hear a few words from the Commissioner of Railways. No matter how dog-weary we were of the session, it did not follow we should pass a line through in such a galloping way as this. He would like to hear the Commissioner of Railways say something about the construction of the line; he also wanted a confirmation about old rails being used, and to know whether the line would be built by contract or by day labour. He would also like to know what amount of traffic the Commissioner expected. This information we were entitled to have on the records of the House. Was there any other Legislature in Australia where there was so much new railway work put through with so little debate and so little information as here?

A MEMBER: Members of the House knew.

MR. MORAN: Members had a right to have information from the Minister on the matter.

THE PREMIER (in reply): Members like himself and others probably assumed that because they knew all about this country, everyone else knew something about it too. That was one of the difficulties to contend with, not only on this but many other occasions. Places not very far distant from Perth had never been visited by some members. This Goomalling line had been talked about for a good many years. He thought the Government had, for some three years past, promised to do their best to have it built, but up to the present, although a survey had been made, we had not been able to carry out what was intended. At first, as the hon. member for Albany (Mr. Leake) had stated, it was intended to build the line from current revenue, and it might have been possible to have done that even under existing circumstances, if it had been thought desirable.

MR. MORAN: Why should it be advisable?

THE PREMIER: But under existing conditions it had appeared that this railway might fairly be chargeable to loan funds. The amount required was not large, for the Government proposed to build the line as cheaply as possible.

No elaborate stations or unnecessary residences would be built, and for the line itself there would be used the second or third-hand rails now being taken up on the Yilgarn railway. The line would be built as far as possible without elaborate ballasting, and it was hoped the work would be done departmentally, so that there would be no law suits over extras. Probably the railway could be constructed for £1,000 a mile, and it was only intended to build it to a distance of about 20 to 25 miles from Northam towards Goomalling. To his intimate personal knowledge, this railway ran through the best piece of agricultural land in Western Australia.

MR. MONGER said he disagreed with that statement.

THE PREMIER: There was no district in the colony more thickly settled by farmers. According to the Commissioner of Lands, it contained, excluding the town of Northam, 2,000 agriculturists, many of whom were also small stock-raisers. These were producers, the men it was desirable to encourage, who would supply our markets and give the goldfields people cheap food. It was very well to depend on other parts of the world for cheap provisions, but the best way to cheapen food was to grow it ourselves, and thus get rid of most of the middlemen, while greatly reducing freights and charges. It was a mistake to think that cheap food could best be had by importation, for when a country could produce more food than it required for local consumption, competition would cheapen prices. Already 1,300 or 1,400 miles of railway had been built throughout the colony, and all knew those lines were paying, notwithstanding the statement of the member for Albany (Mr. Leake) that only one railway paid its way. Would that railway pay if it were there by itself?

MR. LEAKE: Yes.

THE PREMIER: No; all the other railways were feeders for that line.

MR. MORAN: They fed off it.

THE PREMIER: The South-Western railway carried as much traffic as any other line, and could it be said that line was not paying because it did not show the same return as other lines where higher freights were charged? While the railway accounts placed before hon.

members were doubtless correct according to the basis from which they were deduced, it was nevertheless clear that a railway carrying an immense traffic of low-freighted goods, while not paying so well as another carrying the same amount of traffic at higher freights, might still be doing the same amount of good to the country. The principal traffic on the South-Western railway was timber, coal, and agricultural produce, all which the Government desired to carry at the lowest possible rate. Though not a railway expert, still he contended that in estimating the amount of good a railway was doing to the country, the amount of tonnage going over it should be considered.

MR. MORAN: The estimate would be bad if such tonnage consisted of imported goods.

THE PREMIER: Suppose 1,000 tons per day represented the traffic of the South-Western railway, the freight being £5, and there were 1,000 tons going over another railway at £10, we might easily say the one line was losing and the other gaining, though both were doing the same work. This did not mean that one railway was a burden to the colony, while the other was a blessing. The South-Western railway, which he had the honour of introducing to the House, and had carried with great difficulty, was doing as much good as any other line in the colony in developing and promoting the resources of the districts it served. Why should anyone object to the present proposal for a small line, the actual work of which would not cost more than £25,000, and which would open up a large agricultural district, not by settling people on the land, for they were already there, but by giving facilities of transit to those people who were certainly more deserving than new settlers or mere prospective settlers.

MR. GEORGE said he had understood these were new settlers.

THE PREMIER: A great many were old. After the colony had spent six millions in giving railway communication to the goldfields, would hon. members say they would not develop the agricultural resources of the colony, thus giving cheaper food to the goldfields people, while assisting settlers on the soil?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The goldfields railways were agricultural lines, for

they carried agricultural produce to the fields.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member and his friends desired this country to have goldfields and nothing else. While at the Federal Convention, he (the Premier) had been taunted with representing only a few goldfields in the interior and some strips of agricultural land on the coast. The railways must carry, not only the produce of other countries, but that of our own agriculturists.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The goldfields were consumers of Bunbury produce.

THE PREMIER said he was not talking about Bunbury but of Northam, one of the best agricultural districts in the colony, to which the Government desired to give facilities of transit, and in which the Opposition seemed to have no confidence.

MR. LEAKE: Divide!

THE PREMIER: No; we would not divide. The hon. member would have to listen to him, just as he (the Premier) had listened many times against his will to the hon. member. The hon. member did not like one to stand up for the producers of the colony, a class of people whose interests the hon. member had always opposed ever since he entered Parliament. He was a good friend of everyone but his own countrymen. In the producers on the soil he took no interest, and had never taken any. Surely the hon. member need not try to alienate from himself every section of the community. Common sense and self-interest, if considered, would show the folly of that procedure. With these men, the bone and sinew of the country, men who were living here and would continue to live here fixed to the soil, he (the Premier) would on such occasions show that he had some sympathy.

MR. LEAKE: "Two-blades-of-grass" men.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member, far from showing any sympathy with the producers, only treated such proposals as this with ridicule and contempt.

MR. LEAKE: Hear, hear.

THE PREMIER: This railway would pay; it could, he believed, be carried 20 miles for £25,000; and the fact of the Government having been unable to carry

out their wishes regarding the Marradong railway was no reason why the member for the Murray (Mr. George) should oppose this Goomalling line.

MR. GEORGE said he opposed it on principle.

THE PREMIER: On what principle? With regard to the Marradong railway, the Government had been in earnest, though circumstances had prevented its construction. In that district there were magnificent jarrah forests, which, so soon as difficulties in the jarrah trade were removed, must be utilised. Moreover, there were the rich valley of the Marradong, and the Wandaring and Williams districts, all of which could find easier access to the markets of the colony by way of Pinjarrah than by the Great Southern railway.

MR. MORAN: Was the Premier prepared with statistics relating to the Goomalling line?

THE PREMIER: No; but if the hon. member looked at the map before him, and observed the number of selections taken up, he would see the country was well settled. In 1866, some 33 years ago, he (the Premier) had been there, and the country then supported a good many settlers. He had been there several times since, and now the whole of the country was a large agricultural district rapidly coming under cultivation; and when this railway was completed the district would be one great wheat-field, as it was to a large extent already. It would do anyone good to travel through that country in the early part of the season, and to see the magnificent grass and other crops which it carried; in fact, one wishing to see a specimen of the colony's agriculture could not visit a better place. The member for Albany (Mr. Leake) said we should not waste the money of the country. We were not doing so. Money could not be spent in a better direction. The hon. member instanced the Greenhills railway, a line 14 miles long, to a magnificent piece of country, and the construction of which would be justified. A railway could not be made to pay in a moment, for it did not make the grass or the crops grow instantly. Probably the hon. member did not know that between York and Greenhills the land was mostly freehold, owned by private persons, and

that only when Greenhills was reached did one find the farmers.

MR. MORAN: Why not compel cultivation?

THE PREMIER: The hon. member did not know that the Government had bought the Mount Hardey estate and cut it up for settlement.

MR. MORAN: The State could not purchase all unimproved lands.

THE PREMIER: It could, so long as money could be made out of them. The Greenhills line had been constructed more expensively than this proposed railway: no doubt more money had been spent on it than should have been. We built a good substantial railway, fit to carry any kind of traffic, but in regard to the line before the Committee we need not go to that extent. How could we expect the agriculturists in the country to be able to supply all the requirements of the people unless we gave them facilities of transit? How could the people who lived away from the railway, 20 or 30 miles apart, compete with the people who lived alongside the railway, or the people who lived in other colonies alongside railway lines? And further, the freights between Melbourne or Adelaide and Fremantle were so low. If we wanted the country to progress as an agricultural colony, we must expect people to compete, because they had to compete now with the imports from other colonies, and we must give our people the same facilities of transit and the same advantages as were given by the Governments of other countries. He had great pleasure in supporting this railway, as he believed it would pay well, and it was thoroughly justified in every way in the best interests of the country.

MR. MOORHEAD: Before the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) carried his threat into execution, one would like to say a few words as to the remarks which had fallen from the Premier. It had given him the greatest pleasure possible to hear the Premier state that some three years ago, and during the time that had elapsed between then and now, he and the Ministry had promised this railway to the inhabitants of the district. The Commissioner of Crown Lands went so far as to say that to a certain extent he (the Commissioner) had been responsible for the present

settlement in the district. He (Mr. Moorhead) was always pleased to support Ministers in carrying out pledges, not only to their constituents but to the colony at large, especially where the execution of a promise led to permanent settlement and the advancement of the colony. If that was so, then a greater duty lay in carrying out enactments which were on the statute book; and turning to *Hansard* of 1896 he found that a Bill was introduced into the Assembly and passed its first, second, and third readings, duly passing the different readings in another Chamber and subsequently becoming the law of the land; but that law had not been carried into effect. He found that the Nannine-Cue railway, which passed this House without a single dissentient voice, and which at the present time was on the statute book, was inoperative. If the Premier and Commissioner of Crown Lands found it incumbent to have the Goomalling line carried through by reason of promises given to the people settled in that district, *a fortiori* ought this enactment to be carried into effect when the reasons then adduced had been intensified since. The Premier, in moving the second reading of the Bill for the construction of the Nannine-Cue railway, gave it as his reason for introducing the Bill that the line would prove a benefit to the people of Nannine and also to the squatters in that district. He said:

It seems to me we could not do better than extend the railway in this direction, as the line will serve the people of Nannine, and give facilities to the goldfields. It will also give assistance to the pastoral industry, by enabling the stock brought from the North to reach a railway 50 miles nearer than they can do by the present route.

Not a single voice was raised in protest at that time. The only people who were supposed to be benefited were the population of Nannine and the pastoral industry in that district. Since that day not alone had we settlers isolated and appealing to the goodwill and feeling, especially of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, but we had towns springing up in that district. At the time the Premier spoke there was only Nannine; since then we had on the way, Cork Tree Flat and Tuckanarra. We had Nannine with a population of 600 people, Star of the East, Quinn's, Abbott's, Peak Hill, then unknown, we had Horseshoe and Gravel-

stone; all these spots, with a settled population, were in existence now. He listened a few evenings ago to remarks as to the development of Norseman and Leonora. He ventured to say the progress made in the district he had the honour to represent, within the last 12 months, if it did not equal that of the Leonora district, excelled that of Norseman. If the Premier, when introducing the Bill for the construction of the Nannine-Cue line, and probably at a time anterior to the period when he gave a promise to the settlers, could find a reasonable argument in the fact that Nannine would be benefited, also the pastoral industry, how much greater was the force of the argument now, when not only were there one town, but seven centres of population, and not only were there 2,000 ounces returned per month by the Nannine district, but the average was now 5,000 or 6,000 ounces a month. He urged these points, not in opposition to the construction of the line to Goomalling, but as a kind of answer to the member for the Murray (Mr. George); because if that hon. member had a reason to object to the item, how much greater reason had he (Mr. Moorhead) to object. He had a greater reason than the member for the Murray in opposing this line, but he could not play "the dog in the manger" in such a manner as that. If a case had been made out, in his opinion, for the construction of the Goomalling line, then because injustice had been done to another part of the country he could not vote against this item. He had taken advantage of this item which had been brought before the Committee, to press on the attention of the Premier and Commissioner of Crown Lands that in the Nannine district there was no longer one town with a population which at one time only numbered 600, and which at one time only returned 2,000 ounces of gold a month; but now Nannine had a population of over 2,000, and a gold output of between 5,000 and 6,000 ounces a month. In the Nannine district alone at the present time there were 173 stampers going, and there were orders to the extent of 560 head of stampers, which would be in full swing in six months' time. That was in the Nannine district alone, to say nothing of Abbott's, Gravelstone, Horse-

shoe, and Peak Hill. If any member of the House had reason to oppose the passing of this item, it was himself; but he could not bring himself to do so, because he recognised that a case had been made out for the Goomalling line, and he would be sorry to block a measure which would prevent people from being intimately connected with the markets of the colony.

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

Ayes ...	21
Noes ...	10

Majority for ... 11

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. S. Burt	Mr. George
Mr. Connor	Mr. Holmes
Mr. Connolly	Mr. Illingworth
Mr. Ewing	Mr. James
Sir John Forrest	Mr. Leake
Mr. A. Forrest	Mr. Robson
Mr. Hall	Mr. Solomon
Mr. Hubble	Mr. Wallace
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Locke	Mr. Gregory (Teller).
Mr. Monger	
Mr. Moorhead	
Mr. Moran	
Mr. Morgans	
Mr. Pennefather	
Mr. Piesse	
Mr. Quinlan	
Mr. Rason	
Mr. Throssell	
Hon. H. W. Venn	
Mr. Doherty (Teller).	

Item thus passed.

Item, rails and fastenings £100,000:

MR. MORAN: How much of this £100,000 would be devoted to the duplication of the Coolgardie line? Did the Minister of Railways intend to go ahead with the relaying of the 190 miles, in addition to the 100 miles already done?

COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: The question of the duplication of the Coolgardie line had not been settled yet; and although it might be necessary to carry out the duplication very soon, provision had not been made in this £100,000 for that work. It was intended as soon as possible to go on with the work of relaying the remainder of the Yilgarn line, and to complete the 59 miles between the end of the heavy rails now being laid and Southern Cross, so as to complete the section, using this vote for the purpose. Although 115 miles of heavy rails had been laid, these could not be made use of until the section was complete, and it was intended as soon as possible to relay the 170 miles between Northam and Southern Cross. Immediately this section was finished, the 140 miles of line between

Southern Cross and Kalgoorlie would be completed.

MR. MORAN: The assurance given by the Commissioner of Railways bore out the opinion that there would be no attempt to complete any of the proposed new railways within the next 12 months, owing to the impossibility of getting the rails before next year; and to complete the relaying of the lines would be as much as could be done. When it came to carrying water pipes for the goldfields water scheme, the Commissioner's hands would be full without attempting to build new railways.

MR. LEAKE: How much of the money in this loan schedule was it proposed to reappropriate next year?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Like some of the other questions the hon. member asked, this was so unintelligible as to make it impossible to give a reply.

MR. LEAKE: Was the question too difficult?

MR. GEORGE: Were the indents being prepared for the rails for which the Committee were voting money? If the indents were not sent in very shortly, the Commissioner would find that, owing to a general rise of prices in the metal market, he might have to pay a great deal more than he anticipated.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: The indents were not being prepared, but they would be put in hand as soon as possible.

MR. LEAKE: How much of the money in the loan schedule was it proposed to raise by the issue of Treasury bills?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: That was a question for the Treasurer.

MR. LEAKE: It was highly probable no one but the Treasurer could answer the question.

MR. GEORGE: In view of the important financial question now before the Committee, should the Premier and Treasurer not be in his place?

MR. LEAKE: The Premier's presence was not necessary.

MR. GEORGE moved that progress be reported, because an important question had been asked, which ought to be answered by the Treasurer.

Motion to report progress, put and negatived.



MR. GEORGE drew attention to the state of the House. [At this moment the Treasurer entered the Chamber.] Now that the Premier had returned, there was no desire to call attention to the state of the House.

MR. LEAKE: Would the Premier inform the Committee how much of the money mentioned in the loan schedule it was proposed to raise by the issue of Treasury bills?

THE PREMIER: The Government did not propose to raise any of the money by Treasury bills, so far as he was aware.

MR. LEAKE: How did the Premier propose to raise the money?

THE PREMIER: By the sale of inscribed stock.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Ask the Premier something easy.

MR. LEAKE: Then the first loan would be appropriated towards the construction of these loan works, and not towards completing works already in hand?

THE PREMIER: Surely the hon. member had not sat in this House all these years—

MR. LEAKE: Without being confused? No.

THE PREMIER: Surely the hon. member had not sat all those years in the House, and was still of opinion that when a loan was raised by the sale of inscribed stock, the identical money raised was devoted to the very purposes mentioned in the Act under which it was raised. Such a plan would necessitate paying at least double interest. There was one general loan account.

MR. GEORGE: The money was "pooled."

THE PREMIER: All moneys borrowed were put into the general loan account. A loan raised under one Act was put into the "pool" and used for purposes required during the time the money was available, the next amount required being raised under another loan; but it all came right in the end. In the meantime, it might be said that money raised under one Loan Act, was being used for the purposes of another Act; but a little consideration would show that it would be impossible to do otherwise. Supposing £1,000,000 were raised for the Coolgardie water scheme, and at the same time works were being carried on under the general purposes Act of 1896, which

authorised the raising of £3,500,000: if the money were not wanted for the Coolgardie water scheme, it would be necessary, according to the suggestion of the member for Albany (Mr. Leake), to keep the £1,000,000 lying in the bank, and borrow money in order to carry on the works under the general purposes Act.

MR. MORAN: But did that not necessitate a reappropriation Act?

THE PREMIER: Not at all; and on this point he would let members into the "secrets of the prison-house." A sum of £2,000,000 had been raised under the general purposes Act of 1896, leaving £1,500,000 yet to be raised; and £1,000,000 had been borrowed under authorisation for the goldfields water supply scheme. All this latter money had not been used on the water scheme, some being utilised for the general purposes authorised by the Act of 1896; but when the remaining £1,500,000 under the later Act came to be raised, not one single penny would be devoted to general purposes, but all would be devoted to the goldfields water scheme, because the general purposes Act had been kept going with funds which rightly belonged to the water scheme.

MR. MORAN: That was all right if the Government had authorisation.

THE PREMIER: The Government must not go beyond the authorisation, because to do so would be acting illegally. So long as the authorisation was not exceeded, if the moneys of one authorisation had been used for another purpose, there would always be another authorisation from which to repay.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It was a case of recoup.

THE PREMIER: It was a case of recoup, and otherwise the business of the country could not be carried on, because there would be a large credit to one account, and no credit to another. For instance, if this Bill passed, he hoped to raise, when opportunity occurred, £1,500,000, or something like that sum, under the general purposes Act of 1896.

MR. LEAKE: In Treasury bills?

THE PREMIER: No; by the sale of inscribed stock. And the money would be used for any purposes which had been authorised, some of it under the present Bill and some for the goldfields water

scheme; but by and by, when it was desired to raise more money, that would be done under this Bill, and the money would go into the pool and be recouped.

MR. MORAN: The only thing was that the last got "his tail bitten off."

THE PREMIER: The last clause of the Bill provided that the Governor might authorise the Treasurer to advance any sums not exceeding the amount authorised, and the money so advanced must be retained by the Treasurer out of any moneys coming to his hands under the authority of the Bill.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What about discount?

THE PREMIER: The discount question would have to be dealt with by and by, and it had been dealt with it to some extent. It was a serious matter to raise loans at a discount, because certain moneys were appropriated up to the amount voted, whereas the amount was not realised; and unless there was a windfall by which a premium was obtained, more votes would have to be obtained to make up the deficiency.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Where did the reappropriations come in?

THE PREMIER: Reappropriations, he took it, only put the loans from which they were appropriated in the same position as if they had been originally voted at the amounts as they now stood, after the reappropriation had been deducted. For instance, the Coolgardie water scheme had to cost £2,500,000, and of that £460,000 had been reappropriated, and therefore some £2,000,000 odd was left. If, when this sum had been spent, more was required, it would be necessary to raise a new loan, as if there had been no reappropriation. A case in point was the rolling-stock vote, which was reduced two years ago by £200,000 then reappropriated.

MR. MORAN: Did it not mean that the works were costing more? Why the extra loan?

THE PREMIER: For rolling-stock there was a large vote of £1,200,000, of which £200,000 was reappropriated; and when there was reappropriation, the original authorisation was reduced by the amount reappropriated, and had to be recouped; and if the works cost more, there must be a new loan. He was very sorry reappropriations had been made so

largely in the beginning, in regard to works.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It was bad business.

THE PREMIER: It injured our credit when there was no occasion, although there was some little difficulty, inasmuch as if the Government were committed to certain works, people soon knew it, and money had to be provided. At the same time, it was not intended to draw on appropriations to the same extent as had been the case since 1896. However, we had nearly got rid of all our appropriations now. When we got another loan raised on inscribed stock, we would be free of our authorisations altogether, with the exception of this and also of some of the Treasury bills. We were getting over the difficulties that we met in 1896 when we were on top of the wave, and when doubtless we thought we were stronger financially than the London people would allow us to be. As to what the hon. member asked about now, the hon. member would thoroughly understand that if we made advances from one loan fund to another we had to refund the amount, as provided by Section 6 of the Act.

MR. MORAN: In reference to all loan moneys and appropriations it was optional with the Government themselves, without the sanction of Parliament.

THE PREMIER: Section 6 was inserted in every one of our Acts, by which the Government could make advances from any funds at their disposal for one purpose to another, provided the money was paid back from funds authorised when funds came to hand.

Item put and passed.

Item, Railway Workshops £20,000:

MR. GEORGE: The vote was absurd. He did not say the necessity for the railway workshops was absurd, for those workshops were proved to be an absolute necessity.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: We had £17,000.

MR. GEORGE: What would the total cost of the workshops be?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: £80,000.

MR. GEORGE: It would be more agreeable to him if the item were increased from £20,000 to £50,000. The work could then be got on with in something

like a business form. The country was committed to the fact that the workshops should be at Midland Junction, and the country was suffering day after day through the workshops being at Fremantle, whereby the work was retarded. If the Government could see their way to increase the sum from £20,000 to £50,000 they would have his vote.

**THE PREMIER:** We already had £17,000.

**MR. GEORGE:** The Commissioner of Railways said that £80,000 was required. The repairs to the rolling-stock of the country were costing a tremendous lot more than they should, and there was inconvenience all the way round. If the Government were going to have the workshops at Midland Junction, why did they not ask for enough money and have the job done properly?

**MR. EWING:** When did the Government intend to start the work? He thought that not only did he and his constituents, but many of the officers in the Railway Department who were responsible for carrying on the traffic in the country, and for the competency of the machinery in their hands, and also the community generally, wished to know when the loss we were informed officially was being sustained by the Government year after year and day after day, by the cramped position of the workshops at Fremantle, was going to end. Not only would he be glad to hear it was intended to start these works immediately, but he was confident the Committee and the community would be glad to hear it from the Minister in charge.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** No one regretted more than he did that the works had not been commenced. In fact he had hoped that during this year there would be a commencement. It seemed to him we had too many generals in the business. They all put forward their ideas in regard to these shops, and matters were hung up sometimes in connection with designs. We had an expert opinion from a gentleman in England during the time of the visit of the Engineer-in-Chief, and it was thought that on his return to the colony the design he would bring back with him would be acceptable to the people who had to work in these shops here. When this design was submitted to the Loco-

motive Engineer, objection was taken to it, and recently the Engineer-in-Chief was instructed to come to some understanding without delay in regard to this matter. There had been several conferences with the Locomotive Engineer, and he (the Commissioner) believed there was a probability of the design being so far agreed to now that we should make some commencement of the work during this financial year. As to the amount available, he might say that already £17,000 had been voted, and this with the £20,000 now asked for would, he thought, be sufficient to carry out the work in connection with these shops during the next 18 months, so that before that time had expired the Government would be able to ask for more money to continue the work. No one regretted more than he that these works had not been started, and as to what had been said by the member for the Murray (Mr. George) with regard to the expenditure which the country was put to now in connection with the repairs to stock, such expense could be obviated if we had these shops in working order at Midland Junction, and the sooner we could get there the better for the country, for the rolling-stock, and for the railways. He could assure the hon. member that the Government were doing their best to push the work forward.

**MR. GEORGE:** Was it proposed to build one section of the work?

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** It was intended to get the work so far forward that we could move from Fremantle. The Locomotive Engineer considered, and he (the Commissioner) thought rightly so, that to take a portion of the works to Midland Junction and have them under dual control would be false economy, and that it would be far better to make a commencement altogether up there as soon as he was ready to get into the new shops.

**MR. GEORGE:** Would what was now proposed enable him to do it?

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** Yes.

**MR. EWING:** So very much had been heard by him about the difficulty that had existed between the several branches of the department as to designs, that he thought the Minister should not have any more trouble between them. He under-

stood that this trouble as to designs had existed for 12 months. Surely the Minister could give the officers instructions that they must settle their differences, and if they could not settle their differences, we had better find others who could.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** It was simple enough to give instructions and to see them carried out, but it would be a mistake to force this matter forward and tell the officer in charge that he must carry out the work, and that the parties must come to some understanding with regard to the designs. If the officer were told so, and afterwards the shops were not suitable, the country would probably have more reason to cast blame upon the Government than they would if the Government did not force the matter. We must come to some understanding after due deliberation. He regretted very much the delay had occurred, but at this juncture it would not do to force matters in the way the member for the Swan (Mr. Ewing) suggested. Let us wait a little while. He thought there was some probability of the designs being agreed upon and the works commenced.

**MR. EWING:** Within six months?

**MR. LEAKE:** The Government had only had three years.

**MR. EWING:** Would the Government do it in six months?

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** A promise would not be given by him to do it in any specified time. He would try to do it.

Item put and passed.

Item, Rolling-stock £165,000:

**MR. GEORGE:** How would the £500,000 for rolling-stock, referred to the other night, be paid?

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** Information had already been given to the House with regard to this rolling-stock. Indents had been prepared for a certain proportion, and a cable message sent to London. The work in hand would come to about £140,000 or £150,000. Further indents were being prepared for work which would be put in hand as soon as possible. This work would extend over a period of 18 months or two years. The work most urgent would be carried on as soon as possible. Ultimately the cost of the rolling-stock

required would be something over £500,000, and provision must be made for it. The necessity for rolling-stock was evident, and the Government were quite aware of the necessity, and intended to do all that was needed to have stock as soon as possible.

Item put and passed.

Item, Additions and improvements to opened lines (construction) £65,000:

Put and passed.

Item, Boulder railway extension and duplication (construction) £20,000:

**MR. MORAN:** What was it intended to do?

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** What was proposed to be done was first of all to carry out the duplication immediately as far as the Horseshoe. That would cost about £25,000. The hon. member (Mr. Moran) must not forget that in the provision made here there was allowance for £20,000 for railway extension and duplication, and in the item "Rails and fastenings" provision was made for rails, so that taking £10,000, say, out of that amount for rails, the amount would come to £30,000, and the estimated cost of the whole work completed was £47,000, leaving a balance of £17,000 to be provided. Of that amount he had also available on another authorisation £3,600. There were also other small allocations which could be used for this purpose. For the present it was only intended to carry the duplication to the Gnumbulla station, known as the Horseshoe, and subsequently it would be seen whether it was necessary to continue the line as suggested.

**MR. MORAN** moved that the words "extension and" be struck out.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** To that there would be no objection.

Amendment put and passed, and the item as amended agreed to.

Item, Coolgardie to Bonnie Vale (construction) £10,000:

**THE PREMIER:** This railway had been recommended for construction in the Governor's Speech of last year, and also appeared in this year's Speech. When the proposal was first introduced, Bonnie Vale was more prosperous than at present; but this, he believed, was not due to the district having deteriorated or to the mines becoming less valuable, but to the circumstance common on new gold-

fields, that reconstructions had to be made, necessitating some delay. He had been informed and believed, having travelled through the district, that the Bonnie Vale mines were very good, and that they would give employment to large numbers of men.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Was not this a racecourse line?

THE PREMIER: The hon. member took great interest in horse-racing, and he (the Premier) would presently give him all information on that subject. It was only proposed to carry this railway a distance of seven miles.

MR. GEORGE: Would it pay?

THE PREMIER: Certainly; else it would not be proposed.

MR. LEAKE: How many people were there in the district?

THE PREMIER: The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) would give that information. Not only were there good mines at Bonnie Vale, but that place was on the road to the 25-Mile, where there were many mines which, though not too flourishing, promised well for the future. These included the Wealth of Nations. There had once been a difficulty in persuading the House of the advisableness of bringing the railway from Kalgoorlie *via* Broad Arrow to Menzies, rather than from Coolgardie by Bonnie Vale and Kuranalling through Broad Arrow.

MR. MORAN: The former policy had proved correct.

THE PREMIER: Certainly; and for that the public had to thank him (the Premier); for the people of those two districts left the route entirely to the Government, and hon. members generally were not then acquainted with the locality. The member for Menzies (Mr. Gregory) knew that a deputation from Menzies met him (the Premier) at Coolgardie and urged that the railway should not go by Kalgoorlie, but through Kuranalling, or, as it was called, "the 25."

MR. GREGORY: And the latter was at that time the better district.

THE PREMIER: But the latter proposal would not have been the wiser, nor did he think the district was even then the better or the more populous. At one time Bonnie Vale was well thought of, and would doubtless be more important in the future. Moreover, the railway

would pass the Coolgardie racecourse, though he did not advocate railways to racecourses unless they would pay.

MR. GEORGE: Except to the Bunbury racecourse.

THE PREMIER said he had not been eager about that line, but he believed it did pay. This Bonnie Vale line, however, would no doubt pay even in its racecourse traffic, for thousands of people visited those races about three or four miles from Coolgardie; and if there were nothing else but the racecourse, the railway would be remunerative. It was not for this reason alone that the line was advocated, but because it would go to Bonnie Vale, where there were mines, and where, at the time the railway was first proposed, some 1,000 people had been working. The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) would confirm the statement that these mines had not been taken up on "spec." They had been developed; they had machinery; and they would ultimately become of great importance. However, the railway should not be commenced until those mines were once more at work; in fact with the exception of surveying the line, and probably of ordering some rails, nothing would be done until the House could meet again; and the Bill for the construction of the railway would not be introduced this session, so that hon. members could, if desirable, veto its construction next year, when he hoped however to have ample evidence that the railway to Bonnie Vale and to "the 25" was fully justified. For throwing out the item at present there was no justification, considering how long ago it had been promised, how earnestly it was desired by the people around Coolgardie, and that it led to a place which must undoubtedly become a great centre.

MR. MORAN: In view of the promise given not to introduce the Bill this session, the item would not be opposed.

THE PREMIER: Very good. Something was due to Coolgardie, the pioneer goldfield town of the colony; and to refuse to expend £10,000 to assist that centre by giving facilities for its advancement, as well as for pleasure, would be an action not altogether in consonance with the spirit in which hon. members doubtless desired to act in regard to this town which had done so much for Western Australia.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Sentiment!

THE PREMIER: The expenditure was justified. Though there was a temporary depression over this centre with which it was not afflicted when first the line was advocated, still he would not bring in the special Bill for constructing the line until next session.

Item put, and a division being called for by MR. LEAKE, it was taken with the following result:—

Ayes ...	...	...	20
Noes ...	...	...	8

Majority for ... 12

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Connor	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Conolly	Mr. Illingworth
Sir John Forrest	Mr. James
Mr. A. Forrest	Mr. Leake
Mr. George	Mr. Morau
Mr. Hall	Mr. Robson
Mr. Higham	Mr. Wallace
Mr. Hubble	Mr. Wilson (Teller).
Mr. Lefroy	
Mr. Locke	
Mr. Monger	
Mr. Moorhead	
Mr. Pennefather	
Mr. Morgans	
Mr. Piesse	
Mr. Quinlan	
Mr. Rason	
Mr. Throssell	
Hon. H. W. Venn	
Mr. Doherty (Teller).	

Item thus passed.

Item, Coolgardie to Norseman railway (first instalment, construction) £60,000:

THE PREMIER said he had introduced many measures into this House, but seldom had he introduced anything on which he felt more strongly than on this line to connect Coolgardie with Norseman. He knew many objections had been raised to this line. There were political difficulties, these being perhaps the most grave; there were also difficulties raised by persons who thought railways should be built in other directions before this one; but this railway would be but the extension of the railway system of the colony 100 miles to the south of Coolgardie, in the same way as we had extended the railway system of the colony northwards from Coolgardie to Menzies. After leaving Coolgardie, this line would go through a rich auriferous belt where there were very rich mines, where water was scarce for seven or eight miles, until it reached Londonderry, past Burbanks. This country would provide a good deal of traffic, and the railway would give facilities for mining development. At Londonderry there was a tank

which would hold 3,000,000 gallons of water, and which he was glad to say was generally full of fresh water. Beyond Londonderry the line would go to Widgemooltha, 50 miles from Coolgardie, where there was another tank, well cemented, which cost £10,000 to £15,000; the capacity of this tank being 3,000,000 gallons of water, and generally full.

MR. GEORGE: Many people there?

THE PREMIER: Not many. There were formerly about 1,500, but not that number now. Twenty-five miles further there was another 3,000,000 gallon tank; then the line would go on to the Peninsula leases and to Norseman, another 25 miles. Norseman was a considerable town and a good auriferous district; the population being something like 1,600, perhaps a little more at the present time. The community at Norseman were isolated: they had two means of communication, one with Esperance 125 miles, and the other with Coolgardie 100 or 105 miles. The people obtained supplies from both these places, and they had telegraph and postal communication; still the difficulty of transit was so great he did not suppose there was any place in the colony where the people were more isolated from the rest of the population than were those at Norseman. Most of those people came from South Australia, travelling from the coast 125 miles up to the Dundas district, and settling at Norseman. Their intercourse was with Esperance and Coolgardie, except in so far as the merchants had trade relations between Norseman, Coolgardie, and Fremantle; the trade being about equal, or probably a little in favour of Coolgardie. These people were absolutely isolated from the rest of Western Australia, as if they had nothing to do with it; they knew nothing of the public life here; they had scarcely had an opportunity of meeting the public men, and were really associated more with South Australia than with Western Australia. His object was to break down that barrier and give the people an easy and cheap communication with the populous districts of the colony; for the people there had never yet had an opportunity of becoming in reality West Australians. While effecting this object by railway communication, we would be giving the people the advantage and an

opportunity of becoming West Australians, by visiting people down here, and seeing what was going on; having opportunities not only of visiting Perth and Fremantle, but also visiting their fellow-workers in Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, and Menzies. While doing this, we would also be doing good to the people of the colony, and at the same time giving an additional market for the people here. Indeed at present our traders had not more than half the market of the Norseman district, the other half having a connection with South Australia through Esperance Bay. It was only reasonable to believe that with additional facilities of transit, the population at Norseman was likely to increase, and he had no doubt the prosperity and advancement of Norseman would largely increase when better facilities for transit were given. The line would have the advantage of binding that part of the colony to this part, and making the people really feel they were not sojourners in a strange land, but part and parcel of Western Australia, which he ventured to say they did not feel at present, being so isolated. Some people said a railway from Coolgardie to Norseman, a distance of 100 miles, would be a tax on the people of Norseman, because if the line was built from Esperance, 125 miles, the people would only have to pay freight on the 125 miles of railway, whereas they would have to pay freight for 400 odd miles on goods from Fremantle. The people of Norseman would not be in any worse position than the people of Menzies, and he had not heard anyone at Menzies complain of being badly treated because they had to pay railage from Fremantle; therefore he did not see why the people of Norseman should complain either. If a railway from Norseman to Esperance were constructed, the freights might not be at the same rate as those for the existing lines of the colony: he thought they would not be, for he could not see how the Government could afford to keep up a separate railway system between Norseman and Esperance, provide workshops, provide a distinct railway system, provide distinct rolling-stock and all the paraphernalia requisite on a distinct line of railway covering only 125 miles. He did not think that railway could pay, with a small community of 1,600 or 2,000 people;

and it would be absurd to expect that the rate of charge according to mileage could be the same for that line of railway as for the whole railway system of the colony; therefore he did not think much of that argument. Be that as it might, the advantage to the people of Norseman in being directly connected with the whole railway system of Western Australia, and having opportunities of going to and fro and obtaining their supplies directly in a few hours from the port of Fremantle, certainly would be a great advantage to them; and looking at it from the point of view of the remainder of the people of the colony who were not living at Norseman, they too would have the advantage of being able to get to Norseman in a few hours and do business with the people there, and would also be able to take advantage of the investments in that locality. Whether we looked at it from the point of view of the people of Norseman or from the point of view of the people of this part of the colony, the connection of Norseman with the railway system of the colony would be of far greater advantage to us than to have a line from Esperance, which would be an isolated railway, altogether separate from the rest of the colony.

MR. GEORGE: Would it pay?

THE PREMIER: It should not be forgotten that from Coolgardie to Norseman the railway would run through an auriferous line of country. Widgeemooltha at one time had a population of 1,500, though now, with several hotels and a post-office, there were only 20 or 30 residents. But given facilities of transit and opportunities for exploration and prospecting, that country would yet prove of value; because there was plenty of gold there, and only opportunity and means of easy access were required to have the district utilised. All the way from Coolgardie to Norseman was timber country, which in itself would provide an immense amount of traffic in supplying the Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie mines. Timber would soon be worth something in that district, because it was being cut out in all directions, and this large extent of country would yet prove a valuable asset. What was the duty of the Government in this matter? Had an important centre like Norseman to be left isolated? Whether for political or any

other reasons, if Norseman were left isolated, the colony would suffer in the future. Was it fair that a large community, producing an immense amount of gold monthly, should be left absolutely isolated, and be told they would not be given railway facilities such as were enjoyed by every other part of the colony of equal importance? So far as he was able to judge, this railway to Norseman would pay, because there were, he believed, 1,600 people at Norseman now, and it was quite certain that with a railway the population would soon be doubled, and large development take place, as there always did when the advantages of transit were given. The country between Coolgardie and Norseman would be opened out; and, more than all these benefits, the line would bind the Norseman people to Western Australia, and make them indeed Western Australians, which they were not now, and which they could not be under present conditions. He was not looking at the matter from one point of view. First, he regarded the matter in the light of the interests of the people of a gold-producing centre, and the interests of the goldfields of the colony, especially of what he termed the Eastern goldfields; then he considered the interests of the agricultural centres of the Avon Valley, and of the South-Western corner; then the interests of Perth and Fremantle, and, finally, he considered the interests of the whole colony. He knew Norseman, the Eastern goldfields, the metropolitan district, and the port of Fremantle; and from his own personal knowledge, this railway was thoroughly justified. What was the opposition to the railway? He would be very glad to hear from anyone in the Committee what was the real objection to the building of this railway. No doubt, the Government would be told that they could not afford the expenditure; but on that he joined issue at once, because he believed this railway would pay the colony well. But of what value were the objections which came from the Opposition, who opposed even the best projects the Government brought forward? At any rate, if the Opposition did not oppose those projects, they never supported them. There were hon. members who, years ago, before they entered Parliament, advocated a railway from Coolgardie to Esperance.

They made a sort of fetish of the proposal, and said the only salvation of the country was to connect the town of Coolgardie with the sea-coast at Esperance. And yet those very persons, if it came to a vote, would probably oppose building the proposed line which went half way to Esperance.

MR. MORAN: This was the first section of the line?

THE PREMIER: If it were the first section, surely those in favour of the whole should be in favour of half.

MR. MORAN: Was the person in favour of the half in favour of the whole?

THE PREMIER: He need not be; but the person in favour of the whole should be in favour of the half: the other suggestion did not follow at all. The duty of Parliament was to look after every district in the colony, as far as possible, and give satisfaction to every section of the community; but doing that, we ought not to do anything that would injure the whole body. We must not, for the sake of helping one portion of the community, do injury to the whole, and he hoped no one who assisted him in the matter would do so on that ground. If the railway from Coolgardie to Norseman, though of great value to the latter place, was going to injure the whole of the community, then let no one vote for the item. If he (the Premier) was wrong, it was in that he believed the railway would not injure, but would benefit the colony as a whole. The great difficulty Western Australia laboured under in regard to federation was our isolation: all the other difficulties were nothing in comparison. We were so far away from the other colonies, with 1,060 miles of arid country between, that we were not in touch or sympathy with them; and if that were so with this colony as related to the other colonies, was it not so, in a local and lesser degree, with the Norseman people, who were doing good work and producing 4,000 or 5,000 ounces of gold per month? The isolation which the Norseman people experienced meant that they had no interest in the rest of the colony, their only idea being the advancement of Norseman itself and the countries they had come from. If hon. members could do anything to drag down this barrier, and make the Norse-



man people feel that the rest of the people of the colony had a sincere interest in them, and desired to benefit them and include them as real Western Australians, and if that could be accomplished without injuring the community generally, it would be a good work done, and a work we should not be ashamed of. Only take, for instance, any business man having relations with Norseman at the present time: could he go and see the people there? Could they visit him? Could they have a ready personal intercourse? One must say deliberately, "No." It must be all done by letter; and people doing business there under such conditions, for the next 10 years perhaps would not be able to visit one another at all. In regard to the development of the gold mines there, who was going to take any interest in Norseman, if he lived in Perth and could not get to Norseman to look at it? Was a person here to make a pilgrimage to Albany, then take ship, being on board a day or a day and a half whilst getting to Esperance, and then make a journey of 125 miles inland by a two-days coach drive?

MR. ROBSON: Was there any coach from Coolgardie?

THE PREMIER: The hon. member would be told directly. He was always interrupting, though perhaps that was the way of people at Geraldton. After a person got to Norseman, he would have a two-days journey to get to Coolgardie, and there he would reach the railway system and feel he was practically at home. But all this took time, and business now-a-days could not be conducted on such lines. Anyone desiring to do business at Norseman should be enabled to get into a railway train at 7-30, and arrive in Norseman at 2 or 3 o'clock next day. After doing business at Norseman, one could return by railway easily, after being away from Perth perhaps less than two days. By rail there would be easy means of communication, and we knew the railway rates were not very expensive. Then the people at Norseman had no means of going to see other parts of the goldfields unless they made a long pilgrimage, being away from home for weeks at a time; whereas if they were in close communication, it would be a great advantage to them and to the other goldfields, as well as for business men in

the colony. He might say with regard to this work that he had no desire to hurry it on. It took some time, even when one was in a hurry, to commence to build a railway, as we knew by experience for a survey had to be made and plans must be prepared, these requirements occupying several months. It would be almost impossible, even if the Government desired it, to have the survey made to Norseman and the contract let before this House met at the end of June in next year. We could certainly do something: we could have the survey made and plans prepared, and we could order the rails and fastenings. As far as he was personally concerned, so much was he in earnest with regard to this matter that he was not anxious that the Bill in relation to Norseman should be passed through the House this session. He would undertake, if members would support him in getting the vote on this Loan Bill, that with the exception of ordering rails and fastenings (which would be ordered out of votes for general purposes if the House would not pass a special Bill), a special Bill should not be introduced during this session; but he would introduce one next session, and everything would then be ready. The survey would be made, the rails and fastenings no doubt would be ordered, and they might be in the colony by that time for all he knew; and the Government would then at the next meeting of Parliament bring in a special Bill authorising the construction. This was not an unusual course. In the case of the Bridgetown and Collie railways, the same course was followed; and even if this course were not adopted he did not believe the work would be in hand before next session. We all knew there were many difficulties in the way in commencing any new works in this colony at the present time. The war raging in South Africa had altogether upset the money market, and the bank rate in London on the 1st of this month was 6 per cent. The cost of raising a loan by the sale of inscribed stock was altogether out of the question at the present time. It was not that we had not plenty of money to meet all obligations now, for we had a very large amount in the colony—he did not know how much, but was glad to say the Government could put their

hands on nearly £1,000,000. Still we had to be careful, and must not go into undertakings and new works until the money market was easier in London. He had no such idea in his mind, and if he had he could not do it, because the plans, specifications, and surveys were not ready. We never had in this colony commenced the construction of works until the surveys had been made and the specifications prepared; so that hon. members who thought the Government were going to rush into spending this money all at once, just because we had an authorisation under a Loan Act, must give him credit for a little more discretion than to do anything of the sort. Until the money market was easier in London, we must in this colony go slowly. But the present position of affairs was not going to last long. He did not think Mr. Kruger and his Boers would long be able to withstand the valour and intrepidity of the British army, and we might depend upon it the reaction would come very quickly after we had done with those gentlemen. He again commended this item to the consideration of hon. members, and believed they never would regret assenting to the proposal. He believed they would be doing what was just and right in the interests of Western Australia, and would be giving a great boon to an isolated people who had for some years been doing quietly and well a work of great development in this colony.

MR. HIGHAM: This Bill, so far, and the schedule had been gone through without any considerable opposition; but we had now arrived at the principal "bone of contention." Most of the other items were for the completion or perfection of works existing. Possibly the majority of hon. members recognised that the Menzies to Malcolm railway was one of the most urgent works, and that the Goomalling railway also was urgent. We had arrived at one of the most debatable points in the Bill.

MR. ROBSON: That was from a Fremantle point of view.

MR. HIGHAM: Not necessarily from a Fremantle point of view, but, looking at the time, he certainly thought hon. members might agree at this stage to report progress. He moved that progress be reported, and trusted to the generosity

of the Committee and a sense of fair-play.

Motion put and negatived.

MR. MORAN: There could be no doubt the Premier had displayed considerable ability in pushing this Loan Bill through to-night. The right hon. gentleman was never at a loss for a particular line of attack for each question. No one who heard him just now could doubt for a moment that he himself considered he was pursuing what he believed to be a proper policy in connecting Coolgardie with Norseman by this railway. Whether it was of any use now, or not, making any opposition to the proposal, members could judge for themselves.

MR. ROBSON: Absolutely futile.

MR. MORAN: All along he had been opposed to this railway. He believed it was beginning at the wrong end, for the proper policy would have been to connect Esperance and Norseman by a light line; but the Premier was starting out on a grand march, which would ultimately connect Coolgardie with Esperance and with South Australia. Every day the goldfields were gaining in strength and in parliamentary representation. The whole of the Eastern fields were practically within 120 miles of Esperance and of communication with South Australia; and the Esperance railway would be found impossible to prevent. The Premier had promised that the Bill for constructing this Norseman line would not be brought in for 12 months. Terrible things had happened to other Australian Governments during the last 12 months, and none knew what might happen here during next year. Perhaps poor old Norseman would get the promise of a line again; a survey of a line might be taken, and nothing done for another 12 months. Railway Bills were never introduced at the beginning of a session. Next session there must be another Loan Bill, to provide more money for works already authorised. Look round this Assembly to-night. Here was a proposal for a railway, to cost £400,000, and there were only a few "dead beats" lying round the benches. The Assembly resembled nothing so much as a bush ball about 7 o'clock in the morning, where the remnants of the party were hanging across fences and lying against walls. The only man with any energy left was

the Premier, who had discussed this railway proposal from the points of view of Coolgardie, Norseman, Fremantle, Perth, and Geraldton, and then could only say it was a desirable line. The Premier could not leave alone old Paul Kruger, but must use this railway proposal to have a final shot at that potentate, hoping that by the time Kruger was dead the money for this line would be forthcoming. Why? The Premier said he would be able to build the Coolgardie-Norseman line, because he knew the British army would wipe out the Boer Republic; therefore the Coolgardie-Norseman line was desirable, because Tommy Atkins was going to knock corners off Paul Kruger during the next few months. There was only one other aspect to look at this line from, and that was the Peace Conference, and we must know whether the Peace Conference at the Hague was going to be successful or not. We were authorising a line to-night which would cost £400,000. It was not a line like the Leonora railway, which was to be built through a network of mining centres, but this line was to be constructed through an ancient gold-mining town except Coolgardie, and the only landmark along the 105 miles was one tank. There was not a single mine, outside Coolgardie, between Coolgardie and Norseman.

MR. ROBSON: Red Hill.

MR. MORAN: Red Hill was not on the line. Where was the railway policy going to stop when the Premier proposed a line from Coolgardie to Norseman? What was the special object in starting this line from Coolgardie?

THE PREMIER: Because it was shorter.

MR. MORAN: It was not shorter than from the Boulder.

THE PREMIER: From Perth it was.

MR. MORAN: Would the Premier apply that argument to Geraldton and Leonora? If the Premier brought forward a measure to connect Kalgoorlie and Boulder with Norseman, he (Mr. Moran) would oppose that line also. At Kalgoorlie the Premier had established an internal depôt for the repair of rolling-stock. Kalgoorlie was the capital of the interior of Western Australia, and would be the largest town in Western Australia in a couple of years time, because Kalgoorlie and Boulder were actually one town, coming together so rapidly that it

was impossible to see the distinction. The Government had established running sheds at Kalgoorlie, and now they would have to establish running sheds at Coolgardie for the benefit of the Norseman line. There was gold on the road from Kalgoorlie to Norseman, and surely there was nothing more than that on the route from Coolgardie. If the railway were justified, the policy should be to have one running shed and one internal centre; and why start from Coolgardie?

THE PREMIER: Because it was the shorter distance by 30 miles.

MR. MORAN: There was a shorter from Bullabulling, and there was more in this item than appeared on the surface, more than the mere consideration of distance.

THE PREMIER: There was nothing else that he knew of.

MR. MORAN: The Premier knew perfectly well that Coolgardie must be given a certain amount of the "good things" going. It had been promised to Coolgardie that this line should start there, and although another line was justified, why not keep the promise to Coolgardie?

THE PREMIER: This was the right route.

MR. MORGANS: It was a shorter distance, and more direct.

MR. MORAN: It was some miles longer, in point of absolute construction. The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) knew that more gold would be tapped on one route than on the other.

MR. MORGANS: The hon. member was entirely wrong.

MR. MORAN: The country between Coolgardie and Widgemooltha was known to him (Mr. Moran) before ever the Premier knew it, and there was not a mine there to-day, or a single colour or vestige of a mine. A railway from Coolgardie to Norseman would have 100 miles of desert to traverse, and would serve Norseman and Norseman alone, which he admitted was a promising little goldfield, with permanent reefs and a good quantity of low-grade ore. The true policy of the country would have been to allow Esperance to build a narrow-gauge line by private enterprise to Norseman; and if the other goldfields had never existed, that would have been allowed. There was a political reason attached to the attitude of the Government, but he

warned them that they were going the wrong way to keep Perth and Fremantle the capital centre of the colony. He had never advocated opening up the trade with South Australia through Esperance, but the Premier and his followers were going the right way to bring that about in the future.

MR. CONNOR: What was the hon. member?

MR. MORAN: Not a blind follower, but he hoped an intelligent one who, if he saw the Government were on the wrong tack, was always able and willing to say so. The promise of the Premier not to introduce the Railway Bill until the next session took considerable ground from the opposition. The Leonora railway line was a big work, serving a big centre; but this line was a big work serving only one small centre. The glowing picture drawn by the Premier of the auriferous country between Coolgardie and Norseman was moonshine and absolute "tommyrot" of the worst kind.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member seemed to know more about the matter than he (the Premier) did.

MR. MORAN: The country had been well tried.

THE PREMIER: By whom?

MR. MORAN: Let the hon. member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) say how many men were working down there now.

MR. MORGANS: When he spoke he would tell the hon. member.

MR. MORAN: If a single mine could be found actively working on this proposed line of route between Coolgardie and Norseman, he would be delighted.

THE PREMIER: There were plenty at Norseman, anyway; and others would come.

MR. GEORGE: Was it not about time the House adjourned? He moved that progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

MR. CONOLLY: It was not his intention to speak on this matter, but after the very able speech of the Premier and the amount of debating which had taken place, he thought the Committee possessed all the information necessary with reference to the construction of this line; consequently he moved that the question be now put.

MR. GEORGE: That was too bad.

MR. MORAN: That was bad.

Motion put, and a division called for.

MR. GEORGE: Let members walk out of the House, and show their indignation that way.

THE CHAIRMAN: Was a division called for?

MR. MORAN: Certainly.

Division taken with the following result:—

Ayes ...	...	...	16
Noes ...	...	...	8

Majority for ... 8

AYES.	NORS.
Mr. Connor	Mr. George
Mr. Conolly	Mr. Leake
Mr. Ewing	Mr. Moran
Sir John Forrest	Mr. Quinlan
Mr. A. Forrest	Mr. Robson
Mr. Hall	Mr. Wallace
Mr. Hubble	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. Higham (Teller).
Mr. Locke	
Mr. Mougier	
Mr. Morgans	
Mr. Pennefather	
Mr. Piesse	
Mr. Throssell	
Hon. H. W. Venn	
Mr. Rason (Teller).	

Motion (Mr. Conolly's) thus passed.

Item put, and passed on the voices.

Item, Public batteries £30,000—agreed to.

Item, Development generally £20,000:

• MR. LEAKE: All could now realise that the Loan Bill had passed, and that what was predicted had occurred; that those hon. members so loud-voiced in their objections to some of the items in the Bill either would not vote against those items, or had taken good care to be absent from divisions.

THE PREMIER: Were no Opposition members absent?

MR. LEAKE: Yes; they had left when they saw the utter futility of opposing any items. He would make no further comments or criticisms on any other measure during this session, for he realised the hopelessness of fighting for principles when they were good. No parliamentary language could express the utter contempt he felt for the procedure on this Bill, and on many other matters which had come before the House during the session; and he was glad to think the session was at a close, and there would no longer be necessity for hon. members on either side to attempt further to criticise the acts of the Administration. The Government had thought fit, in some respects, to break their pledges.

**THE CHAIRMAN :** Was the hon. member addressing himself to the question of public batteries ?

**MR. LEAKE :** No ; to the Chair.

**MR. GEORGE :** The item under consideration was "Development generally."

**THE CHAIRMAN :** begged pardon.

**MR. LEAKE :** "Development generally." He was observing the rules of debate. As the Chairman did not seem more anxious than many other members to listen to the discussion on this or any other item, he (Mr. Leake) did not wish to say more than express a hope that the Government would be able to finish off the business on the Notice Paper in good time to enable hon. members to enjoy their Christmas holidays, and if possible to enable the Government to embark on another political career of uselessness.

**THE PREMIER :** Usefulness.

**MR. LEAKE :** No, uselessness. No one who had taken the trouble to look at the list of measures introduced could but be convinced that we had done nothing but consider measures of the veriest claptrap of legislation. Bills had been introduced without any intention of being carried through. The House had been flouted in every way, and the constituencies and electors treated in a similar manner. It was generally considered an honour to belong to a Legislative Assembly, but it was a question whether that honour obtained when a man was a member of this House. He was glad to think the right hon. gentleman would be able to have a free hand in what had to be done for the remainder of the session, and one trusted that in a few years, when the right hon. gentleman had to appeal to the electors, he would meet with——

**MR. HUBBLE :** Was the hon. member in order in speaking to the item generally ?

**MR. GEORGE :** This was a development.

**THE CHAIRMAN :** The hon. member was wandering, rather, from the subject.

**MR. LEAKE** said he would not wander much further, except to say that he hoped the hon. member who had raised the point of order would himself develop into a politician some day, for at present he had little of the qualities of a politician. One hoped the hon. member would endeavour in future to consider what was for the advantage of the country rather than for the individual.

**MR. MORAN :** If the Committee passed these items, would he be at liberty to speak to the whole amount of £750,000 afterwards ?

**THE CHAIRMAN :** Not on the items.

**MR. MORAN :** Would the amount of £750,000 be put ?

**THE CHAIRMAN :** Yes.

**MR. MORAN :** Would there be an opportunity of saying a few words without referring to the items ?

**THE CHAIRMAN :** It was a formal matter then.

**MR. MORAN :** Then he would have to say a few words on the item "Development generally." He did not care about the disgust that hon. members felt, but he must say the fair-minded and gentlemanly member who had moved that "the question be now put" must feel that he had done a wrong thing. At the end of a successful session, as far as the Government proposals were concerned, and at the end of the discussion on a Loan Bill which had gone through beyond the expectations of the Government, it was hardly the thing, on a big railway item that was debatable, to apply the "gag."

**MR. GEORGE :** It was not in accordance with the rules of Parliament.

**MR. MORAN :** That motion was doubtless in exact accordance with the rules of the House, or the Chairman, who was fairness itself, would not have put it. Such a procedure was a last resource in the British Parliament, and was appealed to only when a small and factious section persisted in using the liberties of Parliament to delay, after full opportunity for debate, a measure the country was waiting for: only then was this horrible remedy of the "gag" applied. The member who had submitted that motion was "taken on the hop," somebody having whispered in his ear; but he (Mr. Moran) was certain that neither the Government nor the Premier had anything to do with the motion, and the Committee ought to show their absolute disapproval of that action. This Loan Bill seemed to hon. members, some of whom were Government supporters, as a gigantic error; and in the face of all this, on an item the most contentious in the whole Bill, the "gag" was applied by hon. members who ought to know better, and against whom the same

means would be used in the future. No great opposition was being offered to the work proposed, and the advice given to the member for Dundas (Mr. Conolly) came from the Government side of the House. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: No, no.] The advice to the member for Dundas came from the Government side of the House, and he (Mr. Moran) could accept no denial. If the advice had come from the Opposition side, the Premier would have risen up and objected.

THE PREMIER: Nothing at all about the motion was known to him.

MR. MORAN: The Premier should not have voted for it.

MR. CONOLLY: Evidently the attitude taken up by him a moment ago had caused a little dissatisfaction, which really he could not altogether understand. So far as his recollection went, this was not the first time the motion "That the question be now put" had been submitted in the House, and that at times when there had been no such long, protracted debate as the member for East Coolgardie had mentioned; indeed, it was a matter of every-day occurrence in parliamentary procedure. For whatever had been done, he was perfectly ready to carry the responsibility on his own shoulders; because the idea of the proposition emanated from himself, and the Premier knew nothing about it. He trusted that if anything was said in reference to the attitude he had taken, that attitude would be attributed to him, and not to other persons.

MR. MORAN: When the hon. member rose to a point of order, he (Mr. Moran) was speaking. The hon. member need not have risen to tell him that the Premier had nothing to do with this; but he (Mr. Moran) was sorry the suggestion came from the Government side of the House. The hon. member who had just resumed his seat said that what had happened was of common occurrence; but such was not the case, even in the British Parliament. If he searched the records of the British House of Commons from *alpha* to *omega*, he would find that such a thing had never been done in regard to a question of public works. It had been done in party politics, when a section was fighting and blocking the business, and the whole nation thought it necessary to interfere; but never in cases of this kind.

THE PREMIER: It was done by Mr. Balfour the other day, in the middle of a speech.

MR. MORAN: Certainly, but not on a question of public works.

THE PREMIER: It was in relation to the £10,000,000 vote.

MR. MORAN: Was not the honour of the whole nation at stake at the time, and was it not necessary that it should be done by the powers in authority? He repeated that there was no justification for adopting that course in this House to-night, and it was with the greatest regret he saw it done. Nothing but the great ardour which the member who represented Dundas and Norseman had always shown for a railway for his constituency, having it from one end or the other, could have led him to do a thing like this. The hon. member had had a hard battle to fight, and he had done it hoping, even at the expense of a little odium to himself, to benefit his constituents. Therefore one felt inclined to excuse him on the present occasion; but one hoped this would not become a precedent. He regretted this vote had been taken, and the future would show he was right in his view that the country ought not to have gone into this work and this borrowing, and that the Government on this occasion had been wrong. Nevertheless, now the Loan Bill was over, it was his duty as a loyal supporter of the Government to help them in every possible way to carry on the business of the country. Whether he would find it convenient to do so from the Government side of the House or another must be left to himself to judge.

MR. GEORGE: We had been discussing developments generally. There had been a pretty fair latitude shown to hon. members, and he asked to have the same accorded to him. He was very inexperienced in the rules of the House, but it seemed to him that the last vote was given against the rules. He did not wish to reflect on the conduct of the Chairman in the matter, but he found it was necessary that a motion of this sort should be proposed and seconded. The question was not seconded at all: it was simply proposed.

THE CHAIRMAN: In Committee, motions need not be seconded.

MR. GEORGE: Rule 160 covered this case. He had asked the Clerk of the

House, and understood from him that it was the rule. He (Mr. George) would like to know if he was correct in thinking the vote was wrong.

THE CHAIRMAN: A seconder was never required in Committee.

MR. MORAN: Not under Rule 160?

THE CHAIRMAN: That was his ruling: he might be wrong.

MR. GEORGE asked for the ruling of the Speaker.

#### SPEAKER'S RULING.

THE SPEAKER (having resumed the Chair, and the point of order being stated) said:—There is no necessity, when the House is in Committee, for any question to be seconded.

#### IN COMMITTEE.

MR. GEORGE (referring to the item): What was the meaning of "development generally"? Did it mean development of common sense and courtesy in Government supporters?

MR. WOOD moved that progress be reported.

Put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11:45 o'clock until the next day.

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 5th December, 1899.*

Papers presented—Question: Supreme Court, New Building—Registration of Firms Act Amendment Bill, third reading—Mines Regulation Amendment Bill, second reading—Fisheries Bill, in Committee (resumed), recommittal, reported—Federation and the Commonwealth Draft Bill, order postponed—Companies Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Seats for Shop Assistants Bill, first reading—Adjournment.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: 1, Annual Report of Public Library; 2, Plans (building) of proposed Supreme Court-house.

Ordered to lie on the table.

#### QUESTION—SUPREME COURT, NEW BUILDING.

HON. A. P. MATHESON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Whether he had any objection to laying on the table of the House, for the information of members, the plans of the proposed new Supreme Court. 2, Whether any decision had been come to as to the site of the new Supreme Court; and, if so, what site had been selected.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied:—1, There is no objection. The plans are now on the table. 2, A motion was to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly, that a committee of both Houses be appointed to assist the Government in deciding upon the most suitable site. That proposal will come down to us in due course.

#### REGISTRATION OF FIRMS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time, on motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, and *passed*.

#### MINES REGULATION AMENDMENT BILL.

#### SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell): In moving the second reading of this Bill, I am placed at some disadvantage, as I have had the