

carried on. When in London, I, having gone home under the auspices of the late Legislative Council, had the honour of being made an honorary member of no less than seven clubs, and I do not remember ever having observed any drinking. Take our own Weld Club: you can pass through it any day and see many there, but you seldom see anything being drunk. Clubs are established for social purposes, to enable men to meet together and exchange ideas, or to enjoy a little recreation in a billiard room, or read in the library; they are not for drinking purposes. I should be very glad to see the working men have a club established on these lines—not for drinking, but for recreation—and I cannot but help thinking that if such a club were established it would do a great deal of good, and probably prevent many of the drinking habits among this class of people we now all lament. Such being the case, I do not think we should place any restriction on clubs. A fee of £5 a year is nothing to a club like the Weld Club, but it would in many cases deter a working-men's club from being established. In my amendments I propose that the fee shall be £5, but not payable annually, and I should much prefer even to see that swept away altogether. I have no desire to press this Bill to a second reading to-day. We have plenty of time, and as far as I can see we will enjoy each other's company for some considerable period yet, we having the Electoral Act, the Education Act, and other measures to come before us. If, therefore, any hon. members wish the debate adjourned I shall not object. I move the second reading of the Bill.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I move that the debate be adjourned until Thursday next.

Question put and passed.

Debate adjourned.

ENGINE SPARKS FIRE PREVENTION BILL.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 3:10 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Thursday, 14th September, at 4:30 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 12th September, 1893.

Leave of Absence to Mr. Loton—Loan Bill, 1893: in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 2:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO MR. LOTON.

On the motion of **MR. PHILLIPS**, leave of absence for fourteen days was granted to the hon. member for the Swan.

LOAN BILL, 1893.

IN COMMITTEE.

Debate continued on Item No. 1.—*"Completion of Yilgarn Railway, £34,000."*

MR. R. F. SHOLL said they were told yesterday by the Commissioner of Railways that this additional sum was required for providing a water supply; he should like to ask the Commissioner whether, in originally estimating the cost of this railway, the question of water supply was taken into consideration?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said that the Engineer-in-Chief had not been in a position to form any idea of the cost of water conservation on this line until after the contract for the construction of the line had been accepted.

MR. R. F. SHOLL thought that according to the evidence of the Engineer-in-Chief himself, he did form an idea of the cost of providing water. He was referring to the evidence given before the select committee that sat to consider the route of this railway. One of the questions asked the Engineer-in-Chief by the chairman of the committee was this: "In your abstract, showing the estimated cost of the railway both for the York and the Northam route, I notice there is a special mention, at the end of the estimate for the York route, of water services, £750, which is not so apparent, without examination, in the estimate of the Northam route; will you please explain?" The Engineer-in-Chief, in reply, said: "The fact of the matter is, there were three water services provided on both routes, and in the Northam route

the cost of these services was included in the estimate for the sections, but in the York route it was found to have been forgotten when the sections were estimated, and so it was added at the end in a lump sum." It was evident from that answer that the cost of the water service was included in the estimate. In answer to another question, the Engineer-in-Chief said there were reservoirs along the route, and Mr. Piesse put this question to him: "The difficulty would probably be in filling those reservoirs, except in exceptional seasons. We found the same difficulty on the Great Southern line, until the seasons favoured the Company; and I think you will find that these reservoirs will scarcely be filled for years, with such a limited rainfall, and that it will be necessary for you to haul your water?" The Engineer-in-Chief's answer to that was: "We quite reckon we shall, at first." It was therefore very evident from his answers to the committee, that the question of water supply was taken into consideration in the original estimate. Yet they were now asked to vote an extra £34,000, mainly, if not entirely, for this purpose.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said that the evidence referred to did not disclose the fact that any estimate had been made of the cost of providing a continuous supply of water along the route; it simply referred to the tanks and the pumping of water for the engines, and did not include the cost of reservoirs. The Engineer-in-Chief never meant that. Members would know that it was a most difficult problem indeed to discover water along that route, and that the only way would be by means of reservoirs.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he must join issue with the hon. member that the Engineer-in-Chief did not refer to reservoirs. Mr. Piesse put the question to him—"The difficulty would probably be in filling these reservoirs, etc.?" and the Engineer-in-Chief's answer was that they quite reckoned on that, at first. He also said that there were reservoirs along the route at that time, before the contract was ever entered into.

MR. CLARKSON said he was glad that the Government were at last alive to the necessity of providing a water supply along this line. He was not sure that they were not under-estimating it now.

He thought this was one of the most serious matters which the Government had to attend to, not only along the line, but at the other end too.

MR. R. F. SHOLL thought it was the duty of the Government, when submitting estimates of a line of railway to that House, to make proper provision for everything.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): This was an estimate made before survey.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that in any case proper estimates should be prepared, even although there might not be sufficient money available at the time to carry out the whole work. It was simply misleading the House to come there, and say that such a work would cost so much, and get a vote for it on that understanding; and, afterwards, come down with a supplementary estimate. Complete estimates should be prepared, so that the House and the country should know exactly what any particular work was going to cost. They were led to believe that in all probability the cost of the works on the schedule of the last Loan Bill had been over-estimated, and that there would be a large balance to the credit of the loan; but no wthey were asked to sanction a fresh loan. It was like an architect for a house giving you an estimate of the cost, and then bringing in a bill for a large amount for extras. He did not think that architect would be likely to be employed often afterwards. He thought these things showed a want of forethought and a want of competency on the part of whoever was responsible for this estimate. He thought it was ridiculous to say that the necessity for providing a water supply along a line of railway through a waterless country could not have been foreseen.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said it was almost marvellous how close the estimates of the Government in regard to the cost of the railways included in the Loan Act of 1891 had proved, considering that they had no surveys at the time to go by. The estimate for this Yilgarn line was £2,000 a mile, the estimated distance being 162 miles, which gave £324,000. The actual distance was afterwards found to be 170 miles, and the cost per mile was £2,100, including this £34,000 now asked for. He thought the original estimate was extraordinarily close, considering all the circumstances.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he understood that a large item in connection with the cost of this line was the amount of compensation to be paid for the land resumed at Northam. But he had always been under the impression that the Northam people promised to give the Government the land, if the line went through their town.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said they did not know how it would be settled yet, but provision must be made in the event of the Government having to pay compensation. They would not spend a fraction more in compensation than they were compelled to do. It was true that the residents of Northam signed a paper, according to which they were quite prepared to take any reasonable offer the Government might feel inclined to make for their land; and it had struck him at the time that there might be a considerable difference of opinion between what the Government considered reasonable to offer and what the residents of Northam considered reasonable to accept. A large quantity of this land, however, would be resumed without any compensation whatever. At the same time it was only wise and proper to make provision for any claims that might come in, and the Government had made that provision to the extent of £5,000, although nothing like that might be necessary.

MR. RICHARDSON asked if there was nothing legally binding about the document which the Northam people signed? If it was not worth more than the paper it was written on, he did not think the Government had a right to accept it as a sufficient guarantee. On the other hand, if it was a genuine document, and the Northam people meant what they said, couldn't they be made to adhere to it?

MR. CLARKSON said he was present when that document was signed by some of the inhabitants of Northam, and he was certainly of opinion that it was to this effect: that they would make no claim upon the Government for the land resumed for the purposes of this railway. He had spoken, however, to several of them since, and they seemed to make a joke of it. He thought if the hon. member for the Gascoyne was as well acquainted with the people of Northam

as he was, he would know that £5,000 was not likely to be at all too much to provide compensation for them, as they had a very extravagant opinion as to the value of their land.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he did not believe in the Government taking land without compensation, as a rule; but this was an exceptional case. The residents of Northam, it appeared, made a definite promise to the Government that if this line went through their town they would make no claim for compensation; and, if they were dishonest enough to take advantage of any legal quibble now, he thought the Government should exercise every legal right they had to compel them to stick to their agreement. He thought it was an outrageous thing that these people should sign that document in order to induce the railway to be taken through Northam, as against York, and that they should now go back from their bargain.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that all he ever understood from the Northam people was that they would take what the Government offered them, or that they would not demand anything more than the Government offered them. He did not suppose that everyone in the town had agreed to that, but he believed a great many did; and he thought that, until they actually refused to carry out that arrangement, it was not quite fair for members to abuse them. He expected they would find the Northam people honest enough to keep their word. In any case, this offer of the people of Northam had never influenced him in the least as regards taking the line through that town. Still he had no doubt they would adhere to their arrangement.

MR. MONGER thought, as this probably might be the very last opportunity he should have of pointing out to the Government the one great mistake they had committed, the one great blot in the history of the Forrest Ministry up to the present time, it was necessary that he should refer to a portion of the Engineer-in-Chief's evidence before the select committee appointed to consider the question of whether this line should start from Northam or York. It appeared that the Engineer-in-Chief considered that the only saving in the cost of the two lines,

in favour of Northam, was simply the "capitalisation value of the saving in haulage." This, he reckoned, would probably be £30,000,—“on the assumption that there would be a considerable traffic from the port of Fremantle.” That was the only point in the evidence which induced the members of the House at that time to grant this great concession to a town which, he said without fear of contradiction, was most unworthy of it. The Engineer-in-Chief estimated that the cost of the two lines would be about the same,—£269,000 from Northam, and £265,000 from York. In those figures no calculation was made as to the amount that would have to be paid for compensation for land through which the line would run; it was simply put down in both cases to be the same, and that was—nothing. He concluded that the reason for making no allowance for compensation for land was attributable to the pledge given by the people of Northam that no claim would ever be made upon the Government for compensation if the line started from their town. But he was sorry to say that the people of Northam had very much altered since the line had been started; and, when the Government came to reckon with them as to the value they put upon their land, they would find it would take the whole of this £5,000 which they now asked that House to vote in connection with this item, and probably a very considerably greater sum. They had been told by the Premier that the people of Northam made a certain pledge; he (Mr. Monger) did not know what that pledge was, but he ventured to say that it would be found that not one-half of the people through whose land this line ran ever made any particular pledge. A certain gentleman, and a very worthy gentleman, who represented that particular district, made a pledge for these people. If the Government felt that the pledge given to them by this gentleman was binding upon these people, he thought the present Government had powers to obtain concessions from the people which no other Government in the world had. In the estimate submitted by the Engineer-in-Chief at the time this question of route was being very much discussed, the cost of the water supply along both routes was supposed to be likely to be about equal. Mr.

O'Connor estimated that the total cost would be some few hundred pounds; but now the Government said they required £35,000 to find a proper water supply, which clearly proved that the Engineer-in-Chief's estimates were not always reliable. If that gentleman committed such very grave errors of judgment in a matter like this, how were they to place reliance upon his future estimates? Were they to take it for granted, hereafter, when the Government asked that House to vote £10,000, £20,000, or £30,000 for any particular service that the amount asked for would afterwards have to be doubled or trebled? He knew it was futile for him to ask for any support from members at present with reference to the amendment which he had given notice of; but his principal reason in giving notice of it was to bring before that House—not for the first time, and not for the last time he hoped—the desirability, on some future occasion, of constructing a line of railway from some point between York and Beverley, passing through the most fertile and most beautiful agricultural area in the whole of Western Australia, and connecting with the Northam-Yilgarn Railway at some point. No doubt it would be some short time before any future loans would be asked for by the present Ministry; but he had every hope that the hon. gentlemen who now held seats on the Treasury benches would remain in that position for some considerable time, and his principal reason in bringing forward this matter at the present moment was that, when next they brought forward a Loan Bill for the consideration of that House, they would make a point of asking the House to vote in that Loan Bill a sufficient sum of money to construct the particular line to which he was now referring. He could not conclude without saying that the district which he had the honour to represent had not received that fair treatment at the hands of the Ministry which the district was entitled to. He only hoped that the actions of the Ministry in the future would, at all events, be such as to show they were prepared to treat that district more fairly than they had done in the past. In conclusion, he had only to say that he had no intention of proceeding with the amendment standing in his name.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said the hon. member for York was not in the House when he explained that the Engineer-in-Chief had made no estimate for the water supply on this line, or the hon. member would not have made the remarks which he did. The only estimate referred to in the Engineer-in-Chief's evidence was with reference to the probable cost of providing a water supply for the engine tanks, and the necessary pumping appliances. It was absurd to say that the Engineer-in-Chief at that time could have estimated the cost of providing a water supply along this route between Northam and Yilgarn at only a few hundred pounds. It was a moot question at the time what the cost would be, but it was always considered it would form a considerable item. No blame could for a moment be attached in any way to the Engineer-in-Chief in connection with this matter.

Item agreed to.

Item 2.—“*Completion of the Mullewa Railway, £86,000.*”

MR. MOLLOY said he must again object to this large extra expenditure upon this Mullewa Railway, a line which he believed would never pay. Some time ago an estimate of the probable traffic was made, and it was then proved that the country would suffer considerable loss even upon the interest on the capital invested, to say nothing of working expenses. It would take about £8,000 a year to pay the interest on the capital expended in constructing the line, including the sum now asked for. It was known at the time the line was originally sanctioned that the only traffic the line would secure was the small wool traffic from the pastoral districts northwards. It was true that, since the line was first sanctioned, the Murchison goldfields had broken out, and that there was now some better prospect of an improved traffic. But the population on the Murchison goldfield at the present time, after a considerable interval since the discovery of the field, had certainly not increased to that extent as to justify this large expenditure. When this question was before the House last year, the Government obtained an additional £50,000 to complete the line, and a pledge was then given that that sum would be sufficient. Now they

had an estimate increasing that £50,000 by £36,000, which was out of all proportion in an estimate of that character. The original estimate was £100,000, which was subsequently increased by £50,000, and now it was increased by £86,000, which was altogether an unwarranted and unjustifiable increase for a line of railway of only about 60 miles in length. He did not think the Government had any warrant for spending such a large sum upon such a work as this. He was sure it would be an enormous tax upon the ratepayers of the colony, and he must enter his protest against it. He felt it was useless to oppose the vote, but he would press upon the Government the necessity of paying close attention to see whether they could not reduce this amount, and keep within the £50,000 which they said last year would be enough to complete the line.

MR. CLARKSON said he was of the same opinion as the hon. member for Perth with reference to this line, and always had been. It was no use objecting to this item now, as the work had been let by contract, and the money must be found to carry it out. He had been opposed to it from the very first; and, when the Government asked for an extra £50,000, which they assured the House would be sufficient to finish the line, he still objected, and ventured the opinion at the time that it would not be sufficient. Now it was found they wanted £86,000 instead of £50,000. All who were acquainted with the country opposed this railway. He believed it was about the only public work undertaken by the present Ministry with regard to which there was a certainty of its not being reproductive. He only wished they could, even at this stage, strike it off the Loan Bill.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked how the item was made up.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) supplied the information, in detail, showing that the total estimate amounted to £196,000, but, as there was a sum of £10,000 that would probably be available, not being required in connection with harbour works, that would reduce the amount to £186,000, of which the House had voted £100,000 on the Loan Bill of 1891, and the balance was now asked for. If the hon. member would look up the Treasurer's speech

when bringing forward the proposal for £50,000 for the completion of the line, in addition to the £100,000 originally voted, he would see that the Engineer-in-Chief's estimate was about £170,000, but the Treasurer said the Government would do the best they could to complete the line with the £50,000. He then told his hon. friend that he thought it was a pity to make any pledge of that kind, because he was pretty sure that the Engineer-in-Chief's estimate would be realised. Members might think that the Government had been misleading them in this matter; but there had been no misleading about it at all, and, in reality, there was very little difference in the sum now asked for and what was asked for before, if members took into consideration the large amount that had to be paid by the Government for compensation for land at Geraldton,—a sum altogether in excess of what they ever expected. The hon. member for Toodyay said that in his opinion this would be one of the most useless lines that could be constructed. That might be the hon. member's opinion, but he could assure him it was not the opinion of people who know more about the country and its prospects than the hon. member did.

Mr. R. F. SHOLL said this was another bungle of the Government. When this item was voted on the last Loan schedule, there was a long discussion as to whether the line should be started from Geraldton or Minginew, and the item was only carried by one vote; and he was certain the Government would never have carried it if members had any idea that the line was going to cost this large sum. He thought it was a great pity, when money was being raised for public works, that true estimates were not brought down by the Government. It would have been better for the country, and better in every way, if the Government, instead of wishing to pander to gain a little popularity in the town of Geraldton, had agreed to build this line from Minginew instead of Geraldton.

Item agreed to.

Item 3.—“*Deviations to improve the grades between Fremantle and Beverley, and relaying the same with 60-lb. rails, £120,000.*”

Mr. RICHARDSON asked for some explanation as to the details of this ex-

penditure. It struck one as being somewhat enormous. According to the rate upon which the Government congratulated themselves they could build railways, this sum of £120,000 would make sixty miles of new construction, and find the rails also. Taking this item, and the other items on this Schedule connected with railway improvements, they totalled the enormous sum of £280,000, which very nearly frightened him.

Mr. CLARKSON was very much inclined to move that this item be struck out altogether. It was only patching up what they all knew to be a useless line—useless in the way of being too expensive to work. He thought it would be better to acknowledge the mistake made in the past with this line, and try to find a better line, which could easily be done. He believed that the amount now asked to make these deviations would go a very long way towards constructing a new line altogether, and so open up a vast area of good agricultural country, instead of running through the wretched country through which the present line ran, which gave strangers travelling along it a very poor impression of our lands.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said this item might appear large, but members were aware of the enormous expense entailed in working the present heavy grades, and the consequent loss to the revenue. At one place there would be a deviation of 13 miles in ascending the Darling Range, which it was estimated would cost £60,000; and the other deviations were estimated to cost £25,000, which would be £85,000. It was a very large expenditure, but the result would be a reduction of the present heavy grades to 1 in 50. Then there was the difference in the cost of replacing the 45-lb. rails with a 60-lb. rail. The former would be charged to the Yilgarn Railway, upon which they were being used. Then, again, there was the item of sleepers. The Engineer-in-Chief, when he made his estimate of the cost of this work, did not believe there would be one-tenth the number of sleepers to be renewed as they had had to renew. It was no use blinking the fact—it was not for him to run down the jarrah timber of the colony—but the fact remained that, with all our experience and knowledge of

the value of this timber, they had to provide £8,000 for renewing the sleepers on this Eastern Railway—an amount that was altogether unforeseen. No doubt many of these sleepers would have stood some years longer wear if there had been no necessity to take up the rails; but upon the rails being removed and the spikes taken out it was considered it would be wiser economy to discard all the sleepers that were in any way defective. In his opinion the fault was not with the jarrah itself, but in cutting it at the wrong season of the year.

MR. PATERSON: Are these sleepers rotten or split?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said they were so faulty that they had to be renewed. A good many of them were rotten, or, at any rate, were in such a condition that no one would be justified in putting them down again.

MR. CLARKSON said he had seen them; some were rotten, some split, and some warped. He was afraid that the same mistake was being made again in replacing them with jarrah timber, when we had the finest timber in the world along the line, white gum. He could show a post of white gum that had been in the ground over 50 years, and it was in as good condition that day as it ever was.

MR. R. F. SHOLL thought it was a great pity that this schedule had not been referred to a select committee, so as to get the Engineer-in-Chief's explanation with regard to the whole of these items.

MR. MOLLOY said he thought it was a question, even now, whether it would be wise, in view of the extravagant cost of the proposed deviations—one deviation of 13 miles costing £60,000—he questioned whether it would be wise, even now, to go on with these deviations. He doubted if members would ever have agreed to such an enormous expenditure as that for such a short distance, had they been aware of it when they consented to these deviations being made. It was really a question whether it was too late, even now, to abandon this costly undertaking, and adopt another route altogether.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the deviations had not been commenced yet, although the House had authorised them to be undertaken. Of course the

great point that induced the Government to propose these deviations, and which also induced members to authorise them, was the fact that the present heavy grades were so expensive to work that it would be a large saving to the country, in the end, to incur this expenditure. The Government were not likely to undertake the work for some time, until their financial position warranted it; but he always understood that both the House, and the country, desired that they should do away with these very expensive grades, which cost the colony so many thousands a year.

MR. RICHARDSON said the Government were re-railing this line, and also importing improved and more powerful engines to work it, so as to cheapen the cost of haulage. It was now further proposed to spend £85,000 in deviations—£60,000 of which they were told would only make 13 miles; all he had to say was this: he hoped the Government, if they found that the re-railing with a heavier rail *did* cheapen the cost of haulage, as it was expected to do, and that the new engines imported specially with the view of working the present heavy grades worked satisfactorily, — all he hoped was that the Government would consider whether it was necessary to incur all this expenditure upon deviations, and whether it was not possible to make a considerable reduction in this particular item.

MR. CLARKSON moved, as an amendment, that no further sum be expended on the proposed deviations beyond the sum already expended, with a view to the Government undertaking surveys for the purpose of discovering a better route.

THE CHAIRMAN ruled the motion out of order.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said that surveys had been made of other routes, but the estimates were altogether beyond the means of the Government. One route would cost £269,000 and the other £248,000.

MR. CLARKSON said that the survey had been made by a surveyor who rode through the country at the rate of 50 miles a day.

Item agreed to.

Item 4.—“Purchase of Land for Perth Railway Station and Yards, Buildings, &c., including Iron Bridge and Improvements to Barrack Street, £85,000.”

MR. R. F. SHOLL moved that the item be struck out. He did not think it was likely to increase our credit in the English market when they found that a large portion of this Loan was to be expended in the purchase of land. They were told in that House last year that there would be sufficient to pay for this land out of the money saved in building the South-Western Railway. If there was not, he did not think they should raise the money by another Loan. He thought if the Government economised, they could do without this item.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said it was absolutely necessary to have these conveniences at Perth, in view of the extension of our railway system and the development of traffic. Of course the hon. member was not serious in moving to strike out the item, unless he wished all the works in hand at the Perth station stopped.

Question put and negatived.

Item agreed to.

Item 5.—“Eastern Railway, Miscellaneous, £20,000.”

MR. MONGER asked for some explanation as to what was proposed to be done with this money.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said, if there was any item on the schedule he should like to have seen increased, it was this. No line in Australia was ever handed over to a Government in a more unfinished state than this Eastern Railway. The present Government had had to provide increased facilities in many ways,—sidings, platforms, wayside stations, and in a thousand-and-one other ways; and a great deal yet remained to be done in the way of improving the water supply, new wayside stations, goods sheds, cattle yards, crossings, and other conveniences,—all of which came under this item, otherwise they would have to be provided out of revenue. He did not think they should come out of revenue, being improvements of a permanent character; and, unless they came out of this Loan, they could simply not be undertaken. He had in his office a list of general requirements needed to afford additional

facilities on this line, and all he could say was they could have done with another £30,000 or £40,000.

Item agreed to.

Item 6.—“Additional Rolling Stock for Existing Lines, £60,000.”

Agreed to.

Item 7.—“Additional Improvements to opened Railways (exclusive of Eastern Railway), £10,000.”

Agreed to.

Item 8.—“Railway Workshops, £20,000.”

MR. SIMPSON asked where it was proposed to spend this £20,000?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said there was a Commission then sitting to report upon the Workshops, and until the Government were in possession of that report, it would be a difficult matter for the Government to say where the Workshops were to be. But, wherever they would be, it was absolutely necessary that provision should be made for improving the present accommodation. He only hoped it would be at some spot that would meet the growing requirements of this establishment.

Item agreed to.

Item 9.—“Roads; and also Roads to Railway Stations, £10,000.”

Agreed to.

Item 10.—“Development of Goldfields and Mineral Resources, £40,000.”

MR. SIMPSON said there was a rumour abroad about the Government going to bring a thousand tons of coal from the Collie coalfield to Bunbury, at a cost of about £2 a ton for carting alone. He did not know whether there was anything in the rumour; if there was, it was simply playing with this coalfield.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said there was no intention on the part of the Government to play with the Collie coalfield. The Government had a sincere desire to do the best they could for the development of this field. They had a practical test of the value of the coal the other day on the trip to Bunbury, and the result, as members were aware, was very satisfactory. The Government believed there were many millions of tons of coal there, and their intention was to call for tenders for raising some of it. It was estimated it would cost about 6s. a ton to raise it,

and he thought the cartage from the field to the intersection of the present railway could be done for about 14s. or 15s. per ton, at any rate in the summer months. It was true they had had to pay £2 a ton for carting a few tons, during the winter, in order to give a practical proof to the public that the coal was what it was represented to be. The Government intended having a trial survey made of a railway to the coalfield, and, he assured the hon. member, they had no idea of trifling or playing with this valuable coal deposit.

MR. SOLOMON congratulated the Government on the announcement just made by the Commissioner of Railways. He thought everyone would be pleased to hear that some practical effort was to be made to develop this valuable resource; and he was sure that if the Government deemed it advisable to build a line of railway to the field it would meet with all the support it deserved.

MR. TRAYLEN said if it were to cost £5 a ton, instead of £2 a ton, for a little while, to bring this coal to a market, with the view of testing its value, he did not know that it would matter much. The point was, would they be justified in spending £100,000 in providing a railway and shipping facilities, until they were perfectly satisfied as to the value of the field. He was delighted that the Government were not going to commit themselves to Mr. Thompson's tender mercies.

MR. SIMPSON said the Commissioner of Railways told them that he thought he could get coal carted from the field to Bunbury for 15s. a ton. The hon. the Commissioner was responsible for some very cheap railways, but if he thought he was going to get coal carted for 15s. a ton from the Collie field to Bunbury,—

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn): Not to Bunbury, but to the intersection of the line.

MR. SIMPSON said he was afraid the hon. gentleman would find it could not be done. He only hoped that the Government were not going to go in extensively for working the fields themselves.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said the Government had no intention of going into the coal-mining business on a large scale, but would be prepared to deal with *bona*

fidæ capitalists. The Government were fully alive to the importance of developing this particular industry, but at the same time they were not prepared to accept proposals of all kinds, from all sorts and conditions of people, to carry out schemes which in the opinion of the Government were not worthy of being considered. So long as he had the honour of filling the position he held, he certainly would be opposed to that state of things which had occurred in this colony in the past, when people without capital to back them came to the colony and got the Government to grant them huge monopolies, afterwards to be hawked about all over the world, with the view of making money for themselves at the expense of this colony.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that £40,000 was a large sum of money no doubt. Still it was absolutely necessary that everything should be done to have our goldfields developed. He only hoped that more care would be taken in the future in going properly to work in conserving water on our goldfields than had been shown in the past. When they considered that we were attracting the very cream of the working men of the other colonies to our shores, to seek to develop our goldfields, the Government should offer them every assistance and encouragement; only he hoped they would go more systematically to work with this £40,000 than they had done in the past. There was not the slightest doubt in the world that the future of this colony depended very largely upon its gold-mining industry. It was a mistake to say that agriculture was the backbone of the country. If it was, all he could say was it was a very weak backbone. The agriculturists of this colony having been given railway facilities wanted reduced rates, and, not only that, they wanted protective duties on all they produced, while they must have their own machinery admitted duty free; yet, with all this, they were unable to compete with the foreign grower. It was absurd, therefore, to say that agriculture was the backbone of the colony. He thought the real backbone of this country was its gold-mining industry, and a very strong backbone it was. He hoped the Government would not confine the expenditure of this £40,000 to Yilgarn and Cool-

gardie, but would distribute it fairly among all the goldfields of the colony.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said the Government were fully alive to the importance of the gold-mining industry, and also to the necessity of doing all in their power to develop that industry. But it was a mistaken opinion on the part of the public, and of some hon. members, that the Government should be responsible for finding water for men wherever they wished to go to. The Government did not induce these men to go; on the contrary they had been warned not to go until this question of a water supply had been settled. But they heeded no warning, and, although the Government were willing to do, and were doing, all they possibly could in this direction, they could not follow every rush, and undertake to find water. All they could undertake to do was to endeavour to find water and conserve it at certain points, where these people could fall back upon it during the summer season; and, within that limit, there would be no effort wanting on the part of the present Government to carry out that object, and, he trusted, with success.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands whether the Government were satisfied as to the competency of the gentleman they had employed to look after or superintend the water supply? It was a very serious and important matter, and, unless the man entrusted with the work was a thoroughly competent and thoroughly practical man, they might waste thousands of pounds. Personally he had no knowledge of the competency or incompetency of the gentleman in question, but he certainly had heard that he was not the man for the position he occupied.

MR. PATERSON said he could not allow one statement of the hon. member for the Gascoyne to go unchallenged. That hon. member said that the agriculturists were not the backbone of the colony, or, if they were, that they were a very weak backbone. He could assure the hon. member that if they had not a very good backbone they would not have been in the position they were in now, but would have succumbed to their difficulties long ago. The hon. member said they wanted their machinery admitted

duty free. Why not? Were they not as much entitled to consideration as regards their machinery as those who were engaged in the gold-mining industry were. The hon. member said the real backbone of the colony was the gold miner. He differed from the hon. member entirely. He only hoped we should not find some of these men whom he called the backbone of the colony knocking about our street corners raising the cry of the unemployed, when the summer season set in.

Item agreed to.

Item 11.—“*Improvements to Harbours and Rivers, including Jetties and Dredging, £15,000.*”

Agreed to.

Item 12.—“*School Buildings, £15,000.*”

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked where this money was going to be spent?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the hon. member would find a list of the school buildings intended to be built, on the Estimates for the last half-year. The Government found they were not able to undertake all these buildings out of revenue. They extended all over the country from Albany to Roebourne.

MR. MONGER said he did not see York amongst them. They wanted a school building at Greenhills and other parts of the district, which were far more important than some of the places enumerated on the Estimates,—Mount Barker, for instance, and Broome Hill.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said they would be glad to meet the wishes of the hon. member if they found it possible. The items mentioned on the Estimates were only those voted by the House last year.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he rather doubted the wisdom of the policy of raising loans for school buildings. Of course it was necessary and wise on the part of the Government to build schools where they were absolutely necessary; but to go and put up school buildings all over the colony, simply because members wanted to please their constituencies, was not a wise or prudent policy. They must remember that it was not only the cost of the erection of these schools but also the cost of their upkeep afterwards. He hoped the Government would satisfy themselves that these schools were absolutely required, and that the class of

school buildings erected would not be on the same extravagant scale as their railway stations.

Item agreed to.

Item 13.—“Charges and Expenses of raising Loans, £25,000.”

Agreed to.

Preamble and title:

Agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at six minutes past 5 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 13th September, 1893.

East Perth Brickfields: Motion for Adjournment—Fremantle Water Supply Bill: third reading—Loan Bill, 1893: third reading—Chinese Immigration Act Amendment Bill: in committee—Legal Practitioners Bill: consideration of Legislative Council's amendments—Tariff Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

EAST PERTH BRICKFIELDS.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

MR. CANNING: I wish to move the adjournment of the House to debate a matter of urgent importance; that is, the present condition of the old brickfields in the Eastern part of the city. Their condition, at present, is a danger to people going about after dark. The excavations are nearly full of water, and they are for the most part unprotected. A serious accident may occur there at any time. Moreover, their condition, at present, is a source of danger to the public health. When the hot weather sets in we shall have large pools of stagnant water, that

will drain away very slowly, and, whilst evaporating, disease might germinate there, and be carried all over the town. In any case, these brickfields, in their present condition, are a source of great inconvenience and discomfort to the residents of the neighbourhood, being a hot-bed for mosquitoes. But a graver reason for some action being taken in order to rectify the present state of things is the menace to the public health. If disease arose in that part of the town, the probability is it would spread all over the town. Although the origin of disease is somewhat obscure, it is generally conceded that stagnant water is one very serious source of disease. Moreover, the present appearance of this spot is a blot upon the appearance of the town. But that, perhaps, would not be considered a sufficient reason for incurring any considerable expense in filling up these excavations.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): What are the City Council about?

MR. CANNING: I am now drawing attention to a matter that concerns the whole community. If the City Council fails to do its duty, it is the duty of the Government to step in.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): No representations have been made to the Government on the subject by anybody.

MR. CANNING: There are general complaints ever since the brickfields have been deserted; and I think that immediate steps should be taken, firstly, to enclose the land with a sufficient fence, and to drain it, which, I suppose, would not be a very difficult matter—it must be on a somewhat higher level than the river. Probably the work of filling it up would be a more costly operation; but against that we may place the value of the land that would be made available for sale, and for building and other purposes. I think, having called attention to the matter, the Government might very fairly send some competent official from the Works Department to report upon it; and, if they take action forthwith, they will give general satisfaction to the people residing in that part of the city.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): It is not very long ago since the hon. member himself came with a deputation to the Government asking us to keep these very brickfields open; and the Government, at their request, kept them open