

little tricks of the boomsters are being indulged in on every occasion in reference to this field. The tricks to which I refer are the ostentatious display in the newspapers of advertisements calling for practical miners, inches of advertisements in the goldfields papers, asking for good practical miners, and I know of many miners down there at the present time who cannot get work to do. This is one of the most mean and contemptible tricks of the boomster, knowing that when the men get there they will not be able to get work. Carpenters have told me that if the field is a good and genuine one, commensurate with the increased price on the London market, they would not be working half-time but double time. Another mean feature about it goes to show that the people in charge of things down there have something up their sleeve. They have shown the cloven hoof too soon. They have started reducing wages, feeling assured that they will get the railway and that they will get everything else worth having, and they are going to run the field to suit themselves. I do not want to have any association with this matter at all, and therefore I shall vote for the amendment. I remarked the other night this was one of the lines that in the event of proper information being forthcoming, I should support, but the information and all the circumstances surrounding it are such that I wish to have nothing to do with it. If the field developments are such as to justify the building of the railway, so much the better. I have watched what has been going on locally, and I say there are too many financial deadbeats buzzing round like a lot of cats, to suit my taste. The osculum birds are hovering round. There are a few malodorous items in connection with railways in other parts of the Commonwealth. This one is to be added to the list. I shall support the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition.

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

Ayes	...	...	10
Noes	...	...	22
Majority against	...	...	12

AYES.  
Mr. Bath  
Mr. Collier  
Mr. Daglish  
Mr. Heilmann  
Mr. Holman  
Mr. Scaddan  
Mr. Stuart  
Mr. Walker  
Mr. Ware  
Mr. Troy (Teller).

NOES.  
Mr. Barnett  
Mr. Brebber  
Mr. H. Brown  
Mr. Cowcher  
Mr. Eddy  
Mr. Ewing  
Mr. Gordon  
Mr. Gregory  
Mr. Hayward  
Mr. Horan  
Mr. Hudson  
Mr. Keenan  
Mr. Layman  
Mr. Mitchell  
Mr. Monger  
Mr. N. J. Moore  
Mr. Price  
Mr. Stous  
Mr. Underwood  
Mr. A. J. Wilson  
Mr. F. Wilson  
Mr. Hardwick (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### PAPER PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Railway Plan of proposed route of Jandakot-Armadale Railway.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at two minutes to 1 o'clock a.m., until the Friday afternoon.

### Legislative Council.

Friday, 7th December, 1906.

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Bills: Appropriation (votes for the year), 3a.	3558
Excess (five years), 3a.	3558
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Donnybrook-Upper Blackwood, 1a.	3560
Coolgardie-Norseman, 1a.	3560
Hopetoun-Ravensthorpe, 1a.	3560
Jandakot-Armadale, 1a.	3571

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

PRAYERS.

## PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY:—

(1.) Roads Act, 1902—Preston Road Board Amended By-laws. (2.) Cemeteries Act, 1897: (a.) Balance-sheet of the Karrakatta, Bulong, and Kalgoorlie Cemeteries. (b.) Fremantle Public Cemetery By-laws. (3.) Parks and Reserves Act, 1895—By-laws of Caves Reserves. (4.) Land Act, 1898—Amendment of Residential Lease Regulations.

## QUESTION—LOAN MONEY SPENT ON BUILDINGS.

HON. M. L. MOSS asked the Colonial Secretary: What is the amount of loan funds that has been expended on public buildings since the 1st of June 1906?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied:—£21,276 12s., from the 1st June to the 6th December 1906.

## SITTING DAYS AND HOURS, EXTENSION.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved—

That on and after Monday next, for the remainder of the session the House do meet at 3 p.m. instead of 4.30 p.m., for the despatch of business.

Members knew why the motion was moved. It was expected that Parliament would prorogue on Thursday next, and if we met earlier each day there would be more time for the consideration of Bills.

HON. W. KINGSMILL: We had never done this before.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY was not aware whether there was any precedent for it, though last session on one occasion the House met at 10 o'clock in the forenoon.

HON. W. KINGSMILL: On the last day only.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was better to meet at 3 o'clock each day, than to meet so early on the last day and rush things through.

Question put and passed.

## BILLS—THIRD READING.

Appropriation Bill, Excess Bill, *passed*.

## BILL—PERMANENT RESERVES REDEDICATION.

## SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly), in moving the second reading, said: It is not necessary for me to say much about this Bill, it is one of many similar Bills brought down each session to alter the destiny of certain reserves. When the Permanent Reserves Act was passed it took the disposal of these reserves from the hands of the Governor-in-Council and provided that these matters be dealt with by Act of Parliament. This Bill deals with four reserves. The first is an amendment to Class A. reserve, 9,286 at Kalgoorlie. The Education Department desires to erect another school to accommodate the children in the south-west portion of the city, and this is considered the most suitable site. It is proposed to take away a small portion of the reserve which was set apart for recreation and drainage purposes. The small piece taken away will not impair the efficiency of the reserve as a recreation ground. This Kalgoorlie reserve, situate at the south-west corner, contains  $74\frac{1}{4}$  acres, and is principally for drainage. The Education Department propose to take a small portion of it.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Has the municipal council approved of it?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes. The various town councils have approved of the proposals. This reserve is vested in the municipality, and that council is willing to have an excision of five acres for the purpose named, leaving about  $69\frac{1}{2}$  acres still in the reserve. The next is a Class A reserve mentioned in Clause 2, at Subiaco. I have here a map with a sketch of Subiaco, and members will see that the reserve is bounded by Rokeby Road, Hensman Road, Bagot Road, and Hamersley Road. That is the reserve where the gardens, public buildings, and police station are situate. It is proposed to grant a block to the Presbyterians of 100 links frontage at the north-east corner, on which to erect a church and manse on which they propose to expend £3,000. The Presbyterians were granted a reserve adjoining. They held the next block, block 404; that is the coloured part on the map, and they have erected

a small church or Sunday school, but this was spoilt by putting down the bore for the Metropolitan Water Works Board in close proximity to it. Parliament is now asked to grant a small portion of reserve No. 5,183 containing seven acres in order to compensate them for the land that has been damaged by the bore and to give them the necessary room to erect their church and manse.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Do they give up the old land?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not think so. I have not information to that effect, and as far as I can see they still retain the old land.

MR. KINGSMILL: They are Presbyterians.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I may explain that it is not an exchange at all; but Parliament is asked to approve of granting 100 links alongside the present site on account of the Metropolitan Waterworks putting down this bore and thereby spoiling this site; so much so that there is not sufficient land left there for a manse and church. I have a good deal of correspondence from the municipal council and the member for Subiaco, if members require me to give them any farther information in Committee in connection with that clause. Clause 3 relates to a reserve near Greenmount Station. Members know that lately water has been brought from the Mundaring Weir to Midland Junction and Guildford; and it was thought necessary to put in a small reservoir within this park reserve near the Greenmount station. That is six or seven miles North of Midland Junction, which happens to be a class "A" reserve. They wish to take a small portion of this, 10 acres, for the purpose of putting down this reservoir. I do not know but what the reservoir was in course of construction some time ago, so that this is really a matter of form. Seeing that the work had to be gone on with, I think the Government can be excused for their action. Clause 4 relates to a reserve in Fremantle. I think that Mr. Moss and Captain Laurie are acquainted with this particular reserve, because on one occasion one of these members asked a question about it, inquiring whether this Bill was to be brought in. The measure has been or some time before another place. It is

for the purpose of leasing to a golf club a certain portion of "A" reserve 6,638, park lands, Fremantle, for 15 years. I would like to draw the attention of members to Clause 8 of the agreement which reads as follows:—

The lessee shall at all times during the said term allow all persons (whether ratepayers of the municipality of Fremantle or residents of or visitors to the State of Western Australia) full right and liberty of entrance, resort, use, and enjoyment in, to, and of the said leased land as a public park without exacting therefor any payment, toll, entrance, or other fee or reward, and shall keep erected, so as to be legible from the streets abutting on the said land, a notice that persons may enter the said land, both during play and at other times.

So although this land has been granted to the golf club the public will not be excluded from it in the least. Therefore, I do not know that members will have any ground for complaint. If there is any information in respect to these reserves which members desire I shall be very pleased to give it.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: What is the area in the first schedule and that of the third?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In the first schedule 74 acres I think.

HON. J. W. KINGSMILL: It is only part of it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Five acres have been allocated out of that reserve at Kalgoorlie.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: What is the area in the third Schedule?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is a very big area. It is proposed to take ten acres.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Taking the whole, how big is it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have not the information here, but it is some couple of hundred acres I think.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### IN COMMITTEE:

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

#### BILL—GREENHILLS-QUAIRADING RAILWAY.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

**BILL—DONNYBROOK-PRESTON  
VALLEY (UPPER BLACKWOOD)  
RAILWAY.**

Received from the Legislative Assembly.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY**, in moving the first reading, drew the attention of hon. members to the fact that maps showing the land available for cultivation and all the various information were now on the walls of the House, and members would probably find time between this and Monday to look over them. There were also maps on the table, but those on the walls were fuller. They gave information in regard to all these four lines.

Question passed.

Bill read a first time.

**BILL—COOLGARDIE-NORSEMAN  
RAILWAY.**

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

**BILL—HOPETOUN-RAVENSTHORPE  
RAILWAY.**

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

**LOAN BILL.**

**IN COMMITTEE.**

Resumed from the previous day.

Schedule 1—

Item—Coolgardie-Norseman Railway:

**HON. M. L. MOSS**: Were the papers available, particularly the reports of Lands officers and of engineers in the Works Department, in connection with this line?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY**: Certain information concerning the item was available, having just been received from another place, where it had been required in connection with the passing of a Bill to authorise the construction of the line. Maps showing this and other railways contained in the schedule were now in the House. The Bill for authorising the construction of the railway having passed its first reading in this House, he would undertake when moving the second reading on Tuesday next to afford all the information desired. If the House then considered the line not warranted, the Bill could be rejected. The passing of this item in the loan

schedule would not commit the country to the construction of the line. The practice of showing items in the schedule to Bills of this description was a recent one.

**HON. M. L. MOSS**: Since 1896 it had been customary.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY**: It had been the practice during the last few years, but it was not necessary, as the Loan Bill was merely an authority to raise money, not to expend it, as that would require a Bill authorising the construction of the particular railway. It was quite on the cards that members would not be asked to approve the construction of some of the works included in the schedules; because if on farther inquiry and after obtaining all available data it appeared to the Government that some of the works were not warranted, no appropriation would be sought, and therefore no Bill authorising the construction would be introduced. The authorisation of a railway depended on the information supplied to the House when the Bill for the construction of that railway was before the House—not on the passing of items in the schedules to the Loan Bill. A fear was expressed that this might really be the first part of a railway to Esperance. It was nothing of the sort. The Government had no intention of bringing in a Bill for the construction of a railway to Esperance. If members consulted the sheets giving particulars of the line, it would be seen that this was the cheapest possible line to construct, the weight of rails being 45lbs., and the sleepers half-round. In construction it would be similar to the light agricultural railways, and would not at all serve the purposes of a main line. In fact it would be more like a tramway than a railway, and the estimated cost of about £1,300 a mile, though cheap indeed, would have been lower but for the cost of having to carry water a long way. Unless the line were rebuilt at a future time, it could not serve as a main line to Esperance. It was unfair to demand full information on every item of a Loan Bill, which could not be supplied in some instances because the information had not yet been obtained by the Government. The Government had only been in office six months, and Parliament had been sitting continuously since. It was first

hoped that these Railway Bills could be brought before Parliament some months ago; but the compiling of the schedule, the obtaining of information and sifting the good from the bad in connection with the numerous public works urgently needed in the State, represented many months of hard work. Now the Government had only information sufficient to justify the introduction of a few of the projected works; others would probably be brought down next session, and when that was done the fullest information would be supplied to members.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Going back to 1906, the customary practice since then was to supply such information as was now desired in connection with this Bill; and in the case of proposed railways, particulars were supplied showing the amount to be spent on each for rails and fastenings, for rolling-stock and so on. Yet members were asked to pass the items in regard to this loan schedule without any particulars as to the works on which it was proposed to expend the money. A sum of £81,000 was allocated in the Bill to the Coolgardie-Norseman Railway; but that did not constitute the whole of the expenditure, because there was also an item of £66,500 for rails and fastenings, making a total of £147,500. It was no argument that this line would not ultimately go to Esperance, to say that the line was not to be standardised, for all the present main lines were originally laid with light rails. It was a simple matter, once the construction work was done, to replace with heavier rails. The possibility of allowing Esperance to become a competitor of the western ports should be guarded against. Years ago when a railway to Esperance was first mooted we had a Customs tariff to protect the markets of Western Australia for producers within the State; but now South Australia or any other State could pour goods into Western Australia with no greater hindrance than the payment of an ordinary sea freight. It would be a calamity to the settled parts of the State, and a crime to the vested interests of Perth, Fremantle, and the farming districts to do anything that would assist Esperance as a port in close proximity to Adelaide and the producing centres of the Eastern States.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That argument might be applied when the Bill for the construction came down.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It would apply before then, because he intended taking the responsibility, under Section 46 of the Constitution Act, of moving that we ask the Legislative Assembly to agree to the omission of this item from the schedule. He appealed not only to metropolitan members, but to members representing farming districts, to recollect what results lay in the possibility of Esperance being opened up by a railway to that port. In support of his assertion yesterday that the country was not justified in expending this money on a railway to Norseman, the meagre information concerning the Dundas field afforded, even if accurate as far as it went, showed that the field was a poor one and had made little progress since first proclaimed a goldfield. Even if there were 1,600 people there now, a railway to that field was not justified.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: How many people were there at Coolgardie when the railway was authorised?

HON. M. L. MOSS: Many thousands.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Being there at the time, he knew that was not correct.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: How many people were there at Southern Cross when the railway was built?

HON. M. L. MOSS: In dealing with Coolgardie, we were dealing with a new field. The monthly statistical abstract for October 1906 showed the population of Norseman, the principal centre of this goldfield, as 154 males and 99 females; total, 253. It was fair to assume this municipality covered a greater area than those in more settled districts, so probably the bulk of the mining population was at or moderately near Norseman. Gold-mining was the one industry on which that centre depended, and according to the last report of the Mines Department, the total gold production from Dundas was in 1904 33,181 ounces; while in 1905 it decreased to 28,736 ounces; and the gold was worth £3 8s. an ounce, though many other portions of the State produced gold of higher value. The statistics showed that from its inception the Dundas goldfield output never exceeded 40,000 ounces per annum. A project for mak-

ing over 100 miles of railway, costing £150,000, to serve such a goldfield, had never before been heard of. The line would not pay for axle-grease. The dividends paid by a goldfield were another good test. The total for 1905 was £6,000, according to page 10 of the report. Of two large mines, each with a nominal capital of £40,000, one paid nothing and the other paid £6,000, being the only mine that paid a dividend in the Dundas goldfield. By the building of the railway we should put much faith in that mine. In 1906 the goldfield comprised 85 leases, with a total area of 986 acres; in 1902, 68 leases with 733 acres; in 1903, 72 leases with 793 acres; in 1904, 88 leases with 913 acres; in 1905, 84 leases with 956 acres; and apparently only one mine paid a dividend. The auriferous area of the Dundas goldfield leases appeared to be only 2.96 per cent. of such leaseholds throughout the State. Thus the goldfield was very small in comparison with others. Out of 84 mines only one paid dividends. What guarantee had we that the mine would not "peter out," perhaps within the next twelve months? A member said it had been worked for twelve years. All the more reason for caution. From 1901 till 1905 there was on the goldfield only one mineral lease, its area being six acres. In 1904, 286 miners' rights were issued at Norseman, and in 1905, 789. As the rights were available throughout the State there was no proof that the holders were actually employed on that goldfield. What men were employed there? In 1904 the total number employed at gold-mining throughout the State was 18,804, and in 1905, 18,382; but in the whole of the Dundas field the numbers were 460 and 435 respectively, *plus* 25 men employed in alluvial mining. According to the return presented to members the population was 1,600. That need not be doubted, because a large number must be employed in carting wood to the mines; and the railway, while it would not diminish the number employed in cutting wood, would seriously diminish the number of carters. The return anticipated the bulk of the revenue would come from carrying firewood. Only 2,000 tons of ordinary freight was estimated, and 8,000 tons of local firewood. The late Engineer-in-Chief had told him

experts always regarded the carrying capacity of a railway as one ton per head of population; so 2,000 tons was probably considerably over-estimated, and might be seriously reduced when the firewood carters were thrown out of employment. The statistics showed a mere handful of people on the goldfield, the municipality itself having less than 300. The bulk of the 1,600 were probably employed in carting wood. The mining industry to be accommodated by the railway employed less than three per cent. of the total number employed by that industry in the State. How could the line be justified in the circumstances? Members representing the settled portions of the State should beware of the danger to be faced if this line were constructed. The result would be a continual demand to make Esperance the terminus. Members who voted for the project were thus making a rod for the back of every man interested in the settled portions of the country. He moved an amendment—

That the item be struck out.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Was the hon. member in order in moving an amendment after making a speech?

THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Passing this item would in no way bind the House. The proper time for discussion was on the second reading. For this work Parliament had already passed £30,000 in the Appropriation Bill, and the Government could spend that sum to-day; yet the hon. member would refuse to pass this item in the Loan Bill. How ridiculously inconsistent was the proposal.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: The hon. member said it did not bind members.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Parliament had already authorised the Government to spend £30,000 on that line. This Bill was only an authority to raise a loan. The merits or demerits of the work could be discussed when the Bill was before members. He did not wish to be rude to the member (Mr. Moss), but he appealed to members with mining experience, if there was anything in the argument used by Mr. Moss. The item in the Bill was for the construction of a line to Norseman, Esperance being many miles farther on. The hon. member pointed out that there were so many

mining leases, and so many persons resident in the district. That was no argument at all. He also said that the mining companies had paid no dividends, and he advanced that as an argument against the line. It was a good reason in favour of the line, because if these mines had been kept going for years without paying a dividend, then it was right that the Government should assist them in development. The length of the proposed line was 107 miles. The first 12 miles would bear in a southerly direction. The line then passed through Burbanks—a flourishing little centre eight or nine miles from Coolgardie. Then it went to Londonderry, which certainly was not very successful at the present time. Farther on it reached Widgeemooltha, and then passed on through Higginsville, a flourishing little centre which was likely to be a very good field indeed which had sprung into existence within the last few months. The member did not quote the population of these centres, only the population at the terminus of the line. The returns were likely to be large indeed from Higginsville. The line would cost, with rails and fastenings, £147,000, being £1,379 a mile. It would be built in the same way as the agricultural light railways, and there was a Bill before another place providing that a sufficient rate should be charged to enable these lines to pay working expenses. At Norseman there were 87 gold-mining leases, representing 1,137 acres in existence, and 14 more representing 184 acres applied for. There were 20 homestead leases representing 843 acres. These would be accommodated by the railway. At Higginsville there were 12 gold-mining leases representing 144 acres, and an additional 10 gold-mining leases representing 161 acres had been applied for. Besides that there were 152 acres held under pastoral lease, and 500,000 acres were still available, and would be influenced by the line. The Dundas goldfield had contributed 290,862 fine ounces of gold, valued at £1,285,000. The Norseman mining centre had contributed 276,000 ounces, and the remaining fields in that centre had contributed 12,000 ounces. Widgeemooltha had produced 4,082 ounces, valued at £17,339, and Londonderry had produced 13,977 ounces, valued at £60,000; while Burbanks had produced

170,000 ounces, valued at £730,000. It was only 18 months since Higginsville was discovered, and one battery was now erected there. This mine had already yielded 1,744 fine ounces of gold, valued at £7480; and it was a district that gave every promise of turning out a very valuable field indeed. The building of this light line would pay if only with the carriage of fuel. At the present time we had companies with lines which had been built for the carriage of fuel alone; there was the Kurrawang Company which had a line 100 miles in extent.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It supplied the richest goldfield in the world, that was the reason.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Kalgoorlie gold mines consumed something like 2,500 to 3,000 tons of fuel every day of the year, which showed how profitable a firewood railway was, and that it would pay to run this line only for the firewood. The forest along the Kurrawang line was becoming denuded of its timber, and along the route of the line to Norseman there was the finest timber to be found on the Eastern Goldfields. If it paid a private company to construct a line for the sake of timber alone, then it would pay the Government to construct this line to carry timber to the mines. Mr. Montgomery, the State Mining Engineer, made a report on this field, from which he would quote extracts. This officer was eminently qualified to make this report, and members should understand that in making reports departmental officers usually erred on the side of carefulness in order that in the future their reports might not prove incorrect. Of this field the report stated:—

Apart from the published returns of the leading mines, it has been ascertained that there has been a balance of roundly 60,000 ounces of gold bullion from a large number of smaller mines scattered over a belt of country some 32 miles in length, extending from Dundas on the south to the Peninsula on the north. Many of these are very promising prospecting propositions, only requiring active development to become important mines. The general average return from the whole field is seen to be the very satisfactory one of an ounce of gold to the ton of quartz.

For the information of members unacquainted with mining, he would point out that a mine yielding an ounce to the

ton was a valuable property. Most of those at Kalgoorlie were not even half-ounce mines, and yet on that return they were able to pay handsome dividends, mainly owing to the cheapness of supplies and the fact that their ores were free-milling. The report goes on :—

All over the field there are abandoned workings which have not proved payable, but which under more favourable circumstances would give a good profit. With better facilities for working it is probable that the average yield of the field would fall to from 10 to 12 dwts. of gold per ton, but the tonnage crushed would increase greatly. There can be no question that the construction of the railway would enormously facilitate and stimulate the working of these lower-grade mines, enabling many of them to become important producers. The Norseman field suffers very severely on account of its isolated position, as previously stated, in many important particulars. There are two days' expensive travelling by coach from Coolgardie, or five days' walking to be undertaken by men wishing to try there for employment, and consequently the supply of casual labour is very limited, and creates a problem difficult of solution when men are wanted without delay. Skilled workmen and mechanics have usually to be engaged in the larger centres and brought down to the field at the expense of the mine, and it becomes a serious matter to obtain their services unless constant work can be secured to them for a considerable time. The difficulty of access also hinders prospectors from coming to the district, and deters investors from visiting it. It is a somewhat serious matter for busy men to spare the time to go to a place so situated, and they therefore pass it by in favour of others more readily reached. The high freights on goods of all sorts make the cost of living perceptibly greater than in more favoured places, and the amount brought to the field is limited to the minimum that will serve.

Not only was the cost of living high owing to the isolated position of the field, but under the Arbitration Court's award the rate of wages was the highest on any goldfield, and was some 30 per cent. higher than in Kalgoorlie. Members who understood mining would recognise what that meant to mining propositions on the field. On the question of freights Mr. Montgomery says :—

Let me quote one instance *re* freight. Coke costing £4 2s. 6d. in Fremantle costs £12 10s. in Norseman, as will be seen from the following cost of five tons of coke :—Cost Fremantle £20 12s. 6d., railage Fremantle to Coolgardie £8 2s. 6d., agency and charges £3 15s., cartage at £6 per ton £30; total £62 10s. Cement costing 12s. 6d. per barrel at Fremantle costs £2 16s. in Norseman; fire-bricks costing

£8 17s. 6d. per 1,000 at Fremantle cost £34 19s. per 1,000 delivered at the mines.

These figures would show the Committee the disabilities under which the field laboured.

MEMBER: What was the difference likely to be if the railway were built?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Since the mines had been able to keep going several years under these conditions, was there not a likelihood of their paying dividends if better conditions were obtained? He trusted the good sense of the Committee would not permit members to follow the lead of Mr. Moss on this question. All information necessary would be given on the second reading of the Railway Bill, and again he reminded members that the passing of these items in the loan schedule would not commit the House to the construction of the particular works.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: Members must feel grateful for the eloquent appeal made by Mr. Moss; but he (Mr. Glowrey) appealed now to the sense of justice and fair play of hon. members, and he would not use parochial arguments similar to those used by Mr. Moss. The chief objection appeared to be that this line would eventually be extended to Esperance. Some ten or twelve years ago, when the project of a railway to connect Esperance with the goldfields was first mooted, there was considerable difference of opinion as to the starting point. Originally it was suggested that the line should start from Esperance, but that had long since been abandoned. And though he was one of the members representing Esperance in this House, neither he nor any other member could now advocate the construction of a line from Esperance to Norseman, and no Government would be justified in proposing to construct such a line. Therefore the chief objection raised by Mr. Moss was not likely to be realised; and he made that statement with a due regard to his duty and his position in relation to the constituency. A railway to Norseman had been before this House on many occasions; once a Bill passed another place and was defeated in this Chamber by one vote; and this House had since affirmed the advisability of constructing a railway from Norseman to the goldfields. The 110 miles between



Coolgardie and Norseman, with the exception of about five to ten miles, was auriferous country. Burbanks, the first stage of the line, had yielded £730,000 worth of gold; thence the line would traverse Londonderry to the Widgemooltha district, in which there were immense ore bodies. During the past week the richest gold yet discovered in the State was found at Widgemooltha. Higginsville, the next stage, was discovered only about twelve months, and thus far had proved a most promising centre, while Norseman had produced a million and a quarter's worth of gold, which was a good record. Water was plentiful along the proposed route, ample supplies being provided by Government for teamsters' use. At Burbanks, Horse Rocks, Widgemooltha, and Pioneer there were dams with each a capacity of three million gallons, while the capacity of the dam at Norseman was seven and a half to eight millions of gallons. The rainfall was fairly good, about 11 inches; and the recent establishment of an agricultural show at Norseman demonstrated that vegetables, wheat, and agricultural products could be grown there. He would supply members with the latest available information in the way of mining reports to show the justification for this necessary work. The last report of Mr. Montgomery amply justified the line. He stated that the Londonderry, which had produced 15,000 ounces of gold, was sure to attract the attention of prospectors if the railway were built, and might come into prominence at any time; that at Widgemooltha several lodes were known to be gold-bearing, the finds extending over a considerable area, and though the average return was small, some good bunches of ore had been found at times; that while the production of the field up to date was small, if the railway were constructed some of the reefs would probably be worked vigorously and be provided with machinery. Mr. Montgomery's opinion should be more reliable than that of Mr. Moss. The report continued that with the advent of a railway there was little doubt the mines would receive attention, and that at least one or two would be worked on a considerable scale; that Widgemooltha, with its present population, could not be regarded as offering

much support to the railway, but with the line the population would greatly increase; and that the field was easily able to support ten times its present population, for numerous promising reefs awaited the attention of companies with capital. What better evidence could be brought forward for the railway? What would Kalgoorlie be if handicapped like Norseman? Would Mr. Moss refuse Kalgoorlie a railway? The State Mining Engineer had no object in writing a misleading report. The traffic on the line could not possibly be estimated; but it must be considerable, for the railway would increase the population and the freights.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Would the Colonial Secretary undertake to produce all the reports in the Works Department with reference to this line? If so, the amendment would be withdrawn, and the line attacked on the second reading of the Railway Bill.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes. The Government did not want to withhold any information; but, the reports being numerous, having accumulated since 1896-7, some might be overlooked, and he did not wish to be charged with breaking his promise. What papers did the hon. member want?

HON. M. L. MOSS: All the reports for the last four years, of engineers and others, particularly those dealing with the possibility of the line showing a profit.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

HON. J. M. DREW: The Bill authorised the raising of practically  $2\frac{1}{2}$  millions; but before the works scheduled were completed, five millions would be needed. No sufficient reasons were adduced here or elsewhere for this loan. The Government were going too far in asking authority to raise money sufficient for five or six years' expenditure; for they had no right to anticipate being in office for three or four years longer. Last month showed a deficit of £46,000, and the previous month £43,000. The total deficit was about half a million. The House had refused to sanction a land tax, which would have yielded only £60,000; yet this loan of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  millions, at, roughly, four per cent. would involve a yearly revenue charge of £100,000, and after four years,

£25,000 additional must be provided annually for sinking fund. Who would find the money? The property-owners of Western Australia. We could not raise it through the Customs; we must have a heavy land tax and an income tax. A fair proportion of the items would not pay for years. He would speak on the Norseman railway on the second reading of the Railway Bill. The Mt. Magnet - Black Range railway was practically omitted from the Bill, the expenditure proposed for the next twelve months being only £2,000. Nothing was proposed as to the Upper Chapman railway, though three unjustifiable railways were granted to the Great Southern district, near Bunbury, for instance, where for many years there had been no new settlers. The southern railways already built were built simply to advance the value of old settlers' estates. The schedule showed £114,000 for "Development of Agriculture," though for many years the vote was £18,000, of which only £13,000 was spent. Unless there was a special scheme in view, the intention must be that the sum should cover six years. He supported Mr. Moss's denunciation of spending £175,000 from loan on public buildings. None by any stretch of imagination could characterise a public building as a reproductive work.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Would the Colonial Secretary make the same promise in regard to the whole of the railway items that he made in reference to the Coolgardie-Norseman line. He desired to see the reports from the Railway Department and the Works Department as to the possibility of the lines paying. There were bound to be reports by Lands, Railways, and Works officials, and it was right that all information should be available to members who desired to know what land there was in the immediate locality of these lines, and what chance there was of the railways paying. When voting money running into millions it was necessary to make the most exhaustive examination.

HON. J. M. DREW: A short while before the Labour Government left office three reports were received in connection with the Norseman line which were most damaging to that proposal. He would like to see the reports laid on the Table.

One was from the Works Department, one from the Mines Department, and one by a representative of the railways.

HON. M. L. MOSS wanted information in regard to the first four lines mentioned in the schedule. With regard to the Greenhills-Quairiding line he was not so particular because he had made certain investigations into it and it seemed justifiable. He did not ask for any information in connection with the Hopetoun-Ravensthorpe line either.

HON. F. CONNOR: Did the Government propose to bring forward a Bill this session to construct the Port Hedland-Marble Bar railway, what kind of line was it intended to construct? If the Government were not prepared to build this line to develop that district was it possible for the proposition to be built by private enterprise?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The fact of the item appearing on the loan schedule showed that it was the intention of the Government to build the line, but we had not sufficient information to ask the House to consent to the construction of the line now. As to the building of the line by private enterprise, that was outside the scope of the Bill. It was a question of policy. Personally he was not against private enterprise building a line if the State could not afford to build it. But he was not prepared to commit the Government to anything in that respect.

HON. J. W. WRIGHT: Were there plans prepared on flying surveys available for members? The Government must have sectional plans of the railways they intended to construct.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That data would be placed before members when the Bills were brought forward.

HON. F. CONNOR: Would the recommendation of the members of Parliament who visited the North-West be taken into consideration in regard to the building of the Marble Bar line? The Norseman line, which he intended to vote for, was not half as important as a line from Port Hedland to Marble Bar. If a line was constructed between the coast and the Pilbarra gold-fields there would be great developments, and thousands of people would go to that place.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Government were quite alive to the im-

portance of the Pilbarra district, and a great deal was expected from the development of the mineral country in Pilbarra. The Port Hedland railway might be more important than the Norseman line, and it was the opinion of the Government that the Port Hedland line should be built, but the Government had not sufficient data to warrant them in bringing forward a Bill for the construction of that line at the present time.

At 6-30. the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 7-30, Chair resumed.

Item—Black Range Railway :

HON. W. PATRICK : How was it proposed to expend the £2,000 set down for this year?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : This sum was for proceeding with the permanent survey and obtaining necessary information.

HON. J. M. DREW : Would the railway be constructed the same as a light agricultural line?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY was not prepared to say definitely, but this being part of a main line he believed it would be constructed on a better scale than the Norseman or the light agricultural railways.

Item — Bunbury Harbour Works, £44,000 :

HON. M. L. MOSS : Was this for entirely new work, or was it part of the money already expended; if so, how much?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY could not give the exact figures. A considerable portion of the vote had been expended, and for the balance a contract was now in hand for the extension of the jetty and breakwater.

HON. M. L. MOSS : It was an astounding position that there should be an admission from the Treasury bench that moneys listed in a schedule to a Loan Bill had already been spent. It was the essence of parliamentary government, particularly in regard to moneys to be raised by loan, that there should be no expenditure without parliamentary authority.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : A previous Government with which the hon. member

was connected had sanctioned the expenditure.

HON. M. L. MOSS could not accept the statement that any Government with which he had been associated would anticipate expenditure intended to be included in a Loan Bill a year later. He was not prepared to vote for the passing of an item, when it would make this House a mere registering machine for a Government that expended loan money without parliamentary authority.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : The money was not spent without authority. The expenditure having been authorised, and there being no separate vote available against which to charge the expenditure, it was charged against the Loan Suspense Account. The item was passed last year in the loan schedule.

HON. M. L. MOSS : What he desired to know was whether any portion of this £44,000 was contained in any previous authorisation, or whether it was an entirely new expenditure. The Minister apparently was not certain on the point.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY assured the hon. member it was not an entirely new expenditure.

HON. M. L. MOSS : Would the Minister tell the Committee what amount had been expended to date at Bunbury out of loan and general revenue funds.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : To do that would require time, and entail the obtaining of many returns. He could not give the information on the spur of the moment with any degree of accuracy. He could quote figures from printed matter, but such information might be incomplete.

HON. M. L. MOSS : According to the report of the Public Works Department for the year ending December 1905, £82,828 19s. 10s. had been spent from loan funds up to that time, and in addition enormous sums had been expended out of revenue. It was important that the House and the country should know the total cost of those works to date, and also what works were to be constructed with the £44,000 in this schedule. Harbour works stood in a different position from railways, as separate Bills for harbour expenditure were not brought in; hence the House had a right to know before passing this large amount what the Government proposed

to do in connection with it. On page 17 of the Works Report he found this disquieting statement:—

The sand accumulation round the head of the existing mole shows no indication of lessening; and the periodical survey to determine the advance will be undertaken as usual. That was some time prior to December 1905. He had given the total expenditure from loan moneys, but the House should be supplied with the details of expenditure from revenue, and should know exactly what work had been done to date and what was intended to be done with this £44,000. In passing this Loan Bill authorising the raising of two and a half millions of money, the House was asked to treat the matter with as little consideration as if dealing with a small sum.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The item had been passed in the Appropriation Bill.

**HON. M. L. MOSS:** The passing of the Appropriation Bill was merely in compliance with the Audit Act; and without a Loan Bill, the Appropriation Bill would be useless to the Government. Since he would have to justify his action to his constituents were he to vote for such a large sum in the dark and without information, he was not going to do so. He suggested that progress be reported so that available information could be supplied.

**HON. C. SOMMERS** agreed with the previous speaker. A considerable sum had been already expended at Bunbury, and very little information supplied. It was generally admitted that the harbour was silting up. He desired to know what the result of this expenditure was to be, and what the ultimate cost of the harbour would be. Returns showing the amount of revenue derived in harbour dues should also be supplied, so that members might know whether the expenditure sanctioned in the past and proposed for the future was justified.

**HON. J. M. DREW:** The Government deserved credit for having brought down the Loan Bill earlier than in previous years, and sufficiently early to allow of mature consideration being given to the various items. It was surprising to hear the Minister say we were committed to some of this

expenditure. If so, Parliament was simply a farce, and to ask for consent to such expenditure was an insult. Bunbury was fortunate in being the birth-place of Premiers. From loan, £82,000 had been spent on its harbour, and we did not know how much from revenue. The port had a fair export trade, but not sufficient to justify spending £44,000 additional. For lack of information the Colonial Secretary was not to blame. He (Mr. Drew), when leading the House, had experienced the same difficulty. But as there was no need for the session to close till Christmas Eve, we should insist on full information. The Railway Bills could be considered when brought in; but passing such items as these would enable the Government to dispose of them finally.

**HON. R. LAURIE:** The present Government could hardly be blamed for trying to make the Bunbury Harbour safe. It was rapidly filling up, and assistance might ultimately be required to cure a similar defect in the Fremantle Harbour. The export trade of Bunbury was immense, but the harbour should never have been constructed on the present lines, the accommodation being altogether unsuitable to the magnificent cargo steamers which called there. The information asked for should be supplied.

**HON. F. CONNOR:** The Colonial Secretary said this money had been spent.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** No. In the Appropriation Bill Parliament agreed to spending £56,000 for the current year, so there was some money in hand; but the late Government, of which Mr. Moss was a Minister, let a contract for the breakwater. To give full information on each of these items was impossible, for they represented hundreds of small works throughout the country. This session the Loan Bill was brought down eight or nine days before the anticipated date of closing, whereas in Mr. Drew's and other Ministers' time that Bill and the Estimates were brought down on the day of prorogation. Information as to the Bunbury Harbour would be given later. The contract had been let and the work done. Possibly the contract price did not cover the full amount of the item.

HON. F. CONNOR: It was certainly an insult to ask the House to pass money for work already done. How long would a commercial firm last on the same lines?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

HON. M. L. MOSS: This session the Colonial Secretary frequently objected that he (Mr. Moss) had held office in a Government that did so-and-so. His position then was purely honorary, and probably the present Premier might have had something to do with the very works which the Colonial Secretary condemned.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY did not condemn them.

HON. M. L. MOSS would be astonished to know that the late Government had, without parliamentary authority, let contracts in excess of their loan authorisations. If so, we ought to hear more of it in the Auditor General's report. Mr. Bell, Engineer for Harbours and Rivers, stated on the 31st December last, with reference to Bunbury, that on the data obtained various schemes for an inner harbour, as well as for the development of the outer harbour, had resulted in the decision to provide for the time being improved shipping facilities by extending the present jetty 300 feet and the breakwater 800 feet. The report spoke of an alternative scheme for an inner harbour. Was this £44,000 to be spent in commencing a work of that character? We knew from the reports of the late Mr. O'Connor that the construction of an inner harbour at Bunbury would run into many thousands of pounds. No member could give an intelligent account of what the £44,000 was to be applied to. At no time had members been asked to pass a measure for borrowing a large sum of money with so little information; and the Minister himself could not tell members what the money was to be expended on. He moved—

That the consideration of the item be postponed until the end of the schedule.

THE CHAIRMAN: It was not in order to move such a motion.

HON. T. F. O. BRIMAGE understood Mr. Moss not approving of expenditure on harbour works at any place except Fremantle; such a proposal would receive his strenuous opposition. The Bunbury

harbour was continually in a dangerous condition, and the Government had to a certain extent to anticipate expenditure on this work.

HON. R. LAURIE: At a harbour like Bunbury protection must be afforded to shipping. If the Bunbury harbour was intended to be used, then something must be done. A month ago he stood on the Bunbury jetty and saw a large steamer break a 20-inch spring as easily as one could break a piece of thread. That was evidence that something was required to be done there. If the harbour had been started wrongly that was no reason why additional protection should not be afforded in the present harbour. The harbour at Bunbury was filling up every year; the Government would have to send a dredge down very soon to clear the harbour. A contract had been let 12 months ago to lengthen the jetty by 300 feet, and the breakwater by 800 feet, and the work on the jetty was finished only a month ago. He was satisfied from his knowledge that farther protection was required at Bunbury for shipping. If we were to keep the Bunbury harbour open we must provide protection for shipping, or we should have one of the largest disasters occurring in the harbour that ever took place.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was debatable whether the harbour at Bunbury should have been constructed in its present position, but the fact remained that it was so constructed. Eighteen months ago a large sum of money was spent on the harbour and farther work was required, which would run into £40,000 or £50,000. The Rason Government called for tenders for the extension of the breakwater and the jetty, which amounted altogether to £80,000, and the £44,000 on the schedule was portion of the £80,000, there only being £60,000 at that time in hand. When a work of this character was started it could not be stopped abruptly. The Government could not afford to allow the whole of the money which had been expended on the harbour works at Bunbury to be wasted, for the sake of spending £40,000 now.

HON. M. L. MOSS wanted to be satisfied that this money was not for any new scheme. If the Colonial Secretary had assured members that the money was for

the completion of works already started, he would have been satisfied; but he could not believe that the preceding Government, in anticipation of a possible Loan Bill, had exceeded the amount of money that they were justified in taking out of loan for this or any other work. If that was done, then it was a highly improper thing and unconstitutional, and he said this even if he condemned his own colleagues. The Government should not expend public money without parliamentary authority, even if the Bunbury harbour work had to stand still. If there was no parliamentary authority to spend money then the work should stand still. He objected to the ungenerous remarks of Mr. Brimage, who inferred that he was opposed to the expenditure of money on any harbour except Fremantle. Such observations were contemptible, and while they should be withdrawn it was sufficient for his purpose that he now gave them a flat denial. If the present position of the harbour works at Bunbury was dangerous, and this £44,000 was required to put them in the safe condition Captain Laurie said they should be in, he desired only that the information he asked should be supplied, and he would then be satisfied to cast his vote. His action in drawing attention to the matter had been justified by other members, and had resulted practically in extracting from the Minister the desired information.

HON. J. M. DREW: Any previous Government which had committed the country to this expenditure without parliamentary authority was guilty of a gross breach of public trust, and Parliament should take the first opportunity of signifying its opinion of that action. He declined to support the item until farther information was afforded of expenditure from loan and revenue in connection with the Bunbury harbour works, and a statement was also required of the value of imports and exports at that port for the past three years. Members would then be in a position to decide whether or not Bunbury was likely to continue to be a sort of financial sink.

HON. G. RANDELL: Members were justified in asking for information on the item. While accepting no responsibility in connection with the decision to construct the outer harbour at Bunbury—as

he had been at the outset inclined to support the scheme of the late Mr O'Connor for a harbour inside the estuary—he was in accord with Captain Laurie in saying that Bunbury harbour should be made as complete as possible. A considerable trade in timber was now carried on at the port, and in the future there were prospects that this would be supplemented by an export trade in coal, in some form. If the silting continued, dredging would have to be resorted to for keeping the harbour clear, and any reasonable expenditure in this connection would not be grudged either by Parliament or the country, as we could not have too many harbours on our coast. But in view of the necessity for dredging, it would seem that the inner harbour scheme, estimated formerly to cost £500,000, would have been the cheaper. The information asked for might be in the printed slips supplied to members, but he had tried in vain to extract the figures as presented. The Minister should supply the details.

HON. J. W. HACKERT: In the absence of the desired information, would it not be well to adjourn the debate?

HON. J. M. DREW moved to postpone the consideration of this schedule.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: Members expected too much from the Minister in desiring that he should supply all the details of expenditure off-hand.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY had given all the available information.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: Apparently I failed to satisfy members.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: When information was given to Mr. Moss, the member declined to accept it, questioning its accuracy.

HON. R. F. SHOLL: It would be advisable to postpone the item.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY had suggested that course three-quarters of an hour before, but the Committee then declined to follow it.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY: The question exercising the minds of members was whether this £44,000 had already been expended or was intended for future expenditure, and from the Minister's statement it was apparent that a portion at least of the money had already been spent. Many members failed to recognise the importance of Bunbury as a

shipping port, at which on many occasions there was a greater number of vessels than at Fremantle. At times it was difficult to find accommodation at the jetty for vessels using the port; therefore, whoever had authorised the expenditure, it was justified by the need for accommodation of the shipping.

HON. J. M. DREW: The Committee should insist on having the required information. There was no wish to block the Bill, which could be put through its remaining stages on Monday.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Would not the hon. member's object be served by passing the schedule now, and asking for information on the third reading? It was needless to show the importance of improving the harbour at Bunbury, which would soon take its place in the first rank of Australian ports. There was a movement on foot which might revolutionise the whole of the South-West. If present developments continued, the export of wool and lambs would assume gigantic dimensions. Between Fremantle and Albany there must be an anchorage, and none could be found except at Bunbury.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Even Mr. Drew admitted that very full information had been given. Why then postpone the item? As shown on the paper distributed, the total estimated cost of the Bunbury harbour works was £73,619. The authorisation passed was £56,000, and an additional £17,000 must be spent to complete the work. In his Bill we were passing £44,000, the balance being in previous Loan Bills. The money was to pay for the breakwater contract, over £60,000, for the completion of the jetty extension 216 feet, and the breakwater extension 800 feet. As to the trade of the port, he had just obtained some information. Eight years ago the exports of Bunbury were only £11,000; last year they were £500,000, principally timber. The export tonnage was considerably greater than that of Fremantle or any other port in the State. A postponement, however long, could hardly enable him to obtain farther information.

HON. J. M. DREW: If the Bill were passed through Committee, we could not then send a suggestion to another place.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Bill could be recommitted.

HON. J. M. DREW: That would be a roundabout procedure. Better report progress, and between now and Monday procure the information required.

On motion by the Hon. M. L. Moss, progress reported and leave given to sit again.

#### BILL—JANDAKOT-ARMADALE RAILWAY.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 8-43 o'clock, until the next Monday afternoon.

### Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 7th December, 1906.

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THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 3 o'clock p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### QUESTION—HOPETOON HARBOUR, WAGES.

MR. HUDSON asked the Premier: 1, Has the Minister authorised the reduction of the wages of men working on the jetty at Hopetoun to the rates paid at Fremantle; and if so, why? 2, Did the