

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 4th August, 1896.

Question: Accommodation at Albany Quarantine Station—Question: Leasing the Perth Market—Motions: Leave of Absence—Constitution Act Amendment Bill: in committee—Noxious Weeds Bill: second reading moved—Coolgardie Water Supply Scheme: Memorandum by the Engineer-in-Chief—Coolgardie Water Supply Loan Bill: second reading; debate resumed—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—ACCOMMODATION AT ALBANY QUARANTINE STATION.

MR. WOOD (for Mr. Hassell), in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works what number of persons the Quarantine Station at Albany can accommodate.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied:—Thirty-six; but, when the authorised additions are completed, it will accommodate sixty-six.

QUESTION—LEASING THE PERTH MARKET.

MR. RANDELL, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works:—(1.) Whether he has received any offer from a private merchant or firm to lease the new market at a higher price than that for which it has been offered to the City Council? (2.) When arrangements are likely to be completed for the taking over and opening of the market to the public?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied:—(1.) No; but a private individual has expressed willingness to negotiate for a lease, should the arrangements contemplated with the Perth City Council fall through. (2.) The Perth City Council state that (provided there is no hitch in arranging the terms of the lease, which are now under consideration), the opening of the market to the public is expected to take place at the beginning of September next.

MOTIONS—LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On the motion of the PREMIER, leave of absence for one fortnight was granted

to the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor).

On the motion of MR. ILLINGWORTH, leave of absence for one fortnight was granted to the member for Albany (Mr. Leake), for Pilbarra (Mr. Keep), and the Swan (Mr. Loton).

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

The consideration of this Bill, in Committee, was resumed.

Schedule 1—agreed to.

Schedule 2:

Sections 1 to 12, inclusive—agreed to.

Section 13—North Fremantle electoral district:

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said hon. members would see, from the printed slip which had been handed round, that the new boundaries occasioned by the creation of an additional electorate for North Fremantle would extend Eastward as far as Humble Road in Claremont. Since the matter was previously before the House he had considered it carefully, and believed that the boundaries, as defined in the printed slip, were about the best that could be made. They followed the road leading from the railway station at Claremont to Freshwater Bay, the first portion of that road being known as Bay View Street; then down to the Fremantle road, and afterwards to Humble Road as the dividing line Eastward. This additional electorate caused the alteration of what was the North Fremantle electoral district, which would now include Cottesloe and Buckland Hill as far as Humble Road. The new East Fremantle electorate, to be created under this Bill, was constituted by including the portion of the Fremantle district South of the river; therefore, East Fremantle would be what North Fremantle electorate had been, with the exception of that portion known as North Fremantle, on the North side of the river. East Fremantle would thus be a large electoral district, because it would run all the way from Market Street, by the Anglican church, taking in all that part of Fremantle lying to the North of Knutsford Street; so that it would be large enough to return a member. The observations which he (the Premier) had made the other evening in respect to Fremantle

not being, in his opinion, entitled to another member, were not intended to refer, in any way, to the East Fremantle electorate which was now proposed to be created, but were directed solely to North Fremantle itself, as not being entitled to another representative, unless there were added to it Buckland Hill, Cottesloe, and a portion of North Fremantle; and this was now to be done. If hon. members agreed to Humble Road being the dividing line in Claremont between North Perth and North Fremantle, then the printed description laid on the table might be taken as absolutely correct. He therefore moved that the North Fremantle electorate be struck out of this schedule, and East Fremantle electoral district and North Fremantle electoral district be inserted in lieu thereof, the new descriptions being as follow:—

EAST FREMANTLE ELECTORAL DISTRICT.

"Bounded on the *West*, *North*, and *East* by the centre of the Swan River upwards from a spot due North of the centre of the North end of Market Street, and along the centre of the Canning River and Bull's Creek to the North-West corner of Canning Location 26, thence due South to the South-West corner of said Location 26. On the *South* by a line due South from the spot aforesaid in centre of Swan River. to the North end of the centre of Market Street, thence Southerly along the centre of Market Street to its junction with High Street, thence Easterly along the centre of High Street to its junction with Adelaide Street, thence along the centre of Adelaide Street to its junction with Queen Street, thence along the centre of Queen Street to its junction with Hill Street, thence along the centre of Hill Street to its junction with Knutsford Street, thence along the centre of Knutsford Street to the East boundary of Fremantle Townsite, and thence Easterly to the South-West corner of Canning Location 26 aforesaid."

NORTH FREMANTLE ELECTORAL DISTRICT.

"Bounded on the *West* by the Sea Coast. On the *North* by an East line from the Sea passing along the centre of North Street to its junction with Servetus Street; thence North along centre of Servetus Street to its junction with

"Shenton Road; thence East along centre of Shenton Road to a spot due North of the centre of Bay View Street; and on the *South* and *East* by the centre of the Swan River, extending upwards from the Sea to a spot due South from the North-East corner of Swan Location P 245 at Freshwater Bay; thence due North to said corner; thence Westerly along South side of Pensioner Terrace to a spot due South from the centre of Humble Road; thence North along said centre of Humble Road and the centre of Bay View Street to the South side of the Eastern Railway, and thence due North to the East end of the North boundary."

Amendments put and passed.

Sections 14 (South Fremantle) to 30 (East Perth), inclusive, agreed to.

Section 31 — North Perth electoral district:

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved that this section be struck out, and that the new boundaries, described in the printed slip laid on the table, be inserted in lieu thereof. He said this would carry out the arrangement which had been agreed to, after discussing the matter at a previous sitting. The new description was as follows:—

NORTH PERTH ELECTORAL DISTRICT.

"Bounded on the *West* by the Sea Coast. On the *North* and *East* by lines extending East from the Sea Coast, passing along the North boundary of Perthshire Location 111 at Nowergup Lake to a spot due North of the North-East corner of Perthshire Location 104 at Gnangarra Lake, thence due South to said Location's South-East corner, thence by a straight line to the South corner of Swan Location X on the Swan River, thence due East to the centre of the Swan River. On the *South* by the said river downwards along its centre to a point situate South-East from the South-West corner of Swan Location Y, thence North-Westerly passing along part of its South-Western boundary to the Guildford Road, thence South-Westerly along the centre of Guildford Road to Walcott Street, thence North-Westerly along the centre of Walcott Street to Beaufort Street, thence South-Westerly along the centre of Beaufort Street to Vincent Street, thence West

"along the South side of Vincent Street
 "to the East corner of Perthshire Loca-
 "tion Ax, thence South-Westerly along
 "the Eastern boundary of said Location
 "Ax to its South corner, thence South-
 "West along the North-West side of
 "Thomas Street to its junction with Fer-
 "dinand Street, thence South, passing
 "along the West side of Ferdinand Street
 "to a point due West of the North-West
 "corner of Swan Location 87, thence
 "East to the centre of Melville Water,
 "and thence downwards along said centre
 "and the centre of Swan River to a point
 "due South from the North-East corner
 "of Swan Location P 245 at Freshwater
 "Bay, thence due North to said corner,
 "thence Westerly along South side of
 "Pensioner terrace to a spot due South
 "from the centre of Humble Road, thence
 "North along said centre of Humble
 "Road and the centre of Bay View Street
 "to the South side of the Eastern Rail-
 "way, and thence due North to the centre
 "of Shenton Road, thence West along
 "centre of Shenton road aforesaid to its
 "junction with Servetus Street, thence
 "South along Servetus Street to its junc-
 "tion with North Street, thence West
 "along centre of North Street to the Sea
 "Coast."

MR. RANDELL pointed out that Beaufort Street, one of the boundaries of North Perth electorate, was not continuous to the municipal boundary, but that a portion of it was named Burt Street; and it would be necessary to correct this description, so as to be accurate. He had had occasion, when purchasing some land, to discover that Beaufort Street did not continue to the municipal boundary.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that if the description of Beaufort Street as a continuous boundary to the verge of the municipality was wrong in this instance, it had been wrong in all the Constitution Acts relating to this electorate. However, he would inquire into it, and the Bill could be re-committed on report, with a view to amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. MOSS asked if the Premier had forgotten the matter to which he had called his attention, in relation to Clause 4.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he had not forgotten it, but intended

to have the Bill re-committed in reference to that and other matters. The clause would be found to be a troublesome one.

Sections 32 (West Perth) to 43 (York), inclusive—agreed to.

Schedule, as amended—put and passed.

Schedule 3—agreed to.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved that the Bill be re-committed, and be made an Order of the Day for the next Thursday.

Agreed to.

NOXIOUS WEEDS BILL.

SECOND READING MOVED.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson), in moving the second reading, said: I have to apologise to hon. members for not being well posted up in the provisions of this Bill; but if its clauses are examined they will be found to be simple, and practically to explain themselves. The object of the Bill is to protect the colony from being overrun with various noxious weeds that are introduced, perhaps from other countries, or that seem to come by some spontaneous agency. The Bill provides the machinery and power necessary to compel owners of country lands to clear their lands of noxious weeds wherever found. It will be found that power is given to appoint inspectors under this Bill, and for them to enter upon and inspect properties and see whether there are noxious weeds growing there. The Bill provides for the infliction of penalties for neglecting to clear land of these weeds, when notice has been given to the owner or occupier to get rid of them. Turning to the schedule, it will be seen to what noxious weeds and seeds this Bill makes reference. Speaking generally on this Bill, I think it is not the intention or the desire of the Government or of the promoters of the measure, to cause any injury to or inflict any hardship upon anybody by the arbitrary use of the powers that the Bill confers. I would not myself be inclined to support the Bill, if all the powers that are given under it were to be put in force at every opportunity, because it would become a mere element of persecution; but I take it the Bill is like many other powers invested in the Crown, and that its powers will

only be exercised when necessary to do so. If a noxious weed is found to be endangering the welfare of the community, and likely to become a menace to the whole colony, we shall, under this Bill, have power to enforce its eradication. I think it is likely to prove, when it is in operation, a very desirable measure. At the present time, we are suffering, and in the future we are likely to suffer more, from the introduction of a great many of these noxious weeds. There is one of these weeds in particular that has done a great deal of damage. Everybody who has travelled about Guildford will have observed what is known as the "Guildford weed." Unfortunately, that weed at the present time is spreading all over the colony, and it appears to me that the time is not far distant when it will be a menace to the whole of our lands, more particularly the pastoral lands. If we had had a Bill like this in force a few years ago, that terrible weed might have been dealt with in a manner that would have enabled the people of those days to get rid of it. I am afraid it is too late now to get rid of this "Guildford weed," but we may do something under this measure to prevent its spreading, and also to prevent the introduction of other pests. I recommend hon. members to go as fully as they can into the various clauses of this Bill, and if there is anything in them to which they take exception, I trust they will suggest amendments when in committee. I believe this Bill has been prepared under the auspices of the Agricultural Bureau, and afterwards revised by the law officers of the Crown. I think it is intended to guard against the spread of noxious weeds and seeds which, in the future, may be sources of great danger and loss, not only to the landowners, but to the whole colony. It may appear to some hon. members that there is too much power given here for the eradication and prevention of these noxious weeds; but there are many other directions in which the Government are trusted with equally great powers, and I think they can be fairly trusted with the use of the powers given under this measure. We will have to trust whatever Government is in power with the carrying out of the provisions of this measure; but, at the same time, it must be admitted that a certain amount of authority is

necessary in order to deal with noxious weeds and seeds, if they are spreading all over the colony. We must trust, for the proper use of the powers given under the Bill, to the good sense of those administering the Act. With these few words I move the second reading of the Bill, and trust that if hon. members have any amendments to make, or objections to advance, they will bring them forward in committee.

MR. LEFROY: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate on this Bill, for the reason that the Bill has just been placed before hon. members, who have not had the opportunity of considering it, and also because I think the principle of the Bill is a subject for discussion.

Motion put and passed, and the debate adjourned accordingly.

At 5.5 o'clock, p.m., the SPEAKER left the chair, the business being suspended by arrangement until 7.30 o'clock.

At 7.30 p.m., the SPEAKER resumed the chair.

COOLGARDIE WATER SUPPLY SCHEME. MEMORANDUM BY THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest), by leave, laid on the Table a memorandum by the Engineer-in-Chief, referring to the Coolgardie water supply scheme, Mr. Simpson having, at a previous sitting, asked him to do so.

On the motion of Mr. TRAYLEN, the memorandum was read by the Clerk, as follows:—

"In reference to the question asked by 'Mr. Simpson (without notice) in the 'Legislative Assembly, on the 28th 'ultimo (and to which you have asked 'me to enable you to reply), as to 'whether the Government would place 'on the Table of the House the reports 'on the Coolgardie water scheme alluded 'to in report thereon as follow—' As 'regards the practicability of this scheme 'there cannot, I think, be a reasonable 'doubt, as it has already been declared 'to be quite practicable by many com- 'petent engineers, even while some of 'them deprecated it from other points of 'view'—I have the honour to report as 'follows:—

"The most of the opinions of com- 'petent engineers referred to were not in

"writing, and were given to me personally, by personal friends, chiefly engineers passing through Perth to and from the goldfields; and I do not think it would be proper to quote these gentlemen's names and give the country the benefit of their opinions gratuitously, as it seems to me that if the country requires their opinions they should be consulted in a proper manner and paid such fees as are usual in such cases. As regards obtaining such opinions in writing, moreover, it seems to me that it would be an absurdity to ask engineers deliberately, in writing, as to whether or not they considered the proposal to be practicable from an abstract point of view, as there cannot be the slightest doubt of its being practicable from an abstract point of view, and any such question to an engineer would, therefore, be regarded as childish. As a matter of fact, the form in which the engineers whom I have referred to expressed their opinions to me was, that 'some people had been saying that the scheme was not practicable, whereas, of course, it was simply ridiculous to say that it was not practicable, as there was nothing in the least degree impracticable about it, and that it was purely a question of expense.' To get, on the other hand, from engineers, either here or in England (other than the engineers who have been already engaged on the work), deliberate opinions as to whether the project could be carried out for the amount, and within the time which I have estimated it can be, would be a very different matter, as no eminent engineer would give an opinion of this sort without being supplied with all the detailed information which we have got ourselves; and probably not even then, until he had gone over the ground, or sent some qualified assistant of his own over the ground, in order to satisfy himself that all the data which had been supplied to him was correct. In view of this, therefore, I would submit:—

"1. That to ask for deliberate written opinions as to whether a thing is practicable, which any person capable of reasoning at all, after an hour or two's consideration, must realise to be quite practicable, and to pay such fees as engineers of eminence would be entitled

"to ask for such deliberate opinions, would be ridiculous.

"2. If, on the other hand, the opinions are to embrace the probable cost and length of time the work would take to do, then they would take a long time to prepare (just as it has taken myself and several other engineers a long time to get to the stage of the business at which we have now arrived); and there would, in fact, be no probability of getting any such opinions from any engineer of eminence outside the Department in less than a month or two, as such engineer would, as before stated, probably insist upon having an opportunity of going over the whole of the ground before giving such opinion."

COOLGARDIE GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY LOAN BILL.

SECOND READING—DEBATE RESUMED.

The debate, on the motion of the PREMIER for the second reading of this Bill, was resumed.

MR. SIMPSON: I am sure the House will be perfectly satisfied that it exercised a discreet and wise action when, a fortnight ago, it determined to give to its members and the country an opportunity of considering the speech of the Premier in introducing this scheme of water supply for Coolgardie, and the reports submitted by the Engineer-in-Chief. The proposal comes to the House, sir, with great weight, at perhaps an opportune time—an impending election, the hustings in view of the Government, an elaborate report introduced and largely quoted from by the Premier to begin with, a quotation from the prophet Isaiah to wind up with, and the hon. member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) sandwiched in between as an authority on the London market. I do not know whether that gentleman feels comfortable in his position in being placed between these two authorities, but if he does I think it must be in consequence of some new development in his character that has arisen during his recent trip to Europe. The Premier, throwing all his enthusiasm into the question, and endeavouring to put all the glamour around the glittering ideal of the proposal, started away by endeavouring to point out to the country the necessity for this great proposal. He then goes along

a bit further and endeavours to become pathetic about the poor dirty old dry-blower up there, without a wash from morning till night, and then winds up with a little abuse of those who are opposed to the scheme. I think anyone who goes through the speech will be able to summarise it, in a general way, to this effect. And perhaps it was a happy idea that I should have asked for these further reports referred to in Mr. O'Connor's principal report. I notice that the Premier, when, if I may be allowed to use the expression, ladling out a little blarney to the hon. member for Perth, in the manner which he is so fond of for catching votes, goes on to say the Government desire to give the fullest information to hon. members concerning the matter. "We have no desire," he says, "to hurry it through the House." "The more it is discussed here and throughout the country, the more every-thing in regard to it is investigated, the better the Government will be pleased." And perhaps, sir, it was a happy thought of mine to ask for these further opinions from the Engineer-in-Chief, that I referred to as having deprecated this scheme. That further report, now before us, is certainly interesting reading. If hon. members will observe, the Engineer-in-Chief points out there what this House has a right to ask for, what the country has a right, in its own interests, to demand—*independent expert opinion* in regard to this scheme. I presume the Ministry, with their desire for full and careful investigation, will not question that position; that it is expedient, before embarking on this great project, that independent expert opinion and advice should be secured. I am perfectly satisfied that each member of this House is as desirous to give a careful and exact opinion on this question as I am; as careful to secure information from the best possible sources; and as desirous of obtaining as exact information as can be got, apart from any temporary political advantage or disadvantage, but simply with the idea of securing the ultimate good of the country. And yet the Engineer-in-Chief, on the 4th August, advises this House, through the Premier, that to get, on the other hand—"on the other hand" means from engineers outside his own department, that is, practically,

from the parents of his own scheme, or rather, the Premier's scheme—"to get, "on the other hand, from engineers, "either here or in England (other than "the engineers who have been already "engaged on the work), deliberate "opinions as to whether the project "could be carried out for the amount, "and within the time which I have "estimated it can be, would be a very "different matter, as no eminent engineer "would give an opinion of that sort "without being supplied with all the "detailed information which we have got "ourselves, and, probably, not even then, "until he had gone over the ground, or "sent some qualified assistant of his own "over the ground, in order to satisfy "himself that all the data which had "been supplied to him was correct." I ask this House, is it an unreasonable thing to deliberate over this great project? Is it an unreasonable thing to secure the deliberate opinion and conclusion of independent expert evidence? And is it in the interest of the colony? The cost of getting such opinions is a bagatelle as compared with the importance of the project. The Engineer-in-Chief, the foster parent of this scheme, tells us that he cannot obtain a deliberate opinion from people qualified to give one, without much consideration, and yet the Premier asks this House to adopt the scheme, *holus bolus*, right away, on the speech delivered by him the other night. We have here the opinion of the Engineer-in-Chief—not what I imagined, from the great eulogies that have been passed on his ability and character, and from which I have no wish to detract—in which he tells us that to get confirmation of his scheme and his opinion will require the deliberate and careful investigation of engineers whom we would have to employ from abroad. I would suggest to the House and to the country the expediency of securing that information. With regard to the practicability of the scheme, I never had any doubt of it. To put it very plainly, it is purely a matter of dollars. The Engineer-in-Chief, I have very little doubt, would bridge the Indian Ocean if we were to give him money enough. To talk of taking water to Coolgardie, as the Engineer-in-Chief states in his report, is a matter of detail—after you get the data, it is simply a

matter of increasing the power—and I do not imagine any member of this House will dispute for a moment that it is possible to take water by this scheme to Coolgardie. The Premier, in his address to this House, started away by alluding to the necessity of the scheme. I ask, Where is the necessity? I say it is made by the Premier. I say there have been no public meetings demanding such a scheme, though I have observed a report of a public meeting the other day as having been held at Kalgoorlie, after the scheme had been proposed, to support the proposal of the Minister. I noticed also that in Fremantle, some time ago, there was a public meeting to oppose the removal of the railway workshops from that town; and I place these two public meetings on a parallel, as indicating public opinion. It is a singular incident, in reference to the meeting at Kalgoorlie, that the main resolution was proposed by a late resident of Bunbury, and one of the Premier's constituents.

MR. A. FORREST: He has been up there a long time.

MR. SIMPSON: It is a singular fact, nevertheless. The Premier drew the attention of the House—and we know the sympathetic nature that hon. gentleman has got—and described how it grieved him to see animals, or humans, or any living thing suffering from want of water; and he pointed out how sad it had been for him to see horses, out there on the goldfields, dying on the roadside for want of water, and nobody to give them a drink. He told us there were no stockyards at Coolgardie, but I have heard from mining men that several squatting properties have been taken up there—a large area of salt-bush. But the Premier loses sight of the fact that, with the extension of our railway system, the necessity for all these things will disappear. He alluded to Southern Cross, and to the terrible difficulty of carrying on the mines there for want of water; and yet many members of this House, some of them directors of those mines, are aware, and yesterday's papers will show the announcement, that another good old mine out there, regularly on the dividend paying list, is flooded with water, and has been grinding out gold. The Premier says the necessity of

this scheme is for supplying the mines with water, and I take it that is his main contention in connection with what is called the Coolgardie goldfields water supply scheme. I say, and I know there are members in this House who agree with me, that this name is a misnomer, and that it is not a Coolgardie goldfields water supply scheme, but is a scheme to make up for errors in the estimates of railway construction, and to supply municipalities with water: Northam, Newcastle, York, perhaps Beverley, Southern Cross, Coolgardie, and Kalgoorlie. I say again, it is a scheme to make up for errors in the estimates of railway construction, to provide water for railway purposes, and to supply these municipalities with water. Three million gallons of water a day, according to the Premier, will be available for the mines, and he says the necessity for this water for the mines exists. I join issue with him, and I will produce my authorities. He has not produced a single authority to show that the mines are absolutely stuck up for want of water; but I will give him my authorities, and will make the extracts I propose to give as short as possible. I will give the names and the exact quotations, showing the opinions of mining men representing tens of thousands of pounds—not the sixty millions to which the Premier alluded; indeed, he seemed to drop into very large figures in that speech. We are growing enamoured of the word "millions" in this country, and it is a singular thing in connection with this word "millions," though I do not know whether there was any connection in the matter, that on the night after the Premier introduced this scheme, and dilated on these 2½ millions for conveying water to the mines that do not want it, a cablegram appeared in the papers from London—and no doubt a report of the Premier's speech had been briefly cabled to those papers—in which it was said the "Jubilee Juggins" was starting for Western Australia, with the idea of recouping his lost fortune. I will now quote evidence in opposition to what the Premier has said, in regard to the necessities of the mines for obtaining a supply of water. First, the Lake Durlôt Exploration Company, well known in this country, and founded on a sound basis, have in their employ and in their

confidence Captain Rowe, mining engineer, who in his report for October says:—"Water plentiful . . . has been struck at from 30 to 40 feet, in such quantities that owners were unable to cope with it." Mr. William Gray, manager of the Gresham, in October, when leaving Perth for England said he strongly advocated a systematic search for subterranean water; that he thought capitalists should have encouragement given them by Government; and that existing regulations concerning water rights were useless. Then at Coolgardie, in December last, the Premier is reported to have said he had a scheme in his pocket for bringing water to that town, which would cost six millions sterling, and that private capitalists were ready to do the work. The *Australian Mail* says—[THE PREMIER: I know who said that.]—that paper says:—"If it is intended to bring the water a distance of 200 miles from Esperance, or 300 miles from Northam, it would mean serious delay. . . . Before such works are put in hand, efforts should be made "to test local supply." In a Kalgoorlie report written by Captain Oates, in December last, on the Coolgardie Mint and Iron King gold mines, now grinding out gold, that well known authority says:—"At a depth of 193 feet there was a flow of water of 7,000 gallons per 24 hours. "This can be increased by sinking." In a Coolgardie report, dated December last, on the Whitehead and Sultan mines, Mr. William Gray says:—"You will have, "in the Whitehead and Sultan, at "an extremely shallow depth, a large "supply of water." Now, I come right in amongst some of the Premier's friends. Referring to Kalgoorlie, Mr. W. Brookman—[THE PREMIER: Is he one of them?]-I should think so—Mr. Brookman reported, in January last, on Hannan's Mount Charlotte West thus:—"Water has been struck at 150 "and 200 feet, and I have no doubt sufficient for mining purposes will be secured "as deep sinking is continued." Broad Arrow, the Paddington Consols.—Mr. Sinclair Macleay, as chairman of a general meeting, said:—"On the Try It lease, a "large quantity of water has to be pumped "daily. . . . It has been found necessary to make better arrangements to "cope with it. The water is fresh."

THE PREMIER: "Fresh?" We know, that is true, of course.

MR. SIMPSON: Now I will give a quotation about a great property, Hannan's Proprietary—I suppose one of the biggest claims we have, so far as area is concerned—one that stands to-day representing about a million and a half of capital on the London Stock Exchange. At a general meeting, held in January, Mr. George Gray said:—"It is the intention of the "Cabinet to have boring operations undertaken in order to thoroughly test the "field. That the supply of water will "keep up with the demand I never had "any doubt whatever. We expect to be "able to supply the district with 500,000 "gallons per day, all the year round, when "our water right is developed." That is from Mr. George Gray, who obtained a very large concession from the Government for water supply. [MR. A. FORREST: Where was that said?] That was said at a general meeting in London; and, surely, the same rule should apply to Mr. Gray, when in London, as to the hon. member when in London—surely, he would not say differently in London from what he would say here. Referring next to the White Feather Reward, Mr. A. H. P. Stoneman said, at a general meeting in February last:—"They now had a fair supply of water at White Feather, and an enormous supply at Hampton Plains. The last report gave 173,000 gallons per day—so much that it could not be coped with from one bore, and another bore had to be put down."

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS: Is that fresh, too?

MR. SIMPSON: I do hope this information is fresh to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, as otherwise, knowing how conscientious he is, I could not imagine his coming to any other basis for the support of the scheme before the House. Referring next to the 21-mile (Coolgardie), the Linnerick Consols mine, Mr. E. Herbert Becke, mining engineer, in his report of the 7th November last, says:—"An ample supply of water for machinery "and domestic purposes can be obtained "at a depth of 20 to 25 feet." The next is Coolgardie North, the Bunyip mines, and Mr. E. Davenport Cleland, in the prospectus, said, in April last:—"I am "of opinion that strong supply of water "can be obtained at a depth of 200 feet."

Coolgardie East, Great Boulder South.—Mr. Zebina Lane, whose opinion should carry some weight in this colony, as it does in other countries, said, in his report dated May last:—"There is every evidence of an abundance of water being obtained at a depth of about 150 feet, and it will therefore be necessary to erect pumping plant before the sinking of shafts can be continued." [THE PREMIER: Salt water, of course.] You cannot laugh away that evidence. That must go alongside the evidence given by the Premier when he was grieving over the dying horses. Kalgoorlie W.A. Pioneers, Limited.—The Marquis of Tweeddale, in December, 1895, speaking at the general meeting, said:—"Here I may refer to what has been said by speakers as well as writers with respect to the alleged scarcity of water in West Australia. I suppose there is no doubt that in parts of West Australia there is considerable scarcity of water, and difficulties arise in consequence of that; but in this particular case we have no reason to apprehend any serious difficulty. As I dare say you know, Hannan's Proprietary have secured very extensive water rights from the Government, with a lease, I think, of 21 years. Our representative, Mr. George Gray, cabled to us not very long ago that the water question is not one which will in any way hamper the operations of the Hannan's Proprietary Company." I need not suggest to this House that men holding great and responsible positions like that of the Marquis of Tweeddale are very careful of the words they use. The words they use are published in the great London dailies, and they are open to criticism and contradiction. With regard to the Herbert Gold Mining Company, Dr. Churchward, at a general meeting, held in May, 1896, said:—"I do not think we need feel uneasy with regard to water, as a neighbouring mine, two blocks away, has plenty of water at 120 feet, and our engineer states his belief that we shall have all we require at 150 feet." The manager of the Coolgardie Miner's Dream Gold Mines reports, under date May, 1896:—"We have received from the Government a water right of five acres. The area which covers the water shed of 200 acres has a quick and rapid fall. The reservoir will hold, with 12 feet of

water, 3,000,000 gallons." Mr. George Gray, of Lake View East, reports:—"Work on the adjacent mines has proved that there is an abundant water supply obtainable by sinking." Captain Oates, a man who is widely respected, says in the same prospectus:—"I consider there is a good supply obtainable by sinking on the Lake View East." The Premier referred to his experience, which we all value as an explorer. We know that in the early days exploring was not the kid-gloved performance that it is now. The Premier did travel over that country, and so did the hon. member for West Kimberley. It was an arduous, a heroic work in those days, and I have great pleasure in paying my tribute to the arduousness of the efforts of the Premier as an explorer, and the work he accomplished; but, at the same time, there have been other men over that country whose experience the Premier would doubtless permit to rank equally with his own. There is, for instance, David Lindsay. We can quote David Lindsay as one having a fair knowledge of that country. He says: "Bardoc, March 4, 1896:—At 124 feet water has been struck, and I have no doubt sufficient for battery purposes will be obtained, as the contour of the country warrants the belief that a large body of water will be met with at a reasonable depth."

THE PREMIER: He went 30 days without water.

MR. SIMPSON: His camels did. I do not say that artesian water is to be got in all parts of the Coolgardie field, or that it can be obtained at Coolgardie, but in other places systematic boring will give subterranean supplies. Even if this artesian water is not obtained, water will be got, although not artesian, over hundreds of miles where it is popularly supposed there is no water. It will be easily found by boring. I think the Government should carry out some systematic scheme of boring for water. The Premier will admit that the words of Mr. Lindsay should carry weight, coming from the man they do. Then if you want a geologist, to my mind the ablest geologist who ever stood in this country, a man whose reports stand on our State records now, the man who was undoubtedly the ablest we ever had in the country, and whose reports are proving

from day to day of immense value to this country, was Mr. Göczel. Mr. Göczel says:—"I have repeatedly expressed the opinion that, in the near future, the trouble will be not want of water, but too much of it." You asked for a geologist, and I give you the opinion of one. I do not know that I need trespass on the time of the House with many more extracts of this sort. I can simply say that I have quoted the ablest men that capital could secure; men who are representatives of the biggest companies that have invested their capital in this country; men whose private repute and public reputation are beyond question. These able men unhesitatingly say that there will be no difficulty with mining at Coolgardie as regards water, so long as they can secure the gold. So much for that part of the speech of the Premier which alludes to the necessity for this scheme. With regard to the proposal to supply the municipalities with water, I have not the faintest objection to it. I say that it will become necessary for these municipalities to make arrangements for getting a supply of water. It is beyond question necessary for the railways to be supplied with water, but I do not want the Government to tack this municipal supply on to the goldfields water supply, because it is not a supply for the goldfields. This scheme is intended to cover serious errors that were committed in the construction of our railways. We have been talking about cheap railways, about railways costing £530 per mile, yet the contractor will clear £200,000 profit out of his contract—or at the rate of about £4,000 a week—and at the same time we make no provision for supplying those railways with water. We have seen at Broken Hill what tremendous developments followed the mining, and we will yet see on this Coolgardie line 200 or 300 locomotives at work. This Bill, I say, is meant to provide a scheme to cover errors in estimating the cost of our railways. Our engineers built railways to the back blocks and sent their engines there, and then expected them to return, without remembering that they could not get back without a water supply. I stated, in connection with the Southern Cross railway, that provision ought to have been made for the construction of those tanks, which afterwards became a further

charge on the cost of the line. This provision of a water supply for our railways will have to be made; but with regard to these municipalities getting a water supply, I do not know that that is not a matter which could be dealt with in the provisions of the measure which I imagine, is now in the hands of the Government, and which was alluded to in the Address of the Governor. It was stated in that Address that the Government intended to introduce a measure to enable the municipalities to make arrangements for getting a water supply. Another feature in connection with this matter is this—I am perfectly sure it was unintentional—that no more damning speech could have been made in connection with the gold mining industry than the speech of the Premier when moving the second reading of this Bill, if that speech were read by men who could read between the lines. I have little doubt that the proposal of the Government will be welcomed by the company promoter and the prospectus writer in London; and, if I may be permitted to pay a compliment to the Premier, I would say he would make a magnificent prospectus writer himself. Owing to that speech, it will go out to the world that the water difficulty is overcome, that there is to be no more water trouble, and the indiscreet and injudicious investor will say "The Government have taken the thing in hand; I will go in and invest heavily, fully trusting in the scheme." Later, however, he will discover that there is to be no water under this scheme at Coolgardie for three years; and the investor, if he be a discreet man, will wait three years before investing in order that he may see whether the scheme is successful. The Premier alluded to the fact of people living in dirt and disease. With regard to disease, I have grown so tired of it that I hate alluding to it, but I have sound reason to believe that the danger from sickness on our eastern goldfields is no more than is regular and incidental to all new gold mining country, and I have heard the experience of men from the Palmer right down through New South Wales. These men say that disease is incidental to the conditions of life on new goldfields, and not contingent on the water question. The Premier says this state of disease and dirt is incidental alone to the

eastern goldfields. If that is true, if it is worthy of weighing with members as an argument to induce them to support this measure, why is it that we have this disease on the Murchison where you can lose yourself in the water? If the Government carry on this scheme to supply Coolgardie with water because they have disease there, they should also, for the same reason, provide the Murchison field with pumping gear to carry away the surplus water we have there. If you are going to supply Coolgardie with water, why not go a bit further and follow the State nationalisation ideas of the member for East Perth, and supply them with batteries and with quicksilver, and employ men for them? Why not go right through? You have as much right to supply them with bread and meat as to supply them with water, if your argument in favour of that course is that you desire to reduce the cost of production. Starting from an economical basis, you have as much right to supply bread and meat or anything else as you have to supply water. In his speech the Premier started out to prove the necessity of the water supply for turning out the gold, and I have given the House the opinions of able men who consider that it is not necessary to have this water scheme in order to get the gold. I challenge him to disprove it or to question the facts on which those opinions are based. The ablest men connected with the industry have said that this scheme is absolutely unnecessary.

THE PREMIER: They do not quite say that. Will you quote?

MR. SIMPSON: They go so close to it that perhaps the Premier is glad to see even a little shade of light in his favour. I am talking about the water for mining purposes, and I am sure the Premier will admit that the water difficulty has been as troublesome at Southern Cross as elsewhere, and yet there are hon. members in this House who for years have been connected with a gold mine there, which has been turning out dividends regularly without the aid of a 2½ million water scheme. Seven years ago we had to carry water to the mine from a distance of 17 miles, and we did not growl about it. Then the Premier went along a bit, and he came to the great question of private enterprise. It is known now in this House,

and I presume it is very well known in the country, that the Premier is an out-and-out antagonist of private enterprise. In connection with that matter, it is perhaps well that I should disabuse this House of an impression which the Premier sought to convey to the House, and which I think he will have to disclaim, that I am connected with one of the companies that desires to carry out a water scheme on the goldfields. The scheme alluded to was that of Mr. Wilson; and the Premier implied that I, in my public position in this House, was using my position to act as an agent for these people. Now I wish to deal with that matter very plainly. I cannot imagine the Premier believing it.

THE PREMIER: What did I say? Don't quote what I did not say.

MR. SIMPSON: I will give you exactly what you did say. In his speech on the Address-in-Reply the Premier said that he did not know whether the hon. member for Geraldton was not acting as agent for these people; and in the speech on this particular question he said: "The hon. member for Geraldton has told us 'that this work of supplying water for 'the goldfields should be left to private 'enterprise, and he knows of good men 'who are willing to take this matter up. 'I stand here opposed to private enterprise, even if those good men are also to 'be specially represented by the hon. 'member for Geraldton.'" Now I shall tell the Premier and this House that I was not an agent for anyone, and that I won't allow the Premier to imply or say that I ever use my position as a member of this House for such an object. I will say more than that, and it is that if he does not withdraw the statement, it is a black, malignant calumny. The hon. member is fond of parading his honour and his keen sense of honour in this House, and if he is an honourable man he will take the trouble to find out the gentleman to whom he has alluded, and who is at present in town and prepared to give it an absolute denial. That gentleman, Mr. Wilson, will state that there never has been any possibility or suggestion of the least basis for such a foul fabrication. So much for that part of the speech of the Premier. I now come to the question of private enterprise. The Premier has stated that he has been so

discouraged by his experience of private enterprise in the past that he is determined that there shall be nothing of the kind in the affairs of the country in the future. He also says that, if possible, he will come before the House with the affairs of one of these private companies and ask the assistance of the House to buy them out. In connection with that matter I can only say that the adviser of the Government, the Hon. the Attorney General, was the gentleman who drew that agreement for the private company, and if he was able to draw such an agreement for a private company, he will be able to draw as strong an agreement for us. If he is so keen in favour of the private investor, surely he will, when employed by the Premier to act in the interests of the country, be equally careful. I cannot understand the hatred of the Premier to the making of agreements. I am not afraid of making agreements, but the Premier seems to need a kind of wet nurse to prevent him from being taken in when he thinks of making an agreement. The member for West Kimberley, who came back from London lately, said that capital is begging for investment in England, especially in a country like ours, which stands so well before the world. Private enterprises, with reasonable concessions, would have no difficulty in getting money, and, so far as I know, in this project of Mr. Wilson there is no question of monopoly. As regards such monopolies, there is no greater opponent to them than I am, but I am not opposed to the introduction into this country of capital that is to be used in ordinary business ventures, and under conditions that will be fixed by the Government. Other countries have been able to make reasonable contracts, and there is no reason why we cannot do the same. Though the dividends that these companies make will go to other countries, we, here, will get sufficient benefit from the works that are carried out. Now, the Premier, in that special allusion of his to the prophet Isaiah—if I may be permitted to deal with a sacred matter—is almost laughable. That quotation, I am told, was furnished by the hon. member for Northam for use on this particular occasion. The quotation was to the effect that they made a way in the wilderness and a river in the desert. I

suppose that the Premier means that the prophet alluded to the present Ministry, for he said "Future generations will thank us and bless us for our far-seeing patriotism, and it will be said of us, as" Isaiah said, "They made a way in the wilderness and a river in the desert." However, when you come to analyse this scheme and understand the position that the mines do not want it—when we even grant that there is something in the ardour and enthusiasm of the hon. members of this House who wish to see the country between Meckering and Coolgardie studded with green pastures and that sort of business—surely it will remove the glamour caused by the Premier's speech from their eyes. The Premier says that with the aid of the scheme we will be able to turn a tap and cause the sand-plain to blossom into an oasis. Imagine the Premier on a hot day, in the midst of a sand-plain, turning on the water and making an oasis in the desert! That is the sort of position that we come to in connection with this matter. As to the Engineer-in-Chief's report, I shall comment upon it, but I shall not in any way detract from his great position, his great accomplishments, and the high integrity of his character. The report of the Engineer-in-Chief and that of his staff is submitted to this House unendorsed by any independent authority. I think that is a fair statement of the case. Is this House justified in embarking on this scheme without seeking independent endorsement of the various proposals it contains? I say no. Would any member in his private capacity invest in so large a scheme without having it carefully scrutinised; carefully analysed by absolutely independent scientific authority obtained from the best sources in the world? Notwithstanding what the Premier has said, I contend that we have to look at this scheme not merely as providing for an expenditure of $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions, but an annual $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions. If I had the faith in this scheme that the Premier has I would come to the House and ask for 10 millions, and I would flood Coolgardie with water. He, however, comes to us for $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions; but if he believes in the scheme he should ask for far more than that, for the amount that he has put down will never supply the water that is

required. Of the 5 million gallons per day, 3 millions are allotted to the mines, but some of the far-away districts will want the benefit of the scheme, and then you will want a great deal more money. In point of fact, the scheme is merely an experiment that is to cost $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions, and it is an experiment that is to be carried out by 120,000 people. I am not actuated, in my criticisms of this scheme, by any doubt whatever as to the future of the colony. Indeed I am looked upon as a sanguine man as regards the development of this country. I have not the slightest doubt that long before 1900 our population will be close to half-a-million. Another feature in connection with this scheme is that of the time for carrying it out. I suggest my opinion with some deference, but I must say that I do not believe it is possible to do the work in the time mentioned; and I consider that it would be better if we did not put forward three years as the time for construction, seeing that by doing so we may be leading investors into entertaining false hopes. The Premier says he believes the work will be done in three years, but it is hard to accept that statement when one turns to Fremantle and realises that it takes no less than six weeks to land a ship's cargo. Under this scheme it is proposed to import 90,000 tons of pipes and land them at Fremantle. I suggest that commercial men who are in this House, and who have had practical dealings with the shipping trade, will have grave doubts of the possibility of the scheme being carried out in three years. We will, of course, be assured that by that time we shall have ample rolling stock, and this, that, and the other. Assurances have dropped from the Ministry for years now that these difficulties would soon disappear, and I am, therefore, justified in saying that the block which exists now (and the further block which is imminent at Fremantle) is greater than it ever has been. That is the position. [THE PREMIER: No, no.] My information comes from a member of the shipping port in question, and I am compelled to take the opinion of a merchant dealing with the shipping trade there before that of a member of the Ministry. I will leave it to the Minister of Railways to deal with that matter when he replies to the representatives of

the merchant community. It seems to be assumed that this condition of things at Fremantle is exceptional, but so far as I can ascertain it is not so. In connection with this work there will be required between 3,000 and 4,000 men on the job. I am glad always to see men come here and settle and make good wages. I always believe in the best of wages and then you get the best of men; but I want to point out that the unemployed difficulty in Victoria and New South Wales arose from the fact of the undue and hurried expenditure of loan money, inducing a huge influx of unskilled labour, which, as soon as this particular work was accomplished, could find no suitable outlet, and became dependent on the Government; and so it will cause an influx of 3,000 to 4,000 to carry out this scheme. But by far the greater part of this loan will not be spent in the country, as the greater portion of it—I suppose a million and a quarter—will be spent out of the colony, and that is an element in the matter that is worthy of consideration. Then, on top of that, comes the great question that this is a moribund Parliament. It is a Parliament in *articulo mortis*. The Premier in his speech said that within the last 12 months the population of the country has increased by more than 50 per cent., and that increase is not represented in this House. Side by side with this Bill is a Bill for an amendment of the Constitution Act, increasing the representation of the large centres in Parliament, and placing in the Parliament of the country 14 new men; and yet we are asked at the end of the session—or rather at the end of Parliament—with the hustings in view, and an election impending, to pledge the assent of the country to this great scheme. I appeal to the Premier and the Ministerial benches to preserve that spirit of our constitution which gives us the right of free speech in this Chamber. I have always held that the policy of the Government has been one largely of mistrust of the people, tempered by fear, and that opinion is confirmed when they try to carry this Bill through this dying Parliament. If there is a question which ought to be submitted to the people in a young country like ours, where Constitutional Government has not

yet become part of the education of the people, but where we hope it will gradually work itself into the whole system, so that the people will be as tenacious of their rights as in other places, it is this proposal falsely called the Coolgardie Goldfields Water Supply Bill. I do not propose to trespass on the time of the House, but I have endeavoured to give some reasons and opinions for my opposition to this measure. I have little doubt, if this gets into that by-lane—a select committee—it will be smuggled through the House, as I have little doubt that the majority of the Government will be the majority of the select committee. I have not a shadow of doubt about that, but I challenge the Premier, on his utterances given by him and accepted by the House in good faith, that the Government would be glad for the House to seek for all information, and for the matter to be discussed from one end of the country to the other, to say if there is a reasonable opportunity to thoroughly investigate this great scheme, and secure expert scientific evidence during the currency of this session of Parliament. I appeal to him by his respect for that Constitution which he helped to win for this country, to preserve its spirit and not trespass on it and imperil it by trying to foist on the country a scheme which the country has not had an opportunity of considering, and which I, in its present form, consider undoubtedly premature. I beg to move, "That, in the opinion of this House, the proposal of the Government is premature, and ought not to be sanctioned until the large centres of population are more equitably represented in this House."

MR. TRAYLEN: I listened with a great deal of attention to the hon. member for Geraldton, and I thought if the contention of the hon. member were correct, that there is no need for this scheme, at least for battery purposes, then he was somewhat inconsistent in advocating as warmly as he did that the matter should be left to private enterprise. What is there for private enterprise to do if water is not wanted on the goldfields? I was also led to ask myself, while he was speaking, "What is in a name?" as I gathered that if the Bill had been introduced under another name—a water

supply for the municipalities of the goldfields—it would have met with his cordial support; but because it is introduced as it is now, it meets with his strenuous opposition. I fail to see the consistency in taking up these—to my mind—opposing grounds. I do not think it is difficult to show that the scheme is very urgently needed; and, though we be a dying Parliament, we have still sufficient political health to consider this question dispassionately and carefully, and to give it that immediate attention that its urgency requires.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And pledge the country £40 per head.

MR. TRAYLEN: Of course, I should be aided considerably in my work this evening if there were any census returns available and sufficiently indicative of the population of the goldfields to aid us to ascertain how many gallons of water are consumed daily upon the goldfields. As hon. members know, these goldfields were not even in existence when our last census was taken, and even if it had been then taken, so enormous have been the strides made since the census was taken, that it would not help us in the least degree. We have to fall back on other means to ascertain, approximately, how many persons are on the goldfields, and what is the probable average daily consumption of water; though, afterwards, I may deal with the question of the demands of the fields for battery purposes. In reading the various newspaper articles which deal with this question, I find the mining population is variously stated as from 20,000 to 40,000 persons. These may be mere guesses, I think, in the absence of any actual counting of heads. We have still some returns that are helpful to us in determining the number of persons now on the goldfields. A return was laid on the table of the House one or two days ago, which gives the area now under lease in the Coolgardie and Yilgarn goldfields districts. The area, as members may find for themselves, leased on these goldfields is 88,787 acres; and as we are all aware that to man these leases, even to hold them, it requires one person to three acres, there must be, in order to legally hold the leases, 29,662 persons on the leases themselves, to say nothing of the numbers of persons in the respective

townships on the goldfields. That treads very closely on the estimate, which may be a mere guess on the part of newspaper writers, that the population is between 20 and 40 thousand persons. There is another method we may take. The number of leases in the Yilgarn and Coolgardie fields is 6,126. Surely we may estimate each one has, on an average, four men on it. That will give us 24,500 persons, and if to this number we add 10,000 for the population of Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, Kanowna, and Southern Cross, again we are brought to about 30,000 persons as a fair estimate of the number now living on our goldfields. We can now ask what is the probable amount of consumption of water by this number of persons; and the wants of the population perhaps can best be got at by comparing things we know, and using our judgment as to whether the same figures will apply to the persons on the goldfields. During last year the consumption of water in Perth, for 12,000 persons, was, on an average, 450,000 gallons per day, or in other words 37 gallons per head. That is not an adult population as on the goldfields, but a consumption based on reckoning not only the men, but the women and children in the area served with water. If we allow that those on the goldfields, having to pay a higher price, will use a less quantity, I do not think we shall be far wrong in assuming they will require for all their purposes 30 gallons per head per day. I mean of course for drinking, cleansing, cooking, and laundry purposes, and so on. They will therefore require 900,000 gallons of water per day. Of course I know a great deal of this is consumed by horses and camels, and that an inferior quality of water, miscalled fresh, is given to these animals, but even that is costly. Seeing that a large quantity of the water is paid for at the rate of 3d. per gallon, I shall hardly be wrong if I calculate the whole 900,000 gallons at one penny per gallon, or £4 3s. 4d. per 1,000 gallons. It will scarcely be credited that the goldfields population to day—if my estimate is at all correct—pay £3,750 per day for water, or £1,250,000 in the year; and yet we are asked by the hon. member who is largely interested in the goldfields to lay aside a scheme which only contemplates spending £2,500,000.

Then, taking the probable quantity necessary for battery purposes, these 6,126 leases may surely be estimated to have, on an average, a 2-head battery for each lease. Some of them, I know, will have 50-head or more, while some will prove wild cats, and have none at all; but if I take 10,000 head for the whole 6,000 odd leases, surely that is a moderate estimate. If the 10,000 head of stampers work the whole 24 hours, they will take 16,800,000 gallons of water.

AN HON. MEMBER: Numbers of them have no batteries.

MR. TRAYLEN: I tried to follow the figures of the hon. member for Geraldton in the reports he read, and I think he made an average supply of water from the mines themselves of this odd 800,000 gallons per day, so that if battery work is to go on right merrily, and the stamps are to keep on crushing as fully and continuously as they might do, 16,000,000 gallons of water must be found every 24 hours from some source or other. I presume that, as the water is to be paid for at the rate of 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons, each mine battery will take care to use the water over and over again, so that I think I may take it that only 25 per cent. of this water will be wasted daily. In other words, we want 4,000,000 gallons to make up the waste of water used for battery purposes, and, adding this to the 900,000 gallons now taken for domestic purposes, it is found there will be a demand for 5,000,000 gallons daily. This is strong reason for the Government to come to this House with a scheme which asks us to provide for giving five million gallons daily to the fields. I noted that much was tried to be made of the prospects of local supplies. I do not know of more than one geologist who had the least good word to say for the chances of a local supply. The hon. member for Geraldton says nothing at all about the quality of the water that would be obtained locally, but it is salt. We want this scheme, and must have it, to ensure the constant success of our Eastern goldfields. The geological features of the Coolgardie fields have been described as being of such a nature that there is not the remotest probability of obtaining artesian supplies; and, if that is so, subterranean supplies are of very little use to us, as it will cost so much to raise them to

the surface and make them available; and so it is better to go to sources on which we can fairly rely, and pump from them. A few words as to the feasibility of the scheme. I have noticed a good deal of alarm expressed in newspaper leaders, and some of the newspapers think because there is no such scheme as this in the world, and because it is a scheme of the greatest magnitude of its kind ever proposed in the world, there is great fear that it is not a feasible scheme because of that. It is known surely to some hon. members that there exists a pumping system in America 300 miles long; and if it is possible to pump with advantage 300 miles, it requires no very great stretch of imagination to think it possible to pump another 50 miles. The oil line referred to in America is used for pumping the crude oil from the oil regions to the coast—that is, conveying the oil to the coast from it. The profile of their scheme, as compared with our own, makes ours appear almost level ground, by comparison. The difficulties in the scheme before us are small as compared with the great difficulties encountered in the scheme I refer to, as the oil has to be pumped over mountains, and they have the great disadvantage of having to pump daily a million and more gallons of oil through six inch pipes instead of having a 20-inch pipe for one million or a 30-inch pipe for five million gallons. If they can carry so much oil through such small pipes as that, how much more possible will it be, on our comparatively level land, to pump the quantities estimated through so much larger pipes for which provision is made? There is yet another instance of pumping as applied to the delivery of crude oil. It was found so costly to get the oil from near the Caspian Sea to any port of shipment, that the industry had to be given up until it was found possible to deliver the oil on the seaboard; and I understand they pump it over the Caucasian Mountains, and yet make it pay; and if that can be done it is possible to lift water from the Darling Ranges on to the Coolgardie fields. There were many and serious difficulties encountered by those who commenced these pumping schemes, and they were almost failures for some time, but these difficulties have been overcome by im-

provements made in the Worthington pump, and the patents acquired by that company. Indeed, the manager assured me not many days ago, that we did not need more than four pumping stations to lift the water from the height I gave him on the Darling Ranges to Coolgardie. Perhaps he was boasting more than he ought to have done about the power of his pumps, but it was, after all, a matter of the strength of the pipes. Increase the number of pumping stations, and we save money on the thickness of the pipes. A few words as to the gathering ground, and then I must sit down. I have personally visited a considerable area of the Darling Ranges, investigating the capabilities of these ranges for supplying the quantity of water demanded by the goldfields each day; and I am satisfied from my own investigations, supplemented by information I have been able to obtain, that there is an ample supply of water available there, of as pure a kind as can be obtained anywhere in this colony; and I believe, if the Government scheme is carried out, the best quality water will be taken to the goldfields, where they will have no occasion to complain of its quality, though the demand for such a quantity might be some excuse for taking up an inferior quality. I think a quantity equal to ten million gallons per day can be obtained in the gathering grounds in almost any part of the Darling Ranges, chiefly from the Helena River. If the site fixed on by the Government were lower down the stream, an enormous quantity of water can be obtained, as the rainfall at Darlington is 32 inches annually, and at Northam 16 inches. As far as I am able to say, the scheme is an excellent one, and I shall very cordially support the Government in the scheme they have introduced to this House.

MR. MORAN: For some considerable time past there has been a certain amount of surprise, I believe, in this House, and also in my own constituency, that I have not come forward more quickly with ready support for this scheme, as soon as proposed by the speech with which the Premier introduced it; but I think hon. members will realise this fact, that as I have taken rather a prominent part in the question of water supply for the goldfields in the past, and it has always

been my lot to have to accuse the Government in the past of being wanting in systematic efforts to overcome the difficulty, so it was my privilege to listen before speaking to all the arguments for and against the scheme. I cannot fail to recognise that during the time I have been in the House no such important scheme has ever come before this House; and I believe it is recognised by every member in this Assembly, that anything that will assist the goldfields will assist the colony generally, as the colony has been so much prospered by the successful developments of our gold mines. It has developed into an axiom, and there can be no doubt about its truth, that the other producing resources of the colony are not keeping pace with the progress that is being made on the goldfields, and that the mining interests have given Western Australia a prosperity which is not, at the present day, equalled by any other dependency of the British Crown. But, in supporting this scheme of water supply that has been introduced by the Government, I may mention that it is not an original one, because the Premier will remember that last session a private Bill was brought forward, or was proposed to be brought forward, by the hon. member for Northam on behalf of a leading contractor in this colony, who said he had sufficient backing in the London market to carry his proposal into effect for supplying Coolgardie with water. The promoter was Mr. John Maher, who asked me whether I would pilot a private Bill through the House; but, although he was a personal friend of mine, I refused to do so. I did not believe, and I do not now believe, that a gigantic question like this should be handed over to any corporation. I do not believe that any company should have the entire control of the destinies of the fields and of the people on the fields. I am strongly convinced that in a new country the waterworks should belong to the State. The hon. member for Geraldton says it is not necessary to take water to the fields. I know more about the Yilgarn fields than he does, and I say it is necessary. I stand here as the representative of the majority of the people on those fields. I have travelled through all parts of them, and am closely in touch with the needs and the wishes of my constitu-

ents, and I say that I can hesitate no longer in supporting this Bill. From all parts of the fields I have received telegrams asking me to support this scheme, and I shall do so. At the same time, in the early part of my address, I wish to say that in the scheme laid down by the Premier I perceive many deficiencies. The most noticeable defect in the Bill, and a subject to which the Premier, in moving the second reading of the Bill, made no reference, is as to what the fields are to do for water during the three or four years which must elapse before the scheme is carried out. I must express my regret that the Premier should have inferred that such dire consequences to the colony would follow if the Bill should not be passed. This might have been left unsaid. As far as I am concerned, I am convinced that the Government need have no fear that the water will not be used. There is plenty of room for five million gallons of water, even if none of this supply is applied to battery purposes. There is room not only for five millions of gallons per day, but if the Government were to substitute a bill for supplying ten millions of gallons per day, all this water would be wanted. The fields must have water. The dry process of gold extraction in this country has been a failure. That process was initiated under the most glowing auspices at Kalgoorlie, and at heavy expense, and it has been demonstrated to be a failure upon our fields. It was placed under the direction of one of the ablest engineers, in order to overcome the great difficulty of want of water; and it has not been a success. It cannot be denied that its failure has done a great deal to check the legitimate course of speculation—more, in fact, than any other cause. I am in receipt of weekly advices from the great mining market of the world, and I know this to be a fact. The failure of the dry process has been a severe check to investors at home. The result is that, in order to extract the gold, we must return to the old system—that is the one requiring a plentiful supply of water. I need not remind hon. members who have been in this House for the last three years of the way I have worked in order to obtain water for the fields. It has been one long continued system of agitation, which has almost wearied those who have had to

listen to it, as I have spoken so often on the water question that I was told, on one occasion, by an hon. member, that he hoped I would be drowned in the water on the fields some day. So consistent has been my advocacy, that the Minister of Lands did me the honour to say I represented men who expected the Government to follow them and feed them with a spoon; and when I asked for £100,000 and the creation of a distinct water department, the Government laughed at me. But now the Premier is not only prepared to feed the people of the fields with a spoon, but with a 30-inch pipe. But I am very ready to forget the past, and it is my duty to acknowledge that the best thanks of the goldfields are due to the Government for the scheme which they have brought forward, after due consideration, to do justice to the population of Coolgardie—justice which has been denied them in the past. I now come to that part of the hon. member for Geraldton's speech in which he says it is not right or righteous—[Mr. SIMPSON: Oh! I never said anything about "righteous"]—for a dying Parliament to carry out a scheme of this kind. Now I cannot look at this argument in this light. If the Government intend this as a political move; if it is to be a huge plank in their platform in going to the country, then they are going to work in a way that men of brains never would dream of; for, if the Bill is carried, the people of the fields can say, "We are going to have our water scheme, and we shall not have to thank you for it." If the Premier wished to make a cry of this, he would propose the scheme, and then his only desire would be that it (the Bill) might be defeated, in order that the scheme might strengthen his hands at a general election, so that he might be able to say, "If you put us in power, we shall be able to supply the fields with water." So far as the argument about a political move is concerned, I fail altogether to see what advantage it would be to the Government in the case of an appeal to the country; and, whether it is so or not, if my constituents are to get five million gallons of water per day, then I will give them all the help I can in their political dodge. But I have to admit that the Premier's scheme was particularly "thin," when it arrived at the top of Mt. Burges.

I do not think the Premier recognises the great difficulties, the many features that remain, after the water has been carried to Mt. Burges. The Premier only provides a hundred miles of reticulation pipes, which will only serve Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, and which will not carry the water to Menzies. The other night I asked the Government whether they intended to pursue a vigorous policy of local water supply as well as their main scheme, and the Premier answered "Yes." If that answer had been "no," I should have opposed this scheme with all the strength I am capable of; because, if we are to sit down for four years before the mines are able to produce a return, every investor will stop putting a penny into this country until those four years are up. I have ample evidence I can submit to honourable members, that if the five million gallons of water per day, which the Government proposes to provide, are carried to the fields, we shall require five millions for domestic purposes. The hon. member for Geraldton broke down when he said the water would only be required for domestic purposes; for, even if that were true, we should require five millions of gallons per day for a domestic supply, and we know it is absolutely impossible to get that quantity of fresh water from local sources. We also know that condensation of water cannot be carried out on a wholesale scale, nor can water be condensed at anything like the same cost that would be charged by the Government for the water taken from the coastal rivers. It takes a ton of wood to condense a ton of water, and wood is very dear, so that the expenses of condensation would be gigantic. Although I am fairly convinced there are thousands of millions of gallons of water under the surface at Coolgardie, we could not raise this supply to the surface as cheaply as, if the calculations are correct, it can be lifted from the Darling Ranges; and, if for no other reason, I am prepared to support the proposals of the Government. I asked the Premier the other evening whether the Government would take advantage of the fact that, at present, many thousand millions of gallons of water are lying in the lakes near the centres of population, in the Eastern goldfields, and if they would consider the advisability of applying the piping for

service in reticulation from the proposed Mt. Burges reservoir to be used for the purpose of conveying this water in the meantime to the adjacent mining centres. I did so, after careful consideration, and having sent wires to the various parts of the fields, in support of my own experience, that these immense stores of water, which it would take the Government ten years to convey to the fields from any other source, were available. In reply, the Premier said that the Government was not aware that many thousands of millions of gallons of water were lying in the lakes or marshes in question.

THE PREMIER: What part in Coolgardie?

MR. MORAN: I will tell you. Coolgardie is not the only place on the goldfields.

THE PREMIER: You said Coolgardie.

MR. MORAN: I said the Eastern goldfields. I said the Eastern goldfields when I put my question to the Premier. If the Premier will jog his memory, he will remember I said there were thousands of millions of gallons of water lying in the lakes near the centres of population in the Eastern goldfields, owing to the recent rains, fresh enough to use for stock, and excellent water for battery purposes. What I asked the Government was whether, supposing this Bill should be passed, they would be willing to assimilate minor schemes with the Mount Burges scheme, in order to give the mining districts the benefits of this water as soon as possible; and the Premier, from his place in this House, treated the matter lightly. I say there are millions of gallons of water in one lake alone. I have it on the authority of Mr. Wilson, of the "Royal Mint" and "Iron King" mine, who said, in a telegram to me, under date of the 29th July: "I estimate that, in round numbers, there are twenty-five thousand million gallons of water, but cannot state definitely, as I have had no opportunity of obtaining the accurate quantity." That water alone is not seven or eight miles from Broad Arrow, in the heart of a most populous centre of the Eastern goldfields.

MR. CLARKSON: It won't last two months.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member for Toodyay says it won't last two months, but I am only interested in proving that the Premier was wrong in principle when

he admitted that the Water Department had not informed him, whilst bringing forward a scheme to cost no less than two and a half millions of money, that this water did already exist on the fields—as much water as could be carried there from the coast in ten years. Now, that is the evidence of one man, Mr. Wilson. I will read what others have to say, in telegrams which have been sent to me voluntarily, to prove that the Premier's answer showed that he was not acquainted with the facts. I took the trouble to hear from Mr. Leslie Norman, who is representing the "Scottish Westralia Company"—a company which is composed of level-headed Scotch shareholders—who give Mr. Norman three times the salary received by the Engineer-in-Chief of this colony, and who are not likely to employ a man who is not worth his money. Mr. Norman says:—"There are miles of water between Broad Arrow and Black Flag; in many places it is impossible to pass over. There are six or seven miles of water in places, and a couple of miles across. The country is full of water." [THE PREMIER: How deep is it?] I am coming to that directly. The deepest part of Broad Arrow Lake is ten feet. That part I have seen myself. [THE PREMIER: Oh, oh.] The Premier is at liberty to call me—what he likes. I think there are at the present time from three to ten feet of water in the lake, and that the average depth is about five or six feet. Now, I must say that, in bringing this matter forward in connection with the Premier's water scheme, the Government should look at the question in an impartial manner. I stand here to-night to represent only the interests of the country. I have no other object in view. I am not the representative of any private company. No company has ever approached me on the subject. I am totally unbiassed, and I have to remember that, if I say anything that is not in accordance with fact, the misstatement will be reported, and will not be forgotten when I have to go back to my constituents at the proper time. I submit to the House that while there is such a large quantity of water existing on the surface of the lakes as that which I have drawn attention to, this shows that the rainfall is sufficient to make it worth while to conserve the water, and that there must be

a good supply of underground water beneath the lakes. I will read a telegram which I have received from the editor of the *Coolgardie Miner*, who says:—"It is impossible to estimate accurately the quantity of water in the lakes. All the lakes in the Kanowna district are full; Red Lake, New Gowlar, is eight miles long and five miles wide. The average depth is eight feet. Good stock water. Lake Yiendart, Gooda, near Bulong, is covered for a distance of ten miles and a width of 13 miles. To the north 20 miles and east of Goongarrie there are ten square miles of water; the average depth in both places is three feet. There are many other lakes further east in the same condition. Your estimate of thousands of millions of gallons is perfectly correct. The water is mostly fresh, although it is rapidly becoming salt owing to evaporation and absorption."

THE PREMIER: Goongarrie is not three feet deep. It is more like three inches.

MR. MORAN: I am giving you the names of these gentlemen who have sent me these telegrams, and I hope the Premier will have due patience in hearing me read them, so that he may, in dealing with this question, as far as possible see that no misconception shall arise as to the water supply available on the fields. From the same authority I have got a wire authorising me to state that Mr. Vogan, who wrote a series of clever articles for the *Coolgardie Miner*, tasted the water at the Broad Arrow lake and found it fresh, but slightly mineralised. The telegram adds:—"The water covers hundreds of acres," and the editor says: "I can give the same testimony re Black Flag lakes, substituting miles for acres." I have another message from Mr. George R. Bell, manager of a mine within twenty miles of Coolgardie, who telegraphs from Smithfield: "There are hundreds of millions of gallons of fresh water here. I send a sample of it by post." The sample has come; it has never been opened. If the Government would like to taste it, I would be glad to place it at their disposal.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: We don't want to die.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Oh, you will never die.

MR. GEORGE: It will take a good deal more than a drop of water to kill you.

MR. MORAN: Now, what I want to point out is, that there is plenty of water on the fields, but I believe that in a dry summer every drop of it will evaporate. I would therefore ask the Government whether they could not take into consideration the question whether this water, or some of it, could not be conserved by cutting canals to drain the lakes into the deeper places? If this were done, the mines could erect batteries at the lake side, and crush in the wet season the ore that was taken out during the dry months of the year. I may say this plan has been recommended by Mr. Maryanski, the general inspecting engineer of the "Venture" Syndicate, a gentleman who has had very large experience in mining in America. This American expert says that in order to overcome the water difficulty, it will be necessary to utilise the water that is available in the winter in the catchment areas for keeping batteries erected in their vicinity in working order in the summer. During the next four years the Coolgardie goldfields will be marred or made. People at home are not going to wait four years until the Darling Ranges water is taken to Mount Burges, for a return upon the money they have put into the mines of Western Australia. If the Premier says there is no other hope of the mines being kept going than the water scheme of the Government, I say that I know more about the Coolgardie fields than the Premier, and I say that more work than is now done can be done with the local supply of water. Many other schemes than that initiated by the Government can be carried out. The Government and the Engineer-in-Chief are not the only men of brains in the country. I say the Engineer-in-Chief is no mining expert, or even no water expert, and that he knows next to nothing about dry country. There is no one in this House who has a greater respect for the Engineer-in-Chief than I have, but I say he has not been used to a country where there is a scarcity of water. He has gained his experience in countries where the only difficulty is to get rid of the water on the surface. The estimates of the water works are based on the assumption that the scheme will cost two and a half millions of money,

and that five millions of gallons of water will be sold daily; but does the Premier think that all the batteries will run for full time all the year round, and that there will be no stoppages for development work, breakdowns, or repairs? Does the Premier suppose that at the end of four years — [THE PREMIER: I said three years] — well, say three years, when the scheme is completed, that all that will have to be done will be to turn a button in order to keep hundreds of batteries going as soon as the water gets to the fields? When the water has been conveyed to Mount Burges, there are many other very important features of the scheme to be accomplished in order to supply 5,000,000 of gallons of water daily. Does the Premier think what will be done with the water that the mines will not require to use while they are doing development work? Where will that water be disposed of?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Sell it to somebody else.

MR. MORAN: I think that, in order to make the estimates work out in practice, 25 per cent. should be allowed for stoppages and breakages. As I said before, I do not consider that 5,000,000 of gallons of water per day will be sufficient to supply the fields. The Premier, on his own showing, says that 800,000 gallons of the water will be required for railway purposes, in round numbers 1,000,000 gallons; then another 1,000,000 gallons will go to the domestic supply of Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie; another 1,000,000 will be wanted by Newcastle, York, Northam, and probably Beverley; leaving only 2,000,000 for battery purposes. Where are Menzies, Kanowna, Broad Arrow, Black Flag, Mount Monger, L.O.U., Kurnalpi, Ninety-Mile, Siberia, Londonderry, and the General Gordon group of mines to come in? I am supporting this scheme, and I am only trying to give it fair criticism.

THE PREMIER: What do you propose to do?

MR. MORAN: I want to know what you propose to do for all the districts I have named. When I am in your position I shall be prepared to do something for them. I think it is for the Government of this country to do this work; and I have always been willing to give them every assistance I can, and I am prepared

to propound a scheme if necessary. As the Premier has challenged me on this point, I may say that once I was ruled out of order when I took action in regard to the water difficulty. But while I am supporting this scheme of the Government, I want to show how it can be improved upon, and I do not think these questions should be burked. While the Bill is described as providing for the supply of adequate and permanent water to the Coolgardie goldfields, it is my duty to point out that the plan will only serve two centres, namely Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, and that none of the water will be left for other places which will probably become as large as Kalgoorlie. I say, when you consider the scheme, after the water has arrived at the goldfields there can be only one conclusion, and that is that the water will not only be sold, but certainly all you can lay on will be sold, and four times as much water as is proposed in this scheme will be required for supplying all the wants of those fields—indeed, four such schemes could very well be carried out, and every drop of water you could convey to the fields would be utilised. I am not putting the question at all unfairly, for I have studied it almost night and day ever since the Government propounded it; firstly, because I am supposed to put the demands of my constituents before this House; and, secondly, because I have some money invested on the fields myself, and that is an important consideration to me; but I want the Government to tell us what is going to be done when they get the water to Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. I want them to state what is going to be done for Menzies, for the 90-Mile, for Siberia, and for all the large centres growing up northward of Menzies and the 90-Mile? What is going to be done for the Londonderry people? What for Kanowna? What for Kurnalpi? What for the Black Flag, and what for the General Gordon group of mines? Each of these is certainly as important to the British investor as Coolgardie is, and there is likely to be as much money invested in these centres as in Coolgardie or Kalgoorlie at the present time. I say that all we can expect from this scheme is that it will supply two of our large goldfield towns; but, if it will do no more than that, is it any reason why, if we cannot get a whole

loaf, we should refuse to take half? Certainly not. If it is going to be the great success the Premier tells us it is, why not come forward with a ten million gallon scheme at once, instead of the five million gallon scheme now proposed? I have shown the Premier that with the present scheme he can only hope to supply two large towns on the fields; and why not enlarge the scheme so as to supply the wants of an increasing and widespread population? As far as is at present shown, the average return from battery stone crushed in Western Australia is larger than the average obtained in any other part of the world. I know of only one other great goldfield in the world that is returning an average of over an ounce to the ton—that is Charters Towers, in Queensland. Ballarat is a little under the ounce, on the average. Our return from this colony is approximately not only over the ounce, but more nearly two ounces to the ton. The only inference we can draw from these facts is that we have the richest mines in the world, and though it will cost more to extract the ore in this colony than in some other places, yet the stone being so much richer, the operation will pay handsomely. Comparing these mines with the mines in South Africa, I say that any mine which cannot pay for good white labour, and give the working population a fair day's wage, has got to go under. We are not going to import black labour to do it—there is no fear of that. Comparing our mines with those of South Africa, I say that if the South African mines will pay at half an ounce to the ton, then 15 dwts. will pay in Western Australia under a large scheme of water supply. I said at the commencement that I did not think a great deal of this scheme when Mr. John Maher propounded it. I am not prepared to say now whether or not I think a great deal of it on its intrinsic merits, but I tell you what I will say: that if the Government can successfully prove—as no doubt they think they have done, by reference to eminent engineers—that they can deliver on the Coolgardie goldfields five million gallons of water per day, at a cost of 3s. 6d. per 1,000 gallons, it will confer a boon on the goldfields of this colony, and will create a boom in the mining market. That is the part which touches the hon.

member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest)—it is the boom, not the boon, that he is anxious about. There will be a boom in the mining market which will carry us over that which, perhaps, some may regard as a “slump” in the London market; and the result will be that, if water can be got at that price on the fields for battery purposes, there will be no part of Australia where such activity in mining will be seen as on these goldfields. We know the life of this colony depends, practically, on these goldfields; and if we can get the water delivered at that price, or even at 5s. per 1,000 gallons, the Government will confer on the goldfields that which will atone for their past negligences. In voicing the opinions of my own constituents, I say that whilst there are many engineers on the fields to-day who say this work cannot be done for the money, yet if the Government can and will carry out this scheme, it will kill for ever all mistrust as to their not being willing to give to the goldfields a fair share of the revenue which the colony receives from these fields. No one who has listened to the Premier's explanation of the scheme will doubt that he believed he was doing what he considered to be the right thing in bringing it forward, and it cannot be said he was one to lag behind. We find now that this scheme is opposed mainly by gentlemen who are always accusing the Government of lavish expenditure, and wishing to put the break on; but I say that, whatever may be the outcome of this scheme, it can never be laid at the door of the Government that it was proposed as a political dodge, because the credit of passing it will belong to Parliament as a whole, and it will not lend to the Government any prestige in the future. As I said at the commencement, the success of the colony lies in the hope of the continued prosperity of the goldfields, and the belief that anything we can do will not be too much for the goose that lays the golden eggs. I have pointed out the weakness of this scheme; I have shown that for four years, while it is under construction, we must not lie idle, and a more vigorous water policy must be carried on; that at Hannan's Lake 100,000,000 gallons of water has been lying there, fresh, at various periods during the past three years; that there are large

lakes all over the fields, some of them containing immense bodies of water, and it ought not to be impossible to make some use of them; and, seeing that the Government are willing to carry out this water supply scheme, I think there should be no opposition whatever by the Government to other schemes proposed by individuals or companies, such as the scheme proposed by Mr. Wilson. So far from putting any hindrance in his way, it should be the duty of the Government to give him a handsome bonus after his work is completed. It would, indeed, be a handsome act if the Government were to offer a bonus to every man who would undertake the putting down of a bore and getting a supply—say 50,000 gallons per day. I have often proposed in this House that the Government should offer a large bonus for bringing to the surface some hundreds of thousands of gallons per day of salt water; and I may mention that I was present at the opening of the Hampton Plains bore, and saw what was very like an artesian supply, for I saw the water rushing up the bore 10 feet above the earth. The other day the "Golden Bar" mine struck 40,000 gallons of water per diem, and they have so much to spare that they are prepared to sell it. At "Cosgrove's" mine 30,000 gallons of water per day have been struck. All the centres in outlying districts away from the lakes will be wanting water next summer, and I hope the Government will not only carry out the present scheme of water supply, but will give to the fields a plentiful supply from any source where practicable. In carrying out a scheme of such magnitude as this, I hope the Premier will not lose sight of the fact that during the coming summer he will hear cries from all parts of the fields that salt water is not obtainable; therefore I hope he will organise a supplementary scheme that will send men to all parts of the fields, and not only enable them to live there with a sufficient supply of good water, but also that women and children will be able to live amongst them. If that can be done, the population residing on those fields will be in such numbers that they will require all this water for domestic use, and those people will bless the Premier and the Government for having enabled them to live there in something like comfort and cleanliness. I hope the

amendment of the hon. member for Geraldton will not be carried, for I see no good that it can serve. If we are to bring the water to those fields, the sooner we get to work and order the pipes to be made, the better. I consider, still, that this question ought to go to a Select Committee, because it is a very important thing that we should learn from the Engineer-in-Chief what are the centres he proposes to serve. We do not know whether he is going to serve Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie only, or whether he will supply other places, and what those places are to be. There has been a lot of useless verbiage in the address of the Premier, and especially in that part in which he talked about providing water in the desert for irrigation and cultivation purposes. If he means to use any considerable portion of this water for irrigating the desert, the soil will suck up more water than he can supply out of this scheme, after supplying other requirements; and, as I have said, if you allow one million gallons a day for domestic purposes, one million for railway requirements, another million for supplying such towns as Newcastle, Northam, York, and Southern Cross, one million for Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, and one million for irrigating and turning the wilderness into flourishing oases, then where is the quantity that is going to run these batteries afterwards? To talk about irrigating that country, while the mines are wanting water, is ridiculous nonsense. That part of the scheme might well have been left out. Not only will the five million gallons per day be required when it gets on the fields, but five times five millions will be wanted. I shall never rest till I find out from the Premier and the Government what they propose to do during the four years which it will take to complete this great scheme. I want to find out what they propose for those centres lying east of Kalgoorlie and north of Mount Burges. If I can get a satisfactory answer from the Government, I shall only be too pleased to tell the people on the goldfields that they cannot do better than return to power the Government that has, even so late, come forward to do so much for them.

MR. GEORGE: I have been somewhat puzzled at the speech which has just been delivered by the hon. member

for Yilgarn. I really do not know on which side he is standing. I only know he is going to support the Government in regard to their scheme. But, at any rate he has proved, to my mind, that there is not much reliance to be placed on what are called the local water supplies for the Eastern goldfields, when he tells us one dry summer—and we have it on the authority of a Minister, one-half of a dry summer—will dry up all these lakes. However, what I have to complain of in regard to the conduct of the Government in this matter is that the Premier promised us the fullest information. I claim that he has not given us the fullest information. He has given us a set of figures, and the report of the Engineer-in-Chief, which contains just as much as the department is compelled to disclose, but which does not contain the information that we, who have to decide an important question, have a right to ask for. This basis of estimate which is given us by the Engineer-in-Chief looks very pretty on paper, but to my mind it is far from being conclusive as to its accuracy in more than one particular, and I shall ask the House to bear with me a little while I state the points on which further information is required. The Premier, if he wished us to believe he was sincere in his promise that the fullest information should be given to the House, might have placed the plans on the table to show us what sort of reservoir it was proposed to construct on the Darling Ranges, because I find, in item 16 of the principal report of the Engineer-in-Chief, that the amount put down for reservoirs is £300,000, and yet, in another page of the report, I find it is proposed to construct a concrete wall which will impound 3,330 million gallons of water and back it up for a space of seven miles. Taking the length on top, as stated, at 650 feet, and the depth at 100 feet, the very cost of making that concrete wall, and carrying down the foundations to the necessary depth for withstanding the thrust of that wall, will be nearly as much as is set down for the whole work. It is known to those who have watched the construction of the Perth waterworks reservoir, in the Canning Hills, that the foundation had to be carried down many feet more than the engineers of that work anticipated. The material of which the

Darling Ranges is composed is a very treacherous one.

MR. A. FORREST: How much has it cost them?

MR. GEORGE: That does not affect this question. It is by no means certain, until the thing has been gone into fully, that anything like an ordinary estimate for foundation work will be found to be reliable in this case. In stating my objections to this estimate, I do not wish to detract from the ability of the Engineer-in-Chief, who is so highly respected in this House, and I will say that not only do I respect him for his ability as much as other hon. members do, but my respect is more than that of the other 32 members put together. At the same time, I claim to differ from the Engineer-in-Chief on some points in this scheme. There is another point on which the Premier should have enlightened this House. He should have given us some idea as to what sort of pipes they are going to lay. There are no details given us as to how the pipes are to be conveyed to the place where they are to be laid. We know they are to be carried by rail, but has it ever occurred to the Premier or the Government that to lay 330 miles of pipes in the time stated in this report will need a train service in itself of something like eight trains per day? The Premier talked about sufficient pipes to keep the work going; but it will take some considerable time before these pipes can be started to be made, and, if made in this country, probably some months must elapse. I should say myself, at the lowest estimate, it will take six months before a single pipe can be made. We can easily see that, with only 300 working days in the year, it is reasonable to conclude that the carriage of these pipes alone will take nearly the whole time set down in the scheme for carrying out the work. When we take 8 trains per day, and that is the lowest number which will be required, in my opinion at any rate, to carry these pipes on to the site, the question arises whether the present single line to Coolgardie could stand the extra traffic. I say there must be 8 trains up and 8 trains down per day, making 16 trains in all, put on to this service, on a line which is, even now, taxed to its utmost. I believe I am speaking correctly, but if I am wrong

perhaps the Minister of Railways will correct me, when I say that to place 2 extra trains on the Coolgardie line at the present time, 2 up and 2 down, would cause the present service to be congested. Besides that, there is this difficulty to be faced. We know very well that in the summer months in this colony there is a great difficulty in obtaining water to enable the engines to run with anything like speed along that weary stretch between Northam and Southern Cross and on to Coolgardie; therefore just picture to yourselves what the result would be as regards that puny water supply, if 8 more trains each way per day were placed on the line. Ninety thousand tons is the weight given for these pipes, but the conveyance of pipes is a question of bulk, and whether these pipes are to be made in the colony or out of it, they will have to be taken up the line. We have to consider what the trucks will carry, not in weight but in bulk; and I believe my estimate is quite correct when I state that it will take 8 trains per day to give the necessary supply of pipes. Well, if it will take 8 trains a day each way—and in making these remarks I may say that I shall support this scheme if even the amount be made larger—that will mean 8 trains up and 8 trains down and 8 trains loading—altogether 24 trains with 24 locomotives. Then we must suppose that the engines will require repairing, and, allowing that six are usually in the repairing sheds, we may estimate that 30 locomotives will be required, and between 400 and 500 specially designed trucks will have to be constructed to carry the pipes. Now, if I am right as to the quantity of trains, if my argument is right, if my statement is correct that the present line cannot take comfortably more than two up and two down trains beyond the present service, the Government will have to consider what they are going to do with these other trains. So far as I can see, there is only one course, and that is a course which the country will have to follow in any circumstances before many years are over, and that is to double the line. In making these remarks my intention is not to condemn the water scheme, as it will be required for the traffic, but to add something to the consideration of the scheme as regards the point whether it can be carried out in

the time mentioned. With regard to the reservoir, in my opinion £300,000 will not be sufficient to make a retaining wall for the main reservoir, let alone reservoirs at 9 or 10 pumping stations along the line. These reservoirs will have to be lined with concrete rubble. Then there is the reservoir on the top of Mt. Burges, which would have a capacity of at least 15,000,000 gallons. I consider that this £300,000 is not sufficient to do all that work, and to do it thoroughly. I say, therefore, let the Government seek all the advice they can from men accepted as authorities, and who do know something about this matter, and then let the Government come to the House and ask for the money, and they won't ask in vain. The hon. member for Geraldton mentioned in his speech that the scheme is really to make up for the want of foresight in the designing of our railways. In other words, he asks this House to believe that in the making of plans and estimates the officers of the Government had not sufficient foresight to provide the necessary water supply on the Yilgarn line for the use of the engines. I quite believe it. I do not think they had that foresight. I know of a case in which a contract had to be commenced within 60 miles of Perth, and the work had to be done within a certain time, and the only way for conveying the material was to carry it. I had to make a claim against the Government under that contract, and I got a considerable amount for the error made in the Works Department. I only instance that to show that we have not even in our Department of Railways expert railway engineers. They come from nearly all parts of the world, and with good reputations, and yet they make these blunders. Is it then to be expected, if our railway engineers are so lacking, that we have engineers competent to devise and estimate for a gigantic scheme like this water supply scheme? That is a point which should weigh with the Government and with this House, when considering the point as to whether they have before them sufficient evidence to prove that this scheme is all that it is represented to be. There has been a good deal said about private enterprise. I have no fear of private enterprise, and should not have any fear of private enterprise even

if in the course of time—I am hardly presumptuous enough to suppose it—I were to hold a seat on the Ministerial benches. The fact of a member being placed on the Treasury benches should be a proof that he is up to date, that he is acute, and able to deal with anybody over any public matter; and with the officers they have to assist them, I fail to see why Ministers should be so much afraid of private enterprise. The Attorney General could draw up a contract that no man in the country could get through. I do know this, that the Government men cannot carry out work as cheaply, or as well, or as quickly as private enterprise. [THE PREMIER: They do it as well.] They cannot do work as well as private enterprise, because you never find a public officer who is good at practical work. You can find plenty of people who can pick holes in your speeches, but there are not many who could get up and deliver those speeches. In the same way the Government engineers are critics rather than practical men, for they have been accustomed all their lives to examining and criticising other people's work, and they have not had the training necessary for carrying out practical work themselves. I think there is, perhaps, hardly any gentleman in this House who knows so much about contractors as I do, and I can say that no contractor in the whole of the colonies would employ a Government engineer as an engineer for construction. You cannot find me a single instance of this having been done. I should like to see the Premier change that little cry of his about private enterprise. Your Government engineers did not find the gold.

THE PREMIER: I say nothing against private enterprise.

MR. GEORGE: You are always "on" about it. [THE PREMIER: I won't do it again.] The only thing you can do is to put a tax on private enterprise, and I think you are game enough for that. There is another question with regard to this matter that I wish to refer to. According to the report, we are to have eight or nine pumping stations, which will mean a distance of about 30 miles between the stations? The pipe line will go alongside the railway, the pipes being embedded in the earth for the purpose of keeping the water cool, and also for

the purpose of protecting them from damage. I should like to know whether it has occurred to the engineers to ask what would happen in the case of the failure of a pipe, and it must be remembered that it is possible for a steel pipe to burst. Let me ask the Premier, who is a practical man, what would be the effect if a 30-inch pipe, with a pressure of something like 30 miles upon it, were to burst.

AN HON. MEMBER: The water would come out.

MR. GEORGE: Yes, the water would come out. I did not expect that whisky would come out, or even manna in the wilderness. There are serious dangers attendant upon the bursting of a pipe like this. I venture to say that if a pipe did burst, the members of the Government would be up there within 24 hours, and wondering how they were going to repair the damage. There is no doubt that the bursting of a steel pipe would be certain to destroy the railway for a considerable distance. I have seen pipes burst in the old country, pipes with a great pressure of water in them, and I have seen half a mile of country devastated in consequence. I have seen pipes burst in this colony with less pressure than you propose to place on these pipes, and I have had to repair the damage, and I can assure you, from my experience, that if the pipes do burst you will have a tremendous amount of damage done to your railway line. But that is not the greatest thing that troubles me: the greatest thing is that when once you have got the water to Coolgardie—there is nothing surer than that you will get it there—when you have got it there and have educated the people to rely upon that water supply, and taught them how to use it in the preservation of health and the carrying out of work, it would be a serious calamity if, through the bursting of a pipe, the supply were stopped for even one or two days.

THE PREMIER: What do you propose?

MR. GEORGE: The Premier is very ready to say, "What do you propose?" and, in the most respectful manner, I would suggest that if you wish to make this scheme a success you must have a second pipe. If a second pipe were laid down, in case of damage to the other pipe, the supply could be maintained. It

may be said that if you lay down the second pipe alongside the other, both will go in the case of a burst. That is good sense, but it is worth while chancing the laying of the second pipe. I do not think that the advice I have given to the Government will get them quite over the difficulty that I have mentioned. The hon. member for Geraldton made some remarks about the amount of money to be spent in the country. The answer to that is that the bulk of the money would be spent in the country, for though the engines will be imported, the pipes no doubt will be made in this country, although they may not be made by the hon. member for the Murray, as insinuated by the hon. member for Toodyay. The spending of the bulk of the money in the country will confer two benefits—it will give employment to a large number of people, and it will enable the water to be carried to wherever it is wanted. I do not think there is anything more I need say. I have endeavoured to point out in a calm manner to the Government what I think are the essential points in the scheme. If these points receive consideration, I shall be very proud; and if they do not, I am quite sure that before many years have passed it will be found that, at any rate, there was some amount of truth and some amount of justice in what I have stated.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I desire to say a few words in reply to certain objections that have been made to this scheme. So far as we have got during this evening's debate, there is but one gentleman in the House who has at all hostilely criticised the proposals of the Government that are involved in this Bill—that is the hon. member for Geraldton. We are pleased to find that this Bill seems to be increasing its supporters every day, and to find that the hon. member who represents the goldfields at Coolgardie is with the Government in the support of this measure; and we are also pleased to know that the hon. member who has last spoken also intends to give his support to the scheme. Now I would like to deal in the first place with what fell from the hon. member for Geraldton by way of hostile criticism of the proposal now before the House. He has moved an amendment that this Bill and the scheme embodied in it are pre-

ature. The hon. gentleman, it struck me, failed to make out anything like a case against the Bill, as he seemed to have limited his remarks to one point, or I should say rightly, perhaps, to two points: that the scheme itself is premature, and secondly that a moribund Parliament should not deal with it. What does he say in support of these two proposals? First he says we want an independent opinion. It seems that the hon. member is not in search of an independent opinion on the practicability of this scheme, or with regard to the large benefits that must accrue from it, as he uses these words: "I have no doubt as to the practicability of it." Does he then want an independent opinion to assure him of the necessity of it? It must be that he wants an independent opinion as to the necessity for this scheme. As to the practicability or advisability of importing further independent opinion, I might mention that the Government, and I think the House generally, have the greatest possible confidence in the present Engineer-in-Chief and in those able and experienced officers who are serving under him in his several departments. I have been long enough in this House to have seen the action taken, as suggested by the remarks of the hon. member for Geraldton on every occasion when expert opinion was desired outside this colony and the usual advisers of the Government, in regard to the Fremantle harbour works. We know they were postponed year after year on the plea and pretence—largely on the pretence—of obtaining further professional advice from the old country and from the other colonies. I suppose we have, in connection with these Fremantle harbour works, had the opinion of half a dozen people, who reported on it before Sir John Coode's opinion was taken. What became of that opinion? We know that it was said Sir John must come here and see for himself, and when he came and saw for himself his opinion was not taken. The very man beyond whom we should go, according to the hon. member for Geraldton, was the man whose scheme this House took up, and has gone on with till the present day, against the opinion of professional men from the old country and elsewhere. This is a simple scheme, and

you can take the paragraph in the Engineer-in-Chief's report where he says, "It is an easy matter to raise five million gallons of water 300 feet." No one will say that is a difficult matter. Then where is the difficulty in repeating that eight times? That is the scheme, and there is nothing impracticable about it, as the hon. member for Geraldton admits; and we would lose time we can't afford by sending for other advice, which the history of the past tells us we would not follow. I suppose the hon. member for Geraldton attempted to put before us—unfortunately for him—some of this expert opinion he would desire us to have, and what is it? The hon. member had the assurance to quote the evidence and observations of men who are promoting companies. I think every one of those reports the hon. member read were written for the purpose of promoting companies. Is that the expert opinion we want? I have not a word to say about the *bona fides* and truthfulness of those gentlemen, but it is notorious—and public opinion is not generally astray—that when you write a prospectus and report on a good mine, you throw in a little colour. I do not know that anyone will find fault with me for saying that. So much is that so that the expert reporter has become a by-word, and we speak of him as of the profession to which I belong, except that we paint him blacker. I was therefore glad to hear the hon. member for Yilgarn express the opinion that Mr. O'Connor was no expert. I believe he intended to convey the idea that he therefore believed in his reports and everything he said. If these are the opinions we are to seek, I say it will simply consume time for no purpose whatever. The hon. member for Geraldton asks what necessity is there for this scheme, and he attempted to show that there was plenty of water on these fields. Of course he forgot to add it was all salt water he was talking about; but does not one fact appear plain from the report lately made by these gentlemen to shareholders in London? Does it not appear plain that they all speak of the water supply as the great difficulty? You don't find men addressing shareholders in London speaking of the supply of timber or any other necessity, but always of the water difficulty; and why should everyone addressing

shareholders in London lay such stress on the water question? They have not found water yet, but, of course, the experts expect to find it. I believe salt water generally is found at a certain depth, and therefore the expert is saying but little when he says he expects to find water on a property. The hon. member asks what necessity is there for this scheme, a necessity, he says, made by the Premier himself. As to the dirt and disease, he says it is not attributable to the absence of water at all. Admittedly, there is no fresh water whatever, except that which is condensed; but does the hon. member really mean to tell the House that the population of 30,000 people on these fields do not suffer great disadvantages from the fact that there is no fresh water obtainable on the surface of the ground at Coolgardie? Does he mean to say that none of the disease is attributable to the want of cleanliness? I thought cleanliness was next to godliness, but the hon. member says any man may wallow in filth from one year to another.

MR. SIMPSON: I don't remember saying that.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): The Premier was correct in saying that a great deal of the disease was attributable to the absence of the water, which we ask the House to give us the means of supplying. It stands to reason—and this point bears on the question of conserving water in reservoirs—that a great portion of the fever germs, we are told, which are floating in districts where fever is so prevalent, settle on the surface of any large areas of water that may be about. The hon. member for Geraldton says you might as well give the people bread and meat. I hope we always will, and we always do give it to poor people who can't obtain bread and meat, and now we submit a scheme for supplying water to poor people who cannot obtain it themselves. The hon. member says, "Why don't you say this is a Bill for supplying water for the railways?" The hon. member says there will be hundreds of locomotives up there, but they won't be running just for the fun of the thing, as they will be carrying a large goods and passenger traffic there. The hon. member does not say that this scheme is not wanted, as I find he has moved that it is

merely premature. If that means anything, it means the scheme is wanted, but that it should not be proceeded with at the present time. The hon. member in his speech condemns the scheme right out, but winds up by asking the House not to go to the length of his remarks, but to say that the proposal at the present time is premature. Though he admits that thousands go there year by year, yet it is premature to commence this scheme, which will take at least three years to complete and possibly longer. I say we cannot waste a day, as, if it is adopted by Parliament, we are anxious to have the work put in hand at once, as the matter brooks no delay. If it cannot be done in three years, then the sooner we begin the better. That this is a moribund Parliament is fair argument, and the point occurred to the Government very early, when considering this proposal to put before Parliament. It occurred to the Government that as we were introducing a Re-distribution of Seats Bill, we should not pledge the country to this expenditure on the eve of the elections. Members will all admit this scheme stands in a different position from other schemes, as the constituencies affected by this Re-distribution of Seats Bill will be very largely benefited by the Bill now before this House, and it would be very lame argument indeed, that though we were proposing something to benefit this new constituency, we should not proceed with it, but wait until this new constituency, by its members, was represented in the House. I say it is an exceptional case, and we should not be doing our duty to the goldfields if we hesitated to ask Parliament to help us to hurry on this work as early as possible, merely on the ground that we should wait till their representatives come here to give us their support. We feel confident that every member who will be elected for the goldfields constituencies next year will most readily support this measure; and, therefore, Ministers came to the conclusion that, in this case, there was a good exception to the general rule, which would make Ministers hesitate before asking for a vote of two and a half millions on the eve of a Re-distribution of Seats Bill. Therefore, I say there is no force in the argument of the hon. member for Gerald-

ton, when he says this is a moribund Parliament. I return for a moment to the argument of the hon. member for Geraldton, who asks what is the necessity for this Bill. Many of us have been here since the finding of the goldfields at Southern Cross and beyond to Coolgardie, and if there has been one subject that has pressed the House and the Government almost daily, it is this want of water. The hon. member who represents the goldfields constituency in that direction, knows he has felt it his duty to reiterate in this House the great and urgent want on the goldfields for fresh water. The hon. member for Geraldton, who now says it is not wanted, knows that from the start of the Southern Cross district, we started to condense, and that, before Responsible Government, a condenser was bought. I know in 1891, when in London, I had to see a magnificent condenser, which I believe is working now at Southern Cross. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: It never would work.] Anyhow, it made the water much cheaper. We bought Kauffman drills, costing some thousands, in Melbourne, and they were hurriedly sent up to the fields.

MR. SIMPSON: They went 160 feet and stopped.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: (HON. S. BURT): At Woolgangie recently there was a perfect famine for want of water, and we had to send many trucks there that could ill be spared, to carry water from Northam on the Eastern line, though there was a road thickly strewn with reservoirs for catching water which never fell. The members of the Government know how many persistent telegrams they received in October last, which was within the three years during which the hon. member for Yilgarn has admitted that there has been a good rainfall. During last October Mr. W. Thompson, President of the Chamber of Mines, Coolgardie, wrote these words to the Premier:—"I am instructed by the Chamber of Mines and Commerce to lay before you the necessity of the Government instructing the local Water Supply Department to erect at once adequate condensing plants at the Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie bores. Miners at Kalgoorlie are already reduced to half a gallon of water daily, and this is merely beginning summer. Coolgardie will, within a month, be in

"still greater straits, and I cannot too earnestly urge upon you the necessity of immediate action, unless the Government wish to be accused of criminal neglect." That was the kind of telegram which the Government received every day as soon as the two or three months of winter were past. It was the same story year after year from all the mining centres, from the earliest knowledge we have had of the fields. From all parts of the fields the Government were pestered for a supply of water, not to keep the mines going but to sustain life. I have read the communication from the Chamber of Mines, Coolgardie, which was sent in last October, and the same outcry came from Kalgoorlie during the early part of this year, necessitating the Government making every effort to send up all the condensers from Southern Cross, and the sending to the other colonies for steam engines at great expense, in order to keep the people who were flocking to Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie alive, by providing them with necessary water. In the face of these facts the hon. member for Geraldton argues that there is no necessity for this scheme. I have no occasion to answer him. These facts are the answer. I have no need to make any further answer. The hon. member for Yilgarn states that during the last three years there has been a large rainfall in certain parts of the eastern goldfields district, but he admits that the ground is not good for holding and that the rain falling into the lakes rapidly becomes salt. The older the hon. member grows, the more he will find that the rainfall is intermittent in those districts. I have had some experience of the interior of this country in far better watered country than Coolgardie can be, looking at the external evidences of the surface of the country, and that experience goes to show that hereafter you will not get any inches of rain lying on the Coolgardie fields in the twelve months. That is what we have to look at; consequently when the Government had to face the water difficulty, they considered various schemes for the supply of the fields, in the first place for domestic purposes; and after perusing the reasons given by the Engineer-in-Chief I think that hon. members will come to the conclusion that we did right in decid-

ing upon this pumping scheme. We could not see our way to depend upon reservoirs on the fields themselves, for reasons that are most cogent; namely, that there would be excessive evaporation and because of the porous character of the catchment areas, in that part of the country, which would allow a great deal of the water to escape. A great deal of difficulty has been experienced in the operations of the Government in bridging these last three years in regard to water supply, but while we cannot depend upon reservoirs for a permanent water supply, we are making reservoirs on the fields at the present moment, and very great difficulty, I am told, has been encountered already owing to the porous nature of the soil. Owing to the porous nature of the soil and the excessive evaporation of the water in reservoirs, the fact that much of the catchment area is salt, and other reasons mentioned by the Engineer-in-Chief, it will be readily seen why reservoirs could not be relied upon to meet the necessities of the goldfields population. It has been said that we should find artesian water or what some have called—without perhaps being able to explain what they mean—sub-artesian water. Well, at the present moment we have a bore trying to find artesian or sub-artesian water, but if it is found we are very much afraid that it will be salt, or that, if it is not salt, it will be found at such depth that the cost of pumping it to the surface would be far more than the scheme which we now propose. All that is dealt with by the Engineer-in-Chief, and I do not wonder that at the present time the practicability of this scheme designed by him is being admitted on all sides in this House. Although the hon. member for Nannine took the trouble, when he addressed the House upon this measure some time ago, to say that it was a childish scheme—that was his description of this scheme, that it was childish—it is impossible for the Government to hold its hand at this juncture. We are bound, as a Government, to come forward with a scheme of some sort to supply water to the fields. I think I have shown that the difficulty has to be met in some way. I think, when you are asking for the people's money, you have to re-assure them on that point, and to show that the scheme will be sufficient

for the purposes for which it is designed. The hon. member for Yilgarn, while saying that the quantity of water that we propose to take to the field is nothing like sufficient, welcomes the introduction of the Bill, but his argument only opens up the further question that the insufficiency of the supply is becoming very pressing. I say that the Government would have been failing in its duty if it had not come before the House and asked for a sum of money at the present time to enable water to be conveyed to Coolgardie. There are many more points which I might deal with, but I do not think that I need trespass on the time of the House any longer, at this moment, because there seems to be very little contention between us, and I do not wish to repeat for the sake of repetition. I should like to point out another of the benefits which the scheme will confer on the people of the fields. The Engineer-in-Chief has worked out, in his admirable report on this matter, the cost to the miner of water at the present time, and has clearly shown the very great saving that will be effected throughout the fields, on this item. He says that it may be assumed that there will be forty thousand people on the fields by the time the Darling Ranges water reaches Coolgardie. He estimates that there may be 40,000 people on the fields at that time, and if these people get, as is stated, a supply of three gallons each per day, and pay at the rate of 3d. per gallon for 365 days, they will have to pay about £9 per annum. Forty thousand people at £9 per head means £360,000 per annum thrown away for water at Coolgardie, and that is condensed water, which is a mineral water and not the best. The same quantity of water that is supplying 40,000 people with three gallons per day could, under the scheme of the Government, be obtained for less than £10,000, thus showing a saving of £350,000 per annum. This five million gallons per day, if not used for batteries, will support the municipalities, and if we allowed each person three gallons per day, this five million gallons would support 1,600,000 people.

MR. MORAN: We would want to give them more than three gallons a day.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Certainly, you would have to

give them more than that. The hon. member for the Greenough has estimated that 30 gallons per head per day will be required. The Premier has shown by the figures put before the House, when he produced this Bill, that, allowing that quantity of water per head per day, two million gallons per day would be sufficient for a population of from 70,000 to 80,000, leaving for battery purposes three million gallons. He showed also, on the authority of a gentleman he quoted, and I have not heard that authority questioned, that a supply of 10,000 gallons per day would run a 20-head battery 24 hours. Therefore, three million gallons per day would keep work going at 300 batteries crushing at the rate of 40 tons per battery, or 3,600,000 tons of quartz per annum, which at half an ounce of gold to the ton would be worth £7,000,000. We say these figures are correct, and that these things will be done when we get the five million gallons of water on the fields. We do not expect that more than the two million gallons will be wanted for other purposes than that of crushing, and we do not agree that the domestic supply will require the whole quantity, although no doubt we should be very pleased if the population becomes so great that the whole of the five million gallons will be required for domestic uses. I say that this matter is urgent; that we cannot hold back from this scheme. I do not believe there is any man in the House who will get up and make use of such an assertion as that there is no necessity for this water supply for Coolgardie. The hon. member for the Murray wants more information. I can only inform the hon. member that, when we introduce here a proposal for railway extension, we do not put before the House how much it will cost to carry rails up the line; and the House does not care to know what the intention of the engineers will be if any of the water pipes burst. Pipes burst in the best regulated families, and they have to be repaired; and it is with regard to that pipe bursting that the hon. member for Murray is in search of information: that seems to be all the information he requires. It is not worth wasting the time of the House going into a matter like that. When we go into this scheme and consider it, we find that

there is a great simplicity about it. The works will consist of mere pumping stations; mere purchase of engines, which anyone can estimate the cost of, as we have got the prices by inquiries; mere pipes, the expense of which can be calculated to nearly a penny at the present moment. There is nothing uncertain about it. I say this work is urgent at the present time, and must be initiated and commenced as soon as possible—looking to the fact that it will take some years before we are able to pump water to Coolgardie. It has been suggested by one hon. member that a great deal more will have to be done after the water gets to Coolgardie. All this work of distribution is included in the estimated cost. The engineers submit that the expenditure can be easily calculated. There is no reason to suppose that these estimates prepared by Mr. O'Connor will be far exceeded. In our experience of him his estimates as a rule have been over the mark. In every railway project his estimates have been over the mark, and as regards Fremantle Harbour, the north mole has been constructed below his estimate. It would appear, therefore, that this gentleman is most particular in his estimates. There is no doubt of that; and there is no reason to think that what he says he can do, he cannot do for the sum named by him. If we pass this scheme, we shall bring the benefits and advantages of a water supply to the working miner himself, and not alone to the miner, but also to the mine-owner and the population throughout the Coolgardie goldfields.

On the motion of Mr. VENN, the debate was adjourned until the next sitting.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10.45 p.m., until the next day.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 5th August, 1896.

New Member—West Australian Turf Club Bill; first reading; referred to select committee—Adoption of Children's Bill; first reading—Agricultural Land Purchase Bill; first reading—Streets Closure Bill; first reading—Companies Act Amendment Bill; second reading; Committee—Powers of Attorney Bill; second reading; Committee—Agricultural Bank Act Amendment Bill; second reading; Committee—Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women's) Bill; second reading; Committee—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

NEW MEMBER.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) notified that he had received a return to the writ issued for the election of a member for the South Western Province from which it appeared that the Hon. William Spencer had been elected.

The HON. W. SPENCER was then introduced, and having taken the oaths prescribed by law took his seat.

WEST AUSTRALIAN TURF CLUB BILL.

This Bill was introduced by the HON. S. H. PARKER and was read a first time.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER moved, "That the Bill be referred to select committee, with power to call for persons and papers, and to report on Wednesday, 12th August."

Question put and passed.

A ballot having been taken the Hons. H. J. Saunders and F. M. Stone, together with the mover, were elected to serve on the select committee.

ADOPTION OF CHILDREN'S BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly, and was read a first time.

AGRICULTURAL LAND PURCHASE BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly and was read a first time.

STREETS CLOSURE BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly, and was read a first time.