

mittee need not fear that the engine-drivers wished to make this the appointment of a close corporation, for many drivers with first-class certificates now worked at other occupations. The desire of the drivers was to insure that all who obtained certificates should be thoroughly qualified; and to do this it was necessary that a practical engine-driver, recommended by the engine-drivers in the State, should be appointed to the board.

MR. THOMAS: What was a "qualified winding engine-driver," and what was the meaning of "recommended by the engine-drivers"?

MR. TAYLOR: The Engine-drivers' Association.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: As previously stated, he would agree to insert the words "or engine-driver" after "engineer." If possible, a certificated engineer would be appointed; but whoever was appointed must have a winding engine-driver's certificate. He (the Minister) would not consent to the Engine-drivers' Association making the appointment. How would the department know that the association's nominee was well qualified? He might be simply a favourite with the members of the association. The appointment would be made after examination, and the appointee would have practical experience of a winding engine.

MR. HOLMAN supported the amendment. None were better qualified to recommend an engine-driver than were the Engine-drivers' Association; but the association would hardly try to compel a Minister to accept any nominee. All knew that the State Mining Engineer, a geologist, knew practically nothing of engine-driving, and was to be placed on the board apparently to give him more work to do, with a view to raising his salary—a course frequently adopted with other officers.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: As farther discussion of this clause was inevitable, he moved that progress be reported.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11:20 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly, Wednesday, 2nd September, 1903.

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

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—RAILWAY BUILDINGS, SOUTHERN CROSS.

MR. OATS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What was the total cost of the material and erection of the Southern Cross Railway Station, including sheds, dwelling houses, barracks, and all other expenditure. 2, What is the total amount of the rents obtained per annum on the dwelling houses there, and what is the interest per cent. on the capital outlay?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Station buildings, goods sheds, platform, yard, approach roads, weighbridges, cattle yards, £11,010 3s. 4d.; Cottages, £6,619 4s. 10d.; Loco. Barracks, £4,791 17s. 5d.; Water Supply, £3,116 0s. 1d.; Coal Stage and running shed, £6,169 8s. 6d.; Various small works, £823 14s. 8d.; total, £32,530 8s. 10d. 2, (a.), £343. (b.), 5·93%.

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS BILL.

SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

THE PREMIER brought up the report of the Select Committee appointed to consider the Bill.

Report received, read, and ordered to be printed.

RETURN—PUBLIC BATTERIES, CYANIDE.

On motion by **MR. HOLMAN**, ordered: That a return be laid upon the table of the House showing—1, The State batteries that have cyanide plants erected, when erected, and of what capacity. 2, The total cost of experimenting in con-

nection with, and in the erection of, each plant. 3, Amount of tailings treated by each plant to date. 4, Average cost per ton for treatment. 5, Cost per ton for treatment at present; how arrived at. 6, The returns received from, and cost for treatment of, the accumulated and unclaimed tailings. 7, The estimated quantity and value of unclaimed tailings now belonging to the State.

RETURN—FIRE BRIGADES SUBSIDY.

On motion by MR. HOLMAN, ordered: That a return be laid upon the table of the House showing—1, The fire brigades in the State assisted by the Government. 2, Special grants given to each brigade, and for what purpose. 3, Amounts granted to each brigade for up-keep. 4, Subsidies granted on the £1 for £1 basis. 5, Amounts granted to municipalities or other bodies for water supplies for fire brigade purposes.

MOTION—PORT HEDLAND TO PILBARRA RAILWAY, TO CONSIDER OFFERS.

MR. J. ISDELL (Pilbarra) moved:—

That in the best interests of the State it is, in the opinion of this House, desirable that the Government should, failing immediate action on their own part, receive and consider offers from persons willing to construct by private enterprise a line of railway from Port Hedland to Nullagine-Pilbarra Goldfield, upon terms and conditions to be laid before, and approved of by, the Parliament of this State.

He said: I should first like to explain to members that this motion is a reproduction of one which was passed in the last session of the last Parliament, and under a different Ministry. The question arose whether the resolution then passed was voided by the expiration of that Parliament or was still valid; and to remove all doubts I have tabled this motion, so that the question may be thoroughly discussed. In regard to the goldfield in question, I do not think there is any occasion to repeat the statistics so often quoted not only by members but by prominent citizens of this State and by many other people; but I should like also to say a few words concerning the prospects of mining in that part of the country, and concerning the district generally. Firstly, in Port Hedland we find one of the best harbours, with the

exception of Albany, on the coast of this State. It is a natural harbour, and a small expenditure would permit the largest steamers to come alongside the jetty. The jetty is very short; but the largest steamers trading there now can float alongside it at low tide. As soon as one leaves Port Hedland, for a distance of fully 200 miles inland to the south one passes through nothing but auriferous country; and if one leaves the route and traverses the country in any direction within 100 miles, one continuously passes through gold-bearing and mineral-bearing country—country which is now lying idle and dormant for want of facilities for its development. As regards the population of the district, I admit it is not very large, for it consists of about 1,500 men. But although that number is small, when members come to consider the manner in which those men are working, and the good they do the State generally, it must be admitted that they are deserving of consideration, especially in view of the tremendous hardships they suffer. It must be remembered, too, that those 1,500 men are working “on their own,” and are not receiving wages. There has never been a prospecting vote allocated to that portion of the country, nor have we any State batteries. Every shovelful of dirt raised by those men is not for their individual profit only, but it also assists to promote the prosperity of the country, because every ounce of gold unearthed is added to the State's output. When we compare the position of those 1,500 with that of the same number of men living on wages, we cannot but admit that the 1,500 men in the North are doing more beneficial work for the State; because 1,500 wages men are liable to be discharged any day. No doubt those who have been thrifty can, if discharged, find employment; but those who have been improvident will simply be thrown on the hands of the State, which must find employment for them. Again, does the profit resulting from the labour of 1,500 wages men remain in the country? I say it does not. Fully 75 per cent. at least of that profit goes into the pockets of shareholders living outside the country; whereas every ounce of gold won by the 1,500 in the North is spent in Western Australia. So I do not think anyone has

much ground to stand on who opposes the railway on account of the small population. As to the quantity of alluvial gold won, I have to state that for the best part of six years in the North, after the discovery of gold, no records were kept by the Government of the quantity of gold unearthed. During the first three years after gold discovery the Government put an export tax of 2s. 6d. an ounce on the precious metal; and the gold was supposed to be exported through the customs. That it should be sent through the customs was not compulsory, but the regulation was made because of a £5,000 reward offered for the discovery of gold; and although notices of this reward were freely exhibited in various places, no regulations were at first printed with regard to it. As soon as the discovery of gold was reported, regulations were issued that the first goldfield of the colony—that in Kimberley—must produce 10,000 ounces of gold within three years, or the reward would not be paid. So far, that regulation was perfectly just and fair; but to prevent any inaccuracy as to the output, another regulation was made, putting on that gold an export duty of 2s. 6d. an ounce; with the result that many a man did not pass his gold through the customs, but simply took it out of the colony without reporting it; and that regulation was still in force when the goldfield in the North-West was discovered. So during the period of rich gold discovery, very little of the gold discovered was reported. I lived there since the first gold was discovered in that district, and very few rushes have taken place in that country which I have not attended and worked on; and my estimate of the total output, made some years ago for people in London, is about 600,000 ounces. Some other experienced residents of the district made estimates higher than mine, of about 800,000; but I say 600,000. These estimates of course refer to alluvial gold. As regards reef gold, the returns to the customs showed about 220,000 ounces. It must be remembered that although the total output is not very large since the field was first opened, yet when we come to consider the conditions under which that gold has been won, we must admit that it is a grand record. The stone raised in the district has averaged over

two ounces per ton—a really good result; and it must be remembered that the men who are getting and crushing the stone can work nothing less valuable than two-ounce stone. In that country it does not pay to work any stone under two ounces to the ton in value; and we can easily imagine that for every reef of two-ounce stone which is worked there may be in the vicinity perhaps half-a-dozen properties which return possibly 15 to 20 pennyweights. Only a few reefs have so far been worked; but there must be many hundreds of reefs which would well repay working if the same facilities existed as are found on the Eastern Goldfields in this State. Then in mineral resources, copper-mining has been a most important industry in that district for some years, and up to the present copper to the value of about £150,000 has been exported. On the route of the proposed railway there are some large copper lodes within easy distance of the line, which up to the present cannot be worked. In the Nullagine district also there is an immense belt of copper country, with lodes and not reefs. Some of these lodes I have measured and tested, and I have brought the copper to my camp. The lodes average from 100 feet to 300 feet in width. They cannot be worked at present, and must lie idle until we have railway facilities. I consider that the copper lodes in the district will employ three or four thousand persons when railway facilities are provided for their development. Coming to tin, I may say tin mining has been a most important industry in the district during the last five years, and something like £100,000 worth of tin has been exported wholly from alluvial workings. Tin lodes have been found near the alluvial workings, but as in the case of the copper lodes they cannot be worked for want of railway facilities. Other minerals are also to be found in the North-West, such as galena and silver ore, while diamonds have been discovered on the Nullagine. I admit there have not been many diamonds found, but all the geologists and experts who have examined the conglomerate say that these diamonds have been carried there by the aid of water. The probability is that the source of these diamonds will be found in a few years time when, with the addition of population, prospect-

ing is extended. Should they possibly be found, hon. members can imagine the wealth they will add to the State. At the present time the great drawback to unearthing all this wealth is the total absence of mining timber and fuel. These requirements will need to be brought from the South. They can be obtained from no other source. At present it is impossible to cart mining timber and fuel from Port Hedland on account of the heavy expense. A prospector has to pay from £18 to £24 per ton for carting fuel and timber from the coast. How is it possible to do this and go in for deep development? The prospector cannot do it. His mine would need to return 7oz. or 8oz. per ton to put him within reasonable limits of meeting such an expense. As far as the railway is concerned, it would be of great advantage, not only because it would increase the revenue from that portion of the State, and increase the amount of gold and mineral wealth, and add to the population, but, also, because it would open up the southern portion of the State, since all the mining timber needed must come from the timber mills, all the coal from Collie, and all the farming produce from the farmers of the South. It costs £18 per ton for horse forage, which is purchased from the other States. With good communication there would be no need for importation, so that in that regard alone it would mean a good deal for the farming industry. Vegetables are luxuries in that part of the State. In fact they are seldom seen. To get potatoes the prospector must pay 1s. to 14d. per lb. All that heavy expense could be done away with by means of railway communication. If we place Kalgoorlie in the same position as these North-West fields, and if we take away the railway from Kalgoorlie and compel the mine-owners to work only 2oz. ore, how many reefs would be worked in Kalgoorlie, though it is the richest mining field in the State? I think there would be no more mines worked there than are now worked in the North-West. No man could make tucker out of mines producing less than 2oz. ore. Should we take railway and water facilities from Kalgoorlie and let the mine-owners pay £20 to £24 per ton for carting mining timber and fuel, the necessities of life

and all other things required for the working of mines, the North-West would compare very favourably with the richer field regarding the number of 2oz. reefs worked. There are only two ways to have the railway built, either by the Government or by private enterprise. Personally I do not believe in constructing a line by private enterprise. The railway should be built by the people and be the property of the people; but at the same time I should be doing my constituents a great injustice and the State a great wrong if I allowed my principles to stand against private enterprise, should the Government be unable to build the line themselves. Of course, I hope the Government, before the matter is finally settled, will come to the conclusion that the construction of this line would be for the benefit of the State, and that they should build it. In moving that private enterprise may build the line, I do so as an alternative, if the Government cannot build it, so that the North-West may have some opportunity of getting its line. It must not be built by the system of land grants. Should the railway be built by private enterprise it could be built on the guarantee system, the Government guaranteeing the interest on the expenditure for a number of years. Should it come to that, the State may well provide the money. It will mean no more than £15,000 a year for a few years. What is that for a few years? A mere flea bite. Now the whole population willingly pay £150,000 a year as interest on money spent on the Eastern Goldfields. Look at the result. If that money had not been spent, the State would not be in its present position. Therefore we should not object to the expenditure of £15,000 a year and probably open up another field equally as good as Kalgoorlie. For that £15,000 a year, allowing a couple of years to give the mines time to develop and their owners time to get returns and dividends, the Government would reap fourfold. At the same time, although I advocate private enterprise in the construction of this railway, I do not wish to say for one moment that I believe in private enterprise; but if the Government cannot build the line, or if the House is not agreeable to allowing the money required for its construction to be borrowed, I think it would be wrong to

block private enterprise. Some members look on it in a different light and say that it is impossible to allow private enterprise to build the line, without some loophole being given to the concessionaire. It would be a rather disparaging remark to make on some members of the House. Surely we have enough trained lawyers, bush lawyers, and members with common sense to prevent such a loophole being provided in the concession. I would like hon. members to consider the question in a broad manner, and look at it in the interests of the State and not those of individuals. I am sure if they will regard it in that light and study the question thoroughly, they will not be able to help coming to the conclusion that the railway is required. As to the manner in which it is to be built, I will leave that to members to decide. I only hope that whatever measure or steps are taken with regard to the matter they will be taken immediately, because we have been waiting years and years for this railway, and to do any good to the State immediate steps must be taken.

MR. C. J. MORAN (West Perth): I second the motion.

MR. A. E. MORGANS (Coolgardie): I have much pleasure in supporting this motion; but I regret to say I am not able this afternoon to go into the important details connected with this proposal as I would like to have done. I have heard with great interest the speech of the member for Pilbarra (Mr. Isdell); and as one who has visited the country on two occasions and obtained information of a very reliable character from this important mining centre extending over a period of three years, I am able to indorse all the remarks of the hon. member in reference to this important question. There are many points in connection with a debate on this subject that are worthy of the attention of the House. In the first place, I think it is quite safe to say the merits of that great gold and mineral field in the North-West have never received any proper attention from this House or any part of the State. It has been practically a *terra incognita*. There has been too much work in the southern portions of this State, in the development of the Eastern Goldfields and the development of the goldfields north of Kalgoorlie

and the Murchison Goldfields, for proper attention to be given at the same time to the importance of this district. I am perfectly sure that the want of attention to the particular portion of the country I refer to does not arise from any desire on the part of members of the Assembly to forget the importance of the district, nor do I intend to cast any blame on this House or the people of this district for not having paid sufficient attention to the importance of that other section of this State, namely the North-West and Pilbarra Goldfields; but I do think that when this matter is brought before the House by the member for Pilbarra, who has had years and years of experience of these particular goldfields, who has lived there for many years, and by other respectable men who know that district, it is the duty of the Assembly to pay some attention to this very important matter, and at any rate seek for farther information with respect to it. With regard to the construction of a railway, the hon. member who has just spoken says that a railway is necessary in order to open up those fields. I suppose that no one will deny it. The only point that this House has to be satisfied upon is whether or not the importance of those fields justifies such an expenditure. If it be shown to the House that an expenditure of this kind is justified, then it will be for the House to find some means for taking advantage of that dormant wealth and turning it to good account on behalf of the State and the inhabitants of the State also. This is not the first time the question has been debated in this House, Mr. Speaker, as you are aware. Three years ago I had the honour of addressing this House upon the question, and I gave some important information with regard to those great districts, the mineral and the gold-producing districts of the North-West. I do not think that at that time there was too much interest taken in this matter, but it certainly had the effect of calling attention to that part of the State, and I think some good has resulted. Since that time I have had a staff of practical men engaged in that section of the State, and during the whole of that period, for the past three years, I have been obtaining reliable information as to the resources

of that section of this country. All the information I have gleaned since that time and up to the present is of such a nature as to more than confirm the opinion I expressed in this House on a former occasion with regard to the importance of this great gold and mineral field. Since that time also I have had an opportunity of paying another visit, a personal visit, to those fields, and during that period, that is during the three years which have intervened, I have not, I regret to say, been able to observe such an advancement in the development of this section of the State as one could have hoped and looked for, considering its great importance and great value. Some work has been done during this period of three years. Nearly the whole of the development work which has taken place during that time and in many former years has been done by hardy prospectors who are working their own claims. What the hon. member says with reference to the working of reefs under present conditions is perfectly true. It is easy to imagine that unless a vein worked by a prospector carries a very high percentage of gold, it is quite impossible for him to develop it under any other circumstances. One of the great difficulties in that part of the world is the question of fuel. I suppose that if one collected the whole of the fuel in the Pilbarra Goldfields it would not be sufficient to supply the needs at Kalgoorlie for a week, or at any rate I am perfectly safe in saying it would not supply the demands of Kalgoorlie for a month. My own belief is that one week would exhaust the whole of the fuel of that district. I am sure every member of the Assembly will see how impossible it is to develop the resources of that country when that condition alone exists at the present moment. Then there is another point in connection with this, and that is the question of mining timber. What I have already said with regard to the fuel applies also to that important requirement for mining operations. It is absolutely impossible at the present time to find timber suitable for any mining operations upon a large scale, and until some means are found for sending into that district fuel and mining timber, all hope of developing the resources of that important section of this State must end,

because the working of mines without a railway is absolutely impossible. I think the House must consider one very important question in connection with this matter, and that is whether it is worth the while of the State, the Government of the State, and the people of the State, to take advantage of the resources they have at their command or not. If this House and this country think that an important area under their direct control is now lying dormant, possessing untold wealth, it is their duty to give immediate consideration to the question as to how this important section of the country can be opened up and how it can be developed at the quickest possible rate. I do not think it should satisfy us as business men or as politicians to feel that we have in the North-West untold resources, and to entertain the idea that it is quite sufficient to leave the matter to posterity. I presume it is the object and the desire of all members of this House to take advantage of the wealth they have at their disposal, and to develop it as quickly as possible. I do not see that we have much hope ourselves of gaining any particular advantage by leaving this great field to the determination of posterity, but I can see that there will be many advantages to ourselves and to this country if we open up the district ourselves and if we acquire this wealth which is at our disposal, if we like to go there and take part of it. I am quite aware in dealing with a question of this kind that one is asked for proofs. It is not an easy matter to prove to this House that if we build a railway to that important district we shall be able to turn out so many thousands of ounces of gold a month. That is impossible, because no one can know what can be done in that district until it is opened up; that is, no one can give to this House positive information. In order to prove this I may call attention to the fact of the building of the Southern Cross and Kalgoorlie railway. I think it is quite safe to say that at the time this Parliament and the country decided upon the construction of that important line it would have been impossible for any man in this House or out of it to prove there would be an output of 5,000 ounces a month from that field; but what the House did believe, what the

Parliament of this country believed, and what the public believed to a very large extent was that there was a prospect of opening up a great and important goldfield in that section of the country, and they were quite prepared to build a railway with that object in view. The same applies to this, but this case is even stronger than the one I am alluding to in reference to the construction of the line to Kalgoorlie, inasmuch as this particular district up to the present time has turned out twenty times more gold than the Kalgoorlie district and Coolgardie district had at the time the railway was constructed there. It appears to me that this is a strong point, and one which should enter into the consideration of members of this House. With regard to the resources, the member for Pilbarra has told us (I believe the figures were) that the output of gold had been about 600,000 ounces.

MR. HASTIE: Alluvial gold.

MR. MORGANS: I am speaking of the production of gold, whether it is alluvial or reef gold. The production of gold has been about 600,000 ounces. Of course a large portion of this has been alluvial gold—there is no doubt about that—probably the greater portion of it; but we all know that where alluvial gold is found there must be found reef gold also, because it is an accepted fact amongst practical mining men, and I suppose any practical business men, that unless you have reefs of gold you will not have alluvial gold. Therefore the proof of the existence of alluvial gold is a proof of the existence of reef gold also. However, in this case proofs are not wanting of the existence of reef gold. I am safe in saying that in no part of Australia—I do not say Western Australia—I go a step farther and say in no part of the whole world can we see so many well-developed, well-defined gold-bearing reefs within a given area as we can see on the Pilbarra Goldfield. This statement I make from my observation, and also from the observation of a staff of practical mining men who have been acting in conjunction with myself on the Pilbarra Goldfield for a period extending over three years. It is a simple matter to verify this statement, and the Government would do very well to take an opportunity of verifying this important fact; indeed I am glad to

acknowledge the fact that the Government have taken steps to verify some of the statements made in regard to this section of Western Australia. At the present time Mr. Gibb Maitland, the Government Geologist, is in that section of the country; he was instructed, I believe, by the Minister for Mines to go there and make a report on the district, and give his opinions as to its importance. In connection with this I would like to say I am personally grateful to the Government for having taken this step, and I am quite sure the people of that section of the country will be gratified through the Government having taken that step. I regret, however, the Government did not see their way—probably it was inconvenient or impossible at that moment—to send not only the State Geologist, but also the State Mining Engineer into that country. Mr. Gibb Maitland is a gentleman I have the honour of knowing, whom I esteem and respect highly, and I can safely say he is a most able and efficient geologist, and no officer connected with the official staff of the Government is a harder worker, or pays closer attention to the important duties pertaining to his office than does that gentleman. I am certain he will be able to give to the Government a report of the country which will be of the greatest service to them in forming an opinion as to the importance of the Pilbarra Goldfield. At the same time I do not think it fair to Mr. Gibb Maitland to expect him, seeing he is not a practical mining man, to be able to give to the Government and to the people of the State a report on the mining resources that could be relied on to some extent as though a practical mining man had been sent into the district to accompany him. As a geological report it will be of great value, and much valuable information will be obtained from it. I may say in connection with this that I took the opportunity of forwarding a telegram to the Premier when I was in the North-West, asking him if he could see his way to send the State Mining Engineer to that part of the country to report upon the goldfields; and the Premier replied stating that he was unable to do so at that time: owing to other duties which Mr. Montgomery had undertaken it was impossible for him

to go there. But I take this opportunity of suggesting that no time should be lost in sending Mr. Montgomery to that section of the country, and let us hear from a practical mining man what his views are of the possibilities of that mining centre, and not only the geological aspect. The construction of this line will involve the expenditure of about £600,000. I have been over three routes which I may safely say are available and practicable routes for the construction of this line. I think I may safely assure the House that the line can be constructed to Nullagine, which I look on as the principal centre of the gold-mining part of that field, from Port Hedland within a distance of 200 miles. The country over which the railway would have to travel is most favourable for the construction of a railway. There are no engineering difficulties of any account; there would be very few, if any, deep cuttings; in fact I do not think there would be one deep cutting on the route. So far as the contour of the country is concerned, it would be difficult to find in any part of the world a more favourable district for the construction of a railway than this is. There is another point of importance in considering this question. I think a railway could be constructed at a cost of £3,000 per mile—constructed and equipped for £3,000 a mile. I am perfectly certain if it were the desire or intention of the Government to construct this line, they could get it constructed for the sum I have mentioned, namely £3,000 a mile, and it could be done by contract. We all know quite well that to construct a railway of the 3ft. 6in. gauge, which is the standard gauge in this country, and equip it with heavy rolling-stock, to lay down heavy sleepers and 60lb., 65lb., or 70lb. rails, and practically equip it for a very large passenger and freight service, it could not be constructed for the sum I have mentioned; but I maintain what is required in the district is not a railway of that character at all. I certainly recommend the construction of a railway of the same gauge as the Government standard gauge, which is 3ft. 6in., but to my mind it is quite unnecessary to construct a railway with heavy rails or heavy sleepers, or expensive ballasting. What is required is a light railway for the purpose of opening up the country. If a railway

were constructed on these lines, I am certain the figures I have given would well cover the expenditure; they would give a practicable and useful railway to open up the country, and would equip it with all the necessary rolling-stock for a considerable time to come. If this is so—and Mr. Teesdale Smith, who knows something about the construction of railways, I think will bear me out in this statement—is it not quite clear that with the resources that we believe are at the disposal of the Government in that great country, the Pilbarra Goldfield—would we not say, looking at it entirely from a business point of view, that it would be a good investment to construct the railway through such a country as that. I think every business man would answer “Yes,” because the principal conditions that should influence the Government or a private individual in the construction of a line of this kind are these: what expected revenue will there be from this line, and when this line is constructed will it pay expenses? From a business point of view I think these questions should be answered satisfactorily before an investment is made; but when the Government consider this question they have to go a step farther. It is not entirely a question with them as to whether immediately the line is opened it will pay interest and the redemption fund on its capital. They have a farther interest—the opening up of this section of the country, the indirect advantage the Government gain in opening up a goldfield. These are considerations which I have no doubt any prudent Government would take into consideration, and I am perfectly certain when the facts are known to the Government of this country, and to the Parliament, as to the importance and value of that field, if they were to see for the first three or four years a loss on the working of the line, they would still come to the conclusion that it is absolutely necessary to construct it. However, this railway is in a very fortunate position, inasmuch as it can be shown from the very day it is opened it will commence to pay interest on the capital invested. This railway is unique in the advantages it possesses as a commercial enterprise, inasmuch as it is a pioneer railway opening up an important

gold and mineral field. This field, unfortunately for itself, does not possess firewood or mining timber; therefore the whole of the fuel which is to be consumed in the development and exploitation of the mines in that district will have to be carried over that railway to its destination, and the whole of the mine timber will have to be carried also. These are two points that did not apply to the exploitation of mines on the Eastern Goldfields. So far as fuel is concerned the Eastern Goldfields are blessed with a good supply of firewood within a reasonable distance of the mines. They can get a supply, and the use of the Government railway is necessary only to a limited extent to insure that supply of fuel. Taking the consumption of fuel in Kalgoorlie, there are not more than 25 or 30 miles of Government railway that have to be brought into use for the purpose of moving the fuel for the use of the mines. This also applies to some extent to mining timber, although to some extent a considerable quantity of mining timber necessary for the Eastern Goldfields has to be carried on the railway from Perth or from Bunbury. This railway is of such importance to the Pilbarra district that without it the district cannot be exploited. That is the position, and when we realise that all the fuel that has to be used in the exploitation of these mines must be carried to the mines by means of the railway we have under discussion, in that item alone, the question of conveyance of mining timber and fuel, there is sufficient guarantee for the future success of this railway. The railway is an absolute necessity for the opening up of that great field, and although I am not prepared at present with facts and figures that I intend to bring before the House at an early date, I can say the evidence the House has before it, looking at the past history of that field and the amount of gold that has been turned out, with the evidence received from other sources, at any rate should justify the Government and the Parliament of this State in taking into their serious consideration the question of the construction of this railway at an early date. I have only one objection to this motion, that it is too indefinite. I believe the motion was brought forward three years ago in exactly similar terms; but I

should like to see a motion containing something more definite than this. I take it that the Government will be prepared at any time to receive proposals for the construction of this railway, and that they will consider any advances which may be made. That is practically all the motion asks. But I say, in order to make a debate in this House of any use to the country, something more definite in the form of a motion must be brought forward. There must be some debate which will enable Parliament and the country to know what is to be expected from the development of the North-West District, and what is to be expected from Parliament in the way of assistance to open it out. I have pleasure in supporting the motion, and hope to have an opportunity before the close of the session to make in this House a statement of facts and figures with regard to this important railway, and to give some information as to the district. Meanwhile, I can only hope that the Government and Parliament will realise this one important fact. I will state it as my own opinion only, though the opinion has been supported in private by men whose mining experience extends over many years. The opinion is that, outside of the Golden Mile of Kalgoorlie, there is no mining district in Western Australia which can in any way compare either as a gold or a mineral producer with the Pilbarra Goldfields District.

DR. J. S. HICKS (Roebourne): I fully indorse all the statements of the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) as to the necessity for a railway to open up the resources of the North-West. I should have been glad had the report of Mr. Maitland (Government Geologist) been presented to the House before this motion came up for discussion; because members would then have had before them all the facts concerning the district. The only point I wish to discuss is the route which this railway should take. I have before me a map of both the West Pilbarra and the Pilbarra Goldfields. If I start from Roebourne, the distance to Nullagine is, as the crow flies, 208 miles; whereas from Port Hedland it is 150—a difference of 58 miles; but the member for Coolgardie said that by his route about 200 miles must be traversed to get by a detour to Nullagine. If to over-

come some engineering difficulties the line from Roebourne must be deviated, the gross deviation need not amount to more than 30 miles. The reasons which should weigh with members in discussing the routes are, first the minerals of the district, second the pastoral industry, which so far has not been touched on in this debate, and thirdly the harbours. If we make a start from Roebourne, we have right along the track gold-bearing and mineral country from Roebourne to Nullagine; whereas if we start from Port Hedland, for the first 65 miles we shall not find any gold-bearing reefs. Personally I know the district out from Roebourne for only about 110 miles; and I am certain that one could not go over five miles of that ground without finding good reefs which would be payable if the conditions were favourable. We have there what I consider one of the very best gold mines in the North-West, and it could be touched by this line of route. It is the Pilgrim's Rest, situated about eight miles from Egina. That mine is returning six or eight ounces per ton, and is being exploited by working miners. There is no company connected with it. As mentioned by the member for Pilbarra (Mr. Isdell), the quantity of gold hitherto produced in this district is 600,000 ounces, mostly alluvial; and more than half of that has come from the district which I am now advocating, between Roebourne and Nullagine; most of it is from Egina and Pilbarra proper. With regard to the £150,000 worth of copper won, I believe every ounce of that has come from a mine along that route, practically at Whim Creek. Most of the tin has come from near Marble Bar. I think there is no doubt whatever that the line would serve the mineral district better if it were taken from Roebourne through Egina, Pilbarra, and Marble Bar. As to the tin, though it has not been much exploited, there is a large quantity very near Pilbarra; and in addition, this route would touch the big tinfield which extends for about 50 or 60 miles between the western shore and Nullagine. As to the engineering difficulties, I think they are about equal on both routes. By making a detour round to Nullagine, there would be no more engineering difficulties on that route than on the Port Hedland-Nullagine route. As to the pastoral industry, by looking

at a map on which the pastoral leases are shown, one will see that two-thirds of the pastoral leases would be touched and exploited by the line I advocate. There is no doubt that Port Hedland is the harbour of the North; but we have at Point Sampson a jetty which I am given to understand can be used every day in the year. I therefore move as an amendment that the words "Port Hedland" be struck out, and "Cossack" inserted in lieu.

MR. F. ILLINGWORTH: I desire to amend an earlier portion of the motion.

THE SPEAKER: Perhaps the member for Roebourne will withdraw his amendment for the present, to enable that to be done.

DR. HICKS: I will do so.

Amendment withdrawn.

MR. F. ILLINGWORTH (Cue): From the information I have been able to gather from time to time during the last four or five years, I have been long convinced that it is the duty of this State and this Parliament to construct a railway from Nullagine to the Pilbarra Goldfields. I believe that scarcely any work which lies before the Government is of a more urgent character than this. It is part of the plan which I placed before the Leake Government when we had a hope of a surplus. I urged that this railway should be constructed, or that if it could not be immediately constructed it should be begun—a portion of the railway should be built. I have no fixed opinion as to the point of departure or the route. I am only convinced that we have an immense asset in that portion of the State which ought to be developed; and that development cannot possibly take place without a railway. I at one time felt that the case was so urgent as to justify our passing away from what I looked on as a fixed principle in railway construction; I felt that if the State could not construct, the State should, under special conditions, allow the railway to be constructed with funds from other sources. But I have never been favourable to private enterprise for the construction of railways, nor to any separate ownership; and I am not in favour of it now. When the question was before us some three years ago, I thought the conditions of the State did not warrant Parliament in embarking on

any farther loan authorisations, even for the construction of so necessary a work. I felt at the time that it was necessary to begin the work, that it should be done if possible; and I did lend my influence, so far as it went, to a motion made by the then member for the district, the Hon. Walter Kingsmill, now Colonial Secretary, with a view to getting the railway, even though we should depart from the main principle of railway construction. But now we have happily come to a point at which we can see our way fairly clear through the authorisations of the past. We have all our works fairly in hand; and I think the Government should adopt a policy of progress, and not a standstill policy. I have been entirely with them in the past in their determination that no farther authorisations should be granted until we could see something like the end of the former authorisations. But as we have come to that point, I think the Government should take steps to consider an energetic and a forward policy, and should not be afraid even of another loan. If a loan be justified at the present time for any work in this State, it is justified for the construction of this railway. I regret that the policy which was forecasted by the Leake Government, and to which some members of the present Government gave their sanction at the time, did not find a place in the programme of the present Government. I refer particularly to this item, the construction of a portion of this railway. Even though we should construct a portion only, that would be an earnest of what is to come; and moreover it would, as I am informed, conquer a good many of the initial difficulties; because some of the country in which large expenditure is now incurred for heavy carriage would be served if a portion of the railway were built. But I do not think we need be afraid at this stage of our history to go in for a more forward policy. Indeed, at the beginning of this session I was somewhat disappointed when the Government did not forecast more definitely some proposals for a progressive movement; and I hope, now this question has been brought prominently before their attention, they will enter upon or suggest some scheme for the construction of this

work. As to the details, enough has been said by those who know more about the district than I do; but at the time the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) gave that most important speech some three years ago, all who took the trouble to verify his statements and give due consideration to the question must have been convinced that the railway was an urgent necessity. I hope that the hon. member who moved this motion will be willing to consent to an alteration. The amendment I desire to move is:—

[That] in the best interests of the State it is, in the opinion of this House, desirable that the Government should construct a railway to the Nullagine-Pilbarra Goldfield.

I do not think this is the time to enter into the question of route or point of departure, whether from Cossack or Port Hedland. I am not in a position to give an opinion on that particular subject; but I do not think, in any case, it is the time to consider the question. What we want to consider is the absolute necessity for the construction of the line, allowing the Government to get the necessary information to advise the House as to where the line should be constructed. If we look at the question of ways and means, I think possibly a matter of half a million of money will be sufficient as an immediate expenditure for the work, because we have a considerable quantity of somewhat obsolete rolling-stock that wants replacing. It would be replaced, as a matter of fact, by more suitable rolling-stock for existing lines; and a good portion of that old stock might be utilised for the purpose of this railway, and would be found for years to come quite effective. Consequently the cost of the line would be the only item. I hope to hear from members in the House who have knowledge of railway construction, that the railway can be constructed for less than half a million, if the rolling-stock is taken out of the existing stock. This, I think, can be done, because, when we get the Midland Junction Workshops completed, a great quantity of rolling-stock out of use for want of repair will be of use to equip this railway even without doing injury to the existing railways. Therefore, something less than half a million of money is the item the Government will have to consider. I hope the House will see its

way clear to pass this amendment, and I hope that, when it is passed, the Government will earnestly take up the question. I believe, from indications they gave us at the opening of this session, the Government have some idea of suggesting to the House a loan policy. I hope it will be sufficiently large to include this particular railway, and that the construction of the line will be a part of the policy brought before the House. I think it unwise to pass a resolution giving any private company power to build this railway, or to affirm by resolution any starting point for the line. Consequently I would ask the House to follow me in amending the motion, and I hope even the mover himself will see his way clear to support the amendment.

On motion by the MINISTER FOR WORKS, debate adjourned.

MOTION — HOSPITALS MAINTENANCE AND CONTROL.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES moved the adjournment of a motion on the Notice Paper by the Premier, "That the legislation relating to hospitals should be amended to provide for rating and non-rating hospital districts, the payment of State subsidies, and the election of controlling boards in the case of rating districts, and the nomination of controlling boards in the case of non-rating districts."

MR. A. E. THOMAS: The motion should not be adjourned.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: It had been placed on the Notice Paper by error.

MR. THOMAS: There was a motion in his name on the Notice Paper lower down, and he had intended to go on with it; but finding that the Premier had put his motion on the paper for discussion and it being controversial, he naturally thought it would occupy the evening, and so he was not now prepared to go on with his own motion relating to the Norseman Goldfield. The Premier should be prepared to go on with this motion.

MR. PIGOTT: A ruling had been previously given that if a member were absent from the Chamber, the motion standing in his name lapsed. Otherwise he would have moved for the adjournment of a preceding motion in the name of the member for the Williams, who was absent when the motion was reached.

THE SPEAKER: That was the case. The Premier was in the building.

MR. DAGLISH: Was it allowable for the Government to monopolise the business of private members on private members' day, seeing that we decided at the outset of the session that private members should have a full day on alternate Wednesdays? Apart from the wish of the Government, we might fairly consider the motion out of order to-day, even if the Premier desired to go on with it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Because the Premier recognised this was the private members' day he wished that this motion, being Government business, should be withdrawn from the paper and postponed to the following day. If the member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas) had been misled, and if it was the wish of the House, the Premier was willing to go on with the motion.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James): It would be universally admitted by the members of the House and by the whole community that hospital management was not entirely satisfactory, and that it was desirable that lines should be laid down by legislation to uniformly control the various hospitals in the State. We found friction existing in some hospitals between the public and those responsible for the management.

MR. DAGLISH rose to a point of order.

THE PREMIER said he was anxious not to trespass on private members' business.

MR. JOHNSON: Only one member objected to the adjournment.

THE PREMIER: We had found friction existing between some boards of management and the public, and in some cases friction existing in subsidised hospitals between the committees and the Government authorities. It had also been found, on examination of figures, that in a great number of instances the subsidised hospitals were far too costly.

MR. MORAN: Was the Premier discussing the motion?

THE PREMIER: Yes.

MR. MORAN: Was there not a proposal before the House that the motion be adjourned? If so, could the motion on the Notice Paper be discussed?

THE SPEAKER: Several members had appealed to him with reference to this motion being on the Notice Paper. The motion ought not to occupy a position on the Notice Paper to the detriment of private members who brought forward motions. The Premier, in order to carry out that view, did not desire to go on with his motion, or to stand in the way of private members; and a proposal had been made by the Minister for Mines that the consideration of the motion on the Notice Paper be adjourned. That was the question before the House when the Premier came in and commenced to discuss his motion. The question before the House was "That the motion be adjourned to the following day."

MR. THOMAS: There was a notice of motion in the name of Mr. James. Was it competent for the Minister for Mines to move on his behalf for an adjournment? He understood that, if a member was not in his place, no other member could secure the adjournment of a notice of motion. He had seen several notices of motion taken off the Notice Paper. In fact notice of motion No. 4 was wiped off the paper because the hon. member (Hon. F. H. Piesse) was not present. He would like the Speaker's ruling on the point whether it was competent for the Minister for Mines to move that a notice of motion standing in the name of the member for East Perth be adjourned.

THE SPEAKER: According to Parliamentary procedure as laid down in *May*, one Minister could make a motion for another; but that did not apply to private members.

THE PREMIER: If the hon. member objected, the proposal for adjournment would be withdrawn, and he would go on with the motion relating to hospitals.

THE SPEAKER: It was not exactly clear as to what was the wish of the House. The question was, That the notice of motion be postponed until to-morrow.

Question passed, and the motion postponed.

MOTION—SITE FOR EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINES, REMOVAL.

MR. A. J. DIAMOND (South Fremantle) moved:

That in view of the recent explosion attended by the sacrifice of human life at Owen's

Anchorage Magazine Reserve, and having regard to the almost miraculous escape of the town and the adjacent district from a disaster of an appalling nature, this House is of opinion that the explosives magazines in their present proximity to the town are a serious menace to the life of the citizens of Fremantle and suburbs. Also, that the protection of life and valuable property demands the removal forthwith of the whole of the explosives to a hulk anchored in a safe place, with a view either to the permanent use of hulks for storage purposes or, the removal of the magazines to one of the islands.

He said: In moving the motion, I may remind the House in a few words of the catastrophe which occurred at the powder magazines in the neighbourhood of Robb's Jetty some weeks back, and the consequent death of a plucky and faithful servant of the State who sacrificed his life in his endeavour to avert the catastrophe and also to save the lives of other men. I would point out that the extent of this catastrophe was very much minimised by the fact that the quantity of explosives destroyed on that occasion was very small—a matter of a few hundred-weights or less. The place where the explosion occurred, the shed or magazine in which the detonators were stored, was only about the size of one of those offices on the wharves in any shipping port. The explosion caused a terrible amount of consternation in and about the town of Fremantle, so much so that many delicate women in the neighbourhood—that is, within a mile or two of the spot where the explosion occurred—have not yet recovered from the effects of the same. One lady whom I know of has had the doctor in the house practically every day ever since. If a pannikin falls off the table, it practically puts her into hysterics, although she was a perfectly healthy woman previous to the explosion. I said this explosion was, fortunately, a very small one, but its effects were such that a large magazine some distance away, containing about 30 tons of explosives, but partially protected by intervening sandhills, had its roof and a portion of its walls affected, as if it had been bombarded. The walls and roofs were not pierced, but they were very seriously affected, so much so that it would appear possible that had the quantity of explosives which went off been larger this magazine, containing about 30 tons of explosives, would also have ex-

ploded. I am assured that practical experts say that the explosion of 30 tons of dynamite would not probably cause the loss of a life outside the radius of half a mile. All I can say is that I do not believe the expert who says so. I question if there is a man in this House who would credit such an absurd proposition. Still, it is advanced as the case that the explosion of 30 tons of explosives would not menace life beyond half a mile from the scene of the explosion. I will call attention of members to some explosions which have occurred of late years. Within a very few years there has been an explosion at magazines adjacent to the city of Toulon in France, which I believe is the great French naval port in the Mediterranean. That village was practically wiped off the face of the earth. Since that occasion there has been an explosion on a ship lying alongside the quay at a Spanish place called Santander on the Mediterranean. The ship was allowed to go into harbour and to lie alongside the quay. There was an explosion, and practically the whole face of the town in front of this wharf was destroyed. The dangers of these explosions are so much recognised that the manufactories of dynamite, gelignite, and other explosives in Scotland, which is the great place for the manufacture of them, are situated as a rule on wild parts of the seacoast away from all habitations; certainly a long way from anything like a population. So far do they go to get isolation for these explosives factories that they go actually to a part of the coast where they have a jetty which runs out a tremendous distance before it can reach deep water, and steamers loading these explosives come alongside that jetty, and nothing else is landed or loaded at it. The member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas), who I am sorry to see is not in the House just now, will remember the terrible explosion which occurred at Johannesburg. The quantity exploded consisted, I believe, of only one truck of dynamite; at the most, the member for Dundas assured me, it could not have been more than two trucks. That scooped out practically a valley and did considerable damage in the neighbourhood, and at the mine where the hon. member was in charge at the time, more than two

miles out, I believe—he will correct me if I am wrong—they thought the whole town was blown up. Be that as it may, I think, despite what experts may say, the inhabitants of a town with perhaps 100 tons or more of dynamite stored near to it cannot feel particularly comfortable when they know that the explosion of a small quantity of detonators shook every house in Fremantle, made windows rattle for some time afterwards, and frightened the lives out of women and children. If my house had been within half-a-mile of the explosion I should have expected the top of it to have fallen in. I happen to live in a two-storey house. I was upstairs with my wife and daughter. They were frightened out of their wits and thought it was an earthquake. I knew it was not an earthquake, but an explosion. The walls of the house swayed. We were between two and three miles from the place where the explosion occurred. A railway has been made to Woodman's Point, and I believe that steps are being taken to construct new magazines around there, with a jetty to land explosives. Woodman's Point is about four or five miles away from the southern boundary of Fremantle. It is supposed that this distance will render the town perfectly safe. I respectfully but firmly doubt it. But if it makes the town of Fremantle as at present constituted safe, I cannot lose sight of the fact that the tendency of the growth of population is distinctly in the southern direction. It has been somewhat retarded by the fact that several large estates have not been cut up and sold. Now, however, some have been sold in blocks and will be cut up, and others are about to be cut up or are cut up for sale. As soon as these estates are sold in building blocks, the population will grow down south towards Woodman's Point at a tremendous rate. It is a very pleasant neighbourhood, perhaps half or quarter of a mile from the coast. The tendency is, I say, for people to go along the coastline in the southerly direction. The result will be that in a very few years the population will be right round Woodman's Point, whither the magazines have been transferred. I maintain that such a state of affairs should not be tolerated. I venture to say that Woodman's Point is no place for a powder magazine. Within half-a-

mile of these magazines there is the quarantine station. It is quite possible that any time we may have 500 or 600 people on that quarantine station, and I ask members to consider what would be the frightful effects if a powder magazine containing 20, 30, 40, or 50 tons exploded in that district. In spite of what any expert will tell us—no doubt the Minister for Mines will quote his expert—I venture to say that no member of this House would like to be one of the patients on the quarantine station when such an explosion occurred. At any rate, as far as the people living in that direction are concerned, I am voicing a very strong protest on their behalf against the erection of powder magazines in the position in which it is intended to place them. When this matter of the removal of the powder magazines from Robb's Jetty was first mooted I urged the removal of them to some hills not too far away from the Eastern Goldfields, in country so rough that it would not be likely that there would be any population in the neighbourhood. The magazines should be placed there, and there should be a loop line to the Eastern Goldfields line. I still think that would be the best position, but the consensus of opinion seems to be against me, and I consequently do not think it would be advisable to press that. With reference to the last few words in my motion, the removal of the magazines to one of the islands, I would be prepared to accept an amendment to have the magazines at some distant place instead of on one of the islands, if any member thinks that would be better. I am not tied down to any place. My sole object is to secure the safety and comfort of the people living on the south side of Fremantle; not only their safety and comfort, but relief from nervousness, which I can say from practical knowledge is very rife in the neighbourhood just now. I say from personal knowledge there is a considerable amount of nervousness in the district, and I do not think it is desirable that that should be the case. At a small increased expense the Government could provide accommodation for explosives somewhere else. With these few remarks, and reasserting my willingness to have a slight amendment made by any member who may desire it, I move the motion standing in my name.

MR. F. REID (Mount Burges): I second the motion.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): The member for South Fremantle in writing out this motion certainly tried to make it rather sensational. I do not admit for a moment that there was any great disaster of the nature described by the hon. member, who would like the House to understand that it was only by a miraculous accident that the other magazines did not also explode. When one remembers the nature of the accident, it must be recognised that owing to the magazine which exploded being so safeguarded there was no danger to any other magazine. The hon. member wishes the explosives removed to hulks, or one of the islands outside Fremantle. I can assure the House it would be a retrograde movement to store the explosives in hulks. It is very difficult indeed to properly examine the explosives when stored in hulks to see if they are deteriorating, and there is the danger in going aboard hulks. The storage of explosives in hulks was in vogue many years ago, but that system has been abolished in the old world and throughout the other States. Having the magazines on land is far and away the better system; it enables the explosives to be examined carefully and often, and it allows great care to be taken. On the advice of the experts, I do not think it well to have the explosives kept on islands. It would be very difficult indeed during any stress of weather to bring the explosives to the mainland. When the control of magazines was placed under my department 12 months ago, it had then been suggested that the magazines should be shifted to Case Point, and a small sum of money appeared on the Estimates for that purpose. A piece of land was purchased at Case Point on which to erect the magazines; but it was found that the cost of constructing a railway, and the building of a jetty and other works, which would be caused by the removal of the magazines, would be between £35,000 and £40,000, and there was no means of finding the money for the purpose at that time. The present magazines, I admit, are a danger and a menace to Fremantle. That has been admitted in this House before. Time after time the matter has

been brought up in this Chamber, and it has been admitted that having the magazines so close to the abattoirs was not right, and leaving them unfenced was a big element of danger. But the recent explosion has shown that great care had been taken in the placing of the magazines, or a larger explosion would have resulted. The magazines are to be erected at a place four and a-half miles from Fremantle. A railway has already been constructed to the spot, and in a short time the magazines will be removed. A Bill was passed through the House last session giving power to build a railway to Woodman's Point for the purpose of having the magazines at that place. Members were here when the Bill was passed through this Chamber giving the Government power to construct the railway to Woodman's Point, the object being the establishment of magazines there.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Have you sufficient area to put them far enough apart?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: We have a large area there. The old race-course has been given up to us by the trustees, and there is a portion of the stock quarantine area which is not required. There are 20 or 22 acres, and the magazines will be erected eight chains apart. The whole area will be fenced in; even on the sea side there will be a fence. A jetty is being constructed, and all the arrangements, costing between £9,000 and £10,000, have been made; and now, because an accident takes place we are asked to remove the magazines to some other site. I have every sympathy with the people of Fremantle; but there will be no danger when the magazines are removed to Woodman's Point. I may say that the first magazines were not safe, but I can assure the House that in a few months' time we shall have the magazines erected, we shall have the jetty constructed, and on this jetty no other business will be done—only the receiving or removal of explosives. There will be direct communication by rail; and with the whole place fenced in and mounds erected around each magazine, I do not think there will be need for any anxiety on the part of Fremantle people in the future. I have the advice of the Chief Inspector of Explosives, and he says at once that

it would be better if the magazines were farther away from the people who live near to them. He would prefer, of course, going to Case Point; but the Government have no money for that purpose, and it would be too big an expenditure to undertake at the present time. I could not get the railway built to Case Point. The Chief Inspector says that the magazines at Woodman's Point will be absolutely secure. There will be no danger or menace to the people of Fremantle, and I hope the House will take the Chief Inspector's opinion in regard to this matter. The Chief Inspector farther says that the use of hulks would be a retrograde step, and he really thinks that there will be no danger whatever with proper supervision, and with the provisions which I have pointed out are carried out—that is, that the whole of the ground shall be fenced and magazines erected eight chains apart, with mounds around them. In such a case if one magazine were to explode, it would have no effect on the other magazines. I hope the hon. member will withdraw his motion, because it is impossible to agree to the use of hulks, and the proposal to store the explosives on an island is impracticable: the motion says that it must be one thing or the other.

MR. DIAMOND: I have already said that I would accept an amendment.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: If the hon. member does not withdraw his motion, I shall have to leave it to the good sense of the House to negative the motion. I believe an amendment is to be moved. Having the assurance of the Chief Inspector of Explosives, who is an expert, we should be guided by it. I may also add that before erecting the magazines at the new site, we had a conference of all the manufacturers of explosives, and amongst the gentlemen present were representatives of some of the largest manufacturers of explosives in the world. The whole matter was considered and they agreed with the erection of the magazines on the site proposed. The House actually agreed to the construction of a railway to this very point.

MR. DIAMOND: Not since the explosion.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The House agreed without a division that a railway should be constructed to Wood-

man's Point, so that the magazines could be erected there. The hon. member did not know that the Bill had gone through the House. We have spent £3,000 on the works at Woodman's Point, therefore I do not think we should alter the site for the magazines now. I hope the House will reject the motion.

At 6-30, the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7-30, Chair resumed.

MR. J. J. HIGHAM (Fremantle) : There is no doubt that considerable anxiety has arisen in the minds of many of the Fremantle people since the explosion of one of the smaller magazines at Fremantle led them to realise what may happen if one of the larger magazines, containing 30 to 40 tons of dynamite, were to explode; and this anxiety has roused a considerable agitation in Fremantle to have the site at Case Point, originally decided on, fixed for the site of the new magazines. The Minister for Mines has just admitted that while Mr. Mann, the inspector of explosives, considers the Woodman's Point site perfectly safe, yet even he, to be more assured, would prefer the Case Point site; and in this I think practically all the Fremantle people will agree with him. I move as an amendment,

That all the words after "suburbs" in line 5 be struck out, and the words "and should be removed to Case Point at once" be inserted in lieu.

The Minister for Mines has spoken of the large expenditure which would be entailed in constructing the magazines at Case Point, and says that owing to lack of funds he was compelled to adopt the nearer site. But when we consider that the only additional expenditure necessary for the construction of the magazines at Case Point rather than at Woodman's Point will be that resulting from the extension of the railway line some four to five miles, the objection disappears; for the line would be very economical to construct, there being absolutely no engineering difficulties, very slight earth-works, and no material to provide but the bare rails and sleepers. The Minister tells us that the Government bought a site at Case Point, a site in every way suitable for the purpose, and that they will retain that site; so I fail to perceive what

immense expenditure will be entailed if we build on that site as originally intended. The site at Case Point is a plain on which there is not likely to be any close settlement for a quarter of a century at least, if then. In fact this plain, selected from Richardson's paddock, is absolutely unfit for close settlement; and as it is on a point projecting into Cockburn Sound and a considerable distance from the Rockingham townsite, the proximity of neighbours who are likely to be affected by the magazines is not to be expected. The site at Woodman's Point is, I must admit, a fairly good site in many respects; yet it is not, as the Minister would have us believe, so far from settlement as to render it absolutely safe. It is within three miles of the southern boundary of Fremantle, and within a shorter distance of the Smelting Works and the public abattoirs; and on that southern boundary of the town the settlement is very close. There is a considerable portion of the people of South Fremantle living in that part of the town, in Chesterfield and around the Smelting Works. On the other hand there is also the possibility of very extensive settlement at some time or other within a quarter to half a mile of the magazines, on land which has been alienated by the Government and which is known as the Crown suburban blocks. Years ago the Government cut up all the hillside opposite this magazine site into about 100 small blocks. In addition, many of the original blocks of from 500 to 100 acres, which extend from there towards the town, have been subdivided; and while there is not very much settlement there now, all of this land, which has been sold to people who intend to settle on it, may before long be occupied by a fairly large population settled within a distance of the magazine which even the Inspector of Explosives would not consider safe.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Was not the position the same last year?

MR. HIGHAM: Possibly it was; but the people of Fremantle had not then been led by the explosion to consider that site not altogether suitable. Even so, although the Woodman's Point site was assented to, it was not assented to without some protest from the people of Fremantle, who have always expressed

the opinion that the more isolated and distant site would be much preferable. I cannot agree with the motion as drafted ; because, like the Minister for Mines, I do not believe in utilising hulks for the storage of explosives, and mainly for the reason the Minister has given, that on board hulks it is impossible either to supervise properly the explosives themselves or properly to control those who are placed in charge. Apart from that also, considerable expense is entailed in the handling of supplies to meet the demands of consumers. It must be realised that when the municipal regulations demand that but a limited supply may be kept within a municipality, the demands of consumers must be met by daily drafts on the magazines ; and this would preclude the possibility of utilising either hulks or one of the islands for magazine purposes. As to the islands, the Government certainly possess Carnac, but it is absolutely unsuitable. It is to a great extent unapproachable in certain weathers ; hence the immense cost which would be entailed in bringing the daily supply from Carnac and the impossibility at some periods of getting to Carnac when required, would make the site so expensive that we must, as we have done hitherto, put the islands altogether out of consideration as thoroughly unsuitable for the purpose. I must admit that, after the Government have gone to considerable expense in resuming the racecourse from the race club for this purpose, it is rather unfortunate that the Fremantle people should desire a change at this stage. Still, looking at the fact that the Case Point site is so thoroughly isolated and not likely to be surrounded with settlement, and that the building of a few additional miles of railway would entail comparatively little increase to the cost, I think it is worthy of the consideration of this House that some additional cost should not be thought a bar to the removal of the magazines to a more suitable site. The Minister for Mines has drawn attention to the very large expense entailed already at Woodman's Point. So far as the railway is concerned, with the exception of two large sidings none of that expense can be considered as wasted. The two sidings would certainly need to be pulled up again ; but the line itself is ready for extension to Case Point. So far as the

expenditure on the jetty is concerned, even that need not be wasted, because the jetty could still be used for landing and loading explosives. It would not be a difficult matter to land explosives there and take them to Case Point. [THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Four or five miles?] I will admit that ; but there is the jetty at a suitable point, and there is no need why the money should be wasted, for it will answer the purpose for many years to come. If this House does not realise the necessity for the removal of the magazines to Case Point, members must realise that, as the land already alienated from the Crown becomes settled, so will a demand arise for the removal of the magazines at an early date ; and as they are likely to be removed within a few years, just as the magazines are now being removed from Robb's Jetty, I think it would be well to face the position at once and go straight to Case Point. I cannot realise that this extension of five miles of bare railway line, without any special difficulties so far as expense is concerned, should be a great bar to the removal to Case Point ; nor can I see that the jetty built at Woodman's Point should, on account of the five miles of railage to the magazines, be any bar also. I think, rather than go to the expense of building magazines in a thoroughly up-to-date way, as it is proposed to build them at Woodman's Point, with the almost certain prospect that within three, or four, or five years, public opinion will demand their removal to a more distant site, it would be far better to face the difficulty now and go straight to Case Point.

MR. F. McDONALD (Cockburn Sound) : I am going to oppose the motion. Some few weeks ago several members of this House visited the new site, along with the Government Analyst and Inspector of Explosives, who explained the methods which would be adopted for protecting property when these magazines are moved to the new site. I think all those who visited the site on that occasion were quite prepared to accept Mr. Mann's statement that, when these magazines were removed to Woodman's Point, if an explosion should occur it would do no harm to life or property in Fremantle. From the opinions of experts, it is laid down that an explosion will do very little

harm outside a radius of two to two and a-half miles. As to the complaints which the member for South Fremantle claims have been made to him, I have heard only one complaint, and that was from the Fremantle Municipal Council, which passed a resolution that the magazines should be removed to the islands or to hulks. All the importers and merchants are agreed that the site along the coast is the most suitable. I am quite prepared to admit that Case Point would be a better site, if the Government could see their way clear to extend the railway four or five miles farther south into the land purchased some two years ago; but I can assure the House that a large amount of money has been expended upon the new site and upon the jetty, which is very near completion. If the railway is taken past the present site, no doubt it would be taken away from the point where we hope in the near future it will branch off on the proposed extension to Jandakot. The member for South Fremantle states that a large number of inhabitants would go and live out between this site and the southern boundary of Fremantle. [Mr. DIAMOND: I said a large number of people.] I do not think there would be a large number of inhabitants or people who would take up land between the smelters and the proposed site for the magazines, because population is going out more in the direction of High-street East and East Fremantle. I can assure the House that it is very bleak along the foreshore and on the heights alongside Rockingham Road, so that I do not think there would be a very large increase of population out that way. Personally, if the Government will consent to the extension of the railway as far as Case Point, I should be glad to support the proposition of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham); but I am opposed to the motion of the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Diamond).

Mr. F. CONNOR (East Kimberley): I wish to support the suggestion to remove the explosives magazines to Case Point. I think that we cannot have them too far away from Fremantle at any reasonable distance. It is far better to move them out of danger. Only within the last few days, and since the explosion where a man lost his life, two trucks, one empty and one loaded with explosives,

came into collision on the jetty at Owen's Anchorage; and it was by the merest chance there was no extraordinary and dreadful accident. So far as the position fixed upon at present at Woodman's Point is concerned, it is not far enough away from the centre of population. If this amendment is brought forward with the object of altering the suggested Fremantle-Armadale railway route or interfering with it in any way, I shall not vote for it; but I do not think it has this object, because the line to Case Point ought to be constructed as well as the line to Armadale. That is the position I would like to take up with regard to this matter. There is a good deal of log-rolling going on in connection with that railway, as to whether the line should go to Armadale, Mundijong, or Rockingham; but I do not think this question is touched, else I would hesitate before casting my vote. Taking into consideration what has occurred and that we are in danger of a dreadful catastrophe, the magazines should be removed at any rate to Woodman's Point, or better than that to Case Point; and I would suggest that we take the lesser of the evils and go to Case Point. I would like members to look at the question from this point of view, that, if the explosives magazines should go to Case Point and the railway be constructed to that point, it should not be the means of altering what I think a majority of members of this House consider to be the proper route for the railway suggested to join the South-Western line, the route to Armadale. If the magazines are to be kept at all on the main line, Case Point is the place, but I am against their being on the main line at all. Even at Case Point there is a great danger of an explosion, where hundreds of tons of explosives may be set off; and I say that the proper place for the magazines (I have advocated it for years) is at Carnac Island, or possibly at Rottneest or Garden Island. However we are met with the objection from the merchants and traders that the cost would be excessive. What is the cost? Are we to take into consideration the cost of hauling explosives, if we are to consider the possibility of a town like Fremantle being blown up? We must not take up that position. My opinion is that these magazines should not be on

the main line, but on one of the islands or else afloat on hulks. Consequently I am in favour of the next best proposition in this very important matter, that the magazines should be removed to Case Point.

MR. F. ILLINGWORTH (Cue): This question of the magazines was one of the most troublesome I had to deal with during the little while I was in office. I gave the matter great consideration, and dealt with all the questions which arose concerning it. My original idea was that we should locate them in the hills. Difficulties arose from merchants, and there were various other difficulties on the question. Then we discussed the question of locating the magazines on one of the islands, which had a good deal to recommend it; and eventually we discussed the question of this very site which the Government have now fixed upon, and at that time Mr. Mann condemned this site utterly.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Which site?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The site chosen by the present Government. I discussed the matter personally with Mr. Mann. I pointed this spot out and asked him a question. He condemned the site utterly at the time, and he simply came to the conclusion that there was no place he would recommend at all except Case Point. I was backwards and forwards with Mr. Mann for weeks, and it is the strangest thing to me to find that now the Government, on the recommendation of Mr. Mann, select the very place that he would not look at when it was first suggested.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The present site was never offered him before.

MR. CONNOR: That is the racecourse site. The hon. member is speaking about Woodman's Point, which is a different matter.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The hon. gentleman (the Minister for Mines) is a little previous. I placed this matter before him minus the racecourse site. I was just going to remark that since that time the area has been greatly enlarged by the addition of this racecourse site. The difficulty which presents itself to my mind is this. We had the explosion of a small quantity recently. Supposing the explosion had been that of one of the

large magazines. I think members will say that if we had four or five tons of explosives and an accident occurred there, this question of eight chains apart would not make so much difference as is said. The fact is, the whole concern would go off. I have not the slightest doubt that if we had five tons of explosives in either of the magazines and an accident occurred, the whole of the magazines would go off. And what would be the result? It would be impossible for us to tell. One thing is certain, that within a very short distance of this site the population is growing. The population is coming in that direction, and it will continue to come. The site may perhaps be satisfactory for a few years, but in the end it will have to be removed farther away. It seems to me it would be far better to go to the necessary expense and take the magazines to a site where proper distances could be had. I am not sure what the distance is. That is an expert question. I think the suggestion of Mr. Mann is that the magazines should be eight chains apart. That would be all very well, if we happened to strike a small explosion, but if we had an explosion of one of the large magazines eight chains would be of no use at all. I do not think there is sufficient area in this site. I can understand and appreciate the difficulties which surround the question, because I had to do with it, and I know it is exceedingly difficult to settle upon a site which will satisfy the merchants and traders, and at the same time place these magazines in a safe position. I think the first consideration should be the safety of the public, and now we have come to the question of moving this magazine—it has to be done, and it ought to have been done years ago—it would be far better to go to the extra expense of moving the site to Case Point, which was the one Mr. Mann at that time agreed was the only suitable site. As I suggested, the increased area may have altered the view of Mr. Mann upon the question, but I am quite certain that before very long the question will come up again, and I am prepared to see the better thing done at once and have a site which would give a certain amount of safety, at any rate. I still hold the view that we ought to have the magazines on one of the hills. I believe that we shall

not be able to place these magazines in a safe position for the public until we put them there. However, that is condemned by all the experts. I know that at the time I had to discuss the question with them Case Point was the only site I could get them to agree upon at all. It was the only one they would give a favourable minute upon. It was all Case Point, and in order to satisfy the requirements, the Government of that day purchased enough land to increase the area to a sufficient quantity. I think the magazines ought to be placed a sufficient distance away.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. C. H. Rason): I had really hoped that we had reached finality in regard to the question of the explosives site when last year the Government introduced a Bill to authorise the construction of a railway to Woodman's Point. The purpose for which that railway was required was fully explained to the House. It was explained that it was determined to abandon the Case Point site as a site for explosives magazines, and substitute Woodman's Point. That Bill was explained when there was a pretty full House, and the only comment was comment of congratulation. Not one word was raised then as to the unsuitability of the site. As I have said, the only comment was comment by way of congratulating the Government upon the wisdom of their choice, and the Bill passed without any division. The line has been constructed, the jetty has been almost completed, and the work of removal of the explosives magazines to this site will very shortly be taken in hand. It is said that at the time the Bill passed through the House no explosion had occurred, and therefore these highly sensitive people in Fremantle, very nervous people in the neighbourhood of South Fremantle especially, had had no experience of an explosion. Since then there has been an explosion, and the Fremantle people have had some experience of the effect. True it is that unfortunately a man lost his life. That is very much to be regretted, of course, but we have had from the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Diamond) his own experience that the shock caused by the explosion was felt there; that it shook walls, and very nearly did a considerable amount of

damage; that it frightened people out of their wits, and all sorts of catastrophes occurred. The member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth) says the shock was felt in Perth. If that was so, and I have no doubt it was, the fact remains that the explosives stored in the magazines close to the magazine which exploded were not themselves exploded. Surely if you can have an explosion the shock of which can be felt so distinctly in Perth, it should go to allay the fears of the people in Fremantle to convince them from actual experience that it is possible for an explosion to occur in one magazine and to have no effect on explosives stored in magazines in close proximity. That was the actual experience. It is no good advancing theories when we have actual experience to go by. Beyond the actual experience of that explosion which unfortunately has occurred, there is the expert advice the Government have had at their disposal. That expert advice has been sought, and the Government are assured that Woodman's Point is a safe and proper site upon which to erect explosives magazines. Of course I can quite understand the explosives inspector saying it would be better to have them farther away. Undoubtedly; but if that argument is to followed up to its logical conclusion, members may say it would be better if the magazines were 5,000 miles away. Undoubtedly; it would save the feelings of some people in Fremantle, but we have to take a practical view of this question as of others, and we have only to ask ourselves whether, in justice to those who have to make use of these explosives, in justice to the people of Fremantle, and in justice to the requirements and safety of the general public, the Woodman's Point site meets the requirements. If we ask ourselves that question, I submit that there is only one answer, and that is that it is eminently a safe site, and seeing that the House has already decided that there the magazines should be erected I hope members will not farther delay the removal by now adopting the Case Point site which only last year they rejected in favour of Woodman's Point.

MR. J. M. FERGUSON (North Fremantle): I have no wish to prolong the discussion about this matter. There can be no doubt, however, that settlement is rapidly going towards Woodman's Point,

and the position which to-day may be suitable for the magazines will not be so, I think, within the next three or four years. That being so, is it not better to at once face the extra expense of going farther on to Case Point instead of putting the magazines down at Woodman's Point, and having to move them again in three or four years? I think it is an absolute fact that settlement is going rapidly to Woodman's Point. I do not think it necessary to argue the point. It seems to me it is purely a matter of whether it is better to face the extra expense or to build a magazine now and have to move it in a year or two.

MR. W. M. PURKISS (Perth): There seems to be a consensus of opinion that the Case Point site is infinitely safer for the purpose of the storage of explosives.

MR. TAYLOR: Why did not they tell us last year?

MR. PURKISS: There seems to be a consensus of opinion, and I suppose it is a matter of common sense that the farther the magazines are placed from the centre of Fremantle—I do not say at a distance of 500 miles—the greater will be the amount of safety. Taking that as my premise, Case Point is the safer dépôt. Then we are met by the question—what about the expense? If we were an impoverished State with a revenue something like that of Tasmania, there would be something in the point, but we are a State with a revenue of four millions, and we are spending hundreds of thousands of pounds upon ornamental buildings and so forth, such as new Houses of Parliament. The cost of construction of three or four miles of additional railway line for the purpose of the storage of explosives is a mere bagatelle, a mere fraction, a trifle, compared with what might happen in the case of a very large and comprehensive explosion which would involve the loss of property and the loss of life. What is the use of talking about £5,000 or £10,000 in view of a loss which might occur amounting to a hundred thousand pounds' worth of property or loss of life? In a nutshell the position is this. We are agreed, and even Ministers admit, that Case Point is the better site so far as safety is concerned. That being so, are we justified in spending the moderate sum of money that would be needed to carry the magazines to that

site instead of to Woodman's Point? The additional expense would be very small, and seeing that we have a revenue larger than that of any of the other Australian States in proportion to population, that we have money which we really cannot spend, and that we come down with our surpluses and so forth, the question of cost in this instance should not stand in the way for one moment. I therefore support the motion.

MR. W. ATKINS (Murray): I wish to say that it was understood last session that we were to save money in this country, to try to be less expensive and less expansive in our spending. Now it appears that we are to spend all that we possibly can. As to the Case Point site, it may be all very well to remove the magazines to that place; but how do we know that after the magazines have been removed to Case Point, in a few years' time people will not settle all round Case Point, and the magazines will have to be removed again? If we are going to have the magazines at Case Point, then the Government should see that people do not settle all round the magazines, so that the magazines will not have to be shifted over and over again. The Government have been shifting the magazines ever since I came into this country, and it appears as if we shall keep on shifting and spending more money. Whatever is done now, let it be permanent, so that the magazines will not have to be shifted again.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (on the amendment): I should like to draw attention to one or two points before the question is put. Case Point was originally selected, but owing to the cost of constructing the railway, the removal of the magazines, and the construction of a jetty, without contingencies the cost was £35,000; therefore the site had to be abandoned. When I assumed control of the magazines and the explosives, I made some efforts to try and get an area inland amongst the hills, or a little beyond Guildford. I could not find a suitable site. Then suddenly I discovered that I was able to get a large area of land known as the Fremantle Racecourse—that is the present site—which was not available at any previous time. I also had under consideration the cattle quarantine station, but it was a small area,

and Mr. Mann would not agree to the magazines being there because there was not sufficient room. When the larger area was obtained Mr. Mann said that it satisfied him. The site also satisfied the importers; and the business people of Fremantle never raised any objection. It is all very well for members to say the farther we put the explosives away the better. [MR. CONNOR interjected.] If the hon. member had been in his place last year he would have known that a railway was proposed to Woodman's Point where the explosives magazines were to be constructed.

MR. CONNOR: I have brought the question up in the House every session for the last six sessions.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: And the hon. member got nothing done until I took control of the question. I might mention also that the members for Fremantle and Fremantle suburbs all knew of the proposed site. The question was brought before all of them, not only by the Bill, but by the undertaking to get the surrender of the racecourse. It was argued by the member for Fremantle to-night that it would only mean the extra cost of constructing the railway; but that extra cost would mean over £15,000. If we had to use the present jetty as the member for Fremantle said, we would have the same danger as to the landing of explosives as now exists. The member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) said there was a danger in handling; but with a new jetty that danger would still exist, and there would be the extra cost of handling which would be charged to the people. The explosives would have to be landed at the jetty, run five miles along the railway, handled again into the magazines, and then have to be re-handled and brought out again when they were required for the goldfields. The experts are of opinion that the magazines should be at this place, and the site met with the approval of certain special experts who were in this country when the conference took place. The House has already agreed to this site. Taking all matters into consideration, and remembering that if we take the line on to Case Point it will mean the expenditure of a large amount of money, I hope the House will take the advice of the experts who say that

this site is the one that should be selected.

MR. DIAMOND (in reply as mover): Some of the arguments used by the Minister for Mines require ventilating somewhat. The Minister spoke of the greatly increased cost of the proposed removal to Case Point. I have not yet expressed my adherence to the amendment, but I desire to speak on the subject of Case Point as the Minister has specially mentioned that. I believe the building of magazines has not yet been commenced at Woodman's Point; the railway line has been laid, but it is proposed that the line shall go on to the Jandakot Area. Two small sidings have already been made, and the jetty has been built. Therefore the total extra cost would simply be the expense of the two sidings, which would be a small amount, also the jetty, with the extra four or five miles to Case Point. In arguing against the amendment, the Minister was hardly fair in holding up the tremendous increased cost which did not exist. The Minister also spoke about the sensational wording of my motion. That motion, sensational or otherwise, was carefully talked over and worded in conjunction with the Mayor of Fremantle and Councillor Laurie, and one or two others; it was not sensational, but was carefully worded and thought out by the mayor and others connected with the municipality. A great deal has been said about the leading merchants who deal in explosives, and at the present time the Minister and his experts are showing vastly more consideration for the interests of the gentlemen who trade in explosives, and who make money out of them, than they are for the safety of the town of Fremantle and suburbs. I was about to say, whatever extra cost the merchants are put to they pass on to the mine owners. At any rate the extra cost of handling would not mean more than perhaps 1s. or 1s. 6d. a case, which is not too great a tax on the mining industry when it means protecting the lives and property of the people in the Fremantle district. I ask the House not to place too much reliance on the positive dictum of the expert. Unfortunately for us in Western Australia we have had a sorry experience of the dictum of experts. We had some practical experience the other night in the ex-

plosion. With reference to the fact that no outcry was made when the Woodman's Point line was decided on, I simply call the attention of the Minister and the House to the fact that we are apparently living in a fool's paradise in Fremantle. The occurrence of that explosion, which was only a little one after all, showed us what might have occurred if a magazine holding 80 tons of explosives had been the victim of design, or an accident had occurred. It may be said that we remove the danger by taking the magazines to Woodman's Point, thus farther from the centre of population. I reiterate there is a distinct tendency of the population increasing in that direction. The member for Fremantle has indorsed that opinion, and I am sorry the member for Cockburn Sound does not agree with it. He speaks of the bleakness of the land in that direction. Does the member for Cockburn Sound forget that the Lefroy estate is bleak limestone and sand, and that portion of another estate which was cut up sold rapidly, and that estate was bleak limestone and sand? The farther settlement south is bleak. There is the Brockman estate, a portion of which contains sandhills, and 90 acres were sold to Mr. Copley lately. The Brockman estate on the other side is to be thrown open shortly, and as soon as the land is cut up and thrown open it will be immediately sold. There is a tendency on the part of the population to go down south if they get a chance to expand in that direction. I have heard nothing this evening to cause me to alter my opinion. It is absolutely necessary to take the bull by the horns and remove the magazines from Woodman's Point. The discussion has shown that I cannot carry my motion in the form in which I moved it, and the House will not listen to the question of islands, therefore I ask leave to withdraw my motion. Can I withdraw the motion and accept the amendment?

THE SPEAKER: No. The hon. member proposes to withdraw the motion altogether.

MR. DIAMOND: Yes; I asked leave to withdraw my motion.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret): Before the motion is withdrawn, I desire to say a few words. Last year when the Bill for the construction of a line

to Woodman's Point was introduced by the Minister for Works, it was distinctly understood that the removal of the magazines was under the consideration of Ministers. The Case Point site had been originally decided on, but the cost was too great, and the Government brought in a Bill to construct a railway to Woodman's Point so as to remove the magazines to that place. If I remember rightly a jetty was to be erected there.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The jetty was to cost £3,000.

MR. TAYLOR: The cost of the removal to Case Point was given at something like £35,000, and Woodman's Point was accepted.

MR. HIGHAM: The total cost was £35,000.

MR. TAYLOR: Case Point was abandoned with the object of taking Woodman's Point, and when the Bill was introduced into the House, none of the members for Fremantle objected to the line, and the only members in the House who spoke on the matter congratulated the Government for bringing forward the Bill, and hoped that it would be passed. I had nothing to say on that occasion myself. I took it for granted since the representatives of Fremantle are ever on the alert when the name of Fremantle is mentioned in the House; and as they raised no objection I took it for granted that the Government were for once right in selecting the proper place. And no matter how much I might have liked at that time to oppose the Government, I saw there was no possible chance of doing so with any success, seeing that the Fremantle and the metropolitan members were perfectly satisfied with Woodman's Point. The member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) says "half a loaf is better than no bread." He has the half loaf now, and he wants a full-sized loaf at Case Point. I shall oppose the amendment, having had expert opinion on the matter, though the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Diamond) does not think much of experts. But that hon. member, when anything is brought before the House for the benefit of a part of the State other than Fremantle, always accepts expert opinion when it suits his own argument. There is no member in this Chamber who

respects expert opinion as does the hon. member; but now he says it goes for nothing. I am satisfied that the House cannot reasonably accept the amendment. When the Bill was introduced last session, not one voice was raised in this Chamber against Woodman's Point being selected for the magazines, and it is now too late in the day to raise an objection, considering that the Government have gone on with the work. I think the Minister said the jetty was in course of construction.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Almost completed.

MR. TAYLOR: And the railway is completed.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes.

MR. TAYLOR: In view of these facts it is unreasonable to expect the magazines to be farther removed to Case Point, at additional expense. But the argument of the member for North Fremantle (Mr. Ferguson) about the rapid settlement towards Woodman's Point is remarkable. I should like that gentleman or the member for South Fremantle to give us an idea of what he means by rapid settlement. I suppose it means two men and a dog.

MR. DIAMOND: A rapid increase of population.

MR. TAYLOR: Why, on the gold-fields, when in a few days two or three thousand people arrive in a district, we do not look upon that as a rapid increase; yet if on account of it we asked for some support from the Government to make those people comfortable, none would oppose us more readily than the member for South Fremantle.

HON. F. H. PLESSE: Your population goes off again just as quickly—in fact, with the rapidity of an explosion.

MR. TAYLOR: I never heard the member for Cue grumbling about hearing such explosions as he grumbled to-night at having heard another. I hope the House will not pass the amendment; I shall certainly oppose it. Members talk of rapid settlement. What was the increase in settlement at Woodman's point last year? Was it 1,000 or 20?

MR. DIAMOND: No one talked about increased settlement at Woodman's Point.

MR. TAYLOR: That was the argument of the member for North Fremantle (Mr. Ferguson).

MR. FERGUSON: I said settlement towards Woodman's Point.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes; and no matter where we put the magazines we shall find settlement extending in some degree towards the site. After the Minister's statement with reference to the precautions to be taken, I think the Fremantle people will be perfectly safe with the magazines at Woodman's Point.

THE SPEAKER: The motion cannot be withdrawn unless the amendment be withdrawn first.

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

Ayes	9
Noes	20

Majority against ... 11

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Connor	Mr. Butcher
Mr. Diamond	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Illingworth	Mr. Gregory
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Hassell
Mr. Purkiss	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Reid	Mr. Hicks
Mr. Yelverton	Mr. Holman
Mr. Higham (Teller).	Mr. Johnson
	Mr. McWilliams
	Mr. Morgans
	Mr. Plesse
	Mr. Pigott
	Mr. Quinlan
	Mr. Rason
	Mr. Taylor
	Mr. Thomas
	Mr. Throssell
	Mr. Wallace
	Mr. Jacoby (Teller)

Amendment thus negatived.

Motion put, and negatived on the voices.

Question thus negatived.

NORSEMAN GOLDFIELD—TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILWAY.

NOTICE OF MOTION IRREGULAR.

MR. A. E. THOMAS (Dundas) had given notice to move: (1.) "That in the opinion of this House the developments of the Norseman goldfields warrant railway communication, and that a Bill with this end in view should be introduced during the present session; and (2.) that, recognising the great importance of the Transcontinental Railway to this State, this House is of the opinion that the Government should construct a railway from Esperance to the Eastern Goldfields, in order to remove the cause of the openly

avowed opposition of the Eastern States to the Interstate railway." Referring to the notices, he now moved that the first of his two notices be postponed for a fortnight. After the adjournment last night, when considering the order of motions for to-day, he found there was no possibility of having this motion placed high up on the Notice Paper.

THE SPEAKER: If the hon. member made a speech at this stage, he would be unable subsequently to move his motion.

Question passed, and the notice postponed.

MR. THOMAS farther moved that the second notice be postponed for a fortnight.

THE SPEAKER: One of these motions must be ruled out of order when made. Both had the same object, though they were differently worded.

Question passed, and the notice postponed.

MOTION—TICK REGULATIONS, TO RESCIND.

Debate resumed from 19th August, on the following motion by Mr. Holmes:—
"That the tick regulations as enforced at Fremantle should be rescinded, and that all cattle for shipment from Wyndham to Fremantle should be dipped at Wyndham prior to shipment, and re-dipped on arrival at Fremantle, and then liberated."

MR. W. J. BUTCHER (Gascoyne): Perhaps the mover will not be surprised when I tell the House that I shall oppose this motion. I have always opposed the introduction of tick-infested cattle to this part of the State, because I am of opinion that their introduction is dangerous. The hon. member made strong efforts when last he spoke on this subject to convince the House that there was absolutely no risk in relaxing these regulations, and he spent some two or three hours in elaborating his argument; but I do not think he was successful. I closely followed his speech, and did not hear one single argument which made the slightest alteration in my opinion. Perhaps it is very difficult to do that.

MR. HOLMES: I did not expect to do it.

MR. BUTCHER: The hon. member says that to alter these absurd tick regulations (as he calls them) would be

the means of cheapening the cost of meat. That is his principal reason. It is not going to open up fresh avenues of meat supply. All the cattle in the two Kimberleys are held practically by the same men, and it will not make the slightest difference. It is not likely these people will overstock the market with meat. There is not the slightest reason why they should do so. Before the select committee which sat upon this question last session, we got some very valuable information from experts and from those who gave evidence, showing conclusively that there is very great danger in allowing these cattle to come in from Kimberley, even after being dipped. I would like to give a rough idea of the amount of danger from one single tick. A female tick will lay up to 2,000 eggs, and these eggs will always hatch in a temperature of about 90 degrees. It is very seldom that our temperature in the summer months is anything under 90 degrees, so we might expect that, when a tick deposits eggs about Fremantle, or any other part of the country, they will hatch. It is farther conclusively proved that there is no weather in Western Australia cold enough to kill a tick. Mr. Pound, who is I believe a Queensland expert with very wide experience of tick, recently took a number of fully developed female ticks and placed them in a glass tube, packed them in ice and kept them at a temperature of three degrees below zero. One might have expected from this severe test that every one of those ticks would die; but it was not the case. Every one of them laid the full number of eggs, from 1,500 to 2,000. He took the eggs and put them into an incubator to hatch, and the larvæ he packed in ice, as he did the tick. It took no less than a week before the larvæ died, which conclusively proves that there is no weather in Western Australia sufficiently cold to kill tick; so that there must be a danger and risk in allowing tick cattle to come in here. The hon. member went on to say that ticked cattle had come into contact with other cattle in Fremantle for a number of years without any evil results. I would like hon. members to know that such is not the case, because a certain time ago some cattle in an area in Fremantle were found to be ticked. As

such has been the case, surely it proves conclusively that tick will live here and hatch and affect cattle. These cattle were promptly slaughtered when the discovery was made. It is unnecessary for me to go farther until the hon. member disproves what I say. It is the case. There is no doubt these cattle picked up the tick from cattle in the quarantine grounds.

MR. HOLMES: Give me something to prove. Whose cattle were they?

MR. BUTCHER: We have it in evidence taken before the select committee of last session. Two of the cattle were slaughtered—I am unable to say whose they were, but such a thing existed. Another thing is that virulent fever will be produced by tick in any hot latitude such as this, or in a malarial district. It is only necessary for enough ticks to attach themselves to any beast to produce fever. It is farther proved that any tick containing the micro-organism of tick fever will also produce fever in any condition. If these things are the case, and no doubt they are since they have been stated in evidence by experts with lifelong experience, or experience of many years in Queensland, America, and other parts of the world, surely such evidence is worth something; and surely it is advisable we should not relax these regulations and run the risk of getting the owners of stock in the southern portion of the State ruined just to satisfy two or three meat traders. If it would reduce the price of meat I would support the motion; but I cannot see that the hon. member has proved that the relaxation of the regulations is going to reduce the price of meat in any way. He goes on to say that another reason why these absurd regulations should be relaxed is that all the farmers in the southern districts and south-west and northern areas are hungering for store and breeding stock, and that it is impossible to get them unless we alter the tick regulations and allow people to get such cattle from Kimberley, which is the only place from which they can be obtained.

MR. HOLMES: That was the report last year, and you were a member of the select committee.

MR. BUTCHER: I do not think it was.

MR. HOLMES: I do.

MR. BUTCHER: Well, I do not remember it. I do not know who gave evidence to that effect. If this is the case, which I certainly doubt, can the hon. member tell me why it was that such a magnificent supply of cattle, both breeding and store stock, was offered in Guildford within the last fortnight and practically given away? We do not see in this any evidence of the farmers in the southern districts hungering for store stock. If such were the case, these cattle should have gone up to their full value, instead of being sold under value at a severe loss to the importer. This is a practical test. It is not an assumption. It is a fact outside of which we cannot get. If the farmers in the southern districts are looking for store stock and cannot get them, here was an opportunity; but the farmers do not want them or have no room or grass for them.

MR. WALLACE: A fortnight ago store cattle at Fremantle brought £7 5s. for the Irwin district.

MR. BUTCHER: Where from?

MR. WALLACE: Kimberley.

MR. BUTCHER: Is that a marvelous price?

MR. WALLACE: It was a good price for these cattle.

MR. BUTCHER: The mover went on to criticise the select committee that sat last session on this subject, and I think he was in fault in a good many instances. I assert that if hon. members will take the trouble to go through the evidence, they will come to the conclusion that the report was based upon the evidence taken; and what more could the committee do? It is not my intention to delay the House upon this question any farther. Therefore I shall make up my mind, as I have already done, to oppose the motion.

HON. G. THROSSSELL (Northam): In rising to support the motion, it is possible that I am moved by different motives from those of the previous speaker. I uphold the interests of the small farmer. If we base objections to the motion on the experience of Queensland and East Kimberley, there is no question but that we should be justified in voting against it. If, on the other hand, we are to be guided by our own past experience of six years, unquestionably

we shall have to support the motion. Common sense and logic alike dictate this course. When cattle were first allowed to cross the border from the Northern Territory into East Kimberley, East Kimberley was ticked up for six months; but I am sure the losses were small. However, with the past six years' experience of these cattle being allowed to come to this part, no single instance has come under my notice where tick has spread or done any harm. We should remember that it is a positive fact that all the conditions under which Kimberley cattle were allowed to land have been in favour of the spread of the disease, and that, owing to the lax way in which the local cattle at Fremantle were allowed to hobnob and rub noses with the infected cattle in the stock yards, and in which Kimberley cattle were trained to the goldfields, if there had been any danger of infection it would long ago have been widespread throughout the district. I am convinced too, that, had Dr. Jameson been in office, he would himself have introduced a similar motion to that now before the House. At the opening of the Goomalling railway some months ago both Dr. Jameson, who was the Minister for Lands, and the Premier spoke on this question, and as nearly as possible Dr. Jameson's words were:—

He hoped soon to make available to the farmers store and breeding stock now in East Kimberley, which were badly required throughout the farming districts in order to provide a better means of livelihood.

We had the select committee dealing with this question, and all the arguments used were in favour of encouraging the small holder to stock up. The Agricultural Bank Act was amended to allow the purchase of stock on security; and we are now in this position, that we have the Act but no stock. Hon. members may rest assured that, with the considerable interests on this side of the House of West and East Kimberly and with the considerable interests at this end of the House, I only support the motion with a deep and honest conviction that it will be good for the people I represent and for the people in the farming districts generally. I am so convinced that there will be no danger from the introduction of Kimberley cattle, that I will be prepared to put them into paddocks with

imported cattle and take all the risks. As to hot latitudes there is no question that the last speaker, who opposed the motion, is absolutely right. The climate and all the conditions are different here, and if we could only bring ourselves to consider the conditions under which we work, there can be no other conclusion than that it is safe to admit these cattle. Will any member who is interested in the trade point out a single case where disease has spread, where cattle have been infected? If one can do so, I will join in opposing the motion of the hon. member who introduced it. It cannot be done. I have had occasion, during the past six years, to give very close attention to this question. When the Forrest Government first allowed East Kimberley cattle to come in we did so in fear and trembling. We took risks entirely with the object of giving a cheap meat supply to the people, and we were met with very considerable opposition. We had to watch what was taking place, and I repeat again, after six years' close observation, not a single instance of the spread of tick has come under my notice. If there be any member of this House, if there be any member of the community, who can contradict that, it will be a very great argument indeed for keeping the existing conditions intact. What is our present position? As I said just now, we have amended the Agricultural Bank Act, and have liberalised our land laws. The Ministers of the day have stimulated settlement, and hopes have been held out to people that store cattle and breeders will be supplied to them. The herds will be in our Kimberleys, and now the time has arrived when we have an abundance of feed, when Providence has crowned our efforts with success with regard to our farms, and our farmers are faced with the position for the first time for years that not only shall we have an abundant harvest but abnormally low prices. Yet the feed in our paddocks is going to waste, and all for the want of store cattle. Farmers will be seeking in vain for profitable markets. The utterances of Dr. Jameson and the Premier in Queen's Hall all pointed in the direction of looking forward to the Government taking these risks, as I am prepared to take them. What will be the result, if it can be shown that there is no danger

attending the introduction of these cattle? The farmers, instead of being driven to poverty prices, will be able to stock up their cattle to the limit of these stores. They will be able to introduce breeders at low prices, and will have a market for their produce. They will be able to stock up, as I say, the limited number of store cattle, and feed them there, and throughout the agricultural settlements a good price will be obtained, and meat will be of the best quality. We have an enormous stretch of country, commencing at Cunderdin and going right up to Southern Cross, which, if ringbarked for two or three years, will be admirably adapted for pastoral purposes. There is a supply of water, and, with an abundant supply of store cattle this country would be taken up, stores would be placed upon it on the best conditions, and we should be supplying the goldfields with what they so much require—a cheap meat supply. We could have freezing works at East Kimberley, and I have nothing but good to say of that project, which would indeed supply a great want. It might not probably suit the mover of this motion, but it would suit the people here. It would not, however, meet the objection which I have. It would provide for fat beasts coming down, but it would not provide this end of the country with stores and breeders, which are so greatly needed. The country is now ready for them, and if the supply is not available much useful feed must go to waste. I do not wish to take up the time of the House any farther on this matter, but from a deep sense of conviction and after six years of close observation, I say it would be utterly harmless and absolutely safe for the Government to adopt the motion of the hon. member. I am convinced, too, that they are inclined in that direction, from the utterances both of the Premier in the Queen's Hall on the subject, and of Dr. Jameson which I have just quoted from. Of course it is easy to say the Government of the day are trying to please both sides. They are, so to speak, between "the devil and the deep sea" on the question, and they are quite right to be cautious. I commend the present Minister for Lands altogether for his action. I can only say I have very grave doubt whether the quarantine stations which he intends to establish at Hine's Hill and

other places will be of any use for the purpose; assuredly not for some two or three years to come. There is only a small portion of land ringbarked, and although that particular portion now is rich in grasses those grasses will very speedily be absorbed, and it is quite clear that if there were any large number of cattle so treated, stall-feeding would have to be resorted to. When speaking to one of our settlers yesterday he showed me a magnificent sample of wheat. When I asked him what he intended to do with it, he said, "Sir, I am happily situated. My 300 acres of magnificent wheat are in the immediate vicinity of the proposed quarantine station, and I am looking for the best markets for my chaff and for my cattle." I know something about this country, which will be the most valuable land when ringbarked and treated for three years; but no quarantine station dependent upon natural grasses will be available for some years to come in that locality. To say absolutely what I think, it is possible the mover of this motion is actuated entirely by trade considerations. I think I am entirely moved in the interests of the people I represent, not only in my own electorate, but throughout the whole of the Avon Valley and along the Great Southern. It has been the cry for years. The people are compelled to fence, and without compulsion they are largely improving their estates. Third-class grazing leases are being taken up all over the State, I am glad to say. Let one visit the sandplains to-day, and he will be compelled to make a long round to avoid the fences. What was regarded as quite worthless country is being fenced in large areas. We have been stimulated, as I have said just now, not only with the efforts of the Government but by financial assistance, and the people have arrived at that stage that they have the grass, they have the paddocks, but it is said we have not the stock. We have, however, in this State ample stock, not only fats, but stores and weaners. I have but one doubt in my mind with respect to the success of this action, if it be taken, and that is whether the cattle are of such a nature as to allow small farmers to handle them. I have been assured by some who should know that they are so wild that a man on foot

cannot approach them, that one must get on a horse to approach them, and as for a woman, it means a red rag to a bull. I am not in a position to contradict that statement. Probably speakers interested in the trade will be able to give us the information. If that be the state of things, then my argument falls to the ground, for that would not suit the needs of the country. The evidence against that is that the cattle appear to have been handled well. They have been placed on board ship, and they have been stall-fed, and I suppose they should be passive and quiet. Some to whom I have mentioned it have laughed the objection to scorn. It will be for those who support the motion to show that the stock to be introduced are of such a nature that a small farmer could handle them successfully.

MR. T. HAYWARD (Bunbury): In making a few remarks on this subject last session I stated that I had made inquiries from various settlers in the South-West District, and that none of them were at all afraid of the introduction of the tick. I have been interested on a small scale for 50 years, and I should not be afraid to have the cattle here. The regulations have been evaded, and if tick would have spread they would have done so before this. I think we had two instances where cattle belonging to Mr. Richardson were taken down and brought back again. If, as was said by the member for the Gascoyne (Mr. Butcher), one single tick would be sufficient to affect a whole herd, surely some of these tick would have found their way to some of the cattle during that time. I know that Mr. Padbury said he would not be afraid of the tick.

MR. BURGESS: Mr. Roberts does not say so.

MR. MORAN: A tick never leaves one beast to go to another, so how could they drop off?

MR. HAYWARD: They might have been dropped. I suppose Mr. A. R. Richardson has handled about as many cattle as anyone in this part of the State, and he is not afraid of them. I am informed that he is willing to have them to-morrow.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: That does not show the tick would not do harm.

MR. HAYWARD: I say that if the tick would spread in this part of the State they have had ample opportunity at Fremantle, through infected cattle coming into contact with clean cattle there.

MR. BURGESS: Was not a herd at Fremantle infected?

MR. MORAN: There was a tick found on a beast at Fremantle.

MR. BURGESS: One beast!

MR. BUTCHER: One beast was found literally covered.

MR. CONNOR: That is not true.

MR. MORAN: It never spread, anyhow.

MR. HAYWARD: We all know that during last session there were thousands of tons of grasses either destroyed or burnt. This year there will be a far greater quantity of grass wasted than there was last year, if cattle are not introduced in some way. I think we should all like to see a reduction in the cost of living. Seeing what the price of meat is at the present time there is something radically wrong. Meat is dearer in this State than in any part of the world at present. We have an immense area of country, and yet we are paying this exorbitant price. I am arguing against my own interest to some extent, because I am a small breeder of cattle, but I should like to see something done to reduce the cost of meat. We shall probably see a reduced cost of living with that exception in a few months, and I think we should do everything possible, without running any great risk, to reduce the price of meat. The member for Northam (Hon. G. Throssell) exhausted the subject, and he has spoken so well on it and I quite agree with all he said that it would only be repetition on my part to go over the same ground. I shall support the motion.

MR. S. C. PIGOTT (West Kimberley): In dealing with this question, it will be only right to consider it from two points of view; one, whether if we allow the East Kimberley cattle to go to certain portions of the State, there will be any danger of infesting the whole of the country with the tick disease; and the other point is, what is the true object of the motion? I take it from the speeches of the member who introduced it and those who support it that the true object of

the motion is to bring down the cost of beef to the consumers in the southern portion of the State. Taking the first point, whether there is any danger attached to this business, I can only speak of the evidence that was taken by the select committee that sat last year, and from books which I have read on this subject. I ask every member of the House to go through the evidence tendered last year and the year before, and I feel absolutely confident that every member who will take the trouble to peruse that evidence will agree with the reports brought in, and say we cannot with any degree of certainty say that there is no danger of our southern herds being infected by the dreadful disease, and furthermore of the disease being sent farther north into the clean country. I am of opinion, though there may appear to be any amount of danger of the tick diseases spreading in the southern portion of the country, there is a certain amount of danger, and are we to allow the cattle to come in and run an amount of risk? If it were possible to fix a boundary in the southern portion of the State so that if tick did spread in that district there would be no farther chance of its spreading north, I would support the motion; but I do not see how it is possible for that boundary to be made. I would like to draw the attention of members to the evidence given by Mr. A. R. Richardson before the select committee of last year. His evidence has been mentioned by the member for East Fremantle, and by the member for Northam and the member for Bunbury; but when Mr. Richardson's evidence is summed up it amounts to this: his opinion is that the tick will breed and will spread in the south-western districts of the State, but he said it would not matter, for there are so very few cattle in the southern districts that if the tick spread they would do no harm.

THE TREASURER : He does not say that, in reports which he has made.

MR. PIGOTT : The gentleman has contradicted himself several times, but if the hon. member will turn up the report of his evidence it will be found that is what he has said. The last words Mr. Richardson used in giving his evidence were these: "We seem to be driven back on practical experiment as a guide." What are we to take from that evi-

dence? Are we to believe that Mr. Richardson—

MR. CONNOR : He knows more about it than you do.

MR. PIGOTT : I take his words, and he says that tick will thrive in the southern portions of this country. He says he is prepared to buy tick cattle because they will not do any great amount of harm. So it is with all the gentlemen who gave evidence before that select committee. Those who gave evidence before the committee, but who had no large number of cattle in the South and no great risk to run, all wanted the cattle brought in. Those who had country which was not stocked wanted tick cattle to come in; and when we take the evidence from the gentlemen who had stock in the South they said they did not want tick cattle in the South, and they asked, "Why should we run the risk of losing our cattle?" As to the climatic conditions in the South being absolute death to the tick, that we know to be absurd. We know that tick have lived and thrived in the South; but we know that for many years this did not appear to be the case. We know that while the sand drifted and was loose at Fremantle the tick did not appear to thrive very much; but once the floors of most of the cattle yards became hardened the tick did thrive. The member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) said no experiment was made. I have here the evidence by Mr. Morton Craig, and he says:—

While the slaughter yards at Fremantle were in a loose state, before the sand got bound with manure and straw, we experimented on several cattle, and could never find a tick. The sand drift covered up the tick every time it fell from the beast, and it was buried. It could not lay its eggs, or the eggs could not hatch. But since the floors have become solid, tick breed down there by millions. We bought a white heifer for purposes of experiment, and put her in the yards with a young calf, and after all the other cattle had been for some considerable time removed the heifer was covered in a fortnight with ticks, as was the calf.

Are we to accept this evidence as true, or are we to believe the member who interjected that the person who gave this evidence did not know what he was talking about?

MR. CONNOR : Who interjected that?

MR. PIGOTT : We must admit from that evidence that there have been ticks

there, and that the ticks will breed and thrive. The next point is: will the ticks do any harm? Will they set up fever or redwater? That is the point on which we are not able to give an opinion.

MR. HOLMES: Practical experience.

MR. PIGOTT: From practical experience in the Argentine I am led to believe there is very serious danger. The Pasteur Institute sent an expert into the Argentine to go into the subject of tick fever, and Dr. Lignieres was sent out and was in the cattle districts of the Argentine for three years, and in his book on the subject he gives a very remarkable account of the variety of the diseases set up by the tick, and the development of these diseases. For instance he had under observation a herd of cattle infested with tick for over three years, and yet they never developed any sign of fever. He was just about to come to the conclusion that the particular district in which the cattle were located was unfavourable to the development of tick fever, when before the end of the fourth year came, 90 per cent. of the herd—I think the herd consisted of 4,000 cattle—died within three months. As far as the cattle in the South-Western portion of this State are concerned, the risk we run is not so very great. If there is any possibility of tick breeding in the South, and going from the South, as it must travel with the cattle going to the fields, and of course on to the Murchison, the tick must be carried into the North-West.

MR. CONNOR: There are tick in West Kimberley to-day.

MR. PIGOTT: That has nothing to do with the question. I am talking of the North-Western district, and I think that district is going to be the largest cattle breeding district in Western Australia.

MR. MORAN: The largest in area.

MR. PIGOTT: If the hon. member will turn up statistics, he will find that the herds in the North-West are increasing rapidly; he will find that there thousands and thousands of acres have been taken up of late years, and the country used to be considered as worthless; now it is considered very good indeed.

MR. MORAN: It is very much larger in area.

MR. PIGOTT: It is much better country. Of course it is larger in area if

you go back far enough. That is the point I want to come at. As far as my constituents are concerned, it does not affect them one iota whether the cattle are allowed to come into the South or not. The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) said there was only one class in this community who would benefit or who were likely to benefit by the removal of the restrictions, the pastoralists in West Kimberley. To that I give an emphatic denial. I have communicated with, I may say, all the owners in West Kimberley, and not one has raised any objection to East Kimberley cattle being allowed in, whether dipped or not dipped. Another point that has been raised is that if these cattle are allowed in here a great number of them will be bought up as stores. I do not know where these stores are to come from. It has been said there are thousands upon thousands of store cattle going begging in East Kimberley. I would like to draw the attention of the House to one little fact, that some time ago some new country lying on the coast to the north-east of West Kimberley was thrown open for selection, and several millions of acres of it were taken up. If East Kimberley is overflowing with stock and has this great number of breeders to dispose of, how is it that we have not yet heard of a single beast going from East Kimberley into that new territory?

MR. MORAN: Do you think it possible to get into that country with cattle?

MR. PIGOTT: Already West Kimberley has sent 2,000 head of cattle into that country. [MR. MORAN: No fear.] That is so; and I know of over 3,000 more which are on the way.

MR. MORAN: That may be so; but did you read the report of Mr. Brockman, the explorer, about the routes into that country from East Kimberley?

MR. CONNOR: Is there a road into it from East Kimberley?

MR. PIGOTT: I am not certain.

MR. CONNOR: You are trying to mislead the House.

THE SPEAKER: Order.

MR. PIGOTT: I do not wish to mislead the House; I am simply stating the facts as I know them. The hon. member is quite at liberty to state later on the facts as he knows them; and I am about

to move an amendment which will give him another opportunity of speaking. The next point made is that by removing the present restrictions on East Kimberley cattle the price of meat to the consumer will be reduced. I can hold out no hope whatever to the House or to the community in general that any reduction in the price of meat will be thus effected. I ask business men in the House to consider the question from a mercantile point of view. The bulk of the cattle in Western Australia are in very few hands; and is it natural that the holders of those cattle will sell them at a price lower than they can get? It makes no difference whether we do or do not allow the East Kimberley ticked cattle to come in free. The price of beef in Western Australia will be regulated by the price of beef in the other States; and if my opponents can upset that argument, they have something to go on. But looking at it from a business point of view, I cannot perceive how the price will be affected until we in this State can bring forward a supply of cattle which will equal the demand. But there is one way in which we may be able and are able to give our people a cheap meat supply; and that is not by allowing the ticked cattle into the southern portions of the State, but by erecting at Wyndham, the natural port of the East Kimberley district, freezing and chilling works from which the meat can be brought to Perth at a far lower cost than it can be brought alive. The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) admits the truth of that. But there is another element brought into play. If we stopped after securing freezing works to treat the stock in East Kimberley, I do not think there would be any reduction in the price of meat. But in opening, if we can open, those works at Wyndham, we shall be overcoming a far greater difficulty. We shall throw open a way by which stockowners in the Northern Territory—some of them already send their cattle to Fremantle—can get rid of their surplus stock at a good price. We shall also open a way by which many stockowners in northern Queensland may get rid of their stock at a far lower cost to themselves than they incur by sending it to southern Queensland. I look forward to the time when we shall have works in East Kimberley from

which will be exported shipload after shipload of frozen beef. I look forward to the time when Wyndham will be the port of shipment for the whole of the Northern Territory and for a vast portion of Queensland also; because we must consider the geographical position of Wyndham, and we shall see that its position will eventually bring about the result I foretell. Now with regard to the effect of freezing on the price of meat, the only evidence I have been able to get on this point is that of witnesses before different select committees; but I think it is admitted that frozen meat can be landed at Fremantle from Wyndham at 1d. per lb. less than the cost of landing live meat. And if we consider that we are bringing from Wyndham 17,000 odd head of cattle per annum, and that the average weight of those beasts is, say for the sake of argument, 700lbs., we shall find that the 1d. per lb. runs into no smaller a sum than £57,000 odd per annum. To that amount we must add the saving effected by the beast being killed in good condition instead of in poor condition as at present after he has finished his voyage, and, as the member for East Fremantle says, has suffered a waste of 100lbs. If I put it at a low figure, beef now costs the consumer at least 6d. per lb. on the average. [Mr. CONNOR: That is much below the average.] The saving of 100lbs. on each bullock coming from West Kimberley will amount, at 6d. per lb., to over £40,000 per annum. If these figures are right, I ask members to look at the question from my point of view. If the members for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) and East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) be right, these figures of mine must also be right; and they mean that if we erect and start freezing works in Kimberley, with the proviso that cattle are to be put through those freezing works, we shall save on the meat bill of Western Australia no less a sum than £97,000 per annum. But in asking the House to accept my amendment, I think I have shown clearly enough the absolute necessity for building freezing works at Wyndham. There is one other point. Though I admit the Government cannot satisfactorily carry on freezing works, those works should be under the strict supervision of the Government, and the

Government must have a powerful voice in their management. The works will then be a success; the meat will be frozen at Wyndham and shipped to Perth. But if we allow those works to be taken in hand by the people who now hold the bulk of the cattle in East and in West Kimberley, I say we shall build up a worse monopoly than we have to-day. But though there be a monopoly in the meat business, I do not say nor do I think that the people who enjoy that monopoly are to blame for their actions. I do not think we can blame them for trying to forward their own individual interests at the cost of the whole community. But it is our duty to take every means in our power to give the small holders of cattle a chance of getting at the market direct, and to reduce the price of meat to the public I move as an amendment—

That all the words after “be,” in line 2, be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu: “maintained, and that immediate steps should be taken to induce the establishment of freezing and chilling works at Wyndham, on such conditions as may provide the full advantages of the process to all cattle owners within the district.”

MR. MORAN: Somebody should explain what is meant by “inducing” the establishment of freezing works.

MR. ILLINGWORTH took the Chair.

MR. W. ATKINS (Murray): I second the amendment, because I think it is in the best interests of the whole country. I do not perceive how freezing works can harm the stockowners in East Kimberley; and I think much good will be done if the establishment is properly managed, so as to provide cheaper meat and a larger supply; that is, to get more meat and better meat from the number of cattle killed. As the member for West Kimberley (Mr. Pigott) says, freezing works and chilling works should be started and operated immediately, and in the most approved manner possible; and they should not be allowed to be conducted by any one set of people: they should be managed in such a way that the whole country shall get the full benefit of them. I do not think this question has been much considered, and in the circumstances I move that the debate be adjourned.

MR. MORAN: I object that the hon. member cannot do so, after a speech of that length.

Motion passed, and the debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9:45 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 3rd September, 1903.

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

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR MINES: Report (annual) of gaols and prisoners.
Ordered, to lie on the table.

TRANS-AUSTRALIAN RAILWAY ENABLING BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS BILL.

IN COMMITTEE *PRO FORMA*.

On motions by the PREMIER, the amendments recommended by the Select Committee were adopted *pro forma*, for the purpose of being reprinted in the Bill before discussion.

Bill reported with amendments.

Ordered, that the Bill be reprinted accordingly.