

it would enable the Minister to bring in a few fresh clauses showing the reservations which would be granted in a lease. Hon. members could not expect the lease to be recited in the Bill, but the reservations might be given. He moved that progress be reported.

Motion put and passed.

Progress reported and leave given to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 21 minutes past 10 until the next Monday evening.

## Legislative Assembly.

Monday, 20th November, 1899.

Paper presented—Question: Lennonville Public Battery—Question: Police Department, Inquiry—Question: Payment of Members, Referendum; point of order—Annual Estimates, Railway Department, Commissioner's annual Statement; debate, progress—Land Act Amendment Bill, in Committee, Clauses 1 to new clause, progress—Cemeteries Bill, second reading, Committee, reported—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 7-30 o'clock, p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### PAPER PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Return under Section 60 of the Insurance Companies Act.  
Ordered to lie on the table.

#### QUESTION—LENNONVILLE PUBLIC BATTERY.

MR. VOSPER asked the Minister of Mines:—1, Whether it was true that the manager of the Lennonville Public Battery had refused certain persons employment, on the ground that they were members of a trade union; 2, If so, whether the manager had authority to do

so; 3, If not whether the Minister would prevent such refusals recurring.

THE MINISTER OF MINES replied: 1, The manager reports that it is not true; 2, Not being true, there is no reply to give to this question; 3, No refusal having been made, there are none to recur, but managers have instructions to obtain the most suitable employees, irrespective of any particular class.

#### QUESTION—POLICE DEPARTMENT, INQUIRY.

MR. VOSPER asked the Premier: When is it intended to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the Police Department, as recommended by a resolution of this House?

THE PREMIER replied:—It is intended to do so shortly.

#### QUESTION—PAYMENT OF MEMBERS, REFERENDUM.

MR. VOSPER asked the Premier: 1, Whether it would be necessary, for the purpose of enabling a referendum to be taken on the question of payment of members, to introduce special legislation; 2, If so, whether the Government intended to introduce such legislation this session; 3, On what date it might be expected that the promised referendum would be taken.

THE PREMIER replied:—1, The Government do not consider it necessary to introduce any legislation, nor was it ever intended to do so; 2 and 3 answered by No. 1.

#### POINT OF ORDER.

MR. VOSPER: Should I be in order in moving the adjournment of the House, before the Orders of the Day are taken?

THE SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. member would be in order in doing it.

MR. VOSPER: I thought a member had the right to move the adjournment of the House, to call attention to a matter of urgency.

THE SPEAKER: Yes; but whether a matter is one of urgency is for the Speaker to decide; and I do not think that the fact of the hon. member not having received a satisfactory answer to his question is a matter of sufficient importance for him to move the adjournment of the House.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

## IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Consideration resumed from 17th November, at page 39, postponed votes.

RAILWAY DEPARTMENT (Commissioner, Hon. F. H. Piessé).

Vote, *Railways and Tramways*, £810,800:

## ANNUAL STATEMENT.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: It is not my intention to-night to deal at great length with those railway matters which I consider should be laid before this House. Hon. members have had before them the annual report upon the working of the railways, by the perusal of which much information has doubtless been afforded to them; therefore it is hardly necessary for me to deal as fully on this occasion with matters connected with the railways as is usually the case; and in fact I may say that, even if I were inclined to do so, I do not feel altogether capable (having been unwell) of so fully going into the subject as I have done on previous occasions. I may say that during the year the total mileage of railways open was 1,355, an increase of 363 miles over the mileage of the preceding year. The total amount expended in the construction and equipment of railways to the end of June, 1898, was £6,425,370, and during the past year that amount has been added to by £1,380,109; therefore it will be evident that a large proportion of our loan expenditure has been incurred in connection with the construction and equipment of railways. There is one feature that I would like to point out in regard to the cost per mile of the railways, that during the past year the average cost of construction has been reduced by £345 per mile. In 1898 the cost per mile open was £5,088, and in 1899 the cost per mile was £4,743. This, no doubt, is accounted for by our taking over the Mullewa to Cue line of 190 miles, also taking over the Kalgoorlie to Menzies railway; both lines having been constructed at a very low cost, thus reducing the average cost per mile for construction. The result of the working of railways for the year has been on the whole most satisfactory. Although last year I anticipated receiving a revenue of £1,220,000, I regret we did not receive this amount

by a considerable sum. At the time that estimate was prepared, in the early part of the last financial year, we were under the impression that we should continue to receive the same amount of revenue as we had received during the past year, or nearly the same amount, with some addition for the new lines which we were taking over: the lines from Mullewa to Cue and Kalgoorlie to Menzies, also the other railways taken over in the southern portion of the colony. But, as shown afterwards, our estimate was not realised, probably in consequence of the depression which began to be felt about that time, and no doubt during which time the railways suffered. Notwithstanding this fact, immediately we found the railway revenue falling we commenced to reduce expenditure, and on reference to our table of results it will be found we have been fairly successful. The gross revenue for the year amounted to £1,004,620, or a decrease on the preceding year of £15,057; and the working expenses amounted to £712,239, or £73,989 less than the preceding year. Therefore I think we may fairly congratulate ourselves on reducing the expenditure so considerably, without materially interfering with the working of the railways. The net profit in 1899 amounted to £292,291, after paying working expenses, being an increase on the net profit of the year preceding of £58,932; so that the net result this year, after all, is much more satisfactory than in the preceding year by 25·25 per cent. more than the net profit in the preceding year. Our working expenses during the year 1898 were very high, amounting to 77·11 per cent.; and during the year just passed we reduced this by 6·20 per cent., bringing the working expenses down to 70·91 per cent. Taking into consideration all the circumstances, these figures show we have brought about a satisfactory result. In regard to our revenue, the earnings in 1898 per mile of lines open were £1,047; in 1899 the earnings decreased to £791 per mile, a decrease of £256; but against this we show an improvement in the working expenses, which in 1898 amounted to £807 and in 1899 to only £561, or a decrease in expenses per mile of £246, thus showing the result of our efforts in regard to keeping down expenditure. The earn-

ings per train mile in 1898 were 67·72 pence, and for 1899 70·01 pence, or an increase of 6·29 pence per mile run. The working expenses per train mile in 1898 were 52·22 pence, and in 1899 52·48 pence, or a small increase of 0·26 pence per mile run. The net return, however, for the year shows a great improvement, for in 1898 the net return per train mile was 15·50 pence, and in 1899 21·53 pence, an improvement of 6·03 pence. During the year there has not been a great increase in the number of passengers carried: in 1898 we carried 5,669,444 passengers, and in 1899 the number was 5,872,200, an increase of 202,756. There was a decrease in the tonnage of goods carried: in 1898 we carried 1,187,781 tons, and in 1899 we carried 1,132,246 tons, or a decrease of 55,535 tons. There was also a slight decrease in the live stock tonnage of 124 tons. Then, too, notwithstanding the larger mileage, we had a decrease in train mileage which resulted in saving as much as 356,003 miles. By reference to the annual report, it will be found that is how we account for having made a saving, in cutting down the train mileage and as far as possible lessening the train service without affecting the convenience of the public. During the year our stock of locomotives has increased from 186 to 231, an increase of 45; the stock of passenger carriages has increased from 289 to 433; and there has been an increase in the goods stock from 4,478 to 4,558, an increase of 80. We still continue to maintain the position we have always maintained in regard to percentage of net revenue to capital cost: we continue to hold the premier position in Australia in regard to the cost as compared with the cost in the Eastern colonies. Although we have not had the great business lately we had a few years ago, still our cost was only 11·10 per cent., and thus we maintained the position we held last year in realising a percentage of net revenue to capital of 4·55 per cent. The next colony to ourselves in this respect is New South Wales with 3·83, and the lowest is Tasmania with 1·03. As I just now pointed out, the reduction of 6·20 in the percentage of working expenses was due to the percentage of train mileage being curtailed. The curtailment of the train mileage was a great difficulty we had to undertake;

for, as hon. members well know, it is difficult in railway management to reduce the train mileage without interfering with the working of the traffic and the convenience of the public; yet I am glad to say, notwithstanding this, we have succeeded in doing so, and so far we have been able to carry on the business of the colony satisfactorily during the year. As I have mentioned, we carried 1,132,246 tons of merchandise, for which we received £559,090, which comes to only ten shillings and one half-penny per ton. I would like also to point out to hon. members that a large percentage of this traffic is hauled a considerable distance, something over 350 miles; and a very large proportion of it, 73·93 per cent. of the whole traffic of the colony, comprised coal, coke, ores, and other minerals, firewood and timber locally grown, all these articles being carried at very low rates indeed; therefore hon. members can quite understand how the railways have not earned a larger amount than ten shillings per ton. I would just like to mention, while dealing with the subject, that hon. members and the public generally I may say have pressed the Government, from time to time, for a reduction of the railway rates; but when it is borne in mind that with the existing rates we are only just able to pay our way and have a little to hand over to the revenue of the country, hon. members will see that to press for further reduction really means asking us to carry on the working of the railways at a loss. When we take into consideration that on our lines, out of 1,132,246 tons conveyed, 352,787 tons were minerals, and that minerals are carried at a very low rate, the lowest rate in Australia, it can be quite understood how it is impossible, without prejudicing the success of the railways, to further reduce the rate in this direction. During the year we have continued to increase our safety appliances and to further improve the railways by adding to them from time to time, wherever it was considered necessary, those appliances which tend so much to make the railways safe in working.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Out of revenue?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Out of loan, principally. During the past two years we have had freedom from accident and from difficulty in regard to the working of lines, which

we did not experience previously. The advantages we have gained by the introduction of safety appliances have well repaid us; and the expenditure has not been considerable, after all, something under £80,000 altogether. Therefore I consider the money spent in this direction was well spent. We have had an instance before us recently of an accident in New Zealand, which has cost that Government up to the present time £27,000, which might have been obviated had precautions been provided by the ordinary signals which we have at almost every station in this colony. In New Zealand they had not provided these signals; the result being that a collision occurred, with loss of life, and the Government of New Zealand have been landed in a considerable expenditure which now reaches nearly £30,000. This amount would have gone a good way towards obtaining the necessary safety appliances by providing signals, which are the first means that should be taken, and which would have obviated such an accident. I think all must see that since the introduction of these appliances here, we have derived much benefit from them. The drivers and others who use the railways, and who have used them since the carrying out of this work, speak most highly of the system which has been introduced, and which adds to the safe working of the lines. During the past year we have introduced the electric light into railway carriages, and I intend to further improve the lighting by introducing the electric light throughout the whole of the system, as soon as funds are available. Those who have had an opportunity of seeing the lights in our railway carriages will agree that they are much superior to those used in the past, and equal if not superior to the gas-lights used on railways in the Eastern colonies. We have further improved our station-yards by completing the electric light system at Fremantle and Perth. At Fremantle the number of lights has been increased on the wharves, and this has added to the facility of working and the comfort of those engaged there. With regard to the Great Southern Railway, there has been a decided improvement in the working. In the year ended 1898 we made a considerable loss; and we found it necessary to reduce the train mileage, with the

result that this year we have paid all working expenses, and are carrying forward an amount of £4,237 towards the payment of interest. The total staff employed on the railways on the 30th June, 1898, numbered 5,214, which on the 30th June, 1899, was reduced to 4,814, or a decrease of 310; so that it will be seen we have endeavoured to employ no more labour than is absolutely necessary, while carrying out the work satisfactorily. At the same time I would like to point out that with the present increasing traffic, we will find it absolutely necessary to again increase the staff in order to keep pace with the times. I regret to say that at the Fremantle jetty during the year ended 30th June last, as compared with the previous year, there was a decrease in the tonnage of 65,884 tons; but for the last quarter ending 1899 there was an increase of 29,794 tons as compared with the corresponding quarter of 1898; so that we are now again on the up-grade. Our rolling-stock is giving us much anxiety at the present time. When the question of rolling-stock was brought before the House last year, it was then said we were ordering more than we were likely to be able to use, and many persons twitted us with having looked ahead too far. But, as a fact, we have not looked ahead far enough, and during the past three or four months we have found great difficulty in meeting requirements, the stock during last month having proved insufficient. The General Manager has informed me that he has only about 80 per cent. of stock to meet the orders now coming in; and we have to use every despatch, and economise in every possible way, in order to run our trains with expedition and to cope with the shortage in rolling-stock. It is hoped, however, that we shall be able to keep the traffic going until we receive the new stock which has been ordered. Some few months ago we ordered 300 bogie wagons, which are expected to arrive by the end of April, and it is intended to put them together as quickly as possible; the timber for the construction of the wagons now being prepared here, in order to be ready immediately the iron-work arrives. We will find it necessary to further increase the stock, and the Government are quite ready to do all that is possible,

because if we are to carry on the railways satisfactorily we must immediately make provision to cope with the large traffic. The traffic is increasing very rapidly, last month being the busiest we have had in this respect; and that seems to me to point to the fact that the increase will continue. We have already prepared an indent which will go forward in the course of a few days, for 10 small cattle wagons, 25 small sheep vans, 50 four-wheel louvered vans, 12 four-wheel horse boxes, 12 four-wheel meat vans, 10 passenger brake vans, 15 goods brake vans (with two second-class compartments), 20 portable powder magazines, 100 four-wheel hopper coal trucks (for locomotive coal), 250 bogie high-side wagons, 500 four-wheel high-side wagons, 75 new engines, and 300 bogies (recently ordered). The 75 locomotives will cost £200,000; and including the 300 bogies recently ordered at a cost of £75,000, the total amount which it will be necessary to provide during the next two years for rolling stock is thus brought up to £451,550. We are losing no time in sending forward this indent, and it will be seen the Government are ready to meet the emergency by providing stock as soon as it can be obtained from England.

MR. MORAN: Is this £450,000 out of loan money?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Yes. Provision will have to be made for this money. In the Loan Bill, £195,000 is provided as a first instalment, and the Treasurer will no doubt tell hon. members what the Government intend to do in regard to ordering the later stock; but I may now point out that it will cost between £450,000 and £500,000 to provide the necessary vehicles for our railways during the next two years. During the period which must elapse between the present time and that when the stock will come to hand, we shall find great difficulty in dealing with the traffic; and I must ask the public to be as forbearing as possible, and help us in every way they can by expeditiously unloading goods, while I promise that the department will, on their part, do their best to minimise the inconvenience which no doubt must be suffered in consequence of the shortage. Everyone connected with the rail-

ways is eager to do his best to meet the requirements of the public, and no effort will be spared to endeavour to provide every possible means of transit and bring about a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. In regard to new works and improvements, it has been found necessary in consequence of the great increase in traffic on the goldfields, to make further provision in connection with the remodelling of the Kalgoorlie station-yard, and it will also be found necessary to duplicate a portion of the railway line between Kalgoorlie and Kamballie. These works should be carried out almost at once, if we are to deal in anything like an expeditious and economical manner with the working of the railways; and in a few days, when the Loan Bill is placed before the House, there should be no difficulty whatever in regard to the items there provided in this connection. The Kalgoorlie Yard improvement will be provided for out of the vote for "Additions and improvements," as will also the relaying of the line to which I have alluded, it being customary to carry out works of this character from that vote. We are also proceeding with the relaying of about 50 miles of the Yilgarn line. Hon. members will recollect that when the rails were taken up from the Eastern Railway some three or four years ago, they were placed down on the section of the line from Northam towards Yilgarn; but in consequence of the heavy traffic, it was found absolutely necessary to take up the whole of these rails and relay the track with 60lb. rails, and I am glad to be able to say that nearly the whole of this work, over 100 miles, has been completed.

MR. MORAN: Are you going to relay the whole of the line?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: It is proposed to do that in time, but at the present we are not able to do more than relay that portion which had previously been relaid with old rails. There is no doubt as to the necessity for relaying the whole of this line, because it must be done if we are to carry on the traffic in a satisfactory manner.

MR. MORAN: What is the weight of the new rails?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: They are 60lb. rails, and it will

be necessary to lay 190 miles in addition to the portion we have already provided for, so that a large expenditure will be necessary in this direction in the near future.

MR. MORAN: Fifty miles have been relaid already?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: No; 100 miles. Though it may not be news to hon. members, I would like to mention that local coal almost exclusively is being used on the railways, and also at Fremantle in connection with the dredges, and the officer in charge of the latter informs me that he asks for no better fuel. As to the water supply during the past year, we have not been in such straits as we were in the preceding year, excepting that at one period we had only nine days' supply available, but fortunately rain came on, and assisted us materially. We find ourselves fairly well supplied with water between Northam and Southern Cross, but beyond Southern Cross we still may have difficulty.

MR. MORAN: What will be done next year in case of difficulty?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: We would immediately construct large condensing plants at Coolgardie, at Kalgoorlie, and at other points where we could get water, costing something like £25,000. That is the only way in which I see the difficulty could be met.

MR. MORAN: There would still be long cartage between Kalgoorlie and Northam.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: No; because we could rail from Northam to Kalgoorlie cheaper than we could condense, and after that we could condense at places where we could not rail. Our stock, otherwise, would be used entirely in carrying water when it could be better utilised in carrying goods; therefore it would be cheaper to adopt the course I propose, and erect condensers if necessary.

MR. MORAN: That £25,000 would be a capital outlay, and there would still be a big expenditure for hauling water.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: No; because the distance would only be about 25 or 30 miles. Hon. members will see the difficulty is one which we shall always have to face

until we get the goldfields water scheme in operation. Even to-day we are not free from anxiety, but I am glad to say we are not feeling the pinch we felt some 15 months ago, when it was necessary to haul the whole of the water from Northam. I hardly think it necessary for me to deal further to-night with the water question. I would ask members to relieve me from giving any further speech upon the matter, as I am not altogether prepared at present to take it up; but I shall be ready, during the discussion on these estimates, to answer any questions which may be submitted to me. Probably I shall then be able to give some answer to questions such as have already been put by the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran). I think there are many important matters in connection with the railways which may crop up, but I may say that on the whole the system to-day is working satisfactorily, and the whole of the staff are doing their best to meet the demands made upon them. From the General Manager downwards, everyone is doing his best to discharge his duty loyally, and to help forward this great undertaking; because, after all, I think we must all admit there is no more important question in connection with this colony than that of our railways. The work of development carried out in consequence of the construction of railways means so much to this country, and we are to-day doing our utmost to try to meet the demands upon us. We will still continue, or endeavour to continue, to meet those demands. I think we shall be able to keep everything going satisfactorily until the arrival of the new rolling-stock, and we are doing our best to urge that forward. As I have pointed out, the work is now in hand, and some portion of the stock will be delivered early in January on board ship for despatch to the colony. In regard to the other stock which has been ordered, we will also push that forward, and I hope we shall be able to receive sufficient of it in time to help us to cope with the great business which is now coming to our railways. Before sitting down I would like to say that during the last three months we have had an average income of £107,000 per month; therefore, when I place my estimate at £1,160,000 for this year, I think I am well within the

mark. It is probable we shall receive the amount I expected we should receive last year, £1,220,000, and possibly more; but I do not think it will be less. At the same time it is well perhaps not to be over sanguine, and therefore I have taken the course this year of estimating my revenue at £1,160,000, and the expenditure at £810,800, from which we may deduct £22,617 as being provided for additions and improvements to opened lines, leaving a balance of £788,193, which may be put down as the working expenses, this giving 67 per cent. of the revenue as the working expenses of the railways. I think that if we receive a revenue of over £1,200,000 we shall probably reduce this expenditure of 67 per cent. to 63 or 64 per cent.; but that I am not confident about yet, and therefore I shall be satisfied with basing the expenditure for the railways at 67 per cent. for the coming year, although, as I say, I hope we shall be able to reduce it. My greatest effort, and I know I shall be supported by the officers of my department, will be to endeavour to reduce the expenses. Before resuming my seat I would like to say the best thanks of the country are due to the officers of the department; for, after all, notwithstanding the fact that I, as Ministerial head, take great interest in the working of the railways, and do my best, from a political standpoint, to further their interests, yet a great deal depends on those who have the working control of the railways, and I think they, so far, have done their best to merit the thanks of the country for the work they have done.

#### DEBATE ON RAILWAY ESTIMATES.

**MR. MORAN** (East Coolgardie): The Commissioner of Railways had just risen from a sick bed, and was not fully equal to the strain which a discussion of the Estimates would be upon him. He (Mr. Moran) wanted a lot of information. Taking into consideration that not only were we burdened with a tremendous amount of traffic on our railways, but were faced with the building of additional new lines, it would be fair to adjourn the debate to give the Minister an opportunity of affording the full amount of information he would be able to supply. In speaking first, he (Mr. Moran) was sorry if he interfered with the leader of the

Opposition (Mr. Leake), the only reason being that as a Government supporter he would like to help the Minister.

**THE PREMIER:** The Minister was prepared to go on.

**MR. MORAN:** The Commissioner of Railways had said that later on, when he felt better, he would probably be able to give all the information asked for.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** No. To-night he would be ready to answer questions.

**MR. MORAN:** The Minister would be much more able to do so to-morrow.

**THE PREMIER:** Time was running along.

**MR. MORAN:** There would be a long tail to chop off this session, and a big axe would be required. He was simply doing this as a matter of kindness to the Minister. After all, this railway question was ten times more important than all the other business. He moved that progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

**MR. LEAKE** (Albany): If the Minister wished for an adjournment of the debate, he (Mr. Leake) would be only too glad to assist him; but the hon. gentleman did not desire it.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** It was not his desire to offer any opposition to adjournment; but as the Estimates had been before the House so long, and as the matters referred to by one member could be just as well discussed on the Loan Bill, it would be better to proceed with these estimates now.

**MR. MORAN:** There was no feeling on his part in the matter, except that we had reached a time when our railways were carrying about as much as they were able to bear. It was impossible to pile on the Commissioner the onerous duties of having to carry on the enormous and increasing railway traffic of this country, and also hand over to him a new loan policy involving the carrying of rails and fastenings for five more railways. The railways were not in as satisfactory a position as the Minister himself would desire. Traffic was considerably congested, especially so far as the Eastern railway was concerned. That line was bearing its full share of traffic in two ways; for the road itself was not capable of carrying more traffic, and the

rolling-stock in use was not sufficient to carry the ordinary traffic from one week to another. The rolling-stock must be in a bad state, seeing we had just been told that in the next two years we should require half a million of expenditure to replace the stock.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS :** Not "replace" it, but increase it.

**MR. MORAN :** It was impossible to add to the present traffic, if it required half-a-million of new loan money to provide for extra traffic. Our hauling power was not equal to the occasion. It would ill become him to weary the House with details of small matters of traffic whereby the public of his constituency were inconvenienced. He had been sufficiently long in the House to always adopt the course of seeing whether it was of use bringing abuses before the House or the Government, and if the Government deserved blame, none were more ready than he to blame them. But he did not care how great a grievance might be, or how wide the discontent: if the Minister and his servants were unable to remedy things through want of material, he was not going to heap odium on their heads for the sake of popularity. In a place where there were 40,000 people, he supposed, and all were consumers and getting stuff up in such large quantities, there was great dissatisfaction with the railway service. The men were worked to death. There was no accommodation in the railway yards. The duplication of the piece of railway line between Kalgoorlie and the Boulder should have been done out of revenue. One month's revenue would do it.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS :** The department would be able to cope with the increased traffic.

**MR. MORAN :** Railway work and harbour work had been paid for out of revenue, and surely they were new works. Where work was so urgent as that to which he referred, there ought to be some way of dealing with it apart from a loan policy.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS :** It had become urgent only in the last two-and-a-half months.

**MR. MORAN :** The Minister would not be contradicted by him, but most

members of the House had been on that railway.

**MR. MOORHEAD :** It was only a couple of months since the increased traffic had sprung up.

**MR. MORAN :** That was scarcely correct. The population of the Boulder two years ago was considerable.

**MR. MOORHEAD :** Land could be bought cheaply two years ago.

**MR. MORAN :** It was a matter for regret that the hon. member did not seize the opportunity. The hon. member had not been there lately.

**MR. MOORHEAD :** During the Ivanhoe Venture affair he was there, so he had been there lately.

**MR. MORAN :** The hon. member was there on matters of far less importance than this. No hon. member who knew anything about the subject would deny the truth of what he was saying. Of course members who did not understand the question were at liberty to doubt, but he would ask any hon. member who had been on that line lately and knew anything about it, to say whether there was any other part of Australia in which the same state of affairs had existed. Such a state of things had never previously existed. The traffic there had been awfully congested, and trains had been carrying sometimes half the traffic without payment, for people had been hanging on to "cow-catchers" and buffers and so on, and about once a week a person was cut up for sausages. He was not blaming the department.

**THE PREMIER :** There was not one person a week killed.

**MR. MORAN :** Not one a week?

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS :** Not one a month.

**MR. MORAN :** Those who died with a broken heart would be one a day, and he was including only those cut up without a moment's notice. He was not blaming the department in this respect. He believed the traffic was so great that it overtook the department and left them far behind. There was no question about the increase being so gigantic and enormous, but the startling fact was that we were told by the railway authorities themselves that the traffic on that line—he was speaking of the Yilgarn line, the main artery, the one single line of railway between here and the goldfields—was



increasing, and that the local traffic to the Boulder, Kalgoorlie, and so on would be doubled. For want of rolling-stock the department was now unable to compete with the traffic. That traffic would continue to increase and would double itself; yet we were told that no new rolling-stock could be obtained before next January, and that the whole of the rolling-stock necessary for present requirements could not be obtained for two years, and then at a cost of half a million of money. What a dreadful calamity a dry summer would mean to the department!

**THE PREMIER:** It was useless to creak like that. A good many years had gone by without a dry summer.

**MR. DOHERTY:** It was never dry at Kalgoorlie.

**MR. MORAN** said he asked for toleration in this debate, as he was in deadly earnest. He knew as much as the Premier or the Commissioner of the dangers of a dry season to that line. Had not the Commissioner himself said that before the last rains there had been only nine days' water supply? and on a previous occasion it cost the country £50,000 to keep the traffic open in respect to water haulage alone on the Yilgarn line, when the traffic was not half so great as at present. At present there was three or four months' supply of water, with a hot summer ahead. Hitherto the department had been assisted by Providence; but must we always tempt Providence by leaving the whole traffic of the Eastern goldfields at the mercy of a dry summer?

**THE PREMIER:** We knew that all along.

**MR. MORAN:** But the lesson had not been sufficiently driven home.

**MR. DOHERTY:** The water from Mundingaring would be there presently.

**MR. MORAN:** Until that supply arrived, do not heap burdens upon the department.

**THE PREMIER:** There could be no remedy till the railway had been extended to tap the Niagara supply.

**MR. MORAN:** Before the Leonora line could be completed with that object, or the rails and fastenings landed on the site of it, 18 months must elapse. If the Government were authorised to start the Leonora line now, then, according to the Engineer-in-Chief, the Coolgardie water-scheme would be completed and into Balla Balla before the Leonora line was

opened; yet the Premier talked of building the Leonora line to furnish a water supply at the very time when the Mundingaring supply would have reached Balla Balla.

**THE PREMIER:** Balla Balla was 80 miles from Kalgoorlie.

**MR. MORAN:** It was only 40 miles from Balla Balla to Kalgoorlie.

**THE PREMIER:** And 110 to Niagara.

**MR. MORAN:** There was no necessity to go to Niagara. The Leonora line was not yet required. Do not think that by authorising the construction of the Leonora railway the water difficulty would be overcome. At the opening of Mr. Hosking's pipe factory, the Engineer-in-Chief had said that in September twelve months he would have the Coolgardie water scheme completed.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Did the hon. member believe that?

**MR. MORAN:** Yes. The Engineer-in-Chief told the truth as near as he could guess it, and no higher authority could be quoted. That officer said the water would be at Balla Balla in September twelve months. Then at what time would the water reach Southern Cross? It ought to be there by Christmas twelve months; therefore as time went on the water difficulty would gradually disappear; but by starting now with the Leonora line, that difficulty would in no way be overcome.

**MR. DOHERTY:** But the line would help the people in the district which it tapped.

**MR. MORAN:** Leonora required no help: she had her batteries and her gold.

**THE PREMIER:** Few of the people possessed those luxuries.

**MR. MORAN:** There was no urgency for the Leonora line.

**MR. MORGANS:** What?

**MR. MORAN:** The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) should not misunderstand him. It was ten times more urgent that the ordinary business of the country should not be paralysed for the next two years in order to build a railway line twelve months before it was required: all the rails for the Leonora line could not be procured in less than eighteen months.

**THE PREMIER:** What had this to do with the Estimates? This speech would be appropriate on the Loan Bill.

MR. MORAN said he was dealing with the Commissioner's assertion that half a million pounds' worth of rolling-stock was required.

THE PREMIER: That would be a capital argument on the Loan Bill.

MR. MORAN said he thought it well to let his intentions on such matters be known. He had no wish to take the Premier by surprise. The traffic department was at present badly congested; it would require all the help and energy of the Commissioner, who worked day and night, and of the railway officers, to conduct the ordinary business of the department; and no new railway line should at present be undertaken.

THE PREMIER: Not even the Boulder line?

MR. MORAN: No. He could not be caught voting for a Loan Bill for the sake of benefiting his constituency: on the contrary, for that very reason he would probably vote against it. He took a wider view of the question. The 40,000 people in his constituency and neighbourhood would not thank him if their food supplies, their traffic, and their trade got into the hideous confusion which once obtained, for the sake of building a loop-line to a little hill in the black-blocks.

THE PREMIER: Was the hon. member the representative of Kalgoorlie?

MR. MORAN: Yes; he was the member for somewhere, and had the right of speech in the House. His being here might be unfortunate for his constituency; nevertheless, being here, he would remain.

A MEMBER: Till the next election.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said the hon. member was saving him the trouble of making a similar speech.

MR. MORAN: None could instance a new railway urgently required in this colony at the present time.

A MEMBER: Goomalling.

MR. KINGSMILL: Marble Bar.

MR. MORAN: The Leonora line seemed justifiable because it would tap good country; but it should not be built at the expense of piling up extra traffic on an already over-burdened railway system. The arguments for the line were twofold: first, people wanted it; second, it would remove the water difficulty. The second contention was a myth, for no help could thus be given for 18 months; and the next 18 months

would be a crucial time in goldfields history, whether the Coolgardie water scheme were or were not successful. The Commissioner had said the difficulty might be overcome by expending £25,000 for a condensing plant; but he (Mr. Moran) maintained that another £25,000 must be spent on hauling the water to and fro. Even were the water at Kalgoorlie it must be hauled to Northam. In present circumstances the producer was unable to send his goods to the consumer.

MR. DOHERTY: Things were not so bad as that.

MR. MORAN: That was the opinion of responsible men representing the Eastern districts. For this the Railway Department was not to blame, for they were unable to do the work; but he blamed the Government for trying to heap confusion on confusion by endeavouring to build railways through new country. The producer in the South-East was indignant because unable to benefit by the great market on the Eastern goldfields, owing to the congested railway traffic; therefore the protection afforded by the tariff to such producers was useless. We heard daily complaints of want of trucks. One only required to live at Kalgoorlie for a day or so to know what the consumers thought of the railway service. One ordered goods: but when did these arrive? Though a Government supporter, he must state there was the greatest confusion in the Kalgoorlie and Boulder railway yards because sufficient trucks were not obtainable: goods did not come to hand in good order or in time. The department had a good and energetic Minister; and the duty of the House was to give him a chance of putting his traffic in good condition. To do so hon. members must forbid the Government to heap on that department any more extra work in the way of carting material for the construction of new railways. How many thousand tons of pipes would be conveyed over the goldfields line in the construction of the Coolgardie water scheme?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Seventy-six thousand. That work would be managed all right.

MR. MORAN: That did not include the rings and fastenings, the cement, the workmen, their food and their tools, nor the pumping machinery. One might safely

say that 90,000 tons would have to be carried over the Eastern railway for that water scheme between now and next September twelve months; and we were told that after that period the traffic would double itself. Would any man say that the whole of this vast traffic could be carried successfully with all these additional burdens upon the department? Yet the Minister stated to-night that the line to the goldfields required relaying, and that 190 miles must be relaid.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS said he had not stated that so much must be relaid, but that it would be better if it could be relaid.

MR. MORAN: The Minister had relaid 100 miles of line, and if time had permitted would have relaid the rest.

MR. DOHERTY: The line required duplication throughout.

MR. MORAN: Certainly it did, even for the ordinary traffic. The Government should not force these new railways on the country.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Committee were not debating the Loan Bill.

MR. MORAN: True. He hoped the Commissioner would be assisted by hon. members in keeping the traffic arrangements up to date, to place the traffic in a satisfactory position, and so to bring together the producer and the consumer by giving prompt delivery of goods, and by dismissing from consideration new railway projects, which could only bring confusion to the colony and bring the Government into disrepute.

MR. HOLMES (East Fremantle): These estimates could not be allowed to pass without his once more entering an emphatic protest against the manner in which the railway estimates were presented to the Committee, and he would do so as long as the Estimates were presented in the way they were, and as long as he had a voice in the Parliament of the country. Last year he gave notice of the following motion:

That in the opinion of the House the Railway Estimates and the manner in which they have been presented to this House are unsatisfactory and calculated to mislead Parliament. But that motion was never reached.

MR. MORGANS: It was the fault of the Opposition side of the House.

MR. HOLMES: At that time he was sitting on the Government side. Unfor-

tunately for Parliament the motion was never reached: like some other notices it was kept at the bottom of the Notice Paper until the end of the session. He (Mr. Holmes) received a promise from the Commissioner of Railways that there would be no further cause for complaint in this direction, and the Commissioner further promised that this year the Estimates would be presented in such a manner as would meet with approval. What did we find on the Estimates before us? He was astonished—if one could be astonished at anything that took place in this Parliament—that the scanty information hitherto provided was greatly minimised. He would use his efforts to reorganise this large spending department, and he hoped hon. members would give him credit for honesty in his intentions. If the Premier wanted an office boy at £20 a year, the Committee was asked to vote the £20. If the Postmaster General required £30 for a letter carrier, the Committee was asked to vote that amount; but when we came to the Railway Estimates we passed items such as this: £473,979 for salaries, provisional and temporary; nearly half a million of money in a lump sum. Then, for the General Manager's staff there was £3,100; Chief Accountant's staff, £10,500; Chief Traffic Manager's staff, £69,500; Locomotive Engineer's staff, £19,000; Chief Engineer of Existing Lines staff, £15,000; Electrical Engineer's staff, £2,400; and Interlocking Engineer's staff, £1,300. If the Committee could not obtain details, surely it was not too much to ask how much of the half-million was to go to the General Manager's staff, and how much was to go to the Chief Accountant's staff, and so on. Coming to the material and stores of all kinds for the Railway Department, the Committee were asked to vote in one sum £150,000 for material and stores for the working of the railways, and £27,000 for incidental expenses. The details of these amounts were not forthcoming, and if it was too much to ask for those details, surely the Committee were justified in asking how much of the amount for material and stores was to be handed to the Locomotive Engineer and how much to the Traffic Manager for the different branches. The Committee voted last year—and this was what gave rise to the motion he had spoken about—£169,000

for material and stores, and £39,000 for incidental expenses.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** Only £26,000 was expended.

**MR. HOLMES:** An amount of £200,000 altogether was voted, and the Commissioner told hon. members last year that if the amount was not required the money would not be spent. Now the Commissioner told the Committee the money had not been spent. The item for incidental expenses was considerably larger than any similar item on the Estimates. When the Commissioner told the Committee that if the money was not required it would not be spent, he (Mr. Holmes) told the Commissioner that the money was not required, and it was simply by this means that the Commissioner had effected the saving he had spoken about.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** If the department had earned the revenue which was anticipated last year, the whole of that amount would have been expended.

**MR. HOLMES:** The system of presenting the Estimates to the Committee was unsatisfactory; it was calculated to mislead Parliament. Hon. members made a noise a few evenings ago about a few paltry thousands being voted for the Education Department, and the Premier promised that the details of the amount should be supplied. He hoped hon. members would protest strongly against the Railway items, so that if the details were not supplied the amounts in the different sub-heads should be given to the Committee. Unless the information was supplied hon. members could not fairly criticise the Estimates.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** Not a penny of the money would be spent without the approval of the Treasurer, and the accounts had to be audited by the Auditor General.

**MR. HOLMES:** The hon. member would have the right of reply.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** It was necessary to take the chances as he got them.

**MR. ROBSON:** It was very bad form.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS** said he was erring in good company.

**MR. HOLMES:** The other evening the Commissioner said that he (Mr. Holmes) had gone considerably out of his way to induce some person to become

disloyal to the department, and the Commissioner further said that "some officer had so far forgotten himself, his duty to the department, and his loyalty to the service to communicate to the hon. member certain information." Following on that in the next breath the Commissioner said, "I do not know how the hon. member obtained his information which he has made use of in this Chamber." If the Commissioner did not know, as he admitted he did not, how the information was obtained, what right had he (the Commissioner) to impute motives, by stating that he (Mr. Holmes) had induced some person in the railway service to become disloyal to the department? Since he moved his motion he had received letters from all parts of the colony, from the Eastern goldfields and elsewhere, thanking him for his feeble efforts in endeavouring to reorganise the department. The Commissioner had also received letters asking him to withdraw certain statements he had made use of.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** Only one letter had been received.

**MR. HOLMES:** The Commissioner had received one letter from a merchant of this city, who it was said had been guilty of inducing an officer to sign for goods which he did not receive. Before making such a statement as that about a commercial institution of the country, the Commissioner should have been certain of his facts. The replies which the Commissioner furnished to his (Mr. Holmes's) statements were compiled—he had it on the authority of the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest)—by the Chief Traffic Manager, the General Manager, and the Commissioner of Railways; and if these replies were prepared by those officers, surely it was not too much to expect that they were correct. If the Commissioner's reply was wrong—and we had been told that one letter had been received asking the Commissioner to withdraw the statement made that the firm had induced an officer to sign for goods not received—there was necessity for further inquiry, and that inquiry should be held. But the Commissioner's reply should have been correct in the first instance. If the Commissioner now said that he had made a further inquiry into the matter, and had discovered that his responsible

officers had been hoodwinking him in the same manner as they had been hoodwinking the Auditor General's officials, the merchant in question should receive the satisfaction he was entitled to. When he (Mr. Holmes) made the charges against the Railway Department he was practically probing in the dark. Considering the various sources from which he obtained his information, he was fairly right, and he was safe in saying, on the Commissioner's admission, that there was hopeless incompetence. The railways of the country were not conducted in a satisfactory manner, and he hoped before he closed that he would prove his statements. The commercial section of the community who are unfortunate enough to have business with the Railway Department of the colony were worried and annoyed from one week's end to another by the Railway Department.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: It was the same in every business.

MR. HOLMES: It was particularly so in the Railway Department. Until there was some re-organisation, and until the railway estimates were placed on a satisfactory basis, he (Mr. Holmes) would continue to move. The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) had a good deal to say about the Railway Department when speaking to his (Mr. Holmes's) motion; but the member for Coolgardie had a good deal more to say about himself (Mr. Holmes). The member for Coolgardie commenced by denying the accusations he (Mr. Holmes) made, and ended by repudiating the admissions of the Commissioner. Knowing the hon. member for Coolgardie, the Committee would be prepared to admit that when the interests of the Government were at stake, at all events when the interests of the Railway Department were at stake, that member was capable of saying anything to serve his own ends.

MR. MORAN: Not his own ends.

MR. HOLMES: The member for Coolgardie stated that at the next general election his (Mr. Holmes's) action would recoil upon himself for an endeavour to reorganise one of the many mismanaged departments in the control of the Government. He (Mr. Holmes) had nothing to fear at the next general election. What had he gained by his action in the House?

MR. DOHERTY: Notoriety.

MR. HOLMES said he might have gained the sympathy of the approving public, and he might have brought down the wrath of the powerful governing syndicate on the Treasury benches. The member for Coolgardie referred to unworthy motives, and while he (Mr. Holmes) was prepared to admit that the hon. member (Mr. Morgans) was an authority on unworthy motives, he (Mr. Holmes) was not prepared to admit that he had been guilty of unworthy motives. What authority had the hon. member to impute unworthy motives? A very bad case had been proved against the Railway Department, and it was usual under such circumstances, for Government supporters to descend to personal abuse, as had been done in this instance. If the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) were in his place he would be able to say from an intimate acquaintance of ten years whether he had ever known him (Mr. Holmes) to be guilty of unworthy motives or unworthy actions, and the member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham), with whom he (Mr. Holmes) had served as a boy, and who had known him for the last 20 years, would be able to give similar testimony.

MR. MORGANS: That was not the accusation.

MR. HOLMES: The man who feared the general election was the man who sold his principles for his personal benefit, and the man who sold his people at the same price. The man who feared the general election, was he who would advocate a railway to Bonnie Vale, because he happened to have a mine there.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not impute motives.

MR. HOLMES: Motives were not being imputed to any hon. member. The man who would fear the people was he who would advocate an exhibition at Coolgardie, because he might derive some benefit therefrom, or the man who would advocate a railway to Mount Leonora, because he and a powerful syndicate in London held properties there. That was the man who feared a general election, and not the man who did his duty and was prepared as he (Mr. Holmes) was to meet his constituents. Perhaps the member for Coolgardie made the charge of unworthy

motives because he regarded him (Mr. Holmes) as of the same class as the ordinary mining expert with whom the hon. member associated every day; and there was a saying, "Tell me your company and I will tell you what you are." The member for Coolgardie charged him (Mr. Holmes) with exaggeration; but in no one instance was any information exaggerated, and when he (Mr. Holmes) thought of the various sources from which the information was obtained, he marvelled to find himself so fairly accurate. Both the member for Coolgardie and the Commissioner said that if he (Mr. Holmes) had gone to the heads of the department, he could have obtained all the information correctly. When speaking on the Address-in-Reply he casually remarked that when the opportunity presented itself he would be able to make some startling statements as to the administration of the Railway Department. On that occasion the Press reported that the Commissioner of Railways did not appear to be in the least concerned; but on the two or three days following the statement, he (Mr. Holmes) was pestered with telephone messages from the Traffic Manager, asking him (Mr. Holmes) to call, as he had some business with him. Ultimately, he accepted the invitation, and spent two hours with the Traffic Manager, and found that the object was not to give information, but to ask what information was in his (Mr. Holmes's) possession.

MR. VOSPER: It was a "pumping scheme."

MR. HOLMES: They "pumped," but got no satisfaction. The Manager said, "Do you know anything about Baxter and Prince, or do you know anything about Millar Brothers?" to which he (Mr. Holmes) replied, "No; but I would like to." Here was an opportunity for the head of the department, if he were anxious and willing to do so, to give information, but no information was forthcoming; and if he (Mr. Holmes) had had unworthy motives, he might have pumped the Manager then. The information which he (Mr. Holmes) had given to the House had been voluntarily given to him; and what would have been said of him if, six months hence, it had transpired that he was in possession of these facts in regard to this hopelessly mis-

managed department, and had not made use of them?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: If the hon. member had asked, the whole of the papers could have been laid on the table of the House.

MR. HOLMES: In making those charges against the Railway Department, nothing was said but what was true; and why did the Government want to know where the information was obtained? Was it desired to persecute some private or public individuals? Who owned the railways? Were the railway officials servants of the public, or servants of the Commissioner? But he did not want to labour this question. He was prepared to accept either honour or abuse from the Government side of the House, because he valued neither. In concluding on this point, he would say that the despotic and governing syndicate (the Government) should never have the satisfaction of knowing how, when, or where he obtained the information. The purchase of the trucks from the Seabrook Battery was not at all satisfactory, but as he did not wish to delay the House he would not say anything more about the matter, although hon. members, the public, and himself were inclined to think there was a good deal in the charge. He would content himself with dealing with the £5,000 concession allowed to that company. The Commissioner had said that the concession was granted in order to "foster an industry," and that a lien was taken over the trucks before the bond was exceeded; but immediately afterwards the Commissioner said that at the time the lien was taken, the department were negotiating for the purchase of the trucks.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That was a bit mixed.

MR. HOLMES: It was a bit mixed. The trucks were the means by which the industry existed, and if the Government were negotiating the purchase at the time they gave this £5,000 credit—which they had no right to give—they were taking away the only support of the industry. If hon. members were prepared to accept the Commissioner's explanations as satisfactory, the fact could not be helped, but he (Mr. Holmes) could not accept the explanation, and he did not think any reasonable man could. Railway freights were a cash transaction, because a customer

must either pay cash or make a deposit of the amount of the freight required; and as that rule was insisted on generally, it must be admitted that an unusual concession had been made to the Seabrook Company. It had been stated that the department were anxious to give information, but no further information had been given in reply to the charges than could not possibly be avoided. If the department were anxious and willing to give information, he asked the Commissioner now to tell hon. members how many similar instances had occurred. In the matter of Millar Brothers he made two distinct charges of a gross nature, and these had never been repudiated.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: They were admitted.

MR. HOLMES: No; the two charges referred to were passed over. He pointed out that Millar Brothers were allowed the use of trucks at half the rates charged to other companies, and that Millar Brothers were allowed a concession of 25 per cent. on the freight of all timber smaller than sleepers, a concession which no other company received. These charges had not been replied to, and he would like to know who authorised the allowance. Was it to foster the timber industry, or to foster Millar Brothers at the expense of all the other companies? The latter suggestion seemed to better meet the case, and he would go further and point out that a circular was issued to the whole of the railway officers who had dealings with Millar Brothers, to the effect that the rates laid down on page 43 of the merchandise rate-book were cancelled so far as this firm were concerned, and that they were to be charged 1s. 3d. for four-wheel trucks and 2s. 6d. for eight-wheel trucks, irrespective of distance, the rates in the book being, to all the other timber companies, 2s. 6d. and 5s. per truck. If that was not fostering Millar Brothers at the expense of the rest of the timber companies, he was wrong in his judgment, but it would take a lot to convince him that he was wrong.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: The arrangement was not denied, but it was justified.

MR. HOLMES: Who authorised that half-rate? Were responsible officers authorised to make such concessions, or

why were Millar Brothers singled out in this manner? The Commissioner told hon. members that £2,464 was written off Millar Brothers' account for demurrage, because the Railway Department had detained Millar Brothers' trucks on the Government lines.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: It was an adjustment.

MR. HOLMES: It was an adjustment to suit Millar Brothers. The reason for the demurrage, he understood, was that the trucks were detained at Fremantle because Millar Brothers' ships could not take the timber. In that rate-book the department allowed private companies, who had trucks of their own, 6d. per ton rebate, and they undertook no responsibility to return trucks except at their own convenience; yet, as he had said, Messrs. Millar Brothers were allowed this £2,464 for demurrage. The Commissioner said that they did a railway business of £50,000 with Millar Brothers last year, and his argument was that because they carried £50,000 worth of freight for Millar Brothers, there was no harm in writing off £2,000. He (Mr. Holmes) found from the General Manager's report that the loss on the traffic last year on this South-Western line, after paying interest, was £14,250; consequently they carried £50,000 worth of timber for Millar Brothers at a loss.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: There was not a loss with regard to them.

MR. HOLMES: There was a loss regarding the £50,000 worth of timber, and yet the department wrote off £2,500. The railway transactions with Messrs. Millar Brothers were no less than a public scandal. With regard to the sleepers for Messrs. Baxter and Prince, the Commissioner said the Railway Department could not say what had become of them, and that they were all over the place. These sleepers placed end to end would measure 15 miles, and put side by side would cover 10 acres. The Midland Railway Company, over whose line these sleepers passed, were able to prove delivery, yet the Government Railway Department, which handled the self-same sleepers, were made to pay £1,000, 8,500 of the sleepers being lost. The Government took some of them, and handed them over to Wilkie Brothers, who were

constructing the Coolgardie to Southern Cross line. At all events a lot of them went into Wilkie Brothers' line. He would like to know if Wilkie Brothers paid for them, and if not, why not? In addition to this £1,000, £2,500 was written off Baxter and Prince's freight account, making a total of £3,500. The Commissioner said they expected to receive some concession from the Midland Railway Company; but the Minister knew there was no hope at the present time of getting payment of any unjust claim from that company. We had the boast of the department that though at one time the claims for lost goods went into some hundreds and thousands of pounds, to-day they were practically a mere cipher. The House ought to know how these claims were adjusted and the amounts kept to a normal sum. If the Railway Department lost a grindstone belonging to a person, and had a cheese and did not know who the owner was, they gave the cheese as a compromise for the grindstone. If a man happened to send a spring mattress, and it was lost, the Government would give a quantity of oats as a compromise; or if a person lost American doors, the Government would give kerosene as the nearest compromise they could get.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS :** One was lucky to get anything.

**MR. HOLMES :** The day of reckoning must come. He could tell the Commissioner of a case in which the department absolutely lost a siding. We knew how they lost some exhibits for Guildford show, which reached there some days afterwards, he thought. Goods belonging to merchants at Fremantle were lost, and the department said, "We cannot find your goods; we have some others we will give you in exchange." He knew of one merchant who had a claim against the department for a lot of goods lost, and they gave him in exchange what they had in stock. Subsequently the department lost a further lot of goods belonging to the self-same merchant, and in exchange for this second lot of goods they gave him the goods which were lost the first time.

**MR. DOHERTY :** How many years ago was that?

**MR. HOLMES :** In the last three months. A timber merchant, chaff merchant, or a person engaged in some such

business having a bulk lot of goods, occupied a lot of trucks, and was supposed to take delivery immediately on arrival, in order that the trucks might be sent back and again used in traffic. It was not always convenient to the merchant to accept delivery immediately, and consequently railway trucks were detained, and the department should charge demurrage. The Railway Department frequently charged demurrage running into a considerable amount—£10, £20, or £30 as the case might be—and if the department had a £10 claim for demurrage against a merchant, and the merchant a claim of £1 against the department for goods lost, they compromised it by wiping off the £10 and the £1, the merchant getting the best of the bargain by 900 per cent. The Minister compromised a matter in such a way that he got out of one difficulty one day, and into another the next. We had an admission by the Commissioner that a cheque for £339 12s. was lost for four years—from September, 1895, to September, 1899—and the department never knew that they owned the money until the Commissioner, as he himself stated, met the bank manager in Perth one day, and the bank manager told him. The Commissioner said the station-master thought the bank had remitted the amount to Perth, and the Chief Traffic Manager thought the money had got there.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS :** Why did the hon. member want to rake up those things that occurred about five years ago?

**MR. HOLMES :** The present Commissioner came into office, and the Commissioner's advance account could not be made to balance.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS :** It had been proved by him that the account had been balanced, and that the Auditor General gave a certificate. Did he not read it out?

**MR. HOLMES :** If the Commissioner would leave him alone he would prove that the account was not balanced.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS :** Perhaps it was to credit balance.

**MR. HOLMES :** Anyone who had anything to do with a cash account must know that this account was not balanced. Perhaps the account was made to balance, but there was a balance really when the



amount was the same on both sides. He repeated that in this instance the account was never balanced. We had the Auditor General's report in connection with our railway service, stating that the department had been guilty of misappropriation of public money, and had attempted to hoodwink the Audit Department. That report had been confirmed by the Auditor General. He (Mr. Holmes) ventured to suggest that the department were attempting to hoodwink this House; but it would be a very difficult matter to hoodwink him in connection with the subject. The Commissioner said that if the Auditor General's report was correct, the present Ministry were not fit to occupy office. He agreed with the statement. We found that the Auditor General's report was still insisted upon, and also that the Government continued to remain in office.

MR. DOHERTY: Members could not get anyone to take their places.

MR. HOLMES: The Commissioner said the Auditor General should have reported so and so, and he (Mr. Holmes) dared say that if the Auditor General had listened to the officers controlling his department he would have done so; but we knew the Auditor General reported what he considered it his duty to report, and in his (Mr. Holmes's) opinion members would come to the conclusion that the Auditor General was the best judge as to what should be reported to the House. One of the most serious charges made by him (Mr. Holmes) in connection with the Railway Department was that relating to the construction branch under the management of the Engineer-in-Chief, and the working railway branch under the management of the General Manager of Railways. The construction branch built station houses, engine sheds, and goods sheds — architectural freaks he called them — which had never been occupied since their construction, for the simple reason, he believed, that the construction branch constructed them without asking the working branch whether they wanted them. The Commissioner said they were occupied. He (Mr. Holmes) believed that one man occupied one room in one house, but the engine sheds, the goods sheds, and such like had never been used. Was this expenditure to go on? Were hon.

members going to tolerate this expenditure and profess to say they had the welfare of the country at heart? He was still of opinion that we were "living in a fool's paradise" in connection with the Railway Department, and we should there continue so long as improvements to railways and new rolling-stock were paid for out of loan, and until such expenditure was paid out of revenue. As long as this system continued so long would rolling-stock be worked till it fell to pieces, and condemned when it ought to be repaired, for the reason that if condemned new stock could be purchased from loan, but if repaired, the repairs must be paid for out of revenue. Apparently the system adopted to-day was to knock out the rolling-stock and replace it by new, because new stock was paid out of loan and charged to capital account, whilst repairs to old stock must be paid out of revenue.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: For that system there would be a day of reckoning.

MR. HOLMES: By this means a fictitious profit was shown.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: The hon. member well knew that such a system could not obtain.

MR. HOLMES: The present system would bring ruin and disaster to this as to other colonies. Railways should be constructed and equipped out of capital account. When constructed and equipped that account should be closed; and any additional rolling-stock and any improvements should be paid for out of earnings.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: That was done every day.

MR. HOLMES: No.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Let the hon. member prove his statement.

MR. HOLMES said he would prove it from the report of the General Manager of Railways — from reports laid on the table.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Prove it. The statement was absurd.

MR. HOLMES: A department capable of balancing a cash account which should have shown a deficiency of £339 12s., and of hoodwinking the Audit Department, was capable of producing and presenting to the House any fictitious accounts. A few days ago he had expressed the opinion that the trucks of

the department were not in proper repair. The Commissioner replied that they were; and said that out of 5,000 trucks there were only 177 being repaired. That proved his (Mr. Holmes's) argument. As a fact, he believed 3,000 trucks ought to be undergoing repair; and they were not being repaired because repairs would have to be paid for out of revenue.

MR. DOHERTY: Was it not better that the trucks should be earning money on the lines?

MR. HOLMES: There was a fictitious profit of £69,449 on the whole of the working of the railways. He was speaking with authority, for his information was obtained from the reports of the principal officers of the department. To confirm what he had said about rolling-stock, he proposed to quote the Locomotive Engineer, who said:

We have 231 engines in all; and during the last year only 81 of these have been thoroughly overhauled.

The same officer further said:

The average cost of each for repairs was between £400 and £500, or a total of about £35,000.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Did not that prove that the engines had gone through the shops?

MR. HOLMES: The Engineer continued:

I had proposed that a larger number of engines should have been repaired, but in consequence of our repairing estimates being reduced, I was unable to do so.

MR. DOHERTY: That was during a "lean year."

MR. HOLMES: During last year. He feared he could not notice the hon. member interjecting, who, with little knowledge, spoke much. The Locomotive Engineer continued:

We have now a large number of engines awaiting repairs, and I am somewhat concerned as to how we are to overtake the necessary repairs.

But if the balance of the engines, 150, had been repaired, as according to the Locomotive Engineer they should have been, and had been repaired at the same cost as the other engines, that cost alone would have wiped out the fictitious profit of £69,000.

MR. DOHERTY: Half of those engines were new and required no repairs.

MR. HOLMES: The hon. member could speak in his turn. To-day the

House had been asked to vote £330,000 on a new Loan Bill, for additions and improvements to opened railways, to be added to capital account, thus showing a fictitious profit of £69,000. The Bill showed additions and improvements to opened railways, £65,000; rails and fastenings for opened railways, £100,000.

THE PREMIER: Not to opened railways only.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: The Bill did not state "opened railways."

MR. HOLMES said that was his reading of the Bill. The line under the previous item was dotted; and he took the dots to mean that the expenditure was for opened railways.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: That was not so.

MR. HOLMES: At all events, in the Loan Bill was a sum of £330,000 for improvements to opened railways and rolling-stock.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS said he wished the sum were £500,000.

MR. HOLMES said he would agree with that if the department were prepared to pay for the expenditure out of earnings. On consideration, all must perceive that the boasted profit on the railways was fictitious and unsatisfactory. The Locomotive Engineer stated further in this connection:

I have already explained that the expenditure on repairs was less than I proposed and knew to be necessary. The effect of the minimised expenditure shows chiefly to-day in the condition of our engine stock, which, as I have already said, is causing me some concern.

The same officer said further that it was obvious that the amount expended was insufficient to maintain the engine stock in anything like a satisfactory condition of repair. Our wagons, and the wagons that carried our stock, were in a better state of repair; but a larger expenditure on repairing this stock was desirable.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: The Locomotive Engineer had not said a word on that subject. Let the hon. member read the report itself.

MR. HOLMES said he was quoting from the Locomotive Engineer's report, and the quotation was absolutely correct. The same officer said further that the water in the goldfields dams had been of great assistance to the department this year. That was no doubt true; and that

water supply helped to show a fictitious profit. Those railway dams were constructed out of loan money. Had that loan expenditure been transferred to the capital account of the railways? The dams were now maintained for no other purpose than for the railway service. If the cost of those dams had not been transferred to the capital account of the Railway Department, it should be transferred.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: It had been transferred, with the exception of £13,000.

MR. HOLMES: That was satisfactory.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: All the dams on the railway route, with the exception of four, had been built out of loan.

MR. HOLMES: Thus adding to the capital cost of the railways?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Yes.

MR. HOLMES: Still there remained the point of the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran): in the event of that water supply failing, as it probably would in a dry season, the effect on the departmental earnings would be disastrous. Although the capital account of the railways was being continually increased, nothing was written off for depreciation. It would not matter what was the capital cost of the rolling-stock, *etcetera*, so long as such material was required, provided an adequate sum were written off for depreciation; but that was not done. If the department continued to increase its capital account at the same rate, and with the prospects of a loss in the working of the railways staring them in the face, the system spelt ruin.

MR. DOHERTY: Increase the rates and make the railways pay.

MR. HOLMES: To show that the present rolling-stock did not meet requirements, the Locomotive Engineer said that last year an order was passed for 25 new engines to the value of some £40,000, but that this order had never been placed, and that when placed two years must elapse before delivery. The officer said further that it was imperative that an order for 50 additional engines—at a cost of £80,000—should be placed without delay. The Chief Traffic Manager considered that a large number of works was absolutely necessary. These were

enumerated on page 20 of the railway report, and hon. members could read them for themselves. One item would suffice. The Traffic Manager said:

I would urge the alteration of the Midland Junction yard, so as to provide up and down platforms and a marshalling yard, and would also press for the relaying of the Yilgarn and South-Western lines.

That was a nice little order in itself.

MR. MORAN: Enough, without any more railways.

MR. HOLMES: Why was it these lines required relaying? He had his own idea on the matter, and he was backed up by the reports. The department had neglected to look after the lines, and in this way had cut down expenses: the reports showed that.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: There were heavier engines running over the lines.

MR. HOLMES: Was the department going to lay heavy rails on the South-Western line? If the lines had been looked after as they should have been, the lines would have been in a better state of repair to-day; but the lines had not been looked after, because the expense of looking after the lines would have to be paid out of revenue. Any work paid for out of loan money was carried out. In support of the statement that the lines had not been looked after, he (Mr. Holmes) might state that in 1898 £181 per mile was spent in keeping the lines in repair, but this year only £130 had been expended; that represented a saving of £51 per mile, or £60,000, and that £60,000 was put down as saved; he (Mr. Holmes) called it something else. Then there was the necessity of relaying and improving the lines. The Engineer for Existing Lines said that 206 miles of light rails on the Kalgoorlie line required relaying to carry heavy engines, yet Parliament was asked to extend the railway system further out, and we had the opinion of the Engineer for Existing Lines that 206 miles of the railway line at this end would not carry the traffic or the engines passing over it. The General Manager recommended that additions and improvements in all directions should be carried out. New rolling stock was required, extensions in the Perth yard, extensions in the Kalgoorlie yard, the duplication of the lines, and inter-

locking in every direction, which meant a continual increase in the capital account and a decreasing revenue staring us in the face.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: No.

MR. HOLMES: Decreasing per mile. We had a greater railway revenue to-day than we ever had, but the returns were presented to Parliament in the number of miles, not in regard to the single lines.

MR. DOHERTY: If the business increased the lines must be increased.

MR. HOLMES: What did we find when we looked into the working of the railways? There was only one line which was paying; although the Premier told the leader of the Opposition the other day that he opposed these lines and now they were all paying. There was absolutely a loss last year on the working of the Great Southern Railway, after paying interest, of £23,250, and the purchase of this line was the trump card of the Forrest administration. After reducing the mileage of the train service from 340,000 miles travelled to 210,000 miles, this was a reduction of 40 per cent. in the number of miles travelled. By this means there was a saving of £28,000 effected; still there was a loss of £23,250. The interest alone on this line was £27,500 a year, and the net profit after paying expenses was £4,250, leaving a loss of £23,250.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Better than the loss of the previous year of £53,000.

MR. HOLMES: That showed that there had been reckless expenditure in the previous year. There could be no further saving in working expenses to bring about a profit; the expenditure had been reduced to bed rock, and yet the railways did not pay. The expenditure could not be further reduced. The Committee had also to face a loss on the South-Western Railway line, and the loss on this year's working was £14,250. The General Traffic Manager said this loss must continue as long as timber and coal and such like goods were carried at the present rates. Last year the loss on the Northern line was £14,028, while the only line that was paying was the gold-fields line, on which there was a profit of £123,187. Against this there was a loss on all the other lines of £53,783, leaving a net profit of £69,449. There was a

reckless expenditure of £11,000 on the South-Western Railway last year which amount had been saved this year; still there was a loss. There could be no further saving in this direction, and reform was the only hope of saving the Railway Department from trouble. If the railways of this colony had cost in construction anything like the cost per mile of the railways in the Eastern colonies we would have been in trouble long ago. Our railways were constructed at a nominal cost which so far saved us from ruin; the department had been hoodwinked by a temporary railway success, but it would mean ultimate ruin. A department that was capable of getting out of one merchant's debt by getting further into some other merchant's debt, and which balanced the cash account when there was a deficiency of £339 12s.—the department that was capable of doing such actions to mislead Parliament, and which the Auditor General said had been guilty of misappropriating public money and attempting to hoodwink his officers, should not have the confidence of Parliament or the country.

MR. LEAKE: As the Commissioner of Railways would probably like to take time to consider his reply to the hon. member (Mr. Holmes), he moved that progress be reported.

Motion put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

#### LOAN BILL, £750,000.

##### POSTPONEMENT.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved that the order for the second reading of the Loan Bill be postponed until the next day.

MR. LEAKE: Had any arrangement been made in regard to the business of the House? because this Loan Bill had been postponed for some considerable time, and members were anxious to hear something about it.

THE PREMIER: It was rather late in the evening to go on with the Bill.

MR. LEAKE suggested that if the Bill were postponed until the following day, it should be placed on the Notice Paper before the Estimates.

THE PREMIER: There was no objection to that.

MR. LEAKE: Now that the Railway Estimates were before the House, there was a feeling that if the Loan Bill were explained, one would tend to throw light on the other.

THE PREMIER: It was difficult to see that one had anything to do with the other. One Order of the Day was the Estimates for the year, and the other was a Loan Bill.

Question put and passed, and the order postponed.

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL (MINING).  
IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 113 of the principal Act:

MR. WILSON: This clause amended Section 113 of last year's Act, inasmuch as it struck out the provision that the deposit made on application for a block of timber land should be forfeited if the application were not gone on with. He did not see why there should be the amendment, because it was absolutely necessary the deposit should be forfeited if the application were not gone on with.

THE PREMIER: Section 113 of the Act provided that every application should be accompanied by a deposit, as required by Section 136, which deposit, according to the amendment, "shall be returned if the application is refused by the Minister, which he has power to do." If the amendment were not made an applicant would be able to abandon an application, or not proceed with it.

MR. WILSON: An applicant could not be bound to proceed.

THE PREMIER: But he would not get his rent back if he did not proceed. An applicant for timber land, or any other land, had no right to withdraw an application after he had made it, because he might be keeping other people off the land in the meantime. The only case in which an application could be withdrawn was when it was refused by the Minister, and then the rent was repaid. Section 136 of the Act dealt with the periods for which the rent was paid, and the land was the applicant's for all that time, and he had no power to withdraw and get his money back, because he had made up his mind he wanted the land, before he applied for it.

MR. WILSON: It was a well-known fact that applicants for timber country paid a deposit of something like 5 per cent., which covered them for a period of 30 days.

THE PREMIER: Where did the hon. member get that law from?

MR. WILSON: From custom and usage, because he had done it himself.

THE PREMIER: Since the new Act was passed?

MR. WILSON: Since the new Act was passed he had not done that personally; but whatever the deposit was, the Government ought to have power to forfeit it, and he was really arguing in favour of the Government.

MR. JAMES: The Premier and the member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson) both seemed to have the same object.

THE PREMIER: Yes; but it worked out in a different way from the point of view of the member for the Canning.

MR. JAMES: The deposit was paid in accordance with Section 136, and by Section 113 the deposit could be forfeited if the application was abandoned or not proceeded with within 30 days. The effect of the amendment would be that the amount would be returned if the application was refused by the Minister, and the question would arise at once as to what became of the deposit when a man abandoned his application, or did not proceed with it.

THE PREMIER: The department made the applicant hold the land for a term, and if he did not continue, he forfeited it.

MR. JAMES: In ordinary cases, until an offer was accepted, there was no binding contract, so that until an application for a lease was accepted, an applicant could always withdraw.

THE PREMIER: If the amendment were not passed, a loophole was left for a man to monopolise the land for 30 days.

MR. JAMES: The only way to avoid that would be to make a heavier deposit. Suppose for the purpose of argument, the position was that apart from the section as it stood now, an application could be made and there was nothing forfeited, if the section were amended and the day afterwards an application were made and abandoned, the applicant could ask for the return of his money, because the whole provision as to forfeiture had been

struck out. Would it not be wise to retain the power to forfeit?

**THE MINISTER OF MINES:** A person must pay a quarter or a half-year's rent, as the case might be.

**MR. JAMES:** Money was paid by way of deposit, and supposing the application were withdrawn before being accepted, what was to become of the deposit? The Government could not retain it. Under Section 113 there was power to forfeit.

**THE PREMIER:** Section 113 provided that within thirty days after approval a person could withdraw. Under the amendment proposed he would not have the option of not proceeding. Having paid, he must proceed unless the Minister refused to consent.

**MR. JAMES:** If he tendered for a contract, there was no binding contract until it was accepted, and he could withdraw.

**THE PREMIER:** The words "if abandoned before the date of approval" might be inserted: he would agree to that.

**MR. JAMES:** The inference from Section 113 was that if one withdrew an application within thirty days of approval, he was entitled to receive his money back. One ought not to be entitled to receive the money back.

**THE PREMIER:** That was not the practice in the Lands Office.

**MR. JAMES:** It was desirable to strike out the words "or is not proceeded with."

**THE PREMIER:** Before the date of approval?

**MR. JAMES:** The Premier said one could not abandon it after approval.

**THE PREMIER:** If it was refused by the Minister, the money was always returned.

**MR. JAMES:** That was only fair.

**THE PREMIER:** The necessary amendment could be managed. He moved that all the words after "words," in line 2, be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu thereof, in the fifth and sixth lines, "or is not proceeded with within thirty days from."

Amendment put and passed, and clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Repeal of Section 121, Sub-section 1 of principal Act, and substitution of another sub-section:

**MR. WILSON:** The point in this was a question he had raised as to whether a

charge should be made in the shape of a private siding charge for connecting a private railway with the main line. He did not think it was ever intended this charge should be made, and he did not see why it should be imposed. Under the old Act persons had a right to connect private railways with the Government railways. People had to bear the whole of the cost, and if they utilised a station yard they also had to bear a portion of the cost. Why they should be burdened with a siding charge for something they did possess and did not use, he did not see, unless it was to enable the management of the Railway Department to add some small amount to the revenue. These private railways were feeders to the Government system, and the fewer the disabilities placed upon them the better. This especially affected the timber industry, which at the present time was labouring under difficulties enough. He moved that after the word "and," in line 6 of Sub-clause 1, the words "without charge" be inserted.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** The insertion of these words was objected to by him. Clause 121 of the Land Act provided for the connection of a railway or tramway constructed through a timber lease with the Government railways. By an omission, no provision had been made for bringing such sidings under the departmental regulations, and by this clause that difficulty would be remedied. The department bore all the expense of working the sidings, and the inconvenience to the Government line, and had also to provide for the upkeep of the branch lines connecting with the main line; and therefore the ordinary charge made by the department should be paid for all sidings. Why should a timber company be exempt any more than a brick or gravel company?

**THE PREMIER:** Or an agriculturist.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** The department paid a certain proportion of the upkeep of the siding, and charged the usual rent imposed on similar connections in other countries. He would oppose the amendment.

**THE PREMIER:** If every one else were charged, why should a timber company go free? The argument of the Commissioner was irresistible, that the Government had to look after the sidings and keep them in order. Renewals when

required had to be made by the department, and the timber companies should be willing to pay like any other company.

MR. WILSON: A railway connecting with another railway could not correctly be termed a siding, and could not be compared with a brick-yard or an agricultural siding.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: But it was a connection.

MR. WILSON: What would happen if railways in England charged each other for such connections? All such lines were feeders.

THE PREMIER: A brick-yard siding was a feeder.

MR. WILSON: But the timber companies' lines were railways bringing traffic into the Government stations. It was unfair to so charge timber companies and other private railway owners, who had already been mulcted in the cost of laying down the connections, the charge for signalling, and a proportion of the stationmaster's salary.

THE PREMIER: What about upkeep?

MR. WILSON: There was nothing to keep up. The companies maintained the line up to the Government points and crossings. The charge, £20 a year, though small, should not be imposed.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clause 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Repeal of Section 124 of principal Act. Mining leases, pastoral leases, etc., may be granted within timber area:

THE PREMIER moved that the clause be struck out.

Put and passed, and the clause struck out.

Clause 8—agreed to.

New Clause:

THE PREMIER moved that the following be added to stand as Clause 7:—

Amendment of Sec. 124 of the principal Act. —Section One hundred and twenty-four of the principal Act is amended by inserting at the commencement thereof the following words:—  
"Every timber lease shall be subject to the provisions of any Acts relating to mining for gold or other minerals so far as those Acts create rights which may be exercised over Crown Lands: Provided that every lease granted under any of the said Acts of lands comprised within a timber lease, shall be granted, subject to the right of the proprietor of the timber lease to cut and carry away timber: Provided also that, notwithstanding

anything contained in any of the said Acts, a miner's right or a mining license shall not confer upon the holder thereof the right of stripping bark or of cutting or removing timber on land comprised in a timber lease."

MR. WILSON gave notice of an amendment to add words prohibiting any miner from pegging out a claim on any portion of a timber lease where there was a railway, tramway, or building constructed; and also a proviso to give the timber lessee power to carry railways, roads, or tramways through the mining leases, so long as the buildings of the miner were not interfered with.

THE PREMIER: What about the shaft?

MR. WILSON said he would alter his amendment so as to protect the miners' workings also. He moved that progress be reported.

Motion put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

## CEMETERIES BILL.

### SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather), in moving the second reading, said: This is a short Bill, the object of which is to facilitate the regulation of cemeteries. At present the trustees of cemeteries are not incorporated. It is proposed by the Bill to incorporate trustees, and additional power is given by Clause 3 to frame by-laws, impose penalties, and generally to protect the trustees of cemeteries.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### IN COMMITTEE.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10.50 o'clock until the next day.