

had full consideration again, and was once more introduced into another place in the early part of this session, when it was referred to a select committee. The reports both of the conference and of the select committee are available for members. These, then, are the main provisions of the Bill. They have had careful consideration and at least one member in the House has taken part in the conference I have referred to. If any further information is required I shall be glad to afford it when in Committee. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. F. Cullen, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—FRIDAY'S SITTING.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Before we adjourn I would like to remind members that we meet at 2.15 p.m. to-morrow.

Hon. E. M. McLARTY: Before the House adjourns I would ask the Minister to postpone the second reading of the Bunbury Municipal Electric Lighting Bill. I have to go away to-morrow, and I shall not get back before Tuesday. I hope the Minister will accede to this request.

House adjourned at 10.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 26th January, 1911.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—POLICE DISTRICT, NORTHERN.

Mr. HEITMANN asked the Premier: 1, On what date did Inspector Sellenger arrive at Broome on transfer to take charge of the Northern Police District? 2, How many days has he been absent from his head-quarters station there, since his arrival, to present date? 3, What is the total amount of travelling allowance paid Inspector Sellenger while serving in the North? 4, What rank does the member of the force hold who is at present acting for the inspector in charge of the Roebourne and Kimberley districts? 5, Is it a fact that a corporal of police took charge at head-quarters station and dealt generally with district correspondence, etc., during inspector's prolonged absence? If not, who did? 6, Is there a sergeant of police at Wyndham? 7, Is it in accordance with the rules of the force that a corporal should give instructions to, or be placed in charge of a sergeant? 8, Is it the intention of the Government to keep an experienced senior commissioned officer in charge of the Northern Police District? If not, why not?

The PREMIER replied: 1, 18th August, 1909. 2 and 3, The information required in these questions cannot be obtained, owing to reference to Broome being necessary, and the telegraph line being broken down. 4 and 5, The Corporal in charge at Broome is at present acting for the Inspector, who was or-

dered South on sick leave ; that is to say, the Corporal stationed at the Head Office of the District is for the time being the channel of communication for the issue of instructions and transaction of routine police business affecting the various stations throughout the District. Special and important matters would be referred to the Commissioner of Police for decision and instructions. 6, Yes. 7, No. 8, Yes.

Mr. JOHNSON : Will the Premier give an assurance that he will answer questions 2 and 3. The other replies are absolute foolishness without replies to these questions ; they dodge the main portions of the questions. Will the Premier state that when he gets the replies he will supply them to the House ?

The PREMIER : I take exception to the statement of the hon. member that I have dodged the main portions of the questions ; there is no dodging about it at all. I was not able to get the replies from Broome yesterday because the telegraph lines were down, and I asked the hon. member to postpone the question until to-day.

Mr. Johnson : Why did you not postpone it again ?

The PREMIER : I have answered all the questions except 2 and 3, and I will supply those when they come to hand.

Mr. HEITMANN : I take it from the statement of the Premier that he will let me have the information.

The Premier : Certainly, with pleasure.

Mr. HEITMANN : It seems to me rather extraordinary that the Premier should have to wire to Broome in order to get the information.

The PREMIER : I must say in support of the inspector that he has to refer to the records to know how many days he has been absent from headquarters ; he cannot carry the dates in his memory. When a man is on sick leave he does not keep a record of his absence from his station. However, as soon as I get the information I shall let the hon. member have it.

QUESTION—FRUIT FOR EXPORT, PRE-COOLING.

Mr. JACOBY asked the Minister for Agriculture, is he aware : 1, That in the report of the Government Refrigerating Engineer (Mr. A. D. Cairns), which is included in the annual report of the Department of Agriculture for last year, that officer describes the attitude of the Central Fruitgrowers' Association, which at its last conference unanimously decided against the pre-cooling of fruit for export, as "stupid and wrong" ? 2, That in said report this officer states that after the reading by him of a paper on pre-cooling at the said conference, the discussion of same was not allowed to proceed, when, as a matter of fact, the official records and the Press reports show that the proposal was discussed and a resolution unanimously adopted rejecting Mr. Cairn's proposals on the ground that they were neither necessary nor advisable, because they would result in much of the advantage now held by Western Australia in the over-sea markets being lost ? 3, That the said report includes what is stated by Mr. Cairns to be a "Paper on Pre-cooling written for the Central Fruitgrowers' Association of Western Australia, 23rd June, 1910." Whereas the paper included in the departmental report differs very materially from the paper read at the conference, which was published *in extenso* in the *Western Mail*, 2nd July, 1910 ? 4, Does the Minister acquiesce in the action of an officer of his department in using a departmental report as a vehicle for misrepresentation, personal abuse, and the publication of untruthful statements ?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied : 1, No ; see page 17 of the Report which reads : "Through some strange perversity the Fruitgrowers in some instances have got the idea that the Government wish to insist on their fruit being pre-cooled and standardised compulsorily, thereby incurring damage and penalising the grower. This stupid and wrong conception of the Department's interest in the grower has been disseminated by self-interested parties who aver that pre-

cooling is not necessary in this country” 2, Yes. 3, Yes, The Under Secretary for Agriculture informs me that there is no material difference between the Reports. 4, No.

QUESTION—LANDS OFFICERS' INCREASES.

Mr. GILL asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Has the Minister granted increases to the temporary officers in the Lands Department, as promised to this House some time ago? 2, If not, is it his intention to grant such increases? 3, If so, from what date?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, No. 2, Yes, to certain officers in the Accountant's Branch. 3, From 1st November last.

QUESTION—RAILWAY OFFICERS' REMUNERATION.

Mr. GILL asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Why is it that officers in the Railway Department are only (in special cases) paid an increase for performing duties above their classification? 2, What constitutes special cases? 3, Is it the Minister's intention to see that railway officers are given the same consideration as is given officers in other branches of the public service?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The payment of increased remuneration to officers (other than relief officers) required to carry out the duties of a higher position is governed by Clause 29, Subclause (g) of the Salaried Staff Regulations, 1905. 2, See Subclause above referred to. 3, The consideration extended to officers in other branches of the Service does not vary in any marked degree from that given to railway officers. In some respects the Railway Department is more liberal.

QUESTION—DOWERIN-MERREDIN RAILWAY OPENING.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Will the new railway from Dowerin to Merredin be open for traffic to Kununoppin by the end of this month?

2, If not, is the Minister aware that any delay will be a serious loss to the settlers at Kodj Kodjin and other portions of the district, it being impossible for such settlers to put in a crop this year owing to the fact that cartage of manures, seed, etc., 40 to 50 miles over a bad road being impossible? 3, Will the Minister place the position before the contractors and urge them to push on with the work of construction and open the line for traffic to relieve the settlers from their serious position?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No; the date due for the completion of this railway as far as Kununoppin is 31st May next. 2, Lack of railway communication is a hardship to settlers anywhere. Every endeavour is, therefore, being made by the Government to expeditiously provide railway facilities. The first section of this line (30 miles) will be taken over by the Working Railways for traffic in a few days, and the rails have already been laid to within 10 or 12 miles of Kununoppin. 3, The contractors will doubtless be anxious to carry traffic as soon as it is possible to do so.

QUESTION—RAILWAY PROJECT, SOUTHERN CROSS-MARVEL LOCH.

Mr. HORAN asked the Premier: 1, Has the Government made adequate arrangements for the immediate inspection and report on the proposal to construct a railway from Southern Cross to Marvel Loch as promised by the Premier? 2, Recognising that the factors of commercial success are much more pronounced in the case of Marvel Loch than in that of Bullfinch, will he be prepared to explain the attitude of the Government as to—(a.) Why the Bullfinch Railway with commendable but unaccountable expedition was passed through Parliament when the Marvel Loch district with many proved mines of long standing is neglected? 3, Will the Government promptly compensate for the delay in securing a report from a suitable advisory board?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The Government has made arrangements for the inspection of and report on the proposed railway from Southern Cross to Marvel Loch to be undertaken as soon as conveniently possible. Of this the hon. member was personally advised by me yesterday. 2, The reasons for the construction of the Bullfinch railway were fully explained to Parliament when the Bill was introduced. 3, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—WATER SUPPLY, MARVEL LOCH.

Mr. HORAN asked the Minister for Mines: 1, What action has been taken with regard to construction of a suitable water pipe line from Southern Cross to Marvel Loch? 2, Is he aware that numbers of families are removing to Southern Cross, and that mining is languishing, on account of the shortage of water supplies? 3, Is he aware that money unwisely expended by the Government has handicapped this district for some months past? 4, Will the Government take immediate action to remedy this condition of affairs?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Estimates were prepared some time ago, and are now being revised in consequence of recent developments. It has, however, so far, been impossible to obtain from mine-owners any estimate of their probable consumption of fresh water, or any guarantee that they will be regular consumers if a pipe line is constructed. 2, I am not aware that numbers of families are moving to Southern Cross, and believe that abundant supplies of salt water for mining purposes will be obtained by deeper sinking. 3, No. 4, Action has been taken to supply fresh water for domestic purposes.

QUESTION—LAND RESUMPTION FOR RAILWAY PURPOSES, PERTH.

Mr. FOULKES asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the date of the recent resumption by the Government of lands situate in Perth near the Eastern

Railway? 2, What are the names and addresses of the persons who purchased within the last two months lands forming part of the lands so resumed? 3, What are the prices purported to be paid by such purchasers for lands purchased by them within the last two months?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, 24th December, 1910, and 13th January, 1911. 2, It would be impossible to supply this information without a special search in the Titles Office, and the details could not then be guaranteed, as transfers are frequently held for lengthened periods before being registered. 3, Answered by No. 2.

QUESTION—RAILWAY APPEAL CASE, MR. PHILLIPS.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Railways: What progress has been made towards hearing the appeal case of Mr. Phillips, as promised by the Minister during the consideration of the Railway Estimates?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: In replying to the hon. member when dealing with the Estimates, I confused this case with that of another employee from the workshops, whose case is now being heard by the appeal board. Phillips' case was referred by the Commissioner to the chairman of the appeal board, who ruled that the circumstances did not warrant any ground of appeal. I have asked for a special report from the department.

QUESTION—FACTORIES INSPEC- TION, GOLDFIELDS.

Mr. SCADDAN asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that the Colonial Secretary, in reply to a communication from me complaining of the lack of inspection on the Eastern Goldfields of the Shops and Factories Act, stated that the inspection was exemplary, and that the Police reports "That no breaches of the Act occurred during the year"? 2, Is it not a fact that during a recent visit of Inspector Bradshaw to Kalgoorlie and Boulder that he successfully prosecuted between 20 and 30 persons for various

breaches of the Act? 3, Is it not a fact that glaring breaches of the Early Closing and Shops and Factories Acts have been brought under the notice of the inspectors and Minister in turn, and no action taken?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The Hon. Colonial Secretary stated that during the past twelve months all the provisions of the Early Closing Act had been observed in the Kalgoorlie District, and that no occasion had arisen to take action according to the Police report; the latter added that it was intended to send another Inspector at the end of the month to Kalgoorlie which would then make two Central Board of Health Inspectors on the Eastern Goldfields. 2, Yes. A large majority of these prosecutions were for not keeping a record. 3, No.

Mr. Scaddan: That is absolutely incorrect; it is untruthful.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member should not say that; it is not Parliamentary.

Mr. SCADDAN: Then I will say it is incorrect. I will withdraw the word untruthful. If the Colonial Secretary supplied such a statement, he knows he is supplying an incorrect statement.

The PREMIER: The hon. member has no right to state that the information which I have given is incorrect or untruthful; it is the official answer which is given to me.

Mr. SCADDAN: I am denying it; I am entitled to say that the answer is absolutely incorrect. I will bring along the person who went to see the Colonial Secretary.

Mr. SPEAKER: To avoid a repetition of what has occurred I might inform the hon. member that an answer which is given by a Minister cannot be questioned. The hon. member has withdrawn the word untruthful, but I desire to emphasise the point that no one can question an answer given by a Minister; in fact, a Minister can refuse to answer a question if he chooses to do so.

Mr. Scaddan: He ought to have done so in this case rather than give an incorrect reply.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. TROY, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Keenan) on the ground of urgent private business.

BILL—PERMANENT RESERVES REDEDICATION (No. 3).

Introduced by the Minister for Lands and read a first time.

BILL—UNIVERSITY.

Report stage, etc.

Report of Committee adopted.

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

BILL—WONGAN HILLS-MULLEWA RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. H. Daglish) in moving the second reading said: If the principle already approved by this House, and repeatedly expressed by different Acts of Parliament, be warranted, then this railway requires very few words indeed to support it. It opens up a part of the State, which at present is practically unsupplied with railway communication, and which represents what may be called a new province of the agricultural portion of Western Australia, a province of the enormous area of something like 6,000 square miles—that is, excluding all land within a 15 miles radius of the Midland Company's line, all land within a 15 miles radius of the Murchison railway, and all land without the 10 inch rainfall belt.

Mr. Angwin: How much land do you exclude from the map in the Chamber?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member can discuss the map and the land excluded from it at a later stage. I desire at present to submit to this House the reasons that justify the Government in submitting this railway for the favourable consideration of hon. members. There has been no proposition amongst the numerous agricultural railways proposed by

this and by other Governments, which aimed at doing so large a service in the opening up of the unoccupied areas of the State, and consequently stimulating our agronomic industry. The length of the line, as well as the area which it will serve, warrant me in classing it as the most important developmental railway yet submitted for the consideration of hon. members. Moreover, the line is one of those that has received a larger amount of consideration before being brought before members than any other previous proposition, and the Government introduce it, supported not only by the recommendation of the advisory board, but supported likewise by the very strong concurrence of that expert adviser on railway matters, the present Commissioner of Railways. Referring to the report of the advisory board, I may say that at the time that report was drawn up, Professor Lowrie, whose reputation is all in the direction of conservatism, was a member of the board, and another conservative authority, Mr. William Paterson, was, and still is, a member. It will be understood, therefore, that when this recommendation was submitted to the Government in favour of the construction of this line, the board were inclined to lean in the direction of caution and conservatism, and even if there were no corresponding recommendation from the railway authorities, hon. members could receive the report of the board with every degree of confidence.

Mr. Angwin: That is only your statement that they are conservative. Some people do not think so.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: My statement is warranted by the experience we have of both these gentlemen. The length of this railway is 190 miles, and the distance from Perth to the commencement 133 miles. The usual gauge and light rails are proposed. In regard to the sleepers, the figures which hon. members have before them refer to a sleeper 6 ft. 6 in. and 8 x 4. Last week the member for Murray, in speaking of another railway proposition, very strongly urged consideration of the question as to whether 9 x 4½ sleepers

could not with advantage be used in a number of these lines. On receiving that suggestion, I at once agreed to make inquiry, and called for a report on the subject from the Engineer-in-Chief. That report will receive consideration when this and other railways are being provided for on our Loan Estimates. At the present time, not having received a report, I am submitting a proposal tentatively for 8 x 4 sleepers. The ruling gradient will be 1 in 80. Hon. members will see, therefore, that it is proposed to construct a line capable of transporting traffic at the most moderate cost. The sharpest curve will have a 12 chain radius. The cost of construction is estimated at £204,500; the rails and fastenings at £123,500, making a total of £328,000, or £1,726 per mile. I have already indicated the enormous area of country that will be served, or partially served, by this line. I have indicated the tremendous extent of territory at present absolutely untouched by railway communication east of the proposed line, and therefore a long way east of the Midland Company's railway. I desire now to read to the House the report of the advisory board on this proposition—

After an inspection of the country lying between Goomalling and Mullewa and careful consideration of reports, plans, and available data, we recommend that the best route for a railway between the terminus of the Goomalling-Wongan Hills line and the Murchison railway is the one shown approximately by a red line on the attached plan; the actual line to be, of course, subject to an engineering survey. The route suggested has a length of about 190 miles, extends in a general northerly direction through and to the northern boundary of the Dalwallinu locations; thence it trends in a general north-westerly direction through the Nugadong area passing through or near the Perenjori and Morawa subdivisions and areas to the north of and near Morawa that are in process of subdivision. It junctions with the Murchison rail-

way at Mullewa, and from Nugadong northward it is, generally speaking, about 27 miles distant from the general route of the Midland railway. The construction of this railway will shorten the through distance from Perth to Mullewa by about 33 miles. The country lying within 12½ miles on either side of the proposed route, and exclusive of what is or will be served by the Murchison railway and Wongan extension, embraces an area of about 2,330,000 acres, of which about 585,000 acres are freehold granted to the Midland Railway Company; about 348,300 acres held under conditional purchase; about 150,000 acres applied for under conditional purchase conditions but not yet approved; and, about 1,246,700 acres of vacant Crown lands. We estimate that this area includes at least 1,000,000 acres of first class land suitable for the growth of cereals and grazing. We also consider that a large proportion of the inferior country is well adapted for grazing if improved and provided with water. In recommending the route in question we have endeavoured to locate it in a position that will serve the largest amount of good land. From the attached statement supplied by the Commissioner of Railways you will see that he estimates that the construction of this line, even on the basis of present traffic over the Midland line, will increase the gross earnings of the Railway Department by a sum of £38,000 per annum. We also estimate that within a reasonable period after the completion of the line the freight traffic, at a low estimate, will reach a total of 50,000 tons per annum, consisting of grain, chaff, wool, etcetera. This estimate does not include material, stores, manures, etcetera, which will be required by the settlers within the country served by the proposed railway. We consider the early construction of this railway is thoroughly justified, as it will not only serve areas that have already been thrown open and selected but will lead to the selection and settlement of further large areas.

The report is signed by Mr. Paterson, Mr. Muir, Professor Lowrie, and Mr. Johnson. The report of the Commissioner of Railways, to which reference is made in the remarks of the advisory board, I will likewise read to the House. It is dated the 29th of August, and states—

Referring to your letter of the 30th ultimo, the accompanying statement shows the information asked for in paragraphs 1 and 2. With respect to paragraph 3 the following is the desired information:—"The Lands Department advise that the length of the proposed railway from Goomalling to Mullewa will be about 203 miles. This will make the distance from Fremantle to Mullewa, *via* Wongan Hills, 314 miles, as against 367 miles *via* the Midland Railway

Mr. Johnson: Shorten the route by how many miles?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am reading a letter from the Commissioner of Railways. I will come to that point later. This letter goes on—

2, The projected line will shorten the route between any point on the Mullewa-Nannine section and any point on the Government railways east or west of Midland Junction. 3, The Government proportion of earnings on traffic passing over the Midland railway for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1910, between the points referred to in Clause 2, amounted to £47,765. 4, Assuming that the rates and fares remain the same as were in force during the 12 months ended 30th June, 1910, the whole of the traffic referred to in Clause 3 would pass over the new line. 5, Upon going into the question of the nature of the traffic carried (Clause 3), and the actual points between which it was carried, it is considered that 565 miles is a fair mean to take as the distance. 6, The amount of £47,765 (Clause 3) represents the Government proportion for a distance of 288 miles. 7, The distance that the traffic in question was carried over Government lines between the points, Perth and Mullewa, was 78 miles. 8, The distance from

Perth to Mullewa over the proposed line is 302 miles. 9, This means that between the points named, the Government would haul the traffic 224 miles more than now. 10, Therefore, if £47,765 (see Clause 6) represents haulage for 288 miles, it becomes a question of what the haulage would be for 224 miles. This is seven-ninths of £47,765, which amounts to £36,930. To this amount might be added £2,000 per annum for the carriage of mails over the section, Goomalling-Mullewa. It is considered that £38,000 per annum (exclusive of freight on traffic which might be picked up on that section) would be a fair estimate of the gain to the Railway Department by the construction of the railway. 11, The traffic to stations on the Murchison line east of Mullewa was exceptionally heavy for the year under review, owing to material going forward for the construction of the Sandstone and Meekatharra railways, but the increased business for these two lines should more than make up for the increase referred to due to conveyance of materials, etcetera, for their construction.

That is signed by John T. Short, Commissioner of Railways, and is likewise accompanied by a table showing the total earnings under the heading of the stations between Mullewa and Nannine and Fremantle to Midland Junction, and the total received by the Midland Railway Company and the Government. I do not propose to read the whole table, which relates to the year ending 30th June, 1910; but I do intend to mention to the House the summary of that table, and it shows that the total earnings from goods for the year ending 30th June, 1910, was £63,063 11s. 11d., of which the Midland Railway Company received £29,608 6s. 2d. and the Government £33,455 5s. 9d.; that for livestock the total earnings were £8,349 4s. 4d., of which the Midland Railway Company's proportion was £4,626 4s. 7d., and the Government's proportion £3,722 19s. 9d.; that for parcels the total earnings were £4,250 7s. 3d., of which the Midland Railway Company's proportion was £2,135 2s. 11d. and the Government's proportion £2,115 4s. 4d.; and that for

passengers the total earnings were £18,048 4s. 8d., of which the Midland Railway Company's proportion was £9,577 2s. 9d., and the Government's proportion £8,471 1s. 11d. The total earnings for that year were £93,711 8s. 2d., the Midland Railway Company receiving £45,946 16s. 5d. and the Government £47,764 11s. 9d. These are the figures on which the Commissioner of Railways bases the estimate I have already read to the House. It may however be urged—in fact it has been urged—that the Government are doing a wrong in constructing a railway that runs parallel to the already existing railway constructed many years ago by the Midland Railway Company. The great force of that contention so far as I can make it out must consist either in the fact that this proposed railway is running in too close proximity to the Midland Railway or in the fact that it is taking away from the Midland Railway Company the through traffic to the Murchison. In regard to the first contention that the line is running too close to the Midland Railway Company's line, I desire to say that the Government, in recommending to Parliament the construction of railways in districts already partially served by Government railways, have submitted to the House propositions for the construction of lines which have been even closer to Government lines than it is proposed to run the Wongan Hills-Mullewa line to the Midland Railway Company's line.

Mr. Johnson: Two wrongs do not make a right.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member has yet to show a wrong has been committed. I do not remember him raising that point in any case to which allusion might be made.

Mr. Johnson: Fifteen miles is too close, and you know it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not understand the hon. member's allusion to 15 miles. It is not proposed to construct a railway at any part within 15 miles of the Midland Company's line, and I do not know of any proposal submitted to the House to construct a line 15 miles from any Government railway. If the Government are prepared to recommend Parliament to construct a railway within,

say, 27 miles or 30 miles of a Government railway, surely on the same argument they are justified in regarding that as a sufficient distance from the Midland Railway Company's line?

Mr. Johnson: That only makes it 15 miles of carting, does it not?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes; it makes it 15 miles of carting in a direct line, but I would point out to hon. members in this connection that even if we are working on a railway system where there shall be 25 miles between the two railway lines, it represents more than 12½ miles of cartage, because there are very few settlers who can take their produce by a direct route to the railway. Therefore the distance of 25 miles between the two railways may represent even 20 or more than 20 miles of cartage to some of the settlers between the two lines because of the fact that it is a common necessity for settlers to travel two sides of a square or triangle in order to reach their destination, the siding on the railway. They have not only to reach the railway—and they may have to go indirectly to reach that—but they have to do more, they have to reach the siding on the railway; and that may represent, as I have said, more than 20 miles of cartage in some cases where there is only 25 miles distance between the two railway lines. Dealing with this question of the right of the Government to construct a railway between the two points, Wongan Hills and Mullewa, I have already indicated that the Government are pursuing in this portion of the South-West agricultural district precisely the same policy as they have pursued in other portions of the same district. There can, therefore, be no allegation that there has been some unfair, differential treatment accorded to this particular railway company. I instance the fact that the other objection might be raised, that this railway would take away, and was designed to take away the Murchison goldfields traffic from the Midland Railway Company; but I want to remind hon. members that at the time the Midland Railway Company received their concession the Murchison goldfields were not existing. The Act which validated the contract of the Midland Railway Com-

pany with the Government of this State was passed in 1886, and it was not until 1891 that the Murchison goldfields were discovered. Therefore, in 1886, when the concession was granted, neither one nor the other of the contracting parties had in view any such thing as the Murchison goldfields traffic; neither one nor the other could possibly anticipate that ultimately there would be discovered a goldfield north of this Midland Railway line that would do so much to enhance the value, as the Murchison goldfields have done, of that particular concession. Had the railway and the land business of the company been carried on in the same conditions as they have been it is probable the railway would long since have been closed up had not the Murchison goldfields been discovered. Therefore, in view of the fact that the Murchison goldfields were non-existent, it cannot be fairly urged that any claim exists on the part of the Midland Railway Company to the traffic of those fields; but it may fairly be said that, because for the convenience of the State, when the goldfields were connected by railway, a Government line was attached to the Midland line, the company has been receiving for very many years past a very handsome bonus from the people of the State by the business received through the carriage of goods to the Murchison goldfields over the company's private line.

[*The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.*]

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The fact that the Murchison line was made an extension of the Midland line gives no right at all to the retention of that traffic for all time, any more than does the granting of a concession for the construction of the Midland line in the first instance to open up a certain area of land prevent the Government fairly from opening up the area east of that land, which cannot in any sense be served by their railway. Anticipating some possible objections, I have tried to show that the position the Government have taken up in this respect towards the Midland Railway Company is a perfectly fair and perfectly honourable position for them to assume. I have already indicated the tremendous area of land we have east of the Midland

line, an area of land at present entirely unserved, all of which, of course, cannot be served by the line at present proposed. This line, however, will provide for an enormous area. Within the 15 mile radius we find no less an area than 2,658,673 acres will come within the influence of the line.

Mr. Johnson: What is the rainfall?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This area is all well within the 11-inch rainfall belt. I told hon. members a little while ago there are some 6,000 square miles, something over six million acres, within the 10-inch rainfall belt; but I have had a special map marked to show hon. members the three and a half million acres outside the 15 mile radius east of the line, which is still within the 10-inch rainfall belt and which will be to some extent, the western portion of it at all events, served by the construction of the line. The proportion of good land within this area is very satisfactory, as will be indicated by some figures I propose to give in regard to the areas already subdivided. A few months ago the Dalwallinu locations were surveyed and offered to the public. The total area of these was 184,725 acres, the number of blocks 229, the number of applicants about 470, the classification 100,000 acres first-class land, 40,000 acres second class, 44,725 acres third class, while the prices ranged from 5s. 6d. to 20s. per acre, notwithstanding that the distance from the existing Midland Railway line is very great indeed. The Nuga-dong locations totalled 50,400 acres; the number of blocks 57, the applications about 60, the total number of blocks allotted 57; the classification was 30,000 acres first class, 13,000 acres second class, 7,400 acres third class, or, as in the case of the Dalwallinu locations, considerably more than 50 per cent. of first class land. The prices ranged from 7s. to 18s. per acre. The Perenjori locations had a total area of 15,000 acres, the number of blocks was 15, of applicants 13, the classification 13,000 acres first class and 2,000 acres second class, while prices ranged from 13s. to 15s. 6d. per acre. Here hon. members will notice that 13/15ths of the area was first class, which is very satisfactory indeed. The Morawa locations had a

total area of 49,627 acres, the number of blocks was 50, the applicants 157, blocks allotted 50, the classification 35,627 acres first class, 3,000 acres second class, and 11,000 acres third class. Here we had 35,000 acres first class out of a total of 49,000. Prices ranged from 7s. to 28s. in spite of the distance from the railway.

Mr. Johnston: Why not give us the rainfall?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member can see the rainfall here on the big map. I have given the hon. member the information that all the areas to be served by the line are within a satisfactory rainfall.

Mr. Johnson: An equally good authority has given us the rainfall as being less than you state.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Jibberding locations had a total area of 11,712 acres; the number of blocks was 19, applicants about 60, blocks allotted 19; classification 5,000 acres first class, 2,000 acres second class, 4,712 acres third class. Prices ranging from 5s. 6d. to 18s. per acre. Now in regard to these areas hon. members will notice that in spite of the distance from the railway they were very readily taken up, in fact they were rushed by the public.

Mr. Johnson: Watheroo was rushed by the public also.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know why the hon. member is making these absurd interjections; he may have a reason for it. The hon. member for Guildford said just now that an equally good authority had stated the rainfall was less than I have quoted it. I have not seen that statement. If the hon. member will tell me where I can find it I shall look it up.

Mr. Johnson: I refer the Minister to the maps, just as he referred me to the maps.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the hon. member refers to that variegated production from the Midland Railway Company I would draw his attention to the fact that the map is not signed by any authority whatever. The only name on it is that of the Midland Railway Company at the top; it is not even signed by a representative of that com-

pany. Beyond this company's title there is that of the lithographers, Messrs. Sands & McDougall.

Mr. Heitmann: By whose authority is it there?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Government are anxious to afford the fullest information, and sometimes it is worth while even to exhibit the twilight, not to say the darkness, side by side with the light, in order that nothing may be missing. My colleague the Minister for Lands will be quite prepared later on to give the hon. member more information than can I in regard to the value of the land; but the most satisfactory information that can possibly be accorded either to the House or to the public has already been accorded in the avidity with which those persons requiring land have sought to obtain a holding in this particular area.

Mr. Angwin: They are very small blocks as compared with the aggregate area.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Only small areas have as yet been cut up. The hon. member knows the stress under which the Lands Department have been working and which has made it impossible for the officers to carry out their work on a wholesale scale.

Mr. Angwin: Why jump about hundreds of miles apart?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member will get more complete information from the Minister for Lands than I am in a position to offer.

Mr. Johnson: What does he know about it?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He will speak for himself. I may point out to the member for Guildford that the mere asking of these questions does not show any knowledge, but that all are capable of being asked of the right authority. The hon. member asks me about the quality of land, of which I do not profess to be a judge, and of which I speak by my book alone. Probably when the Minister for Lands speaks the hon. member will want to know from him something about the length of the railway or the weight of rails. I have told

the House that all the land to be served by this railway is well within the 11-inch rainfall belt. It has, however, been argued in the House, and certainly outside the House, that instead of junctioning with the Murchison line at Mullewa this railway should junction with that line at Yalgoo. That contention would, of course, have a lot to justify it if we proposed to construct a line for the sole purpose of shortening the distance between Perth and the Murchison goldfields; but if the junction of this, an agricultural railway, were made at Yalgoo, we would be making a grave mistake, for the reason that while the safe rainfall belt terminates 30 miles east of Mullewa, Yalgoo is not less than 74 miles from that centre. Further than that, Yalgoo is something like 24 miles east of the 11-inch rainfall belt. In order to make a railway profitable we expect to get traffic, not from one side alone, but from both sides. In this instance as we approach Yalgoo we could hardly hope to get much traffic so far as agricultural produce is concerned, and certainly none whatever from the east, because of the lack of sufficient rainfall to make agriculture profitably possible. There is a very large area of good agricultural country in the vicinity of that centre, and I need hardly point out that it is impossible for us with advantage to ourselves or the country to construct railways for the purpose of opening up pastoral areas. The claims of Yalgoo to have a branch from this line ultimately constructed if the Murchison goldfields make the progress we hope to see them make in the future may be very strong; but in the first instance, constructing or asking for authority to construct an agricultural railway for the purpose of opening up this very valuable area, we would certainly not be justified in taking our line right outside that rainfall belt. I think I have submitted sufficient facts, sufficient figures and sufficient arguments to warrant me in asking the careful consideration of hon. members for the Bill submitted. I think the Bill is one having a larger justification and being of more importance to the development of

the agricultural areas of this State than any yet submitted to the House, and I hope that after reasonable discussion members will emphatically justify the Government in the introduction of the measure. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. JOHNSON moved—

That the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	14
Noes	..	..	..	19
				—
Majority against	..			5

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Collier	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gill	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Heilmann	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Holman	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnson	(Teller)
Mr. McDowall	

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Male
Mr. Carson	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Monger
Mr. Davies	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. George	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Gordon	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Troy
Mr. Harper	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Layman
Mr. Jacoby	(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. TROY (Mount Magnet): The arguments in support of this railway connecting at Mullewa are based on the advisory board's report: I want to say at the onset that I have no objections to find with the personnel of the board or their report so far as the instructions that were given them to allow them to report on a railway to junction at a given point with the main line are concerned. I have taken objection long since in this House, not to the decision of the board but to the scope the board is given in order to make a thorough inquiry and a correct report. For instance, in regard to a railway such as this,

which is destined to play an important part in the development of the State, it would have been thought by members that the advisory board would have been given the fullest scope to make inquiries as to how the railway would affect the other industries of the State as well as the agricultural industry, but this was not done in connection with this line. The same procedure has been followed as was followed in connection with every agricultural railway the advisory board were instructed to report upon. They were instructed to report upon the agricultural possibilities between a given point and a given point, and beyond that they could not go. Therefore, I for one am not going to accept the advisory board's report as the reason why the railway should junction with the main line at Mullewa. This line, we are told, will be a purely agricultural line for the purpose of agricultural development alone. I want to say that for the last six years I personally have advocated this line in my electorate where I first spoke of it, in order that it might not only be an agricultural line, but an aid also to the development of the mining, agricultural, and pastoral industries. If this line is connected with Yalgoo it will serve all three industries and prove of great assistance in the development of the State. The Murchison has been labouring under great difficulties in regard to its development because it has never been connected properly with the main system of State railways. For years we have had to put up with the Midland Railway incubus, which has made us almost an alien territory and we have never received that consideration and prominence that we otherwise would have received. Comparing the Murchison with the Eastern Goldfields we know our neglect has been due to the fact that the State railway system has not connected us with the populous centres as it has the more favoured Eastern Goldfields. Had it not been for the bad influence and the detrimental effect which the Midland Railway has had on the Murchison we would have been a more pros-

perous community than we find ourselves to-day. I have no sympathy with any claim put forward by the Midland Railway, let that be understood at once. The Midland Railway have received great assistance from the Government, they have received favour after favour from the State; the company have never been asked to adhere literally to the terms of their agreement with the people of the State but they have received consideration, I believe both financial and otherwise. Therefore, I think, so far as this proposed line is concerned, we should not consider it for a moment in regard to the interests of the company. I put the Midland Railway aside altogether and I am discussing the railway from a State standpoint and I hope that view will be adopted by members generally. If the railway junctions at Mullewa it will practically be of no value to the Murchison. I may point out that the Murchison is not only the second important goldfield in Western Australia, according to the gold output, but it is extending and will reach a greater height of prosperity than it has ever enjoyed before. This field has developed greatly during the last few years and I hold out the hope that the Murchison will produce considerably more gold than it has ever before produced in the history of Western Australia. At one time the Murchison was the third goldfield in Western Australia, now it is the second. Then again, apart from the mining industry, the Murchison, next to the Gascoyne and Ashburton, is the soundest and most successful pastoral district in Western Australia. Our flocks and herds have increased by hundreds of thousands during the last few years. It is not long since that there was a large area of pastoral country available in the vicinity of Cue, Nannine, and Mount Magnet, which are favoured portions of pastoral country, but to-day right within the boundaries of the townships on the Murchison goldfields the pastoralists have taken up the country with the result that it is almost impossible to secure an acre of pastoral land there to-day. That pastoral land is not held for speculative purposes but

for the feeding of flocks, with the result that the wool production and the production of cattle and sheep are much greater to-day than at any previous period in the history of this district. I believe, and I am sure in my belief, that that prosperity will continue, that expansion will continue, because the experience of the people living there and the determination to live there for good, while they are on this sphere, has influenced them to turn their attention to these other industries. The result has been that the industries are prospering and consequently this important district is now supporting a population of between six and seven thousand souls who are anxious to secure some consideration from the Government of Western Australia in regard to railway facilities, and be freed from the incubus of the Midland Railway which has had a total disregard for the interests of the people up North. We hoped this branch line would give us the conveniences which we have been looking forward to for many years, but indeed the people will be disappointed if this railway is to connect at Mullewa, because, instead of saving a journey of 150 miles, which it would have done if it had connected at Yalgoo, it will only save a miserable mileage of 33 miles in all, which is a mere bagatelle when we consider the great distance the Murchison is situated from the capital of Western Australia. The distance from Yalgoo to Perth, via the Midland Railway is 429 miles, the distance from Yalgoo to Perth via Wongan Hills and Mullewa is 354 miles while the distance from Yalgoo to Perth via Wongan Hills is 270 miles. If members look at the Midland Railway they will find when they traverse that line as far as Watheroo they turn somewhat to the north-west to Mingenew and Dongarra, thence along the coast as far as Geraldton, and this circuit takes up a considerable portion of the journey. From a geographical standpoint Yalgoo is the proper point of connection between Wongan Hills and Murchison, and that will give us all the facilities we can ever hope to expect from railway connection with the more favoured portions of

Western Australia. There are other reasons why we should be considered on the Murchison, and they are based on those factors which assist in the development of our various industries. For instance, it is well known with regard to timber supplies for mining purposes that Providence has treated us very niggardly on the Murchison. Our only timber is mulga, which is good firewood timber, but even mulga in time must be cut out and we must look to other sources. I hope that in the vicinity of Irwin we shall in the not distant future find coal which, as a fuel, will supply the requirements of the Murchison goldfields. At the present time we have little timber for mining purposes. The whole of the mining timber supply on the Murchison has been drawn for some time past from Three Springs on the Midland railway. Anyone looking at the map will see where Three Springs is located and the detour which must be made from that place will give an idea of the unnecessary amount of haulage which has to take place to get this timber to the Murchison. It travels from Three Springs to Mingenew into Dongarra, then to Geraldton, and out again on the Murchison.

Mr. S. F. Moore: An elbow.

Mr. TROY: The industry has to bear the whole cost of this carriage, and that means a tremendous handicap to the development of our mines on the Murchison. At Sandstone, just before the completion of the railway, I know that mine owners were paying from 2s. 6d. a foot for their mining timber, and if mining companies or miners are compelled to pay that high price a mine must of necessity be very rich indeed to be able to bear the burden. Meekatharra, Day Dawn, Cue, and Sandstone, even far away Peak Hill, and the new locality, Youanine, all require a considerable amount of mining timber, and unless the supply is made cheaper it will be impossible to expect the successful development of the mines on the Murchison. Some 70 miles to the south of Yalgoo we come to a timber belt. I know that Field's Find, the Baron Rothschild's mine, and other mines in that locality, obtain supplies of salmon gum timber from

this locality to the south of Yalgoo. To-day there is a supply of mining timber in the area taken up by settlers at Nugadong and Dalwallinu, and if the railway travels along a straight line through these areas to Yalgoo the Murchison mining centres will be able to get a good supply of mining timber.

The Minister for Works: Would not a branch line suit as well?

Mr. TROY: I would be satisfied with a branch line. I want it to be understood that I am not taking up a hostile attitude with regard to this railway. I desire to assist in the development of all industries, but I know perfectly well that unless we get an adequate and cheap fuel supply for the Murchison for mining purposes it will not be possible to carry on development successfully. On the Eastern Goldfields they have a splendid timber supply in their midst; take the Yilgarn district also, and travel where you like through it, it is possible to strike a magnificent supply of mining timber. At the North Coolgardie and the Murchison fields, however, it is necessary to carry timber some hundreds of miles. This great difficulty with regard to the Murchison will be removed if the junction of this proposed railway is made at Yalgoo, and if that be done it will serve a purpose which the advisory board never had an opportunity of considering. Again, there is another point of view which should be considered, and that is the settler's point of view. These people who have been encouraged to take up land on the proposed route of this railway are to-day developing their properties, and the timber which we badly require on the Murchison these people are burning off; whereas, like the people at Three Springs, they could be selling their timber to the mining people on the Murchison, and in that way receive a certain amount of revenue which would assist them to develop their properties and make homes for themselves. I am given to understand that one family at Three Springs, the Maley brothers, have made a considerable amount of money by selling timber to the mining companies, and with this money they have been able to develop their farming property. Again,

the Parker brothers; when they started timber cutting for the Great Fingall, they had practically nothing, but some little time afterwards they were able to secure a property on the Midland railway line and now they have comfortable homes. It will be seen, therefore, that this is a kind of stepping stone to successful farming operations, which would obtain similarly with regard to settlers along the line of the proposed railway from Wongan Hills if the junction were made at Yalgoo. Again, speaking from the settlers' point of view, besides providing them with a ready sale for their timber they will also have ready access to a local market for their produce. It is well known that on the Murchison fields practically nothing is grown, and the people there must draw the whole of their supplies either from Geraldton or from Greenough, or the different centres around those localities.

The Attorney General: Those districts can more than supply the Murchison.

Mr. TROY: I regret to say that most of the chaff that finds its way to the Murchison comes from Northam. It is a remarkable thing, because Mullewa, and the districts I have mentioned, are capable of growing all the supplies for this field. Even if these people who are now connected with the Murchison by railway can supply more than the Murchison needs, it is only a fair thing that the new settlers should have an opportunity of sending their produce to that market; we should give them the same facilities with regard to the markets of the Murchison goldfields which have been given to farmers in other districts. As I stated, Yalgoo is geographically the centre of the Murchison and Gascoyne pastoral districts. Nearly the whole of the wool from the Murchison is trucked at Yalgoo; some, however, is sent from Pindar, but the greater quantity is trucked at Yalgoo, which is generally recognised as the centre of the great pastoral areas of the Murchison. With the exception of the wool, which is shipped at Carnarvon, the greater portion of the Murchison wool goes down this railway to Geraldton. Yalgoo also is admirably adapted as the centre from which to truck

stock, by reason of the fact that it possesses one of the finest commonages in Western Australia. This commonage is 20,000 acres in extent, and it is securely fenced and well watered, and capable of maintaining thousands of head of stock for some days. If, as is often the case, trucks are not available, pastoralists know that they will not suffer any loss by reason of the fact that stock have to remain at Yalgoo. As showing the dimensions of the Murchison stock trade and that of Yalgoo, I may say that last year no fewer than 30,000 sheep, 2,000 head of cattle, and 200 horses were trucked at Yalgoo. I believe also that from Cue there were trucked 2,460 head of cattle, 1,520 sheep and 140 horses. This applies in a lesser or greater degree to all the centres on the Murchison, and the greater portion of that stock is brought down to the metropolitan markets. All the stock, after the construction of this proposed railway, could be brought down without making the longer detour. The flocks and herds on the Murchison it is well known are increasing in numbers, and as a natural corollary the trade must increase, and the railway revenue become considerably greater. From a railway standpoint also Yalgoo has advantages over Mullewa, and that is a view which has not been taken into consideration with regard to this railway. At the present time at Yalgoo, owing to it being a changing station, the Government have provided all necessary facilities. The locality possesses workshops, locomotive and carriage sheds, and barracks for the convenience of the employees, and is admirably adapted generally to be a junction, because the country is level and there is not that difficulty which there is at Mullewa in regard to levels. Mullewa is a very difficult place for a train to get out of; the train has to go over a little hill after leaving Mullewa and if the load is very great that is a considerable burden and disadvantage.

Mr. Heitmann: The trains often have to stop there.

Mr. TROY: From Geraldton to Mullewa the track is uphill for nearly the whole of the distance, and two engines have often

to be attached to the train, but after Mullewa is passed one locomotive is sufficient. Therefore I think that it would undoubtedly be advantageous to all our industries, mining, pastoral, and agricultural, if this railway were connected with the Murchison line at Yalgoo. The Murchison people are unanimously in favour of that junction, and no less than 1,500 people have signed the petition, which I presented to the Premier yesterday, advocating Yalgoo as the junction. These signatures do not comprise any one section of the community, political or otherwise: they represent all the pastoralists from Nookawarra to Yalgoo, and all the mining and business people of the Murchison, and such a representative petition as that should receive the earnest consideration of this House. In advocating the claims of the Murchison, in regard to this line, I have not overlooked the claims of Geraldton, and I do not desire to take up any attitude which would not give just consideration to every portion of West Australia. I have never been in favour of a policy of centralisation. I have always opposed such a policy and will continue to oppose it, because I believe that the best interests of the State will be served by concentrating at every available port that trade which belongs to it geographically. Geraldton is not only entitled to the whole of the Murchison trade, and a great deal of the Gascoyne trade, but also the East Murchison trade, and the trade which will be brought about by the construction of this railway. I look forward to the time when Geraldton will be the export and distributing centre of all the northern districts. The whole of the Murchison and Gascoyne districts are within its sphere of influence, as also are the whole of the agricultural districts as far south as Carnamah on the Midland line. In regard to this line, Geraldton is entitled to all the trade down as far south as Nugadong and Dalwallinu, and I want to conserve that trade to Geraldton. I want to give the Murchison people those advantages they are looking for, cheap timber supplies, and decent railway facilities, and I desire that the settlers shall have ready access to the Murchison goldfields as a market for their timber and

later on their products, whilst at the same time I want to give Geraldton the trade that is undoubtedly its due as a seaport. The settlers must reach a time when they will produce, not only sufficient for the local market, but also a surplus for export, and naturally I do not desire for one moment that they shall have to carry their produce all the distance to Northam and thence to Fremantle, which would place them at a considerable disadvantage, when they can be brought into closer touch with their natural port, Geraldton. I would therefore suggest, and I hope that the Government will give my suggestion consideration, that this railway should be carried on through Dalwallinu, Nugadong, and Jibberding, direct to Yalgoo. It will then assist in the development of all the agricultural country between Wongan Hills and Jibberding. At the present time the line is taken up for agricultural purposes as far north as Jibberding, and the line would serve agriculture for that distance. From Jibberding to Yalgoo it would serve mining and would assist in opening up the districts of Rothesay and Gullewa, and by cutting off 100 miles in the railway journey would bring fuel and timber supplies for the mines much closer and cheaper than at the present time. Such a route would confer a great advantage on the Murchison, and, therefore, I hope that the House will accept my suggestion and carry this line, not to Mullewa, but to Yalgoo, making provision at the same time that another branch line shall start at Dalwallinu and shall be taken to a point on the Geraldton-Cue line, either connecting at Mullewa or Eradu. I should say that the latter place would be a more convenient point of connection, because if the line were taken there it would assist in opening up the Irwin coalfields, and would give the State an opportunity of proving whether those fields are to be an asset in the future or otherwise. I have been assured for years past that in the Irwin basin there is a valuable coal-field only awaiting development. I do not know why nothing has been done of recent years to test this field, but I understand that tests were made some years ago with satisfactory results. Therefore, if we are

going to construct this line through alien country. I refer to the lands of the Midland Company, it should be made to serve, not only the agricultural industry, but also the coal-fields. I believe that if a junction were made at Dalwallinu, and one branch was taken to Yalgoo and another branch to Eradu, we would open up the agricultural lands, we would test the coal-fields, we would assist the pastoralists, we would give Geraldton the trade it is entitled to, we would shorten the distance for the carriage of fuel and supplies to the Murchison, and we would give the producers quicker access to the Murchison fields and to their natural port for export. In regard to the coal-fields, the time must come when the Murchison will be in dire need of fuel supply and it would be well to prepare for that eventuality; if we have valuable coal-fields on the Irwin we have an adequate fuel supply within a few miles of the Murchison. I hope that before we agree to this Bill it will receive further consideration from the members of this Chamber, and I shall be prepared to give members that opportunity before the Bill is finally dealt with. I am supporting the railway, therefore, even though I want the connection with the Murchison, in the hope that the Government will agree to this branch line connecting at Eradu, in order to serve the interests of the farmers and the people at Geraldton. I have objections to this line, objections which have not been removed, but they will not be sufficient to warrant my voting against the construction of the railway. The first objection is that the Government did not take the precaution to see that the land was made available for closer settlement, as they could have done years ago. Much of the land between the Wongan Hills and Dalwallinu is held by a few individuals and these individuals will be enabled, by the enhanced value placed on their properties, to reap a reward which they have never earned. Mr. Sommers has a large area of the country through which this railway is proposed to be constructed, and Mr. Glowrey has no less than 16,000 to 20,000 acres of land in the Nungah area to be served by this line.

Mr. Johnson: He has denied that, has he not.

Mr. TROY: I take no notice of his denials. He denied it, and the Government denied it at the last general election and said that it was absolutely a lie.

The Premier: No, I did not.

Mr. TROY: My objection to this railway, although it is not sufficient to justify me in voting against the Bill, is that the Government have allowed people like Glowrey to take up large areas of land when this land should be held by a larger number of people.

Mr. Jacoby: Has he taken up more land than the Act allows?

Mr. TROY: The hon. member may ask the Minister for Lands. If the member for Swan will assist me in having an inquiry made, and if that inquiry shows that Mr. Glowrey holds his land under proper conditions, and in accordance with the Act, I shall have nothing more to say, but when I made inquiry at the Lands Department the then Premier gave instructions that no information was to be given.

The Premier: When was that?

Mr. TROY: Just after the general election when the Government denied that Glowrey or Sommers held any land there at all.

The Premier: Nothing of the sort.

The Minister for Mines: We denied your statement.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TROY: I was stating that I had a few objections to the construction of this line, but that they were not sufficient to warrant my voting against it, though I desired to have an amendment so that it would be built from Wongan Hills to Yalgoo. One of my objections is that land is held by a few persons that I think should be held by the many. I do not wish to dwell unduly upon this, but the proposed route will go through the hon. Mr. Glowrey's land. If he held 2,000 or 3,000 acres I would not mind, but 16,000 to 20,000 acres is not a small holding; and if it is held under legitimate conditions, it should be held by five or six persons and not one family. I pointed all this out at the last general election. There are

others who hold land there, but I have cited one instance and it is sufficient. If the Minister can satisfy me that Mr. Glowrey holds that land under conditions under which any other person would be entitled to hold it, my objection is removed; but I do not want any quibbling about it; I do not want it to be denied as it was at the last general election when Ministers went around the country and gave it an emphatic denial and said the statement was a lie, though the plan showed it was absolutely true. Later on a challenge in regard to the same assertions was issued in the House to Sir Newton Moore, the then Premier, but that challenge was not accepted. I recognise there is a large number of settlers who have been persuaded into taking up land along the proposed route, and that if those settlers are to make a success of their properties they must be served by a railway or they will be utterly ruined. It is of no use our sending hundreds of people into the Eastern agricultural portions of the State and giving them advances from the Agricultural Bank if we stop there. We must give them railway facilities to get their produce to the market. There are hundreds of legitimate settlers on many of these areas, and I want to see they get what is due to them; but even accepting the proposed route, I think it should go five miles further to the east than is provided, because on the eastern portion there are many settlers who will be fifteen miles away from the line as it is shown on the map to-day. They have no roads and there is a considerable amount of sandplain, no matter what may be said to the contrary, and if they have to carry their produce more than fifteen miles they can never hope for success. Due consideration should be given to these people. Nobody can deny that the advisory board were not able to beat about the country as surveyors can do to find out how much good land lay to the east or west. They had to go straight through and make their observations as they went, and they were not able to make a very exhaustive inquiry. Therefore, I hope due allowance will be made, and that the Government,

whoever may be in power, will take advantage of the proposed deviation and extend some benefit to the people further east. Their wants should be attended to, because they have the greatest difficulties to labour under in regard to railway communication, roads, and climate. They have a more precarious rainfall, and if we encourage them to settle on the land we should give them every consideration. I do not intend to offer any more remarks in regard to this railway. I have stated my objections to the junction at Mullewa, and they are not based on personal motives. I hope members will disabuse their minds of that. My selection being near Mullewa, if I were looking after my own interests, I should urge that the junction should be at that locality: but I am urging that consideration should be given to the Murchison people, the consideration that has been denied them for so many years, undoubtedly acting disadvantageously to their progress. I know perfectly well objections have been raised by the Midland Railway Company, but I am not influenced by any objections raised by that company, because repeatedly I have had to complain about the facilities provided by them. I have seen people herded in little dog boxes, packed like sandwiches, if I may use the expression, or herded like sheep, women and children travelling from the Murchison, and no lavatory car provided for them. I do not think any company treating passengers in such an inhuman manner should be considered. I have appealed to them on more than one occasion, and one of the responsible persons said to me on one occasion, "Look here. Troy; we are running this business for profit not for the convenience of the people." So far as the Midland Railway Company are concerned, they have received fair consideration from this State, better consideration than they have ever extended to the people of the northern districts, and I do not think they need be considered. I think the people of the State should be considered, and that we should give them the facilities necessary for their progress and comfort. Moreover, I do not want to cen-

tralise the trade in the southern districts: I want to consider the interests of Geraldton by giving to that port the trade of the country which geographically belongs to it; and I hope the Government will accept the suggestion to run the line from Wongan Hills to Yalgoo and build a branch line running to the west to connect with the Cue line at Eradu. I advocated this six years ago at Yalgoo and I have had it in mind for a number of years. Therefore, I shall be disappointed now if the people of the Murchison do not receive the consideration to which they are entitled.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. Mitchell): I think we can congratulate the member for Mount Magnet on the very moderate speech he has made and on the very excellent fight he has put up for the district he represents. This is an agricultural railway. If we sent it into Yalgoo there would be a tremendous area of country with a good rainfall unserved by a railway. The policy of the Government is to bring all the wheat-growing land of the South-West division within fifteen miles, at any rate, of railways, and if this policy is to be followed we must build the line just about where it is marked on the map. A 10-inch rainfall, which we consider the lowest possible to make for safe farming, is marked on the map at Pindar, which is just about 60 miles from Yalgoo. I am perfectly willing to do all that is necessary to bring about the development of the valuable stock country to be found on the Murchison, but it is not so necessary to serve stock country as it is to serve wheat land. I would be delighted to see the Midland Railway Company doing really well. It is to the best interests of the country that people who invest money here should make a profit by it and do well by it. The Midland Railway Company have done excellent work in the past in assisting the development of the country. No doubt when the company were encouraged twenty-five years ago by the Government to put down this line, the

State was not in the prosperous condition it is in to-day, and but for this company we would probably have had to wait many years for the railway. I admit it would have been better had the line been part of the Government system. However, the Midland Railway Company got their concession quite fairly, and so far as I am concerned I will help them to the fullest possible extent in making it pay and in getting some return for the money they have honestly invested. But in building this proposed railway something like 30 miles to the east of the Midland Railway we are only doing by that company what we are doing everywhere else in the State. Where our own railways are concerned we do not hesitate to put down railways competing for traffic with existing lines. The Midland Company have no possible right, I take it, to the traffic beyond fifteen miles east of them. Certainly that country would never be developed if it had to depend upon the Midland Railway Company for railway facilities. No doubt the Midland Railway Company made an excellent bargain with the Government 25 years ago, and no doubt if their land were to be put into use to-day it would be a handsomely paying proposition. I do not know what induced the company to send along a map for the information of honourable members. It is supposed to be a map prepared on a close classification of the country to be served by this proposed line. I am bound to confess I do not view the production with great alarm, because honourable members who know the country will know that the map is a libel on it. I do not understand how a man like Mr. Gardiner—I presume it was he who had this map prepared—could dare to send this House a map which is so inaccurate, to say the least of it.

Mr. Scaddan: You have not classified either.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, we have. There is no doubt about it this map supplied by the Midland Railway Company has been prepared, not from information gathered on the spot, but from

Mr. Gardiner's office in Perth. I will show hon. members directly where in a number of places the map is inaccurate.

Mr. Angwin: You know he went through there with Mr. Paterson previously.

The Minister for Works: He only went through the Midland Company's land.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That would not assist him in the preparation of this map. Hon. members will remember when the Great Southern lands were being taken over the Great Southern Company sent classifiers out—Sir Newton Moore was one—and it took three parties 18 months to make the classification of three million acres. If Mr. Gardiner had set about a close classification of this land, he would have had to ride something over 12,000 miles, which would have taken 800 days. Has he spent 80 days on the work? Nothing like it. Mr. Gardiner has not put up a closely classified map in the House; quite the reverse. I say nothing more scandalous has ever happened in the history of the Government of this State than the furnishing of this map. This map has been sent along with the idea of destroying the proposition the Government have before the country of building a railway from Wongan Hills to the Murchison. Could any member endeavour to justify this map supplied by the Midland Company, knowing as he must know that it is altogether inaccurate? We have sold 881 lots comprising 1,200,000 acres in this area between Mullewa and Wongan Hills. We have cut up 400,000 acres, and are now cutting up 200,000 acres covering about 50 per cent. of the whole of the land referred to by Mr. Gardiner. If hon. members will examine the map supplied by the Midland Railway Company they will see that Mr. Gardiner has marked in blue "fair to good land," in brown "mostly sandplain with patches of good land," in red "sandplain and inferior country," in yellow "land not carefully inspected on account of scarcity of water, but what was seen appears to be poor sandplain

with patches of good land." If you examine this map you will see that to the north of the privately owned land very little good land is shown. I have had plotted on this map a few of the subdivisions we have had closely classified. I need not tell members what the system of classification is. The member for Guildford can explain, because he has had something to do with land lately, and he knows a little about this. If Mr. Gardiner had thought for a moment he would have seen he could get these classification plans covering 400,000 acres, and he could have had them accurately plotted on this map. Instead of that, he trusted to a casual inspection of the country, and has put up this remarkable map as the result. The Morowa subdivision, which comes within the classification of the Midland Company, is, as hon. members know, a subdivision which was thrown open as far back as the 30th September last. It is one of the very best subdivisions we have yet thrown open to the public, and it was eagerly taken up, there being something like 160 applicants for the blocks. There are about 50,000 acres in this subdivision, and of this area 35,627 acres is magnificent country. Yet Mr. Gardiner on his plan does not show 15,000 acres of good country. Hon. members will see on the map what Mr. Gardiner calls first class, second class, and third class land inside this subdivision.

Mr. Angwin: That map is on a different scale.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is a different thing altogether. This map of ours tells the truth about the country. The two maps are in all respects different. If the hon. member desires to endorse this map supplied by the Midland company let him do so if he can. This map of ours has been very carefully prepared indeed, and is absolutely accurate: we guarantee it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The land is only a flea-bite as compared with the whole area.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This south-western corner is, as hon. members

will see by the map, all magnificent country. They will see that it is marked at 27s. 6d. and 28s. per acre, and that the Agricultural Bank have put the maximum advance of £450 against each of these blocks. Notwithstanding that this map of ours was out on the 13th September, the Midland Railway Company have sent along their plan and marked the whole of this magnificent land as sandplain. They have taken just about one-third of the good land comprised in this area, and which we know to be good, and have shown it on their map as being the limit of the good country. I wish to convince hon. members that this map supplied by the Midland Railway Company is absolutely inaccurate, and it not the result of detailed inquiry. I venture to say that no man who knows anything about classification would have sent along a map prepared with so little information. I can, I think, adduce sufficient information to convince hon. members that they can disregard this advice which has been sent them by the Midland Railway Company. In Morawa Subdivision No. 2, by the way, which is just to the north of No. 1 and right on the line of railway, Mr. Gardiner shows no good land at all. From our surveyors' reports and classification sheets we know that over 16,000 acres of it is magnificent country. Hon. members know from their own experience how carefully we classify and prepare this land for settlement, and will realise of how little value is a map which discloses such discrepancies. Before I leave the Morawa subdivision let me say the Midland Railway Company's plan shows the rainfall to be nine inches. We say it is 13 inches. Mr. Gardiner has reduced the rainfall from 13 inches to nine inches.

Mr. Seaddan: Where do you get the records from?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: From the Commonwealth Department; they are not prepared by the State department at all.

Mr. Seaddan: They have no stations out there.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes.

Mr. Gill: They have one at Rothesay, just beyond.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The rainfall on the whole is better than is shown on the Government maps. Notwithstanding this, Mr. Gardiner reduces it from 13 inches to nine inches only. It would be interesting to have some explanation of this discrepancy. At any rate it is my duty as Minister for Lands to point out to the House just what happened in the preparation of this map supplied by the Midland Railway Company. The Perenjori estate is one of the subdivisions lately made, and therefore I have a close classification of the country. You will see that in the Perenjori estate Mr. Gardiner has a very small patch of blue. I would like to point out that Mr. Gardiner ventures to show on that map little 10-acre patches of first class land coloured blue, so as to convey the idea of accuracy be put in a rather small patch of blue for Perenjori. There are 60,000 acres in this subdivision. The land would delight the heart of any man; yet, according to Mr. Gardiner's map it is practically worthless. Mr. Gardiner's brush was dipped in the brown paint so he marked Perenjori "largely sandplain." As I have said, there are in this magnificent area 60,000 acres. It is a fairly big area of country, and it would be impossible for any man to mistake 60,000 acres of first class land for sandplain. Yet, that is what the Midland Railway Company have done: they show from 8,000 to 10,000 acres of first class as against the 60,000 acres actually there.

Mr. Bolton: Is that settled yet?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; it will not be open till February. I have just taken these three areas as an indication of what has happened in the preparation of this map supplied by the Midland Railway Company, and we have no reason to suppose that greater care has been taken in the preparation of other sections of the map. No trouble at all has been taken to ascertain the quality of the land. Wherever in doubt, they have painted it brown.

Mr. Collier: When you are in doubt you usually paint it blue.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I should be jolly well ashamed to paint this land brown. I want to again impress on

the House that 1,200,000 acres of the land have been sold—and the people would have been foolish indeed if they had selected in this area other than first class land, seeing that the selection was made at a time when the whole of the country was open. I have endeavoured to show the House how inaccurate is this classification of Mr. Gardiner's, and I hope I have convinced hon. members they would be mistaken if they paid the slightest heed to the particulars furnished them by the Midland Company. In sending this map along the Midland Railway Company have done something they should be heartily ashamed of.

Mr. Holman: Who are the big owners along the line?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would like to be one, but I am not.

Mr. Holman: But who are they?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The land between Wongan Hills and Mullewa is all held under conditional purchase conditions. Members know the Land Act and they know that a man cannot hold more than 2,000 acres of first-class land with residence or 5,000 acres of third class land.

Mr. Collier: A man with a large family can hold a fairly big area then?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: And he should do, and I would like the hon. member if he had a big family to hold a large area. It is fortunate there are no large areas held by a single person through which the line passes.

Mr. Collier: What about Glowrey?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Mr. Glowrey cannot hold more than the statutory limit.

Mr. Collier: How much does Mr. Glowrey hold?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know. I promised to let the member for Mt. Magnet have a list of the blocks held by Mr. Glowrey, but I can assure the House Mr. Glowrey does not hold any land illegally. He can only hold the statutory area. I have said all I wish to say about this map. I hope members will study the plotting down and the classification by Mr. Gardiner, when they will, no doubt, disregard the advice tendered by

the Midland Company. The country through which the line will go can safely be set down as 50 per cent. good; there are 2,658,000 acres to be served, and of that fully $1\frac{1}{4}$ millions is good wheat land. I have always said that if 10 per cent. of the land adjacent to the railway lines were under cultivation on the fallow system that the line would pay. To-day we have more than 5 per cent. of the land adjacent to the railway lines in the agricultural districts under crop, and if 10 per cent. is put under crop the line will pay, and if in this case one-third of the area can be put under crop the line will become a magnificent proposition; the line would then result in not only 50,000 tons of wheat being sent to the ports for shipment but 100,000 tons of wheat each year. I believe the opportunity will be availed of, because I know no place in the State which will respond more readily to cultivation than this area. Members know that the land is not only easily cleared but is easily brought under crop. This means that every acre cleared during the next five or six years can be put in straight away, and probably will be put in during the next three or four years, therefore we can rightly expect the line to be a payable proposition as its merits are not possessed by every good proposition we have placed before the House.

Mr. Seaddan: What is the average yield?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is not under crop yet, how could it be? It is 30 miles from the Midland Railway.

Mr. Collier: How can you forecast 100,000 tons of wheat then?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I can forecast and I can estimate.

Mr. Collier: But you cannot estimate what the land will grow?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I can and I will, and my estimate is conservative. Extending from Wongan Hills to Mullewa—

Mr. Seaddan: But what is your estimate?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Ten bushels to produce 100,000 tons of freight, and if it is 15 bushels, as probably it will be, and my surveyors often say it will be

20 bushels, but I like to put down the lowest estimate, it will produce 150,000 tons of freight. The land is not only magnificent wheat land but good stock land as well. The member for Mt. Magnet was right in saying that the land eastward is good land as far as Yalgoo and onwards, and if it is not used as wheat land it can be stocked. If, in process of time, the land between Yalgoo and Jibberding is put under cultivation, and is good wheat growing land, this line will have the benefit. We are not afraid to build all the lines to develop this country, we are opening up the land between Mullewa and Wongan Hills. The other line will find itself placed on the programme so soon as we see that it is a safe proposition.

Mr. Scaddan: You open up a lot under false pretences.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would like to hear how that is done.

Mr. Scaddan: You authorised the extension of the line seven miles further than that.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: We are taking it 170 miles now.

Mr. Scaddan: But you alter the route in it.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not think you are right.

Mr. Scaddan: I am sure I am.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Do not be too sure. I would be pleased indeed if the line could be taken to the Gap, because there are settlers west to the hills far away, and if it is found necessary to take the line out to the east of Wongan Hills—if it goes much to the east—the settlers west must be served from the Bolgart railway. I desire to assure the House we have magnificent country out there notwithstanding the map put up by the Midland Railway Company. I hope the House will pass the railway by a unanimous vote so that the Midland Company will see we are going to deal with this country of ours as we think best and not as seems to them best. They have made a very big start, have they not?

Mr. Scaddan: You had better give notice of that question.

Mr. ANGWIN (East Fremantle): It is not my intention to delay the passage of this Bill, but I certainly think the Government should have allowed an adjournment after the second reading was moved although the Minister had placed his information before members. This is a line entailing an expenditure of close on £400,000, and although the Minister quoted many figures on the second reading we have not had the opportunity of looking through the figures and examining them to see if this line is going to be beneficial to the State or not. The Minister for Lands has declared very strongly in regard to the plan which is supposed to be sent here, he said, from Mr. Gardiner.

The Minister for Lands: The Midland Railway Company.

Mr. ANGWIN: The Minister for Works did not know where it came from, he said the words "Midland Railway Company" were on the top. He could not find out where it came from or who distributed it, or who was responsible for it, but the Minister for Lands says he has no doubt it is from Mr. Gardiner. If it did come from Mr. Gardiner we should consider, knowing that Mr. Gardiner is a representative of the Midland company, who have a large area of land in that locality open for sale, that Mr. Gardiner would not produce anything which would be detrimental to the land the company have for sale in that district. This map points out that the valuation of a good deal of the land shown there has been made by Mr. Paterson, an officer of the State; if that is so and it is accurate, we cannot run away from the fact that there might be some reason why a map of this description was distributed amongst members. I do not want to go to the Midland company's map at all, but I wish to draw attention to the Government map on the wall, and members will see the Minister's favourite colour, green. I think we can only come to one conclusion, that for the present there is a necessity to extend the line further north in the Wongan Hills district to Dalwallinu and Nugadong. If members take into consideration the other areas thrown open for selection in a northerly

direction they will see there is no settlement there yet to warrant the construction of a line of railway as is described in this Bill. It appears to me there is something wrong in the opening up of various areas for selection in the State. We are building hundreds of miles of railway in different parts of the State to serve a few settlers. In opening up this State if we have such large areas of good land we should concentrate the areas different from what is being done now. If members look at the map they will see in the southern portion a patch of green, which means land suitable for cultivation, and it is close on 50 or 60 miles before we come to another area. If there is good land between those two areas why not concentrate the surveyors on that area and survey the land, and concentrate the settlers there. Instead of that we have railways running long distances from which no return will come for years. I would have liked the matter to be adjourned for the express purpose of comparing the figures placed before us and those given by the Minister for Works. The Minister for Lands stated we have 1,200,000 acres of land sold, yet on the information in connection with the proposal that is before us we find that the land alienated within 15 miles of the line, including the Midland land, comprises 660,000 acres; there is a great difference between the two. This has been distributed for the information of members showing the amount of development in the district. While the Minister tells us there are 1,200,000 acres of land sold we find the advisory board stating—

The country lying within 12½ miles on either side of the proposed route, and exclusive of what is or will be served by the Murchison Railway and Wongan extension, embraces an area of about 2,330,000 acres, of which about 585,000 acres are freehold granted to the Midland Railway Company; about 348,300 acres held under conditional purchase; about 150,000 acres applied for under conditional purchase conditions but not yet approved; and, about 1,246,700 acres of vacant Crown lands.

We find here that the land open for selec-

tion amounts to 1,717,853 acres, while the advisory board stated that the area is 1,246,000, or a difference of about 500,000 acres. That is only a small detail as far as the information is concerned, but it proves to my mind that it is necessary when a Bill is brought forward for the expenditure of a large sum of money amounting to £328,000, and with extras which will run it into close on £350,000, that some time should be allowed members to look into the question before being called upon to vote for the construction of such a work. I might say that the plan which the Midland Railway Company have put before us does not weigh with me one iota. I believe that it is necessary that this State should have this connection by railway with the Murchison goldfields, and I think also that it is advisable when we build railways for the opening up of our agricultural districts, and when we have a goldfield like the Murchison so close to this district, we should also take into consideration whether that railway is going to benefit the goldfield or not. To my mind as far as this railway is concerned it is not intended as a goldfields railway at all; it is intended entirely for agriculture and that is why it is to be taken to Mullewa. I would like the Government to consider the advisableness of branching this line off in some direction in the north and connecting it with either Yalgoo or Magnet so as to better serve the Murchison goldfields. There is no doubt that the people in this district have been heavily handicapped. On the several occasions of my visits to those areas my attention has been drawn to the great expense the people have been put to owing to the want of proper railway communication, more particularly with the settled parts of the State. While I am in accord with the Government in extending this railway, if they think that it is advisable that the line should also be a goldfields as well as agricultural line, I think that instead of carrying it on to Mullewa immediately, they might stop at Morawa, or at one of the places about there and take into consideration the question of the terminal point at a later date. This railway will not be built for the next three or four

years and there would be in that time sufficient period in which to consider the terminal point. If this were done greater satisfaction would be given and the result would be beneficial to the people as a whole.

Mr. JACOBY (Swan): I desire to say a few words regarding this proposal, and it is mainly to express the doubt which I feel as to whether we are yet in possession of sufficient accurate information to justify us in voting for this railway. I would be one of the first to support a line of this description, but I have heard so many different opinions as to the quality of the land to be served that I have very considerable doubt indeed as to whether the statements put before us regarding the quantity of good land available for cultivation there really represent the facts. We have had figures from the Minister for Lands, but we all know that if we wish to get the real value of the figures quoted by that gentleman we have to divide them by ten on every occasion.

The Premier: That is not fair.

Mr. JACOBY: I cannot help thinking that this hon. member's enthusiasm for that line is to some extent parochial, because it must naturally follow if that line is built it will give a great stimulus to trade in the particular centre the hon. gentleman represents. I do not object to the Minister for Lands doing all he can for his particular district, but in a case like this we have to be satisfied that the country which is to be served by this railway is such that it will justify the construction of the line.

Mr. Angwin: If we said that the Minister would resent it.

Mr. JACOBY: An inspection has been made of the land at the instance of the Midland Railway Company, and the surveyor who was employed by that company to inspect the land on their behalf, is a gentleman in whose opinion and in whose veracity I have the utmost confidence, and when he prepares a map, and I presume the map has been prepared under instructions from him, showing that there is such a large area of land which is useless for cultivation, and that the area fit for cultivation is comparatively small, I must treat that opinion with the

greatest respect. I have also had the opportunity of obtaining information from one of the members of the Railway Advisory Board, and, though I am not able to quote my authority, it is a sound authority. This member is one of the most cautious on that Board, and I asked him what justification existed for the Board bringing in a report which was favourable to the construction of the line, and whether he considered that the country he traversed justified the construction of the line. This gentleman told me that he traversed an enormous area of poor country and that his only reason for supporting the proposition to build the line was that several settlers had been put on to certain districts along the proposed route and they had been promised by the Government that the line would be constructed. He said his justification in giving his opinion in favour of that line was the promise held out to those settlers by the Government that the line would be built.

Mr. Angwin: He does not say so in his report.

The Minister for Works: Are you taking his private statement before his official report?

Mr. JACOBY: I am.

The Minister for Works: Then you ought to name him. He ought to be sacked.

Mr. Johnson: He has been sacked.

Mr. JACOBY: It is my duty to get all the information I can as to the possibilities of the district, through which it is proposed to construct railways, and it is upon such information, compared with other information that one becomes possessed of, that one can recognise whether he can safely exercise the responsibility of voting for or against a line. I am not prepared at this stage to say that this line is or is not justified, but I am prepared to say that because of the information I have received, I want more information before I shall take the responsibility of committing the country to the large expenditure which will be involved in the construction of the line. The main argument of the Minister for Works in favour of constructing the line is the fact that we shall get a large amount of the gold-

fields trade which now travels over the Midland railway. What is our position in this matter? The goldfields are already served with railway communication, and surely it should be our duty in this vast country, where railways are required in many districts, to see that those districts not already served are given railway facilities, before we start duplicating the system in other centres. Those of us who do not have an opportunity of visiting these particular districts, when we have such divergent opinions as to the quality of the land and the prospects of agriculture, should be absolutely satisfied in our own minds by further inquiry that a line is justified before taking the responsibility of voting for its construction. I do not know what might be the best means to adopt in order to get that information in time for the Bill to be considered this session. I think under all the circumstances we would be justified in deferring the construction of this line until we had such information at our disposal which would enable us to give a vote upon it on its actual merits. Members cannot entirely disregard the plan which has been sent in by the Midland Railway Company and which has been prepared by an officer acting on their behalf, and whose integrity every member in the House respects.

Mr. HEITMANN: I suppose he only acted under instructions.

Mr. JACOBY: The gentleman was sent there to see what he could see and to report upon what he had seen. When he makes an inspection of that sort and brings in a report, surely if we have not adequate information from the other side, and if we look at the map presented by the Government, we should pause and say there is sufficient doubt as to the correctness of the information supplied and we should therefore respect the Midland Railway Company's officer's report, and pause before taking the responsibility of voting for the construction of the line.

The Premier: How much time did he spend there?

Mr. JACOBY: I ask how much time was spent there by the Government officers?

The Premier: Any amount.

Mr. JACOBY: Is there a correct map showing us the actual value of the land in this district? There is not. The traverse made by the Board was practically in a straight line the whole time, and what information could they get from that? Moreover they went at a time when a good deal of the country was under water and it was difficult to travel over it, and impossible to judge of the nature of the land.

The Premier: They did not go over a straight line.

Mr. JACOBY: I am not averse to the construction of the line. I have supported the Government in every railway proposal right up to this, and I only stop now because I have an honest doubt as to whether the information we have at our disposal is such as to justify me in voting for the line. I hope that further inquiry will be made into the matter.

Mr. ANGWIN: Who is the Midland Company's officer who inspected the line?

Mr. JACOBY: Mr. John Ewing.

Mr. ANGWIN: The Government have every confidence in him, surely.

Mr. JACOBY: I have the highest respect for the integrity of that gentleman and when he sends in such a report as that which we have before us—

The Minister for Works: Where is his signature to the report?

Mr. JACOBY: I am sure of this, that if the Government sent Mr. Ewing to make a report on their behalf they would have accepted his report without any question whatever. Further information is required in regard to this proposed railway, and under the circumstances I feel I shall not be justified in voting for it.

Mr. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): The hon. member for Swan has, I think, struck the key-note in connection with this particular line. The question arises whether hon. members of this Chamber have had sufficient information of a reliable character placed before them to justify them in voting for an expenditure of over £300,000 for the construction of this railway. I want to ask members whether they are satisfied that the line is purely an agricultural one, what might be termed one of the lines that are making up our sys-

tem of light agricultural railways for the purpose of serving agricultural land only. Personally I am of opinion that this line will not only serve agricultural districts, but that it will eventually serve the Murchison goldfields, and if it does not do that it is useless.

Mr. Holman: It is useless.

Mr. SCADDAN: That depends as to where it should junction with the Cue line; but that is a point in regard to which I cannot express an opinion that would be of any weight. If the line is going to be a through line, it ought to be standardised, and instead of 45-lb. rails being put in, it should have 60-lb. rails. There is no doubt in my mind that it will be necessary before long to use rails other than 45-lb., and that the proposed expenditure will be increased considerably above £300,000. Members should be cautious before agreeing to the construction of a line in the way proposed by the Government. Is there any immediate hurry for the passage of this Bill? Is it the intention of the Government to proceed with the construction of this line immediately?

The Premier: Certainly.

Mr. SCADDAN: I believe that not even a flying survey has been made, and in those circumstances surely there is no intention to proceed at once with the construction of the line.

The Premier: Why not? The settlers want it.

Mr. SCADDAN: Certainly the settlers have wanted it for a long time.

The Premier: Now you are going to prevent the settlers getting it.

Mr. SCADDAN: I am not going to prevent them getting it. The Premier knows that he fixed the route of this line before the advisory board had been over it.

The Premier: I announced the policy; I did not fix the route.

Mr. SCADDAN: The Premier did fix the route, and announced that it would go further east than the route originally agreed upon.

The Premier: The hon. member does not know what he is talking about. I

fixed the terminus of the present Wongan Hills railway.

Mr. SCADDAN: The Premier did more than that. Parliament authorised the building of 40 miles of railway from Goomalling to Wongan Hills. Only 33 miles of that railway was constructed, and the last seven miles has not been constructed yet. The Premier visited this district and told the settlers that the remaining seven miles of line was not going to follow the route decided on by Parliament, but was going to be taken further eastward.

The Premier: No, I did not.

Mr. SCADDAN: I have it on the authority of those who were present.

The Premier: Then your authority is wrong.

Mr. SCADDAN: My authority is not wrong. Settlers who were present told me.

The Premier: I tell the hon. member his authority is wrong. He has been wrongly informed, and that should be sufficient. I would not be so foolish as to say the line should go to the east.

Mr. SCADDAN: Then if the Premier did not state that the line was going to the east, what caused the Government to stop that line seven miles from its proper terminus?

The Premier: If you will sit down I will tell you.

Mr. SCADDAN: The Premier knows that if I sit down I will not have another opportunity unless he speaks by way of explanation. He knows that there was something that caused the Government not to construct that line for its full length, although people were persuaded to settle to the west of the Wongan Hills in the belief that the line would be constructed for the full 40 miles. The line was stopped by the Government seven miles short of the terminus, and it is a remarkable thing that the people in the district knew, before the advisory board went there to report on the through railway to the Murchison, that the Wongan Hills line was not going along the full route decided on by Parliament.

The Premier: No route was decided on by Parliament. Authority was given to construct 40 miles of railway.

Mr. Heitmann: Was it not surveyed?

Mr. SCADDAN: Of course it was surveyed. The Premier is only quibbling. Had the Government authority to build a line from Goomalling to anywhere? The Government know that Parliament was told where the terminus would be, and they altered the route, and I say again that it is remarkable that the settlers knew that the line was not going over that last seven miles. I have it on the authority of the Chairman of the Progress Committee that the Premier said to him that he knew all about the district, that he did not want any information from the people to the west of the Wongan Hills, and that the line was going more easterly than the route previously authorised by Parliament. That was about two months before the advisory board was sent there to report. Putting that together with what was said by the member for Swan, it is evident that the information obtained in regard to this line is not of a nature which would commend itself to members in voting for the expenditure of over £300,000 of our public funds. It must not be forgotten that we have been asked to accept without question the report of the advisory board, and what sort of a report is it? The member for Swan assured us that one of the members who signed the report stated distinctly that the land he went through was in a great measure of inferior quality. Where does the independent board's opinion come in now? Is it not a fact that the board arrived at their opinion on these matters by a majority? And although there may be a dissentient opinion among the members of the board, we never get minority report. Is it not desirable on all occasions when we are asked to give authority for the building of railways such as this, that we should have the freest possible expression of opinion by every individual member of the board? It would be of advantage to them, as well as to Parliament and the Government, if each member of the board were asked to submit an individual

report from the special standpoint which he had particularly to consider.

Mr. Angwin: There is no railway man on the board.

Mr. SCADDAN: No, and I do not know that it requires a railway man altogether. My main point is that there is no immediate urgency about the passing of this Bill. Surely the Government have enough railways authorised and under construction to keep them occupied for the next two years, and I venture to say there will not be 10 miles of this line constructed within the next two years if the Bill is passed. In these circumstances surely we should be satisfied, before voting for the measure, that the expenditure of this money is fully warranted. I believe that even a number of the lines authorised in previous years have not been completed, and this session we have passed nearly 1,000 miles of additional railway. It is impossible for the Government to construct the whole of them.

The Premier: You have not passed them yet; there is only 600 miles altogether, nearly 200 miles of which is in this line.

Mr. SCADDAN: The Premier knows that he will be kept busy for the next two years in completing these lines if he starts them. The position that we are faced with is that either the Government have not supplied us with full information, or the Midland Railway Company, in order to serve their own interests, have supplied information to the House that is absolutely untrue.

The Premier: That is true.

Mr. SCADDAN: I do not know that it is true. It is all very well for the Lands Department to mark this map in brown showing the areas that have been selected, but it is impossible for a layman to say whether the map is accurate or not.

Mr. Collier: Will the Government impugn the reliability of Mr. Ewing?

Mr. SCADDAN: They have done so, they carefully avoid the point that although Mr. Gardiner was principally responsible for the plan being prepared by the Midland Company and submitted to the House, it was prepared on the sur-

veys of Mr. Ewing, a surveyor whom every man in the House respects.

The Premier: His signature is not on the plan.

Mr. SCADDAN: His signature does not matter. The Premier knows that Mr. Ewing prepared the plan, and either the Government are impugning the honesty of Mr. Ewing as a surveyor, or they are impugning the honesty of Mr. Gardiner when he submitted that map. They are either saying that Mr. Ewing when he prepared the plan made a false classification of the land, or on the other hand that Mr. Gardiner, who submitted the plan, deliberately and wilfully made that plan different from the information submitted to him by Mr. Ewing. Hon. members should have an opportunity to satisfy themselves as to who is right. It is all very well for the Lands Department to mark on the map the areas that have been thrown open and are available, but who is to say whether they are properly located? In these circumstances unless there is an urgent need for the authorisation of this line during the present session, members should be certain that the Government are in possession of the facts before agreeing to vote this amount of £300,000. Without impugning the honesty of the Lands Department, or of the Midland Railway Company, we have to decide between the two, and we are asked to believe either that Mr. Gardiner or Mr. Ewing has been dishonest, or that the Lands Department have been dishonest. I am not prepared to say that either has been dishonest, but before being able to vote for the construction of this line we owe it as a duty to the public that we should satisfy ourselves as to who is right. Between now and the next session, we can gain all the information we require, and members cannot then come to the House and ask for a further adjournment because they have not had time to consider the project. To ask members to agree to the building of 200 miles of railway without information of a reliable nature is to ask them to do that which they are not justified in doing. I trust the Government will give us the opportunity of comparing the position as placed

before us by the Lands Department with that placed before us by the Midland Railway Company.

Mr. GILL (Balkatta): I do not intend to say anything in regard to the merits or the demerits of this proposed railway, further than that when I first saw the map the railway naturally appealed to me as being one that met with my support, for the one reason in particular, that it is a loopline, and a line that can be worked economically, and in a manner that will give a greater amount of satisfaction than spur lines can possibly do.

Mr. Bolton: It is a long loopline of 190 miles.

Mr. GILL: Well, we will call it a trunk line. I was glad to see there was a proposition to do away with spur lines in at least one portion of the State. I never favoured spur lines. I consider they are a stumbling block to the progress of the State, as they cannot be economically worked, and they are a source of annoyance. In the way they are worked they cannot give the convenience that a trunk or loopline can give. However, I rose to express my views with regard to some of the classifications of the areas for the benefit of the leader of the Opposition as much as anybody else. The hon. member has alluded to one classification we have had supplied by someone. It reminds me of the Christmas stockings we see in the windows, that the children buy. It is headed, "Midland Railway Company." Two of the areas that have been allocated I have been through, namely, Merkanooka and Mornwa. I spent two days in that country, and I have implicit confidence in the classification issued by the Lands Department in connection with these two areas. I went over the whole of them, and I had maps with me, and in every particular, as far as I could find, those maps were perfectly correct. Again, in regard to the Dalwallinu area further south, I know several of the persons who have taken up land there. I have several personal friends who are located on that area, and they all told me that their maps were perfectly reliable, that the land is first-class almost without

exception, that though there are small patches that can be classed as second-class, generally speaking it is all first-class land. If the Dalwallinu classification is as true as the Morawa and Merkanooka classifications, I can only say that the plan submitted to us by someone is absolutely unreliable.

The Premier: There is no question about it.

Mr. GILL: There is not the least question about it in my mind, knowing the two areas as I do; and I think it is somewhat of a disgrace and a scandal that we should have plans submitted here that are not true. It does not help us whatever in our advocacy of the settlement of the land in that district. I am perfectly satisfied that it is a good tract of country. Of course there have been exceptions taken to the large unsurveyed spaces between the settlement areas. I cannot account for them, but I know that above Morawa, to the north of Morawa, and south of Mullewa, there is a tract of country on which a large number of settlers can be placed. There should be enough there to locate between 200 or 300 settlers. I know this of my own knowledge; and taking this in conjunction with the other areas we have surveyed, I am satisfied that when this line is constructed there will be no doubt about its paying. There is just one point with regard to the areas already allotted. Take Dalwallinu, Merkanooka, Morawa, and Perinjori; these areas have been allotted and persons are settled there and are clearing and preparing for cultivating. Now, if this line is delayed as evidently some members desire, what are we to do with those persons? There certainly is a suggestion to delay it owing to the fact that there are some large areas held by different persons on the route of the line. I do not know of this; but from the little information I have gained, and from the hints I have received, most of these persons are catered for already by a Bill we passed last session to continue the railway to Wongan Hills. I believe there is another large estate held by the Glowreys—I do not know how many of them—that this line

will touch or go through. If it is a large estate held by one person it is to be regretted, sincerely regretted, but that should not prevent members of this Chamber assisting those who have already gone up there and invested a good deal of money and put a good deal of labour on the blocks allotted to them some time ago. At Dalwallinu in particular they have been doing a lot of work and spending a lot of money. It is the same on some of the other areas. What are we going to do with them if the railway is not built? Some railway must be built to these settlements. They must have railway communication; the people are settled there; they have spent a great deal of money, many of them, and have done a lot of good work, and some means of railway communication must be given to them. We must either build a railway of this description or spur lines. If we built spur lines they must go out from the Midland Railway, and I strongly object to that. I can see no other means of giving them railway communication than by running a trunk line, which this undoubtedly should be; and that being the case, I intend to give my full support to the proposal.

The PREMIER (Hon. Frank Wilson): I merely rise to reply, to some extent, to the leader of the Opposition, and before doing so perhaps I must express my regret that he immediately jumped at the condemnation, practically, for the time being at any rate, of a big project of this nature, a railway construction which means so much to the State of Western Australia, because of some alleged statement that I had made to the chairman of a progress committee at Wongan Hills.

Mr. Seaddon: No, that is only one of the reasons.

The PREMIER: It was the main reason. Let me explain to the hon. member the position so far as I can remember it in regard to that matter. The hon. member will remember that about 18 months ago, when I was Minister for Works, I introduced a Bill for a railway from Goomalling to Wongan Hills, and the question arose in debate as to whether that line should be slewed to the westward round a lake, the name of which I forget,

to the south of the Wongan Hills range, and around a spur that runs several miles east and west, and then come in to the east again towards the north end of these hills. In order to pacify, I think it was the member for Murray, who took up the cudgels on behalf of those who advocated that the line should go to the west of the hills, I promised him that before the line was constructed, and before it reached the point when it would go to the east of the hills, either the Premier or myself would visit the district and see where the line ought to go. As time went on and it became my duty to take up the position of Acting Premier, I went out and visited that district in keeping with the promise that had been made to Parliament. That was the only promise that was made on that occasion. I inspected the country all around the Wongan Hills in company with the Inspector of Engineering Surveys, Mr. Muir; and after interviewing all and sundry who cared to interview me, including the chairman of the progress association—by the way, the members of the association at the time consisted of three, one being the chairman elected, the other the secretary, and the third constituting the association; at least so I was credibly informed by a gentleman who has a large holding to the westward of the hills who was also equally concerned with those gentlemen in having the line brought that way if it could be managed—as I was saying, after examining the whole thing, going through the pass to the westward of the hills, and going to the north and to the north-east, I came to the conclusion that the proper course for that line to take was to the eastward of the Wongan Hills. And further, after examining the country, I came to the conclusion that we ought to stop for the time being just opposite the southern gap—for this reason; because there had been a trial survey made over the seven miles between the southern and the northern gaps, and there is a ridge of hills running to the eastward of the southern gap which had to be crossed; so that if we took the line to the point to which the leader of the Opposition says it ought to have gone, we would have had to haul the load on at least

a one in 60 grade extending for three miles in length, and I came to the conclusion as a practical man that this was too great a drop indeed in a railway of this description when I was bound to confess that this was the first section of what would ultimately prove a through main line to the Murchison railway. So I agreed with the Inspector of Engineering Surveys, Mr. Muir, that it was advisable we should terminate the contract at the southern gap, and I instructed him that as early as possible he was to see what was the easiest get-out. I must explain. These Wongan Hills run north and south with a spur running westward at the foot, forming almost the shape of a boot, and there is rising ground running, perhaps, a couple of miles to the east right opposite the southern gap. This rising ground had, of course, to be got round if we were to take the railway north with a decent grade, and my instructions were that the surveyors had to then see how they could best get out from the terminus we had fixed on opposite the southern gap and the rising ground, with the object of going round to the northern gap on the survey northward—that is the position in a nutshell—in order that the people on the west side of the hills might have a railway brought to their doors as near as possible and have the advantage of using the northern gap to bring their produce to the railway. That was not fixing any route of the line which we propose for the acceptance of the House to-night. I never fixed any route at all. I fixed the temporary terminal point of the line and indicated the inquiry that had to be made before the continuation of that line. Now I come to this point, which has been made so much of by the leader of the Opposition and others, namely that we should hang up the construction of the line because we have more work than we can carry out. I want to point out that that is not so, and even if we could not build the whole of this line for three years, yet we can start the construction and build a section of it, and thus serve a large number of settlers and bring a greater number nearer to the railway system than there are to-day. The construction of railway

lines in Western Australia must be sanctioned far in advance of the actual completion of the work, because we must go on with a continuous policy if we are to make the country prosperous. If we are going to delay it still further—because it would be of no use going on with the survey without the sanction of Parliament—it means that we would probably not get a start under two years instead of getting a start almost immediately.

Mr. Bolton: You will not get a start under two years in either case.

The PREMIER: Yes we will. If this Government remain in office this work, like all other works, will be pushed on with to the fullest extent the labour market will permit. Of course I cannot make men, and if we are short of men, then to that extent the progress of the work must be limited.

Mr. Foulkes: You want to let the settlers know they are going to have a railway.

The PREMIER: Exactly. We have already let them know that. Here, as the Minister for Lands has told you, we have sold 1,200,000 acres of land along the route of this line between the Wongan Hills and the Murchison.

Mr. Angwin: And your information says 666,000 acres.

The PREMIER: Those figures are taken from the advisory board's report, which was based on a radius of $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles on each side of the line.

Mr. Angwin: No, 15 miles.

The PREMIER: Not 15 miles but $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles on either side, whereas the figures quoted by the Minister for Lands are based on 15 miles on either side and include the whole length of the line.

Mr. Angwin: Well it is 15 miles as stated here.

The PREMIER: Surely a clerical error is not going to be allowed to damn the proposition. The facts remain that 1,200,000 acres have been sold to and taken up by settlers, that the land is first class and with intermittent patches extends from end to end of this projected railway, and that these people have settled on the land in all good faith that they

will get railway facilities. Now I am not going to be a party to breaking faith with those people we have induced to settle on those lands. What sort of an advertisement would it be for Western Australia if it went forth to the old country—where we are inducing those people to come out and open up our lands and make them productive, to bring their families and settle and make their homes with us—what sort of an advertisement would it be if it was said that Parliament had thrown this Bill out because of some slight error in the figures placed before the House, notwithstanding that nearly a thousand families had settled in the area? The next point I wish briefly to touch upon is the question of this supposed classification by the Midland Railway Company. I ask hon. members whether it is reasonable to suppose that a report—if there is a report; I have not seen it yet—that a map based on some report, a map which is unsigned and bears merely the Midland Railway Company's title—is it reasonable to suppose that map has been got up with the object of convincing this Chamber that it is desirable this railway should be built? Why have those maps been distributed to every member of both Houses of Parliament? With the one object, of course, of damning the proposition. Here let me read from a speech made by the chairman of this company, a speech which I think will bear out what I am saying, namely that this company's interests are opposed to the construction of this line and that they have done all in their power, and will continue to do all in their power to prevent the line being constructed in that direction.

Mr. Angwin: Do you think they would advertise their own land as being no good?

The PREMIER: They have done it, and in some instances the price they are putting on their land is ridiculous. I well remember a sale of some 6,000 acres of land made a year or two ago at 2s. 3d. an acre. The other day this land was valued for a financial institution at £1 per acre. However that is no concern of mine.

Mr. Angwin: It is a pity you did not take the advice of your colleague five years ago.

The PREMIER: I was quite prepared to take the advice of my colleague five years ago at my own price, and I am still prepared to act on that advice, but at my own price. I was referring to an address by the chairman of directors of this company delivered on December 10th, a few weeks ago. After giving the figures of the progress of the company during the past year, and announcing the interest that could be paid on debenture stock, and the amount of debentures redeemed, he went on to say—

With all that is encouraging, it is however right I should impart to you the fact that the newly appointed Premier of Western Australia, the Hon. Frank Wilson, has in a recent speech intimated that the Government of the State of Western Australia have in contemplation the extension, under authority to be obtained from Parliament, of an existing railway starting from Northam, a point east of where our line commences near Perth, and which now runs north-west toward Goomalling, with the view of ultimately extending that line—which I will call the Goomalling line—until it joins, north of our terminus, the Government line which runs from Geraldton to the goldfields. At the moment the Goomalling line is only a small one of about 35 miles, and the extension in question would involve the construction of an additional 190 odd miles. The subject was one which I had an opportunity of discussing in May and June last with Colonel Sir Newton J. Moore—who was then the Premier—when he was in England in those months, and I did so because some politician in the State Parliament had previously stated that the object with which that Goomalling line might be proceeded was the object and the express object of damaging the Midland Company's railway. I was unwilling to believe that, after all the Midland Railway Company had done in the development of Western Australia and the lands adjacent to our railway, all of which are within a zone

of 40 miles on either side of our line, it could be the intention of the Government to promote any scheme for the purpose of damaging our undertaking, and I was gratified to learn from Sir Newton Moore, with whom I discussed the matter with extreme frankness, that his Government had no intention of promoting the railway with any such object. He did, however, say that the impression prevailed in Western Australia that the lands lying to the north of the present terminus of the Goomalling line were lands which were of a character justifying the serving of those lands by the extension through them of this Goomalling line. While he disavowed, as I have told you, any idea of promoting legislation for the damaging of this company's undertaking, he did expressly say that if these lands were found on examination to be of a character which, from rainfall and other conditions, justified the extension of the Goomalling line, we could not expect that any consideration for the Midland Company would deter the Government from acting fairly by the owners of those lands. Unfortunately, Sir Newton Moore is no longer the Premier of the State of Western Australia, and his successor has declared his intention of extending the Goomalling line. It should be remembered in this connection, however, that the Government of the State has only recently escaped a vote of censure by the narrow majority of one vote. We must therefore watch—I was going to say "Wait and see"—what takes place, and how things develop themselves, and I must ask you to rely upon the assurance I give you, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, that both we here and our lands committee on the other side as well as our attorney, Mr. Murett, are fully alive to the importance of the subject to this company, because, should the line ever be completed right through to the Government goldfields line, it could not fail to have some effect—and a prejudicial effect—upon our traffics which are now, to a large extent, made up of traffic which we carry through to the goldfields line. On

that subject we can only repeat that our representatives in Australia have been fully posted and warned as to what course they ought to take in connection with guarding our interests, but as I have explained, we must wait and see whether the Government do actually decide to press forward with a competitive project which, frankly, would not do any good to our enterprise.

Now that is a frank statement from a director of a company whose interests will and must be affected if this railway line is to be constructed. On the other hand, Sir Newton Moore's statement to the chairman was a frank intimation that if the country warranted the construction of the line we could not possibly allow the Midland Railway Company's interests to interfere with that project. But I want to make this connection between the speech and the maps supplied to hon. members: the instructions were sent out as to the course they had to take to protect their interests, and this is the result of those instructions, namely, to show that the country between Wongan and the Murchison does not warrant the construction of a railway line such as is projected. But in doing this they have overreached the mark, and by their plan have shown that they are only advertising the fact that they do not think so much of their lands as they are really worth. And erroneously they have done a serious injury to the State of Western Australia by saying that the land—which is first class and already settled—is mostly sandplain, or land of inferior quality. That is the position to-night. The leader of the Opposition and the member for Swan wish to take this evidence furnished by the Midland Company as against the evidence of our expert officers who have been through this country month after month, and have been classifying the land by going over it in straight lines every quarter of a mile.

Mr. Troy: They were not a month on the journey.

The PREMIER: Mr. Muir has been over this country twice and the others

have been there once. The officers who produced these plans, who classified the land, have been going all the time, and the advisory board has the benefit of the result of this work to guide them. These results have taken months and months of work.

Mr. Angwin: Look at your own map; there is very little good land in one direction.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Swan would persuade the House in highly righteous indignation that it is not right to carry out this policy because he states that Mr. John Ewing has been engaged on this work, and Mr. John Ewing has pointed out that the land is not good. I have every respect for Mr. John Ewing, and I know that everything Mr. John Ewing did or said would be conscientiously done, but, because we have that respect for that gentleman, we are not to believe that everything said by this company is to condemn the construction of this railway, and to leave settlers who would come within the scope of this railway without a line for two years.

Mr. Scaddan: You impugn their honesty.

The PREMIER: The hon. member is too fond of using those terms, we simply point out errors, and I am showing that whereas there was an inducement on behalf of the company to put the worst aspect on the line, there was not the slightest inducement on the part of the departmental officers to put a favourable light upon it.

Mr. Jacoby: Your own reports say there are only a million acres of first class land.

The PREMIER: That is within twelve and a half miles on either side of the line, but taking the 15 miles on either side members have the figures that the Minister for Lands quoted.

Mr. Jacoby: Does that justify this length of line?

The PREMIER: Undoubtedly: there are 1,200,000 acres already sold, and there is plenty to sell yet. The surveyors are busy cutting up the land in the area painted yellow on the map. Let me say, although I have no authentic

information, that Mr. Ewing, who it is said is responsible for the map, and who I have heard was engaged by the company to go out not to make any classification and inspection, but Mr. Ewing I understood inspected the country only and the time he took could not possibly warrant him in coming to a correct decision as to the quality of the land throughout this vast area, and certainly it would never give him the necessary detailed information which would produce a classification such as our officers have produced on the plan. I will give the member for Swan another problem; we have got 1,200,000 acres of land taken up already, to say nothing of the one million acres that have to be taken up. The 1,200,000 acres have been sold and actually settled. Suppose for argument's sake there is only 20 per cent., or one-fifth under cultivation within the next two or three years, and giving that the very low average of 10 bushels per acre—we know some of the land will produce 20 or 25 bushels per acre—will the hon. member kindly figure it out for me and see how many thousand tons there will be to carry over the railway in three years' time? I have not figured it out, but I will guess at it; it will run into something like 50,000 or 60,000 tons of wheat if that is done. I want to point out this aspect of the question that it is only natural that the company should endeavour to protect their own interests to the best of their ability, but in doing that they should not endeavour to bolster it up with inaccurate information, and certainly they should not receive either the sympathy or the support of any member of this Chamber when such information as they have put before us is calculated to seriously injure the reputation of Western Australia as an agricultural State. I want it to go forth that this information is wrong, is erroneous from end to end. On this tract of country between Wongan Hills and the Murchison line we have some of the best agricultural land in the State, and we have over two million acres of land which will all be wheat-producing within a reasonable distance

of the completion of the line. The company have no cause whatever to find fault with me as head of the Government. The chairman of the company has no right to insinuate in the slightest degree that I am hostile to the operations of his corporation. If the truth were known the company have received more generous treatment from the Administrations of which I have been a member, than they have received from the whole of the Governments dating from Responsible Government. The original contract with the company provided that they should place some 5,000 immigrants within seven years on the land which the country had granted for the construction of this line. What did they do? They never introduced one immigrant, and they could not complete the contract, neither could they complete the construction of the line. When I came to Western Australia nearly 19 years ago the Midland railway was hung up, one of the periodical hangings up for want of funds, and the whole State was under a cloud of depression. Ultimately the company got to work again under a guarantee from the Government for half a million of money. What was the object of granting the concession to the company? That they should people their lands, settle the lands and create a traffic for the railway which they were building. It was never contemplated for a moment that the spending of this money, or the construction of the line, was in order to tap the Murchison goldfields. I believe the Murchison goldfields were unheard of at that time, but that they were discovered afterwards. It was intended that the railway line should be self-supporting by the traffic which the company would create by their immigration policy. That was waived later on, and a grant was made to them of £500,000 by the Government in order that the railway might be completed. Provision to protect the State in connection with the guarantee was that the lands should be mortgaged to the Government, and that they should not be sold, and so the prospect of the company waned. They could not sell their lands, the

traffic over the line was not sufficient to enable them to pay the interest on the debentures, and after many years it was a subject for consideration by the Rason Government as to whether the company should be permitted to throw open their lands, to sell them, and thus settle them. I was one of the strongest advocates of the principle. We then had an offer for the purchase of the line; it had been rejected by Parliament, and this being so my argument was that it did not matter much to us whose land the people settled on in the State as long as we got settlers producing, and as long as we had them here. It did not matter if people purchased land from the Midland company, or from a private individual, or from the State itself. I preferred the State lands should be taken up; nevertheless as Treasurer I had to look at the fact that we wanted to build up an increasing revenue, and an increasing population, and endeavour to get an export trade, and we decided to allow the company to sell their lands with this proviso that the purchase money should be paid into the Treasury less 5 per cent. to cover expenses, and that the money each year should be used to retire the bonds guaranteed by the Government.

Mr. Johnson: What has this to do with the railway?

The PREMIER: If the hon. member cannot see I cannot explain it differently.

Mr. Johnson: You are as far away from the question as you can be.

The PREMIER: The hon. member is highly disorderly in expressing that opinion. The Speaker will call me to order when I am out of order. I want to contend that the prosperity of the company was due to the generous treatment of the Rason Administration who granted this concession, who did it I admit in the interests of the State and not in the interests of the company at all; still it enabled them to settle their lands, and sell their lands, and it increased the traffic over their line until to-day they have a very favourable proposition to handle. The member for Claremont is perfectly right. I know they have lost a lot of money, and they

have my sympathy in that direction, still I do not sympathise with a company that will try and hinder development of a State and decry that State's lands with the object of keeping certain revenues in their own pocket. Let me say at once, as far as the Government are concerned,

I am not going to permit any foreign corporation or company, or any private company of the State, local or foreign, or any individual, to stand in my way if I believe a certain project is in the interests and to the advantage and advancement of the State.

Mr. Johnson: Why did you not talk like that when introducing the land tax?

The PREMIER: I have always talked in this way; I have been consistent right through. We have an argument by one member that we have no warranty to build the northern portion of the line. I say the warranty to build the northern portion of the line is in the fact that we are benefiting the seaport of Geraldton. Geraldton is entitled to get its portion of the traffic from the land developed that is created by the construction of the line. I hope we shall have many hundreds of acres yet settled in this State, and that we shall never cease building railways, and never cease bringing people in until every acre has been cultivated, because delays are dangerous and procrastination is fatal. Wherever we have these railway lines tapping good agricultural areas, we provide a direct benefit for the different ports which serve those areas. If the farmer between Wongan Hills and Mullewa can get his wheat carried to Geraldton for 1s. per ton less than to the port of Fremantle, all things being equal, he is going to send that wheat to Geraldton. We want each port to have its natural trade, and in this respect I say that the northern portion of this line is just as important, apart from the question of land settlement, as the southern portion of it. There are, however, very strong arguments advanced that the Murchison goldfields people should have more direct communication. I have already promised the northern members that I will have a special report

prepared with regard to that project. It was my idea last year when I first discussed this matter that ultimately, if the traffic from the Murchison warranted it, we would be justified in junctioning the line with Yalgoo, or to the east of Yalgoo. If that line will open up a stretch of pastoral country, which I am informed it will pass through, and which can be turned into agricultural land, and if it will open up several new centres in the auriferous area *en route*, I am prepared favourably to consider the carrying out of the project. It all depends upon the information we can gather as to the nature of the country to be served as to whether that branch can be carried out or not. In the meantime I say emphatically we would not be justified in hanging up this proposition for one minute longer than is necessary, and we would not be justified in interfering with the proposed junction at Mullewa, which will enable at any rate the products of the northern portion of the system to go to the port of Geraldton for shipment, which is undoubtedly its rightful due, to say the least of it. I hope the House will pass this measure, resting assured that every possible effort will be made by the Government not only to commence this line but to carry it through with all the expedition at their command, with the object of giving the settlers who are already there and who have gone there in the good faith that the railway will follow, the facilities which they must have if they are to be successful in their enterprises.

Mr. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): I desire to make a personal explanation. It is not often that I take exception to statements made by the Premier or by any other member, nor do I frequently make explanations, but I do not want the Premier to deliberately misrepresent the statement I have made in connection with this particular measure. I did not in any part of my remarks say that I would be prepared to accept the classification of the land as shown by the Midland Railway Company. I never even made a statement from which that could have been inferred.

The Premier: I am glad to hear it; but you said it was an argument for hanging up the job.

Mr. SCADDAN: I stated that the Minister for Lands had impugned the honesty of Mr. Ewing or Mr. Gardiner, and in view of the fact that there was such a discrepancy between the two classifications, one submitted by the Lands Department and the other by the Midland Railway Company, it was due to hon. members that they should have an opportunity of getting all the information possible in order to decide which classification was correct. I never asked that the construction of the line should be delayed; I distinctly stated that I did not have sufficient knowledge of any of that country to decide for myself which was correct. I think that the Premier might have been fair enough to recognise that that was the attitude I adopted instead of deliberately stating that I was opposed to the construction of this line because I was prepared to accept the Midland company's classification.

The PREMIER: If I used words which conveyed the meaning that the hon. member put upon them, I am sorry and I withdraw them. I certainly understood from the remarks of the leader of the Opposition that he was not prepared to support the passing of this Bill and that he suggested it should be delayed because of the information. I have tried to show that we are not justified in accepting this information because I am satisfied it is erroneous to say the least of it, and that the information which we have from our departmental officers is worthy of being accepted. If my words conveyed any other meaning I am sorry.

Mr. ANGWIN (East Fremantle): I would like to say in explanation that I did not quote from the information supplied by the advisory board. When I referred to the number of acres sold I did so from the return given to us by the Minister. I read from the table containing the information supplied to us to-day just prior to the introduction of the Bill by the Minister for Works, and this sets out that the land alienated

within 15 miles of the line, including the Midland Railway Company's lands, is 660,632 acres.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison): Already in this House I have advocated the construction of a railway line from Goomalling to Yalgoo or Mt. Magnet. This line from Wongan Hills to Mullewa will not benefit anyone on the Murchison goldfields, or the pastoralists on that goldfield. I think that when the request was made that there should be a little delay in order to get information, it should have been granted. In an important question involving the expenditure of, I daresay, nearly half a million when we include rolling stock, it would be a wise course to allow the Minister to make his second reading speech and then adjourn the debate for a day or so in order that information might be obtained to prove whether the Minister's statements were correct or not. Often we have heard speeches made by Ministers when the facts could not be relied upon, and no opportunity has been given to members to get information to counteract the effect of the remarks of the Minister. As far as the construction of this line is concerned I speak with some knowledge of this part of the State, and I say unhesitatingly that the construction of the line to Mullewa is not warranted. If the line were constructed to Yalgoo it would be of great benefit to a large number of people on the Murchison goldfields, and such a line might become a particularly payable proposition. Under the present circumstances the line is calculated to improve the property of a few of those who seem to wield a great deal of influence with the present Government. When statements were made here two or three years ago that some of the gentlemen interested in large holdings in Western Australia were using a great deal of influence in the direction of getting the railway, these statements were flatly contradicted. We find out at the present time that this railway will no doubt go right through those large holdings and that it will not benefit

a very large number of small holdings. In connection with the construction of this line some consideration should have been given to the pastoralists and the residents of the Murchison goldfields, but I am in a position to say from information received from several pastoralists in that part of the State, as far as this line is concerned it will not affect their trade with the Midland Railway Company in any way. We have had figures quoted by the member for Mt. Magnet, and it is not my intention to cover the same ground. Throughout the pastoral districts in the Murchison there are many large areas of good country carrying a great number of cattle and sheep. Every winter there are many thousands of head of sheep and cattle sent down to the Midland line, and if the railway were constructed to Yalgoo they would certainly be trucked there. If this line is constructed to Mullewa no stock whatever will be trucked there or to the southern portion of the State, the stock will be travelled to Minginew and trucked there, as is done at the present time. One would have thought that if the debate on the construction of this line had been adjourned for a day that the measure would have been knocked out for ever. I can assure the House that if the request had been granted there would have been no delay in the construction of the line. The delay was required merely to allow members to get a little more information than they have at present. Even the Premier himself has denied the accuracy of the information given to hon. members, and that information is the only thing we have to go upon. As far as the member for Swan is concerned, he has stated that in his opinion not enough information has been placed before the House to enable him to support the passage of this Bill. It is a pity he did not take the same stand on many other questions to which he has given support. Doubtless he gave his support in other instances because those instances suited his purpose better than the present proposition does. As one who has always advocated supplying the fullest information in support of every

project before the House, I must admit that the information given to members on this occasion is not sufficient to warrant the passage of the Bill without at any rate some further inquiry. I am satisfied this railway will not serve the purposes which the Minister has outlined. It will not be a payable proposition, but it will in all probability enhance the value of the large properties held by many gentlemen who are heavily interested in land in that part of the State. I refer more especially to Mr. Glowrey, Mr. Sommers, Mr. Connor, the Speaker,—

Mr. Johnson : The Colonial Secretary.

Mr. HOLMAN : I only mention a few of the names that I have seen on the plans, and I am satisfied that the only honest way of constructing this line will be to introduce the betterment system and make those people pay a little towards the construction of the line, which is going to increase the value of their properties. If that could be done I feel convinced that there would not be so many advocates for the construction of the line. We find in every part of the State where railways are being constructed that the price of the land to the small holders has been put up. We found here a little time ago, before it was made known that the line was going to be constructed that some gentlemen with influence were allowed to secure large holdings, and these gentlemen will practically be the only ones who will benefit by the construction of the railway. We know that in the areas mentioned by the Minister for Lands increased prices have been put on the land, the owners having had a full knowledge that a promise of this railway had been made before they secured their holdings. In the cases I have mentioned these gentlemen were allowed to secure their areas long before anybody else had an opportunity to do so, and this railway will of course considerably enhance the value of their property. The only way to get over that position is to introduce a betterment tax, and if we put an extra four or five shillings per acre on those properties, we would be only compelling them

to pay a proper charge. If this line was constructed to Yalgoo instead of to Mullewa, it would open up some large gold-bearing mines ; it would go right through Field's Find, and would also assist Gullewa, and many miles of auriferous country would be tapped ; it would suit the whole of the mining districts. Hundreds of tons of mining timber will have to be sent to the Murchison. Many mines not at present worked could be worked if the supply of timber could be obtained cheaper than at the present time, but throughout the Murchison there is a scarcity of timber within a reasonable distance. Even if this line is constructed to Mullewa, it will not decrease the distance to Murchison to any very great extent. The Premier stated to-night that each port should have the trade which naturally belonged to it. That is an argument which he generally uses when he is speaking for electioneering purposes, but it is a great pity that he did not apply the same principle to a port that has been asking for its natural trade for many years, and has never been able to get it. I refer to the port of Esperance. So far as members on this side are concerned it is immaterial to us what the port is or where it is situated. We say that it should receive its natural trade, and, in this case, if the railway were taken to Yalgoo a spur line could be constructed bringing the producers into closer communication with Geraldton. I know it will be useless to move any amendment, because it is well known that the supporters of the Government will vote whichever way the Government ask them to vote. It will be of no avail to point out anything because their minds are made up, and whether the information given by the Minister is correct or not, matters very little because the Government are sure of the support of their followers. I consider that the information which we have is not sufficient to warrant us in pushing through this measure.

Mr. Johnson called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. HOLMAN: I intend to support a motion for the appointment of a select committee to go into the question as to whether the information supplied by the Government is correct, or whether there is anything in that supplied from another source? So far as this line is concerned, the Government cannot adopt a better course than the provision of additional means of communication from Goomalling or some other centre to a point as far East on the Murchison railway as possible. Further than that, they can extend the present railway system from the terminus at Meekatharra to the Gascoyne and Ashburton country, until in time it junctions with the railway line now being built from Port Hedland to Marble Bar. Such a railway would open up tremendous areas of pastoral and gold-bearing country. It is a remarkable fact that the Nannine gold belt runs North practically in a direct line for hundreds of miles, and any Government who came forward with a trunk line for connecting the Southern system with this portion of the State, would be doing a lot of good and helping greatly to open up the North-West. However, that is a matter that can be better dealt with on the Address-in-Reply, or on some other occasion when we have greater freedom of debate. We hear much said about giving each port its natural share of trade, and I would like to know whether it is intended to commence the construction of this railway from both ends, or whether it is only intended that the line shall slowly creep on from the Wongan Hills end. If the Government are sincere in their policy of pushing forward the construction of this line for the benefit of settlers in the North, as well as in the South, they are in duty bound to start the construction of this line both from Mullewa and Wongan Hills, so as to give the people in the North the same opportunities as those in the South; but no, in all probability the line will be slowly dragged through from the Southern end, and it will be many years before it is constructed. We see how insincere the Government are in regard to the giving

of facilities to the settlers, when we see that lines in the Southern portion of the State have been in the hands of contractors for a considerable length of time, and extensions of time are being granted in connection with the building of railways that should be already finished. To show how much of this so called patriotic resolve to do good for the State is merely a means of serving the personal interests of the Government, I quote another line that one Minister at least is heavily, and others are more or less, interested in: I refer now to the Bullfinch line, in connection with which the Government were removing rails and sleepers from agricultural lines so as to boost this proposition even before the line had been put before this House. That will always stand as one of the disgraceful actions that no Government should be guilty of. Even now, when the people are being led to believe that they will have railway communication within a few months, and have made their contracts for the supply of manures and seed, rails have been taken away from some districts in order to give facilities to Bullfinch where a railway is really not required. The only inference we can draw from the actions of the Government is that they are endeavouring to secure at the next general elections a little longer lease of Ministerial life. The work that has been done by the Government shows that they are not sincere in regard to pushing forward those agricultural railways which they talk so much about. I do not intend to take up much more time, because no matter what is said it will be impossible to alter the intentions of the Government. Knowing that they are suiting the interests of several of those, who in all probability, they have had to placate in the past, and whom they are endeavouring to placate at the present time, they are determined to push this line through, but I protest against the building of this line to Mullewa because it will not do good to the greatest number of people, and will not be a payable proposition. If the line is constructed at all, it should

be to Yalgoo, and so enable the producers to have direct access to the Murchison market, and the Murchison people to get their firewood and timber supplies at reasonable rates, whilst at the same time bringing them into closer touch with agricultural lands on which they may be induced to settle. I am satisfied that we ought to have more information, and it is my intention to support a motion for a select committee, so that further information can be brought forward to show whether the construction of this line at the present time is warranted or not.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

To refer to Select Committee.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS
moved :—

That the House resolve into Committee for the purpose of considering the Bill.

Mr. TROY (Mount Magnet) moved an amendment—

That the Bill be referred to a select committee.

He said: The advisory board had no option but to report as they did and keep within the bounds of agricultural development, whereas it was the desire of thousands of people in the State that the railway should also assist mining and pastoral development. Therefore opportunity should be given to members of the House and to the people of the country to gain fuller information in order that all three industries might be considered. He was prepared to vote for a railway to Dalwallinu to help the settlers there; and from Dalwallinu two main lines should start, one connecting with the Murchison line at Yalgoo and the other connecting with the Murchison line at Eradu. We passed more railway Bills this session than in two previous sessions, but many of the lines passed last session were not yet in hand because the money was not passed for them. The Government had no sincerity in regard to building these lines for the next two or three years. Passing the Bills was merely an electioneering dodge to tell the people the Government were carrying

out a wholesale policy of public works construction. Seeing lines passed last session were not yet carried out, and seeing there were different expressions of views in regard to this line as to the best course to be pursued, it was wise to refer the matter to a select committee so that members could inquire more fully. A railway should be built, but not to Mullewa. It should be built to Yalgoo to serve the mining and pastoral industries as well as the agricultural industry.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison) seconded the amendment

Mr. JOENSON (Guildford) had not spoken on the second reading so that he might not oppose the second reading, but he supported the reference to a select committee because members had not received the information they should be in possession of before going into an expenditure of £300,000 with insufficient knowledge of the country and of the proposition. This was shown by the Premier's speech. The Premier hardly touched the proposition, though repeating statements made by the Minister for Works and the Minister for Lands. How did the Premier build up his speech. By starting off, as he always did, by misquoting the leader of the Opposition and twisting the debate round in order to get members to devote their attention to the operations of the Midland Railway and lose sight of the main question. It was an old game of the Premier's—a game he always resorted to when in difficulties, and he was remarkably clever at it. It was remarkable how members followed him. One must congratulate the Premier on the appeal made to get a majority for the Bill. To get the Bill through the Premier promised everything; but he could afford to do it because he would not have the opportunity of carrying out the promises. The people were not going to return the Government to power to spend £300,000 without the slightest justification for it. The Premier was wrong in considering the attitude of members who asked for information as a cry of "stinking fish." He threw out his shoulders and talked big of the

wonderful land there was about the Midland Railway and the wonderful bit of country to be opened up by this line, and one would think the Premier was the only one who knew about this country and the only one who had optimistic views as to the future of the State; but the Premier was not always so optimistic. He did not say the line was so valuable when he and his party tried to stop the country from purchasing it. The land was then a valueless waste, sand plain and bush, and the railway a proposition the people of the State should not look at; but to-day, when the Midland Railway Company put on the land ten times the value put on it then, the Premier said it was undervalued. What could we expect from such an inconsistent gentleman, who called it a grand proposition to-day because there was danger to the Government's majority, but when the Labour Government proposed to carry out one of the finest financial propositions ever put before the State decried the proposition saying it was not worth the money, that the land was no good and the railway next to worthless? Admitted there were good strips of land where this railway was to be built, but there were good strips of land all over Western Australia, and there were strips of bad land also. We ought not to build a railway to cost £300,000 because the Minister for Lands had surveyed Morawa, Dalwallinu or Merkanooka in this district. That there was a handful of settlers there was the only argument advanced in favour of the construction of the line. There could not be many settlers there at present because the land was taken up too far from a railway. Was it the soundest policy to build a line parallel to an existing railway? It was worthy of consideration whether we should not make some effort to purchase the Midland Railway and then serve all these areas with spur lines at one fifth of the cost of the proposed line. The day would come when some Government would purchase the Midland Railway. It would be a good thing for the State. But then we would have the State burdened with a parallel line built to serve settle-

ment of a scattered nature. There were large strips of good country in that district exactly as along the Midland Railway; and as there were tens of miles along the Midland Railway absolutely worthless that would not feed a bandicoot, so there were similar strips along this proposition. There were good areas along the Midland Railway, some of the best in the State, and there were good areas along this proposition, but by purchasing the Midland Railway they could be supplied by spur railways. By building the line proposed and purchasing the Midland Railway, as would eventually be done, we would have two parallel railways; we would have ten times as much railway as would be required to serve these areas. It was worthy of the consideration of a select committee as to whether we should not do something to assist the Murchison goldfields. The Government admitted the line would not assist the Murchison people, though the Premier now promised that if the Bill were put through he would consider building another line. The question was whether it would be necessary to do so, and the only way to find it out was to have a select committee. We had also to consider whether the line was the fairest proposition for Geraldton. The people of Geraldton did not think so, and the member for Geraldton admitted the line was not on the proper route. The Attorney General shook his head at this, but that was the view expressed by the member for Geraldton, though the hon. member would vote for anything the Government brought forward. It was only fair to give the people at Geraldton an opportunity to express their views; also the people of the Murchison; also the Midland Railway Company. There was no expression of opinion so far from the Midland Railway Company. The map distributed was so much waste paper. It did not influence members to any extent. But we ought to have the opinions of the representatives of the company, because we would get some interesting information; and we could get interesting information from Messrs Glowrey, Sommers, Paterson, and a

It more holding huge areas in this locality all along the route of the railway. Members should not be called upon to pass an expenditure of £300,000 on a mere typewritten statement that might come from a responsible and competent officer and might not. There was no absolute evidence it was the outcome of a proper investigation by a competent officer. It was shown by the member for East Fremantle that it was incorrect, and this was admitted by Ministers and the Premier. The argument put forward by those members on the second reading should be absolutely convincing. The member for Swan, simply because he used his commonsense in connection with this matter, had been attacked by the Premier as being pessimistic, and as being influenced by the map distributed by the Midland Railway Company, which made out the land to be worse than the Premier said it was. Then, because the hon. member asked for further information the Premier accused him of stating that the land was a sand plain, and was no good. He (Mr. Johnson) resented that in the most strenuous fashion. The member for Swan simply appealed for further inquiries to be made, and he did not state that the line should not be built because it was going through poor country. What the hon. member said was that there was not sufficient information placed before the House, and he appealed for more before voting to incur the expenditure. He (Mr. Johnson) agreed with the remarks of the hon. member and he hoped the motion for a select committee would be carried.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison): It was his intention to support the proposal to refer the Bill to a select committee, because the remarks which had been made called for serious inquiry. A charge had been made against a member of the advisory board for having given his private opinion with regard to this proposed railway. In the report, this member of the advisory board had declared that the railway was warranted, and the statement had been made by the member for

Swan that this gentleman had told him that his private opinion was contrary to that which had been made to the House through the board. Not one word had been stated about that matter by the Premier, and a serious reflection had been cast upon an officer, and this select committee would do a great deal towards clearing up the matter. Every possible opportunity should be given to have an inquiry made. A letter which he had received from one of his constituents a few days ago on this very subject would throw some light on it. It clearly showed that the railway line, if constructed to Yalgoo, would not only assist the Murchison goldfields but would assist the Eastern Goldfields to a considerable extent by enabling that part of the State to receive stock trucked at Yalgoo from the pastoral areas of the Murchison and Gascoyne. This and many other matters of a similar kind could be gone into by the select committee. The letter was from Mr. H. B. Walsh, of Mileura, in the Yalgoo district, who wrote—

Dear Sir,—As one of your constituents I should like to point out to you that the proposed route of the railway from Mullewa to Wongan Hills would be quite useless to this Upper Murchison and Upper Gascoyne districts. There are large numbers of sheep and cattle sent from these parts in the winter months, and they go over the Midland line. Making a line from Mullewa to Wongan Hills and Northam would not alter that traffic, as the cattle and sheep would go, as now, past Mullewa to truck at Minginew; but if the line left at Yalgoo and went south through Field's Find and on it would pass through better country than the Midland possess—no sand plains and more forest—and be considerably shorter. We could then send our stock through Northam on to Kalgoorlie. But if the line leaves at Mullewa it will receive no support from graziers with the Midland railage so much less in mileage to Perth. I would so like to draw your attention to the heavy cost of trucking stock these long distances

by rail, and ask you to compare our rates with those of other colonies. If the Government want us to use the railways, they should make the rates attractive, and trains with stock should not be delayed, but run straight through, if only for humanity's sake. The poor brutes suffer enough without prolonging the agony. Trusting you will give the subject your earnest attention, when the matter comes before the House.

This gentleman would be able to give to the select committee information of a valuable nature. The letter showed that if the railway were constructed to Yalgoo it could be utilised for the conveyance of stock from the Gascoyne and Upper Murchison to the Eastern Goldfields, and stock could be trucked to the city as well. If the line were not constructed to Yalgoo it would not be of any use to pastoralists. Then, again, if it were constructed to Yalgoo it would have the effect of opening up very much better country. The trips which had been made through that country had been hurried, and the inquiries which were now necessary could be made by the select committee, who could examine men who had been there for many years. The letter which he had read was from a pastoralist who knew what he was writing about, and who had extensive knowledge of that part of the State, and for the sake of getting the best proposition eventually placed before the House the opportunity should be given to refer the Bill to a select committee. A proposition which would involve expenditure of nearly half a million of money should not be hurriedly gone into, and it had to be remembered also that as there were three industries which would be interested in the matter every effort should be made to secure all the information available.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. H. Daglish): The hon. member who had moved in the direction of referring the Bill to a select committee, and those who had supported that proposition had done

so in all sincerity. While there were doubts about the sincerity of the Government in introducing this measure, there could be no doubt whatever with regard to the sincerity of those gentlemen who genuinely desired a select committee for the purpose of getting information, and not for the purpose of defeating the Bill. Naturally those gentlemen were not aware that the session was almost over, and they were not aware that it would be absolutely impossible for a select committee to make any inquiry within the few remaining days at the far end of the session, and they fondly imagined by securing the passage of the proposal to refer the Bill to a select committee it would be possible for them, before Parliament prorogued, to acquire a vast fund of information, call a cloud of witnesses, submit their evidence to the House, and afford the House a chance to give mature deliberation to it, and after weighing fully and carefully the facts adduced, to come to a decision on this important matter. He desired, however, to inform those hon. members that it would be absolutely impossible to appoint a select committee and gets its report during the present session.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We know that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Then the motion for a select committee was simply tantamount to a vote against the Bill, or a vote in favour of reading the Bill that day six months.

Mr. O'Loughlen: When do you propose to build the railway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We could go into that question when the Government asked for funds with which to build it. At the present time the Government had given good proof of their earnestness in the matter of opening up agricultural areas, and the proofs given were so substantial that it was a mere waste of wind to attempt to impugn their sincerity in this direction at all events. In one breath we were told that the Government were insincere, and in the next breath we were told that they were going to construct agricultural railways for the

purpose of winning votes in the country. We were told the Government favoured a progressive policy in order to buy constituents, and when another yarn was thought to be better for the immediate purpose we were told the Government were insincere in their progressive policy. The Government were prepared to be judged by their public works and by their progressive policy.

Mr. O'Loughlen: A few weeks ago you condemned the present Government.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That was not so, and the hon. member could not quote anything in support of the statement.

Mr. O'Loughlen: *Hansard* will show it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: *Hansard* would not corroborate any such thing, and he was prepared to stand or fall by any quotation which the hon. member could supply from *Hansard*.

Mr. Heitmann: Stand, or fall, or somersault?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member was better at that, because he was more agile and could perform a somersault with more dexterity. The member for Guildford made a strong attack on the Premier for proposing this railway after opposing the purchase of the Midland Railway. The hon. member himself, after proposing the purchase of the Midland Railway very strongly opposed the construction of this one. The position was that it was proposed, and proposed by himself (the Minister for Works) that the State should purchase the Midland Railway and its lands for 1½ millions sterling. He did not intend to go into details, but he merely wished to say that the railway was paying interest on considerably less than one million pounds; and that the land consisted of 2,300,000 acres, of which 419,107 acres were classified as first-class by the Government valuers, Messrs. Johnson and Paterson. The four valuers, of whom Messrs. Johnson and Paterson were two, stated that this area to be served by the Wongan Hills and Mullewa line comprised at least one million acres of first-class land; and that was having no regard whatever to the acreage within 15

miles of the terminal points of the railway. Putting aside all the second-class and third-class land, all of which was good cultivable country, the proposition was to spend £328,000 in the construction of a new railway to serve this enormous area and, indirectly, the area outside the 15-mile limit of no less than 3½ million acres. The member for Guildford had complained against this as a dangerous proposition, a proposition on which the House and the country could not safely risk the expenditure of £328,000 to serve this enormous area. Apart from the service which it would do to the Murchison goldfields—and manifestly the material shortening of the distance to the Murchison was well worthy of consideration by the House; it had not been put forward as a primary justification for the construction of the line, but it was submitted as a very strong secondary consideration in support of that proposition, and he felt satisfied the people of the Murchison goldfield would be materially advantaged by this reduction in their distance from the capital.

Mr. Holman: A matter of 33 miles is a mere nothing in such a journey.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was a matter of 53 miles, according to the return furnished by the Minister for Railways.

Mr. Holman: He is counting running into Geraldton as well.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Even 33 miles was a very material saving in freight.

Mr. Holman: It is very little in the course of a long distance journey; what is the saving per ton?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The saving would be appreciated. The desire of the member for Murchison to get this line to Yalgoo instead of to Mullewa was only natural. From the Murchison standpoint—and the hon. member was quite justified in looking at it from that standpoint—it would be a far more advantageous proposition. But the Bill was submitted primarily to serve an agricultural district. The Premier had given a satisfactory assurance to those hon. members who wanted that Yalgoo junction that he

would have a report made on the subject and see if the circumstances warranted the connection being effected with the direct line to Mullewa. Probably the readiest means of getting what the hon. member aimed at would be to adopt the present Bill and endeavour to get the loop afterwards. The hon. member knew well the Government had no desire to refuse a proposition like that so long as it could be shown to be a good commercial proposition. If the hon. member had a case for that route the Government would be glad to give it to him.

Mr. Holman: Absolute nonsense; it took two years to push the Meekatharra railway through.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member knew the Government had given him that line, and it was rather late now, two years after the line had been passed, to complain of the delay that occurred in a preceding Parliament. However, the hon. member had the assurance of the Premier that consideration would be given and a report made in regard to his project. Therefore, he should not persist in what could only be regarded as direct opposition to the present Bill. It was to be hoped that in any case the House would not agree to entertain the amendment which had been moved.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the Bill be referred to a select committee.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If there was no amendment before the Chair the motion was that the Deputy Speaker leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee to consider the Bill. Because he had moved that motion before the member for Mt. Magnet came in, after which the member for Guildford had risen to speak.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister for Works had moved that the Deputy Speaker leave the Chair for the purpose of considering the Bill in Committee; but the member for Guildford and the member for Mt. Magnet had indicated that they intended to move for a select committee and he understood—it had been the general understanding—that the

Minister agreed to waive his motion in order that that for a select committee might be taken. He (the Deputy Speaker) accepted the motion for a select committee, and the debate had been taken on it. Why had the Minister not raised his point before? He thought the Minister had waived his motion in favour of that motion for a select committee; and as he said, the debate had followed on the motion that the Bill be referred to a select committee.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Nothing had been waived. He had not known the hon. member was going to move his amendment. He thought it had been accepted as an amendment. Of course he was not going now to press any point of order. If the Deputy Speaker understood that his (the Minister's) motion was withdrawn he would not press for it to be submitted, but would allow the other motion to stand.

Amendment (that the Bill be referred to a select committee) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	12
Noes	..	..	..	20

Majority against .. 8

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Heltmann	Mr. Swan
Mr. Holman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Collier
Mr. Johnson	(Teller).
Mr. McDowall	

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Monger
Mr. Daglish	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Davies	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Gill	Mr. Ware
Mr. Gregory	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Harper	Mr. Layman
Mr. Hayward	(Teller).
Mr. Male	

Amendment thus negatived.
Question put and passed.

In Committee, etc.

Mr. Taylor in the Chair: the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.
Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 3—Authority to construct:

Mr. HOLMAN moved an amendment—

That in line 2 the word "Mullewa" be struck out, and "Yalgoo" inserted in lieu.

The discussion this evening had proved that it was far better to serve the interests of three large and important industries than it was to serve one industry. It had been clearly shown that if the railway were constructed to Yalgoo it would open up more country, and would not do any injustice to the settlers along the route of the line. He asked that support be given to the amendment, knowing as he did that this was the best terminal point, and the one which would be of greatest advantage to the State. His own district would not be materially affected, but the suggested alteration of the route would benefit thousands of people engaged in the pastoral and mining industries, and would enable many more people to take up agricultural land.

Mr. ANGWIN: The terminal point of the railway should have further consideration. This line would in all probability eventually become the main trunk line to the Murchison goldfields, and it should be brought as near as possible to the goldfields on which it would have to rely to a large extent for support and upkeep. Yalgoo was a better point for a junction than Mullewa, and if the line were taken there it would make a considerable saving in the distance from Perth to the Murchison. The question of the point of junction with the Murchison line should have been taken into consideration by the advisory board. If it was true that the points of the railway were fixed before the inquiry by the advisory board, it was unfair. According to the member for Swan the agricultural areas did not warrant the construction of a railway, therefore we must look to other sources for traffic and that would be mining. The Government would be well advised to reconsider the terminal point. There would be no delay. Yalgoo would be better than Mullewa.

Mr. TROY: Having already expressed his views on this subject he would simply say he supported the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 7—agreed to.

Schedule, title—agreed to.

(The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. Scaddan and the Colonial Secretary.

Mr. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): This afternoon when the Premier replied to a question submitted by myself in regard to the Early Closing Act and Factories Act, I said that the Treasurer had made an incorrect statement. As a matter of fact, I used a stronger term than that, which I eventually had to withdraw. Since then I have seen the Colonial Secretary, and he has explained to me that the reason why he said "No" in reply to question 3 was that he understood that it applied to the goldfields in accordance with the other questions. I must have made a mistake in writing out the question by not inserting "metropolitan," or else it was a printer's error. However, in the circumstances I was not warranted in saying the reply was incorrect, as on looking into the matter again I find the Colonial Secretary would have been led to believe I meant the goldfields.

The Premier: I am pleased to accept the explanation on behalf of the Colonial Secretary.

House adjourned at 10.58 p.m.